

CAMPAIGN FINANCE REFORM,

HON. RON KIND

OF WISCONSIN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, May 13, 1998

Mr. KIND. Mr. Speaker, today is May 13. The last time the leadership of the House promised a vote on campaign finance reform they guaranteed a vote before May 15. That leaves one more legislative day left to consider this important issue. Unfortunately it appears that this date will pass without a debate and vote on campaign finance reform. It is one more broken promise by the leadership of the House on this issue.

We have now heard that debate may begin next week and a vote will come the first week in June. I will believe it when I see it. It is painfully clear that the leadership will do anything in their power to kill finance reform. The leadership should not, however, believe that this issue will go away. Tremendous momentum is building across this country in favor of campaign finance reform. I for one will use the extra time between now and June to let the public know who is behind the continued delay in allowing a vote on campaign finance reform.

It will not be me or other members of Congress who will keep the pressure on the leadership to allow a vote, it will ultimately be the public. I hope that the leadership of this House will listen to the demands of the citizens of this nation and allow a vote on campaign finance reform.

DEMOCRATS ON CHAIRMAN BURTON'S COMMITTEE JUSTIFIED IN REFUSING TO VOTE FOR IMMUNITY

HON. JOHN CONYERS, JR.

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, May 13, 1998

Mr. CONYERS. Mr. Speaker, several hours ago, the House Government Reform and Oversight Committee gave a vote of no confidence to the campaign finance investigation being headed by my friend Chairman DAN BURTON of Indiana. The Committee declined to immunize four witnesses and haul them before his Committee. As a past Chairman of that Committee, I can tell you that what the Committee did today was the only course of action they could take.

My democratic colleagues were not asking for much. They simply wanted procedures for subpoenas that would give them a chance to object and force a Committee vote before such subpoenas could be issued. They were willing to negotiate, but Chairman BURTON refused.

I'm sorry to say this, but Chairman BURTON's recent actions have discredited the major oversight committee of the Congress, which is supposed to set the example for fair investigative procedure.

Never in my tenure, not once, as Chairman of that committee, did the minority complain that a major investigation was unfair, or conducted without their full involvement.

Consider the causes for embarrassment:

More than 600 subpoenas issued without ever having one Committee vote or the involvement of members of the Committee;

A stubborn refusal to subpoena any witnesses requested by the Democratic members of the Committee;

A tasteless decision to release the private conversations between Mr. Hubbell and his wife that had no connection to the subject that the Committee was investigating;

The misleading editing of the tape transcripts, which should have never been released in the first place, forcing a public rebuke by the Speaker for the embarrassment caused to the House of Representatives;

The growing evidence that the Committee may be improperly, and perhaps illegally, coordinating its investigation with that of Independent Counsel Kenneth Starr, which by federal law is supposed to remain secret.

The failure of the Oversight Committee's investigation carries an important lesson for all of us in Congress. The concerns of every member of a committee—especially an investigative committee—cannot be ignored or shunted aside by procedural maneuvers. I am hopeful that my colleagues will keep these lessons in mind as we move forward from the ashes of the Burton investigation.

50 YEARS OF EXCELLENCE FOR STUYVESANT FALLS VFW POST 9593

HON. GERALD B.H. SOLOMON

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, May 13, 1998

Mr. SOLOMON. Mr. Speaker, it is my pleasure to commemorate the anniversary of Veterans of Foreign Wars Post number 9593. This post, I am proud to say, is based in Stuyvesant Falls, New York of my congressional district, and is celebrating a remarkable 50th year in existence.

The V.F.W., Mr. Speaker, has been an organization of exceptional merit and service to the needs of many veterans. It is only appropriate that those brave men and women who placed themselves in harms way overseas be represented by such an able organization. The member of Post 9593 have been receiving just such outstanding service for 50 years now. And beyond that, they have been providing their fellow veterans, their loved ones, and their community with service themselves as active members of an active Post. It is comforting to know that those who served the needs of our country and fought for the principles and ideals of America all over the globe can depend on the support of an organization like Post 9593 back home in upstate New York.

Mr. Speaker, the service of Post 9593 in Stuyvesant Falls is worthy of significant recognition. This Post, and other like it, are the reason I fought so hard to attain Department level status for Veterans' Affairs. When Ronald Readon signed that legislation into law, veterans were finally afforded the degree of national consideration they deserve. The efforts of V.F.W. Posts like this one, Mr. Speaker, having served the needs of veterans since 1948, assured veterans the assistance and recognition they deserved prior to approval of this government department and continue to encourage fair consideration of veterans' issues.

In addition Mr. Speaker, I can tell you that the members of Post 9593 take great pride in

their service to country and in the existence and activities of their distinguished Post. In fact, their VFW Post has been honored with the distinction that it is one of only a few that has consistently maintained 100 percent membership every year for its entire 50 year history. That is the sort of pride and dedication that marks an organization comprised of brave soldiers who have served their country and community faithfully and honorably. They have made us all proud. For all of this, Mr. Speaker, we owe Post 9593 a tremendous debt of gratitude and I ask that all members of the House rise with me in tribute to each and every brave veteran who has comprised the 50 year history of this Post.

SECRETARY OF STATE MADELEINE K. ALBRIGHT DISCUSSES THE MIDDLE EAST PEACE PROCESS

HON. TOM LANTOS

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, May 13, 1998

Mr. LANTOS. Mr. Speaker, no American Administration since the presidency of Harry Truman has been as supportive of Israel as has our current Administration. The President is personally engaged and committed to the safety and security of the state of Israel, and he has affirmed on many occasions—most recently in a letter I received from him dated May 5th—that our nation's unshakable support for Israel's security "has been and will continue to be a central feature of the U.S.-Israeli relationship and a guiding principle for this Administration's role in the Israeli-Palestinian peace process." He noted that "fighting terrorism is not optional; it is a basic premise of the peace process."

Our distinguished Secretary of State, Madeleine Albright, has personally played a critical role in working to move along the peace process, and she has devoted a great deal of time, effort, and energy to make meaningful progress. Our Secretary of State's personal intellectual and emotional commitment to move the peace process forward is one of the principal reasons for the progress that has been made.

Mr. Speaker, in the past several days, there has been considerable heat, but little light on the status of negotiations and the role of the United States in that process. Secretary Albright yesterday spoke at the National Press Club on the "Middle East Peace Process" and outlined the framework and the focus of the Administration's policy in this regard.

Mr. Speaker, because of the acrimony and misconceptions that have been magnified in the press, I think it is important for my colleagues to see for themselves first hand a concise and coherent discussion of our policy. I submit Secretary Albright's address at the National Press Club to be placed in the RECORD, and I urge my colleagues to give thoughtful attention to her excellent remarks.

THE MIDDLE EAST PEACE PROCESS

(Delivered by Secretary of State Madeleine K. Albright at the National Press Club)

Thank you very much. I am very pleased to be here.

Two weeks ago, before departing for Asia and talks in London on the Middle East, I attended a dinner sponsored by Seeds of Peace.

This is a group that brings young people together from all around the Middle East to learn about and from each other, to go beyond the stereotypes and to understand how much they have in common.

At that dinner, I was given a letter signed by Arab and Israeli youngsters, which I hand-delivered in London to Prime Minister Netanyahu and Chairman Arafat. I want to begin my remarks today by quoting from that letter: "In our history books, the Middle East has always appeared as a magnificent crossroads. Yet we have not tasted its grandness, for we are blinded by its destructive wars. We at Seeds of Peace had a taste of what it is like to co-exist peacefully. We learned to accept the fact that both sides, Arabs and Israelis, have a right to a home in this disputed holy land. We are writing this letter as people who have experienced peace temporarily and we enjoyed the taste, but we want the whole pie. However, this is up to you. It is up to you to shape or build our future."

That is a part of the letter that I delivered. I would have liked very, very much to have been able to return to the United States this past weekend with the news that the prayers of those young people had been answered and that a new milestone in the Middle East peace process had been reached. It was our hope that this week would have marked the start of permanent status negotiations between Prime Minister Netanyahu and Chairman Arafat, hosted by President Clinton.

Unfortunately, despite exhaustive and exhausting efforts to remove them, there remain obstacles to an agreement that would allow those permanent status talks to begin. However, I look forward to meeting with Prime Minister Netanyahu here in Washington tomorrow to see if it is possible to clear the way.

Today, I want to do two things. First, on behalf of President Clinton, I want to reaffirm America's commitment to the pursuit of Arab-Israeli peace and our determination to continue exploring every possible avenue for helping the parties to achieve it. We do this because it is in our interest and because it is right. The people of the Middle East deserve a future free from terror and violence, a future in which they can prosper in security and peace.

Second, I want to explain the logic of our approach and provide some perspective about what we have been doing in recent months to overcome the impasse that has developed in Israeli-Palestinian negotiations.

The past year has been the most disappointing since the Oslo Accords were signed in 1993. It was 16 months ago that active US mediation helped to produce an agreement on Hebron. Since then, a crisis of confidence has arisen between Israelis and Palestinians that has stalled at the bargaining table and put at risk both historic accomplishments and future hopes.

In only two years, we have gone from a situation where Israel had some form of peace negotiation, relationship, or promising contact with every Arab state except Iraq and Libya to a stalemate which has eroded regional cooperation on issues such as water, economic integration, the environment and refugees, stalled Arab-Israeli contacts, and caused optimism to be replaced by a sense of fatalism and helplessness about the future.

At the root of the stalemate is a crisis of partnership between Israelis and Palestinians wherein short term tactical considerations have too often trumped broader understandings of common interest and cooperation. Indeed, we have gone from a situation where no problem was too big to solve to a situation where every issue is argued about. We have seen tragic incidents of terror, unilateral actions and provocation rhet-

oric undermine the historic accomplishments of the Israeli-Palestinian negotiations.

For more than a year now, the United States has been working hard to revive the missing spirit of partnership. We have been trying literally to restore the ability of the parties to talk constructively with each other, to overcome mistrust, to solve problems, to arrive at agreements and to implement obligations.

Early last year, we were approached by Prime Minister Netanyahu with an idea for reorienting the process. He argued that the confidence building period provided for under the Oslo Accords had begun instead to destroy confidence; and he was right. The Prime Minister argued that it therefore made sense to move directly into final status negotiations, and to do so on an accelerated timetable. He asked President Clinton to help achieve this purpose; and as Israel's ally and friend, the President decided to try to do so.

Beginning last spring and throughout the summer of 1997, we sought an agreement that would put the process back on track by focusing the parties on the importance of getting to permanent status talks. In August I proposed in a speech here in Washington that the parties "marry the incremental approach of the interim agreement . . . to an accelerated approach to permanent status."

Then last September the Israelis and Palestinians agreed to a four-part agenda that included accelerated permanent status talks and three other issues: security with the emphasis on preempting and fighting terror; the further redeployment of Israeli troops; and a time-out on unhelpful unilateral steps. There followed several months of intensive discussions on that agenda along with resumed negotiations on key interim issues.

During this period there was some narrowing in the differences between the parties, but very substantial gaps remained. Despite our efforts, we could not get the Israelis and Palestinians to agree to an accord. Both urged us, nevertheless, to persist and to help them find a way to bridge the differences. By early this year we had come to the conclusion that even if the parties could not be responsive to each other's ideas, they might respond to ours. Working closely and quietly with both sides, we began to share our views on how the parties might resolve their differences over the four-part agenda.

In January, here in Washington, President Clinton met with Prime Minister Netanyahu and Chairman Arafat. And I met with them when I traveled to the region in February, and then again in Europe in March. Ambassador Ross and Israeli and Palestinian negotiators have been in almost constant contact. Throughout, we continued to urge the parties to sort out the issues directly with each other.

Unfortunately, none of these discussions produced sufficient results. It was clear that tough decisions were required if Israelis and Palestinians were to reach an agreement that neither side was prepared to make.

Having worked since January to share our thoughts informally with the parties at the highest level, it was logical that we should at some point share a more fully integrated set of ideas in an effort to facilitate decisions. We took this step not because we wanted to, but because there seemed no other way to break the dangerous logjam that had developed.

Our ideas stemmed from intensive consultations with both sides and take into account both the obligations each side has accepted and the vital interests each must protect. They are balanced, flexible, practical and reasonable. They are based on the principle of reciprocity—another concept

stressed by Prime Minister Netanyahu and embraced by us because of our belief that parallel implementation of each side's obligations is the only way to restore the partnership between Israelis and Palestinians.

In presenting our ideas, we made it clear that we were offering them as suggestions, not as an ultimatum or an effort to impose a settlement. Both parties have their own decision-making processes and interests, which we respect. Our purpose was only, in response to the parties' request, to help them find the way forward.

The role of the mediator is never an easy one. The challenge is how to meet the needs of both sides in a way that is acceptable to the other. Logically, that presents both sides with the need to be flexible and to make decisions that reflect the concerns not just of one party, but of two. In this regard, our ideas were designed to find that balance and to persuade each side that the balance could be struck in a way that addressed their particular requirements.

Now, let me try to explain our approach as it relates to addressing Israel's requirements, foremost of which is security. Let me say at the outset that there should be no doubt about the commitment of the Clinton Administration or of America to Israel's security. That commitment is unshakable and has been demonstrated over and over again, not only in words but in actions; in our joint struggle against terrorism; in the assistance to Israel that the American people have so long and so generously provided; and in the steps we have taken to ensure Israel's qualitative military edge.

These include providing Israel with the F-15-I, the most advanced fighter aircraft in the American arsenal; the pre-positioning of American military stock and material in Israel for joint use; and jointly-funded research and development projects designed to enhance Israel's ability to protect itself against long range missiles and Katyusha rockets. And let me add that our to Israel's security does not come with a time limit. There is no expiration date. It will continue today, tomorrow and for as long as the sun shall rise. I said that in Israel last year and I meant it. And that's true whether there is progress in the Middle East peace process or not—or whether we have differences with Israel at a particular moment or not.

At the same time, we have agreed with Israeli leaders from Prime Minister Ben Gurion to Begin and from Rabin to Netanyahu that the key to long term security for the Israeli people lies in lasting peace. That is why we have been working so hard to resolve the present impasse. In so doing, we would not for a minute assert for ourselves that right to determine Israel's security needs. That is—and must remain—an Israeli prerogative.

Moreover, both in our ideas and in the way we presented them, we took fully into account Israeli concerns both about process and substance. For example, we have given the parties many weeks to consider our ideas in private. We did not launch a public campaign on their behalf. And in response primarily to Israeli requests, we allowed more time and then more time and then more time for our suggestions to be studied, considered and discussed.

Moreover, the ideas we presented posed some very difficult choices for the Palestinians. They were required to make substantial changes in their negotiating position. Nevertheless, Chairman Arafat agreed to our ideas in principle.

The real centerpiece of our efforts to address Israeli requirements focused on dealing with Israel's fundamental and legitimate security concerns. It was no coincidence that security was the first point on our four-point

agenda. Creating the right environment for negotiations had as its focus the issue of ensuring that Israeli-Palestinian security cooperation was functioning at 100 percent, and that Palestinians were exerting 100 percent effort to take effective unilateral steps against terror. That's why our ideas on security create a structure to ensure that the fight against terror will not be episodic, but that it endures.

From the beginning, we have made the security issue the center of our dialogue with the Palestinians. We have pressed them to understand that the fight against terror is a basic Palestinian interest. And what we have seen, especially over the past several months, is a concerted Palestinian effort—even in the absence of an agreement with Israel on the four-part agenda—against those who would threaten peace with terror and violence. The Palestinian Authority deserves credit for taking on such groups, but it is essential as they do that others in the region who tell us they support peace refrain from greeting with cordial hospitality and financial backing the enemies of peace.

Our suggestions for Israeli redeployments were also formulated with Israel's prerogatives and concerns in mind. We recognize, as reflected in the Christopher letter, that further redeployment is an Israeli responsibility under Oslo, rather than an issue to be negotiated. But it is in the nature of partnership that Israel should take Palestinian concerns into account, while following the terms of its agreement. Otherwise, the peace process cannot move forward.

In presenting our ideas, we did not define the areas from which Israel should redeploy. Our ideas placed a premium on Israel retaining overall security responsibility in the areas affected by the proposed redeployment. And our suggestion about the size of the next redeployment came down far closer to Israel's position than to that of the Palestinians.

Why did we suggest a size? Because that is the only way to reach the agreement on launching permanent status talks that Prime Minister Netanyahu asked us to achieve. In presenting and discussing our ideas, we have acted with discretion and patience. Because we realize the difficulty of the decisions the parties were being asked to make, we have gone the extra mile—in fact, the extra 20,000 miles, back and forth across the Atlantic many times. And we have done so without complaint, because America will always go the extra mile for peace.

I want to mention at this point also that America's commitment to peace and security in the Middle East has historically been a bipartisan commitment, stretching from the administrations of Truman and Eisenhower to Bush and Clinton. Because that commitment involves the security of a cherished ally and the vital strategic interests of the United States, our leaders have historically stood together in support of Israel, and shoulder to shoulder with our Arab friends in pursuit of peace. If America is to play its proper role in promoting stability in the Middle East, it is imperative that our leaders now—in the Executive Branch, in Congress, and within the Jewish-American and Arab-American communities—continue to work together on behalf of shared goals.

Tomorrow, I will meet with Prime Minister Netanyahu again, and I very much look forward to the meeting. We are working hard to overcome differences and I hope we will be able to make progress.

But the key point that I have been emphasizing to both Israeli and Palestinian leaders is that although America remains committed to the pursuit of peace, it is up to them—not to us—whether peace is achieved.

Over the past months, we have played the role of mediator, counselor, friend, shuttler,

cajoler and idea-maker. We have responded whenever called at literally any time of the day or night. We have done this because we care about Israel and its people; and we care about the Palestinians and Arabs; and we care about the future peace and stability of the region.

We are not giving any ultimatums, and we're not threatening any country's security. We are not trying to make any party suffer at the expense of another. All we are trying to do is find the path to peace, as the parties have repeatedly urged us to do. And what we have especially been trying to do in recent weeks is to issue a wake-up call. The leaders of the region have reached a crossroads. Act before it is too late. Decide before the peace process collapses. And understand that in a neighborhood as tough as the Middle East, there is no security from hard choices, and no lasting security without hard choices.

The parties must understand, as well, that there is urgency to this task. For time is no longer an ally of this process; it has become an adversary. The historic accomplishments that flowed from the Oslo process represented a strategic opportunity for peace that is now being put at risk. Consider that just two years ago, at Sharm al-Sheikh, representatives from Israel and a host of Arab states gathered at the Summit of the Peace-makers to say no to terror and yes to peace. They saw Israel as a partner. Unfortunately, that exhilarating sense of partnership has been lost.

Second, the very idea that negotiations can peacefully resolve the Arab-Israeli conflict is now under threat. Unless the leaders are willing to make hard choices, the field will be left to extremists who have no interest in peace.

Third, the clock continues to tick. The interim period under Oslo concludes on May 4, 1999—less than a year from now. Those who believe that drifting is acceptable, or who believe they can declare unilateral positions or take unilateral acts when the interim period ends, are courting disaster. Both sides must understand that the issues reserved for permanent status discussions—including the status of the West Bank and Gaza and of settlements—can only be settled by negotiation. That was the spirit and logic of Oslo.

America's interest and goal is a comprehensive Arab-Israeli peace based on UN Security Council Resolutions 242 and 338, including the principle of land for peace. That will require decisive progress on all tracks, including the Israel-Lebanon track and the Israel-Syria track.

We are not a party to the negotiations. As President Clinton has repeatedly emphasized, it is not our right, nor our intention, nor is it within our capacity, to dictate terms or impose a settlement. At the same time, our credibility and interests are indeed affected by what the Israelis, Palestinians and Arabs do or fail to do. We are prepared to support their efforts as long as we judge they are serious about wanting to reach an agreement—and serious enough to make the decisions necessary to achieve it.

For too long, too many children in too many parts of the Middle East have grown up amidst violence, deprivation and fear. Too many lives have been cut short by the terrorist's bomb, the enemy's shell and the assassin's bullet. Too many opportunities have been lost to heal old wounds, narrow differences and transform destructive conflict into constructive cooperation.

Everyone with a stake in the Middle East has an obligation to do what can be done to seize the strategic opportunity for peace that now exists, and thereby to make possible a future of stability and prosperity for all the people of the region.

The United States believes this kind of future is within our grasp. But the peoples of the region will not realize that future if their leaders do not reach out with a vision as great as the goal to overcome past grievances, treat neighbors as partners and undertake in good faith the hard work of cooperation and peace. All that is required is for each to accord dignity and accept responsibility, and to act not out of passion and fear, but out of reason and hope.

For the peoples of the region who have suffered too long, the path out of the wilderness is uphill, but clearly marked. The time has come now, before the dusk obscures the guideposts, to move up that road; and by so doing, to answer the too-long denied prayers of the children—all the children—of the Middle East.

Thank you very much.

HONORING FARMINGTON HILLS HARRISON HIGH SCHOOL AND THEIR MANY ACCOMPLISHMENTS

HON. JOE KNOLLENBERG

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, May 13, 1998

Mr. KNOLLENBERG. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to bring to your attention the achievements of the Harrison High School football team in Farmington Hills, Michigan. The Harrison High School football team, with a 46–8 record in 16 playoff appearances and eight state titles under their belts, are true champions in every sense of the word. Most recently, the Hawks added the 1997 Class “A” State Championship to their long list of accomplishments. In addition to their athletic prowess, the team also holds the eighth highest grade point average in the state with a 3.67 average GPA. Mr. Speaker, please join me in congratulating these talented young athletes, Jory Hannan of the football program, and the many others who were an integral part of the Hawk's tremendous success.

A “POINT-OF-LIGHT” FOR ALL AMERICANS: DR. BETTY SHABAZZ

HON. MAJOR R. OWENS

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, May 13, 1998

Mr. OWENS. Mr. Speaker, I rise in celebration of the renaming of the Glenmore School in Brooklyn, New York to the “Dr. Betty Shabazz Elementary and Preparatory School.” Dr. Betty Shabazz stands as a model of what the students of Glenmore School must strive to become—an individual with strength, resilience and perseverance in overcoming life's greatest challenges. Dr. Betty Shabazz is a great “POINT-OF-LIGHT” whose legacy will live on forever and will positively influence many more generations to come.

On Monday, June 23, 1997, a great presence in the lives of countless citizens of the world departed this earth. Dr. Betty Shabazz was not just an inspiration to the African-American community, an advocate of equality for women and a proponent of children's rights. She was an inspiration to the human community; she was an advocate of equality for all people and she was an incarnation of