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Chron

[Handwritten signature]



ONE AMERICA IN THE 21ST CENTURY

The President's Initiative on Race

*The New Executive Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20503
202/395-1010*

July 29, 1998

Mr. Phillip M. Caplan
Assistant to the President and
Staff Secretary
Office of the Staff Secretary
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20500

Dear Mr. ~~Caplan~~ ^{Phil}:

Enclosed is a letter from Angela Oh, a member of the President's Initiative on Race Advisory Board to President Clinton. It was inadvertently forwarded to our office, but should be sent directly into the President.

Thank you for your assistance.

Sincerely,

Judith A. Winston
Executive Director

7-31-98
Send to Burkhardt?

Yes ☒

No ☐

Ph. 6/19 <

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GODFREY ISAAC
A PROFESSIONAL LAW CORPORATION
OF COUNSEL

July 18, 1998

President William J. Clinton
The White House
Washington, D.C.

Re: Race Initiative

Dear Mr. President:

I want to take this opportunity to thank you again for allowing me to serve on your Advisory Board. I am writing to follow up on the call I made to you on Thursday, July 16th, requesting an opportunity to speak with you, either by phone or in person when I return to the Capitol on July 29th. This past year with the Race Initiative has been intense and I am moved to make this request because I fear that you may not be receiving an accurate representation of how your Initiative has positively affected people across the country. The media reports have too often been critical of the work that has been done and my concern is that you receive deeper intelligence - information that goes beyond what you are able to cull from news accounts and political commentators.

As I have told you before, the people of this nation are appreciative of the leadership you are asserting and many continue to hold hope that you will be bold in your report at the conclusion of this process. You have acknowledged the complexity of the challenge we face in the next century as changes in our country and the world take place at an unprecedented rate. You have eloquently described the ways in which racial discrimination and bigotry have harmed all Americans, regardless of race or ethnicity. You have also demonstrated how one individual can alter the course of events for all of society.

The momentum you have created is real and holds the potential to be transformative. During the intervening months between the conclusion of the Advisory Board's charter and the presentation of your blueprint for the future, there must be a vehicle or process that permits the experiences of your Board to be part of your analysis and writing. The weekly and monthly reports have been broad summaries of what has occurred but the texture of our face-to-face dialogues with communities across the country have been difficult to capture. Moreover, the ways in which you can sustain the momentum you have created need to be explored as your report is written.

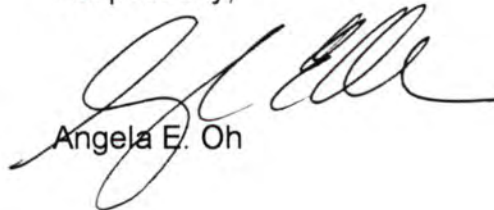
President William J. Clinton
July 21, 1998
Page 2

I would like the opportunity to be a part of the writing process. A year of my life has been dedicated to your mission. I agreed to participate in this process because I felt deeply committed to the issue of advancing race relations in America. It would be a continuing honor for me to assist you in the writing process.

In addition, I urge you to consider issuing, at the conclusion of your second term in office, a White House Monograph dedicated to the current and best thinking about the state of race relations in America at the beginning of the 21st Century. By making this commitment you will have the ability to present the American people with an enduring gift at the end of your Presidency. Moreover, this will allow you to focus your report upon the fact that the Race Initiative was only the beginning, and you can share with the nation a story that focuses on the details of that beginning and the evolution of a blueprint for the future. A series of volumes in the form of a White House Monograph will allow you to draw upon the expertise, creativity, and thought from a wide range of people (i.e., educators, health professionals, social workers, psychologists, religious leaders, labor, economists, community advocates, race scholars, women, artists, and more.) Much of the work has already been done and it would be a matter of coordinating and editing the contributions from the various fields. In the end, a hundred years from today, this White House Monograph could be the place where scholars, practitioners in many fields and policymakers can go to examine the state of race relations, as best as it is understood today.

I have a few other ideas I would like to share with you. I hope we have the opportunity to speak. Again, thank you for giving me the privilege of working on behalf of the American people in my capacity as one of your advisors. It has been deeply gratifying (if not at times, frustrating) and extraordinarily satisfying to work with the other six Americans you invited into this process. The leadership of Professor John Hope Franklin has taught me more about the principles of respect, dignity, grace, and elegance than I could ever have hoped to have learned in my lifetime. Again, thank you for your sharing your vision. I look forward to hearing from you.

Respectfully,



Angela E. Oh

AEO:sb

7131198

7-31-98

After you have
been, we will
send to Burkhardt-

OK

C.

TO

Mr. President

Dan Burkhardt:
Please coordinate
the reply.

and we may
get in U.C.

BC

Elena Fanyul-Debnam
1023 W. South St
Raleigh, NC 27603

Dear Mr. President,

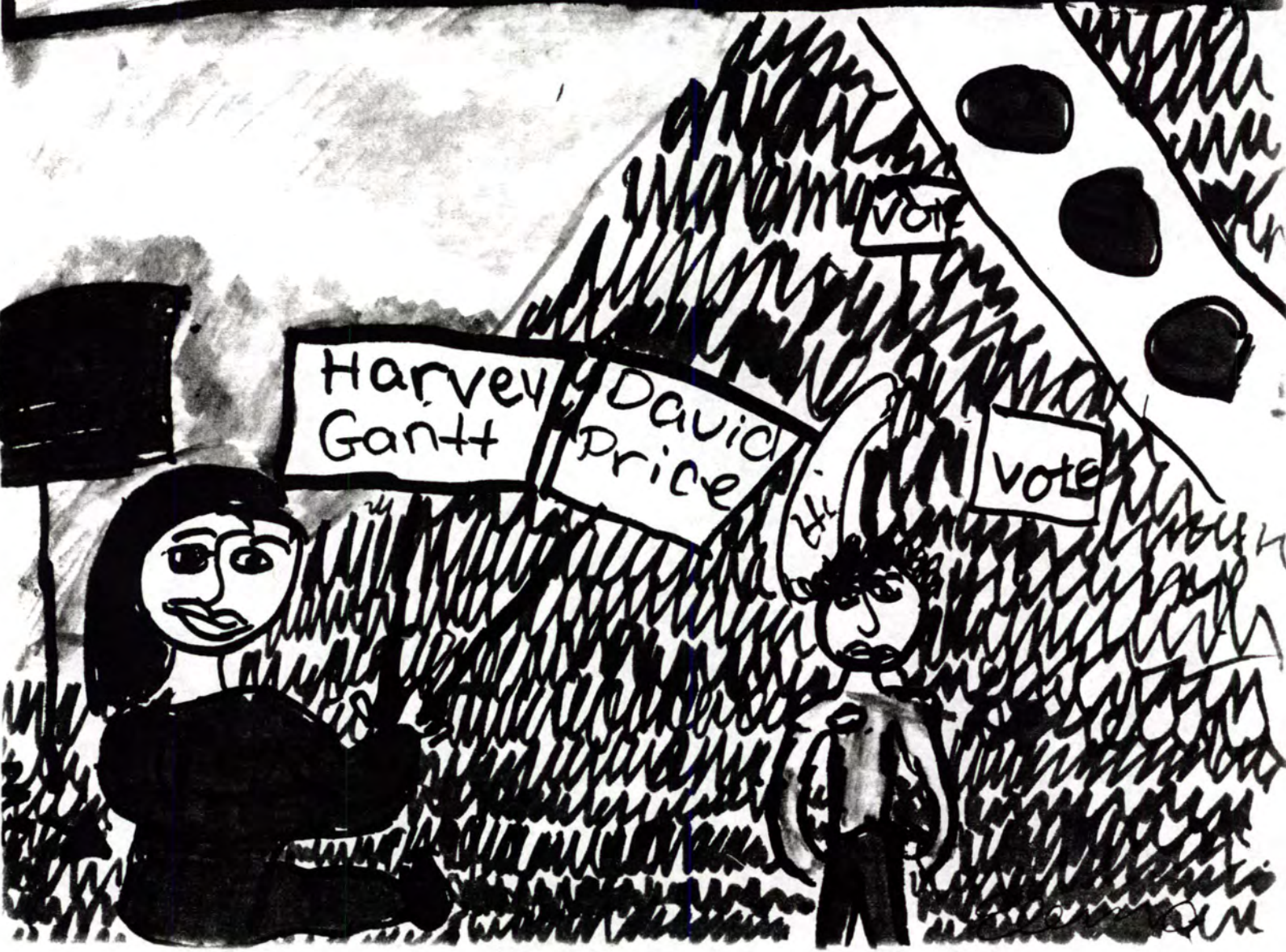
My name is Elena Fanyul-Debnam. I'm 10 years old and I'm from Raleigh North Carolina. My dad (Dean Debnam) is a business man who lobbies for Children. He, my mom, my four sister and I work on alot of democratic Campaigns. I have worked on Jim Fuller for Judge, Eric Reeves for City of Raleigh Council & State Senator, Harvey Gantt for U.S. Senate, David Price U.S. Congress, and my mom Stephanie Fanyul for City of Raleigh Council. Eric Reeves, David Price, and my mom Stephanie Fanyul were very successful. I have gone lobbying with

my dad once before.
I would like to learn
about the OFFICE of
President and also
meet you. After all my
dream is to be the
frist woman President!
Thank you very much!

Sincerely,

Elena
Fanjul-Debram

Elena Fanjul-Debram



THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

Date 7/31

To: Dan Keenick

From: The Staff Secretary

As you can see from this
note, POTUS wanted this
"looked into." Please advise on
how to proceed.

Phil

PETER B. KOMIS
610 DON GASPAR AVENUE
SANTA FE, NEW MEXICO 87501-4428

THE PRESIDENT HAS SEEN
7-29-98

*Not
have their looked
into - it met with
a challenge about
walk -*

*Copied
Henreich
Bowles*

WILLIAM JEFFERSON CLINTON
THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES
OF AMERICA
THE WHITE HOUSE
1600 PENNSYLVANIA AVENUE
WASHINGTON, DC 20050

**PETER B. KOMIS
610 DON GASPAR AVENUE
SANTA FE, NEW MEXICO 87501-4428
(505) 983-1166 or (505) 450-6361**

27 July 1998

**WILLIAM JEFFERSON CLINTON
THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA
THE WHITE HOUSE
1600 PENNSYLVANIA AVENUE
WASHINGTON, DC 20050**

Dear President Clinton:

I would like to sincerely express my gratitude to you for being the best president this country has had in my lifetime. I am proud of you and your accomplishments as President of this land that I love. As leader of the free world, you have served this country with courage, honor, and dignity.

It is my dream to honorably serve this country as a United States Marine. I had the great privilege of being a guest of the US Embassy in Moscow in July 1993. I had the experience of meeting Ambassador Pickering, and the members of the Marine Security Guard Detachment in Moscow. I knew at that point in my life that the experience of earning the title Marine would be the most honorable title that could be bestowed upon me.

Upon returning to the United States, I enlisted in the Marine Corps Reserves in Los Angeles. I qualified for enlistment, obtained a highly technical MOS (Military Occupation Specialty), and was to report for recruit training in November 1994. However, due to the death of my father in October 1994, and my brother (who succumbed after a lengthy battle with Multiple Sclerosis) two months later in December, I was unable to ship for recruit training. The Internal Revenue Service then audited my father's estate and claimed that we grossly underpaid the estate taxes. As trustee and executor of the family estate, I had to stay to fight the allegations and prove our innocence. Of course after a bureaucratically long, drawn out, and intimidating process, my attorney and I won because we made no errors. I did however lose in my opportunity to ship for recruit training as I reached an age where waivers were rare, if not impossible to attain.

**THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA
WILLIAM JEFFERSON CLINTON**

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I then telephoned and wrote to Lt. Colonel Ralph W. Ingles, Head of Enlisted Recruiting at Headquarters Marine Corps/Marine Corps Recruiting Command in Quantico, Virginia. In February 1997, I personally met with Col. Ingles in Washington at MCRC. I was persistent because my goal in life was to become a Marine. Then it happened. General Charles C. Krulak, Commandant of the United States Marine Corps, signed off on my waiver and gave me the opportunity to honorably earn the title of Marine.

I write to you now with a heavy heart, and wish to ask you for your assistance with regard to an unfortunate situation involving a Marine Corps drill instructor. In August of 1997, I reported for recruit training at MCRD in San Diego. My Platoon, 3005 Lima Company formed, and I was highly motivated and thrilled to be there. It was quite challenging, but I felt great and did fit in with the other recruits in my platoon. After being dropped into our Platoons, we had to rapidly move counter clock wise around the racks with our war bags to our newly assigned rack. I was assigned the rack next to the drill instructor hut because I was to be the head scribe. As we moved quickly around the squad bay, a drill instructor standing by the aft portal ordered me to move even faster. As I passed him, he brought his right hand down and vehemently struck me above the solar plexus with such excessive force, that I went down and nearly passed out. I was taken to the shower area by 3 drill instructors as due to the precise and unexpected blow I received, I began foaming at the mouth while fighting to recover my breath.

The next day, I was taken to the Medical section. Two medical technicians examined me and stated that the blow I received caused a problem with my heart. Needless to say, I was in a state of concern and shock. A state of concern because of the unknown future of my health; and a state of shock because unbelievably, a Marine Corps drill instructor violated the Articles of the Uniform Code of Military Justice involving an assault on a recruit. I was then given what is called an "Entry Level Separation under Erroneous Conditions." During my separation process, certain drill instructors in command tried to make me sign a statement vindicating the drill instructor who struck me. I refused to sign the statement, and was told to write my own statement by the Battalion Commander.

After my departure from MCRD, I immediately went at my expense to a Coronary Specialist at Cedar Sinai Medical Center in Los Angeles, Mehran J. Khorsandi, MD. After a complete examination and echocardiogram, I was diagnosed with mild contusions to my heart wall with no apparent damage. Dr. Khorsandi was puzzled as to why I had to leave recruit training. He said that I was in no danger of losing my life; and that obviously I would temporarily have a bad sounding heart and EKG, as per the two medical technicians at MCRD, after the blow I received. He stated that all I needed after a blow like that was light duty for a few days, and that I could have resumed training with the following platoon. Dr. Khorsandi was familiar with the military and with me as the

**THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA
WILLIAM JEFFERSON CLINTON**

Page 3

Marine Corps had him examine me when I returned from Moscow as part of my waiver package for enlistment due to a thoracic procedure that I obtained to correct a pectus excavatum. He compared the echocardiogram (ECG) he took in 1994 as requested by the Marine Corps with the current ECG, and found no changes or abnormalities. I inquired as to the possible need of any medication. Dr. Khorsandi stated that I needed no type of medication, and went on to say that all I need to do is lift weights to build up my chest. I have since been doing so at my local gym.

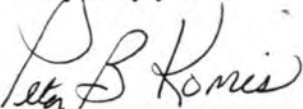
I am delighted that my health is fine. I am delighted that I am in great shape. But I am angry and feel let down because certain members of the United States Marine Corps broke the law and initially tried to sweep it under the rug. I recently went back to Camp Pendleton and met with the Captain and First Sergeant of Third Battalion Lima Company. I was informed that the drill instructor was formally reprimanded for hitting me as well as other recruits. I told these commanders that I wanted to come back to accomplish the mission – the mission of becoming a Marine. Although these commanders have no say so on recruiting matters, the First Sergeant stated that if he was contacted by a higher authority within the recruiting command, that he would have no problem with my returning to recruit training.

I do not lay blame with anyone, nor do I have any ill will or bad feelings towards anyone in the Marine Corps. I do however strongly feel that a careless individual robbed me of my opportunity. This should never have happened. I want and deserve to have that opportunity back.

Mr. President, I love my country and the United States Marine Corps. As you have loyally and honorably served this country as Commander-in-Chief, I wish to loyally and honorably serve my country as a United States Marine. Please contact the proper entities on my behalf so that I may get the ball rolling again. I hope and pray that this misfortune is justly rectified, and in keeping with the tradition of the Corps, that the mission at hand is accomplished.

Thank you, and may you continue to prosperously guide our country across that bridge into the 21st Century. I thank God for you each day and consider you to be one of my heroes. God bless you, Hillary Clinton, Chelsea, and your family.

Very truly yours,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Peter B. Komis". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Peter" and last name "Komis" being the most legible parts.

Peter B. Komis

7-31-98

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

MEMORANDUM

TO: The President
FROM: Rahm Emanuel
DATE: 15 June 1998

Sandy
try to summarize
let's discuss
BE

This was the memorandum that Steve Cohen prepared based upon your request for a game plan in the case that peace talks fall apart. I thought that you would find his thoughts interesting.

copied
Berger
cos

M E M O R A N D U M

To: Rahm Emanuel

From: Stephen P. Cohen

Subject: End of Game but not End of Match

Part Four: From Secret Diplomacy to United States Public Affirmation of
Peace

Date: May 20, 1998

Here are some proposed elements for an American peace policy in the coming two months, starting with this week when the President returns to the Middle East battle and after Bibi has departed.

WHAT NOT TO DO

1. Do maintain the integrity of the positions and policy. No alternative approach to the Palestinian-Israeli solution should be presented publicly for several months. The position should be that there is a coherent, integrated and balanced set of ideas on the table and the United States awaits an Israeli affirmative response. Hold the Palestinians to their yes, and keep stating that the United States awaits the affirmative Israeli response. Bibi needs to change his answer. The US should keep asking the question.

2. There should be no more Dennis trips. No more Dennis trips, not even one. No, not just one more. There was a long period when every Dennis trip was a pressure for decision. Now every Dennis trip is a relief of pressure for decision, and a false encouragement to the Israeli people that things are moving, and soon it will be worked out. It is essential to be working policy on the understanding that more Israeli people support Bibi because they believe he is going to say 'yes' but is just a tough bargainer than Israelis who support Bibi because they believe he is going to say 'no' and risk a break with President Clinton.

What is to be done:

FROM SECRET DIPLOMACY TO UNITED STATES PUBLIC AFFIRMATION OF PEACE

Since the parties have not taken ownership of peace and the legacy of Sadat-Begin, Oslo, Rabin, and the Israel-Jordan Treaty, the United States must assert ownership and demonstrate that peace is vital and is the only basis for a Middle East future. The American attempt to privately cajole and convince the leadership of the parties is not at an end, nor is the the peace process at an end, but this is a moment the revitalization of peace decision making and the reaffirmation by the people of the Middle East and of America and the world, that peace will not be stopped.

Israel has a popular song and the Likud, has recently appropriated it as special to them, "We have no other Country". The United States must say to the Israeli people and to the Arab peoples: We have no other peace process." So secret diplomacy now has to pause for the Israeli answer of 'yes' and in its place there must be a public campaign for peace, for the Israeli public, for the American public, and for the Arab world, with special attention to the Palestinian world..

1. COMMUNICATE TO THE ISRAELI PEOPLE:

a) The President should give an interview to Israeli Television (TV is the key to the Netanyahu constituency) saying how disappointed he is with the Israeli difficulty in saying "yes" to such a carefully prepared proposal. Yet he should be upbeat in saying how pleased he is that the issue of peace is so

much the preoccupation again of the Israeli leadership. He should say how pleased he is that the American diplomacy has achieved a level of Palestinian compliance with security cooperation that was simply not possible without vigorous American involvement.

No threats, no anger. Just love and sorrow.

He should stress that there are important common interests that must be faced together. Really big future challenges are being overlooked and delayed by delays in the decision process. Making this redeployment agreement is the key to a common front with friendly Arab states and Israel, guided by the United States, to face down these threats.

He should say how important it is that Mr. Netanyahu has acknowledged again and again that Oslo must be honored, that there is no other way to peace but fulfillment of Oslo. Decisions are required to make that commitment effective. We just hope that the Prime Minister will find the way to affirm Oslo with this Government. We know he wants to do it with this Government. The President should stress how much he knows that the Israeli people want peace and deserve the security that comes with peace.

After Israeli TV there could be one to Palestinian TV if carefully prepared with the Palestinian leadership.

b) The President should initiate communication to the spiritual and cultural leadership of Israel, saying it his personal way of celebrating Israel's NEXT fifty years. One by one they should come to the White House for informal brief discussion. Rav Ovadyah Yosef would be the right choice of a spiritual leader; Amos Oz could be the right cultural personality; Amnon Shahak after he leaves the position of Chief of Staff, to further the focus on the common strategic agenda; President Ezer Weizman; Miriam Ben Porat, Israel's outgoing Ombudsman and State Comptroller; Aharon Barak, Israel's Chief Justice of the Supreme Court.; Sephardic Chief Rabbi Bakshi Doron. One a month while we await the Israeli affirmation. Not the politicians, not until there is a politician who takes a courageous leadership role for peace. The message of such meetings: the Israeli people are important to us, they deserve peace, how can we help them reach for peace. Peace is compatible with internal harmony, necessary for it. It is the absence of peace that increases tensions.

2. COMMUNICATE TO THE AMERICAN PEOPLE

Build the political center in America for peace and effective American diplomacy in the Middle East.

1) The Secretary of State and the Peace Team should speak to Congress, to many Jewish and other audiences about the intensive American efforts and build a constituency for these ideas and for the careful American approach.

2) Gather together the disparate elements who can make up a coalition in America to support peace and diplomatic activism in the future. Jews and Arab Americans, policy wonks and business interests, the few Senators and Congressmen who were not afraid to support the President in the last weeks. Make a commission or some such body or conclave. Not for big recommendations on policy, just for discussions of how to help the United States be most effective in building regional peace, how to get the American people behind this major American foreign policy effort for peace in this dangerous area of the world. Use the cultural events (see above), and evenings or lunches with Israeli and Arab visitors to build the group and expand it. Create a respect for the political center. Now it is marginalized by traditional advocacy groups. Give more time and attention to building a political center on middle east policy than to calm down the traditional one-note hard line groups.

3. COMMUNICATE TO THE PALESTINIANS AND BUILD A PARTNERSHIP FOR CHANGE WITH THEM

5. Help reconstruct the Palestinian image in America, and help bring about change in key Palestinian behavior while awaiting the Israeli answer.

When Arafat comes to meet President Clinton, and that should happen, let it be after very careful preparation of every aspect of his visit and scripting of his speeches, actions and appearance. Make it a significant bilateral visit.

Help them go forward on the Covenant removal for American consumption and in cooperation with the United States, unrelated to the implementation of the redeployment ideas. *The centerpiece of the visit could be a call by Arafat for a meeting of the Palestinian National Council in America with a one item agenda, the Charter repeal consistent with the Arafat letter to Clinton!* This would require careful agreement on whom Arafat would discourage from coming so that there was no visa/Congress explosion.

Create a joint US/Palestinian Commission for the Palestinian Future as a Free and Democratic People. Under this rubric start creating relations between PA officials and the various bodies of US Government to create the most "advanced, effective and participatory Arab self-government" in the region.

Start addressing the Hamas threat with the Gulf States and with Jordan more vigorously. This is a very dangerous situation: the political accommodation that Jordan and the Gulf want with Hamas could destroy all the work you have done to distance Arafat from Hamas. The address for working on this follows.

4. COMMUNICATE TO THE ARAB WORLD:

CONVENE THE United States-Arab States Peace SUMMIT

1) Start talking to Arab leaders. Tell them it is time for them to come forward with their vision of peace, comprehensive, inclusive, interactive and secure. Preempt any negative Arab summit by inviting key Arab leaders to a meeting with the President as a trade-off for not going off the deep end: not undermining American Gulf policies and not building up Sheikh Yassin and Hamas, and perhaps providing a new injection of funds into the Palestinian Authority via some new mechanism which is more American controlled. Move Syria away from a policy of renewed undermining of stability in all its time honored ways.

2) Bring a group of Arab leaders together with President Clinton to declare that peace is still alive but awaits an Israeli decision for peace. Include Crown Prince Abdullah and President Assad, with the closer group of Mubarak, King Hassan II. (Assad will not meet with Hussein or Arafat.) Use it to calm Saudi games with Sheikh Yassin and to get them to reaffirm peace commitments. Use it to stroke Assad so that Syria not be afraid that the US will play Lebanon games against him, and to stop his tendency to play pro-Iraq and anti-King Hussein. This event should just be at the first week of September to just precede the UN General Assembly and trump the Khatami arrival at the UN is that is planned. The joint declaration should be minimalist reaffirming land for peace, 242-338, the importance of all tracks, including especially the Syrian/Lebanon tracks and the multilateral process, and support for American Middle East peace leadership including the ideas on the table.

Working towards this would itself be very positive even if it did not come off.

3) Be careful about the Lebanon initiative of Israel. Make it clear that it can only go forward with Syrian cooperation not as an anti-Syrian initiative. Do not lurch toward Syria and allow Bibi to escape the Palestinian decision, except by the clearest statement to the United States of accepting the withdrawal from the Golan as coming right after the withdrawal from South Lebanon.

M E M O R A N D U M

To:

From: Stephen P. Cohen

Subject: End of Game but not End of Match/

Part Two: Bibi Takes His Best Shot

Part Three: American Response One: A Policy Speech

Date: May 19, 1998

Part Two: BIBI TAKES HIS BEST SHOT

Bibi has taken his best shot. What has it amounted to?

Let us review his main arguments and their status.

1) Bibi shifted the issue from the substance of the American ideas to the issues of process: ultimatum, deadline, only Israel can decide on its security. On substance he shifted from the dangers of 13% to the dangers of Hilary Clinton's declaration on a Palestinian state and the danger that America would dictate its views in the final status negotiations, including on Jerusalem. The objection to 13% just did not stand up; no other objection to the American ideas was seriously attempted. Still Bibi has helped to teach a catechism of Palestinian sins of non-compliance which falls on receptive ears.

2) Fundamentally, Netanyahu has attempted to shift focus from the lack of trust between Arafat and himself to distrust of the Palestinians and of the American approach, laying blame on a specific set of actors, in particular Martin Indyk, Strobe Talbott (the usual suspect), and Madeline Albright 'who trust Arafat or the Arabs in general'. They are unwilling to openly lay blame on the President.

The implication of the lack of trust shift should be made clear. Bibi's theory of peace without trust is a dangerous virus in the international relations of Israel. It means that Israel comes to distrust anyone who acts with trust toward the untrustworthy Arabs, worst of all Arafat. If the United States is not willing to treat Arafat with total distrust, it is not that Israel reconsiders its distrust of Arafat, it is that Israel starts to distrust the United States. This is the great danger to American-Israeli relations in Netanyahu's theory of peace without trust: *distrust is transitive*. It leads to distrust of the democracies who have relations of trust with Arabs, which is all of the democracies who do not share his demeaning theory of Arab diplomacy, America and Europe in particular.

3) Bibi has tried to preempt America's walking away from the process, by broad hints that America would be to blame for any subsequent outbreak of violence. One of his ministers has already blamed

American mediation for the impasse with the Palestinians, arguing that without American "adoption of the Palestinian" approach the Palestinians would have by now accepted whatever Israel's Government was willing to give. This is a brazen accusation that should not be allowed to stand, and the veiled threat of blaming America for violence is a dishonorable threat that should be condemned, not cowered to.

4) Rather than uniting Jews behind him, Bibi has sown great confusion. Many feel the Administration has misstepped on process, though not on substance. Many supporters of the President have become more alienated than ever from AIPAC and its approach. Some look to Arik Sharon to save the day, hoping that somehow he can revive the pattern of direct Israeli-Palestinian bilateral agreements, but without full awareness of the positions of Sharon and without any awareness of where Palestinian flexibility has its limits. It is mostly a hope to change the subject.

5) Bibi has succeeded in reinforcing the view that there is no real Palestinian politics, only Arafat machinations. He has again succeeded in highlighting doubts about Palestinian long term intentions by emphasising the Covenant, textbooks, and by spinning the Nakba (anniversary of the founding of Israel) demonstrations as evidence that the Palestinians are still trying to end the existence of Israel as such.

6) Doubts about Bibi abound in Israel but have yet to harden into politically relevant actions. Threats accumulate from right and left, but with no strong presumption that any will be carried out. Bibi has left the impression that he has weathered another storm, and that no storm is on the horizon that is strong enough to force his hand one way or the other. Third Way has written a letter, signed by four Knesset members, warning to Netanyahu that absent progress within a month it would depart the Government. Ten Government coalition Knesset members from a variety of coalition parties have signed a letter to Netanyahu that is tough and demanding.

PART THREE: THE AMERICAN RESPONSE : 1) A POLICY SPEECH

1) There must be a defining event or public statement that fully activates the Israeli political system. Secretary Albright's brief press conference last week in London did so temporarily but Bibi deflected from substance to process in a highly effective way.

2) The focus must be that process has done all it can, it is now a time for decision about substance. There should be as a background a Secretary's somber detailed review of the history of diplomacy and anti-diplomacy since Hebron. The failures of both sides to build trusted channels, the insistence of both sides on actions and inactions that polarized and enraged. Palestinian security problems and the American ideas as effective answers to them must be emphasised.

3) The conclusion of a major policy speech should be as follows:

The best possible proposal that an American year of effort could produce is on the table, and awaits an affirmative answer. American judgment is that there is no better proposal that the sides are able to come up with, and no better ones that American mediation could come up with. Again and again America has been inviting the parties to submit better ideas that meet their needs and the minimal requirements of their partners. To no avail.

The parties must judge their own interests, and weigh the benefits of agreement against the costs of halting the peace process. It is their judgment alone that will decide. It is not America that will judge the decisions taken, but the history of the region and of their peoples, that is the judge. Their judgment will be in an acceleration toward a future of peace or in the menace of a reversion to a future of violence.

Let each party look at itself and look at its partner and decide. Shall we risk reengaging in peace with a distrusted partner, or shall we risk reengaging in violence with a distrusted partner? Which is the greater risk to us Israelis? What is the greater risk to us Palestinians? Shall we choose a path which could lead to accelerated final status talks in which we could discover whether there is a reasonable mutually acceptable path to peace? Or shall we choose a path which could lead to deterioration of hard fought gains in personal and national security and in personal and national economic hopes?

Do not look toward us as you weigh your decisions. This set of ideas was the best we in America could do in an atmosphere where trust between the leaders in the region

had evaporated. We took as much as possible of Israeli ideas and shaped them to meet minimum Palestinian requirements. Sometimes the Palestinians felt it went below their minimum. We took some Palestinian aspirations and reshaped them for an Israeli Government committed to making its steps toward peace very modest and very cautious. We did so with little and ineffective communication between Israelis and Palestinians, and where the usual sources of help were not available. Understanding between Israel and other Arab leaders had become strained and devoid of basic confidence.

The Palestinian Authority has kept its word with us, affirming a set of ideas and staying with it, despite great internal strain and opposition from without and within. These ideas often upset them but they affirmed them, and with them their basic belief that Oslo was a historical breakthrough that cannot be set aside. We hope this is a dawning of a new maturity in Palestinian diplomacy and if it is it will be much appreciated in future endeavors for peace, and in future direct Israeli-Palestinian negotiations.

Israel's Prime Minister has wrestled with these ideas for several months, trying to fashion creative ways to go forward. We invite him and his Government, and the Israeli people, to decide upon these ideas promptly and favorably. We want these ideas to open a new chapter in the peace process, a chapter which could be written by Prime Minister Netanyahu together with his Palestinian counterparts, and which is the ultimate chapter of a Palestinian-Israeli peace effort. These ideas are on the table and will not be removed from the table. We believe an Israeli 'yes' will be not so much a 'yes' to America, as a 'yes' to the deep-seated Israeli desire for peace, a desire that unites Americans and Israelis.

There is no deadline. There is just the line separating the dead from the living, the line separating war from peace. All of us want all Israelis and all Palestinians on the side of life.

Page 5
May 14, 1998

Here are the elements of an American peace policy in the coming two months, starting with next week when the President returns and when Bibi departs.

WHAT NOT TO DO

1. Do maintain the integrity of the positions and policy. No alternative approach to the Palestinian-Israeli solution should be presented publicly for several months. The position should be that there is a coherent, integrated and balanced set of ideas on the table and the United States awaits an Israeli affirmative response. Hold the Palestinians to their yes, and keep stating that the United States awaits the affirmative Israeli response. Bibi needs to change his answer. The US should keep asking the question.

2. There should be no more Dennis trips. No more Dennis trips, not even one. No, not just one more. After what Netanyahu did to Dennis on the last trip after insisting he come, no one should go until a 'yes' has been communicated officially.

What is to be done: A MENU

1. Communicate to the Israeli people:

a) The President should give an interview to Israeli Television saying how disappointed he is with the Israeli difficulty in saying "yes" to such a carefully prepared proposal. No threats, no anger. Just love and sorrow. He should stress how there are important common interests that must be faced together, the really big future challenges that are being overlooked.

b) The President should communicate to the spiritual and cultural leadership of Israel. One by one they should come to the White House for informal discussion. Rav Ovadyah Yosef would be the right choice of a spiritual leader; Amos Oz could be the right cultural personality; Amnon Shahak after he leaves the position of Chief of Staff; President Ezer Weizman; Miriam Ben Porat, Israel's outgoing Ombudsman and State Comptroller; Aharon Barak, Israel's Chief Justice of the Supreme Court.; Sephardic Chief Rabbi Bakshi Doron. One a month while we await the Israeli affirmation. Not the politicians, until there is a politician who takes a courageous leadership role for peace. The message of such meetings: the Israeli people are important to us, they deserve peace, how can we help them reach for peace.

2. Build the political center in America for peace and effective American diplomacy in the Middle East. Gather together the disparate elements who can make up a coalition in America to support peace and diplomatic activism in the future. Jews and Arab Americans, policy wonks and business interests, the few Senators and Congressmen who were not afraid to support the President in the last weeks. Make a commission or some such body or conclave. No need for big recommendations on policy, just discussions of how to help the United States be most effective in building regional peace. Use the events of the evenings or lunches with Israeli and Arab visitors to build the group and expand it. Create a respect for the political center. Now it is marginalized by traditional advocacy groups. Give

more time and attention to build a political center on middle east policy than to calm down the traditional one-note hard line groups.

3. Start talking to Arab leaders. Tell them it is time for them to come forward with their vision of peace, comprehensive, inclusive, interactive and secure. Preempt the coming negative Arab summit by inviting key Arab leaders to a meeting with the President as a trade-off for not going off the deep end and not undermining American Gulf policies as retaliation. Bring here a group of Arab leaders to declare that peace is still alive but awaits an Israeli decision for peace. Include Crown Prince Abdullah and President Assad, with the closer group of Mubarak, Arafat and Hussein and King Hassan II.
4. Be careful about the Lebanon initiative of Israel. Make it clear that it can only go forward with Syrian cooperation not as an anti-Syrian initiative. Do not lurch toward Syria and allow Bibi to escape the Palestinian decision, except by the clearest statement to the United States of accepting the withdrawal from the Golan as coming right after the withdrawal from South Lebanon.
5. Help reconstruct the Palestinian image in America. When Arafat comes, let it be after very careful preparation of every aspect of his visit and scripting of his speeches, actions and appearance. Make it a significant bilateral visit. Help them go forward on the Covenant removal for American consumption and in cooperation with the United States, unrelated to the implementation of the redeployment ideas. Create a joint US/Palestinian Commission for the Palestinian Future as a Free and Democratic People.
6. Start working on the religious dimension of Judaism/Islam and Christianity. Do not avoid the sacred issues of Jerusalem but separate them from the political sovereignty issues.
7. Instruct the next US Ambassador to the United Nations to hold informal consultations on the future of the peace process with a variety of nations. No resolutions, just discussions, based on the Albright speech and hopefully the Presidential speech.

A disturbing book about education

In a dandy letter to the editor the other day (so sorry I didn't get the citizen's name) came this useful distinction about questions:

There are questions of faith, such as "Does God exist?"

There are questions of opinion, such as "Who is the greatest baseball player of all time?"

There are debate questions, such as "Should abortion be legal?"

And then there are questions that can be answered to a degree of certainty by the application of the scientific method, which are called empirical questions—in other words, those that can be largely settled by the evidence.

In politics, we often get ourselves tangled up trying to settle questions of faith and opinion through a process not remotely designed to resolve them. To the extent that empirical questions and even debate questions can be resolved through the political process, the value of that resolution depends entirely on the caliber of the evidence we use. And because the well of public debate is often poisoned by bad information, the first thing we need to ask is: "Where does this information come from, and how good is it?"

One of the most disturbing books I have read in years is *The Manufactured Crisis: Myths, Fraud and the Attack on America's Public Schools* by David Berliner and Bruce Biddle (Addison-Wesley Publishing, 1995). Normally when you find bad information infesting a public debate, the culprit is self-interest—aka money. Studies sponsored by chemical companies on the effects of pollution, by the tobacco companies on the effects of smoking, by the auto industry on car emissions, by the Chamber of Commerce on the evils of increasing the minimum wage and so forth, can all be treated with the gingerly skepticism they so richly deserve. Using the old safety standby "who benefits?"

Molly Ivins

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Molly Ivins is a columnist for the Fort Worth Star-Telegram.

A disturbing book about education

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Molly Ivins



you can pretty much see through that kind of bad information without breaking a sweat.

It's a great deal more puzzling to figure out why there is so much bad information about the schools. That the drumbeat of negative information about our schools has at least in part an ideological basis has been clear to the meanest intelligence for years. Supporters of the voucher system, who want to use tax dollars to send kids to private schools, are much given to jeremiads on the supposedly hopeless failure of the public schools, which they condemn as dens of iniquity, crime, drugs, sex and illiteracy.

Nevertheless, we all know (don't we?) that even though many of our public schools do a wonderful job year after year, on the whole, the system is failing our kids. It is the thesis of Berliner and Biddle that what we think we know just ain't so.

Starting with the 1983 report "A Nation At Risk," we have all been told over and over that the schools are failing, and the reason we know this is because SAT scores keep falling! Don't they?

According to *The Manufactured Crisis*, the phenomenon of apparently falling SAT scores is based on a misunderstanding of the evidence. SAT scores fell because more kids take the tests now. So doesn't that mean we're doing a worse job of educating them?

"The brief decline in SAT scores a generation ago provided no information whatever about the performance of American schools but was, instead, a signal that interest in higher education was rising

throughout the nation. Surely this should have been a matter for rejoicing, not alarm.

"Since the SAT is voluntary and is only taken by roughly one-half of high school seniors across the nation, aggregate national test scores will *always* reflect the characteristics of students who choose to take the test. And since those characteristics change over time, aggregate national scores simply *cannot* be used for making valid judgments about the performance of the nation's schools. Despite repeated claims by critics and alarmist reports in the press, shifts in national *aggregate* SAT scores tell us nothing at all about the performance or problems in American education."

The point here is that the "fall" in scores compares half of today's seniors with the one-tenth who took the test in 1941, when almost all college-bound kids were a well-to-do elite. And SAT scores go down by 15 points for each decrease of \$10,000 in family income, which is, among other things, the reason they're useless for judging the relative intelligence of African American kids.

Debunking the SAT-score myth is just the beginning of the mountains of evidence that the book examines and finds either erroneous or (more often) misunderstood, misreported, oversimplified or distorted for ideological purposes. The cumulative effect of all this misinformation for the public schools is chilling. I suspect that what is behind it is, as usual, not conspiracy but stupidity.

Even so, there is no way we can have a useful debate about what needs to be done about the public schools until we clear away part of this mountain of misunderstanding. And *The Manufactured Crisis* does move mountains.

Molly Ivins is a columnist for the Fort Worth Star-Telegram.

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The Manufactured Crisis



*Myths, Fraud, and the
Attack on America's Public Schools*

David C. Berliner • Bruce J. Biddle



Addison-Wesley Publishing Company

Reading, Massachusetts Menlo Park, California New York
Don Mills, Ontario Wokingham, England Amsterdam Bonn
Sydney Singapore Tokyo Madrid San Juan
Paris Seoul Milan Mexico City Taipei

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WALTER H. ANNENBERG

THE PRESIDENT HAS S
7-31-98

July 22, 1998

Very

The President
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue
Washington, DC 20500

Dear Mr. President:

The enclosed coverage characterizes you as a sensible President.

As an independent citizen, I firmly believe that we are obligated to protect public education which embraces those youngsters who must have public support. The underprivileged must be helped, and I salute you for your decision in this matter.

Sincerely,

Dan Burkhardt:
Please coordinate
the reply.

Walter

7/31/98

Enclosure

St. Davids Center
Suite A-200
150 Radnor-Chester Road
St. Davids, PA 19087

*After you have seen,
we will send to
Burkhardt -*

C.

Clinton vetoes tax breaks for private-school tuition

The Senate lacks the votes to override. The President said the bill would benefit richer families.

By Sonya Ross
ASSOCIATED PRESS

WASHINGTON — Following through on his promise, President Clinton vetoed legislation yesterday that would have given tax breaks to parents who send their children to private schools.

Clinton said he vetoed the Education Savings and School Excellence Act because it would use \$3 billion to fund tax benefits for richer families while doing "virtually nothing for average families." He said the \$3 billion could be better used to improve overall public education.

"By sending me this bill, the Congress has instead chosen to weaken public education and to short-change our children," Clinton said. "Just as we have an obligation to repair our transportation system, we also have an obligation to invest in the infrastructure needs of our public schools."

House Ways and Means Chairman Bill Archer (R., Texas) said Clinton caved in to special interests.

"Today is a sad day for America's schools and schoolchildren," Archer said. "Republicans intend to continue pushing for new ways to improve education in America. The

education of our children is a vital priority, and I regret the President's action."

The education bill cleared the Senate last month by too narrow a margin to overcome Clinton's veto, and the President immediately had said he would not sign it. It was offered as an alternative to Clinton's \$12 billion, five-year proposal to build schools, hire teachers and expand after-school programs, and Clinton renewed his call for lawmakers to approve his plan.

The vetoed legislation, sponsored by Sen. Paul Coverdell (R., Ga.), would have expanded education savings accounts so that tax-free withdrawals could be used for education expenses from kindergarten through college. Covered expenses included private tutors, home computers, supplies and transportation.

Clinton said the bulk of those benefits would flow to families at the top 20 percent of income distribution.

The measure contained other tax breaks for prepaid tuition plans and employer-paid tuition, as well as some education provisions that had nothing to do with taxes.



7/31/98

Send to WSC?

Yes

No

Handwritten signature

C.

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July 23, 1998

The Honorable William Jefferson Clinton
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Ave., NW
Washington, DC 20500

Dear Mr. President,

I have just returned from a five-nation visit to the Middle East, including Egypt, Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates, Jordan and Palestine. I met with the political leadership in each place (the Crown Princes of Saudi Arabia and Jordan, Foreign Minister Amr Moussa, and President Arafat) and discussed the crisis in the Middle East peace talks. In every meeting I heard the same views and the same concerns and I would like to share these with you.

There is tremendous personal support for you and a strong belief in your commitment to a just and lasting peace in the Middle East. Arab leaders, like Arab Americans, were truly inspired by your address to our national leadership conference. When you spoke of the need to "work hard to regain the momentum for peace," of "seizing opportunities to move forward" and of "making difficult choices," they believed in your sincerity. And when you closed with the injunction that Arabs "not give away the best of [your] hopes. We will prevail"—you inspired Arab Americans and Arab leaders to believe that you understood their hopes and their frustrations and that you were committed to achieving real peace during your administration.

But while there is strong personal belief in your commitment, there is deep concern with what is perceived as a failure in U.S. policy to take a decisive stand to move forward the peace process.

Arab concern is not merely with the foundering talks, but with the progressive deterioration on the ground in the Occupied Territories. Palestinians, today, are less free to move within the Occupied Territories, poorer, more unemployed and less hopeful about their future than they were five years ago.

Meanwhile, settlement expansion and road construction in the West Bank have continued at an alarming pace. Jerusalem is practically surrounded by growing settler cities

that virtually wall-in about 20 percent of the West Bank. Almost daily Palestinians lose land to new Israeli confiscation orders and each week there are more Palestinian homes demolished by the Israeli military. Not only have Palestinians become frustrated and angry at this state of affairs, the rest of the Arab world has as well. Arab leaders, who are strong friends of the United States, ask why the United States is not doing more to support peace or, at the very least, to criticize Israeli behavior. Since these leaders have supported the peace process and feel that they too will lose if the process collapses, they question why the United States does not act more vigorously to support its allies and its interests in the region.

Mr. President, not only peace and the lives of Israelis and Palestinians are at stake in this process, but the stability and security of our allies and interests in the broader region are at risk as well.

In the past 25 years, we have spent more U.S. dollars, sent more U.S. weapons, sent more U.S. troops, lost more U.S. lives and have more U.S. economic interests at risk in the Middle East than in almost any other part of the world. The dangers of a collapse of the peace process in that region are enormous.

Mr. President, I believe that at the end of the day not only Israelis and Palestinians have difficult decisions to make, but the United States must also make critical decisions.

During your administration, the peace process raised expectations of peace and prosperity to dizzying heights. Now it is in danger of collapse with two of its most essential elements, trust and hope, having been lost. There is a third element that has been critical to this process—confidence in U.S. leadership. It too is in danger of being lost.

* * *

I would respectfully suggest that, at this time, you convene a large leadership meeting of American Jews and Arab Americans at the White House in mid-September—during the 5th anniversary of the 1993 signing ceremony.

You could use this occasion to send three messages:

1. American Jews and Arab Americans should become a constituency for peace

American Jews and Arab Americans should be addressed together as Americans. Meeting with each community separately plays to their weaknesses, their tribal self-identification. Both can become defensive and prone to posturing.

When you speak to us together, as Americans, you help to create a stronger

force that can silence the divisive tendencies that emerge within each community.

I was part of that audience you addressed five years ago. The dynamic created by our coming together and by your remarks was as important as the event we came to witness on the White House lawn. We have not met with you, as a group, since.

What you might say to us at this time is:

“Five years ago we came here together euphoric over the prospects of a new era—one in which we could work together, support each other and help create a new reality for both Arabs and Israelis in a new Middle East.

“I asked you then, to work together as Americans to export to the Middle East the best of America, our shared values of cooperation and free enterprise and not to import from the Middle East, the tensions and divisions of that region.

“Today, I speak to you again, as Americans, and ask you to support me, as your President, in the difficult decisions I must make to save the peace that we all desire. To build peace, we must have a constituency that supports peace, I urge you to be that constituency and to join with me in working to make the dreams we shared five years ago into a reality.”

2. A balance sheet of gains and losses and a comparison of competing visions for the future

Both Israelis and Palestinians need to be reminded of the impact of the decisions they are now being asked to make. As in Charles Dickens’ A Christmas Carol, both sides need to have alternative futures depicted for them in graphic detail.

There are two competing visions of the future. One is based on mutual fear and outmoded ideologies. The other is based on hope and a commitment to change.

If the region continues down its current path, it will remain divided and in conflict. The alternative path will make possible the emergence of a new Middle East and will allow the region as a whole to prosper and participate in the broader world economy.

In order to spur the debate that is taking place among both Arabs and Israelis, they must be inspired to believe that such a new Middle East is possible. Both parties must be reminded of what they have already won in this peace process, what they still can win if peace is completed, and what they will lose if the process collapses.

Mr. President, you can help both parties choose peace and endure the hardships and the risks they must face to attain peace, by presenting them with a vision of peace so compelling and attractive that both Arabs and Israelis are drawn to it.

3. An analysis of where we are now and where we need to be

There is an intense debate taking place within Israel, the outcome of which is critical to the future of the peace process. There is also a debate taking place within the Arab world, not only about peace with Israel, but about whether or not the United States can be trusted to be fair in its dealings with Arabs.

It is vital that we engage both debates and support the sides that desire peace and believe in working with the United States.

Mr. President, in the past two years the United States has been virtually absent from these debates and, as a result, others are defining the terms of the discourse.

This was not always the case. In the past, during times of crisis and critical choices, we actively engaged both Arabs and Israelis. For example, after the terror bombings in early 1996, Israel and several Arab states were convened at the Sharm el Sheik Summit to demonstrate that the terrorists would not win. At the same time you consistently held out to Israelis the promise that if they took risks for peace, the United States would be there to support them.

With the defeat of Prime Minister Shimon Peres, we have, to some extent, absented ourselves from the Israeli debate. Prime Minister Netanyahu has redefined the terms of the peace process tearing down the very foundations of the Oslo process. Those in Israel who seek to maintain the integrity of that process are fighting, at times, without our direct and aggressive support.

It is important at this time to spell out, in detail, the commitments and obligations of both parties, and the consequences for peace, regional stability and U.S. national security interests if those commitments are not honored.

Simply announcing the U.S. interim proposal and evaluating both parties'

responses to it will not be enough. That proposal was a means to an end—to breathe life back into the process and reengage the parties in an interim step that would push them toward final status talks. The Prime Minister has wrung the life out of this approach, making the 13 percent into an end in itself. Palestinians, and many Israelis, have now concluded that final status talks with this Israeli government will go nowhere.

It is critical to seize this moment to remind both parties of the fundamental commitments they have made at Oslo to mutual recognition of each other's rights and to a peace process that would provide both parties with the opportunity to realize their rights.

Words cannot be minced. Just as terrorism and violence must be rejected and condemned, so too must occupation and subjugation. Just as Palestinians must accept recognition of Israel within secure borders, Israel must surrender its claim to Eretz Israel and recognize the Palestinian right to sovereignty. New settlement expansion, confiscation of Palestinian land and the demolition of Palestinian homes are all violations of the very principle of mutual recognition.

While the United States cannot physically intervene in the process, we can help the debate that is taking place amongst the parties to the process. Those who seek peace in Israel and the Arab world need direct U.S. support and encouragement.

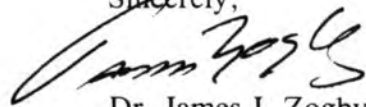
This may be the most we can do to help save the peace—but we can do no less than that.

* * *

One final thought: a bold public challenge for peace can win the support of both American Jews and Arab Americans. If such a message were taken to Congress and directly to the American people, I believe that your presidential leadership would win strong bipartisan and overwhelming public support as well.

I hope that at least some of these ideas prove helpful to you at this very difficult time. Please let me know if I can assist you.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "James J. Zogby", written over the word "Sincerely,".

Dr. James J. Zogby
President