

Remarks on the Israeli-Palestinian Agreement and an Exchange With Reporters in Cleveland, Ohio September 9, 1993

The President. I just got off the telephone with Prime Minister Rabin. I called him to congratulate him on the agreement that he has reached today.

When we first met, he told me that he was prepared to take risks for peace, and I told him that it was the responsibility of the United States to do everything we could to minimize those risks. And I reaffirmed that today. They have reached a general agreement, but the process of implementing it will be quite complicated. And we expect to be closely involved in the process all along the way. I am extremely happy that it has finally happened. I am very, very hopeful for the future. And this is a very brave and courageous thing that has been done.

Q. Will there be a signing ceremony Monday—

Q. Will the U.S.—with the PLO as part of this deal, Mr. President?

The President. Well, let me answer you in this way. Later today we will see what the statements of the parties are, and then I will have another formal statement later in the day. If the PLO's statement today meets the criteria we have repeatedly set down, renouncing terrorism, acknowledging Israel's right to exist, those things, then we will resume our dialog with them and then we'll go forward from there. And we'll have an announcement probably today, perhaps tomorrow, about what happens next with regard to this agreement.

Q. Will that constitute formal recognition of the PLO?

The President. I don't want to say any more today. Let's wait until their statement comes out. For the moment, for the next few hours let's savor the fact that they have made this agreement. As Prime Minister Rabin said, it's the first time in 100 years that the Israelis and the Palestinians have agreed on something fundamental and important.

Q. Why do you think the time was right now for such an agreement, sir?

The President. I think that there are many reasons. I think, frankly, the major leaders in Middle East, beginning with Prime Minister Rabin and Mr. Arafat, were at a point in their

lives, their careers, their experiences, where for all kinds of reasons they thought the time had come. And I also want to compliment Foreign Minister Peres; I think he deserves a lot of credit.

I think the circumstances were propitious. I think most people thought they had exhausted their reasonable alternatives, and they didn't want to go on in this manner anymore. And I hope we can keep this process going.

But I want to remind you that there are a lot of things that still have to be done to make this really happen, and the United States is committed to doing our share.

Q. Was the U.S. cut out of this deal, Mr. President?

The President. No. You know the facts, but let me briefly reiterate them. We sponsored, along with the Russians, the resumption of the talks. We put on the table a set of basic principles. About 70 percent of them were in the ultimate agreement that came out of the secret channel in Oslo. Our job was to keep these talks going in Washington, and the Secretary of State did a masterful job on two different occasions, once with the deportations and once with the conflict in the Bekaa Valley, when they were in danger of being derailed. And he worked hard. He went to the Middle East. We've worked hard to do that.

We were made aware in the most general terms of what was happening in Norway, but we didn't know a lot of the details, nor should we have known. I think this matter was so volatile and so difficult that it may be that the only way the final agreements could have been reached on the principles was in a secret and totally unknown channel. I think it gave both sides the freedom to reach out to one another.

So I think we did everything we could have, and a lot of our work is still to be done now that the agreement has been made and is public and has to be implemented. And we're prepared to do our part. But I'm pleased about this, and I hope that it means more good things in the future.

Q. Will the U.S. find the money, sir, to support this kind of agreement? Because after all,

there's going to be a lot of aid needed.

The President. [*Inaudible*]*—*a lot of work, a lot of economic reconstruction that has to be done. I believe we'll do our part. I believe the Congress will be willing, and I think the American people will be willing. I think that our people will appreciate the absolutely historic significance of this. This is a huge development in the*—*

Q. Did you offer to sponsor a signing ceremony or have some kind of official recognition in Washington?

The President. We've been discussing that for the last several days, but I think that I should

wait until there is a formal statement by the Israelis and the PLO later today, and then we'll have more to say about that.

Thank you.

Q. But you will*—*

The President. Later today.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:50 a.m. upon arrival at the Park Corp. I-X Jet Center. In his remarks, he referred to Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin and Foreign Minister Shimon Peres of Israel and Yasser Arafat, Palestine Liberation Organization Chairman.

Remarks to the Community in Cleveland September 9, 1993

The President. Thank you so much. Thank you very much. It is great to be back in Cleveland. I've never had a bad day in Cleveland. [*Laughter*] But I felt so good about coming here today that I wore a necktie I bought in Cleveland the last time I was here.

I want to say first how very grateful I am to all of you for being here, how much I appreciate*—*

[*At this point, audience members interrupted the President's remarks.*]

The President. I can't hear. Can you hear me?

Audience members. Yes!

The President. Well, I can't hear them, and you can hear me, so that's good.

Let me say, first of all, I want to thank Senator Glenn, Congressman Stokes, and Congressman Hoke for coming down from Washington with us. I want to tell you that Senator Glenn especially is going to have a big role in passing these Government savings initiatives we proposed because he's the chairman of the Government Operations Committee. So if we want it to operate, he has to help us make it operate. And I'm grateful for his support. I thank the Congressmen for being here.

And Mayor White, I'm delighted to be back here and glad you had somebody out there screaming you were the best mayor. That's good. [*Laughter*] I also want to acknowledge attorney general Lee Fisher and your State treasurer,

Mary Ellen Withrow, two good friends of our administration in this effort.

Let me say as briefly as I can what all this celebration is about from the point of view of the Federal Government. We give the State and local governments over \$220 billion of your tax money every year. That means that you give it to us; we turn it around and give it to the States and the cities. If we make a mess of it, we waste a lot of your money; and if we don't do it right, the mayors and the Governors, the city councils, the county commissioners can't do what you hired them to do.

So a huge part of this National Performance Review, in attempting to make the Government work better at less cost, has to involve a better relationship between the National Government and the States and the local government. If we don't do it, then nothing we do in Washington will overcome the things that you don't have happen here at the local level.

There's a real slogan now going around, and I think a lot of slogans aren't any good, but this one is appropriate for our time. It is: Think globally, but act locally. What does that mean? It means my job is to tell you as President what the sweeping problems and challenges of our age are and to help us to deal with all this change that's happening, to help make the changes our friends and not our enemies, and to talk about them in terms of big things, like providing affordable health care or bringing the deficit down or opening new opportunities for