

Statement on the AFL–CIO Election October 25, 1995

There were plenty of winners in today's AFL–CIO election. The working men and women of the labor movement benefit the most. If every American got to choose in every election between candidates such as these, this country would be a better place.

I offer my hearty congratulations to John Sweeney, who has led one of the most progressive, growing, and innovative unions in America. He has been a force for inclusion and activism and has already left a deep and positive imprint on the labor movement.

The outgoing president, Tom Donahue, has been a source of strength and leadership in the labor movement for decades. Working men and women are fortunate for his many years of service, his integrity, and his dedication.

The theme of AFL–CIO convention was “Stand Up for America's Working Families.” My administration stands with John and the other newly elected officers as we work together in the months and years ahead on issues important to America's working families.

Remarks at a United Jewish Appeal Reception October 25, 1995

Thank you very much, Stan Chesley. Thank you for your friendship and for your leadership. Mr. Secretary, thank you for what you have done, along with Dennis Ross and so many others here to hasten the day of peace in the Middle East. Senator Lautenberg, distinguished foreign guests, my fellow Americans, and most of all, to Prime Minister and Mrs. Rabin and all the friends who are here from Israel, we're delighted to have you back.

It is a great honor for me to receive this award, an honor amplified by its association with the United Jewish Appeal and with all of you who contribute so much to the UJA and its mission. But it's a special honor to receive it from the Prime Minister.

As the journey toward Middle East peace advances, the courageous leadership and vision of the Prime Minister will become more clear to all the world, and they will serve not only the people of Israel but all people in our generation and those who will inherit the Earth.

This is a time of remarkable progress for peace. You heard the Secretary talk about what we hope and pray will happen when the parties to the war in Bosnia meet in the next few days. We have seen a remarkable transformation in South Africa. In Northern Ireland they have laid down their arms, and we are working and hoping and praying for peace there. But nowhere

has the progress been more dramatic and nowhere has it moved more people than in the Middle East.

We have tried to be a full and reliable partner. I am proud of the agreements that we have worked hard to bring about. I am proud of the handshakes that sealed them, handshakes I never thought I would live to see. I'm not sure he did either. *[Laughter]* I am proud of our efforts to secure the economic underpinnings of the peace.

We will continue to stand with the peacemakers. But let's be clear on one thing here: The real credit belongs to them. Could we have made peace in the Middle East had Israel not had a Prime Minister like the one who stands before us? He and the members of his government, but most of all, the Prime Minister, a man willing to risk his own political fortunes, a man who for decades had risked his own life to secure the life and the future of Israel. Could we have made it had it not been for King Hussein and had Chairman Arafat not determined that he would take a different course, if President Mubarak had not been supportive? Could we have made it if people who have already reached their mature years had not looked into the eyes of the young people of the Middle East, like the Israeli and Arab children who participated in the Seeds of Peace program?