

President Clinton. Let me first say that we are profoundly honored to have President Weizman here. We are grateful for his visit and for his work for peace as President and for, indeed, his entire career. I've looked forward to this for a long time. We had a grand dinner last night, and I'm looking forward to our visit.

Please ask your question.

Assassination Attempt on Khaled Meshal

Q. What do you think about this Israeli failed assassination attempt in Jordan?

President Clinton. I believe that it's important to fight terrorism, but I think it's important to consider in the fight the consequences on all your allies in that fight and what the ultimate conclusions will be. The people that are involved have dealt with it as best they could, and so I think the important thing for me now is to get the peace process back on track and to go forward.

American law is very different, you know. We don't—it's against the law in America for the Government to promote any kind of assassination, and I agree with that for us. But I think the most important thing for me is to get this peace process back on track.

Middle East Peace Process

Q. Mr. President, I understand that you were considering last night the possibility of inviting both Prime Minister Netanyahu and Chairman Arafat to a 2-month summit at the North Pole? [*Laughter*] Is it on the agenda?

President Clinton. You got a good leak. Let me say what I said last night. I said that I would go anywhere or do anything that I thought would be most effective in promoting the peace process, and if I thought it would

help I would get parkas for all of us and we could all go to the North Pole and stay there until we had a peace agreement. And I will reiterate that in public.

But what we are going to discuss today, and what I am continually assessing, is what is the best way for the United States to promote the peace process, without pretending that we're a party that can make the peace, and what is the most effective thing for us to do.

But what I said was that I would do anything, including go to the North Pole, if I thought it would help make peace, and I will reiterate that in public. I would do that. At least it would cool things down. [*Laughter*]

Q. Are you optimistic about the peace process? Because people in the Middle East are not.

President Clinton. In a funny way, sometimes when things get really bad, they have a way of getting everyone's attention about the bigger issues. And it may be that some of the difficulties of the last 6 months will create an environment where everyone is more aware of the ultimate consequences. And perhaps we can therefore actually have a chance to get it back on track that is greater than the chance we've had for the last several months. I just hope so.

Thank you. We need to visit.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:48 a.m. in the Oval Office at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Hamas leader Khaled Meshal, who was attacked in Amman, Jordan, on September 25; Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu of Israel; and Chairman Yasser Arafat of the Palestinian Authority. A tape was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

Statement on Senate Action on Campaign Finance Reform Legislation

October 7, 1997

Today was not the end of this fight for campaign finance reform but the beginning. The Republican leadership and a minority of the Senate used procedural maneuvers to block the obvious will of a majority of United States Senators to support bipartisan campaign finance reform legislation. I will fight for this measure

as hard as necessary, for as long as necessary. And I call on all Senators to realize that the bipartisan McCain-Feingold measure is our best chance to move forward with reform.