

school student, Bette Ann Schroeder, at Wednesday's graduation ceremony:

I AM AN AMERICAN

I am an American.

My grandfather came from China in the 1800s and helped build the railroads of the West.

I am an American.

My grandfather came from England in the 1800s and worked in the coal mines of Illinois.

I am an American.

My grandfather came first over the Bering Strait and the Isthmus of Panama to roam the forests and valleys of this great land.

I am an American.

My grandfather came from Germany in the 19th Century and started Kindergartens.

I am an American.

My grandfather was captured in Africa and brought to slave in the cotton fields of the South.

I am an American.

My grandfather came from Japan in the 1900s and founded the abalone fishery in San Pedro.

I am an American.

My grandfather fled Pancho Villa in Mexico and worked in the fields of the Imperial Valley.

I am an American.

It was not easy to forget the homeland, to learn the language, to make a living, to struggle against bigotry, to change my ways.

I am an American.

I am all the cultures of the world, all the religions of the world, all the legends and lore of the world, all the struggles for freedom everywhere.

I am all of these, and all of these make me an American.

TRIBUTE TO RAY BURKHOLDER
ON THE OCCASION OF HIS 80TH
BIRTHDAY

HON. PAUL E. GILLMOR

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, June 20, 1997

Mr. GILLMOR. Mr. Speaker, it gives me great pleasure to rise today and pay tribute to an outstanding citizen of northwest Ohio. On June 22 of this year, the family and friends of Ray Burkholder will gather to celebrate his 80th birthday which will occur on July 3.

Ray lived and farmed most his life in Pandora, OH. A member of the Grace Mennonite Church in Pandora, Ray has been a leader in his community. He was an instrumental part of the Menmonite disaster team, always available to lend a hand to others. He served for many years as the Sunday school treasurer and is a recipient of both the Community Service Award of Pandora and the Outstanding Citizen Award of Pandora. This past year he served as First Grand Marshal of the Riley Creek Festival.

Birthdays are a wonderful time to recount memories and to look toward new horizons. Since Ray's birth he has been witness to tremendous revolutions in politics, technology, and society. However, I know his favorite memories are of his family and friends.

Americans would not be able to enjoy the blessings of our country without the tireless dedication of those who have the talent and

willingness to work for their community. Ray Burkholder, through his example of leadership and humility has enriched the lives of his neighbors in countless ways over the years. It is with great fondness that they will take a day to thank him for his warmth and generosity.

I ask my colleagues to join me in extending best wishes to Ray and his family for continued happiness and best wishes.

ISRAEL—A CORNERSTONE OF U.S.
NATIONAL SECURITY POLICY

HON. MICHAEL P. FORBES

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, June 20, 1997

Mr. FORBES. Mr. Speaker, I submit for my colleagues' consideration remarks I made June 8, 1997 before the Great Neck Synagogue Men's Club. My support for Israel is no secret among my friends in Congress. We cannot ignore the challenge that has been placed before us if we are to see Israel survive as a free and flourishing democratic state. Israel has always been, and must remain, a cornerstone of United States national security policy.

ISRAEL AND THE MIDDLE EAST: A VIEW FROM
CAPITOL HILL

Good morning ladies and gentlemen. It is a pleasure to be here among so many friends at a congregation known throughout the greater New York area for its strong ties to the Land of Israel. Your record of generous giving to Israeli causes and your commitment to a strong U.S.-Israeli relationship are well known.

Your congregation has always embodied the essence and vitality of "Am Yisrael Chai" and the sharing, giving spirit "Tikkum Olam." By your very example you have been a light unto our community. Through good times and bad, times of sadness and hope, the Great Neck Synagogue has stood by Israel in its eternal quest for peace with security.

Though many of you share different political opinions about how peace in the Middle East might finally be achieved, you stand united—indeed America stands united—on the need to maintain Israel's economic and military strength as a hedge against the uncertainties of the future.

My friends, we can never allow politics of the moment to obscure three essential facts of our time: first, that Israel exists today as a sovereign, democratic, and Jewish state precisely because it has never allowed its fundamental security interests to be compromised; second, that peace, particularly in the Middle East, has never flowed from weakness; and third, that support for a strong, self confident Israel has always been, and must remain, a cornerstone of United States national security policy.

Israel exists today not because of the world's caring or generosity toward the Jewish People, but in spite of its neglect and indifference. We must never forget the basic truth.

As we commemorate the fiftieth anniversary of the Marshall Plan this week, we must remember that the United States stepped forward to rebuild Europe after the war—and particularly Germany—a full year before it gave any thought to relief for Germany's victims through the creation of a Jewish state. The lesson is clear: Israel's fate must always rest with Israel and with those who care for her; it can never be entrusted to the presumed good will of others.

History, my friends, is sometimes a cruel, but honest teacher. I am particularly honored to be here today to share with you some thoughts on the state of U.S.-Israeli relations, the Oslo process, and events unfolding in the Middle East, from the vantage point of Capitol Hill. At the outset, I must confess that I stand before you with more than a little concern.

Concern because a century after the First Zionist Congress, nearly 50 years since the founding of Israel, 30 years after the miraculous triumph of the IDF in the Six Day War, 20 years since Camp David and 4 years since the Oslo process began—Israel still does not know peace.

As we sit here this morning amid these comfortable and serene surroundings, Israel is facing perhaps the greatest threat to her survival yet experienced. It is a threat born not only of external enmity and aggression, but sadly, of internal division, social strife, political indecision and confusion, and the calamity of peace gone unfulfilled.

It is an unfortunate consequence of Israel's proud, but troubled history that we have grown all too accustomed to the hatred which her enemies harbor for the Jewish State—a state whose very existence continues to be the anathema to the 110 million Moslems who surround her.

Terrorist bombs in Jerusalem and Tel Aviv, the murder of Jewish school girls on a class outing, the knifing of Yeshiva students on their way to the Kotel—these sights have become as familiar to the younger generation of Israelis as the weekly Vietnam body count was to my generation. My friends, we are living a tragedy today with no satisfactory end in sight.

Lamentably, we have learned the sad truth that weapons and military might alone can not bring peace. Sadder still, we have learned that a peace reluctantly born and brazenly violated by Israel's enemies is not peace either. There are no good choices left for Israel today. She has been cheated of the very hope, *Hativka*, for which her people proclaim in song and for which all Jews everywhere yearn.

Like you I have tried to make sense of the many contradictions that have arisen as a result of the Oslo process. I say Oslo process, and not peace process, because while there exists today only one process, I believe that there are many paths to peace—and I am a fervent believer in peace. But for it to be real, it must be lasting; for it to be lasting, it must be honest; for it to be honest, it must demonstrate at every turn the resolve of all of the parties to abide by the commitments they made on the day of the signing and in the subsequent agreements. Tragically, for all concerned, this has not happened.

Those Palestinians who had the chance to share in the prosperity of a reconstructed Middle East, and in doing so to accept something less than the full measure of their political demands, have opted instead for a more sinister path. They have chosen to use the dove of peace to conceal their more menacing intentions, just as Mr. Arafat, himself, chose to conceal a pistol beneath his jacket when he appeared before the United Nations General Assembly in the mid-seventies.

This song of peace is well worn in tune. Born of Hitler's deception at Munich in the 1938, it survives today in the guise of those who would have peace at any price, even if it meant admitting the Trojan Horse of the PLO terrorism inside the gates of the city. If we are to begin to understand what is now happening to Israel and to grasp the historic forces now at work to undo the dream of the last 100 years, we must first see that there is a distinction between negotiation and extortion, between reality and illusion, and between trust and deception.

I stand before you this morning as one who lives this ordeal every day in Congress. My heart is heavy with the pain and suffering endured by Israelis as together we struggle to make sense of the turmoil that is gripping the region. And yes, I grieve for the Palestinians, too, who have been deceived by their leaders into believing that a terror organization like the PLO can ever bring peace. It can't. And the reason is simple. Terror and the ways of the gun are an integral part of the PLO's identity, a past it can never leave behind.

The Palestinian community has yet to produce leaders whose commitment to peace is more than simply a means of seeking tactical advantage. It is a community which continues to be dominated by revolutionaries, guerrilla fighters and scoundrels of every stripe—and not true statesmen who understand the art of compromise, are committed to a true reconciliation, and tolerate dissent.

I wish this were not so, but the record of the last four years speaks of different reality. While Israel has demonstrated a willingness to retreat from some of its most cherished sites like Hebron and Shechem (Nablus), to accept the presence of armed Palestinian militia at checkpoints around the country, and to concede that a final status talks will include Jerusalem, the PLO has only shown increasing reticence to carry out its side of the bargain.

The PLO has answered Israel's deeply rooted security concerns with provocation after provocation, even questioning whether there will even be room for a sovereign Jewish State in the Middle East once the Oslo process is concluded. If you doubt what I am telling you, you need look no farther than the maps which the PLO uses at countless functions, both official and unofficial, on its monuments, on its stationary letterhead and on its television broadcasts.

It is a map showing a sovereign State of Palestine stretching from the Mediterranean to the Jordan River and from the Banyas to Eliat, encompassing all of the present day State of Israel. If this were not bad enough, the President's own Special Coordinator for the Middle East, Mr. Dennis Ross, has been photographed with Yasir Arafat sitting beneath these maps apparently unmoved by the implication of their sinister message.

I believe that at no time during the Cold War would an American diplomat ever have been found posing beneath a map of the Baltic States, festooned in the colors of the former Soviet Union. The same might be said for Berlin and Afghanistan—for South Korea and Hong Kong in the case of China—and for South Vietnam when it came to claims made by the Hanoi Government before our withdrawal from the War.

My friends, I am deeply concerned that Israel and the United States are now living an Alice in Wonderland existence, where up is down and down is up—where is good is bad and bad is good. It is a contradiction that has bedeviled me for the past four years about which I refuse to remain silent.

As the principal House sponsor of the Middle East Peace Compliance Act of 1995, I tried to bring some sense to our nation's Middle East policy. I asked my colleagues to consider the folly of providing the terrorist PLO with \$500 million in U.S. Government assistance while making virtually no provision for the accountability of the funds and providing no honest mechanism to assess whether the PLO was in fact complying with the spirit and the letter of Oslo.

For this I was widely chastised by many Members as well as by Administration officials: for attempting to bar all funding to the PLO, for insisting that no funds go to individuals alleged to have killed or injured

Americans or for trying to prevent projects and activities that were not strictly humanitarian in nature.

Well, time has vindicated my position. Just two weeks ago an audit conducted the PLO itself found that \$350 million dollars in international aid has been stolen from the Palestinian coffers or misused by their leaders—many of them took money to buy grand villas and fancy automobiles. At the same time we see that incidences of PLO-inspired violence are continuing to increase with not only Israelis being killed, but also Palestinians who dare to sell land to Jews.

Yasir Arafat continues to undermine Oslo by praising Palestinian suicide bombers as martyrs and heroes and by paying homage to Hamas leader Sheikh Yassin. Arafat calls upon his public to unite around the cause of Jerusalem—all of Jerusalem—as the capital of a Palestinian state.

Would you believe that a senior Arafat official recently leveled the absurd accusation that Israel sells gum in the West Bank and Gaza laced with an aphrodisiac! Unfortunately, this is but a mild version of the anti-Israel vitriol which regularly pours out from the Egyptian Press and is frankly indistinguishable from the anti-Semitic diatribes of medieval European demagogues or Der Stuermer, the Nazi propaganda paper.

My friends, I can go on and on listing the PLO violations of Oslo and Arafat's incendiary rhetoric. This is a matter of public record and the record is indisputable. That is, unless you hail from the U.S. State Department, which continues to insist in report after report to the Congress that Arafat and the PLO are in virtual compliance with their Oslo commitments.

Though the New York Times has only recently acknowledged that the PLO has not changed its covenant calling for the destruction of Israel, the State Department continues to cling to the vain notion that Arafat's word is his bond. The Administration still insists that the promise of the Palestinian National Council (PNC) to change the covenant is an adequate substitute for actually changing the covenant.

We cannot ignore the challenge that has been placed before us if we are to see Israel survive as a free and flourishing state.

To the extent that the United States is complicit in helping Arafat achieve his objectives, we are obliged as citizens, as friends of Israel, as Americans concerned with the moral, political and strategic posture of our own country, to act soon to restore common sense to our otherwise misguided Middle East policy.

These are the actions which I am now talking, and which I intend to pursue in the weeks ahead, toward this goal:

First, I have notified the Foreign Operations Appropriations subcommittee, of which I am a member, of my desire to suspend U.S. aid to the PLO until it meets the compliance standards laid down in the Oslo Accords. Last month I added my name to a bi-partisan letter co-signed by 15 House members urging the president to cut aid to the PLO;

Second, I do not endorse the current effort by the Administration to cut \$50 million from Israel's aid package for next year—aid which is sorely needed to maintain Israel's strong defense posture in the face of renewed threats by Syria and Iraq and vote to ensure that adequate funds are made available to facilitate the eventual move of the U.S. Embassy from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem as directed by Congress in legislation last year;

Third, I am continuing to support efforts to bolster counter-terrorism cooperation between the U.S. and Israel. To this end, I urge the Justice Department to conduct a review of all cases in which current or past mem-

bers of the PLO are alleged to have harmed Americans or their property. I want to know the level of cooperation that U.S. law enforcement agencies have received from the PLO in their investigation and in requests for extradition; and, urge the Administration to examine the threat to U.S. security posed by the increasing numbers of weapons pouring into the Palestinian controlled areas. In particular, I am concerned by reports that the PLO has acquired surface-to-air missiles which have the potential to down civilian air traffic transiting through the Middle East and elsewhere. With the cause of the TWA disaster still unknown, I feel it is prudent to keep a spotlight on this critical national security issue.

Dear friends, let me conclude by saying that I feel privileged to be able to lead the fight for a cause in which I believe so deeply. For me, the U.S.-Israel relationship is more than just a slogan, it is an historic commitment of two nations to the cause of peace, freedom, and security, I don't have to tell you we are living through difficult times. They are difficult times for many nations around the world, particularly for Israel, which continues to live under the threat of war.

Just last week Israel's Chief of Staff spoke publicly of the increasingly menacing military build-up along the border with Syria. Likewise, countries from Egypt to Saudi Arabia, and Iraq to Iran, continue to acquire advanced long-range weaponry, capable of striking anywhere in Israel, despite the region's supposed move toward peace. Therefore, it is all the more important that we not forget the history which brought us to this point in time—and the lessons learned—as we begin to build a new future.

It was exactly 30 years ago this week that the Jewish State found itself caught in a life or death struggle as the Arab armies of Egypt, Jordan and Syria, backed by the Soviet Union and its allies sought to destroy her. I remember those terrifying hours of the 1967 war well, as do most of you in this room. They are seared into our collective consciousness.

Many of you probably can recall in vivid detail what you were doing at precisely the moment when news flashed across our television sets that the fledgling was now fighting for its life against seemingly unsurmountable odds. Today, as we recall those fateful hours, we must renew our pledge to fight for Israel's survival, in our homes, in our places of worship, in our State and on Capitol Hill.

We must do everything in our power to see that the insecurity of those years do not return. For my part, I am committed to do whatever is necessary to perpetuate a strong Israel and a strong U.S.-Israel relationship. It is my hope that during the difficult weeks and months ahead I will be able to call upon each and every one of you, your rabbis and synagogue leaders, to guide me through the thicket of Middle East politics so that I can better serve the cause of peace and U.S.-Israel friendship. Together, we can achieve miraculous things.

Thank you for the opportunity to share a few thoughts with you this morning. May the coming festival of Shavuot pass peaceful for Israel. May you all know peace. Shalom.

FREE TRADE AND THE G8 SUMMIT

HON. BOB SCHAFFER

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, June 20, 1997

Mr. BOB SCHAFFER of Colorado. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to alert my colleagues to