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Senate

The Senate met at 9:30 a.m., and was called to order by the President pro tempore [Mr. THURMOND].

PRAYER

The Chaplain, Dr. Lloyd John Ogilvie, offered the following prayer:

Gracious Lord, the divine Potter of our lives, our days are in Your hands. Shape the clay as You have planned. May the day work out exactly as You have arranged it for Your glory and our growth. We say with the psalmist, "I delight to do Your will, O my God, and Your law is within my heart."—Psalm 40:8. We long to know what is best for our Nation. Now at the beginning of the day we commit to You the challenges and decisions of this day. We desire to glorify You, so show us what You desire. With inspired intentionality, we put our relationship with You first and make our primary goal what is best for our Nation. In the name of the way, the truth, and the life. Amen.

RECOGNITION OF THE ACTING MAJORITY LEADER

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. The able acting majority leader is recognized.

Mr. SPECTER. I thank the distinguished President pro tempore.

SCHEDULE

Mr. SPECTER. Mr. President, I have been asked by the majority leader to announce that today the Senate will immediately resume consideration of S. 1061, the Labor-HHS, Education appropriations bill. As Members are aware, under the order, all amendments had to be offered last evening to be in order. The Senate will continue debating and voting on amendments throughout the day's session. The first rollcall vote will occur at 2:15 today. As always, Members will be notified as to the scheduling of other rollcall

votes. It is hoped that all action on the bill will be completed today.

As is customary on Tuesday, there will be a recess from 12:30 p.m. until 2:15 for the weekly policy luncheons to meet. Following disposition of the pending legislation, S. 1061, the Senate will begin consideration of S. 830, the FDA reform bill.

(Mr. HUTCHINSON assumed the chair.)

U.S. FOREIGN POLICY IN THE MIDDLE EAST

Mr. SPECTER. Mr. President, in the absence of any Senators in the Chamber to proceed with the legislation pending, I will take this occasion for a few moments to discuss U.S. foreign policy in the Mideast. This is especially appropriate since today the Secretary of State, Madeleine Albright, is traveling to the Mideast in an effort to promote the so-called peace process. My very strong view is that the time has come for a fundamental reassessment of U.S. policy for the Mideast. The brutal fact of life is that there is no peace process. We talk of the peace process, but there is a one-sided war being waged today by the Palestinians, a war against Israel.

Regrettably, terrorism has replaced warfare as a way of obtaining or seeking to obtain political objectives. After the Israelis were successful in the wars of 1948, 1956, 1967, and 1973, there has no longer been an effort to confront Israel militarily, but the insidious terrorist war continues. President Reagan said that the Soviets liked the arms race as long as they were the only ones in it, and then with the change of United States policy in the 1980's we brought the Soviet Union to bankruptcy and ended that matter. And now I submit it is time for a change in U.S. foreign policy in the Mideast because, simply stated, the emperor is wearing no clothes. There is no peace process. We have had continuing terrorist attacks

for years, but in the last 6 months the situation has escalated.

On March 21 of this year, on July 30 of this year, and on September 4 of this year, there have been bombings, murdering 21 Israelis and wounding over 330 other Israelis. On August 27, Chairman Yasser Arafat openly embraced the Hamas leader, specifically condoning and supporting the Hamas terrorism in a picture seen around the world: The famous shot heard around the world. This is the famous picture seen around the world as depicted on the front page of the New York Times. And in this embrace and in this kiss facially, Yasser Arafat has thumbed his nose not only at the Israelis but at the United States and our allies and all others who have poured billions of dollars into the Palestinian authority.

My point is, simply stated, that it is time to stop that U.S. aid, and it is time that the U.S. exert its maximum influence to persuade our allies to stop that aid because of what has in fact happened. The Palestinians now have a police force of some 30,000. They have highly sophisticated weapons which are really not designed for a police force. Should Israel now turn over an airport to the Palestinians so that they can develop air power as well?

The fundamental principle of the Camp David accord and the Oslo accord was that there would be confidence measures established, that there would be assistance to the Palestinians in Gaza and on the West Bank, that there would be an improvement in the standard of living, that there would be an opportunity for Israel and the Palestinians to live side by side. But the brutal fact of life is that that has not happened. And when the U.S. policy now suggests going to final status negotiations, it seems totally inappropriate when the confidence building measures have not worked.

U.S. law now prohibits economic aid to the Palestinians on conditions imposed in an amendment introduced by

• This "bullet" symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.



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Senator SHELBY and myself in 1994 which became part of the foreign aid bill of 1995. That amendment provided that further U.S. economic aid was conditioned on two factors. No. 1, a maximum effort by the Palestinians to stop the terrorism. Realistically there cannot be guarantors. There is no such thing as an absolute success requirement. But there is a requirement of a 100 percent effort, and that certainly has not happened. The second requirement of the Specter-Shelby amendment was that the PLO charter be changed to eliminate the language calling for the destruction of Israel. That, too, has not been done, with some excuses about the Palestinian legislative group not convening, some representation that the accord signed on September 13, 1993, in effect changed the charter, but that is legally incorrect. The charter has not been changed.

After the March 21 terrorist attack on a Tel Aviv restaurant, Prime Minister Netanyahu charged that Chairman Arafat had given a green light to the terrorists. When Secretary of State Madeleine Albright appeared before the Appropriations Subcommittee on Foreign Operations, I asked whether in fact it was true that the Secretary of State knew the facts that Chairman Arafat had given a green light. Secretary Albright replied that there had not been a green light but there had not been a red light either.

Now, Mr. President, if there is not a red light, then U.S. law requires an end to the economic aid. There is an absolute obligation on the part of Chairman Arafat and the Palestinian Authority to make that maximum, 100 percent, effort and it was not made. Earlier this year, in March, Deputy Secretary of Education Moshe Peled of Israel charged that Chairman Arafat had knowledge in 1993 before the bombing of the World Trade Center. When I noted that accusation, I called upon the Department of Justice to conduct an investigation as to what had happened there. I then pursued the matter by calling Deputy Secretary Peled myself. I could not talk to him because he spoke only Hebrew, and I spoke only English. But my associate, David Brog, who works with me on these issues, who speaks Hebrew, talked to Mr. Peled, who stood by his earlier comments. And it is my understanding that the FBI has questioned Mr. Peled and that an investigation is ongoing, but as yet we have not heard what the results of that investigation are.

It was a difficult day for me back on September 13, 1993, when Chairman Arafat was honored at a ceremony on the lawn of the White House. It was an especially difficult day because many of us felt that Chairman Arafat should have been prosecuted for his complicity in the murder of our American Ambassador to the Sudan, Cleo A. Noble, Jr., and our Chargé, George C. Moore in Khartoum back in 1973. Many thought Arafat should have been prosecuted for the murders of 11 Israeli athletes at the

summer Olympics in Munich in 1972. Many thought, including this Senator, that Chairman Arafat should have been prosecuted for the hijacking of the *Achille Lauro* and the murder of Mr. Leon Klinghoffer who was pushed overboard in October 1985.

But in the world of real politics, remarkable, strange, bizarre things occur, and I think such an occurrence was presented at the White House lawn back in September 1993 in conferring a joint Nobel Peace Prize on Chairman Arafat. It seemed to me that when Prime Minister Rabin shook Chairman Arafat's hand and then Foreign Minister Peres shook Chairman Arafat's hand, considering the fact that Israel had borne the brunt of the PLO terrorism, I should shake his hand as well, and I have on a number of occasions. Senator DeConcini led a delegation of which I was a member back in December 1993. Senator Hank Brown and I visited Chairman Arafat in Gaza in 1995, August. Senator RICHARD SHELBY and I visited Chairman Arafat in Gaza in January 1996, and on each occasion we pressed him hard about stopping terrorism. And in August 1996 Senator Brown and I had obtained a long list of terrorists from now Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu. At that time, Mr. Netanyahu was the leader of the opposition. And one by one, we went over this list of terrorists with Chairman Arafat, and we heard his excuses one by one. But now Chairman Arafat has run out of excuses.

The U.S. policy appears to be continuing to work with Chairman Arafat because there is no one else to work with, but I suggest that if Chairman Arafat is the best we have to work with, then the reality is we have no one to work with. From meetings that I have had with Palestinian leaders over the course of the past decade, it is my view that there may well be someone to succeed Chairman Arafat. We know on this state of the record, with what Chairman Arafat has done on repeated pronouncements and this embrace seen around the world, it is simply not workable to continue to deal with him.

Now, it may be that the zebra can change its stripes, but on this state of the record my sense is that it is futile to continue to deal with Chairman Arafat. The terrorists whom Israel has tried to have extradited for trial, of which 31 are now on the list, some 11 have either joined the Palestinian Authority police force or are awaiting entry there. I have discussed with the distinguished Presiding Officer, Senator HUTCHINSON, who introduced a sense-of-the-Senate resolution last week, combining our efforts in seeking hearings on this matter to go into some detail and hear from the Secretary of State after her return from the Mideast and to hear from the Department of Justice what are the ramifications of the inquiries conducted as to Moshe Peled's charges, because leadership is necessary to our foreign pol-

icy at the present time and it is counterproductive and simply not sensible to continue on the policy which is being undertaken at the present time, to continue to have United States dollars and our allies' dollars poured into the Palestinian Authority, which only increases the ability of some Palestinians to conduct terrorism and also to prepare to wage an all-out war.

The thought about a Palestinian state had been deferred, awaiting to see what confidence-building measures could arise, but when the DeConcini delegation arrived in Jericho in December 1993, just a few months after the signing of the accord on the White House lawn on September 13, 1993, the Palestinian flags were already in full evidence. As far as the Palestinians were concerned, it was a de facto state.

There had been concern that there would be a Trojan horse within Israel. That has not happened because it hasn't been a secret Trojan horse; it has been an army out in the open, some 30,000 strong with sophisticated military weapons and with the chief of police being under indictment under charge of having worked with the terrorists.

It is my hope, Mr. President, that President Clinton himself will become engaged in the Mideast peace process. I think it is a very good move for Secretary of State Albright to go to the Mideast, and I compliment the President for the decision to send our Secretary of State there, notwithstanding the terrorist attack of last week. It is my hope that there will be a renewed effort by the United States to press to resume the Israeli-Syrian dialog. I believe that the visit that President Clinton made to Damascus in 1994 was a very fruitful visit. There have been reports that President Clinton was engaged in negotiations as an intermediary between Prime Minister Rabin and President Assad which might have led to an accord between Israel and Syria, depending on what happened to the Golan Heights. That matter might have been referred to Israel for a referendum, and there are signs now that it would be fruitful to resume those discussions.

I think it also might be helpful to the Israeli-Palestinian situation to take the world's spotlight and the glare of the television cameras, so thoroughly enjoyed by Chairman Arafat, away from the Israeli-Palestinian controversy and focus some attention on an Israeli-Syrian peace accord. If a peace could be brokered between Israel and Syria to go along with the peace between Egypt and Israel from the Camp David accords and the more recent peace negotiations between Jordan and Israel, that would leave the Palestinian issue the odd man out. I believe that a direct involvement by the President, which I had suggested last August after I returned from conversations with both Prime Minister Netanyahu and President Assad, would be very, very fruitful.

I have seen in my foreign travels in my capacity as Chairman of the Senate Intelligence Committee and my work on the Foreign Operations Subcommittee of the Appropriations Committee the enormous respect and admiration that the United States is held in around the world. We are the only superpower, and we are greatly admired for our tremendous economic success. We have the potential for enormous influence. When the President of the United States, when that office is involved, regardless of who the President is—President Reagan, President Bush, President Carter, President Clinton—when the Presidency exerts that power, there are enormous potential benefits to be gained in bringing adversaries together.

It is my hope that Secretary Albright will make some progress. It is my hope that the President will personally intervene in these matters, because his participation in the past has been very, very productive, but it ought to be very plain that on the current state of the record, the United States will not, should not, cannot, must not provide further economic aid to the Palestinian Authority, that we should use our utmost persuasive powers to get our allies to follow the same course of not giving economic aid to the Palestinian Authority, because to do so is just to build up their military capacity, their capacity for terrorism, the police force, the army of some 30,000 and the sophisticated weapons they now have. The reality is that the emperor has no clothes. There is no peace process. There is a war engaged, one side of the war is terrorism, with the efforts of the Palestinians to use terrorism to replace warfare as a method of getting their political objectives.

The time has come for a fundamental reassessment of U.S. policy for the Mid-East.

The brutal fact of life is that there is no peace process.

It is time to acknowledge there is a war going on. The PLO is at war with Israel.

There can be no other conclusion from these facts:

First, the PLO/Hamas in three terrorist attacks in the past 6 months have murdered 21 Israelis and wounded over 330.

Second, Chairman Arafat has literally and figuratively embraced Hamas openly. His front page kiss of the Hamas leader seen around the world tells the Arab world and certainly the Palestinians that the Palestinian Authority condones and supports Hamas.

Third, even after last week's terrorist attack, Hamas threatens more violence if its demands are not met.

Terrorism has replaced conventional warfare in the Mid-East as the prime method to obtain political objectives. After losing the wars of 1948, 1956, 1967, and 1973, the Arab world has not directly confronted Israel militarily. Instead the PLO has sought to obtain its

objectives by killing women, children, and any other available civilians by cowardly sneak attacks in restaurants, shopping centers, and street corners.

Yet, we continue to talk of the peace process while this one-sided war is being waged. President Reagan correctly noted that the Soviets liked the arms race as long as they were the only ones in it. The United States changed course in the 1980's with military preparedness and brought the U.S.S.R. to its knees in bankruptcy.

It is now time—really past time—to change U.S. policy in the Mid-East.

This week's visit by Secretary Madeleine Albright presents an occasion to do just that.

While the PLO makes a pretense at peace, the United States and our allies are making the Palestinian Authority stronger by financing their buildup.

The concept of the Camp David agreement and the Oslo accords was sound. Give the Palestinians local autonomy. Develop confidence building measures. Set the stage for the Palestinians to live side by side in peace with Israel.

The problem is that it just has not worked. It's time to acknowledge that the emperor is wearing no clothes.

I had long thought Chairman Arafat should be prosecuted for his complicity in the murder of our Ambassador to the Sudan, Cleo A. Noel, Jr., and our Chargé d'Affaires, George C. Moore, in Khartoum on March 2, 1973; for the murders of 11 Israeli athletes at the Summer Olympics in Munich in 1972; and the murder of Mr. Leon Klinghoffer on the *Achille Lauro* in October 1985. But I thought, if Prime Minister Rabin and Foreign Minister Peres could shake Chairman Arafat's hand—considering Israel had born the brunt of PLO terrorism—then so could I.

I have shaken his hand in meetings with a delegation led by Senator Dennis DeConcini in Cairo in December 1993, with Senator Hank Brown in Gaza in August 1995, and with Senator RICHARD SHELBY in Gaza in January 1996. On each occasion, our delegation pressed him on stopping terrorism. In our August 1995 meeting, Senator Brown and I had obtained from now-Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, then the leader of the opposition, a list of PLO terrorists against whom Chairman Arafat refused to act. One by one we listened to his excuses why nothing could be done. By now, he has run out of excuses.

Following the Oslo accords, the United States took the lead with our allies in providing financial aid in the billions to the Palestinian Authority. Our calculation was that improving the lives of the Palestinians would provide stability to the region and promote peace.

The issue of a Palestinian state was supposedly deferred. But not as far as the Palestinians were concerned. When the DeConcini delegation arrived in Jericho in December 1993, we found flags for the Palestinian state with the PLO taking it as a fait accompli.

Some were concerned that the Oslo accords would create a Trojan horse—a concealed military force within Israel. But it was not that way at all. It was not concealed, but it was a force.

We now find a Palestinian police force—really an army. Although the Oslo accords limit the Palestinians to 24,000 policemen in the West Bank and Gaza, the Israeli Government reports that the PLO currently deploys over 30,000 policemen. The Palestinian police have acquired sophisticated weapons typically used by armies, not police forces, such as LAU and RPG antitank missiles, antiaircraft missiles, and Kayushas.

Of the 31 suspected terrorists whose extradition is being sought by Israel, 11 are either serving in the Palestinian police or are in the process of joining its ranks. The Palestinian police chief, Ghazi Jabali, stands accused by Israel of planning terrorist attacks on Israeli civilians. The Israelis cited evidence that General Jabali helped plot a July 1997 attack on Jewish settlers near Nablus. Israel has issued a warrant for his arrest and a formal order for his extradition to Israel to face these charges. The Washington Post reported on August 7, 1997, that the Clinton administration has said it has proof that Jabali helped organize this attack.

What next? Israel has resisted giving the Palestinians their own airport. Should a Palestinian air force be permitted? Will continued U.S. and allied aid be funneled into such air power and further military development?

Assessing blame for the deterioration in the Israeli-Palestinian relationship is an endless and futile undertaking. Whatever blame is attached to Prime Minister Netanyahu's rhetoric and policies, that cannot be placed on the same scale as PLO terrorist murders.

I strongly believe that the United States should now cut off any further aid and persuade our allies to do the same unless and until the Palestinian Authority demonstrates a 100-percent effort to stop terrorism. They cannot be guarantors, but they can and should be held to a 100-percent effort.

When PLO terrorism continued after the Oslo accords were signed, Senator SHELBY and I introduced the Specter-Shelby amendment which became law on August 23, 1994, as part of the fiscal year 1995 foreign operations bill. That amendment provided for a cutoff of United States aid if: First, the PLO did not change its charter calling for the destruction of Israel; and second, the Palestinian Authority did not make a 100-percent effort to stop terrorism.

In a report published in the Jerusalem Post on March 26, 1997, Deputy Education Minister Moshe Peled charged that Chairman Arafat knew in advance about the plan to blow up the Trade Center in New York in 1993. I then wrote to Attorney General Reno on April 1, 1997, asking for an investigation on that matter. After receiving a reply from the Department of Justice legislative liaison that they

knew of no evidence to support that charge, I called Mr. Peled on May 2, 1997. Since he did not speak English and I do not speak Hebrew, I asked my assistant, David Brog, who does speak Hebrew, to talk to him. Mr. Peled stood by his charge, but declined to elaborate.

On May 14, 1997, I again wrote to Attorney General Reno with more specific requests on what her Department should do in its investigation. When I announced on June 13, 1997, that I intended to put a hold—that is, hold up on the confirmation of Deputy Attorney General Eric Holder, the Department of Justice committed to undertake an investigation. I have since heard media reports that the FBI interviewed Mr. Peled in his Tel Aviv office for some 2 hours on June 26, 1997. On June 4, 1997, and again on July 28, 1997, I asked FBI Director Louis Freeh about the progress of the investigation during Judiciary Committee hearings. Both times, I was told he would let me know. To date, I have received no report on the progress of that investigation.

In light of Mr. Peled's charge and the March 21, 1997, terrorist attack on a Tel Aviv restaurant, I proposed an amendment to the fiscal year 1998 foreign operations bill providing that no aid shall be given to the Palestinian Authority unless:

First, the Palestinian Authority is using its maximum efforts to combat terrorism and, in accordance with the Oslo accords, has ceased the use violence, threat of violence, or incitement to violence as a tool of the Palestinian Authority's policy toward Israel;

Second, after a full investigation by the Department of Justice, the executive branch of government concludes that Chairman Arafat had no prior knowledge of the World Trade Center bombing, and

Third, after a full inquiry by the Department of State, the executive branch of government concludes that Chairman Arafat did not authorize and did not fail to use his authority to prevent the Tel Aviv cafe bombing of March 21, 1997.

That amendment was adopted on July 16, 1997, as part of the Senate bill and now awaits action in the forthcoming Senate-House conference.

The subsequent terrorist attacks on July 30 and September 4 require increased sanctions of an unconditional elimination of U.S. aid plus our efforts to persuade our allies to do the same.

I support the President's decision to send Secretary of State Madeleine Albright to the Mid-East notwithstanding the September 4 bombing and urge greater U.S. involvement including action by the President himself. However, I disagreed with the administration's decision to continue United States aid to the Palestinian Authority after the March 21 bombing and I oppose the suggested administration policy to move to final status negotiations promptly.

After the March 21 bombing, Prime Minister Netanyahu accused Chairman Arafat of giving a green light to that terrorist attack. On March 24, 1997, I wrote Secretary of State Madeleine

Albright asking if that was true. Receiving no answer, I pursued that question when the Secretary of State appeared before the Appropriations Subcommittee on Foreign Operations on May 22, 1997.

The Secretary of State responded that Chairman Arafat had not given a green light, but had not given a red light either. That is totally unsatisfactory. Under United States law, embodied in the Specter-Shelby amendment, a red light is mandated if the Palestinian Authority is to continue to receive United States aid.

The administration continues a policy of giving financial aid to the Palestinian Authority to promote the so-called peace process and to deal with Chairman Arafat on the argument that there is no one else with whom to deal.

I emphatically disagree on both counts.

Further financial aid to the Palestinian authority only strengthens the PLO's ability to carry out terrorist attacks and ultimately wage an all-out war.

To continue to deal with Chairman Arafat on this date of the record is counter-productive and foolish. How can we deal with a man who openly embraced the Hamas terrorist leader which condones prior murder and encourages future mayhem.

If Chairman Arafat is the best we have to deal with, then their best is not good enough. After extensive dialogue with moderate Palestinians for more than a decade, I believe there are others who could do a better job than Chairman Arafat. None could do worse.

I would not categorically rule out further dealings with Chairman Arafat if he again changes his stripes. Not to discredit the zebra or to unduly mix metaphors, Chairman Arafat makes the chameleon look constant.

The Chairman Arafat who embraced Hamas leader Abdel Aziz al-Rantisi—pictured on the front page of the New York Times on August 21, 1997—is totally unacceptable as was the Chairman Arafat who was implicated in the murders of our Ambassador and Charge d'Affairs in the Sudan in 1973, the murder of 11 Israeli athletes at Munich in 1972 and the highjack/murder of Leon Klinghoffer on the *Achille Lauro* in 1985.

But, in the distasteful world of real politic, who knows? What will be the future of Chairman Arafat and the Palestinian Authority? We know that Chairman Arafat responds to pressure. If the United States applies the most pressure, perhaps he will again be minimally acceptable. But on today's record, the cutoff of aid from the United States and our allies and the rejection of Chairman Arafat should be absolute.

The desperate situation in the Mid-East calls for more intense U.S. involvement in new directions. We should continue to urge all the parties, including Prime Minister Netanyahu, to improve the climate for negotiation. However, we should not place on the same

scale Israel's policy to build settlements on its own land with PLO's terrorist murders.

Somehow, we must reach the daily preaching of hatred against Jews by the PLO and Moslem fundamentalists. It may well be that until we solve that underlying problem, the reach for peace in the Mid-East will be a continuing generation away.

The record continues to demonstrate the spewing of hate by Chairman Arafat and his ilk. Just weeks ago, on August 25, 1997, a moderator on PLO controlled television declared that "the Jews exaggerate what the Nazis did to them" and that "no more than 400,000" Jews were killed in the Holocaust. Likewise, PLO officials including their representative to the United Nations in Geneva have embraced a modern version of the age-old blood liable by claiming that Israeli authorities injected hundreds of Palestinian children with the HIV virus.

These messages of hatred are not directed against Israel alone. On July 11, 1997, the PLO-appointed Mufti of Jerusalem, Sheikh Ikrama Sabri, said in a sermon broadcast on the Palestinian Authority's official radio station: "Oh Allah, destroy America for she is ruled by Zionist Jews . . . Allah will paint the White House black . . . Allah shall take revenge on behalf of his prophet against the colonialist settlers who are sons of monkeys and pigs."

Beyond the current visit by the Secretary of State, I continue to urge the personal involvement of the President. At the right moment, his personal touch on the Israeli-Palestinian problem could be powerful.

My foreign travels on behalf of the Senate Intelligence Committee and the Appropriations Foreign Operations Subcommittee have shown me the enormous impact the United States has around the world. The United States is respected and admired. As the only remaining superpower, our power is acknowledged as awesome.

Bringing peace to the Mid-East is an awesome task in the face of millennia of strife in that region. By properly deploying our persuasion and power, we may still be able to do it.

I ask unanimous consent that all letters and articles referred to be printed in the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD at the conclusion of this floor statement.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

U.S. SENATE,
COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS,
Washington, DC, April 1, 1997.

Hon. JANET RENO,
Attorney General, Department of Justice, Washington, DC.

DEAR ATTORNEY GENERAL RENO: Just yesterday I saw a news report that Israeli intelligence has evidence that Palestinian Authority Chairman Yasser Arafat had prior knowledge of the 1993 plot to bomb New York City's World Trade Center which killed six people.

The news report quoted Deputy Education Minister Moshe Peled stating: "More than

that, he [referring to Arafat] was part of the discussions on the operation." The news report further said that Arafat was privy to the conspiracy and met with Sudanese and Islamic terrorist leaders.

With this letter, I am enclosing for you a photostatic copy of the news report from the Jerusalem Post on March 26.

I would very much appreciate it if you would conduct the appropriate investigation to determine what evidence exists, if any, of Arafat's complicity in this matter.

It appears to me that, if true, Arafat would be prosecutable under U.S. criminal laws. I would appreciate your advice as to what indictments could be brought as to Chairman Arafat.

Thank you for your consideration of this report.

Sincerely,

ARLEN SPECTER.

U.S. SENATE,
COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS,
Washington, DC, May 14, 1997.

Hon. JANET RENO,
Attorney General, Department of Justice, Washington, DC.

DEAR ATTORNEY GENERAL RENO: By letter dated April 1, 1997, (copy enclosed) I wrote to you concerning Israeli Deputy Education Minister Moshe Peled's statement that Palestinian Authority Chairman Yasser Arafat had prior knowledge of the 1993 plot to bomb New York City's World Trade Center.

By letter dated April 29 (copy enclosed) Assistant Attorney General Andrew Fois responded with a very generalized statement about having "queried the Israeli authorities." No mention was made whether the Department of Justice talked to Deputy Education Minister Moshe Peled or did any real pursuit on the matter.

Since I do not speak Hebrew, my assistant, David Brog, Esquire, talked to Mr. Peled. Mr. Peled said that he was not prepared to disclose any more information on Chairman Arafat's connection in the World Trade Center bombing beyond what he told the Jerusalem Post. Mr. Brog said that Mr. Peled was not flexible on this point and that he (Mr. Brog) had the impression that Mr. Peled had gotten into some trouble for his previous disclosure.

I am interested to know whether the Department of Justice talked to Mr. Peled before Mr. Fois's letter to me of April 29. If so, what he said. If not, why wasn't Mr. Peled questioned.

I consider this an extremely serious matter. As you know, Chairman Arafat could be extradited to the United States if there is evidence to support Mr. Peled's charge.

I formally request the Department of Justice to conduct a real investigation on this matter.

Sincerely,

ARLEN SPECTER.

U.S. SENATE,
Washington, DC, March 24, 1997.

Hon. MADELEINE ALBRIGHT,
Secretary of State,
Washington, DC.

DEAR SECRETARY ALBRIGHT: According to the weekend press reports, Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu has stated that Palestinian Chairman Yasir Arafat has indirectly given a green light to the terrorists resulting in the suicide bomb which killed and wounded many Israelis last Friday.

According to the news reports, Chairman Arafat and the Palestinian authority released Ibrahim Maqadmeh. Prime Minister Netanyahu further stated that Chairman Arafat and the Palestinian authority have failed to detain known terrorists and to confiscate weaponry.

In my judgment, it is very important for the State Department to make a factual determination as to whether Chairman Arafat and the Palestinian authority did give a green light indirectly to the terrorists and whether there was a failure to detain known terrorists and to confiscate weaponry.

I would appreciate your advice, as promptly as possible, on your Department's conclusion as to whether Chairman Arafat and the Palestinian authority gave an indirect green light to the terrorists.

As you know, an amendment offered by Senator Shelby and myself to the Middle East Peace Facilitation Act of 1995 conditions the \$500 million in U.S. aid to the Palestinian authority on presidential certification that the Palestinian authority is complying with all of its commitments under its peace accords with Israel, including its commitment to prevent acts of terrorism and undertake "legal measures against terrorists, including the arrest and prosecution of individuals suspected of perpetrating acts of violence and terror".

The Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on Foreign Operations, on which I sit, will soon be considering this issue for fiscal year 1998 so I would appreciate your prompt response.

In addition, I would appreciate your advising me as to whether there is any U.S. aid in the pipeline which has not yet been turned over to the Palestinian authority. If so, I request that such payments be withheld until the determination as to whether the Palestinian authority is complying with the Specter-Shelby amendment.

Sincerely,

ARLEN SPECTER.

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE,
OFFICE OF LEGISLATIVE AFFAIRS,
Washington, DC, April 29, 1997.

Hon. ARLEN SPECTER,
U.S. Senate,
Washington, DC.

DEAR SENATOR SPECTER: This is in response to your letter to the Attorney General dated April 1, 1997. Your letter encloses a news article from The Jerusalem Post in which it is reported that Yasser Arafat may have had prior knowledge of the bombing of the World Trade Center building on February 26, 1993.

Aside from the news report enclosed with your letter, the Department of Justice is unaware of any information that Yasser Arafat either had prior knowledge of the bombing of the World Trade Center or was in any way involved in the conspiracy to bomb the building. We have queried the Israeli authorities about this information and they deny the accuracy of the statements attributed in the article to the Deputy Education Minister.

I hope this information is helpful. If we can be of further assistance with regard to this or any other matter, please do not hesitate to contact this office.

Sincerely,

ANDREW FOIS,
Assistant Attorney General.

[From the Jerusalem Post, Mar. 26, 1997]

ARAFAT KNEW OF WORLD TRADE CENTER PLOT
(By Steven Rodan)

Israeli intelligence has evidence that Palestinian Authority Chairman Yasser Arafat had prior knowledge of the successful 1993 plot to bomb New York City's World Trade Center, which killed six people. Deputy Education Minister Moshe Peled said Tuesday night.

"More than that, he was part of the discussions on the operation," Peled said, "I call on the prime minister to give the information to the Americans, so they'll know who they're dealing with."

Peled confirmed information relayed by intelligence sources that, several days before the February 26, 1993 bombing, Arafat met with Sudanese and Islamic terrorist leaders who discussed the plot.

The sources said Arafat was privy to the conspiracy because of his close personal ties to Sudanese leader Hassan Turabi, head of the National Islamic Front. According to a U.S. State Department report on terrorism, Turabi is a leading advocate of closer ties between terrorist groups and their government sponsors. He was also a leading figure in the Fatah-Hamas dialogue in 1995.

Two Sudanese diplomats were arrested and later deported in July of 1993, after U.S. authorities directly linked them to the explosion at the World Trade Center and a plot to bomb the United Nations.

Israeli government spokesmen refused to comment on the intelligence reports or on Peled's call for Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu to release them to the U.S. "I don't know anything about it," said David Bar-Illan, director of communications and policy planning in the Prime Minister's Office.

A Defense Ministry spokesman also refused to comment.

But U.S. and Israeli intelligence sources agree that Arafat continues to maintain a large number of Fatah guerrillas in bases in Sudan, 1,200 of whom arrived from that country in 1994 and now serve in the Palestinian security forces. One Israeli source said the number of Fatah guerrillas in Sudan is close to 3,000.

"Arafat continues to maintain a training base in Sudan and the Fatah people there and work closely with the regime and with Iran," said Yonah Alexander, a Pentagon consultant and director of the terrorism studies program at George Washington University. "If there hadn't been an agreement with Israel, then Fatah would definitely have been on the U.S. list of terror organizations."

But a U.S. counterterrorism official disputed the claim and said Israeli officials might be confusing Fatah with Abu Nidal's Fatah Revolutionary Council, which trains in Sudan.

"There's no doubt there are terrorist groups training in Sudan, but (Fatah) isn't one of them," he said.

U.S. counterterrorism officials have "never heard any report of Fatah" training there, he said. He also stated that "there's been no indication of that kind of Sudan connection" to the World Trade Center bombing.

At one of the Sudanese camps, Kadru north of Khartoum, Iranian experts trained terrorists, including Fatah forces headed by Jaber Amer, as commanders, intelligence operatives, and bombmakers, according to the sources.

A U.S. congressional investigator with close ties to Israeli officials said Hamas and Fatah have training camps in Sudan. "They work together," he said. "Arafat has strategic ties with Turabi and he has exploited them in order to forge cooperation with Hamas." But the investigator said although he has heard of reports that Arafat knew of the World Trade Center bombing plot, and was said to have even praised the idea, he is skeptical of the veracity of the information, "I have yet to be convinced," he said.

U.S. State Department officials said the PLO has not authorized any terrorist attacks since Arafat signed the Declaration of Principles with Israel in September 1993. One official who works on the State Department's report on global terrorism said he does not know of any Fatah bases in Sudan.

In another development, Israeli officials said the Clinton administration has quietly dropped its dispute of Israel's assertion that

Arafat has allowed the Islamic opposition groups to resume terrorist attacks on Israel.

The officials said the CIA now shares Israel's assessment that Arafat gave Hamas and Islamic Jihad a green light to carry out terrorist attacks, at least while he is abroad.

[From the New York Times, Aug. 21, 1997]

DEFYING ISRAEL, ARAFAT EMBRACES ISLAMIC MILITANTS

(By Joel Greenberg)

GAZA.—Defying Israeli and American demands that he crack down on Islamic militants, Yasir Arafat kissed and applauded leaders of the Hamas and Islamic Holy War movements today and warned that Palestinians were prepared to resume their violent revolt against Israel.

At a conference of Palestinian factions here, Mr. Arafat returned to the combative language of the seven-year uprising against Israeli occupation, which ended in 1994 with the beginning of Palestinian self rule.

"There was an uprising for seven years," Mr. Arafat told the conference, which he called to protest the policies of Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu of Israel. "Who did it? The lion cubs, our children—this glorious uprising. Seven years. We can erase and do it again from the beginning. There is nothing far from us. All options are open to us."

As he has many times in his career, Mr. Arafat was fighting on several fronts at once.

His remarks came just days after Dennis B. Ross, the American mediator, prodded him to renew security cooperation with the Israelis and take action against Hamas and other hard-line Islamic groups that have carried out terrorist bombings in Israel. Mr. Arafat met Tuesday with the head of Shin Bet, the Israeli domestic security agency, as he began to comply with that request.

But at today's session in Gaza, called the National Unity Conference to Confront the Challenges, Mr. Arafat was lining up support from a broad array of factions, including the militant Islamic groups who favor a more confrontational stance toward the Israelis. The Islamic groups said they saw the meeting as a means of resisting the crackdown by the Palestinian Authority that Israel and the United States are demanding.

In Washington, senior American officials were dismayed by Mr. Arafat's remarks. "It simply makes an already difficult situation more difficult," one official said. "We have a crisis of confidence, so no party should do or say things that undermine confidence about a peaceful resolution of their differences."

[James P. Rubin, the State Department spokesman, said the United States remained convinced that Mr. Arafat would carry out his pledge to cooperate with the Israelis against terrorism. "We are going to judge, in the area of security cooperation and anti-terrorist cooperation, Chairman Arafat by deeds," he said. "Deeds are the coin of the realm when it comes to fighting terrorism."]

Today's conference in Gaza was significant because it marked the first time Islamic Holy War, a militant group that operates primarily in Gaza, had joined a meeting of Palestinian factions under Mr. Arafat's leadership. Unlike Hamas, which has both social programs and a military wing, Islamic Holy War has devoted itself almost exclusively to attacks on Israel.

At the conference, representatives of Hamas and Islamic Holy War, who are political leaders of their organizations, not members of their clandestine military wings, exchanged customary kisses with Mr. Arafat after their speeches.

They said later that their participation in Mr. Arafat's conference did not mean they

were renouncing violence, as the Palestinian leader did in reaching an accord with the Israelis. The delegates said they remain implacably opposed to the agreement reached in Oslo in 1993 between Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organization.

"This is not a conference to support Oslo, but to support the stance of our people against the American and Israeli pressures on the Palestinian Authority to arrest and crack down on the Islamic movements," said Abdel Aziz al-Rantisi, a Hamas leader.

The relationship between Mr. Arafat and the Israeli Government, which had been strained, worsened considerably last month after a suicide bombing in a Jerusalem market on July 30 in which 14 people and the two attackers were killed.

Israel demanded that Mr. Arafat take action against Hamas and Islamic Holy War and it imposed economic sanctions and other punitive measures that the Palestinian leader condemned as a declaration of war against his people.

The measure included closing borders, demolishing houses of Palestinians on the grounds that they were built without permits, and freezing payments of taxes and other money to the Palestinian Authority.

Israel's moves united Palestinians of all political stripes behind Mr. Arafat. Many perceive him as standing up to heavy Israeli and American pressures to suppress the militants.

United States officials have backed the Israeli demands, but they have also urged Israel to rescind economic sanctions that are not directly linked to its security. To ease the economic pressure, President Hosni Mubarak of Egypt pledged Tuesday to give the Palestinian Authority \$10 million.

Israeli officials criticized Mr. Arafat for inviting Hamas and Islamic Holy War to the Gaza conference, asserting that his invitation of groups responsible for bombings that killed scores of Israelis contradicted his commitment to fight terrorism. Mr. Arafat is "giving the terrorist organizations a stamp of approval," said David Bar-Illan, communications director for Prime Minister Netanyahu.

Mr. Arafat and his aides might think that "appeasing, pacifying and placating these organizations will do the trick," Mr. Bar-Illan added, "but they already tried that, and we found that all this dialog does is give these organizations the respectability and legitimacy which makes it easier for them to continue their terrorist activity with impunity."

But Tayeb Abdel Rahim, a close aide of Mr. Arafat who was chairman of the conference, rejected the Israeli criticism. "None of the speakers advocated explosions or terrorism," he said. "They all protested the Israeli policy that disregards the peace process. They agreed on a common denominator of rejecting the policy of dictation."

The speakers, apparently following rules agreed upon in advance, did not call explicitly for violence against Israel, but instead urging "resistance," "confrontation" and "struggle" against the Israeli "enemy."

Many called on Mr. Arafat to stop security cooperation and negotiations with the Israelis, and urged a boycott of Israeli products in response to the Israeli border closures. They criticized American officials for what they described as a stance that favors Israel, and they urged Mr. Arafat to resist Israeli "dictates" backed by the Americans to crack down on militant groups.

Mr. Arafat has recently renewed security contacts at the urging of the Americans, and he met on Tuesday with Ami Ayalon, the head of Shin Bet, the Israeli security services. But before the conference delegates he vowed never to submit to Israeli economic and political pressures.

"In the name of our children," he said, "the children of the uprising, I say: No one can humiliate the Palestinian people, no one can defeat the Palestinian people, no one can make our Palestinian people bow!"

ORDER OF PROCEDURE

Mr. SPECTER. Mr. President, we continue to await the arrival of Senators on the floor to present amendments. We have a very crowded schedule for the Senate with the FDA legislation and other appropriations matters to follow. So I urge my colleagues to come to the floor so we can continue to move the Labor, Health and Human Services bill along.

In the absence of any other Senator on the floor, Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. DORGAN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. ROBERTS). Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. DORGAN. I ask unanimous consent I be allowed to speak for 10 minutes as in morning business.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

NATIONAL TESTING

Mr. DORGAN. Mr. President, I understand we are not yet on the appropriations bill today. It has not been formally called up. We have a number of issues in the appropriations bill that is now before the Senate, and I know the majority leader and others would like to complete it soon. I want to describe one of them that I think is very important that I hope will get resolved today. That is the issue that was raised last week on the subject of national testing with respect to achievement levels at various grades in our schools.

President Clinton has suggested, and others have called for some kind of national testing system by which we can evaluate at the fourth grade level whether children are able to read sufficiently and at the eighth grade level whether they have sufficient capabilities in mathematics, because those are the benchmarks in the education system that allow you to proceed and succeed. If you are not able to read sufficiently in fourth grade, you are not going to do well beyond that. If you don't have a basic grasp of the concept of mathematics by the eighth grade, you are not going to do well beyond that. The question is, What are we getting for our education dollars? We spend a substantial amount of money in this country on elementary and secondary education. What are we getting for it?

The proposal is a proposal that says, let us measure that, let us evaluate that, student to student, school to