

Agreements between 2- and 4-year institutions to accept students may not exist. Credits may not easily transfer. Community or technical college students may need additional tutoring, mentoring or support to succeed in a 4-year institution. Programs and schedules may be structured to preclude work and study—a growing necessity as college costs rise.

These are significant barriers than can and should be addressed. That is why I am introducing the Community College Partnership Act today. I am proud of this bill and believe that it will go a long way toward closing our skills gap. In addition, however, I remain committed to addressing the significant funding shortfalls that our educational institutions face. Ensuring students get the skills necessary for our new economy is essential. We must meet the needs of employers who have unfilled jobs now, as well as employers in emerging technologies that will provide significant job opportunities in the coming years.

By Ms. COLLINS (for herself, Mr. LIEBERMAN, Mr. VOINOVICH, Mr. SUNUNU, Mr. COLEMAN, Mr. LEVIN, Mr. AKAKA, Mr. STEVENS, and Mr. DURBIN):

S.J. Res. 18. A joint resolution commending the Inspectors General for their efforts to prevent and detect waste, fraud, abuse, and mismanagement, and to promote economy, efficiency, and effectiveness in the Federal Government during the past 25 years; to the Committee on Governmental Affairs.

Ms. COLLINS. Mr. President, I rise today to introduce a joint resolution recognizing the accomplishments of the inspectors general during the past 25 years. I am very pleased to be joined in this undertaking by Senator LIEBERMAN and many of our distinguished colleagues in both Houses of Congress.

Since 1978, the inspectors general (IGs) have made valuable contributions to the efficient and economical operation of the Federal Government. They have made thousands of recommendations, which ultimately saved the American taxpayers literally billions of dollars.

We've all heard the horror stories of \$500 hammers and roads build to nowhere: those are examples of the kind of wasteful spending that the IGs have exposed. The waste of scarce Federal resources not only picks the pockets of taxpayers but also places severe financial pressures on already overburdened programs, forcing cutbacks in vital government services.

Investigations by inspectors general have also resulted in the recovery of hundreds of millions of dollars to the U.S. Treasury from companies and individuals who defrauded the Federal Government. These investigations have been the basis for thousands of criminal prosecutions, debarments, exclusions, and suspensions.

In my capacity as chairman of the Governmental Affairs Committee and

previously as chairman of the Permanent Subcommittee on Investigations, I have had the opportunity to work hand-in-hand with IGs to combat fraud and waste in a variety of programs.

To cite just one example, I worked with the Office of Inspector General for the Department of Health and Human Services to uncover flagrant examples of Medicare fraud. We found that the Federal Government had been sending Medicare checks to 14 fraudulent health care companies that had provided no services whatsoever. Indeed, the address listed by one company did not exist, and, if it had, the address would have been located in the middle of the runway of the Miami International Airport.

The Offices of Inspector General have demonstrated a record of tremendous success over the past 25 years, and we wish to commend them and their employees for their dedication and professionalism in the performance of their duties.

I hope my colleagues will join Senator LIEBERMAN and me in passing this resolution commending the IGS for their many accomplishments.

SUBMITTED RESOLUTIONS

SENATE RESOLUTION 236—EX-PRESSING THE SENSE OF THE SENATE THAT THE LEADERSHIP OF THE PALESTINIAN PEOPLE BY YASSER ARAFAT IS A HINDRANCE TO PEACE IN THE MIDDLE EAST, AND THAT SUCH PEACE DEPENDS ON INSTITUTIONS FREE FROM THE TAIN OF TERRORISM

Mr. REID (for himself and Mr. DASCHLE) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Foreign Relations:

S. RES. 236

Whereas unemployment among Palestinians has risen to 50 percent, and 59 percent of the Palestinian people live below the poverty line;

Whereas a June 2003 independent poll indicated that the Palestinian people do not see Yasser Arafat, the president of the Palestinian Authority, contributing to an end to their suffering;

Whereas the June 2003 poll found that 84 percent of Palestinians believe corruption exists in the institutions of the Palestinian Authority, and 3/4 of those who believe there is corruption also believe that corruption will increase or remain the same in the future;

Whereas Yasser Arafat has steadfastly blocked attempts at political, judicial, and economic reforms by using the Fatah Central Committee and the Palestinian Legislative Council to obstruct efforts to bring greater transparency and accountability to the Palestinian Authority;

Whereas the international community has lost confidence in the ability of the current Palestinian leadership to confront terrorism;

Whereas Palestinian Security Forces have refused to confront and dismantle Palestinian Islamic Jihad, whose express goal is the elimination of the State of Israel, and Hamas, both of which have been responsible

for terrorist attacks that have killed over 800 Israelis in the last 3 years;

Whereas Abu Mazen, the first ever Palestinian Prime Minister, recently resigned because Yasser Arafat refused to turn over full control of the Palestinian Authority's 53,000-man security apparatus to the duly appointed government and continued to wield power over the General Intelligence Apparatus, the National Security Force, and the elite bodyguard unit known as Force 17;

Whereas the dismantling of terrorist organizations is a precondition to a comprehensive peace in the Middle East;

Whereas Yasser Arafat can no longer be trusted by the international community or the 3,500,000 Palestinian people living in the West Bank and Gaza Strip to be an honest broker for peace; and

Whereas Yasser Arafat has presided over a period of decay in economic and security conditions affecting the Palestinian people and has impeded any meaningful progress toward peace in the Middle East: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That it is the sense of the Senate that—

(1) the leadership of the Palestinian people by Yasser Arafat, who has condoned terror and refused to dismantle terror organizations, is a hindrance to efforts to reach a comprehensive peace in the Middle East; and

(2) peace in the Middle East depends on the construction of independent, transparent, and accountable institutions that are free from the taint of terrorism.

Mr. REID. Madam President, the struggle to win peace in the Middle East is at a critical juncture. In one direction lies more of the same: Constant fear, the old hatreds, terrorist murders and retaliations that too often claim innocent lives, as well.

Down the other road are lasting peace and security for Israel and a self-ruled homeland for the people called Palestinians.

If we want to move in this direction, we must shed the baggage of the past. If we stick with the same old formula, we will only repeat the violent cycle that has persisted for far too long. I don't claim to have all the answers about how to achieve peace in this very troubled region. But there is one thing I do know: Yasser Arafat must go. He must go now.

We look all over at his tracks. They are tracks he cannot cover.

In the Las Vegas Sun newspaper on September 28 there was an editorial written by Michael O'Callaghan who has been in the newspaper business since 1978. Prior to that he was Governor of the State of Nevada for two terms, probably the most popular Governor ever elected in the State of Nevada. But for many years he has been a newspaper man. He writes in this column, among other things:

What peace lovers over the world have received from Arafat is more bloodshed and the increased use of suicide bombers. Arafat in return has become wealthy from funds provided by the United States and other nations trying to encourage him to practice good government to provide for his people. His siphoning off of funds was exposed years ago

This practice is not acceptable even though it is by some leaders in that part of the world, he writes, in part.

He further states:

Ten days ago a new audit was released that shows that Arafat has diverted at least another \$900 million of public money into his own special bank account. This is being done while the Palestinian people continue to suffer from housing shortages and high unemployment. Arafat makes sure they have enough explosives and weapons to kill Israelis when they get bored. The Palestinian people continue to live in misery while Arafat's wife and daughter reside in France living in luxury.

Michael O'Callaghan writes more, but I think we get the point.

Arafat must go. He is a man of hate. Arafat is a man of hate. Since 1948 he has resented the very existence of Israel. He might say his views have changed, but as my mother used to say, actions speak louder than words. And by his actions we know Arafat for what he is, a bankrupt and corrupt leader of a badly suffering people, and someone who is not serious about achieving lasting peace.

We know that elements with varying degrees of affiliation with the PLO, including the Al Aqsa Martyrs Brigade and Force 17, have frequently been involved in violence against innocent Israelis.

We know that documents found at Arafat's compound, with his signature, authorized cash payments to members of the Martyrs Brigade. We know the leader of the Martyrs Brigade said he is "following the orders of Yasser Arafat." We know that former Palestinian Prime Minister Mahmoud Abbas resigned because Arafat refused to surrender security for Palestinian security forces.

Why did Arafat undermine Abbas? It is simple. He does not want peace with Israel. Forget what he says, look at his actions.

Since the cease-fire in the Middle East was announced 3 months ago, there have been at least 240 terrorist attacks on Israel. This happened while Arafat stood by failing to engage security forces of the Palestinians.

Since Arafat took control of the Palestinian Authority, hundreds of Israelis have been murdered. But his stubborn refusal to accept peace has made life miserable for the 3.35 million Palestinian people in the west bank and the Gaza strip.

We know that Prime Minister Barak courageously gave Arafat everything he asked, but Arafat could not take yes for an answer because he is a terrorist and cannot get that out of his blood.

Today, half of all Palestinians are unemployed and 59 percent live in poverty. This misery breeds desperation which suits the purposes of Arafat and other terrorists. In the midst of this desperation he controls personal war chests of tens of millions of dollars, if not hundreds of millions, with investments across the world. He spends his money as he pleases and is accountable to only one person: Yasser Arafat, himself.

It is in this milieu that Arafat stands by as desperate young men and women commit suicide murders in exchange for large sums of money for their families and a promise of eternal paradise

for themselves. They waste their young lives and murder innocent Israelis.

It is now time to hold Yasser Arafat accountable. If he cares about his people, there are other leaders there who could carry on and do a good job for the Palestinian people. But he cares about Yasser Arafat. It is time we hold this man accountable.

I am submitting this resolution right now, along with Senator DASCHLE, calling upon Arafat to immediately resign his position as President of the Palestinian National Authority because he is a hindrance to peace in the Middle East and that such peace depends on institutions that are free from the taint of terrorism. That is the only way Palestinian people will ever achieve their dream of a free, self-governed homeland.

Let me be clear, I support the people of Palestine. They have a right to self-rule. They have a right to control it themselves. But I also support strongly Israel's right to live in peace and to defend itself against terrorism. Israel is at war against terrorism just as we are, but even more amplified. We can never accept or tolerate terrorism in any form at any time any place in the world.

In the name of peace in the middle East and in the world, in the name of prosperity and self-rule for the Palestinian people, Yasser Arafat must go.

Mr. DASCHLE. Mr. President, I come to the floor and rise in strong support of the resolution submitted by the distinguished assistant Democratic leader, Senator REID, this afternoon.

It was 3 years ago that we had an opportunity to bring real peace to the region. In September of 2000 there was a great deal of optimism, a great deal of hope, a great promise that after months and months of negotiation we could have finally found a peaceful resolution and move to the next step in the peaceful coexistence of people in the Middle East.

For reasons still unclear, Yasser Arafat walked away from that agreement, disappointing, disillusioning, and, in so many ways, undermining the peace process.

Over the course of the last 3 years, 800 Israelis have been killed, 2,400 Palestinians have died.

Where he has had an opportunity to renounce violence, he has condoned it. Where he has had an opportunity to embrace peace, he has repelled it. At virtually every turn, regardless of circumstance, Mr. Arafat sends the wrong message about leadership, about commitment, about the spirit that was so alive just 3 years ago.

In the creation of a new government, Mr. Arafat had yet another opportunity to stand behind his new Prime Minister, Abu Mazen, and to say, through him and through this new office: We will resolve our differences. We will bring violence to an end. We will find ways with which to establish a peaceful coexistence. Yet he chose once again to walk away from that opportunity, if not undermine it in every way.

Now there is a new government, at least under consideration. Again,

Arafat sends all the wrong messages about what he expects from that new government, its allegiance to him, not to the process, not to the people, not to a commitment for a better future—it is to him.

Some of us want to use this occasion, through this resolution, to make it clear that Mr. Arafat has been an impediment to peace. Mr. Arafat has done virtually everything to thwart peace. As a result, we find ourselves in a situation far worse than it was just 3 years ago. It is a tragedy—a tragedy that has amounted to the loss of 3,200 lives in 3 years.

I hope my colleagues will join us in sending a clear message that we cannot have peace, we cannot have any expectation, any hope of stability and the realization within our grasp that death can end, without sending a clear message to those responsible: We cannot tolerate this kind of leadership. We cannot tolerate this kind of irresponsible and dangerous direction. We will speak out in every way, shape, and form we can until this matter is resolved.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. FITZGERALD). The Senator from Nevada is recognized.

Mr. REID. I thank the Chair.

(The remarks of Mr. REID and Mr. DASCHLE pertaining to the submission of S. Res. 236 are located in today's RECORD under "Submission of Concurrent and Senate Resolutions.")

RECESS UNTIL 9:15 A.M. TOMORROW

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate stands in recess until 9:15 a.m.

Thereupon, the Senate, at 7:17 p.m., recessed until Tuesday, September 30, 2003, at 9:15 a.m.

NOMINATIONS

Executive nominations received by the Senate September 29, 2003:

THE JUDICIARY

RAYMOND W. GRUENDER, OF MISSOURI, TO BE UNITED STATES CIRCUIT JUDGE FOR THE EIGHTH CIRCUIT, VICE PASCO M. BOWMAN II, RETIRED.

IN THE COAST GUARD

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE UNITED STATES COAST GUARD RESERVE TO THE GRADE INDICATED UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 12203:

To be rear admiral

CAPT. JOHN C. ACTON, 0000

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICERS FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE UNITED STATES COAST GUARD TO THE GRADE INDICATED UNDER TITLE 14, U.S.C., SECTION 271:

To be rear admiral (lower half)

CAPT. ARTHUR E. BROOKS, 0000
CAPT. RICHARD R. KELLY, 0000
CAPT. DAVID P. PEKOSKE, 0000
CAPT. FRED M. ROSA, 0000
CAPT. TIMOTHY S. SULLIVAN, 0000

THE JUDICIARY

WILLIAM JAMES HAYNES II, OF VIRGINIA, TO BE UNITED STATES CIRCUIT JUDGE FOR THE FOURTH CIRCUIT, VICE H. EMORY WIDENER, JR., RETIRING.

CONFIRMATION

Executive nomination confirmed by the Senate September 29, 2003:

THE JUDICIARY

CARLOS T. BEA, OF CALIFORNIA, TO BE UNITED STATES CIRCUIT JUDGE FOR THE NINTH CIRCUIT.