

"The Missing Summit" which correctly identifies Arafat's failure to revise the PLO Covenant as a major obstacle to peace. The editorial reads as follows:

The summer heat tends to slow everything down, even diplomacy. In the absence of real movement in the peace process, talk of summits is proliferating. Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu has unsuccessfully pushed for a "Madrid 2" international conference. France and Egypt have a proposal, and yesterday Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak, Jordan's King Hussein, and Palestinian Authority Chairman Yasser Arafat met in Cairo. However, the only summit missing is the one that is most necessary—between Netanyahu and Arafat.

When Mubarak, Hussein, and Arafat last met in September, they could hardly have expected that by now there would still be no deal on the much-anticipated second redeployment. Much of the blame for delay has fallen on Netanyahu's doorstep, and indeed Netanyahu seems to be a master at drawing matters out. Next to Arafat, however, Netanyahu's delaying skills seem almost amateur.

In the current stalemate, one of the main issues in contention is Israel's demand that the Palestinians amend the PLO Covenant to erase its multiple calls for Israel's destruction. Arafat's promise to do so is as old as the Oslo process itself. The Oslo era officially began with an exchange of letters between prime minister Yitzhak Rabin and Arafat, days before the signing of the Declaration of Principles on the White House lawn. Arafat's September 9, 1993 letter to Rabin states the Covenant's denials of Israel's right to exist "are now inoperative" and that he pledges to "submit to the Palestinian National Council for formal approval the necessary changes in regard to the Palestinian Covenant."

At that time, amending the Covenant seemed imminent. It is now almost six years later, and Arafat's commitment is yet to be implemented. In April 1996, the Peres government attempted to negotiate a formula to resolve the issue, but the resolution actually passed by the PNC again made no specific amendment to the Covenant. Then in January 1997, as part of the Hebron Accords, Arafat again committed to "complete the process" of amending the Covenant.

Since then, Arafat has sent letters to President Bill Clinton and Prime Minister Tony Blair retroactively listing the articles of the Covenant that were supposedly canceled by the 1996 PNC resolution. But this, too, can only be taken as a statement of intentions, since the Covenant states that it can only be amended by a two-thirds vote of the PNC, and numerous PLO officials have stated that it has been "frozen," not amended. Now Netanyahu is seen to be delaying matters by demanding that the Palestinians finally carry out a commitment that is a foundation stone of the entire process.

Since the beginning of the Oslo process, Israel has—despite fits and starts, internal division, and even the assassination of the prime minister—demonstrated its commitment to the process by transferring territorial control to the Palestinians. Even under Netanyahu, this process continued with the redeployment in Hebron, and now a major further redeployment is on the table. In this context, it is not unreasonable to characterize the situation as Netanyahu did to the diplomatic corps on Friday: "The issue is not what Israel is prepared to give—it is prepared to give considerably—but it is the Palestinians' unwillingness to give anything of substance."

In the Gaza Strip on Friday, the Palestinian Police cut off Israeli settlements after

the IDF refused passage on an Israeli security road to a convoy led by a Palestinian minister. The standoff, which could have broken out into a full-fledged shooting war, was a reminder of how dangerous the current situation is. But the lesson is not just that Israel has an interest in resolving the existing impasse, but that the Palestinians do as well.

Now that Clinton has returned from China and the end of the Knesset summer session approaches, the fate of the redeployment package will be determined. So far, the United States has not rejected Israel's concerns regarding the package on the table, but it has not subjected the Palestinians to the same public pressure that Israel has been under. The sticking point is no longer the size of the redeployment, since creative solutions can be found for the territory surrounding the Israeli settlements that will be isolated by the withdrawal. The more significant question is whether Arafat will be pressed to deliver something much less tangible than what Israel is delivering, but no less necessary for the ultimate success of the peace process. Amending the Covenant is such a fundamental building block, as is an end to the long boycott by Arafat of direct negotiations with Netanyahu.

Mr. President, the Palestinian Authority has promised since 1993 to change the PLO Covenant so that the Israeli people can be confident in the Palestinian regime's acceptance of the existence of the State of Israel. To this day, this most basic and vital action has not been done. As the Jerusalem Post correctly points out, the U.S. Government has "... not subjected the Palestinians to the same public pressure that Israel has been under."

The Palestinian Authority must formally and officially amend the Covenant. Until they do so, United States influence should be focused on this failed Palestinian promise.●

RECOGNITION OF THE DEROSI AND SON COMPANY

● Mr. TORRICELLI. Mr. President, I rise today in recognition of DeRossi and Son Company, which has been recently honored by the Small Business Administration. DeRossi and Son Company was nominated as the Regional Small Business Prime Contractor of the Year and recognized as one of the top small business prime contractors in the State of New Jersey. As a result of this nomination, DeRossi and Son has earned the U.S. Small Business Administration "Administrator's Award for Excellence" certificate. It is a pleasure for me to be able to note these accomplishments and congratulate DeRossi and Son on a job well done.

Since 1926, when Angelo and Dominick DeRossi founded the company, DeRossi and Son has manufactured military dress coats for the United States Government. The company provided clothing for the United States Armed Forces during World War II, the Korean War, and the Vietnam War. DeRossi and Son has a long history of excellence, beginning in 1943 when it received the Army Navy E Award during World War II. This was an award issued for excellence in pro-

duction and quality during the war. Mr. DeRossi believes that the success of the company is due to the training he received from his grandfather and father and to the great dedication and effort his staff and employees have in serving the customer.

Small businesses face enormous odds for success in the corporate world. There are tremendous obstacles every day, yet DeRossi and Son has been able to rise above adversity. This award is a wonderful testament to its strength and perseverance among small businesses in the State of New Jersey and across the country. Few companies are able to make this claim, and I am honored to be able to say that one has been from my home state.

Both the DeRossi Family, and the company they built over the last seventy-two years, are excellent examples of an immigrant success story. The DeRossi Family's contributions have done much for the future of the town of Vineland, the State of New Jersey, and the United States as a whole. I congratulate DeRossi and Son on a job well done, and I wish both them and their employees the best of luck in the future.●

CRIME VICTIMS WITH DISABILITIES

● Mr. ABRAHAM. Mr. President, I rise to join my colleagues Senator DEWINE and Senator LEAHY in sponsoring the Crime Victims with Disabilities Awareness Act. This legislation will help us better understand and prevent crimes against Americans with disabilities.

Mr. President, Americans with disabilities are four to ten times as likely as other Americans to be the victims of crimes. That means that 54 million Americans are at increased risk of victimization because they suffer from one or more disabilities.

We have long known that criminals are opportunists, and that they target the weakest members of society for exploitation. As a result we have initiated programs to heighten public awareness of crime against women, children, and the elderly. Americans with developmental disabilities deserve the same consideration.

Many disabled Americans have been the victims of crime, Mr. President. Indeed, many of these Americans have been repeat victims because their condition renders them less likely to report incidents to the proper authorities.

If some Americans are unsafe from crime, Mr. President, all Americans are unsafe. Criminals who prey on the disabled are not only showing their lack of morality and victimizing a particularly vulnerable segment of our society, they are degrading our entire nation. To the extent they are allowed to continue their criminal activities they endanger all Americans.

That is why this legislation is so important. It will direct the Attorney General, in conjunction with the National Research Council, to develop a