

July 29 / Administration of William J. Clinton, 1997

biennial revision (1998–2002) to the United States Arctic Research Plan. The White House,

WILLIAM J. CLINTON July 29, 1997.

## Remarks on the Terrorist Attack in Jerusalem, Israel, and an Exchange With Reporters

July 30, 1997

*The President.* Good morning. Today's bombing by terrorists in Jerusalem was a barbarous act. There is no excuse and there must be no tolerance for this kind of inhumanity. The slaughter was aimed directly at innocent Israelis. And make no mistake, it was also aimed at the majority of Israelis, Palestinians, and Arabs who want a lasting and just peace.

The only answer can and must be concrete steps by the Palestinian Authority to increase security operations and the strengthening of security cooperation between Palestinians and Israelis and a deepened determination by both Palestinians and Israelis to pursue peace. Only when a lasting and secure peace is achieved will the enemies of peace be defeated.

I have just spoken to Prime Minister Netanyahu. I told him the hearts and prayers of Americans are with him, the people of Israel, and the victims of the attack and their families.

I have nothing further to say about this except to say, again, we must not let the enemies of peace prevail. There must be increased security operations, increased security cooperation, and a continuing commitment that is deep into the peace process.

*Q.* Mr. President, what kind of security could have guarded against these two people who apparently were willing to kill themselves in order to do this damage?

*The President.* Well, I can't answer that, but I do know that there have been long periods when the security operations have succeeded. And if these people were part of larger networks, there may well be something else that can be done, but I don't obviously know the facts of this specific case. We can't say whether any action by the Palestinian Authority, for example, could have stopped this bombing, but we can say, from our observations, that there could be increased security activity and cooperation.

*Q.* Will you try to reach Chairman Arafat, and what publicly do you expect him to do in the wake of this explosion?

*The President.* Well, he's already talked to Prime Minister Netanyahu, and I would expect him to say in public what he said to him in private. And I would expect there to be increased security activity and increased security cooperation.

*Q.* Mr. President, how long will the Dennis Ross trip be postponed, and what specific new steps will he bring from the United States trying to revive the peace process?

*The President.* I think it's inappropriate to discuss the second part of your question at this moment, but the trip will be postponed for a period—an appropriate period of mourning.

*Q.* Mr. President, do you think that it's time for either you or the Secretary of State to become personally involved? There has been a lot of criticism that the United States hasn't been—

*The President.* First of all, I think the suggestion that we've not been personally involved is just false. But certainly—

*Q.* In a public way, though.

*The President.* Well, I believe, and I think that the record will bear this out—I believe—my personal involvement has been continuing and intense in this. But I know of no example in recent history where peace is made by third parties trying to be helpful making public statements alone. I believe the way I'm doing this is the most effective way. But you should not conclude for a moment that the White House has not been intimately and intensely and continuously involved in this peace process, particularly as it has gotten more difficult.

Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 9:45 a.m. in the Briefing Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu of Israel; Chairman Yasser Arafat of the Palestinian Authority; and Special Middle East Coordinator Dennis Ross.

## Statement on Campaign Finance Reform

*July 30, 1997*

In my State of the Union Address, I called on Congress to enact bipartisan campaign finance reform legislation. I said that delay could be the death of reform and urged Congress to move forward quickly. I strongly support the decision by Senators McCain and Feingold to bring campaign finance reform legislation to the floor of Congress in September for a vote.

The problems with the role of money in Presidential and congressional elections are plain. Since the campaign finance laws were last overhauled two and a half decades ago, the system has been overwhelmed by a flood of campaign cash. Both political parties are now engaged in an ever-escalating arms race for campaign funds. The consequences for our political system are clear: There is too much money in politics, and it takes too much time to raise.

To make sure that ordinary citizens have the loudest voice in our democracy, we must act to change the campaign finance laws. This year, I have asked the FEC to ban so-called soft money to parties; I have asked the Federal

Communications Commission to require broadcasters to provide free TV time to candidates; and the Justice Department has indicated it will defend spending limits in the courts. But these steps, however important, are no substitute for legislation. America needs—and the American people demand—strong, comprehensive campaign finance reform legislation. As the new century approaches, we have an opportunity and an obligation to restore the trust of the American people in their politics—and this is our chance to do it.

For years, the special interests and their allies have blocked reform. This year, those who seek to continue special interest influence as usual will filibuster again. But this year, we have an opportunity to come together across party lines to act and pass reform that cleans up the campaign finance system. September will be the time for Members of the Senate to stand up and be counted for reform. I will do what I can to see to it that 1997 is finally the year that it is achieved.

## Remarks to the 1997 National Boy Scout Jamboree in Bowling Green,

Virginia

*July 30, 1997*

Thank you very much. Are those Arkansas flags I see back there? Thank you for waving them.

Let me say to all of you, I want to begin by thanking John Kates for that introduction. Congratulations for passing the board of review for the Eagle Scout rank. I didn't notice whether John had a public speaking merit badge on his sash, but I'd say he earned one tonight standing up in front of all of you to introduce me. I think he did a great job. Let's give him a hand. [Applause]

I want to say to Jere Radcliff, Roy Roberts, Jack Creighton, to all the officials of the Boy Scouts here, thank you for what you do with our young people. I'm happy to be joined tonight by the Secretary of the Navy, John Dalton; the Secretary of the Air Force, Sheila Widnall; the Under Secretary of the Army, Joe Reeder; and the Chief of Naval Operations, the top ranking naval officer in the United States and a proud Eagle Scout, Admiral Jay Johnson. They're right over here, and we're all glad to be with you tonight. Again let me say to Major