NEXT STEPS IN ISRAELI–PALESTINIAN PEACE PROCESS

HEARING

BEFORE THE

SUBCOMMITTEE ON
THE MIDDLE EAST AND SOUTH ASIA

OF THE

COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

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NEXT STEPS IN ISRAELI–PALESTINIAN PEACE PROCESS

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 14, 2007

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
SUBCOMMITTEE ON THE MIDDLE EAST
AND SOUTH ASIA,
COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS,
Washington, DC.

The subcommittee met, pursuant to notice, at 2:32 p.m. in room 2172, Rayburn House Office Building, Hon. Gary L. Ackerman (chairman of the subcommittee) presiding.

Mr. ACKERMAN. The subcommittee will come to order. Today the subcommittee had hoped to examine those realistic and productive measures that the parties directly and indirectly involved with the Israeli-Palestinian conflict might have taken to restore a sense of hope, and maybe even make some material progress toward peace.

But in light of the Mecca Accord, which if implemented will create a Hamas-Fatah unity government for the Palestinian Authority, sometimes I am not sure what is left to discuss.

Over the past 6 years there have been many plans and many envoys. And contrary to popular opinion, there hasn't been a deficit of attention, merely a deficit of performance. Commitments made to the United States or between the parties have often been honored in the breach. The timing was never right. What was promised was never delivered.

There was always a provocation, an incident, an upcoming election, a crisis, an attack, and so it is again today. Recent weeks held the promise of change, maybe not all of it wise, but things were moving. The United States and Israel seemed ready to work with the Palestinians to provide some kind of political horizon, setting aside earlier obligations in the President's roadmap. Why? To strengthen Abu Mazen.

The President asked the Congress to agree to reprogram $86 million for Palestinian security services. Why? To strengthen Abu Mazen. Secretary Rice agreed to participate in a tripartite meeting next week. Why? To strengthen Abu Mazen.

And what has Abu Mazen done to strengthen himself? He has capitulated to Hamas. The Mecca Accord neither strengthens him, nor helps the cause of peace.

I, for one, have been urging a different kind of assistance to Abu Mazen, suggesting both publicly and privately that significant economic assistance should have been provided to him long ago. We are now well beyond that point. And due to the courtesy of our friends in Saudi Arabia, we now have what Secretary Rice once

said we could not accept: A Palestinian Authority with "one foot in terror, and one foot in democracy."

How anyone can describe what happened in Mecca over the weekend as progress is beyond me. And if, in Abu Mazen, we have seen a leader who has chosen a form of government with a multiple personality disorder, in Israel we see a government suffering from depression, schlepping along with no mandate except that provided by inertia. Things seem so hopeless and fearful in the region that Arab governments are actually threatening to begin cooperating with each other.

I had hoped that this hearing would explore ways to fill the gaps between high-minded principles and facts on the ground. So many Americans—indeed, so many people across the world—are desperate to see some kind of progress, some indication that this conflict between two people fated to share the same land can at least be put back on the path toward peace.

Instead, we have to contend with the implications of the Mecca Accord. And those implications look severe. The Mecca Accord seems quite clear on the necessity of Hamas accepting the quartet's three non-negotiable conditions for the resumption of assistance to the PA. It ignores these conditions altogether.

Hamas is not required to recognize the State of Israel. Hamas does not have to commit to resolving the Israeli-Palestinian conflict through exclusively non-violent means. Instead, Hamas has to respect, but not necessarily obey, the prior obligations and agreements of the Palestinian Authority.

Must Israel renegotiate its right to exist every time the Palestinians change government? That would be lunacy.

In exchange for this massive reversal, Hamas will allow Abu Mazen to pick a new foreign minister and new finance minister. The foreign minister will be responsible for explaining the political disaster to the world, and the finance minister will have the job of distributing funds the Mecca Accord will preclude the PA from receiving from members of the quartet. It is a trifecta of a diplomatic disaster.

Abu Mazen has gutted his own credibility, empowered his opponents, and taken upon himself the responsibility for the inevitable failure of his two-headed monstrosity of a government. Yogi Berra had it right: It is deja-vu all over again.

I would like to turn now, with great pleasure, to my partner on the committee, the ranking minority member, Mr. Pence.

Mr. PENCE. I thank the chairman for both the recognition, as well as calling this extremely important hearing. I am greatly privileged to serve in the capacity of ranking member on this subcommittee, and can't help but feel that the chairman's decision to begin our work on this subcommittee on this issue is commendable and appropriate.

Mr. Chairman, I know we share a commitment of the long-term health and security of Israel, and it is heartfelt in both of our lives. She is our staunchest ally in the Middle East, and one of our best friends in the world.

Fifty-nine years after the birth of the modern State of Israel and 30 years after the beginning of the first Camp David Accords, the

very existence of Israel still goes unrecognized by the Palestinian leadership and most of the Islamic world.

The absurdity of Israel enduring years, approaching decades, of negotiations with an entity that does not recognize its right to exist is historically striking. And the fact that this is still a subject of negotiation is outrageous.

Mr. Chairman, contrary to some of the testimony we are about to hear with respect, I believe this problem is not shrouded in great mystery or complexity. As President Ronald Reagan often said, there is a simple answer—not an easy answer, but a simple answer.

We will hear talk about us needing to be an honest broker. We will hear talk about a return to the roadmap, to more action by the quartet of restarting the peace process. And I will listen intently.

We will hear a lot of discussion about confidence-building measures and processes now on the political horizon. But, Mr. Chairman, I plead with the Palestinians and the Arab world: If they are serious about peace, take the simple answer, not the easy answer. But take the simple step of recognizing Israel and renouncing violence against it.

In fact, the Bush administration and several European countries had three basic conditions required of the new Palestinian Government, and we know them well. Recognize the right of Israel to exist, foreswear violence, and accept previous Israeli-Palestinian agreements.

And on 8 February, as the chairman has referenced, in Mecca, Saudi Arabia, Fatah and Hamas signed an agreement to form a national unity government in hopes of lifting the international embargo and ending their own virtual civil war. This step was hailed in many quarters, notably the Governments of Russia and France, as a breakthrough. But none of the basic steps that have been at the center of our expectation in this region were met, as the chairman has noted eloquently.

Even before the ink was dry, a Hamas spokesman would tell the Reuters News Service, "We will never recognize Israel. There is nothing called Israel," he said, "neither in reality nor in imagination."

This agreement is not a step toward reform, since it does not come close to addressing this basic problem, in my judgment. The new Palestinian Government is a hybrid, still dominated by Hamas. Hamas holds nine cabinet ministries to Fatah's six. One of our witnesses, David Makovsky, describes the Mecca Agreement as a victory for Hamas, since a unity government has been one of its standing goals.

And despite the President's four separate approvals of direct funding for the Palestinian Authority, and the anticipated request of $73.5 million for fiscal year 2008 in aid to the Palestinians, I ask, Mr. Chairman, how can we support funding any official Palestinian entity, when an internationally recognized terrorist organization dominates that government?

The fact that Hamas was chosen by the Palestinians to represent them is a bigger obstacle to peace than is any disengagement by this administration of the peace process.

Mr. Chairman, as an aside, without getting into my opinion on the peace process, let me speak a word of defense of the administration and its efforts. The subject was a priority for Secretary Powell, and is a priority for Secretary Rice.

General Zinni was dispatched on a round of shuttle diplomacy in 2001, and in fact Secretary Rice will return to the region in 5 days. I do not believe that the peace process has suffered primarily from a lack of administration attention.

I also would note, Mr. Chairman, parenthetically, that the President has faced criticism largely from the congressional majority for not opening an active dialogue with Iran and Syria, which I would point out are both internationally recognized terrorist regimes. Yet virtually no one in this Congress, on either side of the aisle, has ever called on the benign powers of this world to negotiate directly with Hamas, one of the main beneficiaries of those regimes.

If negotiating with terrorists is bad policy, I would offer that we shouldn't hear so many admonitions about negotiating with their patrons.

Mr. Chairman, today marks the 2-year anniversary of the assassination of Lebanese Prime Minister Rafik Hariri, which was credibly linked to the Syrians who then occupied that country. That outrage and so many events in this region remind us that not everything is a matter of negotiation, dialogue, and talk. Some forces are evil, prone to violence, and hostile to civilization.

Mr. Chairman, thank you again for calling this hearing. I look very much forward to our witnesses, to their presentations, and our dialogue that will follow.

Mr. ACKERMAN. Thank you very much, Mr. Pence. Congratulations, and I look forward to working with you on the committee.

The Chair will follow the general procedures of the full committee in recognizing members in order of appearance at the meeting, at the time the gavel was struck.

Mr. Sherman.

Mr. SHERMAN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. There is incredible aching in this world for peace between the Israelis and the Palestinians. We are now told that not only would it be good for the Holy Land, but perhaps Shiites and Sunnis would stop fighting each other in Baghdad, if only Israel made concessions.

A peace agreement would be a good thing. We shouldn't over-sell it. But it is hard to begin even thinking of a peace agreement if the Government of the Palestinian Authority doesn't recognize the three conditions: Recognize Israel, renounce violence, and affirm adherence to previous agreements with Israel.

The response of this new entity that has been created by discussions in Mecca fails on all three counts. Three strikes and you should be out. The unity government does not recognize Israel or renounce violence, and if you do not recognize Israel it is hard to reaffirm agreements made with Israel.

The agreement instead stresses the importance of confronting the occupation, which means it endorses the continued use of violence and terror. Hamas, whenever it uses the term occupied territories, refers not only to Ramallah, but to Tel Aviv. Hamas is adamant that the agreement does not recognize Israel, as I believe my colleague from Indiana quoted. Their senior leader in Gaza said we

will never recognize Israel, there is nothing called Israel, neither in reality nor imagination.

Finally, immediately after signing the agreement with Abbas, the top Damascus-based Hamas leader, Khalid Mezal—I apologize if I mispronounced his name—continued to call for attacks on Israel, saying we devote ourselves to the battle for Jerusalem and the Allaksa Mosque, the battle for our prisoners, in order to recover our rights and enable the refugees to return to their homes.

What does he mean when he says refugees return to their homes? He means the Ahmadinejad approach, which is that roughly 5.5 million Israelis should be ethnically cleansed from the Middle East, and that any Arabic-speaking person who claims—because there are no records—that they or any member of their extended family, or any of the ancestors of any of the foregoing, ever lived where Israel is now, has the right to move to Israel.

Israel is alone among the countries of the world where people try to turn back the clock. No one suggests that Australians should not live in Tasmania, though once it was exclusively occupied by Tasmanians. No one says it is wrong for Turks to live in Silesia, though it was once part of an Armenian kingdom. And no one says that it is wrong for Poles to live in what was once called East Prussia.

Yet somehow we are told that the clock in the Middle East should be turned back, not all the way back to before the common era, not all the way back to Roman times, but only turned back to some propitious moment at which Jewish residency and numbers and population in the Holy Land was at a low point. Those who declare that the clock must be turned back can only confront the results of that thinking in Kosovo, which was once called Old Serbia, where Milosevic believed the clock should be turned back. Ethnic cleansing is often a prelude to genocide, and it seems to be the ideology governing this new Palestinian Authority agreement.

So I look forward to a time when Israel has a partner for peace. But until then, we should recognize that self-delusion is not a substitute for having a peace partner; and that pressure on Israel will not bring peace to the Holy Land, and certainly won't help our other efforts in the Middle East.

I yield back.

Mr. ACKERMAN. Perfect timing, you had 6 seconds left. Thank you very much.

I now recognize Representative Klein, who is a new Member of the House, as well as of the committee. And we welcome you to the committee.

Mr. KLEIN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and I am delighted to serve with the ranking member, as well as the other members of this committee.

I have had a long personal interest in Middle East policy, as a civilian, as someone who has been very interested from community efforts, as well as travel. I know a lot about the history, but I have a lot more to learn. I look forward to learning more about the United States policy in terms of where we need to be at this moment in time.

I think we all understand that historically, the United States, administration after administration, has tried many different ave-

nues to try to bring peace and stability to Israel and its neighbors, sometimes with more success than others, but this is an ongoing issue. And when we have pulled back from our active involvement, our active responsibility, unfortunately many times things have happened that spiral out of control.

That being said, I had the chance to be over in Israel last year during the war, up in the Haifa area. And once again you see visually, first hand, when missiles are coming down one way, and the world's media is reporting that view versus missiles going down the other way, and the world seems to cast a blind eye toward that event.

So we understand, as American citizens, that Israel is a strategic issue for us. The only true democracy, although there are other friends in the area. But we obviously know that Israel's relationship with the United States is extremely important to the United States and its citizens. And we need to continue to be vigilant and diligent, and recognize that our active involvement in the Middle East as a whole, and bringing stability to that area, is something that will be necessary for Israel's long-term safety and security.

But let us not mix up the differences between solving the Israel-Palestinian issues as solving everything else in the Middle East. There are lots of complicated issues in the Middle East, and certainly we ought to do everything we can to continue to provide safety and security for Israel, but don't let it get tangled up in the recognition that that is the, if you solve that problem, you have solved everything else in the Middle East. I think we all understand that is a misnomer and a misunderstanding promoted by certain people.

So Mr. Chairman, I look forward to learning and listening, and being part of this committee, and hoping to work with the administration in moving a real peace process along.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. ACKERMAN. Thank you very much. Next we will hear from Representative Scott, not new to the Congress, but new to the committee. Welcome aboard.

Mr. SCOTT. Thank you very much, Chairman Ackerman. It is indeed a pleasure to serve on this committee, and I think our Subcommittee on the Middle East and Asia are very, very important, and at a no more critical time than now.

I was last in Israel a couple of years ago. I had the distinct pleasure of speaking with, on one hand in one meeting, with Prime Minister Ariel Sharon; and then in the same day, just a few hours later, with Abu Mazen. Our hope was great at that time. At that time we were discussing the feasibility of building a fence of protection, which is certainly Israel's right to defend itself. We felt that with Abu Mazen we were moving in a strong direction.

No one would have foreseen that just a few years later we would be in a situation where a basic terrorist organization, Hezbollah and Hamas, would be in the rather strong positions that they are in now. It often brings to mind the wondrous challenge of whether or not peace can be found.

But as I ponder that, I am also reminded of the interchange between two great Americans during the Civil War, Robert E. Lee and Abraham Lincoln. As they were in the throes of that war, they

had a conversation where one said, I believe it was Robert E. Lee that said it is not incumbent upon us to complete the task. But before he could finish that sentence, Abraham Lincoln said, but neither are we free to desist from doing all we possibly can.

And I believe that is the cornerstone of this subcommittee, our full Foreign Affairs Committee, and our entire government: That we must do everything we can to bring peace to this region.

And I believe we can do that. We are going to have to talk to people that, unfortunately in some measures, we are not talking to, in Syria and Iran, and bring this about.

So Mr. Chairman, I really look forward to the hearing today, and I look forward to working with you on this committee, and to my other distinguished colleagues.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. ACKERMAN. Thank you very much, Mr. Scott.

The Chair is delighted to recognize a very senior member of the committee, and an old hand on the subcommittee, as well, Howard Berman.

Mr. BERMAN. With the emphasis on "old." Thank you, Mr. Chairman, it is a pleasure to be on your subcommittee once again, with the new ranking member and a number of new colleagues.

There is a lot to say, but you have really assembled for your first hearing a wonderful group of people who truly can be called experts. And I would be curious to hear what they have to say. So I will yield back.

Mr. ACKERMAN. Thank you, Mr. Berman.

Long-time Member of the House, new member to the subcommittee, Sheila Jackson Lee.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Chairman, thank you for your graciousness, and particularly in utilizing the term old-time and not old. Thank you for that kindness.

I thank the ranking member, and I am pleased to join this subcommittee as a new member of the Foreign Affairs Committee, and to represent my views on the Mid-East, which can be characterized as a hopeful optimist.

And I say that because for the last 20-plus years, the 18th Congressional District, which I represent, has sent about 17 young people from our inner city schools to Israel every summer. And they have come back changed and inspired. And they have spoken to young people from one end of Israel's great land to the other end. And these families that have hosted them have expressed to them a sense of hope and optimism.

And so I look forward to the testimony. I am sharing myself between two hearings at this moment, but I offer, in my thoughts, that we did have a period of intense engagement in the waning hours of the Clinton administration that at least had the doors of dialogue open. Some may have agreed with that process, others may have not. But you cannot agree or disagree with the fact that the process was ongoing.

We need to engage intensely again. Speak to the hopefulness of the Israelis, and the hopefulness of many Palestinians, families, young people who don't want violence, don't want suicide bombings, but want hope and education and prosperity. And I do believe that, with the experts that we are about to hear and the leadership of

this chairperson and ranking member, that we will be able to move that dodge ball along a little bit further in bringing hopefulness, and hopefully peace, to the Mid-East.

And with that, Mr. Chairman, I yield back my time.

Mr. ACKERMAN. Thank you very much. This being the first meeting of the subcommittee, I would just like to introduce the staff director for the committee, Dave Adams, who sits to my right. In back of him, professional staff member Howard Diamond. Sitting at the small table to my right again, Dalis Blumenfeld, who is our Staff Associate. And sitting over here to my left, Greg McCarthy, who is the minority professional staff member. So welcome. Everybody will get to know them.

There certainly being no further members who wish to be recognized, we will turn to our three witnesses. I would ask each of them to summarize their testimony if they can, and without objection their full statements will be entered into the record.

Moving this way, joining the subcommittee today are David Makovsky, Ambassador Martin Indyk, and Dr. Daniel Pipes.

David Makovsky is a senior fellow and director of the Project on the Middle East Peace Process at the Washington Institute for Near East Policy. He is also an adjunct lecturer in Middle Eastern Studies at Johns Hopkins Universities, Paul H. Nietzsche School of Advanced International Studies.

Ambassador Martin Indyk is the director of the Saban Center for Middle East Policy, and senior fellow on Foreign Policy Studies at the Brookings Institution. Previously, Ambassador Indyk served as U.S. Ambassador to Israel, Assistant Secretary of State for Near East Affairs, senior director for Near East and South Asian Affairs at the National Security Council. And he is a wonderful host when you get to visit him wherever he serves in his posts.

And last but not lest, to my left, but certainly to the right of the panel, is Dr. Daniel Pipes, who is the director for Middle East Forum and distinguished visiting professor at Pepperdine University. He served in the United States in two capacities, first as vice chairman of the Fulbright Board of Foreign Scholarships, and also as a member of the Board of the U.S. Institute of Peace, and probably had the most difficult time of the panel in getting here with all kinds of airport problems across the country. We are so happy you persisted and are with us today.

We will begin with David Makovsky.

STATEMENT OF MR. DAVID MAKOVSKY, DIRECTOR, PROJECT ON THE MIDDLE EAST PEACE PROCESS, THE WASHINGTON INSTITUTE FOR NEAR EAST POLICY

Mr. MAKOVSKY. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman, Chairman Ackerman, Ranking Member Pence, and distinguished members of the Middle East Subcommittee. I am pleased to appear before you today.

The Israeli-Palestinian political landscape has been rather bleak over the last several years. Between 2000 and 2004, the second Intifada has brought almost unremitting terror and violence. Despite Israel's pullout from Gaza in the summer of 2005, the parliamentary victory of the Rejectionist Hamas party in January 2006 contributed to this downward trend.

Compounding the problem of peacemaking today has been the inadequate leadership of Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas and Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Olmert. Both leaders have been weakened, Olmert by the consequences of the war in Lebanon, and Abbas by his willingness to yield to his Hamas rivals. This trend was demonstrated last week at the Mecca Summit. The agreement signed there will greatly complicate Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice's effort to reach a "political horizon" between Israelis and Palestinians, which is scheduled to be launched next week in Jerusalem at a meeting with Olmert and Abbas.

Secretary Rice's mission is to create a political horizon for the Palestinians; specifically, a discussion, rather than a formal negotiating channel between Olmert and Abbas, to see if they agree on principles that would shape the contours of a final deal. According to this view, Secretary Rice sees her political horizon discussion as both validating Abbas' focus on negotiations instead of violence, and satisfying Israeli Foreign Minister Tzipi Livni's belief that such a wide-ranging discussion avoids ensuring that Israeli concessions are made in their contextual vacuum.

Livni and apparently Rice believe that only under the rubric of discussing principles about a final status agreement can significant tradeoffs be reached, and a grand bargain be struck. And then the roadmap implementation will flow easier.

It is critical to understand how the recent Mecca Summit has undercut this endeavor. While there are favorable aspects of the accord, especially the prospect of halting internecine Palestinian violence, the negative side weighs heavily. The Mecca Accord is a victory for Hamas, which has achieved its goal of forming a unity government without agreeing to the conditions imposed by the quartet: Namely, no recognition of Israel, no disavowal of violence, and no commitment to agree to pass written agreements.

In Mecca, Hamas resisted Abbas' insistence that Hamas commit to these principles. It is hard to escape the conclusion that Abbas has, in fact, legitimized an unrepentant Hamas. A rationale for Secretary Rice's political horizon initiative was done in no small measure to help bolster Abbas, at Hamas' expense, to show that progress comes through negotiations, and not terror.

Israeli officials may wonder how it will be possible to proceed with such weighty issues as a political horizon under such circumstances. Moreover, there is ample reason for skepticism that the PA coalition policy guidelines will substantially be better than Mecca. Hamas' Haniyeh will be the prime minister. Palestinian Authority officials are now publicly saying that the Hamas executive force militia of Gaza will continue, and this time will be financed by the PA.

Hamas has the right to put forward "an independent" name as interior minister, but this person would head the security services. All this has implications for U.S. policy. People who felt there was logic to bolstering Abbas against Hamas' growing strength, and therefore supported the security mission of General Keith Dayton and $86 million in non-lethal security assistance, must now wonder if the new Palestinian coalition alignment could lead to a very different outcome. Clarifications about this new setup are critical.

Irrespective of the Dayton issue and the $86 million, the quartet should keep to its three criteria. Such a commitment by the quartet has not meant a cutoff of funds to individuals and humanitarian needs. According to the UN Special Coordinator's Office in the Middle East that we confirmed earlier this week, overall foreign aid to the Palestinians in the West Bank in Gaza reached $1.3 billion in 2006. It is estimated that this is 10 percent above the year before, although there is an obvious shortfall of tax revenues passed along by Israel.

It is hard to see how Secretary Rice's mission on creating a political horizon can succeed without the active involvement of the Saudis and Egyptians, who are critical to backing compromises, including the key issue of whether refugees cannot just—whether they will be able to go of course to a Palestinian state, but whether the Palestinians will insist they go to Israel. This is a deal breaker. A compromise on this issue would enable Israel to also make concessions on the territorial issue, which will be serious.

Therefore, without Arab backing, Abbas is unlikely to succeed, and the political horizon will fail. In the wake of the Mecca Accord, as the Saudis move from the backstage to the center stage when it comes to Middle East diplomacy, one of my key conclusions is a belief that there is a need for high-level urgent United States-Saudi consultations about whether the two countries share a common outlook toward peacemaking. A benign interpretation of Riyadh's intentions is that the Saudis realize the risk of radicalism, and are ready to take the plunge into Arab-Israeli peacemaking.

According to this view, there is a changing regional context that could create opportunities. There is little doubt that the Saudis, along with Egypt and Jordan, where I just visited, fear that an ascendant Iran upends the existing order. And if Iran pursues nuclear weapons, this could change the balance of power in the Middle East. The wakeup call was last summer's war between Israel and Hezbollah.

But there is also a less benign interpretation. It states that what is driving Saudi Arabia now is sectarianism, not the pursuit of Arab-Israeli peace. Under this view, Riyadh has no problem supporting Hamas' program, so long as they are Sunni, and can keep Iranian money and sphere of influence at bay.

Therefore, it would be critical for the United States to explore Saudi objectives and strategies. Moreover, for a political horizon to succeed, one needs to consider whether Riyadh and Cairo are willing to do something they were not willing to do in 2000, at the time of Camp David in July and the Clinton parameters in December; namely, they need to provide the requisite political cover for Abbas to compromise. If they do not, unlike 2000, I would urge that they need to know from the United States that they will be politically exposed for failing to do their share.

In short, and in conclusion, if the Bush administration is really serious about a political horizon, it needs to have a dialogue, not just with the Israelis and the Palestinians, but also with our Arab friends, to discern the depth of their commitment to peacemaking in a very specific way.

The Mecca experience suggests that not everyone is on the same page, to put it mildly. This is not a good omen, as peacemaking re-

quires broad support. But without such assistance, there is little prospect that Secretary Rice could succeed. But instead, her mission could constitute motion without movement.

Thank you very much.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Makovsky follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF MR. DAVID MAKOVSKY, DIRECTOR, PROJECT ON THE MIDDLE EAST PEACE PROCESS, THE WASHINGTON INSTITUTE FOR NEAR EAST POLICY

Ackerman, Ranking Member Pence, and Distinguished Members of the Middle East Sub-Committee,

I am pleased to appear before you today. The Israeli-Palestinian political landscape has been rather bleak over the last several years. Between 2000–2004, the second Intifada brought almost unremitting terror and violence. Despite Israel's pullout from Gaza in the summer of 2005, the parliamentary victory of the rejectionist Hamas party in January 2006 contributed to this downward trend.

Compounding the problem of peacemaking today has been inadequate leadership of Palestinian president Mahmoud Abbas and Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Olmert. At times, Abbas has been outmaneuvered by Hamas, while at other times he has shown a willingness to yield to rather than confront his Hamas rivals. This trend was embodied last week at the Mecca summit. The agreement signed there will greatly complicate Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice's effort to reach a "political horizon" between Israelis and Palestinians, which is scheduled to be launched this Sunday in Jerusalem at a meeting with Olmert and Abbas. For his part, Olmert has been on the defensive. His coalition is solid but he and his inexperienced Defense Minister Amir Peretz have—at best—anemic public support, according to a wide variety of polls. This is because of widespread public perception that his government slipped into war last summer and then subsequently mismanaged the conflict by overstating political objectives and by not matching military moves to meet those objectives. Allegations of corruption have not helped the embattled Prime Minister's public standing either. Olmert's future may be brought into sharper focus next month as the Winograd Committee examining the conduct of the Lebanon war of last summer issues its interim report.

Secretary Rice's mission is to create a "political horizon" for the Palestinians—specifically a discussion rather than a formal negotiating channel between Olmert and Abbas—to see if they agree on principles that would underline the contours of a final deal. According to this view, Rice sees her "political horizon" discussions as both validating Abbas' focus on negotiations instead of violence and as satisfying Israeli Foreign Minister Tzipi Livni's belief that such a wide ranging discussion avoids ensuring that Israeli concessions are made in a contextual vacuum. Livni, and apparently Rice, believe that only under the rubric of discussing principles about a final status agreement can significant tradeoffs can be reached and a grand bargain can be struck. Both Rice and Livni have made clear that once such a grand deal has been struck then the interim steps called for under the moribund Roadmap could be implemented since all side know if there is light at the end of the road, and this means confidence building when it comes to security, improving daily life for the Palestinians, and settlements.

It is critical to understand how the recent Mecca summit has undercut this endeavor. On the favorable side of the ledger, the accord does bring about the prospect of halting internecine Palestinian violence which has claimed 100 Palestinian lives since December 2006. This is probably the main reason that Abbas agreed to the accord, as he is known for his non-confrontationalist style and he wanted to stop the killing. Another potential benefit is that the agreement could potentially narrow Iranian interference in the Palestinian debate through increased Saudi support. Other favorable prospects include a government with a Hamas minority in ministers, and the increased possibility that the new government will witness the release of captured Israeli soldier Gilead Shalit, which could in turn boost public support for Olmert.

However, these favorable possible outcomes must be weighed against the negative side of the ledger, and unfortunately, the drawbacks outweigh the benefits. By forging a unity government, the Mecca accord is a victory for Hamas, as a "unity government" has been a goal of Hamas. Since its victory, the movement has viewed such a wide coalition, which would enable it to be legitimized by Fatah, as a means of consolidating its electoral gains, thereby positioning itself to restart international funding without conceding any of the three principles put forward by the Quartet—US, EU, Russia and UN—namely commit to recognizing Israel, disavowing violence and adherence to past written agreements. At Mecca, Hamas resisted Abbas' insist-

ence that Hamas "commit" to these principles, due to reasons linked perhaps to heartfelt ideology which is often underestimated by people outside of Middle East and amid hope that they could drive a wedge within the international community. Despite the avowal to cease intra-Palestinian fighting, there is no mention of either recognizing Israel, or desisting from violence against Israelis.

It is hard to escape the conclusion that Abbas has legitimized an unrepentant Hamas. Current Hamas Prime Minister Ismail Haniye will remain in his office. Accordingly, before the ink at Mecca was dry, Hamas spokesmen openly declared that they will never recognize Israel. By agreeing to join a coalition with Hamas, it is very possible the distinctions between Abbas and Hamas have blurred. Under such conditions, how can Abbas call a new election and win? If Abbas and Hamas are joined, there is less incentive among people in the international community to bolster Abbas at Hamas' expense. The rationale of Rice's political horizon initiative was being done precisely for this purpose, namely to demonstrate to Palestinian moderates that it is Abbas and not Hamas who can reap major diplomatic gains. The most vocal advocate in Israel who favors Rice's "political horizon" concept is Foreign Minister Tzipi Livni, who accepted its logic, and who believed it would heighten the differences between Abbas and Hamas. She is certainly bound to be less than enthusiastic after Mecca. It is fair to predict that the very premise of the Rice exercise will come under greater scrutiny on Sunday, as Israeli officials may wonder how will it be possible to proceed with such weighty issues with an Abbas who joins a government will the rejectionist Hamas. Olmert, who did not share Livni's enthusiasm from the outset and has been skeptical of the political horizon idea because he does not think the Arabs will do their share of compromising, is likely to feel vindicated. In short, even if Abbas is willing to make a deal, Mecca has proved to many that he will not break from Hamas. As such, the ostensible blurring between Fatah and Hamas at Mecca is actually a clarifying moment. The onus is on Abbas to prove otherwise.

So far, the response to Mecca from the international community has been rather muted. The Quartet issued a statement making clear that its three criteria, mentioned above, need to be met. The muted response may be partially explained as a show of deference to Saudi Arabia, which facilitated the agreement and in so doing, departed from its historically passive position on internal Palestinian affairs. However, the lack of a response is also due to the Quartet holding out hope that the new actual PA government guidelines will prove more practical and moderate than what was mandated at Mecca, given its new composition with Hamas as the minority.

However, there is ample reason for skepticism that the PA coalition policy guidelines will substantially be substantially different from Mecca. Yes, Hamas might not be a majority in the new government, but it will have key posts. Haniye will be the Prime Minister and Hamas has the right to put forward an "independent" name as Interior Minister. Such a minister in the Middle East does not deal with national parks, but rather is usually the strongman of the regime. Failure to reach an agreement on an Interior Minister, which has long been a sticking point between Fatah and Hamas, could lead to the non-implementation of the agreement, as could deep disagreements of power-sharing between Fatah and Hamas in the Palestine Liberation Organization. Moreover, as of this writing, there is no indication that Hamas is willing to dismantle its "Executive Force"—a nascent militia in Gaza which could easily grow with fresh infusions of cash. Instead, Hamas would like the Executive Force legitimized as another PA security force. All this has implications for US policy. People who felt there was a logic to bolstering Abbas so he not be intimidated by Hamas' growing strength and therefore supported the security mission of Gen. Keith Dayton and $86 million in non-lethal military assistance, must now wonder if the new Palestinian coalition alignment could now lead to a very different outcome. While the US will not talk to Hamas ministers, the key question about who controls the Palestinian Security services seems to have an impact about how or whether, if at all, the US can or should proceed on both fronts. These are questions that require serious examination as Rice meets with Olmert and Abbas on Sunday.

Irrespective of the Dayton and $86 million questions, the Quartet should keep to its three criteria. It should urge the Saudis to refrain from delivering aid until the conditions are met. Such a commitment by the Quartet does not mean that Gaza will worsen. According to the UN Special Coordinator's office in the Mideast earlier this week, overall foreign aid to the Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza reached $1.3 billion in 2006. Of this, some $750–$800 million was channeled through the Temporary International Mechanism, World Bank and Arab donors. Another $430–$450 million was channeled via the UN system and non-government organizations for humanitarian programs, mainly in the form of direct food and cash assistance to the people. Virtually no aid was programmed through government line

ministries. It is estimated that the $1.3 billion of 2006 was 10% above the year before, although there was an obvious shortfall of tax revenue passed by Israel.

The Mecca accord has made it clear that Abbas is more dependent upon Hamas than ever before. He is demonstrating that he will prefer Palestinian unity to peace with Israel. As such, many wonder if Rice is doomed to fail in such an ambitious effort to reach common principles that will end the conflict. Therefore, the only way to prove the opposite it can be argued is that Rice pursue her course and see if Abbas will pick peaceful compromise with Israel over Palestinian unity on the core issues needed to resolve the conflict. The odds are slim. The litmus test will be the refugee question. The territorial demands made upon a weakened Olmert will be overwhelming, but without Abbas willing to compromise, as well, there is no chance that an overall deal can be reached. If Abbas can demonstrate that he can compromise on a core issue like refugees, Olmert could be politically energized to make requisite territorial compromises as well.

It is hard to see how the Rice mission on creating a "political horizon" can succeed without the active involvement of the Saudis and Egyptians so they back compromises, including this key issue. Without their participation, Abbas will not likely feel he has the Arab backing to proceed. Therefore, as the Saudis move from backstage to center-stage when it comes to Mideast diplomacy, there need to be urgent US-Saudi high-level consultations about whether or not the two countries share a common outlook towards peacemaking. The Mecca accord raises key questions about whether the US and Saudi Arabia are aligned, or whether they are working at cross-purposes.

A benign interpretation of Riyadh's intentions is that the Saudis realize the risk of radicalism and are ready to take the plunge into Arab-Israeli peacemaking. According to this view, there is a changing regional context for the US that could create opportunities. There is little doubt that the Saudis, along with Egypt and Jordan where I just visited, fear that an ascendant Iran could change the balance of power in the Middle East. These governments fear Iran gaining nuclear weapons and Iran as a destabilizing force in the Mideast seeking to upend any existing order. The wake-up call was last summer's war between Israel and Hizbullah, where Riyadh took the unprecedented step of denouncing Hizbullah for being "reckless" and repeated it despite public criticism. The calculus is simple: If Iran supports sub-state Shia actors such as Hizbullah in Lebanon under a Sunni-led coalition of Fuad Siniora, it is well within the realm of possibility that Tehran could support similar sub-state Shia groups in Saudi Arabia, where the benefits of the world's largest oil reserves are enticing. Moreover, if a Shia Iran has a demonstrated willingness to provide material support to a Sunni-Hamas in Gaza, why would not replicate this formula and support other Sunni groups of similar extremist ideology to destabilize other Arab regimes like Egypt? According to the benign interpretation, the fear of Iran driven home the risk of rejectionism to Riyadh and they view Israeli-Palestinian peacemaking as at least one means to defeat it.

There is a less benign interpretation. It states that what is driving Saudi Arabia is sectarianism, not moderation. Under this view, Riyadh has no problem supporting Hamas' program, so long as they are Sunni and can keep Iranian money and influence at bay. According to this view, the Saudis have not changed at all and are not a partner for peace.

It would be useful for the US to explore Saudi objectives and strategies. This would be beneficial not just to avoid surprises in Mecca, but to see if support for Hamas would be linked to a change of its platform. Furthermore, the US needs to know if a political horizon between Israel and the Palestinians can succeed. Specifically, contrary to assertions of former President Jimmy Carter and others, this entire conflict is not merely about land. Indeed, land is the most solvable part of this conflict. There are sufficient land swap formulas to resolve the territorial dimension of this conflict if one accepts the premise that both Israel and Palestine are entitled to a state of their own. This idea is accepted by Israel and Abbas, but not the Islamists. Moreover, apart from this recognition, there is a need to resolve Arab sections of east Jerusalem, and how to resolve the Palestinian refugee problem so they know that they can inhabit a new Palestinian state without inundating Israel and fundamentally altering its demographics.

The Arab Initiative of 2002 is often touted by Arab states, but at least in its current form, it is an inadequate framework for such talks. There are at least three major problems with the initiative as it is currently worded. First, the issue of refugees in the Arab Initiative is addressed in a manner that, semantics aside, is best interpreted as meaning no compromise at all. Second, it gives little flexibility on how territorial arrangements are reached. Third, it essentially gives the Syrians veto over the Palestinian track, since there must be full withdrawal on all fronts or else, there is no normalization. Fourth, the Arab Initiative is completely back-

loaded. It is currently structured that Israel does all the heavy lifting of getting out of the West Bank, East Jerusalem and the Golan Heights. Only after Israel does everything, will the Arabs provide Israel with the flag of normalization. There are no efforts to take parallel steps that could revive the Israeli center as it undertakes such herculean tasks. So far, the Israeli public has seen its pullouts from Lebanon in 2000 and Gaza in 2005 met with Katyusha and Qassem rockets, respectively, and this reinforces a sense among some that peacemaking is not possible. Such parallelism, I have argued for years, would require an Arab roadmap to go in parallel with Israeli territorial withdrawals. It needs to be demonstrated by deeds that withdrawal will make Israel more secure rather more vulnerable. For the Initiative to be useful, it needs substantial modification.

If Secretary Rice is genuine in pursuing a political horizon in an era of weak leadership, one needs to consider whether Riyadh and Cairo are willing to do something that they were not willing to do in 2000 at the time of the Camp David (July) and the Clinton Parameters (December). Namely, they need to provide the requisite political cover for Abbas to make the key compromise so that the Palestinian refugees can inhabit the Palestinian state, go to a third country, or receive financial compensation, but not go back to Israel. Unless there is Arab cover on such core issues—especially the refugee issue which could likely trigger an Olmert response and lead to parallel action—it is hard to see how Rice can succeed.

In short, if the Bush Administration is really serious about a political horizon, it needs to have a dialogue not just with Israelis and Palestinians but also with our Arab friends to discern the depth of their commitment to peacemaking in a very specific way. The Mecca experience suggests that not everyone is on the same page. It is not a good omen, as peacemaking requires broad support. Without such assistance, there is a prospect that a very well-intended Rice mission could constitute motion without movement.

Thank you.

Mr. ACKERMAN. Thank you very much, Mr. Makovsky.

Ambassador Indyk.

STATEMENT OF THE HONORABLE MARTIN S. INDYK, DIRECTOR, SABAN CENTER FOR MIDDLE EAST POLICY, THE BROOKINGS INSTITUTION

Mr. INDYK. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman, for the opportunity to address this subcommittee. I want to begin by congratulating you on assuming the chair, and it is very good to see you in that position.

There is a strange disconnect, which I think you, Mr. Chairman, now referred to in your opening remarks, between the initiative that the Secretary of State is about to embark upon for peacemaking in the Middle East and the reality on the ground. And that disconnect seems certain to render such efforts futile. So why, then, is she engaging?

I think, as David has suggested, that she sees and she speaks of a new opportunity emerging from the war in Lebanon last summer, when Israel and Saudi Arabia in particular found themselves on the same side for once against Hezbollah and Iran. And it is this emerging threat from Iran, the sense that Iran's rise in the region is generating a common threat to both Sunni moderate Arab leaders and to Israel, that I think is what gives the Secretary the sense that there may be an opportunity here.

Since all these neighbors face a common threat from Iran, the assumption is that they have a common interest in working together. But such a virtual alliance can only cohere if there is a basis for the Sunni leaders, particularly King Abdullah of Saudi Arabia, to demonstrate that he has the justification for cohabiting with Israel. And there the glue of this virtual alliance is progress on an Israeli-Palestinian peace process.

That kind of new opportunity is something that she is now trying to take advantage of, through this idea of developing a political horizon of a two-state solution that would give Israelis and Palestinians a better sense of what they can expect at the end of the peace process. What the proximate borders of the Palestinian state might look like, whether refugees would have a right of return to Israel or not, what would happen to the major settlement blocks, how could Jerusalem become the capitol of two states.

This is the kind of agenda which I believe she wants to discuss in informal talks with Prime Minister Olmert and President Mahmoud Abbas. Ironically, this is what President Clinton attempted to do at the end of his administration, when he proposed the Clinton Parameters for an Israeli-Palestinian final status agreement. The difference between the Secretary's political horizon and President Clinton's parameters is likely to be very little, indeed.

I believe that the Secretary deserves congressional support for this effort, not just because of its closeness to the Clinton approach, which I had a role in helping define. It is rather because defining the end game of peace negotiations with greater granularity has been sorely missing from the Bush administration's approach over the last 6 years. It is absent from the roadmap of the quartet, which defines the phases through which the parties must pass, but is silent on what awaits them on the other side. That has done little to assuage Israeli fears that Congressman Sherman referred to, that the Palestinian state that might emerge will merely be a springboard for further efforts to destroy the Jewish state; and it has done little to persuade Palestinians that the state that President Bush has offered them will be viable, contiguous, and independent.

Defining a political horizon can therefore boost confidence in the process, and enable the Israeli and Palestinian leaderships to justify better the painful steps that would have to be taken along the way. It is not a substitute for the roadmap, but rather a complement to it, and a means of encouraging the long-delayed journey along it by both sides.

All of this should be welcome news. But the Secretary's initiative comes late in the game, when the ground seems unfertile for this new effort. My colleague, David Makovsky, has already referred to the weakness of both Prime Minister Olmert and President Mahmoud Abbas, the Secretary of State's partners in this new effort.

I think that Olmert's first priority is to ensure his own political survival. He has to stabilize his government. And without doing that, he cannot pursue a peace process which is inherently destabilizing because of the Secretary's idea that they should now discuss the politically fraught issues of settlements, refugees, Jerusalem, et cetera.

At a minimum, I think he will want to wait at least until the Labor Party leadership contest is resolved at the end of May. And he may have a different partner in the Labor Party leader and defense minister to work with.

On the other side, President Mahmoud Abbas is engaged in his own struggle for survival with Hamas. To head off an incipient civil

war in Gaza, Abu Mazen, Mahmoud Abbas, has now, as we know, joined forces with Hamas in this national unity government.

Hamas, in the process, has conceded some important portfolios: The Interior, Finance and Foreign Ministries. It no longer has a majority in the cabinet. Fifteen of the portfolios are not in Hamas' hands. That is 15 out of 24. It only has nine now. But it has not yielded on its fundamental principles that it will not recognize Israel, nor foreswear the violence and terrorism that it calls resistance.

So in these circumstances, how can the Secretary and Prime Minister Olmert engage with Abu Mazen? From a legal standpoint, Abu Mazen, as chairman of the PLO, has the legal authority to negotiate with Israel. All the previous negotiations with Israel were conducted by Israel, the Government of Israel, and the Palestine Liberation Organization. They were not conducted with the Palestinian Authority. The Palestinian Authority is a product of the agreements that were struck during those negotiations. And Israel still, from a legal standpoint, is dealing with the PLO when it comes to negotiations, especially final-status negotiations.

So he is fully empowered to negotiate with Israel. And one option, the option that I think both Prime Minister Olmert and the Secretary of State are going to take, is simply to ignore the fact that Hamas is now in a cohabitation agreement with Abu Mazen as they conduct these talks about the political horizon.

But Prime Minister Olmert's rivals are not going to be willing to ignore the cohabitation agreement, and they will surely argue that any concession he makes, even a concession in principle to Abu Mazen, will be concessions now made to his Hamas partner, as well.

And on the other side, any understanding that Abu Mazen might reach with Olmert and Rice that concedes anything to Israel is likely to be denounced by Hamas, his partner, as a betrayal of Palestinian rights. So in those circumstances, it is difficult to see how these discussions can really move forward, given the political jeopardy involved.

Beyond that, were they to move forward, Abu Mazen does not have the capability to deliver on any commitments he might make in the peace process. Hamas, as we know, is systematically establishing a failed terrorist state in Gaza. In the West Bank it is a little different; Hamas is very weak there, thanks to the systematic efforts of the Israel Defense Forces over the last 4 years to destroy its infrastructure of terror. But Abu Mazen will need to restructure, train, and equip security forces loyal to the presidency before he can assume responsibility there for any territory from which the Israeli Army might withdraw.

Moreover, because American influence in the Middle East has been so weakened by the debacle in Iraq, Secretary Rice is no longer able to wield it in a way that might compensate for the weakness of local partners. And without Presidential engagement, it is difficult to imagine that she could overcome the formidable obstacles to real progress in any negotiation. But it is hard to believe that this President is now likely to devote, in his waning years, the kind of effort involved to a peacemaking endeavor which, frankly speaking, I don't think he has ever really believed in.

But having said all of that, I don't think the situation is as bleak as it appears on the surface. And the reason for that is that there are unusual alliances, tacit alliances now emerging precisely as a result of Iran's power play in the region.

The first is between Prime Minister Olmert and King Abdullah of Saudi Arabia. King Abdullah cannot accept Iranian Shi'a Persian hegemony in the region. And the only way that he can counter it, I believe, is by showing that a path of moderation and peacemaking can provide a better future for the Arab world.

And for Prime Minister Olmert, Saudi involvement in peacemaking can help to compensate for the Israeli public's disillusionment with the Palestinians as partners. King Abdullah's offer to Israel of real peace and normalization with the Arab world, contained in the Arab League's peace initiative of 2002, if lent real credibility by Saudi Arabia's direct engagement with Israel, could boost Olmert's ability to sell a West Bank withdrawal to Israelis who are keen to be rid of the burden of occupation, but don't see a credible Arab partner to take responsibility for it.

The second unusual emerging partnership is between Ehud Olmert and Mahmoud Abbas. The Palestinian leader, like his Saudi counterpart, is threatened by Iranian backing for Hamas, Iranian control of the Palestine Islamic jihad, and even renegades in Abu Mazen's own Fatah party. Iran is now blocking an Egyptian-brokered effort to get a prisoner swap that would release the Israeli prisoners held both by Hamas and by Hezbollah. Iran is financing Hamas' takeover of Gaza. And Hamas is now training its cadres, both in Tehran and in Gaza.

Olmert understands, therefore, that it is in Israel's interest to strengthen Mahmoud Abbas in his struggle with Iran and Hamas. That is why he handed over the $100 million in Palestinian tax revenues. That is why he agreed to Egypt's transfer of weapons to Abbas' security forces. And that is why he is using the Israeli Army systematically to destroy Hamas' infrastructure in the West Bank.

It is too early, Mr. Chairman, for these emerging partnerships to yield a viable peace negotiation. But it is not too early, in my view, for a newly engaged Secretary of State to start to put those building blocks in place. Sustaining a conversation with Abbas and Olmert about a political horizon is just one of those blocks.

The United States still needs to make a serious effort to rebuild the capabilities of the Palestinian President, particularly in the security realm, where I still think that Congress should go ahead with the security package the administration is now seeking, albeit with the kinds of benchmarks and assurances and transparency about where the money will go to give some assurance that it is not going to end up in the hands of Hamas or security forces under Hamas' control.

And the Secretary of State—I agree here with David Makovsky—needs to carefully orchestrate this virtual alliance between moderate Sunni Arab leaders and Israel, so that the Arab states are more visibly and actively involved in bolstering a process they claim to care so much about.

Who knows, Mr. Chairman, from these modest beginnings, nurtured by a common Iranian threat and the hope of peace that still

lies in many Israeli and Palestinian hearts, great things may eventually grow.

Thank you very much.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Indyk follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE HONORABLE MARTIN S. INDYK, DIRECTOR, SABAN CENTER FOR MIDDLE EAST POLICY, THE BROOKINGS INSTITUTION

There is a strange disconnect between the new consensus that has developed in Washington about the need to engage in Middle East peacemaking and the reality on the ground that seems certain to render such efforts futile. But in the Middle East, things are never what they seem. Ground that looks on the surface to be arid may in fact contain the seeds of a new Israeli-Arab peace partnership. If properly nurtured by a newly engaged Secretary of State, backed by a supportive Congress they can yet yield the fruits of reconciliation. However, it will take lowered expectations, a tolerance for complexity, and, above all, sustained attention for this effort to produce results.

For six years, the Bush Administration has resisted the notion that peacemaking in the Middle East could advantage American interests there. Early on, President Bush reached the judgment that his predecessor's efforts were a waste of time. The words "Middle East peace process" were literally banned from the State Department's lexicon. Instead, transformation in the Middle East was to take place on the Bush Administration's watch not through peacemaking but through regime change and democratization. Six years later, the President's strategy is in deep trouble, and there is now a new receptivity in Washington to relaunching the Middle East peace process.

Joining the new consensus are those who have always argued that the failure to solve the Palestinian problem is the root cause of America's difficulties in the region. These voices from a bygone era were not able to get much traction even when their views were repackaged in the recommendations of the Baker-Hamilton Iraq Study Group Report. However, they have now been joined by a more influential group of "neo-realists" whose passion for democratization has been replaced by concern for the emerging threat from Iran. In their view, Iran's rise in the region can only be countered by the development of a new coalition of regional moderates that includes the Sunni Arab states led by Saudi Arabia and Egypt, as well as Turkey and Israel. Since all these neighbors face a common threat from Iran, the assumption is that they have a common interest in working together. The "neo-realists" recognize that such a virtual alliance can only cohere with the glue of an Israeli-Palestinian peace process that would enable the Sunni Arabs to cohabit with Israel and would encourage Israel to strengthen the weakest links in this new chain—the Sunni leaders of Palestine and Lebanon.

Secretary of State Rice seems to be thinking along these lines when she speaks of "a new opportunity" for peacemaking that emerged from the war in Lebanon last summer when Israel and Saudi Arabia found themselves on the same side against Hezbollah and Iran.

Consequently, while the President has dispatched another carrier battle group to the Gulf and ordered American forces to take on Iranian trouble-makers in Iraq, Secretary of State Rice has committed to making Israeli-Palestinian reconciliation her first priority. In pursuit of that priority, she will host a trilateral meeting with Prime Minister Olmert and President Mahmoud Abbas on February 19 in Jerusalem, and has committed to monthly visits to the region until she has prepared the ground for a major peace initiative. She deserves Congressional support for this effort.

Secretary Rice's admirable objective is to launch informal talks on the "political horizon" of a two-state solution that would give Israelis and Palestinians alike a better sense of what they can expect at the end of the peace process: what the proximate borders of the Palestinian state might look like; whether refugees would have a "right of return" to Israel; what would happen to the major settlement blocs; how could Jerusalem become the capital of two states. Ironically, this is what President Clinton attempted to do at the end of his administration when he proposed the "Clinton Parameters" for an Israeli-Palestinian final status agreement.

Defining the end game of peace negotiations with greater granularity has been sorely missing from the Bush Administration's approach. It is absent from the Quartet's Road Map which defines the phases through which the parties must pass but is silent on what awaits them on the other side—except the general proposition that there will be two states for two people. That has done little to assuage Israeli fears that the Palestinian state aborning will merely be a springboard for further efforts

to destroy the Jewish state. And it has done little to persuade Palestinians that their state will be viable, contiguous and independent. Defining the "political horizon" can therefore boost confidence in the process and enable the Israeli and Palestinian leaderships to better justify the painful steps that will have to be taken along the way. It is not a substitute for the Road Map but rather a complement to it, and a means of encouraging the long-delayed journey along it by both sides.

All of this should be welcome news for those who care about the future of Israel and understand that the resolution of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict would help stabilize a volatile region where American interests are heavily engaged. But it comes late in the game. Six years of purposeful disengagement from the Israeli-Palestinian peace process by the Bush Administration has left the ground seemingly unfertile for this new effort.

For instance, no meaningful process can be constructed without the active involvement of Israel. Yet its prime minister, Ehud Olmert, is engaged in his own personal struggle for political survival. His approval ratings are below 14 percent. He has an incompetent defense minister who cannot be fired because he heads up the Labor Party, Olmert's main coalition partner. The Prime Minister is anxiously awaiting the conclusions of the Winograd Commission of Inquiry into his conduct of the Lebanon War last summer. And now he faces a criminal investigation. Olmert's first priority, necessarily, is to stabilize his government. Without that he cannot pursue a peace process, which is inherently destabilizing because of the politically fraught issues involved (settlements, refugees, Jerusalem, etc.).

At a minimum, he will want to wait until the Labor Party leadership contest in May, which could produce a new candidate for Defense Minister in Ehud Barak (a former Chief of Staff and Israel's most decorated soldier) or Ami Ayalon (former head of the Israel Navy and the Shin Bet internal security services). Both Barak and Ayalon are on record as supporting the end game that President Clinton outlined at the end of his administration.

On the other side, Olmert's putative partner, Palestinian president Mahmoud Abbas (aka Abu Mazen), is engaged in his own struggle for survival with Hamas an Islamist movement with a terrorist cadre that seeks to replace Israel not negotiate peace with it. To head off an incipient civil war in Gaza, Abu Mazen has now joined forces with Hamas in a National Unity Government. But even though Hamas may have conceded some important cabinet portfolios (the interior, finance and foreign ministers will be independents), it has not yielded at all on its fundamental principles—no recognition of Israel and no foreswearing of "resistance" (i.e. violence and terrorism).

Abu Mazen can still engage in talks with Olmert about the end game of a Palestinian state. That is because, from a legal standpoint, negotiations have always taken place between Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organization, rather than the Palestinian Authority that is now headed by a Hamas prime minister. Abu Mazen is Chairman of the PLO and is therefore fully empowered to negotiate with Israel. Therefore Rice, Olmert and Abbas can and probably will simply ignore the fact that Hamas is now in a cohabitation agreement with Fatah, the Palestinian President's political party, when they meet next weekend.

But Olmert's political rivals will not ignore the argument that any concession he makes to Abu Mazen will now be made to his Hamas partner as well. And any understanding Abu Mazen might reach with Olmert and Rice that concedes anything to Israel is likely to be denounced by Hamas as a betrayal of Palestinian rights.

Beyond the political jeopardy involved in talking about the end game, lies the reality that Abu Mazen does not yet have the capability to deliver on any commitments he might make in the peace process. Hamas is systematically establishing its control on the ground in Gaza, turning it into a mini failed terror state. In the West Bank, Hamas has been seriously weakened by years of systematic destruction of its cadres and infrastructure by the Israel Defense Forces. However, Abu Mazen will need to restructure, train and equip the security forces loyal to the Presidency before he can assume responsibility there for any territory from which the IDF withdraws.

Moreover, because American influence in the Middle East has been so weakened by the debacle in Iraq, Secretary Rice is no longer able to wield it in a way that might compensate for the weakness of the local partners. Moreover, without presidential engagement, it's difficult to imagine that Rice could overcome the formidable obstacles to real progress in any negotiation. Yet, facing defeat in Iraq, a doubting public at home, and a Democrat-controlled Congress, there is a real question whether her president is willing to devote the waning years of his presidency to a peacemaking endeavor which he has never believed in.

Nevertheless, the situation is not as bleak as it appears. Iran's play for regional hegemony is helping to forge unusual tacit alliances in response. The first is be-

tween Olmert and King Abdullah of Saudi Arabia. Abdullah cannot accept Persian, Shia Iran's attempt to be the arbiter of Arab interests in Iraq, Lebanon and Palestine. He knows that Iranian President Ahmadinejad and Hezbollah leader Hassan Nasrallah are popular in the Sunni Arab streets of Riyadh and Cairo. Their promise of dignity and justice through violence, terrorism and defiance of the international community is a potent and dangerous brew. Abdullah can only counter it by showing that his way of moderation and peacemaking can provide a better future for the Arab world.

For Olmert, Saudi involvement in peacemaking can help to compensate for the Israeli public's disillusionment with the Palestinians as partners. Abdullah's offer to Israel of real peace with the Arab world (contained in his peace plan that was endorsed by the Beirut Arab League summit in 2002), if lent credibility at the appropriate moment by direct Saudi involvement with Israel, could boost Olmert's ability to sell a West Bank withdrawal to Israelis who are keen to be rid of the burden of the West Bank but don't see a credible Arab partner to take responsibility for it.

The second unusual emerging partnership is between Olmert and Mahmoud Abbas. The Palestinian leader, like his Saudi counterpart, is threatened by Iranian backing for Hamas, Palestine Islamic Jihad, and even renegades in his own Fatah party. Iran is blocking an Egyptian-brokered prisoner swap, financing Hamas's takeover of Gaza and training its cadres. Olmert understands that it is in Israel's interests to strengthen Abbas in his struggle with Iran and Hamas, which is why he has handed over $100 million of Palestinian tax revenues, agreed to Egypt's transfer of weapons to Abbas' security forces, and is using the Israeli army systematically to destroy Hamas' infrastructure in the West Bank.

It is too early for these emerging partnerships to yield a viable peace negotiation. But it is not too early for a newly engaged Secretary of State to start to put the building blocks in place. Sustaining a conversation with Abbas and Olmert about the "political horizon" is just one of those blocks. The United States will have to make a serious effort to rebuild the capabilities of the Palestinian Presidency, particularly in the security realm where Congress needs to go ahead with the security package the Administration is seeking. And the Secretary of State will have to carefully orchestrate the nascent virtual alliance between moderate Sunni Arab leaders and Israel so that the Arab states are more visibly and actively involved in bolstering a process they claim to care so much about.

Who knows, from these modest beginnings, nurtured by a common Iranian threat and the hope for peace that still lies in many Israeli and Palestinian hearts, great things may eventually grow. But that will only happen if the Secretary of State sustains her involvement in the effort over the remaining years of this administration, if President Bush is willing seriously to invest and engage in the process, and if Congress is prepared to work with them.

Mr. ACKERMAN. Thank you, Ambassador.

Dr. Pipes.

STATEMENT OF THE HONORABLE DANIEL PIPES, DIRECTOR, MIDDLE EAST FORUM

Mr. PIPES. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and Ranking Member Pence.

I am in broad agreement with almost everything that has been said. What I would like to do is complement it by looking at what one might call the big picture.

You asked in the title of this hearing about "Next Steps in the Israeli-Palestinian Peace Process." I shall argue three points. First, that these negotiations have so far been so counter-productive, they could better be called a war process; that their failure results from an Israeli conceptual error 15 years ago about the nature of warfare; and third, that the U.S. Government should urge Jerusalem to forgo negotiations, and instead return to its earlier policy of deterrence.

So first, Mr. Chairman, to review the peace process. It is embarrassing to recall today the elation and expectations that accompanied the signing of the Oslo Accords in September 1993, when

Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin shook hands with Yasir Arafat. For some time afterwards, "The Handshake," as it was known, served as a symbol of brilliant diplomacy whereby each side achieved what it most wanted—dignity and autonomy for the Palestinians; recognition and security for the Israelis.

President Clinton lauded that deal as "a great occasion of history." Yasir Arafat called it "an historic event inaugurating a new epoch." Shimon Peres, the former minister of Israel, discerned in it "the outline of peace in the Middle East."

These heady expectations were then grievously disappointed. Before Oslo, when Palestinians still lived under Israeli control, they benefitted from the rule of law and a growing economy independent of international welfare. They enjoyed functioning schools and hospitals. They traveled without checkpoints and had free access to Israeli territory. They even founded universities. Terrorism was declining as acceptance of Israel increased.

However, then came Oslo, which brought Palestinians not peace but tyranny, failed institutions, poverty, corruption, a death cult, suicide factories, and Islamist radicalization.

Yasir Arafat early on promised that the West Bank and Gaza would evolve into what he called "the Singapore of the Middle East," but the reality he shaped became a nightmare of dependence, inhumanity and loathing.

As for the Israelis, Oslo brought unprecedented terrorism. If the two hands in the Rabin-Arafat handshake symbolize Oslo's early hopes, the two bloody hands of a young Palestinian male who had just lynched Israeli reservists in Ramallah in October 2000 that represented its dismal end.

Oslo provoked deep internal rifts and harmed Israel's standing internationally. Israelis watched helplessly as Palestinian rage spiraled upwards, spawning such moral perversions as the United Nations World Conference against Racism in Durban in 2001. That rage also reopened among Westerners the issue of Israel's continued existence, especially on the hard left. From Israel's perspective, 7 years of Oslo diplomacy undid 45 years' success in warfare.

Palestinians and Israelis agree on little, but they concur that Oslo was a disaster.

Now, why was it a disaster? Where did things go so badly wrong? Why did the peace process turn into a war process? Where lay the flaws in so promising an agreement?

Of its many errors, and I think all analysts will agree there are many, the ultimate mistake lay in Yitzhak Rabin's misunderstanding of how a war ends. And it is revealed in this catchphrase, which he said repeatedly; "One does not make peace with one's friend. One makes peace with one's enemy."

The Israeli prime minister implied by this that wars are concluded through a mix of good will, conciliation, concessions, mediation, flexibility, restraint, generosity, and compromise, all topped off with signatures on official documents. In this spirit, his government initiated an array of concessions, hoping that the Palestinians would reciprocate. But they did not. Those concessions, in fact, made matters worse.

Still in a war mode, Palestinians understood the Israeli efforts to make peace as signals, instead, of demoralization and of weakness.

The concessions reduced Palestinian awe of Israel, made it appear vulnerable, and incited irredentist dreams of its annihilation. Each Oslo-negotiated gesture by Israel further exhilarated, radicalized, and mobilized the Palestinian body politic. The quiet hope of 1993 to eliminate Israel gained traction, becoming a deafening demand by the year 2000.

Rabin in short made a shattering mistake, which his successors then repeated. One does not, in fact, make peace with one's enemy; one makes peace with one's former enemy. Peace nearly always requires one side in a conflict to give up its goals by being defeated. Rather than vainly trying to close down a war through good will, the way to end a war, Mr. Chairman, is by winning it.

"War is an act of violence to compel the enemy to fulfill our will." That is what the Prussian strategist Carl von Clausewitz wrote in 1832. "War is an act of violence to compel the enemy to fulfill our will." And however much technological advancement there has been in the nearly two centuries since he wrote that, the basic insight remains valid. Victory consists of imposing one's will on the enemy of compelling him to give up his war goals. Wars usually end when one side gives up its hope of winning when its will to fight has been crushed.

Arabs and Israelis since 1948 have pursued static and binary goals. Arabs have fought to eliminate Israel; Israelis have fought to win their neighbors' acceptance. The details have varied over the decades, with multiple ideologies, strategies, leading actors, and so forth, but the goals have barely changed. The Arabs have pursued their war aims with patience, determination and purpose. In response, Israelis sustained a formidable record of strategic vision and tactical brilliance in the period 1948 to 1993.

Over time, however, as Israel developed into a vibrant, modern, democratic country, its populace grew impatient with the humiliating, slow, tedious task of convincing Arabs to accept their political existence. By now, almost no one in Israel sees victory as the goal; no major political figure on the scene today calls for victory in war.

Since 1993, in brief, Mr. Chairman, the Arabs have sought victory while Israelis have sought compromise.

It is my view that he who does not win, loses. To survive, Israelis must eventually return to the pre-1993 policy of establishing that Israel is strong, tough and permanent, the policy of deterrence: The long, boring, difficult, bitter and expensive task of convincing Palestinians and others that the Jewish state is permanent and that dreams of eliminating it are doomed.

This will not be quick or easy. Perceptions of Israel's weakness due to terrible missteps during the Oslo years and after, such as the Gaza withdrawal of 2005, have sunk into Palestinian consciousness and will presumably require decades of effort to reverse. Nor will it be pretty. Defeat in war typically entails experiencing the bitter crucible of deprivation, failure and despair.

I look at this process, Mr. Chairman, through a simple prism. Any development that encourages Palestinians to think they can eliminate Israel is negative, any development that encourages them to give up that goal is positive.

The Palestinians' defeat will be recognizable when, over a protracted period, and with complete consistency, they prove that they have accepted Israel.

My third and final point: American policy. Like all outsiders to the conflict, Americans face a stark choice. Do we endorse the Palestinian goal of eliminating Israel, or do we endorse the Israeli goal of winning its neighbors' acceptance?

To state this choice is to make clear that there is no choice—the first is offensive in intent; the second defensive. No decent person can endorse the Palestinians' goal of eliminating their neighbor, and along with every President since Harry S Truman and every congressional resolution and vote since then, the 110th Congress must continue to stand with Israel in its drive to win its acceptance.

Not only is this an obvious moral choice, but I think it is important to add that a Palestinian defeat at Israel's hands is actually the best thing that would ever happen to them. Compelling Palestinians finally to give up on their foul, irredentist dream would liberate them to focus on their own polity, economy, society, and culture. Palestinians need to experience the certitude of defeat to become a normal people—one where parents stop celebrating their children becoming suicide terrorists; where something matters beyond the evil obsession of anti-Zionist rejectionism.

Americans especially need to understand Israel's predicament and help it win its war, for the U.S. Government has, obviously, a vital role in this theater. My analysis implies a radically different approach for the Bush administration, and for this Congress.

On the negative side, it implies that Palestinians must be led to understand that benefits will flow only after they prove their acceptance of Israel. Until then, no diplomacy, no discussion of final status, no recognition as a state and certainly no financial aid or weapons.

On the positive side, the administration and Congress should work with Israel, the Arab states and others to induce the Palestinians to accept Israel's existence by convincing them the gig is up, that they have lost.

Diplomacy aiming to shut down the Arab-Israeli conflict is premature until Palestinians give up their hideous anti-Zionist obsession. When that moment arrives, negotiations can reopen with the issues of the 1990s—borders, resources, armaments, sanctities, residential rights—taken up anew.

But that moment is years or decades away. In the meantime, a war needs to be won.

Thank you.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Pipes follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE HONORABLE DANIEL PIPES, DIRECTOR, MIDDLE EAST FORUM

What next in Israeli-Palestinian negotiations, which some call the "peace process"?

I shall argue three points: that these negotiations have been so counterproductive, they could better be called the "war process"; that their failure results from an Israeli conceptual error fifteen years ago about the nature of warfare; and that the U.S. government should urge Jerusalem to forego negotiations and return instead to its earlier policy of deterrence.

Reviewing the "Peace Process"

It is embarrassing to recall the elation and expectations that accompanied the signing of the Oslo accords in September 1993, when Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin shook hands with Yasir Arafat, the Palestinian leader. For some years afterward, "The Handshake" (as it was known) served as the symbol of brilliant diplomacy, whereby each side achieved what it most wanted: dignity and autonomy for the Palestinians, recognition and security for the Israelis.

President *Bill Clinton* lauded the deal as a "great occasion of history." Secretary of State Warren Christopher ruminated on how "the impossible is within our reach."[1] *Yasir Arafat* called it an "historic event, inaugurating a new epoch." Foreign Minister Shimon Peres of Israel discerned in it "the outline of peace in the Middle East."[2] The press enthused; one columnist, Anthony Lewis of *The New York Times*, deemed the agreement "ingeniously built"[3] and "stunning."[4] *Time* magazine made the three principals its "men of the year" for 1993.

These heady expectations were then grievously disappointed. Before Oslo, when Palestinians lived under Israeli control, they benefited from the rule of law and a growing economy, independent of international welfare. They enjoyed functioning schools and hospitals, they traveled without checkpoints and had free access to Israeli territory. They even founded universities. Terrorism was declining as acceptance of Israel increased. Then came Oslo, which brought Palestinians not peace but tyranny, failed institutions, poverty, corruption, a death cult, suicide factories, and Islamist radicalization. Yasir Arafat early on had promised that the West Bank and Gaza would evolve into the "Singapore of the Middle East,"[5] but the reality he shaped became a nightmare of dependence, inhumanity, and loathing.

To Israelis, Oslo brought unprecedented terrorism; if the two hands in the Rabin-Arafat handshake symbolized Oslo's early hopes, the *two bloody hands* of a young Palestinian male who had just lynched Israeli reservists in Ramallah in October 2000 represented its dismal end. Oslo also provoked deep internal rifts and harming the country's standing internationally. Israelis watched helplessly as Palestinian rage spiraled upwards, spawning such moral perversions as the U.N. World Conference Against Racism in Durban. That rage also re-opened among Westerners the issue of their country's continued existence, especially on the Left. From Israel's perspective, seven years of Oslo diplomacy largely undid 45 years' success in warfare.

Palestinians and Israelis agree on little, but they concur that the Oslo accords failed.

Yitzhak Rabin's Error

Why did things go so badly wrong? Where lay the flaws in so promising an agreement?

Of its multiple errors, the ultimate mistake lay in Yitzhak Rabin's misunderstanding of how war ends, as revealed by his *catch-phrase*, "one does not make peace with one's friends. One makes peace with one's enemy." The Israeli prime minister implied that war is concluded through a mix of goodwill, conciliation, concessions, mediation, flexibility, restraint, generosity, and compromise, all topped off with signatures on official documents. In this spirit, his government initiated an array of concessions, hoping that Palestinians would reciprocate.

They did not. Those concessions, in fact, made matters worse. Still in war mode, Palestinians understood Israeli efforts to "make peace" as signals of demoralization and weakness. The concessions reduced Palestinian awe of the country, made it appear vulnerable, and incited irredentist dreams of its annihilation. Each Oslo-negotiated gesture by Israel further exhilarated, radicalized, and mobilized the Palestinian body politic. The quiet hope of 1993 to eliminate Israel gained traction, becoming a deafening demand by 2000. Venomous speech and violent actions soared. Polls and votes suggest a mere 20 percent of the Palestinian population today accepts Israel's simple right to exist.

Rabin made a shattering mistake, which his successors repeated. One does not "make peace with one's enemy" but with one's *former enemy*. Peace nearly always requires one side in a conflict to give up its goals by being defeated. Rather than vainly trying to close down a war through goodwill, the way to end a war is by winning it.

"War is an act of violence to compel the enemy to fulfill our will," wrote the Prussian strategist Karl von *Clausewitz* in 1832, and technological advancement has not

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[1] http://www.washingtoninstitute.org/pubs/wye/warren.htm.
[2] *Los Angeles Times*, 14 September 1993.
[3] *The New York Times*, 17 September 1993.
[4] *The New York Times*, 13 September 1993.
[5] Agence France-Presse, 4 June 1996.

altered this insight. So long as both sides hope to achieve their war ambitions, fighting either continues or potentially can resume. Victory consists of imposing one's will on the enemy by compelling him to give up his war goals. Wars usually end when one side gives up its hope of winning, when its will to fight has been crushed.

Defeat, one might think, usually follows on a devastating battlefield loss, as was the case of the Axis in 1945. But that has rarely occurred during the past sixty years. Battlefield losses by the Arab states to Israel in 1948–82, by North Korea in 1953, by Saddam Hussein in 1991, and by Iraqi Sunnis in 2003 did not translate into despair and giving up. Morale and will have consistently matter more. Despite out-manning and out-gunning their foes, the French gave up in Algeria, the Americans in Vietnam, and the Soviets in Afghanistan. The Cold War ended, notably, without a fatality. Crushing the enemy's will to fight, then, does not necessarily mean crushing the enemy.

Preferring to Finesse War

Arabs and Israelis since 1948 have pursued static and binary goals. Arabs fought to eliminate Israel, Israelis fought to win their neighbors' acceptance. The details have varied over the decades, with multiple ideologies, strategies, and leading actors, but the goals have barely changed. The goals are also unbridgeable; eventually, one side will lose and one will win. Either there will be no Jewish state or it will be accepted by its neighbors. Those are the only two scenarios for ending the conflict. Anything else is unstable and a form of war.

The Arabs have pursued their war aims with patience, determination, and purpose; the exceptions to this pattern (e.g., the Egyptian and Jordanian peace treaties) have been *operationally insignificant* because they have not tamped hostility to Israel's existence. In response, Israelis sustained a formidable record of strategic vision and tactical brilliance in the period 1948–93. Over time, however, as Israel developed into a vibrant, modern, democratic country, its populace grew impatient with the *humiliating*, slow, and tedious task of convincing Arabs to accept their political existence. By now, almost no one in Israel still sees victory as the goal; no major political figure on the scene today calls for victory in war. *Uzi Landau*, who argues that "when you're in a war you want to win the war," was rewarded by being ranked so low on the Likud party's parliamentary list in the 2006 elections that he lost his seat. Since 1993, in brief, the Arabs have sought victory while Israelis sought compromise.

In this spirit, Israelis have openly proclaimed their ennui with fighting. Shortly before becoming prime minister, *Ehud Olmert* said on behalf of his countrymen: "We are tired of fighting, we are tired of being courageous, we are tired of winning, we are tired of defeating our enemies." *Yoram Hazony* of the Shalem Center correctly characterizes Israelis as "an exhausted people, confused and without direction."

In place of victory, Israelis have developed an imaginative array of approaches to manage the conflict:

- Unilateralism (build a wall, partially withdraw): Ariel Sharon, Ehud Olmert, and the Kadima party.
- Lease for 99 years the land under Israeli towns on the West Bank: Amir Peretz and the Labor Party.
- Territorial compromise: Yitzhak Rabin (and the Oslo process).
- Develop the Palestinian economy: *Shimon Peres* (and the Oslo process).
- Exclude disloyal Palestinians from Israeli citizenship: Avigdor Lieberman.
- Push the Palestinians to develop good government: Natan Sharansky (and President George W. Bush).
- Territorial retreat: Israel's left.
- Insist that Jordan is Palestine: Israel's right.
- Transfer the Palestinians from the West Bank: Israel's far right.

Contradictory in spirit and mutually exclusive as they are, these approaches all aim to finesse war rather than end it. Not one of them addresses the need to crush the Palestinian will to fight. Just as the Oslo negotiations failed, so too every scheme that avoids the hard work of winning.

The Hard Work of Winning

Who does not win, loses. To survive, Israelis eventually must return to their pre-1993 policy of establishing that Israel is strong, tough, and permanent. That's achieved through deterrence—the long, boring, difficult, bitter, and expensive task of convincing Palestinians and others that the Jewish state is permanent, and that dreams of eliminating it are doomed.

This will not be easy or quick. Perceptions of Israel's weakness due to terrible missteps during the Oslo years (1993–2000) and even after (e.g., the Gaza withdrawal of 2005) have sunk into Palestinian consciousness and will presumably require decades of effort to reverse. Nor will it be pretty: defeat in war typically entails experiencing the bitter crucible of deprivation, failure, and despair.

Israel enjoys one piece of good fortune: That it need only to convince the Palestinians of this, not the whole Arab or Muslim populations. Moroccans, Iranians, and Malaysians, for example, take their cues from the Palestinians and will with time follow their lead.

I look at this process through a simple prism. Any development that encourages Palestinians to think they can eliminate Israel is negative, any that encourages them to give up that goal is positive.

The Palestinians' defeat will be recognizable when, over a protracted period and with complete consistency, they prove that they have accepted Israel. This does not mean loving Zion but it does mean permanently accepting it. They must overhaul their educational system to take out the demonization of Jews and Israel, tell the truth about *Jewish ties to Jerusalem*, stop inculcating hatred of Jews, and accept normal commercial, cultural, and human relations with Israelis. Stiff demarches and letters to the editor will be fine, but not violence. Symbolically, when the Jews living in Hebron (on the West Bank) have no more need for security than Arabs living in Nazareth (in Israel), one can conclude that Palestinians have accepted Israel and the war is over.

Which Side Should Win?

Like all outsiders to the conflict, Americans face a stark choice: endorse the Palestinian goal of eliminating Israel or endorse the Israeli goal of winning its neighbors' acceptance.

To state the choice makes clear that there is no choice—the first is offensive in intent; the second defensive. No decent person can endorse the Palestinians' goal of eliminating their neighbor; along with every president since Harry S Truman, and every congressional resolution and vote since then, the 110th Congress must continue to stand with Israel in its drive to win acceptance.

Not only is this an obvious moral choice, but Israel's win is actually the Palestinians' as well. Israel's success in crushing the Palestinians' will to fight would actually be the best thing that ever happened to them. Compelling Palestinians finally to give up on their foul irredentist dream would liberate them to focus on their own polity, economy, society, and culture. Palestinians need to experience the certitude of defeat to become a normal people—one where parents stop celebrating their children becoming suicide terrorists, where something matters beyond the evil obsession of anti-Zionist rejectionism. There is no shortcut.

U.S. Policy

Americans especially need to understand Israel's predicament and help it win its war, for the U.S. government has a vital role in this theater. My analysis implies a radically different approach for the Bush administration and for this congress. On the negative side, Palestinians must understand that benefits will flow only after they prove their acceptance of Israel. Until then—no diplomacy, no discussion of final status, no recognition as a state, and certainly no financial aid or weapons.

On the positive side, the administration should work with Israel, the Arab states, and others to induce the Palestinians to accept Israel's existence by convincing them the gig is up, they have lost. This means impressing on the Israeli government the need not just to defend itself but to take steps to demonstrate to Palestinians the hopelessness of their cause. That requires not episodic shows of force (such as the war against Hizbullah last summer) but a sustained and systematic effort to alter a bellicose mentality.

Also, given that Israel's enemies—the PLO, Hamas, Hezbollah, Iran—are also America's enemies and that Israel has a significant role in the U.S.-led "war on terror," an Israeli victory would greatly help its U.S. ally. In smaller ways, too, tougher Israeli tactics would help. Jerusalem should be encouraged not to engage in prisoner *exchanges* with terrorist groups, not to allow Hizbullah to re-arm in southern Lebanon or Fatah or Hamas in Gaza, and not to withdraw unilaterally from the West Bank (which would effectively *turn over* the region to Hamas terrorists and threaten Hashemite rule in Jordan).

Diplomacy aiming to shut down the Arab-Israeli conflict is premature until Palestinians give up their hideous anti-Zionist obsession. When that moment arrives, negotiations can re-open with the issues of the 1990s—borders, resources, armaments, sanctities, residential rights—taken up anew. But that moment is years or decades away. In the meantime, a war needs to be won.

Mr. ACKERMAN. Wow. I guess we picked the right panel. Mr. Berman?

Mr. BERMAN. Pardon my interruption, but did I hear Dr. Pipes say that he agrees with almost everything that the previous two witnesses said?

Mr. ACKERMAN. Yes. Yes, we heard that, but we didn't hear whether the two previous witnesses agreed with Dr. Pipes. [Laughter.]

Well, let me say at the outset, the Chair anticipates a second round of questions, having not begun the first round yet. I thank the three distinguished witnesses for their powerful testimony. Let us see if we can sort some of this out.

It occurred to me, listening both to myself and my colleagues, as well as the panel, that it was hard to pick out a positive sentence or word with regard to the Palestinians in general. Negative comments were addressed to the Palestinian leadership, or generically the Palestinians.

Do the Palestinians have legitimate rights and concerns? And in the end, should they get their own state? Let us start with Mr. Makovsky.

Mr. MAKOVSKY. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. This year marks the 70th anniversary of the Peel Commission. The Royal Peel Commission was trying to decide what to do with the land of Palestine, and how you could really reconcile the aims of these two different peoples.

And I think that their conclusion is the only conclusion, frankly; and that is there has to be a partition.

One can argue with the success of Oslo, certainly. But I think the concept of partition is the core. And you know there is just too much history and too little geography. And basically, they are going to have to split that land.

And therefore, I argue that both sides deserve what I would call a moral legitimacy; that they both have come home, whether Jews to Israel or Palestinians to Palestine, and they both have legitimate rights.

I think on the positive side of the ledger there are some very impressive people at the top of the PA. I think of Finance Minister Salam Fayyad, who spent 20 years at the International Monetary Fund, and is a world-class economist. I think they have some very, you know, credible, talented people. But I just fear, as I tried to say in my remarks, that the Mecca Agreement unfortunately, instead of bringing the best talent forward in a new hope for reconciliation and partition, I feel greatly complicates the matter right now.

Mr. ACKERMAN. Thank you. Ambassador Indyk.

Mr. INDYK. Yes, the Palestinians have legitimate rights as a people. I remember the formula adopted by Moshe Dayan, the former defense minister and foreign minister of Israel, when he said the Palestinians should have the right to determine their own future, but they should be denied the right to determine Israel's future. And I think that is the heart of the matter here.

President Bush has articulated what President Clinton before him developed, the notion of two states for two people, which David was referring to when he talked about the only solution being to

divide the land between these two people because it has been, from its inception, a contest between two national rights and claims.

But the heart of the matter is that the Palestinians must come to accept that they will have their state and their right to self-determination if they are prepared, in return, to live alongside the Jewish State of Israel in peace. And that is what the peace processes, in their various forms, have been trying to address; trying to find a way to get the Palestinians to the point where they would accept this compromise deal.

And one has to say, Mr. Chairman, that the Israelis have tried looking for other solutions. But they, too, have come back to this basic formula. And it wasn't just the Labor Party or the doves on the left; it has indeed become the policy of the right-wing party, the Likud, as well, that the Palestinians should have a state.

That policy was introduced by none other than Ariel Sharon, who, after he tried all the other alternatives, including, one might say to Daniel Pipes, trying to achieve victory through war. But in the end, every Israeli leader of the right or the left has eventually come around—including Menachem Begin, for that matter—to accepting that the Palestinians do have legitimate rights. The challenge is to find a way to give expression to that in concrete terms that does not threaten Israel's existence and future well-being.

Mr. ACKERMAN. Dr. Pipes, knowing that you agree with the other two.

Mr. PIPES. We do agree. Martin just said that, he paraphrased Moshe Dayan that the Palestinians can't determine Israel's right, and he concurs with it, and I concur with it. Where we differ is on the tactics to get there. And these are major differences, but our goal is the same: The Palestinians must accept Israel. That, I think, everyone who has spoken so far concurs with that. Now the question is, How do we get there?

I believe Martin has said that the war hasn't worked, and I have said that the peace process hasn't worked. Take your pick which one hasn't worked. Nobody can claim that a great deal has worked here.

I, too, concur that partition is ultimately the way forward. My major difference from my fellow panelists is that I believe there should be no—absolutely no—discussion of final status before the Palestinians have accepted Israel. No rewarding of their irredentist ambitions; no discussions with them while they still have this, while they are still engaged in murder, while they are still attacking their neighbor. While their children are still being taught in the schoolbooks and the television and the wall posters and the mass sermons and the media and the politicians speeches all agree that there can be no Israel. So long as that is the case, there can be no discussion of final status.

But in principle, yes; partition is fine.

Mr. ACKERMAN. In your statement you stake that position out pretty clearly, saying that diplomacy, final status negotiations, recognition, economic and security assistance should wait until the Palestinians "prove their acceptance of Israel."

So I come back to two questions. The last one was the first question that I asked, and that is, at that time, should they be getting a state.

But the first question I have to ask is how do they prove their acceptance? What, to you, would constitute proof of their acceptance? Do they sign public oaths, or make public statements? Do they have to give to the UJA?

Mr. PIPES. No, they do not have to become lovers of Zion, but they do have to permanently accept it. They must overhaul their education system to take out the demonization of Jews in Israel. They should tell the truth about Jewish ties to Jerusalem, stop inculcating hatred of Jews, and accept normal commercial, cultural and human relations with Israelis.

They can have their differences with Israel. They can disagree with its policies, and dislike various aspects of it. But they must not engage in violence against it. And they must not engage in violence in a systematic and a consistent way over a protracted period. And one has to look beyond violence to a shift in society—the sort of things that were expected back in 1990/1993, with that signing on the White House lawn; that this was a new dawn. And that the hatred that one heard before would be gone. But in fact, there is more hatred since 1993 than before 1993.

Mr. ACKERMAN. Ambassador. I think we have provoked something here.

Mr. INDYK. Could I, Mr. Chairman, just interject very quickly?

Mr. ACKERMAN. Ambassador.

Mr. INDYK. If we accepted Daniel's requirements, then I think a fair case could be made that Abu Mazen, the Palestinian President who is the elected Palestinian President, has met those requirements, including, once he became President, ending the incitement of Israel in the Palestinian media, and beginning a process of dealing with the demonization of Israel in Palestinian curricula.

He has led the effort to bring the Palestinians around to the acceptance of Israel. He has a clear history of having done that over a period of the last 25 years. He has not played a double game, like Yasir Arafat did. And so that is why I think that, as I said, Israelis are prepared to deal with Abu Mazen, prepared to accept that he does accept Israel's right to exist, not just its existence.

The problem is he doesn't have the capabilities to enforce his will. He is, as we all agree, I think, weak. And the challenge, therefore, is to see whether it is possible to ensure that he does get the capability, so that his way can prevail.

Mr. ACKERMAN. I have run the clock on myself, but David? Quickly.

Mr. MAKOVSKY. Mr. Chairman, I mean, in my remarks I tried to make clear in this where I guess I differ from Daniel.

I don't see by putting forward the horizon where you make the tradeoffs on the final deal is not the same thing as implementing the final deal. That is why I think it was important that Livni and Rice have both talked about the roadmap would remain. And the first phase of the roadmap has to deal with the incitement issue, dismantle the militias.

I think if you at least demonstrate to people here is the light at the end of the tunnel, they might take the journey. And I think Israel wants to know this, too, and not to engage in Salami tactics, you know, making these concessions without any sort of context.

At the same time, and I guess where Daniel and I would differ is, I think that time is not necessarily a neutral variable. I see the Islamist wave in the Middle East. I see it with great alarm. And I think it necessary to say that if you just put this issue in a freezer for 20 years, that everyone is better off; I mean, that is, you know, that is not the metaphor that I know Daniel meant. He said winning a war. But that I think that that ignores, in my view, the broader context.

So I think the answer is not to surrender to pressure; I think the idea is to hold out here is the vision. If you perform on security, which I think is crucial, and you deal with the first phase of the roadmap, then you will end up here. But it is not a dead end.

Mr. ACKERMAN. Thank you. Mr. Pence.

Mr. PENCE. Thank you, Chairman. And I would associate myself with your enthusiastic reaction to the candor and the clarity of the testimony that was presented.

I would like to provoke a couple of quick questions, and then yield to my colleagues.

Mr. Makovsky, I believe in your testimony you described the recent Mecca Agreement as a victory for Hamas. In my opening remarks I reflected, and I think the Ambassador referenced this, that Hamas now holds nine cabinet ministries. And yet I hear kind of a consistent theme from several on the panel of continuing to engage with a government with this new political horizon vision, where Hamas has had a victory, has prevailed.

And as I said, in my opening remarks, I am just, no surprise that the minority witness reflects more of my sentiment in this regard, and I expect it may actually reflect the heart of most of the people on this panel, about a deep suspicion about the intentions of an organization in Hamas that will not live up to those three basic criteria.

I would like you to respond as quickly as you can if it is a victory. If the Mecca Agreement is a victory for Hamas, how do we then deal, then, with this unity government?

Mr. MAKOVSKY. Thank you. Look, as I tried to say in my remarks, yes, I see it as a victory; therefore, I don't think the criteria of the quartet should be changed. I think there should be a review now of the $86 million, and maybe of General Dayton's role there. Because the question is, Who is his counterpart?

You know, if the interior minister is going to direct all the security services, that is not a small matter even if he was the only Hamas member in the whole government. So therefore, I think we have got to know what the setup is.

I believe those, with due respect, it would be a mistake to cut off communication with Mahmoud Abbas. He was elected separately, a 62 percent margin of victory, consistently been for a two-state solution. And I echo what my colleagues have said, and what Martin has said, on this. He is someone who has had death threats because he has said publicly that violence was wrong; he said it is immoral. He said it at the Palestinian National Legislative Council meeting in May 2003. I think there needs to be a channel of communication, to see what could come from it.

But in terms of making it business as usual and engaging with Hamas ministers, or even, you know, other ministers of that gov-

ernment, we can't put our head in the sand. We just had a major setback here. And I think that the idea of somehow regular business with the PA, and lifting the requirements, in my view, of the quartet would be a horrible mistake.

Mr. PENCE. Thank you for that. I want to get to the Ambassador for a second.

Mr. Ambassador, you made, characteristic of your reputation for candor and intellectual forcefulness, you made very direct comments about this administration. I think your words, if I may quote, "weakened by the debacle in Iraq, Secretary of State Rice is no longer able to wield it in a way that might compensate for the weakness of local partners."

You said and wrote, without Presidential engagement, it is difficult to imagine the Secretary could overcome the formidable obstacles to real progress. And then said this is a presidency which has "never believed in a peacemaking endeavor."

I would respectfully take exception to that. I think the President has taken a very hard line, I think as hard a line as can be taken in a negotiation. And I believe that the President has taken a hard line on the side of Israel in the past 6 years, and I commend him for that.

I guess I would just ask rhetorically—then I want to get specifically to a real question, and I will close my element of the panel, yield to my colleagues. I would just ask rhetorically that the massive Presidential engagement that by your definition was present in the Clinton administration, and faltered, in effect, in the last 6 months of the Clinton administration, doesn't seem to argue for the American Presidency being a determinative factor in achieving a Middle East settlement.

That said, let me ask you very sincerely and respectfully, on the question of funding, that it did seem to me there was some agreement about the ominous nature of this moment in which the chairman has called this hearing. And I was quite struck that you said—and I am quoting again now—that the United States will have to make a serious effort to rebuild the capabilities of the Palestinian presidency, and that "Congress needs to go ahead with the security package the administration is seeking." Now, you did add, beyond your written testimony, you referred to benchmarks, transparency, and assurances.

I would like to ask you to expand on how, as legislators, we could, seeing a victory for Hamas, and in knowing the inherent dangers, how we could, in good conscience, go forward with what President Bush has requested in funding. Maybe you could unpack that transparency and what those benchmarks might be.

Mr. INDYK. If I might just comment quickly on your commentary on my remarks. I would say yes, indeed, the President has been a strong supporter of Israel. But let us also recall that he has been a very strong supporter of elections as a way of achieving democratization. And it was indeed our President's insistence on elections that resulted in Hamas being elected, and in control of the Palestinian Authority. And we cannot ignore that when we try to find a way out of this very complicated situation.

Hamas was elected, too, in a free election. And so if we are to be true to our values, we have to recognize that we have got a

problem here. They have legitimacy, according to the election process that our President insisted upon, on the grounds that they would then become accountable to the people and that would moderate them.

So there is enough blame to go around. There is no doubt that President Clinton and his advisors, me amongst them, made plenty of mistakes, too. But the question really as we go forward is, How do we get out of it? It was a mistake to regard everything that Clinton did as stupid and feckless. And that was the default position.

It took 6 years to come around to the idea that the Secretary of State is now proposing which is the very thing that President Clinton was doing. There must have been some logic to what he was doing. So that is just my first point.

In terms of how you unpack it, it is now very complicated. Abu Mazen is not a strong man, and he is not willing to confront Hamas if it means a civil war amongst the Palestinians. And I think the reason that he did this deal with Hamas was to avoid the civil war that was developing in Gaza.

That said, if there is to be a capable and responsible partner to Israel in any way that can settle this conflict, the one hope on the Palestinian side is Abu Mazen. He has his own status. He is President of the Palestinian Authority, but he is not in that cabinet government. He has his own status as President. He has his own powers as the President, and he has a responsibility for the security services. Ultimately, they are responsible to him.

The interior minister will not be a Hamas minister. The interior minister also has control over some of the security services. And we will have to see who that interior minister turns out to be, and whether he dances to Hamas' tune or is loyal to the President.

But the security package that was proposed was a package designed to strengthen those security services under the direct control of the Palestinian President, Mahmoud Abbas, and to give him a capability that would be independent of Hamas, and therefore strengthen him against Hamas.

Hamas' military capabilities—let us be quite clear about this—are being supported, supplied, provided by Iran and its proxy. So that is what we are facing here. It is not a clear-cut situation where we can simply decide that we are going to stand back from this, because the consequence of that essentially is to cede the territory to Iran.

So therefore, the question is, Does the Congress have a way of getting assurances that the money that it puts up is going to flow to the right people, and be used in the right way? And I think you need to have General Dayton in here, and you need to get answers to those questions. How are you going to ensure a transparent process in which Congress can follow where the money is going? How are you going to ensure that the commanders in charge of the training are loyal to Abu Mazen and committed to peace with Israel? How are you going to ensure that the training is done effectively, and is only going to be used for the purposes of strengthening a partner in the peace process? Those are questions that don't have easy answers.

From my own experience in the Clinton administration, I am quite sure it is not a secret, the Central Intelligence Agency played a critical role in training Arafat's security forces. And in the end, those trained people ended up using their guns against Israel. That clearly is not acceptable. Cannot be acceptable.

But having said that, we have to look and see whether there is a way to do it. Because I think the logic that if we don't strengthen Abu Mazen, we end up with Hamas winning the game, and its Iranian backer being the beneficiary of this, is a worse outcome than trying to grapple with the problems of meeting the requirements of strengthening Abu Mazen.

Mr. PENCE. Thank you. Mr. Chairman, I yield.

Mr. ACKERMAN. Mr. Berman.

Mr. BERMAN. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

Just to clarify, Dr. Pipes, I mean, you made a compelling presentation. By your indication that partition is an acceptable outcome, I assume, but just want to make sure I am right, that for you, the certitude of defeat is defeat in the notion that you can eliminate a Zionist entity called Israel, not that you have abandoned your aspirations for a homeland, a viable nation-state. Is that fair?

Mr. PIPES. That is correct, crushing the will to fight, to eliminate Israel.

Mr. BERMAN. Right. We meet with a lot of Palestinians. Ambassador Indyk actually made I think a pretty good case that at least some of those Palestinians, and not the former chairman of the Palestinian Authority or President, but the existing President of the Palestinian Authority is one of them who seem to have accepted the certitude of defeat in that goal.

In other words, when it comes up to us, there is a, it is a blurred picture. A lot of Palestinians seem to have accepted it and are prepared to live at peace, and do whatever, and it doesn't seem like their capability is a lot, to ensure Israel's security. And large numbers of others haven't. So that makes a little more complicated the picture, the unambiguous picture that you drew.

Mr. PIPES. I skipped over the part where I said that 20 percent of Palestinians accept Israel. And perhaps Mahmoud Abbas is one of them, perhaps not. I am less convinced, but I certainly agree that there are Palestinians who do, and I would say the goal is to change that 20 percent to 60 or 70 percent.

Mr. BERMAN. Okay, all right. Okay, I understand in that context. But now let us go to this issue of the horizon.

In hearing the Secretary talk about it, whether it is here or there, there is a certain "second life" aspect to all of this; that in a virtual world, with people who do not have the power to accomplish much—and by this, I mean the head of the Palestinian Authority—we will have a discussion of the political horizon and what people who do not have the power to implement the concessions they would need to make on things like the right of return or the acceptance of Israel, that they will make certain concessions. And Israel's leadership will outline the kinds of concessions they are willing to make and talk about all this. That that could have happened before in the context of an Israeli leadership that would be willing to articulate very clearly a horizon that even brought us back to the 2000 parameters seemed complicated to me.

With the existence now of this Mecca Agreement, it seems almost impossible. The Israelis are going to start publicly indicating the concessions they ever had to make about things like Jerusalem and land swaps with the Palestinians at a time when the prime minister, when the three conditions haven't been met, how is that really going to happen at this next meeting?

In an earlier conversation Ambassador Indyk indicated he thought a process underway that could describe, that could lead to that possibility maybe is realistic; but certainly not an articulation of the "horizon" at this next meeting between the Secretary, this trilateral meeting that is supposed to take place.

And so we come to the point here now where we don't know if this Mecca Agreement is going to hold. We know it is going to be a few weeks before it is implemented, even if it does hold. We don't know who the interior minister is. We don't know whether the Hamas forces are truly going to integrate into the Palestinian forces—one could be quite skeptical about the possibility of that. We don't know who is really going to control it.

How can we, at this point, how can the Congress release whatever instruments it has to block the aid to the Palestinian security forces, until those kinds of issues are resolved, much as David suggested. And do any of you see a situation where somehow this unity government, if it is ever really created, can agree to the three conditions? And don't you think it is pretty important to stick with those three conditions, and not find ways that respect becomes the word instead of adhere? That we make those conditions—do you see a way in which a unity agreement, a unity government can accept them, even though Hamas hasn't, and does that have meaning? And do you think the Europeans particularly will stick? They have stuck for 2 days, which is pretty impressive. But do you think over the long term they will stick with adherence to those three conditions, by either Hamas or by the unity government? And that is a whole series of questions.

Mr. MAKOVSKY. You raise some very important questions, obviously. On the last point about the Europeans, I actually think here the two issues are implicitly, in their minds, at least the ones that I have met, are somewhat linked. In other words, they will probably say thank God for Condoleezza Rice, she is pursuing this political horizon. There has been trans-Atlantic unity for a year on the three conditions. No one would have believed that we in Europe would have held fast with the Bush administration over the last year. We are willing to give it another whatever it is. We want to see if she gives it her best effort on this.

So I don't think they are going to break from the United States. If anything, I think the quartet's statement on Friday was actually a signal that right now they wouldn't.

The question is, to say, Will they never break from the U.S.? I think is a bit optimistic. I think that right now they want to say that they are behind Condoleezza Rice. So they don't want to do anything that will make her talks in Jerusalem with Olmert and Abbas even harder.

I come back, though, in the broad picture to my recommendation on Saudi Arabia. I think what we have to kind of admit, and it is not always easy to say this, but that the center of gravity in the

Middle East has changed; that it used to be we thought of Egyptians as the center of the Arab world, the center of the Arab League is in Cairo.

But look at these things that have happened. This Mecca Agreement was in Saudi Arabia.

Mr. PENCE. The Egyptians are going to be very unhappy to hear you say that.

Mr. MAKOVSKY. I know that. And I just met with the foreign minister, so he will not be too pleased with me.

But you know, and you have had the situation of Larijani from Iran, when he wanted to convey messages via the Saudis. The Lebanese issue, they are trying to get the Saudis to negotiate, as well.

Saudi Arabia has a lot of resources——

Mr. PENCE. Then why didn't the Saudis do something in terms of this Mecca Agreement to get a——

Mr. MAKOVSKY. Well, that is my point, is that right now I think that it is too soon to say that they are devoted to peacemaking. That is where Martin and I would probably differ. Because I think that there are some real problems with the Saudi initiative. I don't know if we have time now to get into that. I put it in my full testimony, that it needs substantial modification.

And they could be really, because they see the new regional alignment against Iran, they might really be devoted to peacemaking. Or the less benign interpretation is it is all about sectarianism, and keeping the Shiites at bay.

And I think unless there is a strong summit between the United States and Saudi Arabia about what they are about, then this is one of the biggest uncertainties in the mix. You, very well, I think, articulated a lot of uncertainties in the mix. I think it is a good idea to bring General Dayton here to show how he would deal with this.

But I think there is too many uncertainties right now. But I think the biggest uncertainty, from my perspective, is where are the Saudis? And unless we have some sort of deeper understanding with them, I don't think Rice is going to get far at all.

Mr. INDYK. Let me try a couple of your other questions, because I agree with almost everything David said, so I don't want to repeat that.

It is going to be very difficult for this meeting between the Secretary, Olmert and Abu Mazen to move forward, precisely for the reasons you suggest. I think the first thing Olmert is going to want to know is, if he is talking about the future, is he talking about the future with Abu Mazen, or is he talking about the future with Hamas.

And he needs to know that, because if he doesn't have a good answer to that, he has got a problem domestically. And he is not in a strong position to be able to withstand the kind of heat that would come from this ambivalence, or ambiguity, I should say, about the situation.

So again, we will have to see. I wouldn't expect anything but modalities, agreement on modalities for conducting this discussion to be what emerges from this first round.

Then that relates directly to your second question, as to whether the national unity government will last. I think it is probably bet-

ter to think about this as a temporary truce in an ongoing conflict between Hamas and Fatah. Clearly, Hamas' objectives and ideology have not changed, but I don't think Fatah's have, either. And interestingly, I saw that Abu Mazen said today that he wanted Mohammed Dahlan to be deputy prime minister to Hamas' Ismail Haniyeh as prime minister.

Well, that is not going to work. For Dahlan, who is the sworn enemy of Hamas, to be the deputy prime minister, I think tells you a lot about the likely longevity of this particular government. And that is where I come back to why Congress needs to keep its eye on what made sense before this national unity government was formed, and what I think still makes sense, which is to build the powers of the Palestinian President. Because I think this national unity government is likely to fall apart, sooner rather than later.

And if that is, in fact, the case, then talks—these are not negotiations, they are more like pre-negotiations; they are discussions, informal, between Abu Mazen and Olmert can be useful in the event that the national unity government falls apart again. And either they go to elections—in the agreement itself, they talk about the potential for new elections in 2008—it will be important in those circumstances if there aren't earlier elections, that there be some political horizon that will give Abu Mazen the ability to say, "Vote for me because I have a better future for you that comes through making peace, rather than making war on Israel."

Mr. PIPES. On receipt of the arms from Egypt some days ago, Mahmoud Abbas promised the Palestinians that these would be used only against Israel. I think it is fair to call Mahmoud Abbas the good terrorist and Hamas the bad terrorist, or PLO the good terrorist and Hamas the bad terrorist.

I don't see much virtue in backing the good terrorist against the bad terrorist. I have no wish to see Iran get stronger, but I also have no reason to want to see the Saudi-backed terrorist group get stronger. And there are some virtues in having a terrorist group that speaks its mind openly.

In my understanding, the difference between the PLO and Hamas is a difference of tactics, philosophy, and personnel. They are different in approach, they are different in personnel, and they are different in what they do. But their goal is all the same. They are very clearly the same. They are very clearly the same, to eliminate Israel.

Mr. BERMAN. Then who are the 20 percent?

Mr. PIPES. Well, that 20 percent is in there. But as we both agreed before, it is not very powerful.

Now, Martin said earlier that Mahmoud Abbas is someone who accepts Israel. I would challenge Martin to present to me a single map in the entirety of the West Bank and Gaza that shows an Israel alongside a Palestine. Every single map I have ever seen, in any context whatsoever, shows a Palestine instead of an Israel. There is no presence. That is the visual symbolic way of saying that there is no presence to the argument that says, "Let us accept Israel."

Some people, that 20 percent, perhaps Abbas in his heart is one of them, do accept Israel but they are irrelevant to the process. What dominates is an argument between the PLO and Hamas.

What is the better method to eliminate Israel? Is it by working with Israel and getting the benefits that working with Israel brings, including land and money and arms? Or is it retaining the purity, as Hamas does, of position, and making it clear to the world where you stand?

And it is an argument that has been going on now for 20 years between these two groups. Sometimes they work together and sometimes they fight. At the moment they are maybe going to work together; they have just been fighting. But it is a fluid process by which one is trying to dominate the movement to eliminate Israel. But in the end, I don't see that one is better than the other from an American perspective.

Mr. ACKERMAN. Before calling on Mr. Costa, I just want to observe, if one is the bad terrorist and one is the good terrorist, whether we have the option of entering an entry into the race as the very, very good terrorist, I don't know that that option exists.

There was a race, I think it was in Louisiana, where there was a Nazi running against a crook, and people had bumper stickers that said I want the crook. You know, if it is a two-horse race and you want to play, you have got to put your two dollars down somewhere.

Mr. Costa.

Mr. COSTA. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

Ambassador Indyk, when you, in your opening statement, talked about the groundwork that needed to be followed through at this current point in time, you talked about some benchmarks, but you didn't lay out any timelines. And I guess, given the current negotiations that are taking place with the unity government, the most recent fighting that has been taking place, and your critique of the current administration's efforts, and believing that the possibility now is that an opportunity to get on a path that you were engaged in previously under the Clinton administration. How would you lay out as, one, the benchmarks that you outlined following a timeline over the course of the next year or 2 years, and juxtapose that with currently what is going on elsewhere in the Middle East, because I think a lot of things are going to take place here not only in Iraq, but with Iran, and the hegemony that you spoke of in your comments.

And also, I would like to get a sense from you as to where you think Congress' best efforts could be applied, if we can achieve some consensus here through this subcommittee and through the Foreign Affairs Committee?

Mr. INDYK. Thank you, Mr. Costa. I was referring, when I talked about benchmarks, to the specific issue of if Congress were to go ahead and provide the $86 million in security assistance to the Palestinian President, in which case the benchmarks are, whether you were in the room when I spoke to this with Mr. Pence, that the benchmarks relate to the issue of transparency, where the money is actually going.

Mr. COSTA. I heard you say that, okay. So I won't repeat myself on that.

Mr. INDYK. I think a timeline is something that is worth thinking about in terms of the Secretary of State's engagement. Because my argument is that it is going to take some time, and that she is

going to need an understanding, not just in the Congress, but certainly in the media, who will love to write the story of her failure every time she goes out there and doesn't produce some progress, that this is a process that really will run through this administration. It may take over 2 years, so for the next 2 years, there won't be a lot to show for it.

But the effort itself is definitely worthwhile. And notwithstanding my criticism of what I consider a purposeful disengagement from the process for 6 years by this administration, the fact that the Secretary of State is now willing to risk her own reputation and prestige to try to take advantage of an opportunity that may well be there, but is hard to see, takes courage, and she deserves credit for that. And she deserves support.

But the process itself, and it is a process, is going to start with a very small step; a big idea, but a small step—discussions, not negotiations—that will nevertheless start to deal with what the shape of a final settlement will look like. And that may yield some fruit over time simply because everybody essentially knows where this process is going, at least those who want to get to a two-state solution.

There is no mystery about it. The question is, How do we get from here to there when we have got now Hamas in the process, and Hamas has a very different idea of a solution—wants a one-state solution, not a two-state solution?

So the essence of the timeline is as follows, I would say. The first 6 months is going to be just laying the groundwork, because I do not believe that Prime Minister Olmert is going to be able to engage on these politically fraught issues before he stabilizes his government and gets a new defense minister.

I also think those 6 months will be a time of testing of this national unity government on the Palestinian side. And we will have a much better idea after 6 months of who is calling the shots, whether it is Hamas or Abu Mazen who is actually able to engage in this with some authority and legitimacy.

Then I think the next 6 months will be a time in which it may become possible to start to give some greater refinement to the principles that would have to be involved in the political horizon. And beyond that, it is the Middle East, and I wouldn't dare to suggest. But it is only going to produce some results if the Secretary remains engaged in the process from now until the end of the administration.

And the advantage of that, in terms of your question about the larger context here, is not that somehow an engagement here is going to solve the problems in Iraq; I think it is a mindless formula that says this is the core problem, if we solve this problem, we will solve all the other problems. It is not likely to make any difference in Iraq itself.

But it will make a difference in the broader region, and in the broader Islamic world, when they see the United States engaged in a serious effort to try to move this process forward toward a resolution. It is something that will help defuse some of the anger out there, and make it—it is not going to be a great victory in the war against terrorism, but it will make it easier for leaders in the region to work with us, and easier for us to demand that they do so

because we are engaged in an issue that they say is a hot button one for them and their people.

Mr. COSTA. Thank you. Do I have time for one more question?

Dr. Pipes, you had a very interesting, I think, analysis of describing the situation as you see it between the good terrorists and the bad terrorists.

I am wondering, is there the possibility—and we have all heard some discussions about this—of seeing the world through a different paradigm, in terms of the groups that supposedly represent the Palestinians? When you look at the wealth that exists in some parts of the Arab world, and you look at the political rhetoric oftentimes used when it comes to the Palestinians, it just seems to me that, you know, if you could somehow think out of the box vis-a-vis a Marshall Plan, where you really were to reach out and help the people who really are suffering, who are sometimes, it seems from a distance, pawns in this political gamesmanship that is taking place; what application do you think, in looking through this differently?

I am reminded of the saying that we have all heard, continuing to do things the same way we have always done them and expect different results is not only frustrating, but it can be maddening.

Mr. PIPES. Well, thank you for your thoughtful question. I would tend to be doubtful that it would work, however, for two reasons.

First, I think that over the decades it is the grassroots that is more radicalized than the elite. It used to be understood that it was the kings, presidents and emirs who were exploiting the Arab masses, hanging this red meat in front of them of Zionism and saying, "Go," so that people wouldn't worry about their own local conditions.

And if that was ever true in the 1950s and 1960s, I don't think it applies today. Today, in case after case, one finds that it is the leaders who are willing to make concessions more than the body politic. And one can go through this in an Egyptian case, a Jordanian case, and even a Palestinian case, where one can note that in September 1993, Yasir Arafat was willing to make concessions to Israel, and he got a very negative reaction from the Palestinians. So that would be one point.

The second point I would make is that I don't think ultimately this is an issue that boils down to economics, to poverty, to despair, and to unemployment. I think it has far more to do with love and hate, with dreams and fears, and hopes and desires. It is about ideas. It is about nationalism. It is about control of territory.

And what one has found over the years is that Palestinians and, for that matter, Israelis are willing to give up—but in particular, it is true of Palestinians—are willing to give up material benefit in order to pursue this war. And were it possible to wean them from war through economics, it would have happened in the 1990s, because after all, that was Shimon Peres' insight, to say that "We, together, Arabs and Israelis, can form a new economic order. We can have prosperity, and we can leave these old antagonisms." But in fact, that is not what happened.

So while I commend you for this new out-of-the-box thinking, I must respectfully say I think it won't work.

Mr. ACKERMAN. Mr. Carnahan.

Mr. CARNAHAN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman and panel. I apologize for coming in late. I know I have missed much of the discussion. But I did want to ask questions in a particular area with regard to your thoughts regarding the impact of progress with, between the Israelis and the Palestinians, with regard to the situation in Iraq. And again, I apologize if I may have missed some of this, but I would appreciate your thoughts.

Mr. MAKOVSKY. Congressman Carnahan, good to see you.

Mr. CARNAHAN. Good to see you.

Mr. MAKOVSKY. And I wish for a successful season for our fellow joint project of the St. Louis Cardinals.

Mr. CARNAHAN. Yes, indeed.

Mr. MAKOVSKY. But I think the Cardinals will have a better record this year than the Palestinian Government, because I think the complications of the Mecca Agreement—I think it is important, you want a solution among Israelis and Palestinians because you want to give dignity to both peoples. And I feel the Mecca Agreement, though, unfortunately complicates that.

I don't believe somebody in the Anbar province is going to turn on Aljazeera and say, well, they are making progress on the roadmap, so we don't shoot Americans today. I don't see a linkage between the two. I realize, though, among many Arabs and Muslims, this issue is important, and I think it could have a resonance in the wider world of the Middle East and beyond it. But I think in terms of the outcome in Iraq, I never believed the road to Baghdad, the road to Jerusalem goes through Baghdad, or the road to Jerusalem goes through Baghdad. So I am not a fan of these linkages, and I don't believe in it.

But I do think there would definitely be a big dividend if, you know, in the region and beyond, in terms of people, if there was some sort of a solution. And most importantly to the peoples themselves. Both sides in this conflict, Israelis and Palestinians, have suffered a lot. And you want a solution that gives dignity to both.

I fear unfortunately we have taken a big, giant step backwards with this Mecca Accord. Thank you.

Mr. CARNAHAN. Thank you. Could I ask the other panelist to comment? Anybody else? Ambassador?

Mr. INDYK. I do not believe that if we were able to make progress on the Israeli-Palestinian front that it would make any significant difference to the problems that we are facing in Iraq today. I just don't. I think things are far gone there, and I don't see how one could influence the other.

Where I think David is right is that the Palestinian issue is a hot-button issue for many people in the region, and beyond in the Muslim world. Their leaders are authoritarian to a man. Precisely because they are not elected, they fear their publics. And they fear public opinion. And the perception that the United States does not care about this issue, the Palestinian issue, is something that has made the leaders reluctant to identify with us and work with us. Or if they do it, they will do it in a very quiet way because of other threats they face, in particular from Iran.

So I think it does have a value in the broader region in terms of helping our diplomacy and efforts across the region. But in Iraq itself, I don't think it is going to make any difference.

Mr. CARNAHAN. Thank you.

Mr. PIPES. I am in broad agreement.

Mr. CARNAHAN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. ACKERMAN. Thank you very much, Mr. Carnahan.

I want to take that question if I might, and just reverse it; play it back at a different speed, too.

In the Middle East between the Israelis and the Palestinians there seems to be a lack of strength and leadership on both sides, for very different reasons. The hope is that the strength of the United States in situations such as this will be able to bring parties together.

My question would be, has our involvement in Iraq weakened our hand and the perception of our strength to the extent that it makes us less effective as a convener, or the party that is going to bang the heads together, or however you would describe this tripartite agreement the Secretary heroically is going to try to have next week?

Mr. MAKOVSKY. I will just say that I just came back from there. I spoke to Israelis and Palestinians. And I was struck how the word "Iraq" hardly ever came up in any of my discussions. It was like a parallel universe to what we are dealing with here.

The only time it would come up, I felt, was with the Israelis, but in a different context: That the issue of Iran is looming. As you know, the President of Iran says he wants to wipe Israel off the map. The supreme leader calls Israel a cancer that should be cut out. So it is not just Ahmadinejad.

And the only time I would hear Iraq come up in conversations would be the United States will be so preoccupied with the Iraqi issue, and some wonder if there is a neo-isolationist mood in the United States, which I don't think is accurate, would so envelop the United States that the United States will be hamstrung with the ascendant Iran. And I felt also some of the Arab leaders I talked to also asked me that question.

I found that was the only context Iraq would come up, was in an Iranian context. And I never heard it come up in a Palestinian context. And I was struck, in all my meetings with Palestinians, that they never raised it either. So it was a little bit of a parallel universe for me being over there, given how much this issue is critical, that we are having so many soldiers over there right now.

Thank you.

Mr. INDYK. I think, Mr. Chairman, that the prime example of our reduced influence was the way in which the Saudis went off against our will, and against our plan and strategy, and did this deal in Mecca. That was not what the Secretary of State had in mind at all.

She, and I think the Israelis as well, thought they had an understanding with the Saudis and the Egyptians, and Abu Mazen, that the whole effort, of which the political horizon was one part and the security package was another, was designed to isolate Hamas, and effectively to take it out of the government and have new elections that would produce a different complexion for the Palestinian Authority.

And neither Abu Mazen, nor the Egyptians, nor the Saudis went along with the script. They did an old "switcheroo." And I believe

that they did it not because we didn't have a big enough stick to beat them with; it is that they were looking out for their own interests that we could not affect.

I don't think it is so much that the Saudis have decided to play a sectarian game. It is rather that the Saudis now see that the sectarian genie is out of the bottle. And they do not want Hamas, which is a Sunni extremist organization, to be on the Iranian side of that fault line. They have their own Sunni extremists that they have got to deal with; so do the Egyptians.

And so they chose to try to co-opt them rather than to confront them. And Abu Mazen, when he saw that the Saudis were doing this, and it began—I don't know how closely you followed it—but it began when King Abdullah sent his own private aircraft to pick up the Hamas Prime Minister Ismail Haniyeh, and take him to Mecca so he could perform the hajj and have a private audience with King Abdullah.

And after that, the Egyptians started treating Ismail Haniyeh like royalty, and Abu Mazen said, "Well, hey, you know, if the Saudis and Egyptians are going to play this game, why the hell should I be the guy out on the limb confronting them? I am going off to Damascus to show them, and to see whether Damascus will help me make a deal with Hamas." And from there it was a short step to Mecca. And we were left essentially on the sidelines.

If we had been able to produce an effective way forward, and they had seen that we were still the dominant player in the region, they would have been, I think, more willing to go with us, and more fearful of our reaction if they didn't.

Mr. ACKERMAN. In your view, did the administration see this? Or did they just have no inclination for leaning on the Saudis?

Mr. INDYK. I can't really speak to that. My sense——

Mr. ACKERMAN. If the center of gravity is shifting, which is the tone of what I got before from, say, Egypt to Saudi Arabia, one would think that we would be more engaging with Saudi Arabia, and using whatever pressure points there are. You know——

Mr. INDYK. We have been very——

Mr. ACKERMAN [continuing]. Everybody has needs, and the Egyptians need bullets, and the Saudis need bodyguards.

Mr. MAKOVSKY. I don't know if we sent a message to Saudi Arabia, but my understanding is we sent the message via the Palestinians. There was a Palestinians negotiating team here in Washington last week to prepare for the political horizon talks for Rice's visit. And then, all of a sudden this Mecca thing was unfolding quickly. And via the Palestinians, we sent the message that we found Haniyeh unacceptable, we found et cetera, et cetera, and that was ignored.

Mr. ACKERMAN. We are using the Palestinians to talk to the Saudis?

Mr. MAKOVSKY. To convey a message to Abu Mazen in Mecca. But I have no way of knowing if we also communicated directly with the Saudis. I would hope so. But I mean, this was not a secret that they were there. There is a telephone, I would assume.

But to me, it just underscores that either we seem to be not on the same page with the Saudis, and there needs to be some understanding about what they are up to. I am concerned it is just about

sectarianism, and that is not a good sign. But maybe not. But I think there needs to be a high-level engagement.

Mr. ACKERMAN. Let me ask a question of Dr. Pipes, which goes to the premise that people either accept it, or for the time being accept it. And that was your assertion that the polls suggest only 20 percent of the Palestinian population accepts Israel's right to exist. You said it would have to be 60 percent to 70 percent in order to be meaningful.

Khalil Shikaki, who I believe you are familiar with, is the preeminent Palestinian pollster. And he has been right on target most of the time. His conclusion, based on his polling—and I will quote you the statement—"58 percent support, and 40 percent oppose, mutual recognition of Israel as the state for the Jewish people, and Palestine as the state for the Palestinian people, in the context of a permanent settlement and the establishment of a Palestinian state."

That is a big difference in your assertion and his polling conclusions.

Mr. PIPES. It certainly is. My 20 percent figure comes from the whole range of polls of Palestinians in the Palestinian Authority, as well as in Jordan and Lebanon.

Mr. Shikaki's figures are often fantastical. It is due to Mr. Shikaki that we have a Hamas government.

Mr. ACKERMAN. You were able to poll in Lebanon?

Mr. PIPES. Oh, yes. I haven't done the research myself, but I can refer to the research by Martin Kramer, that he showed how Shikaki had throughout 2004 and 2005 been assuring everyone that the PLO, Fatah, is doing well in Palestinian public opinion and Hamas is down and getting worse all the time. And this was a critical, critical factor in both the United States and Israeli decision to push for the elections, and lo and behold, Hamas did far, far better than Shikaki ever predicted.

So I would take any figure from Khalil Shikaki with a great deal of salt. And I will be happy to provide you with this analysis by Martin Kramer.

Mr. ACKERMAN. Did you say the Israelis pushed for the elections?

Mr. PIPES. Well, we pushed for them, but the Israelis didn't protest, because everyone was looking at Shikaki's numbers.

Mr. ACKERMAN. My understanding is that we really leaned on the Israelis to have the elections.

Mr. PIPES. They acceded to it; they didn't try and prevent it; in large part because the only numbers coming out of the PA were Shikaki's numbers, and Shikaki was assuring everyone it will come out all right, Fatah will win.

As I said, I will be glad to provide you with this analysis.

Mr. ACKERMAN. If we believed in exit polls, we would have different presidents from time to time.

Mr. PIPES. Well, it was really a big difference.

Mr. ACKERMAN. There is a big difference between 58 percent and 20 percent, as well. The answer that was elicited due to the question by my friend, the ranking minority member of the committee, had to do with elections. And I was thinking at the time that perhaps we are going to consider having a hearing on elections in the Middle East, good or bad idea.

Because from what we are seeing—and I don't know that we have ever given serious thought to it—but should there be an election in Lebanon while the troubles were going on or right after it ended, I would not have been surprised to have seen the Hezbollah winning with huge numbers that they might not have had before.

But anyway, I thank you for eliciting that question. I think maybe we are going to do that.

We are going to continue with questions, if it is okay with the panel. First Mr. Pence and then Mr. Berman.

Mr. PENCE. Thank you, Chairman. I want to direct my second series of questions to Mr. Pipes. And I want to recognize that, as anyone that might look on in this hearing or read a transcript could learn, DanielPipes.org is the single-most accessed internet site for specialized information on the Middle East today.

Mr. Pipes, you have been described by major national media outlets as having been years ahead of the curve in identifying the threat of radical Islam. And The Boston Globe also wrote that "if Pipes' admonitions had been heeded, there might never have been a 9/11."

I have been an admirer of yours since before that fateful day. And I would agree whole-cloth with the assertions of The Boston Globe in that regard, and I thank you for your service to the country.

I want to talk to you, or ask you about radical Islam, and what a subject that has been bandied about in the last few questions might mean to radical Islam.

The Ambassador said in his testimony that this President might be "facing defeat in Iraq." There has been some testimony today about the implications of Iraq, Mr. Carnahan raising the issue of linkage, and I share his profound concern about the inherent danger to Israel that any linkage would mean.

But in your testimony you said, and I quote, "Defeat one might think usually follows on the devastating battlefield loss, as was the case of the Axis in 1945, but this has rarely occurred in the past 60 years." You said, "Morale and will have consistently mattered more. Despite outmanning and outgunning their foes, the French gave up in Algeria, the Americans in Vietnam, the Soviets in Afghanistan." And if the Ambassador's inference, or perhaps prediction, is correct, we may add Iraq to that list at some time in the next 2 years.

My question to you—as one of the Western world's leading authorities and most prescient thinkers on the rise of radical Islam—is, What would the loss of Iraq by the United States of America mean to radical Islam and to Israel? I mean, I would ask very broadly, If we lose Iraq, do we lose Israel? And because it does seem to me that a debate that will continue late into tonight and tomorrow, and a debate that will continue for months here in Washington, DC, hasn't fully considered that question.

Mr. PIPES. Indeed. Thank you so much for your kind words.

Without being pedantic, I might raise the question of what exactly "losing" means. Our man, as it were—or the person perceived as "our man" in Baghdad—is a pro-Iranian Shiite, who has elements in his government who we have arrested, who have been found implicated in the bombing in 1983 of the Marine barracks in

Beirut. The Iraqi Constitution in many ways offends us. The oil policies of the Iraqi Government are quite at variance with our own interests at times.

So what I am getting at is that the Iraqi Government in place is not a puppet of ours, is not a construct of ours, is not something that we, as Americans, find altogether salubrious.

The question is, How different would a government in Iraq be once we pull out? Would it change radically from what it is today? And I am not sure of that answer. The security situation in Iraq is so fluid, with the Sunni-Shi'a dimension, with the resurgent Baathists, with the tribal elements, with regional elements, with Kurdish interests, that it is very hard for me to get a sense of what Iraq will look like, whether we stay or whether we go.

So I am not sure how—it could be a radical difference. It could be the forces of Muqtada al-Sadr taking over, in which case it would be very, very different. But it might not be that different. It might not make that much difference. I am optimistic that an American exit would not lead—I mean, the *National Interest*, a magazine, had a cover an issue or two ago that said something of the sort of, "Will it happen again?" And it showed Vietnam in 1975, and that famous picture of the Americans leaving the Embassy, and just a totally different order took over. I don't think it would be quite something like that, because it is not our order exactly today. And I don't know that the next order that would follow us would be that different from the existing one. So I am inclined to think it is not that radical of a difference.

Mr. PENCE. Thank you. Thank you, Chairman.

Mr. ACKERMAN. Thank you very much. Ms. Sheila Jackson Lee.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. And I would like to explore with Professor Indyk, former Ambassador, thank you for your service, and I think the very lucid framework which we find ourselves in, as you have articulated, but also historical perspective.

I indicated earlier that I had been hosting some, for almost 20 years combined with my predecessor, the Hon. Mickey Leland, the Mickey Leland Kibbutz Program, and the life-changing experiences that these youngsters have had. In the course of their travels to Israel they visited Palestinian families, Ethiopian Jews, and others; that shows the richness of the diversity of the region.

So I have this sense that dialogue does work. And of course, someone would suggest that that is a simple premise. But I think it works, because, as I said, in talking to Israeli families, you will find those who certainly will defend Israel with their lives, but also believe in dialogue.

So I want to take you back to the end of the Clinton administration and the intensity of those negotiations, because we have so often cited and criticized previous agreements like Oslo. So many critics would say just another episode of, I will use the term dysfunctionality, that that was not going to come to anything.

I remember right after the end of his term, going to the floor of the House and pleading with the present administration to continue negotiations. It might have taken a different framework. They might have wanted to add more stringent requirements or framework, but engage. And I remember the rebuke. We will not—

in fact, it was proudly announced, I remember Members of the Senate proudly announcing that they would not follow that policy, maybe even characterizing it as wimpish.

If you would, would you take me from that point, if we had pursued that continued engagement, what kind of protocol we could have utilized?

And I thank you for your kindness, but I beg to different to suggest that the present Secretary of State and others are engaging in the same. The reason is because they have how many years of failure in between, so they are obviously coming at it at a disadvantage. Look at the conditions of Palestinian territory now, look at the rise of Hamas, look at the failure of Fatah. And so we have those in the way.

But help me to understand if that protocol could have continued what we would have gained. And what is the forcefulness that we need to use now—and I say forcefulness so it can be taken in many elements, such as diplomacy—to help prop up what I think the Secretary of State and some of the diplomatic actions that are going on now. I think they need to be propped up, because people are not happy with how they see the framework between Hamas and Abbas, and what the Mecca Agreement, though I certainly think there is certainly something to cite for the Mecca Agreement, I think we need to thank the many allies.

But help me go back to that period. And I will just finish by saying it was dropped like a hot potato, because it frankly was. And that was the worst way to drop negotiations. And how that has played out. And how do we pick up really the energy behind two, at least one, serious negotiator—I certainly was disappointed in Arafat at that time—but one serious negotiator. How can we pick that up?

Mr. INDYK. Thank you, Congresswoman. It is a very big question.

I, at the time, shared your concern. I worked for President Bush as his Ambassador in Israel for the first 6 months of the administration. And I think that it is understandable, first of all, that when a new administration comes in, it wants to do things differently. I came into the White House with President Clinton on his first day in office, and we certainly had exactly the same attitude.

But we didn't walk away from everything that had been done before. Yasir Arafat was certainly a major disappointment to President Clinton and it was one of the last things he told President Bush before he left the White House. "Don't ever trust Yasir Arafat," I think his words were.

But that didn't mean there wasn't a framework that had been put together over 8 years of American investment, not only of the President's time and energy and prestige, but of the Congress and of the State Department. A major effort to build an infrastructure of peacemaking.

And when the Bush administration took over, the Intifada was only in its 3rd month. And while the casualties were high, they were minor at that point. I think it was 100 Palestinians killed, and maybe 30 Israelis at that point, compared to the thousands that were killed in the following 4 years of the Intifada.

And there was a framework that had been put together by George Tenet, the Tenet Cease-Fire Plan, and George Mitchell, the Mitchell Recommendations, which had been accepted by both sides, the Israelis and the Palestinians. And the challenge was not to pick up the Clinton parameters and get a final deal; the challenge was to implement the Mitchell Recommendations and the Tenet Cease-Fire Plan to stop the conflict, and get back to negotiations. And that wasn't done.

Maybe it would have been impossible to do, but it wasn't really tried. And I say that from my own personal experience, because I was there. Just a personal story here, if you will allow me. One of the things that I suggested to the administration was since they weren't prepared to engage, why didn't they let me engage, since I was on my way out? They could sacrifice me.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Special Envoy, you could continue in that capacity.

Mr. INDYK. Yes. Well, basically they gave me permission, as Ambassador in Israel, to go work with Arafat and Sharon to try to make the Tenet and Mitchell Plans work.

And I had said to them in order to do this, I am also going to have to engage in some political discussions about a political horizon. And the orders came back to me that I could go ahead and talk about a cease-fire, but I could not talk about anything to do with a political horizon.

And that was true, by the way, of General Zinni's efforts. He, too, was circumscribed. He was not allowed to talk about anything to do with the political horizon, or how the cease-fire might relate to some process that could achieve both sides' objectives in a negotiation.

And so, as a consequence, essentially the Israelis and the Palestinians were left to their own devices. And when they were left to their own devices, the Intifada and the terrorism of the Intifada, and the Israeli Army's response to that, took over. And that is what filled the vacuum.

Even so, there were various opportunities along the way. After the success in Iraq of toppling Saddam Hussein, all of the region's radicals, including Yasir Arafat, lowered their profile. And he, in response, appointed Abu Mazen as prime minister. That was a perfect opportunity to get behind Abu Mazen and try to resurrect the process at that time that would have been against Arafat's will, but nevertheless might have had some chance. And we left him twisting in the wind until Arafat rendered him powerless.

So as I say, it is a big question, and there is a lot of history involved in this. But I think that it was a mistake not to engage from the beginning of the administration. And even though it is late, it is now the right thing to do, to engage, with lowered expectations, with an understanding that this is going to take time, and with a willingness—and this is perhaps the hardest part—to understand the complexity with which the administration now has to deal as a consequence of the fact that over 6 years, the entire edifice of peacemaking has been destroyed. And so we start from a very low base.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Well, let me just finish, and if you would just add to this by agreeing with your assessment. And the apprehen-

sion that I have is the low staying power of this administration in this short time of their tenure, their presence here as President of the United States, or as in charge of this process.

And so is there any instructive counsel you can give as they start at this low stair step? They are starting at the bottom steps now, again. Their time is short. Time is short for the State Department. And the time is short for the administration.

What, then, what counsel can you give us that we could make some strides, starting at the point of where we are, as well as starting at a fractured point, where many of even the allies, sadly enough, the condition of the former prime minister, which you had the opportunity to engage in, who brought the certain sense of military proudness and statute and unquestionable loyalty from the Israeli people, we don't have that any more in terms of his presence. We have a new government. What, then, do you think is the counsel for us?

Mr. INDYK. Well, as I said, the counsel is to stay engaged. The counsel I believe for Congress is to support the Secretary of State in this effort, and to back her up.

But the effort is really to try to put the peace train back on its tracks, and get it moving forward again. And that is, I think, perhaps the most that one can expect to achieve in the next 2 years, precisely because it is the end of the administration, and precisely because this administration is understandably preoccupied with some other problems in the region that are of a very highly problematic nature, particularly Iraq, but also Iran.

And so, you know, I think that that is the way we should look at it. This is an effort to put the process back on track. And if this administration can achieve that, then the next President will, I think, be in a position, much better position, to take it up when she comes into office.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. I would like that. Then don't let them backslide, is that my understanding? Don't let them backslide.

Mr. INDYK. That is one way of putting it, yes.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Thank you. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. ACKERMAN. Thank you very much. Mr. Berman.

Mr. BERMAN. I will be real quick. You didn't really address, except perhaps by implication, the notion of the three conditions and the unity government. In fact, the implication I got was more likely this unity government doesn't hold, and so we shouldn't spend a lot of time on it.

But do you see a chance that this "unity government" actually comes to terms with those conditions, and can somehow do something that Hamas on its own wouldn't do? Any of you. I take it Dr. Pipes thinks this is all a pointless process anyway.

Mr. MAKOVSKY. I am skeptical that the unity government is going to be able to go beyond Mecca. I think that Hamas made it clear that they have certain positions, and they were not even going to change them for the King of Saudi Arabia. So I find it unlikely that suddenly they are going to go beyond, in a new configuration.

I don't have much hope. I don't disregard the depth of their, I would have to say religious commitment against recognizing Israel. I don't think they feel they got elected to get business-class tickets

to Davos. This is, they are ideologically committed to their platform. So I am not holding my breath that they are going to change.

I am more hopeful, focused on Abbas. I think he is the one who was elected, 62 percent, for a two-state solution. And Martin might be right, that for a variety of reasons he will find that this is not a comfortable thing for him, in which case he will leave. But right now he probably feels it will tamp down the violence.

Unity over peace; that is how I see it. And I will just say that you could say, well, once he sees the Rice horizon, maybe he will see that the peace is more tangible, and he will choose peace over unity. I wouldn't rule it out. There are a lot of different interests here at play.

Mr. BERMAN. It is funny how you call it the Rice horizon. I thought it was supposed to be the party's horizon.

Mr. MAKOVSKY. Did I say Rice? I meant Rice's political horizon. I mean that she is going to discuss it with them. If it is more tangible, maybe he will leave.

There are other issues here that Fatah will find in terms of power sharing. I didn't even want to get into all this because of your limited time, you know, in terms of power arrangements within the PLO. There are all sorts of things here where the things could unravel.

It is possible that it is a very short-term hiccup, you know. We will have to see. But I don't think we should assume that it is, and therefore pretend that Mecca is irrelevant. I do think it has real implications, especially, for me, the issue of who is in charge of the security services. And that has implications for American aid.

And I think until we know better what this government is and what it isn't, I think we should just have a review. I think this idea of calling General Dayton in and see how he would navigate, you know, in such a situation is a worthy exercise. I think there are just a lot of variables up in the air. For me, it isn't an irrelevancy, what they have done in Mecca. I think it is a step back, and it requires a review.

Mr. BERMAN. There is a blurb today that Abbas fired 1,500 of his security forces because they wouldn't fight against Hamas, apart from what Hamas brings to it.

But my final, final question is—several times you came back to what is in Saudi Arabia's agenda here. I read, I think it was in an Israeli paper, *Mecca Agreement*, "Victory for Hamas, Defeat for Iran."

If the Saudi agenda is that, then why would they have even pushed Hamas to agree to more of the conditions? Money and calming things in the Gaza Strip, and the allegiance they buy with that is their agenda, and maybe they have achieved their agenda.

Mr. MAKOVSKY. Right. No. Look, the sectarian thing in a certain way dovetails nicely with the peacemaking in this camp, although one has to be always careful about being accused of getting in the middle of the Sunni-Shi'a issue. This is not a religious question for people in the United States, or for Israel, or anything like that. You want to stay out of that.

But in a certain way, keeping Iran out is not a bad thing. But if it is only about keeping Iran out, then I have concerns that this isn't going to go anywhere. They will have no trouble then

bankrolling Hamas, as well. I am sure the King of Saudi Arabia did not like the idea of seeing Mahmoud Abbas sitting with Bashar al-Assad—the same Bashar al-Assad who said he was a half-man after the Israel-Hezbollah War, he had mocked every single Arab leader—I am sure that didn't make King Abdullah of Saudi Arabia happy. And I am sure he didn't like to see Haniyeh going to Iran. And I think he was also trying to signal, this is the center of the Arab world now, fellows. You want to do something, you come to Saudi Arabia.

And he succeeded. And there is no doubt, for all our criticism, I think, I don't think either Martin, Daniel, or myself would differ that one thing that has emerged from Mecca is the centrality of the Saudis. And you know, they have proved themselves. But to me, it might be necessary, but it is not sufficient. Unless we know what they are really about, we are just going to keep going in circles.

Mr. ACKERMAN. I would like to ask an end-game question, based on the different philosophies with the witnesses.

My understanding of the positions of Ambassador Indyk and Mr. Makovsky is that you agree that a two-state solution based on certain conditions is the ultimate outcome. And I wasn't sure about Dr. Pipes, if he saw a Palestinian state as part of the end game.

I know you said that the Palestinians have to lose a war. I don't know how literally you meant that. Is that a real war, or war of ideas? Or do they just have to give up?

You also used the word crushed. These are very active words that evoke a lot of action, rather than just discussions. Do the Palestinian people, in your view, have to be crushed or neutered of their ambitions, or just certain ambitions? And how do you do that, absent a real war? Or is real war the thing? Or do they reach certain goals, and they are entitled to a state?

If you did the polling, and in your polling they had 60 percent accept Israel, do they get a state then? Or do they get to go through another set of tests?

Mr. PIPES. Well, there are two questions I think you are asking. One is the process I see here. And the second is, What is the formal status?

On the process, yes, those are active verbs. And at the same time, I am not talking about crushing the Palestinians; I am talking about crushing the will of the Palestinians to fight. The perfect model for this—well, not perfect, but a model for this—would be the end of the Cold War. We did not defeat the Soviet Union through a battlefield victory. The Soviets gave up.

Or, to turn it around, in 1975 we gave up in Vietnam not because we ran out of bullets or soldiers, but because we lost the will to continue. It is the will to fight that is critical. And the Palestinians very much have that will, and indeed have more of that will today than 15 years ago.

Mr. ACKERMAN. I am trying to understand what you mean by the Palestinians, because I don't have a picture. They went to the polls once and elected a guy who speaks the language of diplomacy, who has been a professional negotiator all his life, whose viewpoint was well known that he wanted to negotiate, the denounce the Intifada, to Yasir Arafat himself claiming it would be a disaster for even the Palestinian people to do that. And the only way to achieve their le-

gitimate goals would be to negotiate with Israel. That seems to be a pretty clear-cut philosophical position.

Mr. MAKOVSKY. I would——

Mr. ACKERMAN. And I know you have granted him less evil——

Mr. PIPES. May I differ?

Mr. ACKERMAN. Well, let me just finish. Then the Palestinian people went to the polls again. And elections do have consequences. And they elected, in their legislative elections, an acknowledged terrorist organization which, by their own words, announced themselves to be just that.

The question is, Did they elect them for their terrorist inclinations? Or did they elect them because they were the people who brought home the groceries? Because they have now done both, in two consecutive elections.

So is it the Palestinian people, or just certain people who were stirring them up, who are terrorists? Or do you believe that Palestinians are inherently terrorists, and have to be neutered of those ambitions?

Mr. PIPES. No. The latter is easy; no, I don't think they are inherently terroristic. Opinion polls and elections are certainly a good guide to understanding the political viewpoint. But there is also the clear trend toward celebration of violence against Israel, and agreement on the fact that Palestine must replace Israel

But let me go back to your specific point about Mahmoud Abbas. He was elected quite soon after the death of Yasir Arafat. He was clearly the heir to Yasir Arafat. I would differ with Martin in one important detail: Yes, Mahmoud Abbas did denounce terrorism, but he denounced it as a tactic back in 2002 and 2003. I would challenge you to document that he called it immoral.

Mr. ACKERMAN. He did once. He did, in Arabic.

Mr. MAKOVSKY. In Arabic. I think it was May 29, 2003, at the Palestinian Legislative Counsel. He said it is immoral; it is against our religious traditions.

Mr. ACKERMAN. That is why you are at the table.

Mr. MAKOVSKY. Whatever. I remember these things.

Mr. PIPES. All right, I will stand corrected if Abbas did use the word "immoral." But I will still contend that the major thrust of his argument was this wasn't working; this was tactically a failure, and so the Palestinians should not continue with terrorism. I mean, if he used it once, I think you are in some sense agreeing with me, that he was not coming and saying this is bad, this is bad, you must give this up, this is immoral. He was saying this isn't working, this isn't working, let us try something different.

And he was elected in the aftermath of Arafat's death, as Arafat's successor. Hamas was—one can read it in different ways—and one way is they are more honest, and that this was a good-governance election. But if it were good governance, there were other alternatives. There were many other parties running who were really good-governance parties, and who were not calling for the elimination of Israel, who were just talking about talking about cleaning up the governance.

So given these facts, given the unquestionable support on a mass level for violence against Israel; given the celebration that terrorism brings out, given the massive funeral——

Mr. ACKERMAN. But is it fair to say it brings out—you know, the whole country doesn't go to the funeral, and the whole country doesn't celebrate. I mean, we had people celebrating when the World Trade Center was struck down. As I understand, you could have stopped that if more people listened to you.

But if—and the other point is——

Mr. PIPES. We had people celebrating World Trade Center?

Mr. ACKERMAN. Yes.

Mr. PIPES. In this country?

Mr. ACKERMAN. In this country.

Mr. PIPES. Okay.

Mr. ACKERMAN. They were.

Mr. PIPES. What I mean to say is the public face of the Palestinian body politic——

Mr. ACKERMAN. But that doesn't mean the American people will accept it, and I don't know that it means the Palestinian people will celebrate when there is an act of terror.

Mr. PIPES. If I may return to your second question?

Mr. ACKERMAN. Please.

Mr. PIPES. On the final status. I believe it is important not to hold out carrots in this sense. I believe one shouldn't. But at the same time, among ourselves it is a perfectly reasonable thing to discuss. And some form of two-state solution does seem to me—partition, as David put it—seems to me the way forward. The only alternative to that ultimately is a one-state solution, which means no Israel, which means that Israel is swamped by its neighbors and Zionism is defunct.

So if one is a Zionist, ultimately, one believes there should be a Jewish state, then one is ultimately saying there has to be a two- or a three- or however-many-state solution, absolutely.

Mr. ACKERMAN. Well, unless there is something compelling, let me say this has been an excellent hearing in my view, not just because it is our first hearing of the committee.

We did not employ the use of the timer, either to the witnesses or the members, and greatly appreciated the fullness of the responses. And you have added greatly to the national dialogue, and indicating ways that we might go forward.

Thank you very much, panel. We are adjourned.

[Whereupon, at 5:15 p.m., the subcommittee was adjourned.]

APPENDIX

MATERIAL SUBMITTED FOR THE HEARING RECORD

[NOTE: A *Palestinian Media Watch* bulletin dated February 28, 2007, titled "Nearly 90% of Palestinian youth deny Israel's right to exist," by Iramar Marcus and Barbara Crook, was submitted for the record but is not reprinted here. It is available in committee records for this hearing.]

ARTICLE SUBMITTED BY THE HONORABLE DANIEL PIPES, DIRECTOR, MIDDLE EAST FORUM

The following text is an excerpt from sandbox.blog-city.com. To access the links shown in the text below, go to: http://sandbox.blog-city.com/hamas_polls_khalil_shikaki.htm (3/26/07)

Some people are up in arms over the fact that Palestinian analyst and pollster Khalil Shikaki has been made a senior research fellow at the new Crown Center for Middle Eastern Studies at Brandeis. Details of the controversy are here. The Zionist Organization of America is arrayed on one side, Americans for Peace Now on the other. I know Shikaki, he's no terrorist or terrorist sympathizer, and he's been a welcome speaker at The Washington Institute where I hang my hat. (He appeared there most recently on January 19.) I do think the new management of the Crown Center needn't have appointed him off the bat, since having him doesn't signal that the Crown Center intends to be different. I said my piece about the principles I hope will guide the Center when I spoke at its inauguration last spring. I invite my friends at Brandeis to reread my remarks carefully.

The problem with Shikaki lies in another realm altogether: his polls of Palestinian opinion. Shikaki runs something called the Palestinian Center for Policy and Survey Research, which gets money from foreign governments and foundations to conduct opinion surveys. They've earned Shikaki the moniker of "respected pollster," and he's always running off to Washington or a European capital to present his findings.

Shikaki conducted three crucial polls that affected perceptions in Washington, in the early parts of June, September and December 2005. They showed Fatah well ahead of Hamas, by a comfortable and growing margin:

June 2005: "Findings show that the level of participation in the next legislative elections will be 77% and the outcome of those elections will be as follows: 44% for Fateh, 33% for Hamas and Islamic Jihad, 3% for the left, and 8% for independent lists. 12% are undecided."

September 2005: "Findings show that 74% of the Palestinians will participate in the upcoming parliamentary elections in January 2006. Voting intentions among the likely participants indicate an increase of Fateh's support from 44% last June to 47% in this poll and a drop in Hamas' support from 33% to 30% during the same period. 11% will vote for other factions and groups and 11% remain undecided."

December 2005: "If elections are held today, findings show that 78% of the Palestinians would participate (compared to 74% last September). Among those intending to participate in the upcoming parliamentary elections, 50% will vote for Fateh, 32% for Hamas, 9% for other factions and groups including independents, and 9% remain undecided."

With each new Shikaki poll, U.S. policymakers grew more lax when it came to setting conditions for Hamas participation. Robert Satloff and Dore Gold both sharply criticized the U.S. drift that allowed entry of a gun-toting, terrorist-talking Hamas into the electoral arena. They were disregarded because of certainty at the State Department and the White House that Fatah would win anyway, and that Abu Mazen would be in a stronger position to discipline Hamas after the victory. A lot of that certainty derived from Shikaki's polls.

Even in late December, a month before elections, Shikaki conducted a special poll that reported these results: "43% will vote for Fateh List while 25% will vote for the List of Change and Reform [Hamas], and 19% remain undecided." Only his last poll, in early January, showed Hamas closing the gap: "42% will vote for Fateh List while 35% will vote for the List of Change and Reform, and 7% remain undecided." Shikaki's exit poll on election day showed the gap had been closed, but was still wildly off the mark: "Results show Fateh winning the largest number of seats (58) followed by Hamas

with 53 seats." In fact, Fatah took only 45 seats; Hamas collected 74.

Is it possible that the Shikaki polls were themselves part of Fatah election propaganda? This is the charge insinuated by a Jerusalem-based political analyst, Zakariya al-Qaq, without citing Shikaki by name: "The people who conducted these polls are inexperienced and unprofessional. They also made serious mistakes in the public opinion polls they conducted before the election. I believe they were then trying to affect the voters' decision by presenting a distorted picture." That's a serious charge, although it might refer to a pollster other than Shikaki. But even if this worst-case interpretation is improbable in Shikaki's case, the professionalism of his polls is very much in question.

That's significant, because Shikaki's polls have become a font of conventional wisdom. Whenever you hear someone say that a majority of Palestinians accept a two-state solution, or a majority of Palestinian refugees don't really want to return to Israel proper, or the Palestinians hate corruption more than Israel, it's a remote echo of one of Shikaki's polls. Complicating the picture is the fact that Shikaki isn't *only* a pollster. He's a political analyst, and even a political activist, which is why Americans for Peace Now have rallied to him in the Brandeis row. From Peace Now to the State Department, Shikaki is admired and feted because he tells peace processors what they want to hear--not just with emotion and analysis, but with numbers.

Unfortunately, we now have a concrete case in which his numbers just didn't add up. If Shikaki has an interesting explanation for what went wrong, and he posts it on his website, I'll be glad to link to it. At the moment, the last entry there is his exit poll, squatting like a grim epitaph. Hamas has never liked Shikaki or his polls: they've always claimed he underestimates them. Now it turns out that they've been right. If Hamas assumes real power, the future of Shikaki's polling gig is in doubt. It would be ironic and sad if he were forced into permanent Brandeis exile, by a famously vengeful movement he himself helped bring to power.

Update: According to this report, Israeli intelligence also relied on Shikaki's polls.

Addendum: Earlier this month, the United States Institute of Peace published a report by Shikaki, entitled *Willingness to Compromise: Palestinian Public Opinion and the Peace Process.* Finding: "Palestinian public opinion is not an impediment to progress in the peace process; to the contrary, over time the Palestinian public has become more moderate. Palestinian willingness to compromise is greater than it has been at any time since the start of the peace process.... Therefore, the time is ripe to deal with permanent-status issues." Ripe indeed.

Amusing: The *New York Times* throws in a quote from Shikaki in an article (Jan. 29) on the democracy dilemma in the Middle East. How is he identified? You guessed it: "respected Palestinian pollster."

Further update: Here it is: Shikaki spins (and sugarcoats) the election results in predictable ways, in a *Newsweek* column.

New twist! Shikaki now claims there was an organized effort to mislead pollsters.

February 14, 2007

Hon. Gary Ackerman, Chairman
Hon. Mike Pence, Ranking Member
and Members of the House Subcommittee on Mideast and So. Asia
Washington, DC 20515
By Facsimile & Electronic Mail

Dear Mr. Ackerman, Mr. Pence and Members of the Subcommittee,

We write on behalf of the Union of Orthodox Jewish Congregations of America with regard to your hearing today on "Next Steps in the Israeli-Palestinian Peace Process."

In the wake of last week's announcement in Mecca that the Fatah and Hamas factions have agreed to form some type of "unity government," as well as decisions by the Quartet and U.S. Secretary of State Rice to have Prime Minister Olmert and President Abbas meet to discuss their peoples' state of affairs, we are again witnessing a good deal of talk about "re-energizing" or "re-starting" a more "vigorous" Israeli-Palestinian peace process.

We write to express our considered view that there is little prospect for real progress – even in the wake of the notably vague Mecca agreement – so long as the Palestinians lack leadership fully committed to a renunciation of terrorist violence and a firm commitment to peaceful negotiations with Israel.

President Abbas' record of a clear lack of capacity and will to dismantle terrorist infrastructures, not to mention Hamas' remaining presence in the Palestinian leadership – clearly places the Israeli-Palestinian conflict in a mode of "conflict management" as opposed to "conflict resolution." It would be wrong to initiate efforts that would prematurely press Israel to undertake any actions before the Palestinian leadership concretely demonstrates a new and real willingness to engage in a productive way.

We appreciate your consideration of our views and your examining this issue in today's hearing.

Sincerely,

Rabbi T. Hersh Weinreb

Nathan J. Diament

UNION OF ORTHODOX JEWISH CONGREGATIONS OF AMERICA
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