

service. Educating women in an atmosphere of "In Omnibus Caritas" (In All Things Charity) each student is challenged to grow both mentally and spiritually through the virtue of service. Students of all faiths are encouraged to find their unique gifts and use them to help the community they live in. In doing so, St. Augustine's has been aiding the communities of Greater Cleveland for seventy-five years, and the students, staff, and administrators deserve to be thanked.

Mr. Speaker, I ask you and our colleagues to join me in thanking the Saint Augustine Academy. The school has produced girls who are ready to fulfill their responsibilities to their family, community, and the global society. Celebrate with me these contributions the Academy has been providing as the Academy itself celebrates its seventy-fifth anniversary.

EGYPT'S EFFORTS ON BEHALF OF
THE CAMP DAVID MIDDLE EAST
NEGOTIATIONS

HON. NICK J. RAHALL II

OF WEST VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 6, 2000

Mr. RAHALL. Mr. Speaker, I submit into the RECORD a letter from His Excellency Nabil Fahmy, Ambassador to the United States, representing the Arab Republic of Egypt.

Mr. Speaker, when the Camp David Summit ended without an agreement between the leaders of Israel and Palestine, a vigorous campaign was activated to paint an arbitrary picture of what supposedly went wrong—to the effect that Mr. Arafat was intransigent, had rejected all proposals put before him, and was supported in this intransigence by Egypt and Saudi Arabia.

I firmly believe that Egypt's response to those arbitrary and much publicized charges will go far to put a better light upon what, in truth, occurred. I submit for the RECORD the August 17, 2000 letter I have received from Ambassador Nabil Fahmy on this subject, and commend it to my colleagues for their close consideration.

EMBASSY OF THE
ARAB REPUBLIC OF EGYPT,
Washington, DC, August 17, 2000.

Hon. NICK RAHALL,
*Rayburn House Office Building,
Washington, DC.*

DEAR CONGRESSMAN RAHALL: To follow upon the latest summit negotiations at Camp David, I would like to share with you some of my thoughts.

As soon as the Camp David summit ended without an agreement, a vigorous campaign painted a subjective picture of what went wrong in the 14 days of closed negotiations. In short, the story was that Arafat had been intransigent, had rejected all proposals, and was encouraged by Egypt and Saudi Arabia.

These accounts overlook how far the Palestinian position had moved over the last few years. By accepting the 1967 borders, Palestinians had already compromised on about 80% of what many in the region believe to be the land of historic Palestine. Also, at Camp David it was reported that they further agreed to an exchange of land leaving some settlements under Israeli sovereignty. They have accepted intrusive security measures to satisfy Israeli concerns. No one underscored that Arafat compromised on many issues. While many issues remain outstanding,

progress has been witnessed in numerous areas. The issue of sovereignty of East Jerusalem, particularly El Aqsa Mosque, was among the outstanding issues. It is especially sensitive to Palestinians. We have to recognize that the Palestinians were flexible, however, they also have legitimate concerns that are dear to them.

The issue of Jerusalem remains outstanding, not only for the Palestinians. To this day, the international community has not recognized the Israeli occupation of Jerusalem. Numerous United Nations Security Council resolutions considered that all legislative and administrative measures taken by Israel, to change the legal status of Jerusalem, are invalid and cannot change Jerusalem's status. They urgently called upon Israel to rescind all such measures, and to desist from further actions changing the status of Jerusalem. Almost every country in the world, including the United States, respected those resolutions and have not established diplomatic Missions to Israel in the Holy City.

On the eve of the Madrid Peace Conference (1991), the basis of the current negotiations, the United States reassured the Palestinians that "The U.S. is opposed to Israeli annexation of East Jerusalem and extension of Israeli law on it and the extension of Jerusalem's municipal boundaries." This remains the pronounced U.S. official position today.

We must not forget that the negotiations at the Egyptian-Israeli Camp David summit were also about to collapse on how to deal with the issue of Jerusalem. Each side stated its position in a letter to President Carter who would provide, for the record, an affirmation of the United States stance on Jerusalem. In his letter, dated September 22, 1978, President Carter asserted: "The position of the United States on Jerusalem remains as stated by Ambassador Goldberg in the United Nations General Assembly on July 14, 1967, and subsequently by Ambassador Yost in the United Nations Security Council on July 1, 1969." The two statements unequivocally declared that:

"The United States considers that the part of Jerusalem that came under the control of Israel in the June (1967) War, like other areas occupied by Israel, is occupied territory . . .

The actions of Israel in the occupied portion of Jerusalem . . . give rise to understandable concerns that the eventual disposition of East Jerusalem may be prejudiced and the rights and activities of the population are already being affected and altered. (The United States) government regrets and deplores this pattern of activity, and it has so informed the government of Israel on numerous occasions since June 1967.

(The United States) has consistently refused to recognize these measures as having anything but a provisional character and do not accept them as affecting the ultimate status of Jerusalem."

Forcing a compromise on the Palestinians would ultimately mean the postponement of the end of the conflict and would plant the seeds for a bloodier confrontation between future generations. We have learned, the hard way, that military superiority and "qualitative edges" have never prevented wars nor provided security, and will never do. We have no alternative but to reach a comprehensive Palestinian-Israeli peace accord, including Jerusalem, and to reach it now, to bring to a final close the Palestinian-Israeli conflict.

In a NY Times Op-Ed article on August 6, 2000, President Carter wrote: "Accolades for one side and condemnation of the other is always a political temptation after an unsuccessful effort, but this makes it very difficult to orchestrate future negotiation sessions where mutual confidence in the medi-

ator is required. Such statements made since Camp David discussions have aroused concern in the Arab community, and the possible movement of the American Embassy from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem would create an even greater impediment to further progress."

Let us look for solutions rather than waste our time and energy trying to find excuses.

As for Egypt's role, when asked on Israeli television about this issue, President Clinton answered "I think that the truth is that because this had never been discussed before between the two parties—and because when we went into the negotiations, they were usually secret or sacrosanct—that I'm not sure, number one, that they thought they knew enough to know what to ask for".

President Clinton also spoke about Egypt's role in the peace process in an interview with Al-Hayat Newspaper published Friday the 11th of August. He said: "The fact is that all that has happened since the original Camp David in September '78, including Madrid and Oslo, is an indication of the courageous and visionary policy of Egypt. Egypt was a pioneer for peace and continues to be a key partner for the United States. We agree on the fundamentals of the peace process and we will not be able to reach an Israeli-Palestinian agreement on these core issues without close consultations with Egypt. We are engaged in such a process today."

What more can be said to dispel rumors that Egypt and other Arab countries were not helpful to the negotiations in Camp David. Egypt has been a key player in brokering almost all Palestinian-Israeli agreements, and has taken an active role in the pursuit of a just, lasting and comprehensive peace settlement. When faced with a crisis or a stalemate in any Arab-Israeli negotiations, the parties and the United States always turn to Egypt for fair and objective advice. One recent example was the Sharm el Sheikh Summit in September 1999.

It is noteworthy that Prime Minister Barak sent an envoy to Cairo even before leaving the U.S. and then proceeded himself to Cairo to meet President Mubarak after his return to the region, as did President Arafat. In the meantime, contacts between Egyptian and American officials continued in search of ways to overcome this impasse; Ambassador Walker, the Assistant Secretary of State for Near Eastern Affairs went to Cairo where he met with President Mubarak and conferred with Foreign Minister Moussa to coordinate both countries' efforts. President Clinton has recently corresponded with President Mubarak and Secretary Albright has since then called Foreign Minister Moussa. As always, we are now examining avenues of working with Palestinians and Israelis to give a creative boost to the negotiating process.

It is a difficult task before us, let us focus our efforts on finding a truly historic compromise to finally bring peace between Palestinians and Israelis. I look forward to working with you toward this objective.

Sincerely,

NABIL FAHMY,
Ambassador.

HONORING DONNIE SPARKS

HON. SCOTT McINNIS

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 6, 2000

Mr. McINNIS. Mr. Speaker, I would like to congratulate Donnie Sparks, of Canon City,