

were poised to present our ideas the end of September, which is when the intifada erupted.

He knew we were poised to present the ideas. His own people were telling him they looked good. And we asked him to intervene to ensure there wouldn't be violence after the Sharon visit, the day after. He said he would. He didn't lift a finger.

On a final plan in December:

Now, eventually we were able to get back to a point where private channels between the two sides led each of them to again ask us to present the ideas. This was in early December. We brought the negotiators here.

The ideas were presented on December 23 by the President, and they basically said the following:

On borders, there would be about a 5 percent annexation in the West Bank for the Israelis and a 2 percent swap. So there would be a net 97 percent of the territory that would go to the Palestinians.

On Jerusalem, the Arab neighborhoods of East Jerusalem would become the capitol of the Palestinian state.

On the issue of refugees, there would be a right of return for the refugees to their own state, not to Israel, but there would also be a fund of \$30 billion internationally that would be put together for either compensation or to cover repatriation, resettlement, rehabilitation costs.

And when it came to security, there would be an international presence, in place of the Israelis, in the Jordan Valley.

These were ideas that were comprehensive, unprecedented, stretched very far, represented a culmination of an effort in our best judgment as to what each side could accept after thousands of hours of debate, discussion with each side.

Arafat came to the White House on January 2.

Mr. President, it was January 2, just before President Clinton left office.

Met with the president, and I was there—

“I” being Dennis Ross—

in the Oval Office. He said yes, and then he added reservations that basically meant he rejected every single one of the things he was supposed to give.

He [was] supposed to give, on Jerusalem, the idea that there would be for the Israelis sovereignty over the Western Wall, which would cover the areas that are of religious significance to Israel. He rejected that.

He rejected the idea on the refugees. He said we need a whole new formula, as if what we had presented was non-existent.

He rejected the basic ideas on security. He wouldn't even countenance the idea that the Israelis would be able to operate in Palestinian airspace.

This is commercial aviation.

You know when you fly into Israel today you go to Ben Gurion. You fly in over the West Bank because you can't—there's no space through otherwise. He rejected that.

So every single one of the ideas that was asked of him he rejected.

Dennis Ross then went on to say:

It's very clear to me that his negotiators understood this was the best they were ever going to get. They wanted him to accept it. He was not prepared to accept it.

Then on why Arafat said no. Dennis Ross said:

Because fundamentally I do not believe he can end the conflict. We had one critical clause in this agreement, and that clause was, this is the end of the conflict.

Arafat's whole life has been governed by struggle and a cause. Everything he has done

as leader of the Palestinians is to always leave his options open, never close a door. He was being asked here, you've got to close the door. For him to end the conflict is to end himself.

Now, he was asked the question on whether Arafat believed he could get more through violence. This is how Dennis Ross responded. And I quote:

It is possible he concluded that. It is possible he thought he could do and get more with the violence. There's no doubt in my mind that he thought the violence would create pressure on the Israelis and on us and maybe the rest of the world.

And I think there's one other factor. You have to understand that Barak was able to reposition Israel internationally. Israel was seen as having demonstrated unmistakably it wanted peace, and the reason it wasn't available, achievable was because Arafat wouldn't accept it.

Arafat needed to re-establish the Palestinians as a victim, and unfortunately they are a victim, and we see it now in a terrible way.

Mr. REID. Will the Senator yield for a question?

Mrs. FEINSTEIN. I certainly will.

Mr. REID. I did not see this interview on television over the weekend, so I appreciate very much the Senator from California bringing it to my attention and the attention of the Senate and the American people.

But it appears to me that what he has said—“he,” meaning Dennis Ross—is that Yasser Arafat could not take yes for an answer. It appears that he and his people got everything they asked for, and that still was not good enough.

Is that how the Senator sees that?

Mrs. FEINSTEIN. I think that is exactly correct.

What Dennis Ross said, essentially, was the final negotiations, that had been gone over prior to this meeting in the White House, had been gone over with the negotiators—that the implication is, that there was an assent to it by the negotiators, and then when the meeting was held in the White House, Arafat said, yes, but then he presented so many reservations that that clearly countermanded the “yes.”

So the implication that is drawn from that, I say to the Senator, is that you are absolutely right. When push came to shove, Yasser Arafat said no.

Mr. REID. Well, I appreciate very much the Senator from California bringing this to our attention. And I have a clear picture that what has taken place in the Middle East since August a year ago is the direct result of the inability of Yasser Arafat to accept what he had asked for in the first place; that is, all the violence, all the deaths, all the destruction, I personally place at his footsteps.

I want the Senator from California to know how I personally feel, that this man, to whom I tried to give every benefit of the doubt, has none of my doubt any more. I think Yasser Arafat is responsible for the problems in the Middle East totally.

Mrs. FEINSTEIN. I say to Senator REID, thank you very much. I appreciate those comments. I think there

are many in the Senate who share those comments. What is so significant to me because I know Dennis Ross—and Dennis Ross was really an excellent Middle East envoy, an excellent negotiator, fully knowledgeable about all of the points of convention—and I thought if anybody had a chance of achieving a settlement, it really was Dennis Ross and President Clinton. And, clearly, that did not happen. I think on this “FOX News Sunday,” Dennis Ross clearly said why it did not happen.

So I appreciate those comments.

THE ARAFAT ACCOUNTABILITY ACT

Mrs. FEINSTEIN. Mr. President, on Thursday, Senator MCCONNELL and I introduced legislation that had findings as well as bill language containing some sanctions. The title of the legislation is the Arafat Accountability Act. I do not want to argue that now, but I do want to point out, in a column in this morning's New York Times, Mr. William Safire, under the title “Democrats vs. Israel,” made a statement about this resolution, saying it has been blocked by Majority Leader TOM DASCHLE.

This is not true. Senator MCCONNELL and I presented the bill on Thursday. We indicated we were not pushing for its passage at the present time, that we wanted time to go out and achieve a number of cosponsors. That was the reason for any delay. So I would like the record to clearly reflect that.

EARTH DAY AND GLOBAL WARMING

Mrs. FEINSTEIN. Mr. President, today is the 32nd anniversary of Earth Day. I think it is fitting, then, to say a few words about the world's No. 1 environmental problem; and that is clearly global warming. It is also fitting because last week the east coast of our country experienced its first April heat wave in more than a quarter of a century. Even more disturbing, in February, an iceberg, the size of Rhode Island, collapsed from the Antarctic ice shelf.

The Earth's average temperature has risen 1.3 degrees in the last 100 years. Computer models predict an increase of 2 to 6 degrees over the next century.

The 10 hottest years on record have all occurred since 1986. What does that mean? Today the atmospheric concentration of carbon dioxide—that is our No. 1 greenhouse gas—is 30 percent higher than preindustrial levels. This may seem to be a small change, but just a few upticks in temperature can produce catastrophic conditions in weather. So the window of time to do something to curb global warming is closing fast.

One of my disappointments with the energy bill is the fact that there is no substantive action taken to reduce our Nation's profligate carbon dioxide pollution.