

**Tab 26**



**REMARKS BY PRESIDENT CLINTON AT PHOTO OPPORTUNITY WITH  
PALESTINIAN AUTHORITY CHAIRMAN YASSER ARAFAT  
THE WHITE HOUSE  
10:22 A.M. EST THURSDAY, JANUARY 22, 1998**

PRESIDENT CLINTON Let me say before we begin that I am very pleased to welcome Chairman Arafat back to the United States as our partner in the peace process. As I did with Prime Minister Netanyahu, I want to emphasize what a critical time this is in the process and the importance of both parties' meeting their obligations.

I also would like to take just this second to underlie (sic) the principles of the peace process; mutual obligations and the concept of land for peace so that Israelis can live in security, recognized by all their neighbors, and the Palestinians can realize their aspirations to live as a free people. If we can focus on these principles, I am convinced we can make some progress.

I am going to give Chairman Arafat a little report on my meeting with Mr. Netanyahu, and then we're going to go to work.

Q Mr. President, when do you think the Israelis will finally meet their U.N. obligations, their treaty obligations, to give back conquered land?

PRESIDENT CLINTON: Well, we're going to discuss that. We're working on it. You know, we believe, you know, the Oslo process sets out a schedule for redeployment, and that's obviously one of the major issues to be discussed.

Q But they're not going to meet it, are they?

PRESIDENT CLINTON: Well, let -- give us chance. We're working on it.

Q (In Arabic.)

CHAIRMAN ARAFAT: (In Arabic.)

Q Mr. President, what's the next step now? And is there a time frame where you want things to (word inaudible)?

PRESIDENT CLINTON: Well, we're going to have a -- after this meeting, then what we'll do is to see whether we have moved the

parties closer together.

And if we have, then we'll try to figure out how to close the loop and get an understanding on what the next steps are. And if we can do that, we want to do it, obviously, fairly quickly. We don't want to just keep dragging this out. I think we -- we have a sense of urgency here.

(Cross talk.)

Q (Through interpreter.) What would you be asking President Clinton for?

CHAIRMAN ARAFAT: (In Arabic.)

PRESIDENT CLINTON: One more.

Q Mr. Arafat, do you believe progress was made with Prime Minister Netanyahu? Do you believe progress has been made this week? And would you agree to a (few-stage ?) withdrawal?

CHAIRMAN ARAFAT: (Through interpreter.) As long as there is pressure and efforts by President Clinton, I'm fully confident that the peace process will be protected and will be succeeded.

And we should not forget that the president also has sent Madeleine Albright, secretary of state, and Mr. Ross to the region many times to push the peace process forward.

Q So you believe Mr. Netanyahu will stand by his commitment?

CHAIRMAN ARAFAT: We hope so -- he would do so.

PRESIDENT CLINTON: Thank you.

STAFF: Thank you, Mr. President.

(Cross talk.)

Q Mr. President -- (inaudible) -- important issues in the Middle East --

PRESIDENT CLINTON: Go ahead.

Q -- but could you clarify for us, sir, exactly what your

relationship was with Ms. Lewinsky and whether the two of you talked by phone, including any messages she may have left?

PRESIDENT CLINTON: Let me say, first of all -- I want to reiterate what I said yesterday -- the allegations are false, and I would never ask anybody to do anything other than tell the truth. Let's get to the big issues there -- about the nature of the relationship and whether I suggested anybody not tell the truth. That is false.

Now there are a lot of other questions that are, I think, very legitimate. You have a right to ask them. You -- that -- you and the American people have a right to get answers. We are working very hard to comply, get all the requests for information up here. And we will give you as many answers as we can, as soon as we can, at the appropriate time, consistent with our obligation to also cooperate with the investigations. And that's not a dodge; that's really what I've -- what I've -- I've talked with our people. I want to do that. I'd like for you have more rather than less, sooner rather than later. So we will work through it as quickly as we can and get all those questions out there to you.

(Cross talk.)

Q Mr. President, would you comment --

PRESIDENT CLINTON: Thank you.

Q Mr. President, would you comment --

STAFF: Thank you.

PRESIDENT CLINTON: Thank you

Q Did the pope in Cuba, Mr. President --

PRESIDENT CLINTON: Thank you.

STAFF: Thank you.

PRESIDENT CLINTON: What about the pope in Cuba?

Q What are your impressions of the remarkable scenes of the pope in Cuba? And what about his call for an end to the embargo?

**PRESIDENT CLINTON:** Well, first of all, I am glad he went to Cuba. I think it's a wonderful thing, and I am glad Mr. Castro invited him to come. I am glad the Cuban government let the Christian people in Cuba celebrate Christmas last Christmas, acknowledge it in the explicit and open way.

And I hope that this trip will lead to some reassessment on the part of the Cuban government, that would enable us to move closer together in many ways, and maybe it will.

**Q** (Inaudible) -- Netanyahu --

(Cross talk.)

**STAFF (?)**: (Do you think we ?) -- can get out of here, ladies and gentlemen. Thank you very much.

**Q** (Inaudible) -- do you want to talk about your comment --

**PRESIDENT CLINTON:** (Inaudible.)

**STAFF (?)**: Thank you, again.

**STAFF:** Thank you. Thank you.

(Cross talk.)

**PRESIDENT CLINTON:** Thank you all. We've got to go to work. Let us hit it.