

RELEASE IN PART
B6

From: Mills, Cheryl D <MillsCD@state.gov>
Sent: Sunday, December 18, 2011 6:05 PM
To: H
Subject: Fw: A note for Secretary Clinton

From: Pickering, Thomas R [mailto:]
Sent: Sunday, December 18, 2011 10:58 AM
To: Mills, Cheryl D
Subject: FW: A note for Secretary Clinton

B6

This text has been cleaned up of typos and omissions and should be the one to be forwarded. I apologize for loading your in box. Tom
Cheryl:

I would be grateful if you would pass this to the Secretary.

“Dear Madam Secretary:

It was a pleasure to sit beside you last evening.

I particularly enjoyed your speech and the key points it made. All that day and for many days previously I had been engaged with senior Palestinians and other Arabs and Israelis talking about the peace issue.

Your remarks raised a new and very important point for me which I would like briefly to set out for you.

Our group concluded rightly that we need to see a game changer in the region to make any progress.

Netanyahu is not going to move for anything that the Palestinians can offer him which they can deliver.

His coalition is too hard over and likely to divide on the key issues.

He cannot deliver anything the Palestinians can accept without our help. He is much more satisfied with the status quo than with the risks of change.

The Palestinians are divided and in the same position – nothing they can do politically can meet even their minimal needs as they see them and attract the Israelis to the process much less move them

We have little we can offer to break the stalemate; for years it has been clear that the curse for the Middle East peace effort is that it is never more than two years away from a major American election.

You may not agree with my points above, but I see no signs that there is a different conclusion possible. We are stuck and maybe for a long time

A stalemate has its own dangers. Things never get better on their own – the reverse is always true. There is no status quo possible in this region.

In the past a game changer put us in a position to help both parties and gave them incentives.

We have tended to see game changers as a war – the Yom Kippur-Ramadan War in 1973, Iraq's invasion of Kuwait in 1990.

No one can wish a war on the region, even or especially with Iran – it much too dangerous, particularly with all that is happening there - despite the fact that it might be a game changer,

Your speech suggested a different kind of game changer.

It would be a slow roller and hard to catalyze for us and others, and maybe one in which it will be a struggle to develop confidence.

Your spoke of the power and capacity of women to move events and noted the Liberia and Cote d'Ivoire model.

The Middle East is not West Africa – I have lived and worked in both - but I have always believed that a Gandhian approach might work in the region and particularly with Israel.

After listening to you, I am more convinced that it may be the one hope we have slowly but necessarily to see the region move to the point where both sides will come again to want a deal and seek our help. But it has to come from them and their own people.

What will change the situation is a major effort to use non-violent protests and demonstrations to put peace back in the center of people's aspirations as well as their thoughts, and use that to influence the political leadership. This is far from a sure thing, but far, in my humble view, from hopeless. Women can and ought to be at the center of these demonstrations. Many men and others will denigrate the idea. I don't and I don't think that was your message.

Several thoughts about how.

It must be all and only women. Why? On the Palestinian side the male culture is to use force. Bedouins were for years tribal raiders and bride stealers from other tribes. It defined the male being and the Arabs invented 'macho'. Palestinian men will not for long patiently demonstrate – they will be inclined over time and much too soon to be frustrated and use force. Their male culture comes close to requiring it.

The Palestinian women have to begin this. Some few already have. They should use peaceful demonstrations and sit-ins in their own territories calling for peace and seeking to get their own leadership – which is more than willing – also to support them if they look successful. They must develop growth and momentum, just like Tahrir Square, and attract more women to participate and thus gain world attention – not easy to do in their area and under their conditions. Their leadership has shied away from this idea because they can't control it; they too are afraid of being replaced by a Tahrir Square style action. Women acting alone could help counteract that thinking.

The Palestinian women should also stimulate a supporting, parallel and congruent effort by women in Israel, both Jews and Arabs, to do the same thing on their side of the dividing line. They too should keep the men away. If the Palestinians see men engaged they will jump in and the soldiers of the IDF will sooner or later use force. This comes from several former senior Israeli military officers I have spoken with. The soldiers are fearful, nervous, outnumbered, insecure and brought up on a severe distrust of Palestinian males whom almost all of them have never spoken to except at roadblocks.

Finally, the women must have a strategy. It must be long term and find a way to bring continuing pressure to change minds at the top. There should be no effort physically to cross dividing lines, but there might be peaceful demonstrations against all aspects of the occupation on the Palestinian sides – roadblocks, land confiscations, new settlement activity, around military government installations and perhaps in Area C which they do not control. This ought to be done with care but it could help to create the kind of action which no army can easily use force to deal with. There would be a chance force would be misused against them. With all and only women demonstrating peacefully under the eyes of the world the chances are much less force will be used against them, since that action has its own consequences. But in truth, I cannot minimize the fact that the dangers are not small.

On the Israeli side, it must be public demonstrations and show growth as well. Outside the Prime Minister's office and the major squares and parks in Jerusalem and elsewhere have been the traditional places for demonstrations like this for peace and change to begin and persevere. Rabin Square in Tel Aviv would be right. The Peace Now organization (Shalom Akshav), despite its decline, is one starting point.

Most of all the United States, in my view, cannot be seen to have stimulated, encouraged or be the power behind it for reasons you will understand better than anyone. I believe third parties and a number NGOs on both sides would help, particularly if there were an outline of a peace document with parameters which, like those at the end of the Clinton administration, promised a fair and lasting peace and which the women on both sides could agree to support.

You may well think this is too far out, with too many moving parts, and it may well be and that there are better ideas. If so, I would be the first to understand. But the dangers of doing nothing are real too – conflict, certainly change and not for the better, and with a certainty as well of no progress. If it is as the President has said peace in this part of the world is a vital interest for the US, then something like this may fit the need."

Tom