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What I want to do this afternoon is continue our conversation on I think the two biggest challenges we face at this moment. The two strategic issues that I believe that will dominate the conversation over the coming weeks and months--first and foremost, the issue of Iran, and there should be no mistake and you've heard about this from speaker after speaker at this Conference and obviously that's not an accident, about the Iranian quest for nuclear weapons and their talk about what they will do with those weapons. There should be no ambiguity about this and it's not just the United States saying this, it's not just Israel saying this; it is the United Nations, it is the International Atomic Energy Agency, bodies who are not particularly sympathetic to either the United States or Israel who now are deeply concerned and are taking actions against the Iranians at this time.

We should make no mistake that we are in a race with the Iranians as they build the technological capabilities to acquire--to develop nuclear weapons and the systems to deliver them. And the fact is now they're involved and some say some 2,000 centrifuges on their way to 3,000 which is an industrial capability of enriching uranium along this headlong path that they're on at the moment. But the reality is over this period of time there has been and continues to be from our point of view--not enough, and I'll get to that in a second--an effort to slow them down, an effort now that on the US part has been over a decade in the making and many of you in this room have been involved with helping us get there. The effort to use diplomatic, economic and financial sanctions--to put pressure on the regime in Tehran and by the way it's about the regime; it's not about Ahmadinejad. He is the leader but it is about the regime to change direction. And we have seen sanctions begin to take hold and a dramatic decision by the American Administration just three days ago to put the Iranian Revolutionary Guard on the terrorist list, to put the major banks on the watch list of transactions to prohibit both American banks and international banks from doing business with Iranian banks. These two steps alone have taken us to a quantum leap forward in international pressure and I want to say in large measure that American leadership were due to the efforts of some of the Senators and Congressmen that were with us last night including Senator Menendez who will be with us this afternoon, and your efforts to insure that this issue is on the table. That pressure by the House of Representatives who just within the last three weeks overwhelmingly adopted a piece of legislation calling for exactly these two steps and the Senate just a few weeks ago--passing the Kyle-Lieberman Amendment calling for exactly this stuff. This is I believe along the path that will actually prevent us from having to use

force if it is adopted and implemented and enforced and enjoined by the rest of the international community. It is a step in the direction of using diplomacy and economic sanctions and we have seen the beginnings inside of Iran of some tumult we haven't seen. The fact of the matter is there's been a 25-percent cost in the increase of food in Iran. The fact that we've seen increases in housing of dramatic proportion; there were strikes and demonstrations when the Iranians tried to raise the price of gasoline.

Again we're beginning to see the seeds of students and labor unions coming together inside Iran and saying we--we have to think differently possibly about where we're going as a nation. Now none of this is inevitable and I'll come back to that but the most important thing at the moment is the steps that have taken and will need to continue to be taken including this dramatic decision of a few days ago. In addition, the efforts of divestment over this past four-months that we have undertaken with your assistance around the nation--now several of the largest American pension plans have said they are divesting from companies that do business in Iran's oil sector, including yes, California, Florida, Illinois, hopefully joined by Pennsylvania and others and that's a major challenge here. We're sending a powerful message and it's not just the United States.

Britain has joined us; France has joined us; and even the giant Russian oil company Lukoil has announced that they are pulling out of Iran and the reason by the way--yes; the reason they are pulling out is because of their fear of American sanctions. So these steps in a dedicated way need to happen but the missing piece and this is the part of the conversation about what is the meaning of these last two days together, we have to create a sense of urgency amongst every decision maker we encounter. We have had a chance over the last several days to hear from speakers; now it's our turn to act. And that opportunity must focus on making sure that every encounter with every Congressman, every Senator, every candidate for office, including the Presidency of the United States we ask them the very simple question--what are we going to do to prevent Iran from becoming a nuclear power? That must be the central question that we ask and not be afraid to ask that question.

And if we don't create that sense of urgency, believe me; no one else will. No one else will and for Israel this is an existential question--not just a nice-to question. But the Iranians are not just involved in their quest for nuclear weapons. The Iranians today are deeply involved in helping the Hamas in Gaza, helping the Islamic Jihad in the West Bank, funding and arming Hezbollah in Lebanon, working with the Iranians, and none of us in this room to be surprised when the full story is told of what Israel did in Syria last month, of not only the involvement of the North Koreans but the fact that the money is likely to have come from Iran in building this nuclear facility. The Iranians believe that they're on the march--not just in their nuclear quest but their desire and willingness to foment and support terrorism on a global scale. And it's in that context that I want to address the second issue.

And the second issue has to do with how to view what we--what you promiscuously call Annapolis which is the next phase in the Israeli Palestinian dialogue--the next phase in the efforts to see if there can't be a reconciliation between Israel and the Palestinians. And

Annapolis, an event I still believe will take place sometime probably in December and--and what I want to do here for us is to focus just on some basic principles that need to encompass how we think about what is taking place. The first principle is we should understand that not only this government in Israel but I believe every successive government as previous governments have had have an obligation and a responsibility and they take seriously to try to find a path with the Palestinians. And if that being the case it establishes a series of principles for us here in the United States about how we would like to see this conducted--first and foremost is the following; an Administration, a US government, Congress and the Administration understand that the key to success is to work with Israel along this path--that as Israel sorts out its direction we want the United States to work with them and that--to be in a position of pushing Israel in directions they do not want to go. That's cardinal--cardinal principle one if you will.

And by the way I must say despite the press that you read about this, at the moment that is taking place. Second--the United States is not neutral in this affair. And if the United States is to be even-handed in this when the rest of the world is tilted in the direction of the Arabs and the Palestinians here the United States being even-handed tilts the conversation towards the Arabs and the Palestinians and the only thing that keeps it in balance is the United States declaring steadfastly that it is on the side of Israel and working together with Israel. As we like to say--we'd like the United States to continue to be an honest broker but the emphasis on honest and to be very clear about this. And it's only when the Arab States see that the United States is with Israel that we begin to understand that they have to compromise.

The fourth principle--prior commitments must be adhered to, including by the United States. The fact is that George Bush has written a letter to Olmert--to--to former Prime Minister Sharon and he has outlined very clearly some very important commitments that must be adhered to regarding the issue of refugees, the issue of borders--that become very significant for where we're going forward and we must insure that--that commitment is sustained not just through this Presidency but beyond it as well.

Two final matters--first the Palestinians have to perform. And they have to perform in the area of security and this is something we must ask of them and make sure that this is something because without it the possibility of moving forward becomes next--very difficult if not impossible. And the last is the Arab world. The Arab world itself has responsibility to getting us closer and it's time for the Arab world, particularly those nations that have not recognized Israel to recognize Israel and we shouldn't have to pay them to beg them to come to this Conference to do so. The Arab world must be helping the Palestinians stop funding the Hamas, stop trying to bring Abbas and Hamas together. The reality is at the moment--these moderate Arab regimes, allies of the United States here have yet to this moment provide a single penny to the Palestinian Authority. It has fallen upon the Israelis and you and I as American taxpayers and the Europeans to help fund them; not a single Arab--that must end. They must help the Palestinians and those forces from moderation if we're going to see success.

My friends, there's two things that--that we must be mindful of; we must be the ones who are vigilant about these principles and urge that our elected officials take on this responsibility as they view these ongoing peace talks, these conversations taking place to get to a better place between Israel and her neighbors.

Last night when I was on the podium, on the steps of the museum on the outside of the tent looking out here on those famous rocky steps if you will it gave me a chance to really step back for a moment and recognize that we were in Philadelphia and the meaning of Philadelphia in American history. The fact is that it reminded me of a story about Benjamin Franklin during the Constitutional Convention where Franklin through this very tumultuous acrimonious discussion taking place about the Constitutional Convention and it was never really certain that we would actually come out. There was nothing inevitable that these men would come together and--and basically write a document that would bind a people and form a nation. It was not inevitable. And Franklin tells the story afterwards as that during the course of these debates he would keep looking back over at George Washington who was sitting in his chair and behind his chair was this carving, and this wooden chair he was sitting in--a carving that had a picture of a sun--of a half-sun here with some rays coming out. And throughout the course of the conversation Franklin says that he could never know whether the sun was setting or the sun was rising. And at moments--various moments in time when the conversation became very difficult he began looking at that and maybe it was setting--that this wasn't a rising moment. And obviously at the end of the conversation he began to say that indeed, this was a moment of rising for the United States--that--that sun behind Washington represented a nation that was about to rise.

And the reason I mention this story is because I believe that the pro-Israel movement in this country represented by the people in this room is still at a moment of the sun rising. But there's nothing inevitable about this and the challenge we face in the coming days, the coming weeks--is for us, the responsibility is on us to insure that we create this urgency about the issue of Iran, that we do for this issue what we did for the Soviet Jewry Movement to create a national and international movement that urges action on this matter and that we create for--for the dialogue that must take place between the Israelis and Palestinians a set of understandings that will guide us to success. That is something that we have the ability to do. And--and I believe if we seize this moment in history, take this opportunity that we will have a chance to insure that not only we will see the continued rising of the sun on our movement but we will have a more secure America, a more secure Israel--not just for us but for the generations to come and that is a commitment we must make to the generations that are here and the generations that are to come as well. Thank you very much.