

WASHINGTON REPORTS TO THE PEOPLE

AFL-CIO Public Service Program

SUBJECT: Near East Background

PARTICIPANTS: Senator Hubert Humphrey (D., Minn.)
Representative Walter Judd (R., Minn.)

MODERATOR: Harry W. Flannery

TIME: 13:30

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FLANNERY: Washington Reports to the People!

U.S. troops are in Lebanon; British troops in Jordan. The Near East situation is before the United Nations . . . the concern of the world.

This radio station and the American Federation of Labor and Congress of Industrial Organizations brings you the background picture of the Near East in the words of two prominent members of Congress recently in this newsworthy area.

Senator Hubert Humphrey, Democrat, of Minnesota, a member of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee.

Representative Walter Judd, Republican, of Minnesota, a member of the House Foreign Affairs Committee.

First to the office of Representative Judd. Congressman Judd, should the United States troops be in Lebanon?

JUDD: Yes, Mr. Flannery. I don't see any possibility of our doing other than the President has done. I get letters -- a few -- saying, "Why should we bother with Lebanon? Lebanon is so small and so relatively unimportant." They don't see that it isn't a question of Lebanon. It is a question of the United States' word. It is a question of confidence. We're engaged in a struggle where there is a ruthless enemy -- resourceful, tricky, and who proposes to destroy us. We have been working even since the war to build up a system of collective security where free peoples stand together to defend their independence.

That system is based on one thing -- confidence. When one of the members is in trouble -- threatened by aggression -- and calls for help, and the other countries don't come to its assistance -- the whole thing goes down. It's not a matter of Lebanon. It's a matter of the United States, in short. Because if we had not gone to the aid of Lebanon when it was threatened -- and when the Turks and the Ethiopians and the Tunisians and the Moroccans and the Jordanians and the Iraqians and the Persians all said we must come in -- if we hadn't gone, no country in the world would have trusted the United States.

The Middle East would have gone, our alliances in South America would have been shattered, the people of Western Europe would have had very little confidence in us, and so on. I think you could have practically kissed Southeast Asia and the Far East goodbye. That would mean Korea, Japan, the Philippines, India -- the whole works. So it isn't just a matter of sentimentality or our sticking our nose into the internal affairs of Lebanon. This is a move which was made necessary to preserve a free world in which the United States itself could be free.

FLANNERY: Congressman, it's necessary for us to understand the Near East. I don't think we understand it very well. What would you say are the basic forces in that part of the world?

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JUDD: There are certain positive forces and negative forces. The positive forces are what I would call the Spirit of 1776. These peoples have been walked over, they have been conquered and re-conquered since before the time of Alexander the Great. For 400 years, most of them were under the Ottoman Empire -- the old Turkish Empire which was very decadent and rotten. We encourage them by the example of the United States which itself fought a war against the colonialism of Europe to get its independence. This has inspired them. You talk to Mr. Nasser and he goes on at great length. He said, "I merely am trying to do what you yourselves did. You help Britain against me instead of helping me against Britain." Anybody can understand the yearning of these people who have been downtrodden and who have been treated as second-rate citizens -- who have been pushed into the background, but who have, nevertheless, in their past had great civilizations, great cultures. They're not inferior persons -- their civilizations became decadent. They're sensitive about it.

This is a great positive thing. It's not so much to get money -- but to get dignity. It's equality of status -- it's an intangible. They're determined to be treated not as natives or lesser breeds without the law -- they're determined to be treated as human beings on a basis of equality.

The negative forces are three fears. One is the fear of the Western Colonialism. The second is the fear of Zionism. They'll say to you frankly: "We don't mind if Israel were willing to be a small country in the Middle East -- we would then make friends with her right away." "But Israel is merely a spearhead, so they put it, of a great world force, Zionism. That we cannot accept."

The third thing they fear, of course, by and large, is Communism. The Number One Fear was Western Colonialism because that's the one they've been under. You are always more against that which you're familiar with. The same as many Frenchmen are more opposed to Germany than they are to the Soviet Union. They've been under the Germans a half a dozen times, so there is the great fear -- the fear of colonialism.

Then, on top of that is the increased resentment against us because it was the Western countries which were largely responsible for the establishment of Israel. Israel couldn't have been established without the support and the economic assistance of the West. That increases their animosity towards us.

They're also afraid of Communism because -- number one -- it is atheistic and -- number two -- they haven't been under it. It's beyond the Turks -- it doesn't hit them directly -- they haven't been under the Russian Communists.

FLANNERY: Aren't we inconsistent when we stopped the British, French and Israeli troops in the Near East then send our own troops into Lebanon.

JUDD: Those two things are not alike at all. We are against aggression as a way to solve our problem. In both cases, we were opposed to the action of England, France, and Israel because it started an aggression. Under the United Nations charter, we were committed to oppose aggression, even if it was by our best friends. So, what they were doing was in violation of the pledges of the charter. We were going to keep our pledges so we had to oppose that aggression. Now, it's Nasser who is engaging in aggression and we're opposing aggression.

In the first case, the action of the British, French and Israelis was in violation of the charter. What we're doing in Lebanon is in support of the charter. We're trying to help countries even though they may not be our best friends -- maintain their independence. If countries are free and secure then we can work out these difficulties. If they're not free and secure and are being threatened from outside or from the inside, then there is nothing but chaos ahead.

FLANNERY: Congressman, what can we do in the Near East to make friends?

JUDD: The first thing is their pride as a group. We must respect it. If we're going to go in there and say not "Now, we're here to tell you what to do", but if we'll go in and say, "Now, what are your problems? How can we help you most?" If we'll work with them, not say, "You are our problem", but "You've got problems, how can we help you with your problems." If we respect their dignity, then they will welcome our assistance. Otherwise, they will resent it because they are fearful that we are moving in to take over the position of control of the Western powers of the past, which they fought so long and hard to throw out.

If we would just think of ourselves in 1776 -- we had that same sort of problem and if we would just approach them in that attitude, we have the means of giving them that right kind of help and we can do it in a way which is acceptable to them.

FLANNERY: Thank you, Congressman Judd. Now to the office of Senator Hubert Humphrey, who also was in the Near East. Senator, how did all of this begin so far as the United States is concerned in the Near East?

HUMPHREY: I suppose our immediate interest in the Middle East was at the time of the Aswan Dam on the Nile River in Egypt. You may recall that there was a great deal of discussion about our participation in the financing of that particular project. Then all at once, when it looked as if the project was well on the way to agreement with Mr. Black of the World Bank in Cairo to work out the final details -- our Secretary of State announced our withdrawal on the basis that the Russians were making offers to Egypt and the best way to show up the Russians was for us to withdraw and see whether the Russians would carry through. Well, the Russians didn't carry through, but the end result was that the Egyptians started out on an anti-American campaign.

I had a chance to discuss this with some of the Egyptian leaders. I want to say that the manner in which our government handled our participation in the Aswan Dam on the Nile River was the beginning of real troubles for the United States in the Middle East.

FLANNERY: You talked with Nasser himself, I believe, Senator.

HUMPHREY: I did. I spent over three hours with President Nasser of Egypt and I recall one particular part of his conversation when he said that after we had withdrawn our support from the Aswan Dam, a project which he believes of the utmost importance for the expanding population, after we withdrew our support and the manner in which we did it -- he told me that he sat down with his Cabinet to figure out a way that he could injure and punish the West -- literally to get even, and he said he came to the conclusion that the nationalization or the seizure of the Suez Canal would do more to irritate the West than any other one thing, and that's why he did what he did. That was the beginning, may I say, of some of our real, immediate problems in the Middle East.

FLANNERY: And our answer was the Eisenhower Doctrine.

HUMPHREY: You recall, Mr. Flannery, after the seizure of the Suez Canal, the British and the French and the Israelis became very concerned -- the Israelis primarily because of the Soviet arms pouring into Egypt, and the attack upon Suez took place. At that time, we moved in and demanded that our allies withdraw in support of the charter of the United Nations.

It was also at that time that we said that we said we must have a new Middle Eastern policy -- but there was none. The only thing that was offered was the Eisenhower Doctrine which was a program to meet Communist open, overt aggression in the Middle East with some

economic assistance, and I recall Mr. Dulles saying to the Foreign Relations Committee that the Eisenhower Doctrine must be looked upon as a stop-gap, as an emergency measure, and that the government and the administration was going to develop an overall comprehensive policy for the Middle East -- something that they never did.

I have said many times that the Baghdad Pact and the Eisenhower Doctrine never really faced up to the genuine threat in the Middle East and that threat is a political infiltration, subversion, conspiracy, Soviet economic penetration, and of course, the challenge and the demands of Arab nationalism compounded by Egyptian Nasserism. Nasserism is a kind of imperial desire in the Middle East for Egypt and Nasser built upon Arabic nationalistic desires.

FLANNERY: What do you think will happen next in the Near East, Senator?

HUMPHREY: I don't know what will happen, but I'm very unhappy about what has happened. I say that if the United States of America makes it its business to intervene in the Middle East on the basis of troops and military force, if that is the only policy we have, we're going to end up being the most hated people in the world as far as the people of the Middle East are concerned, and I don't think we can win on that basis.

I have long advocated that our programs in the Middle East be designed and directed through the United Nations -- that there are old historic bitternesses and enmities in this area that no one nation can cope with -- that we ought to seek to share these responsibilities with others.

This is why I have proposed the establishment of a permanent United Nations police force over there. I predict the Congress will again ask our government to do something about this in the UN.

I have urged the development or the establishment of a Middle East development agency for capital and planning, not under the auspices of the U.S., but under the auspices of the U.N. with our participation.

I have urged, with Senator Mansfield, that we establish in the UN, or at least work for the establishment of an arms control and an arms traffic commission for the Middle East to prevent the shipment of armament to this area. I have urged that we have a pilot project of open skies for the Middle East so that we could have some kind of regional disarmament.

These are some of the things I believe are needed, but through the UN and not just through the US.

FLANNERY: Thank you, Senator Hubert Humphrey, Democrat of Minnesota, and Representative Walter Judd, Republican of Minnesota. Senator Humphrey is a member of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, Representative Judd is a member of the House Foreign Affairs Committee. Both Senator Humphrey and Representative Judd were recently in the Near East and thus are able to report at first-hand on the situation there.

Each week this radio station and the AFL-CIO talks with members of the Congress on major issues of the day.

This is Harry W. Flannery who invites you to be with us next week at this same time for the next WASHINGTON REPORTS TO THE PEOPLE.



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