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WHAT IS THE U.S. COMMITMENT IN THE MIDDLE EAST?

UNITED JEWISH APPEAL
CLEVELAND, OHIO
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REMARKS BY

THE HONORABLE HUBERT H. HUMPHREY

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ISAIAH SAID, "BEHOLD, I WILL DO A NEW THING; NOW IT SHALL SPRING FORTH; SHALL YE NOT KNOW IT? I WILL EVEN MAKE A WAY IN THE WILDERNESS, AND RIVERS IN THE DESERT."

AND THE LORD GOD HAS CREATED A "NEW THING" -- A NEW ISRAEL. AND IT IS HIS WILL THAT IT SHALL CONTINUE TO EXIST -- TO PROSPER AND TO BE FREE.

IT IS IN THE CONTEXT OF OUR OWN COMMITMENT TO THIS NEW ISRAEL THAT I SPEAK TO THE SUBJECT OF U.S.-SOVIET POLICY IN THE MIDDLE EAST.

WHEN I AM ASKED WHAT I CONSIDER THE SOLUTION TO THE MIDDLE EAST CRISIS, I AM REMINDED OF THE STORY TOLD OF THE BRITISH STATESMAN CASTELREAGH AT THE CONGRESS OF VIENNA. (1815).

WHEN ASKED WHAT HE THOUGHT TO BE THE PERFECT SOLUTION TO THE PROBLEM OF SCHLESWIG-HOLSTEIN, THE EARLY 19TH CENTURY EQUIVALENT OF THE MIDDLE EAST,

HE WOULD REPLY: "WELL THERE ARE ONLY THREE PEOPLE IN THE WHOLE WORLD WHO KNOW THE SOLUTION TO THIS. UNFORTUNATELY, THE FIRST ONE DIED.

THE SECOND WENT MAD AFTER WORKING OUT THE SOLUTION. AND I'M AWFULLY SORRY, BUT I'VE FORGOTTEN IT."

HOW BOTH JEWS AND ARABS SOLVE THIS CONFLICT HOPEFULLY WILL SET THE STAGE FOR A DRAMATIC FLOW OF OVERWHELMING GOOD.

BUT DOES THE UNITED STATES HAVE A TRUE AND BINDING COMMITMENT TO HELP PRESERVE ISRAEL'S SOVEREIGNTY AND INDEPENDENCE?

I MAY NOT BE ABLE TO DISPEL ALL THE CONFUSION OVER THE DEFINITION OF COMMITMENT, BUT JUST A LITTLE STRAIGHT TALK MIGHT HELP.

FIRST OF ALL, WE DEFINITELY DO HAVE A CLEAR-CUT COMMITMENT TO ASSIST ISRAEL, ECONOMICALLY, DIPLOMATICALLY AND WITH THE ARMS NECESSARY FOR THE ISRAELIS TO MAINTAIN THEIR OWN DEFENSE AND PROTECT THEIR OWN PEOPLE.

THIS COMMITMENT IS NOT ONE OF TREATY STATUS.

IT IS NOT ONE THAT DIPLOMATS SKILLFULLY CONSTRUCTED -- WITH ELABORATELY DESIGNED LOOPHOLES.

IT IS NOT ONE EXTRACTED FROM THE U.S. THROUGH ENLIGHTENED SELF-INTEREST.

IT IS NOT A COMMITMENT ENTERED INTO BECAUSE OUR "NATIONAL PRIDE" DEMANDS IT.

IT ISN'T EVEN ONE THAT PERMITS OUR MILITARY TO "SHOW THE FLAG" WITH ANY MARTIAL BRAVADO.

THE COMMITMENT I SPEAK OF -- THE SPECIAL BOND YOU, AND I, AND MOST AMERICANS FEEL, IS A BOND FORGED BY THE PEOPLES OF BOTH NATIONS.

IT IS A COMMITMENT OF THE MINDS AND
HEARTS OF THE PEOPLE.

IT IS A COMMITMENT THE PEOPLE OF
AMERICA HAVE MADE AND DECLARED TO OUR PRESIDENTS,
OUR CONGRESS, AND OUR FRIENDS IN ISRAEL.

BUT THIS COMMITMENT MUST AGAIN BE DECLARED
CLEARLY BY THE NATIONAL ADMINISTRATION.

THE AMERICAN PEOPLE AND THEIR REPRESENTATIVES
HAVE DECLARED THIS COMMITMENT. THESE CULTURAL,
RELIGIOUS, FAMILY AND INDEED, EMOTIONAL,
TIES ARE JUST AS REAL -- PERHAPS MORE SO --
THAN BONDS OF ALLIANCE OR HIGH LEVEL DIPLOMACY.

I CALL FOR THIS RE-DECLARATION ON THE PART
OF OUR GOVERNMENT NOT TO IRRITATE THE ARAB
WORLD.

ON THE CONTRARY, I SAY TO THE LEADERS OF
THE ARAB NATIONS AND THEIR PEOPLES THAT THIS
RESTATEMENT OF AMERICAN COMMITMENT TO PRESERVING
THE SOVEREIGNTY AND SECURITY OF ISRAEL IS IN
THEIR OWN BEST, LONG-TERM INTEREST.

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THE ARAB WORLD HAS ALREADY TRAVELED FAR ON THE ROAD OF TECHNOLOGICAL, EDUCATIONAL AND POLITICAL MATURITY. THEY ARE A PEOPLE OF RICH INTELLECTUAL, CULTURAL AND PERSONAL GIFTS. THEY WISH TO DEVELOP THESE ATTRIBUTES FURTHER.

THE UNITED STATES AND ISRAEL WISH FOR THEM THE FULLEST SUCCESS ON THIS HIGH ROAD OF NATIONAL AND INDIVIDUAL DEVELOPMENT.

AGAIN, I SAY, THAT THIS COMMITMENT IS IN THE BEST LONG-TERM INTEREST OF THE ARAB WORLD.

ITS STRONG REAFFIRMATION WOULD MAKE ABSOLUTELY CLEAR TO THE SOVIET UNION THAT THE UNITED STATES HAS GONE AS FAR AS IT CAN IN PROVIDING FOR THE SUCCESS OF THE JARRING PEACE TALKS, NOW UNDERWAY AT THE UNITED NATIONS.

IT HAD BEEN HOPED THAT ONCE THE SOVIET UNION HAD REACHED APPROXIMATE NUCLEAR PARITY, THERE WOULD BE REASON TO SIT DOWN AND TALK. IT WAS FELT THAT THIS SEMI-SECURITY WOULD PERMIT THE NUCLEAR SUPER-POWERS TO DISCUSS DÉTENTÉ NOT THREATEN DÉMARCHE.

no imposed settlement!

CAUTIOUS OPTIMISM SURROUNDING THE SALT TALKS WOULD SEEM TO GIVE SOME BASIS FOR THIS HOPE.

HOWEVER, FOR THE SAKE OF FOOLISH NATIONAL PRIDE, OUTDATED COMMUNIST INTERNATIONALISM AND GEOPOLITICAL AND ECONOMIC INFLUENCE OVER ARAB AREAS, THE SOVIET UNION HAS DECIDED TO FOSTER AND EXPLOIT THIS ARAB-ISRAELI INSTABILITY.

BY SO DOING, THE SOVIET UNION HOPES TO SEE ARAB NATIONS DRAWN GRADUALLY AND FIRMLY INTO THE COMMUNIST ORBIT. THEY PLAN THE SACRIFICE OF LEGITIMATE ARAB NATIONALISM TO FURTHER THEIR OWN IMPERIALISM.

WHERE CATHERINE THE GREAT LEFT OFF, BREZHNEV NOW RESUMES.

AND UNFORTUNATELY, PRESENT-DAY RUSSIAN LEADERS LEARNED SOME LESSONS FROM THE ADVISORS OF THEIR CZARIST PREDECESSORS.

THEY CREATED POTEMKIN VILLAGES FOR THE LEADERS OF EGYPT.

THEY CREATED VISIONS OF VICTORIES THAT
WOULD BE THE GLORY OF EGYPT AND THE ARAB WORLD.

THEY URGED AND ENCOURAGED.

THEY SUPPLIED AND TRAINED.

THEY SUCCEEDED IN DECEIVING EGYPT.

AND, IF IT MAKES THE SMASHING DEFEAT OF
THE 6-DAY WAR ANY EASIER TO TAKE, MAYBE THEY
SUCCEEDED IN DECEIVING THEMSELVES.

THAT DEBACLE FOR THE ARAB COUNTRIES WAS
THEIR REWARD FOR LISTENING TO THE COUNSEL OF
THE SOVIET UNION.

THE ONLY WAY OUT OF THIS TANGLE IS FOR
THE ARAB NATIONS TO REALIZE THAT THE UNITED
STATES -- ITS LEADERS AND ITS PEOPLE -- HAVE
A FIRM, LASTING AND INFORMED COMMITMENT TO
ISRAEL.

ONCE THE ARAB WORLD REALIZES THE U.S. WILL
NEVER PERMIT THE DESTRUCTION OF ISRAEL, THEY
ALSO WILL REALIZE THEY DO NOT NEED THE SOVIETS
TELLING THEM HOW TO RUN THEIR COUNTRIES -- HOW TO
FIGHT THEIR WARS -- HOW TO IDENTIFY THEIR NATIONAL
GOALS AND PLAN FOR THEIR ACHIEVEMENT.

11. [-- I TELL YOU THAT THE MEASURE OF OUR
COMMITMENT TO ISRAEL IS ALSO THE MEASURE OF THE
CHANCE FOR ARAB WORLD FREEDOM.

--FREEDOM FROM OUTSIDE DOMINATION --
POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC;

--FREEDOM TO BUILD THEIR OWN NATIONS AND
NATIONAL CHARACTER;

-- FREEDOM TO ENHANCE THE QUALITY OF LIFE
FOR ALL ARABS;

-- FREEDOM TO WELCOME THEIR JEWISH BROTHERS
TO THE JOINT TASK OF REGIONAL GROWTH AND
PROSPERITY;

-- FREEDOM TO BE THEMSELVES AND SET THEIR
OWN PACE.

NOW, WHAT WOULD SOVIET DOMINATION OF THE
MIDDLE EAST MEAN TO THE REST OF THE WORLD?
WHAT WOULD BE THE POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC RESULTS
OF A STRONG CONTROLLING SOVIET INFLUENCE IN
POLICY DECISIONS OF THE ARAB NATIONS?

I AM NOT, NOR EVER WILL BE AN ALARMIST.

HOWEVER, I FEEL WE MUST BE REALISTIC ABOUT THE PROBABLE RESULTS OF SUCH A SUCCESS OF SOVIET IMPERIALISM.

DOMINANCE OF ARAB NATIONS BY THE SOVIETS WOULD PRESENT THEM WITH A RE-OPENED SUEZ -- A SUEZ THAT COULD BE USED TO PERMIT SWIFT MOVEMENT OF SOVIET AND ARAB WARSHIPS TO DENY ISRAEL AND OTHERS FREE ACCESS TO THE GULF OF AQABA.

-- A SUEZ ROUTE SHORTENING THE DISTANCE FROM RUSSIAN PORTS TO THE INDIAN OCEAN BY APPROXIMATELY 8,000 MILES -- THUS PLACING INDIA AND PAKISTAN WITHIN THE DIRECT INFLUENCE OF RUSSIAN SEAPOWER;

-- A SUEZ PERMITTING RUSSIA TO INTIMIDATE FURTHER THE OIL-RICH ARAB STATES ON THE PERSIAN GULF -- THIS IN TURN WOULD COMPLETE THE ENCIRCLEMENT OF SAUDI ARABIA AND DIRECTLY THREATEN NEUTRALIST IRAN;

-- A SUEZ ROUTE PERMITTING THE SOVIETS TO USE EITHER OR BOTH THEIR ATLANTIC AND PACIFIC FLEETS IN THE EVENT OF A MILITARY OR POLITICAL CRISIS.

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DOMINANCE OF ARAB NATIONS BY THE SOVIETS WOULD PERMIT THEM TO CUT OFF, AT WILL, THE FLOW OF OIL TO EUROPE, JAPAN AND OTHERS OF OUR FRIENDS. IT IS TRUE THAT THE MAJORITY OF OIL-PRODUCING NATIONS IN THE MIDDLE EAST ARE WELL-DISPOSED TO THE U.S. AND OUR FRIENDS. THEY REALIZE THEIR COMMERCIAL INTERESTS ARE BEST SERVED THROUGH FRIENDLY RELATIONS, BOTH DIPLOMATIC AND COMMERCIAL, WITH US.

THEY DISTRUST THE SOVIET UNION -- HAVING SEEN THEM PLAY ONE ARAB NATION AGAINST ANOTHER SINCE THE END OF WORLD WAR II.

THESE OIL-PRODUCING NATIONS HAVE A LONG-TERM VITAL INTEREST IN THE STEADFASTNESS OF AMERICAN POLICY IN THE MIDDLE EAST.

HOWEVER, SHOULD THAT POLICY WAVER AND BECOME UNCLEAR -- SHOULD AN UNCERTAIN OR EQUIVOCAL AMERICAN POLICY RESULT IN THE DEFEAT *or* weakening OF ISRAEL -- THESE NATIONS WOULD HAVE NO CHOICE BUT TO SEEK AN ACCOMODATION WITH RUSSIA AND ITS ARAB CLIENT-STATES -- AND ON RUSSIA'S TERMS; NOT THEIR OWN.

I TRUST YOU WILL UNDERSTAND IF I SEEM TO HAVE SPOKEN SHARPLY HERE. BUT I FEEL THAT STRONG, THOUGH CAREFULLY CHOSEN LANGUAGE, IS NECESSARY WHEN TALKING TO THE SOVIET UNION ABOUT POWER POLITICS AND ITS DANGERS IN THE NUCLEAR AGE.

THE SOVIETS HAVE KNOWN ME FOR QUITE A WHILE. I'VE VISITED WITH THEIR LEADERS ON MANY OCCASIONS. THEY KNOW I'LL TELL THEM THE TRUTH, AS I SEE IT.

HOWEVER, THEY ALSO KNOW I AM A PERSON WHO CAN DISCUSS THE ISSUE AND TRY TO ARRIVE AT A FAIR SOLUTION.

A SOLUTION -- FINDING A SOLUTION -- I'M AFRAID, HAS PROVEN AS DIFFICULT AS ~~DEFINING~~ ^{understanding} "COMMITMENT."

THE UNITED NATIONS, WITH THE SUPPORT OF BOTH THE U.S. AND THE SOVIET UNION CREATED ISRAEL OUT OF ~~THE~~ PALESTINE LANDS UNDER THE BRITISH MANDATE. WE MIGHT HAVE EXPECTED SOVIET HELP IN ESTABLISHING THE PEACE IN THE AREA.

IT WOULD NOW SEEM, BASED ON A RECENT INTERVIEW OF PRESIDENT SADAT OF EGYPT, THE SOVIETS HAVE DECLARED THEMSELVES WILLING TO PARTICIPATE IN ANY PEACE-KEEPING FORCE ESTABLISHED IN THE MIDDLE EAST.

WELL, WE SHOULD TAKE THEM UP ON THIS OFFER. THE U.S. HAS ALSO STATED OUR WILLINGNESS TO PARTICIPATE IN SUCH A FORCE UNDER INTERNATIONAL AUSPICES. UNDER THE UNITED NATIONS, WITH FORCES OF THE BIG FOUR SAFEGUARDING THE INVIOABILITY OF BORDERS AGREED TO BY ISRAEL AND THE ARAB NATIONS, THERE COULD EMERGE A PEACE OF AN ENDURING NATURE.

CREATION OF AN EFFECTIVE PEACE FORCE, DRAWING ON THE TWO SUPERPOWERS AS PARTICIPANTS AND GUARANTORS, WOULD NOT ONLY KEEP THE PEACE, IT WOULD PROVIDE A MECHANISM AND A PRECEDENT FOR INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION THAT COULD GO FAR TOWARDS EASING WORLD TENSIONS.

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AS TO THE SPECIFICS OF ANY SETTLEMENT THAT HOPEFULLY WILL EMERGE FROM THE BEGINNINGS OF TALKS THROUGH AMBASSADOR JARRING, I CAN ONLY SAY THEY MUST PROVIDE THE ESSENTIALS OF A LASTING PEACE IN THE MIDDLE EAST.

I DO NOT CALL FOR ANY PRE-DECLARATIONS BY THE PARTICIPANTS, BUT OUTLINE WHAT I SEE ARE SOME OF THE ESSENTIALS TO A LASTING SETTLEMENT:

1) ISRAEL'S RECOGNIZED AND GUARANTEED BORDERS MUST BE SUCH THAT POPULATION CENTERS WILL NOT BE EXPOSED TO THE VIOLENT WHIMS OF DISSIDENT GUERILLAS.

I ALSO APPLAUD ASSURANCES OF THE GOVERNMENTS OF ISRAEL THAT ONCE NEGOTIATIONS BEGIN, WITH A FIRM PEACE IN MIND, ISRAEL WILL BE FLEXIBLE ON FINAL BORDERS. HOWEVER, ISRAEL'S BORDERS MUST BE REASONABLE AND DEFENSIBLE. TO BE OTHERWISE WOULD PROVIDE INVITATION TO INVASION AND A RESUMPTION OF CONFLICT IN THE MIDDLE EAST.

*Arab Refugees are still numerous
and the issue is one of
extreme importance -- in arriving
at a settlement.*

2) WITH RESPECT TO JERUSALEM, ITS IMPORTANCE TO THREE MAJOR FAITHS -- ITS HISTORIC AND CULTURAL SIGNIFICANCE -- THE RELIGIOUS AND EMOTIONAL BONDS TIEING THE CITY TO SO MANY INDIVIDUALS AND PEOPLES THROUGHOUT THE WORLD -- ALL THESE REASONS WOULD INDICATE THAT JERUSALEM DOES INDEED BELONG TO ALL PEOPLE.

YET, IT MUST BE GOVERNED; IT MUST BE ONE CITY, NOT TWO; THERE MUST BE GUARANTEES OF RELIGIOUS FREEDOM AND ACCESS TO ALL RELIGIOUS SHRINES. THERE MUST BE EQUALITY OF TREATMENT FOR JEW AND ARAB, AND A GOVERNMENTAL STRUCTURE, UNDER ISRAEL, THAT RECOGNIZES THE UNIQUELY HISTORIC SIGNIFICANCE OF THE CITY.

3) THE SHIPS OF ALL FLAGS SHOULD HAVE THE RIGHTS OF PEACEFUL ACCESS TO AND PASSAGE THROUGH THE SUEZ CANAL, THE STRAIT OF TIRAN AND THE GULF OF AQABA.

4) FINALLY, ALL THE ABOVE POINTS AND THE SPECIFIC AGREEMENTS REACHED IN THE PEACE TALKS MUST BE GUARANTEED BY A SIGNED AND DEFINITIVE INSTRUMENT THAT FORMALLY DECLARES THE PEACE.

EARLIER IN MY REMARKS, I DISCUSSED WHAT THE COMMITMENT OF THE UNITED STATES WAS TO ISRAEL. I THINK I MADE CLEAR THAT I BELIEVE OUR COMMITMENT MEANS DOING EVERYTHING IN OUR POWER TO SEE THAT ISRAEL SURVIVES AND PROSPERS. HOWEVER, IN WHAT WAY DO WE DECLARE THE CONTINUATION OF OUR COMMITMENT TO ISRAEL AND PEACE IN THE MIDDLE EAST? WHAT CAN WE, AND, HOPEFULLY, THE OTHER MEMBERS OF THE PEACE-KEEPING FORCE DO TO INSURE THAT THIS PEACE WILL ENDURE?

I PROPOSE THAT EACH MEMBER OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL RETURN FOR PARLIAMENTARY APPROVAL, IN THE FORM OF A TREATY, THE FORMAL INSTRUMENT OF PEACE.

would constitute

THIS ~~IS~~, INDEED,[^] A JOINT COMMITMENT. I BELIEVE THAT THE SENATE WOULD OVERWHELMINGLY ADVISE AND CONSENT TO SUCH A TREATY. I KNOW THAT THE AMERICAN PEOPLE WOULD SUPPORT SUCH A TREATY AND THE MEN WHO GAVE IT OUR GOVERNMENT'S SANCTION.

I HAVE INDULGED IN SOME STRAIGHT TALK.
NOT EVERYONE MAY AGREE WITH WHAT I HAVE SAID.
HERE THIS EVENING.

I HAVE SCOLDED WITH THE TRUTH BUT HOPE
I HAVE ALSO PROVIDED THE MEANS FOR MUTUAL
COMPASSION AND UNDERSTANDING THAT CAN BRING
THESE PEOPLES TOGETHER.

WE MUST NOT LET THE HOPES OF THE PEOPLES
OF ISRAEL AND ARABIA ~~ALSO LIE~~^{be} BURIED ON THE
SLOPES OF MOUNT HERZL.

FOR THE SAKE OF THE ISRAELI YOUTH NOW
SLEEPING THERE IN ABRAHAM'S ARMS, LET EACH ONE
OF US MAKE OUR OWN COMMITMENT -- A COMMITMENT
TO PEACE -- PEACE FOR ISRAEL, FOR ARAB NATIONS,
FOR THE WORLD -- FOR EACH OF US WITHIN OUR
OWN HEARTS.

SHALOM.



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