



NEWS from U.S. Senator Bob Dole

(R.—Kans.)

New Senate Office Building, Washington, D.C. 20510 (202) 224-6521

REMARKS OF SENATOR BOB DOLE

INSURING A JUST PEACE

SUNDAY, MARCH 25, 1979

You call yourselves the children of Israel. Many of you have recent ancestors who fled from European oppression, discrimination, war and poverty. Like most Americans you have pride for and a commitment to your ethnic heritage, expressed in a keen and abiding interest in foreign policy in general, and in particular towards Israel, that other haven for the oppressed and the dispossessed. I am deeply honored to share your dedication to a strong, a free, and a permanent Israel.

A CALL FOR COURAGE

If we have learned anything in recent months it is that a president must provide leadership to which the American people can respond. Nowhere is that truer than in foreign policy. It was evident by its absence in Iran and Africa. It was strikingly evident by its success in President Carter's recent trip to Egypt and Israel.

That leadership must give focus to the rising demand for stand-up diplomacy in support of our legitimate interests.

When challenged on the international scene we must respond. We must face those who would shove us aside or they will do just that.

The source of the challenge is no mystery. There is only one imperialist country left in today's world--its name is the Soviet Union. Russia itself, seeks constantly to expand its influence and power. But it also acts violently through its two agents, Cuba and Vietnam.

This is a fact which we overlook at our own peril. Yet we have overlooked the hard reality of Soviet imperialism.

We have overlooked the bitter truth--that the Soviet Union is an aggressive, expansionist nation on the march--and we can only hope to respond from a position of superior strength and unflinching will.

Israel understands this very well, which is one reason an Israeli-Egyptian peace treaty took so long to negotiate. This treaty is, perhaps, an excellent first step toward real peace. Today we celebrate this peace. Tomorrow we formalize it. But for the future tomorrows there remain problems which we must keep in mind. It is not enough for us to ratify euphoria. We must turn our attention to new dilemmas.

Peace in the Middle East.

The words seem too good to be true. Indeed the sentiment is premature. But it is not premature to review the ingredients for a successful recipe in the Middle East, one which allowed this much progress toward peace to be made. It is not premature to begin applying the lessons learned on the larger world stage and affecting the workings of U.S. foreign policy as a whole. We will especially need these lessons when it comes time to address the Palestinian problem.

One main lesson stands out. One element must be grasped. In a nutshell, it is that American strength and determination is not just a negative factor-- a means of preventing hordes of enemy forces from overrunning our lands and our allies. Rather it is first and foremost--if used properly--a positive factor, a means of contributing to peace and security all around the world.

-MORE-

Why is this so? Primarily because gambles--and all negotiations are in certain respects gambles--must be grounded on a firm foundation. In the Middle East, there is no substitution for direct American participation in that foundation. Let's review the record to see why.

A LESSON PAINFULLY LEARNED

Initially the Carter Administration tried to make peace in the Middle East on the cheap. The new team tried to limit America's role to one of co-chairman of the Geneva Conference. Amazingly enough, we tried to lower our stance, to adopt a position no higher than the Soviet Union's.

We would remain as the primary military, economic, and political backer of Israel. But we would opt out of the peace process once the Geneva Conference room filled. We would become just another of many participants.

But Sadat and Begin were shrewd enough to catch the drift and grasp the danger. Sadat did not want a reduced U.S. role; he did not support a U.S. withdrawal. He did not want an elevated Soviet role. And he did not cherish the notion of sitting alongside the P.L.O., the Soviets, and the radical Arab states any more than Begin longed to sit across the table from them.

Then as now, both Sadat and Begin desperately needed American military strength, American economic assistance and American political commitment. Only by leaning on Washington for necessary support could they gamble to end three decades of bloodshed on terms acceptable to the main parties.

The agreement leading to the signing of tomorrow's treaty illustrates one inescapable fact about the world today. Quite simply, smaller nations cannot afford to compromise their security unless their strongest ally, the United States, shows itself willing to become involved in the settlement--and what comes after.

Israel exists on the thin margin of survival. She cannot gamble without some backing in security.

Without doubt, the Carter Administration learned the lesson of the positive contribution of American strength late in the game.

It looked around the world and realized the truth of what many of us had been saying for some time--that American fire-power and will-power were essential for preserving the type of world we want for our children and grandchildren.

It appreciated the relationship between events it had previously thought unrelated. It saw how an announced troop withdrawal scheme from South Korea terrified many Asian friends. It saw how our shabby treatment of Taiwan had set off a heated debate in Israel. It saw how rough handling of U.S. policies and U.S. diplomats from Afghanistan to Mexico City had set signals beaming around the world that America is a has-been power.

Most important, it saw how the fall of Iran had upset virtually everyone in the region. Both Israel and Egypt were badly shaken. Israel had received over half its oil from Iran, who continued the flow even during the 1973 Arab oil embargo. Egypt, of course, looked to Iran as a close ally; when the Shah departed, he immediately headed to Cairo, where he was warmly received. The Iranian revolution terrified the Saudis, who are fiercely anti-Soviet and have voiced strong concern over the confusing, contradictory policies emanating from Washington these days.

Perhaps it was the fall of Iran which finally shook the Carter Administration.

Whatever the reason, at least now our leaders are learning the lesson that only American determination and strength can lead to peace and stability around the world.

THE ROAD TO LASTING PEACE

The Middle East treaty signals the first realization of that lesson.

It is up to the President whether he will choose to utilize this opportunity to his, and the nation's advantage. He has an opportunity to join with the new bipartisans behind a program of military strength second to none and a cohesive foreign policy that solidifies every friendship and maximizes every advantage.

We must rekindle the lost confidence in our allies. We must not hesitate to project our military power, the symbol of our national will and purpose. Our alliances for mutual security and friendship must be reaffirmed. The past decade has seen us falling away from a firm commitment to our alliance systems, as various nations have succumbed to internal economic pressure or outside political/military aggression.

-3-

We must approach the upcoming debate over a new SALT treaty with caution, with idealism tempered by the cold knowledge of Soviet adventurism and the steady growth of the Soviet military threat. We must never forget that perceptions of strength are often as important as strength itself, and much of the world today perceives America as a nation on retreat from its international responsibilities.

In the wake of the Vietnam fiasco, many in our government are convinced that isolation from the world is required if the world is to live in peace. They believe, if it seems possible, that if only America will leave the rest of mankind alone, then peace will break out and passions will be calmed.

But the world is not that simple, and America is not an enemy to peace. If we would only wake up to the facts; we are still the world's strongest democracy, the richest economy, the most advanced technology. As we approach the turbulent Middle East, we shouldn't forget the pitfalls that open in the sands that have flowed over so much history. But neither should we forget our potential to make peace--not a jerry built or temporary armistice, but a peace that will last beyond our time, and insure the survival of Israel for all time to come.

Looking to the future, we realize that the road to stable peace and security will be a long and winding one. The primary problem will remain the future of the Palestinians and the West Bank or, as Prime Minister Begin calls it, Judea and Samaria.

Much can be said about the issue, and compromise is inevitable if there is to be any stable resolution of this problem, or complex of problems. However, the starting point--as with so many issues over the past three decades--must acknowledge the security of Israel. The P.L.O. cannot expect to champion the rights of the Palestinians and awaken the world's conscience if it continues to call for the destruction of the state of Israel. When it is willing to live peaceably alongside the Jewish state--then and only then--can the world, and particularly the Americans and Israelis, address the important question of political boundaries and government in the territory.

It is important to realize that the entire Palestinian issue is one which arose largely because of Arab intransigence. This is in marked contrast to the holier-than-thou stance many Arab states now adopt towards their "Palestinian brethren".

We all may ponder why didn't the Arab states accept all Palestinians into their societies in the late 1940's and early 1950's, rather than leave them in wretched refugee camps which breed discontentment and misery and spawned an entire generation of guerrillas and terrorists? Thinking of other similar situations around the world, one remembers thousands of East Germans fleeing the horrors of Marxism to freedom in the West. Not for a minute did the West Germans relegate those refugees to camps. Rather they accepted them and integrated them into their society as full citizens since they--like the Palestinians and the Arabs--spoke the same language, shared the same culture and felt a spiritual kinship.

Territorial disputes are not ended by tomorrow's treaty. Indeed they have just begun. In my opinion, the Golan Heights should be permanently invested with a joint U.N.-Israeli peace keeping mission--not just a token force but a full establishment of men, equipment and physical structures that would make any Syrian military sweep impossible. I suggest that various international organizations or their branches be headquartered in the Heights--a new city of peace as institutional block to aggression by any force--one in which all nations of the world would have a stake.

The Arab cry for autonomy for the West Bank and Gaza provokes another question: Why were those territories never granted political autonomy between 1948 and 1967, when both were in strictly Arab--not Israeli--hands? By the same token, why did we not press President Sadat to grant Israel rights to oil produced in the very Sinai fields developed by the Israelis. Instead, we have guaranteed Israel's energy needs, a seemingly generous gesture that, in fact, holds the potential for future bitterness and further erosion of Israeli political independence.

Saudi Arabia has been one of the most moralistic of the Middle East countries on these issues. The media frequently refers to the Saudi kingdom as a "valuable U.S. ally" in the region, and indeed, they are fiercely anti-Soviet.

Yet they seem less than fiercely supportive of our goals for a reasonable and peaceful settlement. Even though the U.S. exports to Saudi Arabia some two-thirds of its food requirements and provides for much of its security against possible outside threats, still the Saudis harshly condemn the Israel-Egyptian peace treaty. The Saudi press calls for a holy war against Israel to "regain" the beloved city of Jerusalem, and the Saudis threaten to cut off their flow of petrodollars to Egypt. One's patience wears a bit thin.

---more---

But our unrequited love for the Saudis demonstrates one of the basic Middle East realities--namely that when all is said and done, Isreal will remain our main friend and ally in that volatile region.

The point is often made that Israel needs the United States. Equally true is the fact that America needs Israel.

The Jewish state is, after all, the only true democracy in the region and the only stable regime. Every other state in the region may be changed in political structure. A well aimed bullet could plunge the region into devastating war. It could fundamentally change a nation's internal structure and international policies. Nassar and Sadat illustrate the importance of fate in the world's affairs. Israel, on the other hand, remains a rock of stability and permanence wherein a change of government does not mean a change in systems of government or basic international policies.

Israel remains a military power, a strategic asset in an area where America -- without the friendship of Iran -- needs all the strategic assets it can muster, and an intelligence conduit on regional and larger affairs.

THE MORAL OBLIGATION

Israel is our friend. She is our ally. More than that, she remains what whe has always been -- a towering example of moral leadership in a world that usually prefers rule of the aggressive.

Israel lives in the name of human dignity. She carries in the heart of her constitutional and political state a message that is profoundly moral. It is not unjust to say that God still ordains men's affairs, and that mankind still heeds his call.

In the words of Pope Paul VI, "Peace is something that is built up day after day, in the pursuit of an order intended by God, which implies a more perfect form of justice among men."

It is that peace that Israel seeks for her people. It is that peace that America must guarantee. To do less would be a betrayal of our past, and of our claim to speak the language of justice and decency. Peace must come to the Middle East, but it must not be the peace of the dead.