

STATEMENT OF
THE HONORABLE BOB DOLE
AMERICAN-ISRAEL PUBLIC AFFAIRS COMMITTEE
MONDAY, MARCH 11
NEW SENATE OFFICE BUILDING

I APPRECIATE THE INVITATION TO SHARE MY IMPRESSIONS
AFTER A RECENT 9-DAY TRIP TO THE MIDDLE EAST.

TWO COLLEAGUES AND I, ALL MEMBERS OF THE HOUSE
FOREIGN AGRICULTURAL OPERATIONS SUBCOMMITTEE, TRAVELED
TO LEBANON, CYPRUS, ISRAEL, THE "WEST BANK" OF JORDAN
AND THE GAZA STRIP, PRIMARILY TO STUDY FIRSTHAND THE
ARAB REFUGEE PROBLEM.

Refugees--No. One Problem

IN MY OPINION, THE REFUGEE SITUATION IS THE
NUMBER ONE STUMBLING BLOCK TO RELIEVING TENSIONS IN
THE MID-EAST. AND UNTIL THE PROBLEM IS SOLVED, THERE
CAN BE NO PERMANENT SOLUTION OF THE OVERALL CONFLICT.

THERE ARE THREE MAJOR OBSTACLES COMPOUNDING THE
DIFFICULTY:

- 1) RESISTANCE BY THE ARABS TO ORGANIZED
REFUGEE SETTLEMENT IN THE ASYLUM
COUNTRIES OF SYRIA, JORDAN, LEBANON
AND THE GAZA STRIP.
- 2) FOR ISRAEL, AT THE OUTSET, IT IS
SHEER NUMBERS. FOR EXAMPLE, JUST
18 DAYS AFTER THE BRIEF WAR LAST
SUMMER, IT WAS ESTIMATED 100,000
FLED TO ISRAELI AREAS.
- 3) THE UNITED NATIONS RELIEF AND WORKS
AGENCY HAS, IN EFFECT, PERPETUATED
THE UNFORTUNATE PLIGHT OF THE REFU-
GEEES.

add 1.

- The UNRWA -

IN THE INTEREST OF TIME, I WILL CONFINE MY REMARKS TO THE ROLE -- PAST, PRESENT AND FUTURE -- OF UNRWA.

CHARGED WITH PROVIDING FOOD, CLOTHING, SHELTER AND TRAINING OF THE PALESTINIAN REFUGEES, THE UNRWA HAS SPENT OVER \$571 MILLION IN 20 YEARS. THE UNITED STATES HAS CONTRIBUTED 70 PER CENT OF THAT AMOUNT. THE UNITED KINGDOM HAS PROVIDED 20 PER CENT, WITH THE REMAINING 10 PER CENT COMING FROM OTHER NATIONS.

OF THE 1,300,000 REFUGEES ON THE UNRWA REGISTER LAST JULY, OVER HALF ARE FOOD RECIPIENTS.

MANY OF THESE PEOPLE ARE SECOND-GENERATION NAMES ON THE RELIEF ROLLS. AT THIS POINT, THERE IS NO CONCRETE ASSURANCE OR HOPE MANY OF THEM WILL EVER BECOME PRODUCTIVE, ECONOMICALLY-INDEPENDENT INDIVIDUALS.

- Training And Jobs -

UNRWA HAS AN EFFICIENTLY-ADMINISTERED VOCATIONAL PROGRAM. BUT THERE IS A LACK OF JOBS. SO ALTHOUGH MANY ARE TRAINED TO WORK IN AGRICULTURE AND IN OTHER FIELDS, THERE IS NO WHERE TO GO TO EMPLOY THEIR SKILLS.

THE END RESULT IS A MERRY-GO-ROUND OF INDOLENCE, NONPRODUCTIVITY AND DEPENDENCE FROM ONE GENERATION TO ANOTHER.

ADD 2

-Israeli Determination-

ONE OF THE BRIGHTEST SPOTS IN OUR TRIP WAS THE ISRAELI DETERMINATION TO DO SOMETHING ABOUT CREATING MORE JOBS.

ISRAELIS RIGHTLY BELIEVE WELFARE SHOULD BE AVAILABLE ONLY TO THE DISABLED, THE VERY YOUNG AND THE VERY OLD. THEY BELIEVE ABLE-BODIED MEN AND WOMEN SHOULD NOT BE WELFARE RECIPIENTS AND DOOMED TO A LIFE OF DEPENDENCE.

IF GIVEN THE OPPORTUNITY, ISRAEL CAN MAKE A GREAT CONTRIBUTION BY ENCOURAGING THE REFUGEES TO PERMANENTLY RESETTLE, PROVIDING JOBS AND ENCOURAGING THE REFUGEES TO WORK AND THEREBY REGAIN THEIR DIGNITY AS MEN AND WOMEN.

- Role of U.N. and U.S.-

NEITHER MY COLLEAGUES NOR I ADVOCATE UNITED NATIONS OR UNITED STATES WITHDRAWAL OF AID.

UNRWA HAS BEEN THE ONLY MEANS OF EXISTENCE FOR THESE PEOPLE FOR OVER 20 YEARS. AND IT IS INEVITABLE THE REFUGEES WILL NEED ADDITIONAL AID FOR SOME TIME TO COME.

IN MY JUDGMENT, HOWEVER, IT IS IMPERATIVE THAT BOTH THE UNITED NATIONS AND THE UNITED STATES REVIEW AND MEASURE THE EFFECTS OF THEIR MONEY AND MANPOWER.

IF WE CAN RECHANNEL SOME OF OUR EFFORT AND MONEY
TOWARD CREATING JOBS AND UPGRADING TRAINING, THEN WE
MUST PROCEED.

IF WE CAN ASSIST THESE DISPLACED PERSONS IN HELPING
THEMSELVES AND THEREBY STAVE OFF ETERNAL DEPENDENCE AND
DISILLUSIONMENT, THEN WE MUST PROCEED.

THE POINT IS WELL SUMMARIZED IN THE FOOD FOR PEACE
ACT OF 1966. IT STATES, IN PART: "THE ASSISTANCE
TO NEEDY PERSONS SHALL INSOFAR AS PRACTICABLE BE DIRECTED
TOWARD COMMUNITY AND OTHER SELF-HELP ACTIVITIES DESIGNED
TO ALLEVIATE THE CAUSE OF THE NEED FOR SUCH ASSISTANCE."

WE CAN DO NO LESS.

end