

STATE OF ISRAEL BONDS - CHICAGO
GUILD HALL - AMBASSADOR WEST HOTEL
(STATE & GOETHE STREETS)
14 NOVEMBER, 8:45P.M.

PERCEPTIONS OF PEACE
IN THE MIDDLE EAST

American Credibility:

The recent events in Iran have
shattered a number of our illusions.
They have made clear that American interests
in the Middle East are not entirely limited
to the Arab-Israeli question. Stability

in the Gulf region and access to the area's oil resources are of utmost strategic importance to us.

We are also reminded that the United States cannot unilaterally affect developments in the Middle East. More countries and groups are today influenced by decisions taken in Moscow than ever before.

But most of all, there are the independent dynamics of Islamic politics which are largely beyond our control.

Finally, we have been made aware that the phrases coined by one of my former colleagues, Senator William Fulbright, namely the ARROGANCE OF POWER, is no longer applicable. Most likely, and seeing that

our nation can be held to ransom by a mob
of students, we should possibly speak
today of the FUTILITY OF POWER.

When talking about Israel and its
future, these three observations will have
a decisive impact upon the formulation of
our foreign policies in the months and
years to come. Recognizing that there

are clear limits to what America can do for its friends, not what it is willing to do but what it is capable of doing, can provide a more realistic assessment of alternatives.

Let me say at the outset that I will resist the temptation of proposing any more solutions for our problems in the

Middle East; this, I believe, can safely be left to the various announced and unannounced presidential candidates.

Instead, I would like us to shed some preconceived notions (at least for tonight, anyway) and consider a new approach for thinking about our relations with Israel and other countries in the region. Before

doing so, however, let me be absolutely certain about my own position.

There is not one iota of doubt in my mind that the continued existence of a democratic Israel is in the national interest of the United States. I am not making this statement to merely please my Jewish friends, but I am profoundly

convinced that Israel can be, and should be, the politically stabilizing factor in a volatile region. The Middle East is strategically important to us for its resources and its location. Israel, in its history, its spirit, its political and social institutions has a greater affinity to the ideals we cherish than any other nation in the area. It is

for this, admittedly national, reason that I view the viability of Israel as being vital to our interests. But there are problems.

Although Jewish kingdoms already flourished around 1000 B.C., its inhabitants were repeatedly banished from their land. Some thirty years ago, the State of Israel

was carved out of a potentially hostile region, and its security required the acquisition of nearby areas, further aggravating a possible rapprochement to neighboring Arab countries. In the process, people were displaced who now form the major opposition to Israel. Since Israel cannot be expected to negotiate its own disappearance, it is confronted

by armed struggle rather than diplomatic initiatives.

These are some of the problems which, to my mind, the United States must assist in solving in order to make Israel the region's stabilizing factor which our policy anticipates. I visited Israel myself, recognized the strategic importance of

the Golan Heights, the vitality of the Kibbutz settlements, and the indomitable spirit embodied in the PALMACH as an individual contribution to the defense of the country. Ever since coming to Washington, I have consistently voted for military and economic support for Israel. I was also satisfied that my amendment last year,

relating to the disposal of stockpiles,
made millions of karats in industrial
diamonds available to Israel. Continuity
in our relationship must be the foundation
of our Middle Eastern policy, regardless
of whether we agree with every single
move of the Begin Government or whether
we have to give increased attention to
the supply of Arab oil.

The Need for International Thinking:

Conceptionally, there is a fundamental problem in thinking about the Middle East, or any other part of the world. In our age of nationalism, each country still views itself as the center of the universe, and all relationships are determined to this fixed point. Inevitably, such a

method will create an entirely distorted perspective, yet from the vantage point of Washington, Tel Aviv, Moscow or Cairo, the national view corresponds to reality and appears wholly justified.

In other words, we apply to world affairs a nation-centered concept, a concept that was to deal with internal,

domestic problems through law and government. At the international level, the nation-centered approach leads to misunderstanding, chaos and confusion, if not conflict. The objectives of sovereign nations may follow parallel lines but are rarely identical. More often, they diverge at one point and old friends become sus-

picious of each other. Let me give you
an illustration..

The United States and its NATO allies
share a common view of the antagonistic
nature of communism in the Soviet Union.
According to the American view, our defense
is best served by a strong Europe, keeping
strategic armaments in reserve. While

France agrees with us as to the need for a military preparedness against Russia, it doubts American resolve and places more reliance on an independent force which is realistic when seen from Paris. Likewise, the Germans generally share our apprehensions and fully support collective security. Yet they also realize that any

conventional conflict would first destroy their country, and for this reason, they favor a dispersal of offensive weapons and more active negotiations with the Soviets. Again a very plausible approach when viewed from the Rhine.

The same circumstances prevail in the Middle East. The policies pursued appear

rational from the vantage point of a national foreign office but quickly assume an ominous dimension in the eyes of a neighbor. Let me try to review the Middle East situation as it is seen by the United States, Israel, the Arab bloc and the Soviet Union, with particular reference to the existence of Israel, the Palestinian

question and the strategic importance
of the region.

America's_Vision_of_Peace:

When the end of the British Mandate
over Palestine was in sight by the end
of World War II, Jewish leaders once more
staked their claim to a return to their
homeland. During the summer of 1944, both

major political conventions in the United States adopted platforms in support of this claim. At that time, President Roosevelt wrote to Senator Robert F. Wagner, endorsing the idea of a Jewish state. In early 1945, Congress passed a resolution calling for unrestricted Jewish immigration from Europe to Palestine.

In October 1947, President Truman made his commitment for an independent Jewish nation, Ambassador Jessup argued for it at the United Nations and we became the first country to recognize that new state.

Having been midwife at the birth of Israel, every American President since Truman faithfully rededicated America to

its original commitments. These include assurance for the absolute security of Israel, its borders and its people. For this purpose, the United States provided \$12 billion in foreign assistance up to this year, or approximately \$5 million a day. The FY80 appropriations will again exceed \$2 billion for economic and mili-

tary support, an amount which is substantially to be increased when compensation is being made for the Sinai withdrawal.

But a guarantee for security also implies work toward a peaceful environment. President Carter sought to establish normal relations which led to the Camp David accords and the first peace treaty with

an Arab country. Secretary Vance now seeks to widen face-to-face negotiations in his search for a durable peace. At the base is an acceptance of United Nations Resolutions 242 and 338 which would require a return of Israeli occupied land in exchange for full recognition by affected countries. But peace, as Dr. Brzezinski

said, is not an option, it is the only way. Thus "Jews must take a risk to make peace", as I. F. Stone remarked recently, "the preservation of Israel is only possible...by reconciliation with our Arab brothers".

Now what is America's attitude toward the Palestinians? In a joint statement

in 1976, the United States and the Soviet Union spoke of "the legitimate rights of the Palestinian people". Soon thereafter, President Carter made his now famous remark at Clinton regarding "the need for a Palestinian homeland", followed by an elaboration at Aswan (in Egypt) in January 1979, to "enable Palestinians to parti-

icipate in the determination of their own future". However, as I understand it, this refers only to the Arabs in the Gaza strip and the West Bank, and does not include self-determination which could lead to a separate Palestinian entity.

Particularly excluded from any formal contract is the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) whose singular aim is to destroy Israel, and this running counter to American objectives. The PLO is terrorist in method, Marxist by conviction, fully supported by the Soviet Union, and is responsible for thousands of deaths in Israel, Jordan in 1970 and

Lebanon in 1976. Ambassador Young was forced to resign for overlooking these facts, and other recent contacts with Arafat are deplorable. Still, the State Department at this moment is exploring the idea of "getting all belligerents" around a table to talk about a Lebanon cease-fire and an eventual truce. Last week, a panel of prominent Americans

including General Goodpaster, Joseph Sisco and ten former ambassadors, recommended informal contacts with the PLO to "ascertain their views and modify them".

Strategically, the United States seeks to secure an uninterrupted supply of crude oil. This implies preventing communist subversion and especially an intrusion of

the U.S.S.R. in the Middle East. In his
farewell address, former Energy Secretary
James Schlesinger said on August 16 that
"Soviet control of the oil tap of the
Middle East would mean the end of the
world as we have known it since 1945".

Following Secretary Brown's visit to the
area in February of this year, the Admi-
nistration has been at pains to reassure

conservative Arab regimes of its capability to intervene with its own forces in a crisis. Nevertheless, the existence of a stronger United States military posture should have the purpose of deterring Soviet military action and not of preserving shaky governments threatened from within.

Israel's Dream of Peace:

As is understandable from a nationalist point of view, Israel's concept of the region differs in some respects from that of the United States. Jews settled in the heartland of the Middle East 1,500 years before the onset of Christianity. When, in 1948, they were finally given some 10,000 square miles to restore their

national life on an arid piece of land along the Mediterranean, it was with the determination to survive at any cost.

Militarily, it was surrounded by hostile Arab nations who went to war against Israel on the day the state became independent. Those Arab nations, with the exception of Egypt, are still

the enemies of today. In subsequent years, Israel had to defend its security three times at a cost in lives higher than those experienced by the United States during the Second World War. And Israel has only three million people! Successive governments had to insure acquisition of territories which made its defensive positions more tenable. Its military might, through

purchase, production and training, had to match the combined military total of its potential adversaries. In the meantime, occupied land had to be made safe with the creation of settlements. Sporadic terrorist attacks were countered by Israel's retaliatory raids into Lebanon and Jordan which constitute legitimate self-defense in accordance with Article

51 of the United Nations Charter.

Economically, Israel has difficulty in supporting its objective of survival. It is poor in minerals and water, and produces oil for less than 10% of its needs. When Senator Sam Nunn returned from a visit to Israel earlier this year, he predicted a triple-digit inflation

rate, an increasing trade deficit and a labor shortage. Israeli scientific ingenuity and social organization have so far overcome the handicap -- of course with a good portion of foreign aid, gifts and reparations.

It was Golda Meir who correctly claimed, "We, the Jewish pioneers, were

the Palestinians". More than 36,000
Palestinian Jews fought in the British
Army and 3,000 Arabs, all identified as
Palestinians. There is no Arab Palestine
nationalism, only a political usage of the
term, according to Ben Gurion. Israel
is prepared to grant self-rule to Arab
residents in occupied areas, and democratic
elections. Those who choose Israeli

citizenship could acquire land anywhere in the country, thereby granting Israeli Jews the same right in the new territories.

Before 1967, Israel had an indefensible demarcation line. Giving up ALL occupied land would be "national suicide", according to Prime Minister Begin, "and place the nation in mortal danger".

Sophisticated Soviet-supplied weapons now exist in abundance in neighboring countries. Israel is a state besieged without a single week passing by when there are not incursions and bloodshed.

With about 3,000 Soviet military advisers in Damascus, and Syria occupying Lebanon and maintaining close ties with

Iraq and Jordan, the combined force poses a significant threat to Israel. The abrogation of the U.S. Defense Treaty with Taiwan worries Israeli politicians for its implications to their own country. The United States was viewed as an ally to Israel between 1967 and 1973; it was regarded as a mediator from 1974 to 1977 and as a partner to negotiations since

1978. This is regarded as leaving Israel open to American pressure, squeezing Israel for concessions.

Arab Interpretations of Peace: Talking

about the Arab countries of the Middle East may be a misnomer since only half of their citizens are Arabs, but 90% are Muslims.

It is difficult to discern unity, cohesion

or even a single voice although the Arab

League assumes this role occasionally.

Generally, the Arab nations view Israel

as the intruder, having given cause for

more wars and casualties than were

experienced in previous centuries. Arabs

were expelled from their lands and were

transformed into permanent refugees.

The Chief of the Jordanian Royal Court,
Hamid Sharaf, claims that Arabs want peace
but were repeatedly rejected. Settlements
are viewed as a slow deprivation of Arab
land ownership. The democratic right of
self-determination is denied to the
Palestinians. This pretty well summarizes
what the Arabs see as their reality.

In a recent interview, King Hussein criticized the Israeli-Egyptian treaty as splitting Arab unity. He, and other Arab leaders, argue for a comprehensive peace with all interested parties that would "respect collective interests and legitimate aspirations." All outstanding issues are to be solved simultaneously, not separately.

Another Arab League representative, Dr.

Maksoud, declared erroneous the assumption that a conflict settlement would leave the two superpowers to concentrate on each other.

Egypt, he says, acted against collective interests by removing the most important component from the Arab strategic equation.

Consequently, it has given Israel the

freedom and the means to strike at will
in South Lebanon, and further attacks are
feared by Syria and Jordan.

Arab and Muslim unity appears to
require a continued conflict with Israel.
Still, there are public declarations for
a de jure recognition of Israel and
acceptance of U.N. Resolution 242 if

Israel is prepared to return ALL seized territories. There is also a greater awareness among conservative Arab regimes that stability in the region is their best guarantee for survival. This would favor the existence of a democratic, anti-communist Israel and create a greater concern with Soviet incursions in the area.

Support for a Palestinian state, and the broad acceptability of the PLO as a legitimate organization, have a publicly professed high priority. Oil supplies and fixed prices are offered as inducements. The PLO threat of blocking the Straits of Hormuz, the only access to the Persian Gulf, could serve similar objectives. In the

meantime, the PLO has made diplomatic gains in Common Market countries, and received political recognition by Italy and Belgium.

Soviet Designs for Peace: This leaves the Soviet Union. What are its designs for peace in the Middle East? As a Co-Chairman of any Geneva Peace Conference, Moscow feels that it has been undeservedly neglected

in recent developments. It would like some tangible evidence of appreciation--perhaps SALT II--for its restraint. Ultimately, the Kremlin still has hopes for enlarging its diplomatic leverage in the region. Open conflict is discouraged as giving a pretext for U.S. intervention.

The U.S.S.R. has geo-strategic interests

in the Middle East. Some countries (Turkey and Iran) have long and vulnerable borders with the Soviet Union, and the Bosphorus is the only Mediterranean outlet for the Soviet navy. The Suez Canal remains vital for a Soviet naval presence in the Indian Ocean. By the mid-1980's, Russia will also be a net importer of oil with need for the region's resources. Yet

to protect these interests, the Soviets have refrained from a massive presence since their negative experience with Egypt in the early 1970's. Instead, there is greater reliance on proxies.

Russia's new approach, an active campaign for peaceful co-existence, began in response to the Camp David accords.

South Yemen is being used as the key link to other Arab states, after it signed a 20-year Friendship Treaty with the Soviet Union, similar to those in existence with Vietnam and Ethiopia. Syria has ended its rift with Moscow and is receiving more arms. Other incentives are offered to Iraq and Aden.

When Soviet Foreign Minister Andrei Gromyko addressed the United Nations General Assembly in late September, he reiterated Israel's right to exist under guaranteed conditions of peace but also insisted upon an end to the occupation of all Arab land. Apparently the Soviet Union is for a "legitimate" Palestinian state and a

comprehensive peace settlement which requires its participation. The separate arrangements between Israel and Egypt, however, "add to the tense political atmosphere and...the heavy smell of oil."

A Unified Perspective for Peace: This

brings me to my conclusion. I have described in a rather general framework, four differing

approaches to the problems of the Middle East. Although viewpoints and tactics vary, all parties agree in the desirability for peace, but not strongly enough to overcome the handicaps of seeking a unilateral advantage, an ideological solution or a concession in principle. The likelihood of open warfare has temporarily decreased,

and we may be grateful for that.

However, I am afraid that the time may not be on the side of Israel. Its essential natural resources (whether people or oil) will remain limited, and dependence upon foreign assistance will continue. The rise in Islamic fervor will spread beyond Shiism to other branches of the Muslim faith,

thereby increasing instability. The oil wealth of the conservative regimes tends to emphasize the discrepancies in living standards, encouraging radical solutions and hastening the demise of the old order. And finally, the demand for oil will not slacken; on the contrary, it is bound to increase as more countries reach the

industrial take-off stage and their energy requirements expand. Conflict almost seems inevitable.

What I am saying is that time is running out. Let us use our ingenuity, simple human understanding, and a willingness to compromise in order to achieve gradual progress. Passions, rivalries and old

antagonisms must be put aside, and be replaced by pragmatism and good will.