



United States
of America

Congressional Record

PROCEEDINGS AND DEBATES OF THE 94th CONGRESS, FIRST SESSION

OK for

Vol. 121

WASHINGTON, TUESDAY, APRIL 15, 1975

No. 57

Senate

REASSESSING THE MIDDLE EAST

Mr. JACKSON. Mr. President, the administration's announcement of a reassessment of U.S. policy in the Middle East at this critical time has aroused proper concern in the Congress, and I would like to call to the attention of my colleagues my statement on this subject.

I ask unanimous consent to have printed in the RECORD the text of my April 14 speech to the American Israel Public Affairs Committee.

There being no objection, the speech was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

REASSESSING THE MIDDLE EAST

In recent days the newspapers have been filled with commentary about the relationship between the tragedy in Indochina and the failure of the Kissinger mission to the Middle East. But somehow the most profound connection between these two distant situations has been overlooked. It is this: negotiated settlements that do not include movement toward a genuine peace are certain to fail. Without starting the process of political accommodation, cease-fires and disengagements that alter only the military situation cannot lead to lasting peace. In the search for peace, a change of line is no substitute for a change of heart.

This is the bitter lesson of the Paris accords. And if the Israelis have learned from it, if they have concluded that they would rather understand history than repeat it, who can hold them at fault?

ASSESSING THE SHUTTLE DIPLOMACY

Unhappily and unwisely, the end of shuttle diplomacy has been followed by a campaign of background briefings, meetings and leaks to the press calculated to imply that Israel alone was responsible for the failure to reach an accord. Partly as a result of this campaign and because the Secretary of State returned to Washington from Jerusalem, some people concluded that the talks had failed when Israel rejected an Egyptian compromise proposal. The truth is otherwise; and the record should be clear on this point. Dr. Kissinger departed Jerusalem when President Sadat of Egypt refused even to consider an Israeli compromise proposal that sought to provide a basis for continuing negotiations.

The American people must judge for themselves whether Egypt was justified in breaking off the talks. Unfortunately, their task is fairly considering the issue is complicated by the Administration's one-sided characterization of the course of the negotiations. So perhaps it would be useful to review for a moment the two proposals that proved, in the end, to be irreconcilable.

In exchange for an Egyptian statement of non-belligerency and some concrete political

and economic steps along the road to peace, Israel offered to give up the strategic Sinai passes and to return the oil fields at Abu Rudeis to Egyptian control. Egypt, for its part, refused to make a pledge of non-belligerency or to take concrete steps that would begin the process of peace and reconciliation. Instead, Egypt insisted on a deep Israeli withdrawal, well beyond the passes—a withdrawal that would seriously and immediately worsen Israel's physical security. It is hard to resist the conclusion that Israel was searching for the road to peace while Egypt sought the road to Tel Aviv.

To break the impasse, Israel then proposed to withdraw from the Western half of the passes and to permit land and sea access to the oil fields which were to be returned to Egyptian control. In return she asked only that Egypt agree to refrain from the use of force, a very partial—some would say marginal—step toward peace. Egypt declined the Israeli compromise, refused to receive Dr. Kissinger in Aswan, and the negotiations came to an end.

ARGUING FROM DIFFERENT PREMISES

Samuel Pepys once observed two women arguing across a back fence. "They will never agree," he remarked. "They are arguing from different premises." So it was in the Middle East. Israel's premise in the negotiations was that withdrawals from strategic positions in the Sinai should be matched by commensurate progress toward a genuine peace.

The Egyptian premise was quite different. Sadat regarded a second disengagement agreement as an essentially military arrangement. Thus he sought a deeper Israeli withdrawal, a more advantageous disengagement line, unaccompanied by real political concessions.

My own view is expressed in remarks I made on December 17, 1973. It is this:

"Peace must be more than a word, more than a mere document that can be torn up when it suits the convenience of aggressive governments to go to war again. It must be something concrete. It must exist in the daily lives of men, for only then can it eventually come to exist in men's minds as well; and only then—finally—can it be secure. It is naive to imagine that the enmities of decades will vanish with the stroke of a pen. But for a peace treaty to be more than just a scrap of paper, it must do more than simply move the walls that separate Arabs from Israelis to a new location. It must permit Arabs and Israelis to work together, to trade with one another, to talk with one another, to see for themselves the truth about their neighbors."

THE NEGOTIATIONS AND THE ADMINISTRATION

Surely the inflexibility of the Egyptian position reflected President Sadat's belief that Israel would yield to Administration

pressure and settle on Egyptian terms. An anxious Washington, Sadat believed, and a dependent Israel, would lead to irresistible pressure. In such circumstances there was little incentive for Egypt to compromise, and a predictable ultimatum resulted. In any case, Sadat must have reasoned, a failure of the talks would drive a wedge between Israel and America.

Well, Sadat was wrong. He was wrong about Israel and he was wrong about America. Israel resisted the temptation to make unrequited concessions, and it did so with remarkable unity. And America will not allow a wedge to be driven between our people and the people of Israel. The Administration knows that the American people will not permit it to pressure Israel into withdrawals that prejudice her security and increase the risks of war. That is why we find the Administration saying one thing in public and quite another in private. Thus in public the Administration urges the view that no useful purpose is served by assessing blame for the failure of the negotiations; while in private Israel is held to have been responsible. Well, the time to end that unwise charade is long past. The American people have a right to an Administration that says what it means and means what it says. They have a right to read in the morning papers that remarks attributed to "a senior official traveling with Kissinger" are in fact the words of the Secretary of State. They have a right to know who it is that is speaking in their name. For without candor and openness in our foreign policy, in the Middle East and elsewhere, the American people are deprived of the right to make their judgments felt.

THE ADMINISTRATION'S REASSESSMENT

There has been much talk by the Administration of a reassessment of its Middle East policy. I hope and trust that it will be thoughtful and deliberate. Above all it must be fair. It must not be marked by the petulance that marked its inception.

In my judgment the first conclusion to which any sober reassessment should come is this: the idea that a stable peace can be achieved by pressuring Israel to diminish her physical security without a political reconciliation with her neighbors is dangerous and unwise.

Second, the reappraisal should return to U.N. resolutions 242 and 338 by recognizing that a real peace must involve direct negotiations among the parties in which Israeli withdrawal to secure and recognized borders is matched by an end to the state of belliger-

ency. The last round of shuttle diplomacy, by departing from the hopeful formula of these resolutions, did much to subvert what I believe to be the most promising prospects for peace.

Third, a fair reassessment will reaffirm the soundness of the longstanding American policy of helping to maintain the military balance in the Middle East. Some of you may recall that we wrote that policy into law in the 91st Congress. We said then that it was the policy of the United States to maintain the military balance in the Middle East by furnishing Israel with the arms she requires for her own defense. And I mean to see that we continue to adhere to it because it is essential to any realistic hope for peace.

Finally, any clear-sighted reassessment will include a reappraisal of the role of the Administration's detente in promoting peace in the Middle East. Detente didn't inhibit the Soviets from sending the arms that started and then sustained the Yom Kippur war. It didn't restrain the Soviets who first incited other Arab governments to join forces with Egypt and Syria, and then urged OPEC to use the oil weapon against the West.

A reassessment of the Administration's detente will reject the dangerous illusion that underlay the ill-fated Paris accords on Indochina. I am referring, of course, to the idea that we can count on Soviet cooperation—or even restraint. Detente didn't save Cambodia and it won't save Vietnam, despite the fact that we and the Soviets are co-guarantors of the Paris accords. And that, by the way, is something to keep in mind when one hears that we and the Soviets should replay the international guarantee game in the Middle East.

A genuine and reciprocal improvement in East-West relations is to the advantage of all peoples in the world. But we must not ask our friends to pay the price of the Administration's illusions about detente.

Finally, let me conclude with this thought. In their frustration at the seemingly intractable conflict in the Middle East there are those who are tempted to fashion a piece of paper into a paper peace. To yield to such temptation would be a mistake of historic proportions. I am confident that we will not so yield; that in the end we will summon those resources of courage and vision that are the best hope for a lasting peace.

And let me just say to our friends overseas that America is not about to withdraw from the world. In adversity we have always found strength. And the conviction of the American people that America must remain strong is undiminished in these difficult times.

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