

United States Senate

MEMORANDUM

Speech -
at S.F.
Democ conf.
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Feb 16

STATEMENT BY SENATOR HUBERT H. HUMPHREY (D., MINN.) MEMBER, SENATE COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS, — OPENING FOREIGN POLICY SECTION OF DEMOCRATIC NATIONAL CONFERENCE.

Both as Democrats and as good citizens, we need discussions like we are having today to stimulate better understanding of our international relations — and our urgent need for a more constructive approach toward establishing and preserving a world of peace — a world with just and honorable peace, not just peace at any price.

We want your views, to help guide those of us who must determine our nations policies in these critical times. In turn, we who serve you in the Congress have an obligation to keep the public informed as to the shortcomings and failures of our foreign policy.

It is more than just partisanship. It is good citizenship of the highest order.

Quite frankly, it's time for the United States to face squarely the overriding question of whether "gunboat" diplomacy" is an adequate policy for the leadership of the Free World.

I don't happen to think so. We need better answers. Even if we bring up to date that Coolidge-era phrase about gunboats and call what we have today H-bomb diplomacy, or military pact diplomacy, or massive-retaliation diplomacy, we still must face the question of whether it is an adequate policy for the United States.

We, as Democrats, do not question the need for adequate defenses. Our record proves otherwise. We do question, however, whether the United States has begun to develop the kind of affirmative, positive, constructive, political and economic policies which show what we are for, as well as what we are against; policies which can draw together the forces of freedom everywhere — and policies which can establish a secure world climate for the freedoms we cherish here at home.

What kind of image are we presenting to the world?

U.N.
NATO
MID.EAST
FAREAST
EAST-EUROPE
&
LATIN AMERICA

Are we presenting the kind of image that inspired our own struggle for independence, our own fight for freedom?

Are we presenting to the world the American people as we really are, or are we creating artificial images of America as a land of power, of money, of H-bombs, but not as a land of compassion, of mercy, of understanding, of sharing in the aspirations of others.

The image of America which has been projected abroad for four years is a distorted image. In its changing and mishappen character, it is like a shadow leaping on the wall thrown by the light of a flickering candle. This is an image which has never in four years become stabilized -- which has expanded and shrunk, leaned this way and that, until the world does not really know what this nation is.

And it is vitally important that our enemies, as well as our friends, know what we are, what we intend, what we will do -- we must make very clear our basic policies.

At the moment, I'm afraid, both our friends and our enemies see us as a belligerent giant, threatening to set the world on fire with nuclear weapons. It sees us pressing forward with more and more thermonuclear tests. It hears open threats of "massive retaliation", "liberation of satellites". Yet in the next breath the world has seen us back down when the chips were down, after the powerful boasts and open threats we have uttered. We can't build a world of security on bluff and backdown. Neither can we build it with dependence on the deterrent power of the nuclear weapon as our sole defense.

We must bring about an understanding among our own people that our survival depends as much on our ability to stabilize several very shaky areas of the world through economic and political assistance as it depends on our own armed strength.

American foreign policy, to be effective, must be based on the recognition that the Soviet drive for world communism is occurring in the midst of a world-wide revolution for freedom and material progress among more than a billion people seeking political self-determination, economic development, and human dignity. It is the responsibility of American foreign policy to recognize and foster these human aspirations in an orderly and democratic fashion, rather than to permit them to be claimed and exploited by the communists.

It would be a tragic mistake for the American people to ever believe that the so-called Eisenhower Doctrine soon to be approved by the Congress -- even with the changes we have successfully made to preserve the constitutional relationship between the President and the Congress and pinpoint the responsibility of our chief executive to assert some leadership in foreign affairs -- provides satisfactory answers to pressing problems of the Middle East.

I hope our discussions today recognize and bring forth constructive suggestions for many areas of the world needing attention. Because of the immediate problems confronting us in the Middle East, however, I would like to throw open our discussions by offering some suggestions of my own for that area. I do so in the spirit we Democrats have always maintained -- never criticizing just to be critics, never complaining about failures of others without having some constructive proposals of our own to offer.

Here, in my opinion, are some of the things we should be doing in the Middle Eastern crisis instead of wasting so much time on the largely inadequate, if not irrelevant, Eisenhower Doctrine:

1. We should strengthen the United Nations Emergency Force in the Middle East as an instrument of interposition between Israel and Egypt at such strategic assignments as the Gaza Strip, the Straits of Tiran, and outposts along the Sinai frontier. We should initiate proposals in the United Nations to place the United Nations police force on a continuing basis for permanent availability for service elsewhere as the United Nations may direct.

2. We should initiate proposals to end the arms race in the Middle East by an effective embargo against shipments from any outside source other than under United Nations auspices. To this end, we should seek the establishment by the United Nations General Assembly of a Special Commission on Arms Traffic, which Commission would be charged with responsibility for proposing early recommendations on regulating all flow of non-United Nations material into that region.

3. We should consider proposing a pilot project, open-skies aerial and ground inspection system over the Egyptian-Israeli-Jordanian-Syrian-Saudi Arabian border areas. Since many of these governments supported the 1955 United Nations resolution giving priority to these proposals on a wider scale, the same governments might be asked to assist in the reduction of tensions in their own areas, as well as help promote the usefulness of this concept for disarmament negotiations generally, by agreeing now to such a pilot mutual inspection system to be conducted by themselves or by outside parties as agreed upon.

4. We should recognize the critical importance of re-establishing the principle of free navigation on international waterways, specifically including free, unfettered access to the use of the Suez canal and the Gulf of Aqaba for the shipping of all nations. To this end, we should be taking the leadership in the United Nations where already existing resolutions in this matter remain to be implemented and reinforced.

5. We should propose the establishment of a United Nations Good Offices Commission, whose purpose would be to reduce tensions in the Middle East by promoting direct negotiations between the current antagonists and mediating among them if direct negotiations prove to be impossible. The Commission should be specifically charged with unremitting exploration of the possibility of negotiations on the central problems of determination of boundaries, resettlement of Arab refugees from Israel and of Jewish refugees from Egypt and Syria, and the conclusion of treaties of peace.

6. We should help break the stalemates of inertia and blockade by promoting dynamic projects to help raise living standards, strengthen economies, and encourage orderly social progress in the Middle East. We should reaffirm our interest and support for long-term regional economic development programs sufficiently broad to encompass multi-national river development projects for the Jordan, Nile, and Tigris-Euphrates river valley systems. Toward this end, we should take the initiative in the United Nations in proposing a Middle East Development Authority, as an administering agency for the mutual pooling of capital and technical aid in the region, the Board of Directors of which would contain representatives of all Middle Eastern States as well as of all other states furnishing capital aid and technical assistance.

I consider these proposals to be sound, practicable and indicative of the positive approach which the United States must soon adopt. It will take courage and daring to adopt such an approach in the Middle East.

Without these qualities, however, we will continue to muddle, moralize, and probably miss the opportunity to be of constructive use in the Middle East. With these qualities, we can at least hope that our courage will be rewarded.



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