
Jordan's Hussein: Peace equals development

Perhaps the most remarkable speech delivered at the United Nations thus far was that by King Hussein of Jordan. Not only did Hussein flatly and with no equivocation rule out his participation in the Camp David accords—a commitment that won admiring comments on the Jordanian monarch's speech by the Syrian and Palestinian delegations—but he also went a step further. Stressing "the substance of peace, not the form," Hussein concluded his speech by stating: "The cause of peace is inseparable from the new world economic order, détente, the fight against colonialism, and economic progress."

He outlined Jordan's belief that the improvement of relations between Western Europe and the Arab world was critical to resolving the overall crisis in the Middle East. That, he said, could only be accomplished by a comprehensive settlement that involved the entire world community, including the Soviet Union, and which took account of the Palestine Liberation Organization. Jordan and the PLO, he stressed, maintain excellent relations.

On the same day as his speech, Jordan established diplomatic relations with Cuba. More than anything else so far, the Jordanian speech and its implications underscored the extent to which the Anglo-American bloc has become isolated from the dominant international current. Excerpts of the official U.N. account of King Hussein's remarks follow.

There was a growing international conviction, even among the industrially and technologically advanced nations, that the world must rectify existing economic relationships and seek a new pattern of international economic interaction based on equity, co-operation and equal opportunity, continued King Hussein of Jordan...

Jordan was for world peace, he said. It stood for the new international economic order in all its manifestations. Jordan was viewing the entire world as an indivisible unit with regard to resources, aspirations, peace and the solution of problems, and for placing the resources of humanity at the service of progress and enlightenment for all mankind.

The cause of justice in the Middle East had been making continued progress, King Hussein said.... "Western Europe is overcoming the effects of Zionist control both in the mass media and in national parliaments." The European mind had been opened to the realities of the situation in the Middle East and to the

aspirations and sufferings of the Palestinian people....

King Hussein of Jordan continuing said: "Until this very moment, no statement has been made by the Israeli government to the effect that Israel accepts the right of self-determination for the Palestinian people—even within a framework of reciprocal peace and security—or that Israel commits itself to withdrawal from the occupied territories in the context of a comprehensive settlement leading to mutual guarantees."...

Playing with words would not solve the problem, he said. Israel must withdraw from the territories it occupied in June 1967, must respect the right of the displaced Palestinians to return to their homeland and must stop its denial of the Palestinians' right to self-determination, including the right to establish an independent state if they so wished. Jordan, together with the other Arab countries, stood behind the Palestinians in demanding this right....

Continuing, King Hussein of Jordan said his country supported any sincere international efforts to achieve a just and comprehensive settlement, and had cooperated with such efforts, within its announced principles, from the very beginning. But the agreement between Egypt, Israel and the United States—the Camp David Accords—resulted in "what we perceive as contrary to our national interest, to the interests of the Palestinian people and to the interests of the Arab world."

He emphasized two points. First, the occupied territories were indivisible. They were all subject to the principle of the inadmissibility of the acquisition of the peoples' territories through the use of force. The West Bank and Gaza were no different from the Sinai or the Golan Heights. As the heart of Palestine and the homeland of the Palestinians, the West Bank was not subject to bargaining. There could be no meaning to any international settlement if it left the future of the West Bank and Gaza vague or applied to it a status at variance from that which applied to the other occupied territories. The "Israeli theory of autonomy" for the people but not the land was unacceptable.

Second, he said, Jordan did not accept the role of assisting the Israeli occupation authorities in the West Bank while Israel made daily claims to ownership of the land and refused even the possibility of the alleged "autonomy" eventually evolving towards sovereignty and independence for the people of the occupied territories within their own homeland. Jordan was not prepared to accept from the occupying authorities any vague international formulas designed to gain time while planting the land with settlements and postponing the difficult basic decisions through recourse to tactics aimed at preventing world public opinion from exercising moral and political pressure to end the occupation.

"I would like to emphasize," he said, "that the destiny and the future of this area cannot be decided in the absence of the concerned parties, foremost among

them the Palestinian people, or in the absence of the rest of the international community. Developments have led us to believe that the United States by itself cannot exert a constructive influence in achieving a just settlement and the establishment of a durable peace as long as its policy is committed to supporting Israel by all political and material means and by supplying armaments, while Israel persists in refusing total withdrawal and the recognition of the legitimate national rights of the Palestinian people on their national soil, as well as respecting the rights of all States in the region to live in peace and security.”...

King Hussein of Jordan, then stated: “If the Israeli forces withdraw completely, then the world community can arrange a smooth and lawful transfer of authority and responsibility to the people of the occupied territories—those living there now as well as those who belong there—through internationally recognized and voluntary means.”...

If the world community accepted those basic principles, which were indispensable for a just peace, then the way would be open for their implementation in a reasonable and appropriate manner. The Arab parties had in the past accepted the idea of an international conference in which the Arab parties would be represented by a unified delegation under United Nations auspices. During the past months, he had personally called for taking the problem back to the Security Council with the purpose of agreeing on a formula for implementing these accepted principles which should underlie a settlement. They were also ready to consider suggestions “from any quarter” with regard to the implementation of a just settlement, so long as they abided by the principle of withdrawal and an equitable solution of the Palestine question. The United Nations, its Charter, its flag and its successive resolutions, were the natural framework for the achievement of the comprehensive settlement.

The Arab countries today had sufficient confidence in themselves to consider all suggestions and ideas leading to a just peace. They were fully capable of consultations and co-operation among themselves as well as with the rest of the world for the achievement of peace. The Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO), through its international activities and announced positions in recent months, had proven that it wanted to participate, in the name of the Palestinian people which it represents, in steps leading to a just peace.

Jordan was cooperating in good faith with the leadership of the PLO and with the rest of the Arab countries.

“Our cause,” said the King, “is inseparable from the cause of the new world economic order, from the cause of détente, from the cause of those struggling against colonialism and international domination, from the cause of economic progress.”

Secretary Vance: 'Progress not inevitable'

In a speech that shocked many United Nations delegations for its blunt and unequivocal pessimism, U.S. Secretary of State Vance told the General Assembly that the problems facing the world may not have solutions. Rapid technological development—too rapid, Vance implied—as well as food shortages, the energy crisis, environmental problems, and the threat of World War III may overwhelm the human race in the next decade. Although “progress is possible,” intoned Vance, it is by no means “inevitable.” Ignoring the European and Nonaligned calls for reshaping the world monetary system, Vance sent instead an unmistakable signal. The U.S. will demand an expansion of the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank, he said.

On international diplomacy, Vance took a similar position of refusing to negotiate. He insisted that the discredited Camp David accords are the only basis for settling the Middle East conflict, for instance, and he said that the southern Africa crisis must remain in the hands of the British Government.

Again and again, Vance urged the delegations to be “realistic,” to dampen their expectations, and to avoid rancor. “We must resist the voices of international confrontation.... We must not react now in frustration, and unleash a spiral of rhetoric which can dampen rather than resolve our divisions.” But, said many delegates, Vance’s speech indeed creates legitimate grounds for frustration.

Mr. President:

We meet in this General Assembly on the threshold of a new decade.

It will be a time of complex challenge ... a period in which, more than ever, cooperative endeavors among nations are a matter not only of idealism, but of direct self-interest.

The decade now drawing to a close has been characterized by rapid change—far-reaching and fundamental.

- Awesome technological developments are all about us.

- The assertion of national independence has reshaped the political geography of our planet.

- Within nations, we see an accelerating rise in individual economic, political and social expectations.

- The unrelenting hostility of the Cold War has given way to a more complex relationship between East