

King Hussein: If this is the new world order, what an ominous future!

Below is the full text of the speech given by King Hussein of Jordan on Feb. 6, 1991. Although it was greeted by heavy threats against Jordan from the Bush administration, the speech has been almost completely blacked out of the American press.

Brother citizens, brother Arabs, brother Muslims, you who uphold your faith and refuse to see your nation humiliated; you who are truly sincere within yourselves and in your hearts and minds, and in your objectives, ideas and attitudes; you who are concerned for the present as well as the future generations of our nation, I greet every one of you with all affection.

I choose to address you at this very difficult moment, motivated by Arab honor and religious duty. I address you on the eve of the fourth week of this savage and large-scale war which was imposed on brotherly Iraq, and which is aimed at Iraq's existence, its role, its progress, and its vitality. It is also aimed at Iraq's right to a life of freedom and dignity, and its determination to fulfill its historic, cultural and human role which started in Babylon, Baghdad, and Basra, and which contributed to human civilization, scientific progress, and culture.

Iraq, fellow Arabs and Muslims, now pays the price in pure and noble blood of belonging to its nation. Iraq had always hastened, without hesitation, to make sacrifices in all the battles which the Arabs fought, or which were forced upon them in defense of Arab land in Palestine, Syria, Egypt, and Jordan. Arab blood was always dear to Iraq and shouldn't the blood of Iraqi men, women, and children be dear to us?! How shamed will be the Arabs who let Arab blood be spilt in this unjust war?!

The world has known cruel wars, but never one like this that is waged against Iraq and the likes of which may never happen again. The armies of the biggest and most powerful nations have gathered and unleashed their modern and dangerous weapons on the land, in the sea, and in the sky. These weapons had originally been arrayed by the present international military alliance against an opposing alliance led by another superpower. They are all now arrayed against the Baghdad of Haroun al-Rashid, the Basra of Islamic studies and poetry, the Kufa of Ali, may God's peace be upon him, the Holy Najaf, Karbala, Al Diwaniyeh, Mosul, Kirkuk, and every Iraqi city and village. Fire rains down upon

Iraq from airplanes, from battleships, from submarines and rockets, destroying mosques, churches, schools, museums, hospitals, powdered milk factories, residential areas, Bedouin tents, electricity generating stations, and water networks. This bombing started from the first hours and took the form of a war that aims to destroy all the achievement of Iraq and return it to primitive life, by using the latest technology of destruction. The first victims of this war were justice, righteousness, and peace. Its first casualties were the aspirations of all humanity since the end of the Second World War, hoping that that war would be the last human tragedy, and that man would no longer be killer or victim. All the hopes of our nation and the world community were thwarted the day the land of Iraq was turned into the arena of the third world war.

Brother citizens, brother Arabs, brother Muslims,

The irony of this war is that it is waged under the cloak of international legitimacy, and in the name of the United Nations, which was created to preserve peace, security and justice, and to resolve disputes through dialogue, negotiations, and diplomacy. If this is an example of the future role of the United Nations in the new world order, what an ominous future lies before all nations! What international legitimacy will there be to protect the less powerful against the more powerful who seek to subjugate them, humiliate them, kill them, and usurp all their rights that were granted by God and protected by Charter of the United Nations? We now realize fully the real reason why we, the Arabs, were deprived of our right to solve our problems, and why the United Nations was prevented from fulfilling its role, and why the doors were shut against any sincere political attempt to resolve the Gulf crisis. It is claimed that every effort possible was made to solve the crisis during the five months before the war. This is not true. If the effort that was spent in preparing for the war had been devoted to the quest for a peaceful settlement, this disaster would not have taken place. Moreover, the ongoing war, with its destructive outcome, is incompatible with the humanitarian objectives of the United Nations resolutions which were adopted to restore peace and security to the Gulf region.

By contrast, the Arab-Israeli conflict remained far from any honest and real attempt to resolve it justly. The Arab Palestinian people and the Arab nation still await the imple-

mentation of a single United Nations resolution, which rejects Israeli occupation and calls for an end to it. Twenty-four years have passed since the occupation of the West Bank, Gaza, and the Golan Heights, and nine years have passed since the occupation of south Lebanon, but none of our hopes were fulfilled. Nevertheless, we did not despair of the United Nations. The major powers persisted in assuring us that a peaceful solution was possible. As regards the Gulf crisis, the Arab parties concerned chose from the beginning to reject any political Arab dialogue with Iraq, and to block any attempt that could prevent the internationalization of the crisis and its resolution by directly dealing with all its causes and results. All the good offices of Jordan and others who were concerned for the future of our nation were aborted. Why? Because the real purpose behind this destructive war, as proven by its scope, and as attested to by the declaration of the parties, is to destroy Iraq, and rearrange the area in a manner far more dangerous to our nation's present and future than the Sykes-Picot agreement. This arrangement would put the nation, its aspirations and its resources under direct foreign hegemony and would shred all ties between its parts, thus further weakening and fragmenting it.

The talk about a New World Order, whose early feature is the destruction of Iraq, and the persistence of this talk as the war continues, lead us to wonder about the identity of this order and instill in us doubts regarding its nature.

The New World Order to which we aspire holds all people equal in their right to freedom, progress and prosperity. It deals with their causes with the same standards and under the same principles, regardless of any consideration or influence. The required new world would not mete out injustice to any one nation. It would not discriminate between nations but draw them together within the framework of mutual respect and fruitful cooperation for the benefit of our planet and all people on it. It must be an order that believes in public freedom and protects private freedoms, respects human rights and strengthens the principles of democracy. It should not deny the Arab people their right to all this.

The nature of the military alliance against Iraq betrays its near- and long-term objectives. For when Israel supports this alliance; when two countries, one Arab, the other Islamic, both of which have normal political relations with Israel, whose leaders compete for prominence in this alliance and reiterate their desire and enthusiasm for the destruction of Iraq, it becomes easy to realize that this war is a war against all Arabs and Muslims, not only against Iraq. When Arab and Islamic lands are offered as bases for the allied armies from which to launch attacks to destroy Arab Muslim Iraq, when Arab money is financing this war with unprecedented generosity unknown to us and our Palestinian brothers, while we shoulder our national responsibilities; when this takes place, I say that any Arab or Muslim can realize the magnitude of this crime committed against his religion and his nation.

Brother citizens,

From the very beginning we have shouldered our responsibilities to the Arab nation and Islam, as well as towards international peace and security. We have made every effort to fulfill these responsibilities. We are not hurt because our rewards have been successive punishments to our country and people. It has become clear to the world that these punishments are the price which we must pay because we tried to avert the disaster which was planned and premeditated in the dark. As a new form of punishment there are now attempts to deprive us of our basic needs, even oil, as a new form of punishment, and one of the most severe, for no other reason than our principled stand. It is because we are not party to the conflict, nor part of the alliance, unwilling to dance to the tune others play, with no will of our own, no rights and no ability to express our free opinion. We would not forsake this right, because it is equal in importance to our human right to breathe air that is not yet rationed. Nevertheless, Jordan's leadership and people will remain firm in their position and belief that the opportunity for peace still exists. Recourse to peace remains less costly and would reflect more truly the commitment to principles and values than the continuation of this devastating war.

The voice of millions can be heard in every country, including those of the alliance. They all call for peace and an end to the killing of children, the destruction of homes, and the withholding of medicine from the sick. I know just as you do that against these voices stand political and military leaders, alas with Arabs in their forefront, calling for the continuation of this war. Which voices will win in the end? The voices of reason, peace and justice, or the voices of war, hatred and insanity?

We and other brothers have made a loud call to stop military action and open the way for diplomatic political action to resolve the problem, but the call fell on deaf ears. Many a time before the war had started we warned against its effects, the deep wounds which it would open, and its repercussions which would grow and include human, economic and ecological tragedies. We warned that war is a measure of last resort, launched only after all efforts to avert it have been exhausted. Our calls and warnings were in vain.

Justice will be victorious, God willing, brothers, and our nation will prevail because, through its victory humanity will prevail against its enemies. Life will prevail over death. Love among nations will prevail over hatred. It will become clear to all those who gambled that our nation would be divided, like its leaders, that it is a dead nation, will be proven wrong. Our nation will remain, God willing, a strong, proud and vibrant nation. "These your people are one people and I am your God, so worship me alone" (*Surat al Anbiya* no. 92). Let us have fear of God and remember that. If this situation continues, it will only benefit those who covet our lands and resources, with Israel at their forefront. There are already signs that the spoils are being divided. We hear and read



The city of Jerash in Jordan, with ancient ruins in the foreground, and the modern city behind. Jordan has already become a target in the war on Iraq.

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every day of plans to control our resources, limit our freedom of decision, strangle our aspirations and usurp our rights. There is talk of proposed military alliances and foreign troops that will stay on Arab soil; of conditions that will handicap our progress; of a solution for the Palestinian problem which has been prepared or which will be prepared by others according to what they see, and according to the will of the powerful that is imposed on the weak. We cannot imagine that this solution would fulfill the legitimate national rights of the Palestinian people on their nation's soil.

This is a call from a Hashemite Arab to all honest Arab and Muslim leaders. Let us join our efforts to stop this catastrophe and save the people of Iraq from the fate that is planned for them. Let us save our nation from the plans that are designed for it. Let us bring this war to an end.

The starting point in all this is immediate and serious work to make the alliance accept a cease-fire, in preparation for a responsible dialogue between the antagonists: an Iraqi-American dialogue and an Arab-Arab dialogue that resorts to reason and balances interests against international legitimacy, the legitimacy of security, peace, justice and equality.

By destroying Iraq, this war has exceeded the limits set by the United Nations in its resolutions. This is confirmed by the declarations of the alliance leaders. So where is the United Nations now? The alternative to a cease-fire is the destruction of Arabs and Muslims, their humiliation, their exploitation, the trampling on their honor, pride and legitimate hopes, and hatred and strife between nations. We in Jordan will stay the Arabs of all Arabs, the noblest of the noble, the men of all men. We shall always stay united, army and people, alert to defend our country. If the fight is forced upon us, we shall be up to it and gain one of God's two favors (victory or martyrdom). Our hearts are full of faith, and we thank God for everything.

From Amman of the Arabs I send to our people in Palestine our great pride in them, in their steadfastness, in their resilience against their suffering where a whole nation is under house arrest, without work, without a source of earning, without medicine. But it is a nation that believes in God and stands fast by the Aqsa mosque and the Church of the Holy Sepulchre.

As for our people in Iraq, what words can describe their great courage and pride, their tenacity, and their ability to face 28 allied countries, 28 armies headed by the largest, most powerful, and best-armed army of the world! To them we send our love and our pride as they defend us all and raise the banner that says God is great, the banner of Arabs and Islam, we salute Iraq, its heroic army, its steadfast people, its glorious women, its brave children, and its aged, confronting with faith the bombers, the battleships and tons of explosives.

We send a special salute to His Holiness Pope John Paul II for his prayers and continuous calls for peace in the Middle East, and to all people and international figures everywhere who decry war and call for peace. A salute of pride to all our Arab and Muslim brothers in the five continents who came out from the first moments of war to make a stand for life and peace against death, destruction and aggression.

I pay a special debt of thanks to all those who search for truth and who work to spread it because they respect and care for truth. To all the newsmen, academics, and politicians who live among us and do their duty in honesty and professionalism.

"Most of their conferrings together are devoid of good, except such as enjoin charity, or the promotion of public welfare or of public peace; and on him who strives after these, seeking the gratification of God, shall we soon bestow a great reward" (*Surat al-nisa* no. 114).

May God's peace and blessings be upon you.