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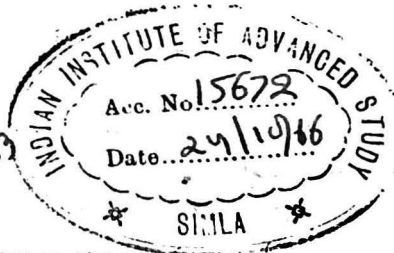
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THE CHALLENGE IN THE MIDDLE EAST

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Three days ago we heard a speech by the Soviet representative. It was calumnious. It was provocative. It was totally contrary to the ideals of peaceful settlement, truth, and of integrity, to which this Assembly is devoted. In the few remarks which I made after his speech I tried briefly to give it the response which it deserved. I really thought I had said enough.

But many members have asked me to reply categorically to this speech. . . . I shall now take the charges of the Soviet Union and state very bluntly just exactly what the situation is as a result of this attempt of theirs to bully the world into submission.

I warn the Soviet Union now that they will not like what I am going to say and I repeat now what I have told them many times in the past — that, while I shall never start an altercation with the Soviet Union, I shall always reply when charges are made against the Government which I have the honour to represent. In this case I shall do so not merely in a defensive spirit, but I shall go further and reveal the true motivation of the Soviet attack and then say what the United States stands for affirmatively and constructively in the Middle

East. There is not a representative of a government here in this hall who would not feel the same obligation to reply, if his country were attacked as mine has been.

I therefore make this refutation partly out of respect for the opinions of the members of the Assembly, but also because I believe that the challenge which we face has grown clear, and that this is a moment when plain speaking—which is sometimes to be avoided in a diplomatic forum—will actually strengthen peace and promote the well-being, security and independence of the countries of this vital region. That is what the United States wants, and that is the basic motive underlying what I am about to say.

Some time ago the Soviet Union decided to carry on and inspire a campaign of vilification against the United States in relation to the Middle East. At press conferences and in propaganda originating in Moscow, in a letter to the Secretary General, in corridor conversations and in speeches in the United Nations, allegations were made that the United States is seeking to promote war in the Middle East. All this was carefully done in a way that does not require the Soviet Union to prove any of its charges.

You all have heard these charges. The United States, it is alleged, attempted to overthrow the present Government of Syria. Having failed in these efforts, according to Soviet spokesmen, the United States sought to persuade Turkey to launch an attack upon Syria late in October. There have of course been variations of this tale since it was spun by Mr. Gromyko on September 10.

The claim has been made that Iran, Jordan and Lebanon were to commit aggression, together with Turkey. However, in all cases, the story was essentially the same. This was an *American* 'plot'.

We have heard of American 'plots' from Soviet representatives on previous occasions. There was the alleged 'plot' against Hungary. There was an alleged 'plot' against North Korea, which was used as a smoke-screen to cover the aggression against the Republic of Korea. The United States was even accused, if you please, of having 'plotted' against the Soviet Union, with the aid of the late head of the Soviet secret police, Lavrenti Beria. Only last winter the General Assembly rejected by an overwhelming majority the Soviet charge that the United States was subverting the governments of the Soviet satellites. Everyone of those American 'plots' was invented in Moscow — usually after the Soviet Union has been overwhelmingly rebuked and repudiated in the United Nations.

II

Now, what are the known facts in this case? Let me review the actions of various countries, beginning with Syria.

On August 12 the Syrian officials announced that they had uncovered still another American 'plot' — this time to overthrow the Syrian Government. This announcement was followed by political and command changes in Damascus which the Soviet Union has clearly revealed are pleasing to it.

The Soviet Government has been sending large quantities of arms to Syria, including jet aircraft, tanks, armoured vehicles. There is no question of challenging any country's right to acquire arms. We are entitled to inquire, however, regarding the motives behind sending such large quantities of arms into a potentially explosive area at a particularly tense moment. Such shipments in such circumstances inevitably heighten tensions.

In this connection I cannot refrain from pointing out the dangers involved in a policy of indiscriminate distribution of arms to non-military groups of the population of a country at a time when deliberate efforts are being made to incite the people of that country to hostile acts against a neighbour. In such circumstances, no one can guarantee that an incident will not occur which could have grave consequences.

I come now to the steps taken by the United States Government. Mr. Loy Henderson, one of our most experienced diplomats, was asked to expedite a trip to the Middle East which had been planned some time before. He was asked to consult with United States and foreign officials and to obtain a first-hand impression of current developments. This was the substance of his instructions and this was the purpose of the trip. We are curious why the sensibilities of the Soviet Government should have been so injured. Could the Soviet Union have something to fear, something to hide?

The Turkish Government also took certain steps. It proceeded to strengthen its defenses along the Syrian border in the light of these Soviet activities in Syria —

in particular, the possible establishment of a Soviet arms depot on Turkey's southern border. This Turkish action, I submit, was perfectly reasonable. In no manner has Syria been endangered. The Government of Turkey has repeatedly given its solemn assurances that this move was a pure defensive precaution and that it has absolutely no intention of attacking Syria or of intervening in Syria's domestic affairs.

Turkey has a distinguished record in the work of the United Nations. It has ably performed its duties on the Security Council and on the Economic and Social Council. It has done whatever was requested of it in supporting the United Nations in action. The United States bows to none in its admiration for the courageous service of the Turkish soldiers who fought under the command of the United Nations in repelling Communist aggression in Korea. Turkey stood firmly with the overwhelming majority of the United Nations during the Communist crushing of Hungary last year, despite the fact that it was the next door neighbour of the government who was committing the crime.

The United Nations can be proud of Turkey which has firmly supported it and which has complied with its Charter obligations and the resolutions of the United Nations. One need but ask in passing, whether the record of its accusers is as good.

I would like to point out several additional facts in this connection. The Soviet representative alleges that "the Turkish General Staff together with American advisers has elaborated detailed plans for an attack by Turkey on Syria." I wonder whether he is aware that

the four members of the Turkish Joint Chiefs of Staff recently resigned in order to stand for election to the Turkish parliament. Obviously this could not happen in a country "vigorously preparing" a military attack.

The Government of Turkey has also, as we know, accepted the offer of good offices extended by His Majesty King Saud. A country willing to seek an amicable settlement of differences is not a country bent on war.

III

Finally I come to the heart of the matter — the behaviour of the Soviet Union, and particularly, its war of nerves against Turkey. Along with its propaganda charges of a Turkish plot against Syria, the Soviet Union has been openly threatening Turkey with annihilation and extinction. Mr. Gromyko on September 10 warned Turkey that it "may land in an abyss and that a great disaster awaits it." Premier Bulganin in his message of September 11th to Premier Menderes warned indirectly of a Soviet attack and asserted that "great calamities" awaited Turkey if it did not heed these warnings. These statements were played up in the usual manner by the Soviet press.

A remarkable feat is that these accusations against Turkey were first launched not in Damascus but in Moscow — even though Syria was supposed to be the intended victim of the imaginary conspiracy.

On October 7, Mr. Khrushchev continued this Soviet war of nerves in an interview with a *New York Times* correspondent. He said, "if war breaks out in the

Middle East . . . we are here and you” — meaning the United States — “are not” “When the guns begin firing, the rockets can begin flying” — a statement which is both impotent and is also untrue. In another statement on the same day, Mr. Khrushchev cautioned Turkey that it had few troops to defend its borders with the Soviet Union and again threatened to bombard Turkey with rocket missiles. These very same threats were repeated by Mr. Gromyko on Tuesday.

Finally, the Communist leaders of the USSR actually went so far in their breathless eagerness as to send letters to political parties in other countries, which presented the Soviet propaganda line on developments in the Middle East and exhorted these parties to support Soviet policies in this region. Is this the non-interference Mr. Gromyko had in mind in the resolution on ‘peaceful’ coexistence which he tabled on September 28 ?

Through these manoeuvres, the Soviet Union set what it believed to be the proper stage for charges it was engineering to bring before the United Nations.

IV

All these actions of the Soviet Union should be seen against the background of Soviet Middle East policies and actions during the past two decades.

Soviet ambitions in the Middle East entered an active phase in 1939 when Nazi Germany and Communist Russia formed an alliance in the Ribbentrop-Molotov Pact of unfragrant memory. The Soviet Union in 1940 sought to use this alliance to establish a sphere

of influence in the Persian Gulf and Black Sea regions and proposed to Hitler's foreign minister that this area be "recognized as the centre of the aspirations of the Soviet Union."

These ambitions came to nothing, but the USSR nevertheless pressed forward toward the same goals after World War II. It sought trusteeship over Libya. It demanded that Turkey cede to it the districts of Kars and Ardhan and grant the Soviet Union a naval base at the Dardanelles. It occupied Northern Iran in open violation of international agreements, and only the staunch stand taken by the United Nations and the will of free countries caused Soviet forces to be withdrawn from that region.

The year 1955 was marked by renewed Soviet efforts. It seems clear that the Soviet Union then reached the decision to concentrate its attention on the Middle East and the free countries of Asia. Its tactics are clear. First it seeks to expand its influence by psychological exploitation of legitimate national aspirations, even if this requires the temporary repudiation of local Communist parties. Then it resorts to subversion as gains are registered. And finally, it hopes to seize and consolidate power through indirect aggression.

Now, the Soviet Union pretends to believe that the United States is 'prodding' Turkey to attack Syria. While it does not really believe this charge, it has spread it across the world and into this forum. I therefore reaffirm to you all : the United States is pushing no country into war ; we are steadfastly against aggression in any form and from any quarter.

We are entitled to ask what the real explanation is for the behaviour of the Soviet Union. All the evidence shows what its true aims are :

1. By creating the appearance of threat to Syria's security and then pretending to remove the threat, they want to pose before the world as the saviour of the Arabs.

2. They want to bully Turkey with threats of extinction and frighten the rest of us, if you please, into doing nothing.

3. They evidently believe that their agents and sympathisers inside Syria will make political gains from the artificial threat of war which has been generated.

4. They want to blacken the name of the United States and to destroy the friendship which has existed historically between the people of the Middle East and the United States.

5. Finally, by creating an artificial war scare the Soviet Government hopes to further its expansionist purposes and, in accordance with its historic aims, reduce the Middle East to the status of the captive nations of Eastern Europe.

So there, Mr. President, are the facts, and the conclusions about Soviet intentions which flow inescapably from the facts and from what they themselves have said. None of this is my rhetoric, it all comes from the record. It is this same Soviet Government, the author of unlovely record, which now seeks to accuse the great peace-loving majority of non-Communist nations in the world of being warmongers.

Here is a government which has been condemned by the United Nations three times in the past year for its actions in Hungary ; which has violated the expressed wishes of the United Nations more than 30 times in the past eight years ; which has abused its United Nations veto power 82 times, accusing the overwhelming majority of the human race of wanting war.

Here is the government most often defeated in the United Nations operating on the maxim of an old politico ; "claim everything ; concede nothing ; and if defeated allege fraud."

Here is the chronic lawbreaker, not only seeking to be regarded as a good citizen, but actually trying to sit in the judge's seat and sentence the whole law abiding community to jail.

Here is the arsonist, trying his best to start another fire, and demanding the right to lead the fire brigade.

Remember that it was one year ago to this day that Soviet tanks were shooting down Hungarian Freedom Fighters in the streets of Budapest. Compare the Soviet defiance of the demands of the Assembly, that it desist from its butchery of Hungary, with the actions which many other members of the United Nations and the United States took a few years ago when they shed their blood in defense of the principles of the Charter in Korea ; shed their blood while the Soviet Union was actively and directly aiding the aggressor — as one speaker said here in the Assembly at that time, "fighting to the last Chinese."

Remember too, the complaints of Iran in 1946 and of Greece in 1947.

Remember the so-called "charges" which the Soviet Union has brought before the General Assembly year after year and which have been dismissed by overwhelming votes, what we call here "the Soviet item."

Remember the recent assassination by a Communist fanatic of President Carlos Castillo Armas of Guatemala, who once addressed the Assembly from this very rostrum, and the terroristic Communist bombing of Saigon only the other day. These acts remind us of the methods the Soviet Union is prepared to use.

It is a tragedy that the Soviet Government pursues a policy so unworthy of the greatness of its people. Their distinguished achievements prove how much the Soviet Union could contribute to humanity, if the policies of its Government were truly directed toward peace and cooperation. Let us hope that we here in this room, within our lifetime, will see an advance in Soviet policies which will reflect the fundamental decency of the peoples of the Soviet Union.

V

Mr. President, the matters which we are discussing here today, while of concern to all those devoted to freedom, are of direct importance to the Arab states and the Arab peoples. The Arab peoples aspire for closer relationship with one another. This aspiration for unity is accompanied by an equally strong desire for equality within the family of nations.

The United States, which was formed by the voluntary union of individual states, recognizes and respects the aspirations of the Arab nations. To Americans, there is a grandeur in freedom and unity. We respect that nation that is truly free and independent. We respect those, who, of their own free will, join together for their common good. In our relationship with other nations, we believe sincerely that our interests and theirs are best served when we meet as equals. We want this for ourselves ; we want it for all others. With the same fervour we shall stand with our Arab friends to oppose those who would seek to rob them of their liberty and twist their hopes of progress to serve the aims of a new imperialism.

On January 5, 1957, President Eisenhower stated to the Congress of the United States :

“We have shown, so that none can doubt, our dedication to the principle that force shall not be used internationally for any aggressive purposes and that the integrity and independence of the nations of the Middle East should be inviolate There is general recognition in the Middle East, as elsewhere, that the United States does not seek either political or economic domination over any other people. Our desire is a world environment of freedom, not servitude.”

Mr. President, as I conclude let me say this : the United States will not be stopped by threats or by defamation from continuing to offer its understanding and support to those nations of the Middle East which are being threatened by the Soviet Union and whose independence the Soviet Union seeks to destroy. Let there be no question about our capacity to offer this support.

We are strong ; and our allies are strong. The Charter is a most powerful grand alliance against aggression. It could well become the most powerful alliance that the world has ever seen. The United Nations has played a big part in thwarting the many Soviet power grabs since the end of the Second World War. We should not be discouraged, let us be optimistic.

I have in mind the failure of the Soviet Union to gain its demand that Turkey cede the districts of Kars and Ardhan to the Soviet Union.

I have in mind the withdrawal of Soviet troops from Northern Iran.

I have in mind the ending of the Communist encroachment on Greece.

I have in mind the Communist attempt to conquer Korea by force of arms.

I have in mind the thwarting of the Communist attempt to expand all through Central America, using Guatemala as a base.

Thus the true facts, and the motives behind these charges, are perfectly clear for all to see who wish to see. The U. S. welcomes examination by the Assembly of this situation. The U. S. is confident that such considerations will be most helpful in placing developments in proper perspective and in reducing the tensions which the enemies of peace and tranquillity in the Middle East have sought to build up around this matter.

Mr. President, we will uphold the Charter and have faith in God.

13

