

# Chronological: Union Typographical Workers of Hawaii

Senator Daniel K. Inouye Papers  
Speeches, Chronological, Box SP3, Folder 45  
<https://hdl.handle.net/10524/72168>

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SPEECH BY SENATOR DANIEL K. INOUE BEFORE THE  
UNION TYPOGRAPHICAL WORKERS OF HAWAII AT 9:30 AM,  
AUGUST 30, 1975, HILTON HAWAIIAN VILLAGE, HONOLULU,  
HAWAII.

RELEASE DATE: AUGUST 30, 1975, 9:30 AM.

The news reports of this past week indicate that soon Secretary of State Kissinger may announce the signing of the new Sinai troop disengagement agreement by Israel and Egypt. Although any agreement between Egypt and Israel to an interim settlement in the Sinai Peninsula is not a final peace agreement, it nonetheless represents an important step toward an eventual peace settlement in the Middle East.

Apparently, and I must say apparently, because the Congress has not been privy to the specifics of the negotiations, an important element in the approval of the present pact by Israel is the promise by President Ford through Secretary Kissinger of a substantial military and economic assistance program for Israel.

The total amount of this program is estimated to be between \$1.3 and \$2.7 billion; three-fourths of the money to go for military assistance, the remainder for economic assistance. The military assistance may take the form of grants, loans, and/or military credit sales at concessionary rates.

Among the items of military hardware likely to be included are the new F-15 aircraft, replacement tanks for the updated World War II models now in use, anti-aircraft and anti-tank missiles, etc.

Three years ago, I was selected by the Senate Leadership to chair the Subcommittee on Foreign Operations of the Senate Appropriations Committee.

This Subcommittee will have jurisdiction over the special assistance for Israel package that has been formulated by Secretary Kissinger. Accordingly, I would like to take this opportunity to share my views with you on this important matter which is certain to become controversial.

Soon after I took over the chairmanship of the Foreign Operations Subcommittee I formulated a simple test to apply against all requests for foreign assistance. It is this test, now adopted by other members of the Subcommittee, that will be used to judge the Israeli request for aid.

The test asks two questions. First, is such aid in our national interest? Second, is the recipient country doing its utmost to help itself?

Let us explore the first question: Is aid to Israel in our national interest?

First, our national interest requires a cessation of conflict in the Middle East for several reasons. Obviously, peace in that area is important because the Arab countries are a major source of petroleum for our nation and most of the Western World. When the Arab countries of OPEC, the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries, decide to raise the price or limit the supply of oil, that decision is in effect accepted as policy by all the OPEC countries, including the non-Arab countries, namely Ecuador, Indonesia, and Venezuela. Hence, Western Europe which imports more than 97 per cent of its oil and Japan which depends entirely on OPEC imports are particularly vulnerable to manipulation of petroleum supplies. And while we are less dependent than

these other nations, imports have grown during recent years so that they now supply 36 per cent of our present petroleum needs. In 1965, foreign oil provided only 21 per cent of our needs, and up until the 1950's we were a net exporter of oil.

The oil embargo of 1973 proved just how vulnerable the West is to curtailment of the supply of Middle East oil. The deleterious impact of the quintupling of OPEC oil prices on the Western economies has been evident throughout the current recession. So, the need to stabilize OPEC prices and assure access to their supplies make peace in the Middle East a matter of national interest in Washington, London, Paris, Tokyo, Bonn, Rome, etc.

Our own dependence on OPEC oil could be limited to some degree if strong efforts were made to conserve energy. It is obvious, however, that the people of this nation are not yet ready for drastic curtailment of the use of their automobiles, appliances, or other energy-consuming luxuries. Voluntary conservation has not had an appreciable effect on our consumption. And Congress is unwilling to impose involuntary conservation without the consent of their constituents.

It should also be pointed out that the oil embargo of 1973 was used as an effective political as well as economic weapon. The Arab OPEC countries succeeded in splitting the Atlantic Alliance over the question of support for Israel by forcing the Western European countries to publicly retract their support. Hence, Israel was further isolated within the world community.

In addition to the importance of OPEC oil as an element in determining our national interests in the Middle East, there are other significant, if not as tangible, elements. These include our commitment to the sovereignty of Israel.

After World War II, the world was stunned with disbelief by disclosures of the mass genocide that had befallen the Jewish peoples under Hitler's Third Reich. The horrible extermination of 6 million men, women and children, and the violent shattering of many million more families underscored the cry of the Jews of the world for their own home. This cry was heard by the major powers. And the placement of that home was chosen in recognition of the history of the "land of milk and honey."

Abraham and Moses had lived in the Middle East. David built his temples there.

The desire of the Jewish world for a home land in the Middle East was articulated in the United States by a hard-working, talented, and influential Jewish constituency. It must be remembered, in addition, that this desire of the Jewish people also coincided with the strategic interests of the Democratic nations of the West.

The end of the hot war in 1945 almost immediately led to the Cold War with a realignment of former allies and enemies into a schism between East and West. Accordingly, the Mediterranean became a very important body of water in the maintenance of the security of the West. The presence of a

democratic nation such as Israel was considered important for the over-all defense of the Mediterranean. This vast area was then governed by sheikhs, monarchs and dictators.

For these reasons, we have thought it to be in our national interest to support a strong, but not aggressive, Israel and to help her to stand proud in resisting threats to her sovereignty.

To address the second test that must be applied to a request for foreign assistance, we must ask... "is Israel doing enough to help herself?"

The answer unquestionably is yes. Consider the nature of Israel's finances. According to the best available and reliable figures, the average Israeli wage earner will gross \$2,100 in 1975. But he must pay about \$1,365 in taxes, assessments or involuntary war bond purchases, leaving a net income of less than \$800. The 65 per cent per capita tax rate helps fill Israel's treasury and certainly contributes to Israeli defense efforts. Incidentally, 30 per cent of the country's Gross National Product goes for defense expenditures.

This contrasts with the economic management of South Vietnam and Cambodia in the 1960s, where tax laws were not enforced and many citizens succeeded in evading tax payments. In addition, U.S. foreign aid to these countries was not used properly. When President Ford asked Congress in March for \$222 million in military aid for Cambodia, I responded by saying, "You still have the problem of a country that doesn't seem to be doing its part in clearing up an internal mess so that these dollars we send them can

be effectively utilized."

American money sent to Vietnam and Cambodia since 1962 were outright grants with some concessionary loans under the "Food for Peace" program. Israel, however, up to the 1973 war, paid for all of her military assistance from the U. S.

Moreover, Israel has fought her own battles. In the 1973 war, Israel lost nearly 1 per cent of her population. When you compare Israeli losses with those of the U. S. during its involvement in Vietnam, estimated at over 400,000 dead and wounded, you will find that our loss of manpower did not even approach the 1 per cent mark of 2.1 million men. Today every able-bodied man and woman at the age of 18 in Israel must serve three years in the military. Thereafter they must serve in the active reserve until the age of 55 years. This along with the high level of taxation clearly demonstrates positive, responsible and almost unbelievable steps by Israel to help herself.

Finally we must consider the nature of the conflict in the Middle East in order to understand why we can agree to support Israel without turning our backs on the Arab nations.

It is futile to try to identify the aggressor in this conflict. It is really a chicken and egg question. Since Israel was first created, and even before it was recognized as a sovereign state, Jewish raids on Arab villages and Arab attacks on Jewish homes became common place. Each side claims it acts only in response to the other's aggression. Almost three decades of bloodshed have numbed world reaction to the constant loss of life that occurs

in that troubled area. When one considers that both Arabs and Jews come from the same ethnic stock and share common prophets in their religions, it seems strange that they have been unable to lay down their arms and to live in peace.

This past January I led a delegation of Foreign Operations Subcommittee members on a ten-day fact-finding mission to the Middle East which allowed a candid and factual exchange of views with Israeli, Jordanian, and Egyptian leaders. The visit reinforced my belief that U. S. foreign assistance should foster stability and political independence in all countries of this region.

At this point, I would like to digress for a moment from the subject of financial support for Israel to briefly comment on the proposal included in the recent peace negotiations that Americans serve in early warning systems situated between the borders of Israel and Egypt. I want to study the specifics of this proposal before any final judgment. Still it is obvious that if such early warning systems are required to keep the peace, the U. S. may have the only forces that have the credibility of both sides in the current conflict. Unfortunately, this is the kind of role that the U. N. was envisioned as best able to undertake, but the sorry fact is that the U. N. today is unable to perform such a role to the satisfaction of both sides. And if it is in the national interest for the U. S. to provide the means for negotiating a peace agreement in the Middle East, it may be necessary for and in our national interest to put some of our personnel on the spot in order to maintain such a peace agreement. I do not see any parallel between such a commitment and the tragic history that

followed from the sending of a few hundred advisors to Southeast Asia. Our Vietnam advisors were not neutral observers -- they were active participants in the war. Yet, as I say, any final view on this proposal must be based on a full understanding of the negotiations now underway.

There has been legitimate concern that the United States may be parcelling out too much foreign aid, regardless of the needs abroad, especially since financial needs at home seem more important. Congress has recognized this and, through my subcommittee, foreign assistance measures have become more responsive to American needs through the cutting of aid as well as through attempts to improve aid quality.

The fiscal year 1975 measure passed last March 24 contained the largest percentage cut since 1969 and the second largest in the 27-year history of the U.S. aid effort. The final \$3,674 billion appropriation was cut 38 per cent below the Ford Administration's request.

But recent aid reduction has not meant a lessening of an economic commitment to Israel. I remain firm in my belief that U.S. foreign aid should be designed to strengthen the economic underpinning of the new momentum towards lasting peace in the Middle East. Above all, we must act to help end the dangerous cycle of war after war in the Middle East which will continue unless we achieve a settlement of the basic differences between the Arab and Jewish people. "Now the time has truly come," as Abba Eban the former Israeli Foreign Minister, has said, "to look not backward to belligerency, but forward to peace."