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It's a great privilege for me to come back to Georgetown University and the Center for Contemporary Arab Studies, with which I had the privilege to be associated at its inception. I've seen how it has grown, not only in breadth but also in influence and impact, to become the prime center of Arab studies not only in the United States but on the world level.

I have chosen this evening to talk about the fashionable topic, the "new world order." It doesn't matter what it is or that it is not defined. It is important to be associated with the term. Let me at least define the current meaning of the "new world order."

First of all, the democratizing process that has taken place in Eastern Europe, and the changes that have occurred in the equation between the two superpowers in particular, constituted a major shift in the balance of power. What used to be considered a world polarized between the two superpowers, namely the Soviet Union and the United States, has become, broadly speaking, a unipolar system of power.

What has taken place, in fact, is that in the global equation there is no longer a countervailing superpower on one side. In a way, the detente between the two superpowers almost at times functioned as an entente between them. This in itself is an important development historically, inasmuch as it has brought about the defusion of international crises. It has become possible to distance ourselves from the threat of a global war. To that extent, this has been a very positive development.

Furthermore, the new global order, as it is emerging at this particular juncture, comprises two important trends simultaneously -- one where entities are being dismembered and integration is giving way to a new consciousness of identity based on ethnicity or other factors. We see in the Soviet Union today that previously suppressed nationalities in Lithuania,

Latvia and Moldavia, for example, are beginning to articulate their ethnic or national identity and insist pluralistic society within the Soviet Union. Pluralism is giving way to the sovereign prerogatives that are necessary *in* order that the identity of a nation-state becomes ascertained. This process has not culminated yet, but it indicates a level of ferment unprecedented *in* the 70 years of the Soviet Union's existence.

Furthermore, the liberation of Eastern Europe has also brought about a consciousness of national identity. It has created another force, the force of national unity and European consciousness, demonstrated in the emergence of a united Germany. Hence, unity of a nation has become an inspiring trend. This 'gravitation' towards a more European consciousness is to culminate in 1992 in economic union and political union (although it is being resisted tentatively by Mrs. Thatcher at this moment, which is creating a crisis in Britain).

The new world order is a trend only in the northern part of the globe. The southern part, to which the Arabs belong, is almost untouched by it. Therefore, those amongst us in the Third World and in the Arab world who clamor to be fashionable and to do things in accordance with the new world order, have in a very immature way allowed themselves to be co-opted into a system *in* which they had no input.

This is a world order suitable to the northern part of the globe, from the Soviet Union to the United States to Japan. It's a new world order where the political, military, and strategic power of the United States is being challenged by the growing economic power of a new Germany or of a new Europe and by the Pacific Basin, whose central force is Japan.

Hence, what we are beginning to witness is that East-West tensions in the northern part of the globe are giving way to a new tension, not necessarily confrontation, between the North and the South. The southern part of the globe has not been touched by this process. We see, for example, how today in India there is a resurgence of communal tensions, and Hindu fundamentalism, Islamic fundamentalism, all sorts of fundamentalisms are threatening to tear apart integrated societies. Further examples abound of the new contradiction between South and North, particularly Sri Lanka and South Africa.

We find ourselves *in* the last decade of the 20th century, the '90s, *in* a situation reminiscent of the last decade of the 1890s in the imperial and colonial period. It is this disenfranchisement, this sense of dispossession again that is beginning to create tensions and make us rather pushy, because we feel we are being pushed away.

It is this prevailing psychology in the countries of the south of the globe that needs to be studied. It is crucial that we begin to believe that we are contributors to our history, rather than

that under the pretext of a new world order, history is being made for us. This is the broad context. We have seen how this new global order is being demonstrated and where the Gulf crisis fits into it. It is important to study the ramifications and the consequences of the invasion by Iraq of Kuwait, and how it fits into the new global system.

Let me first define the Arab order and how the new world order is bound to be affected and to affect the Arab order. The Arab order has always had two prerequisites: the sovereignty of the state system and the mutual accountability of the Arab states. Sovereignty and independence have been consecrated legally, and the Arab League has constituted the framework that addressed the recognition of the legitimacy of the state system and therefore the sovereign prerogatives inherent in the definition of state.

This state system has now been violated by one Arab country's invading another Arab country and thereby eliminating one state, not as a consequence of its will, but as a consequence of coercion. In that respect, there has been a violation not only of the state system, but also of the concept of Arab unity, the other prerequisite of the Arab order--the accountability of the Arab states towards each other.

The state system was able, at the time of Egypt's defection over the Camp David agreements, to withstand suspending the major Arab country and yet protect the Arab state system because there was no accountability to the Arab nature of that system. NOW, there is Arab unity as well as the state system. How to reconcile these two concepts has been the operational function of the Arab League in its conception and in its mechanics.

The notion of Arab unity remains one of the basic facets of Arab national resurgence. That is why in 1958, when Egypt and Syria united as a result of popular pressure for union, that was an inspiration for generations to come. When separation later took place, there was a tacit recognition of the legitimacy of the Arab state system in spite of the fact that there was the dissolution of a unity that has been achieved. Subsequently, the unity between the two Yemens into one Yemen was a cause of rejoicing among the Arab nation. It meant, for many Arabs, that the Objective of Arab unity remains a constant in Arab national development.

Therefore it becomes important to realize that both the Arab state system and the notion of Arab unity must always reconcile each other. The will to unite must be demonstrated in order to foster the commitment to realize it. Yet, the Arab state system, albeit legitimate, is a vulnerable system because it has been unable to deliver on two specific cases of unfinished business.

First, when the Palestine Liberation Organization acquiesced and recognized Israel in 1988 in Geneva at the United Nations General Assembly, the Arab state system was on the brink of completing

itself and mitigating its vulnerability by means of an independent state of Palestine. For two years, since 1988, that state system has not been completed. Because of its unfinished status, it has remained vulnerable. Hence, there was a commitment to the legitimacy of the state system, but an awareness of its vulnerability inasmuch as it has been incapable of delivering the Palestine state, despite the fact that the Palestinians recognized the right of the state of Israel to exist. It is this vulnerability, this unfinished business, that rendered the state system legal but not sacrosanct.

It is important to realize that the Arab perception of the vulnerability of the Arab state system is due to the fact that the Camp David agreements, and subsequent regional reorganization, spawned vertical dependency on the United States and the West rather than the horizontal inter-Arab relations that should have ensued. The primacy of the vertical relations with the United States in particular and with the West in general overwhelmed horizontal relations and weakened the other prerequisite of legitimacy, namely inter-Arab accountability. This brought about a subsequent development: the consciousness of being Arabs, that there is one nation of individual sovereign states. This means that Arab wealth belongs to Arabs rather than to those geographically in possession of it. Therefore, possession does not mean national ownership. This discrepancy constitutes another level of vulnerability for the legitimate Arab state system.

How can this vulnerability be corrected? The violation of the legitimacy of the Arab state system by Iraq has brought into focus the double vulnerability of the Arab state system. This is why we have a situation in the Arab world today where the people, if you like, are using the Gulf crisis as a historic opportunity to articulate many frustrations that have sapped Arab credibility and effectiveness in the last two decades.

It is crucial that the Arabs not become accustomed to being committed to a crisis. It is important that they have a stimulant to address this crisis, to resolve this crisis. It is here that some of the logistics—of how to bring about a resolution of the conflict become important in order that the Arabs can share in the restructuring of the global order rather than having a new world order dictated to them. Let me, therefore, spell out some of the mechanisms that should evolve in order to bring about a credible Arab contribution to the resolution of the Gulf crisis. This resolution is not an alternative to the international jurisprudence that has developed as a consequence of various United Nations resolutions. Yet, these resolutions should not thwart an Arab input into the resolving of this crisis.

We must start with the notion of peace, not at the expense of legitimacy, but in support of it. This means that we must rule out the war option. We cannot afford, however, an ongoing stalemate because at stake is the fate of the people of Kuwait.

At stake also within the Arab national consciousness is the future of the Iraqi people and Iraqi institutions. So, we are committed in that respect to both the restoration of the Kuwaitis to their homes and the protection of Iraq from any military holocaust.

This appears to be a dichotomous situation, but, for an Arab nationalist, this is the conceptual commitment. I know that it is complex. It is difficult. It seems to be farfetched at this moment. But every effort should be made to bring about this peaceful resolution. In order to do so, it is important to rethink how to bring about a mechanism whereby the Arab states--with the United Nations, perhaps would have a reassuring presence on the Kuwaiti-Iraqi border and on the Saudi-Iraqi border.

In order to be a reassuring presence, this presence has to be temporary, in place as long as it is needed. Equally important, the composition of these forces must be such that the reassurance becomes credible. The composition of the forces, whether on the Saudi border or on the Kuwaiti-Iraqi border must be made in a manner to address the sensitivities of the parties concerned.

Furthermore, there must develop simultaneously with this a mechanism to address and adjudicate the mutual claims and legitimate demands of both parties. It should be within the Arab League, but there are no objections--at least on my part--to having an Arab League, World Court or United Nations adjudicating mechanism.

Is this panacea mechanism possible? How can a climate conducive to peace be created? One: it is essential that there be, among this so-called world coalition, a realization that although Iraq might be isolated, it should not and cannot be ostracized.

Secondly, it is important to encourage countries like the Soviet Union, France, India, Yugoslavia, Canada, and many countries in Latin America, to be emboldened to lower the level of belligerency towards Iraq on the part of the United States and Britain. This will ensure that isolation of Iraq will become an incentive for compliance. Ostracizing Iraq would become an incentive for reckless defiance. It is imperative, therefore, that these countries become more assertive so as to offer an alternative to the collision course which we are on now.

It is a media distortion to describe as pro-Iraq the position such countries as Yemen, Algeria, Jordan, and Tunisia have taken. They positioned themselves to become potential catalysts, in order to allow the confrontation of some Arab states to be reinforced by the persuasion of others. Thus they, along with the international factors, will be able to mitigate the intransigence of Iraq's leadership. It is crucial, diplomatically and politically, to reduce both the levels of belligerence on the part of the United States and Britain, and level of intransigence on the part of the Iraqi leadership. It is this transitional

phase that will prepare the ground for the ultimate simultaneous withdrawal of Iraq from Kuwait and of the American troops from the various Gulf countries.

It is this which would enable us to bring an Arab component into the resolution of the crisis and therefore deserve to contribute to the world order. If subsequently we do not allow regional problems in the various third world countries to become a pretext for intrusion and domination and control of their destinies, then the Gulf crisis will have been--although at great cost--a challenge and even a blessing in disguise.

Furthermore, it is important that this Arab League mechanism be able to address the various problems in the Middle East. Although the United States considers that there is no linkage between the Gulf crisis and the Arab-Israeli conflict--and the United States might be right--to the Arabs they cannot be decoupled. It is important also that the United States, which has been instrumental in energizing the Security Council against Iraq, cannot paralyze the Security Council when it comes to Palestinian rights and Israeli withdrawal from the occupied Arab territories.

Therefore, at this particular juncture in our history we have to come to grips with the fact that there are many people itching for a blitzkrieg. There are people in the United States, unfortunately, who are advocating a war option, who are trying to expedite it, who are claiming that it can be done quickly. But the costs may become unbearable.

Even from a moral, philosophical, or historical point of view, it is important that the peace constituency of the United States become more assertive. Bellicose statements, whether on the part of President Bush in calling Saddam Hussein Hitler, or on the part of the Minister of Information of Iraq asserting that Iraq will not withdraw from Kuwait, this kind of polarization is leading to heightened tensions, rendering the discourse irrational, and enhancing the credibility of the war option.

War would undo many of the benefits that have accrued and would render the new global order an imperial hegemony of the north over the south. It would make us victims rather than beneficiaries of the new world order.

For this reason Arab nationalism today is resurgent. The Arabs are beginning to articulate their frustrations, to ask questions that they have not asked for a long time because of suppression and coercion. They have been disfranchised within their own countries, and now they are candidates for disfranchisement on the global level.

It is because of this that Islamic fundamentalism and Arab nationalism are no longer counterpoised against each other.

Islamic fundamentalism is shedding its Obscurantist dimension and

beginning to realize the validity and relevance of Arab nationalism. So instead of Arab nationalism sheepishly following in the footsteps of Islamic fundamentalism, we are beginning to find that Arab nationalism is rediscovering its spiritual and cultural roots and galvanizing them into what I call the third Arab way.

It is this Arab third way that carries with it the seeds of the institutional corrective within the Arab national framework. It is this Arab third way that seeks to bring about a more equitable distribution of Arab wealth to ameliorate Arab poverty. This Arab third way carries within it the seeds of the catalysts that would restore legitimacy but not at the expense of peace, and would bring about peace but not at the expense of legitimacy.

It is in this context that we must begin to come to grips with the unprecedented dilemma and the great tragedy that we are facing today. We have always had tragedies inflicted from outside. Now a tragedy is being inflicted from within. It is important that we purge ourselves of the hate we are seeing today in the Arab world -- talks, political literature, hate campaigns, like those we witnessed in the earlier period in Lebanon, where we were trying to stimulate Lebanese against Palestinians, Lebanese against Syrians, attributing to Palestinians and to Lebanese all sorts of negative qualities. Then it became Christians against Muslims, then Shiites against Sunnis, Maronites against other Maronites, in a disintegrating process.

That disintegrating process has been reversed by the preponderance of an Arab option, although it has not been healed completely. The Taif agreement has brought about the realization that an Arab option can resolve a critical Arab situation-- Lebanon. That Arab option has not been allowed to operate in the Gulf crisis. That is why we are witnessing a replay of Lebanese factionalism on an Arab scale. You hear characterizations of the Kuwaiti as arrogant, or the Palestinian as ungrateful, or the Yemeni as unconcerned, or the Saudi as rich, etc., etc. These negative attributes destroy from within the Arab identity and the Arab personality and the Arab integration so that we fall into a replay of the Lebanese tragedy on an Arab scale at a moment when the Arab option has been able to help resolve the Lebanese tragedy.

In order that we do not get pulled into that vortex, we must realize that the Kuwaiti problem, the Iraqi invasion, is an immediate priority. But it cannot let us lose sight of the constant priority -- the Zionist program.

Today, while we are consumed -- some of us obsessed -- by the Gulf Crisis, Israel continues not only its usual oppressive measures in the occupied territories but also in flooding the occupied territories with Soviet Jewish immigration as a potential means of bringing about the continuation of its annexationist policies. In order to preempt any possibility of

the emergence of an independent Palestinian state, Palestinian refugees in Lebanon are being attacked daily by they Israeli Air Force. While we are all focusing on the Gulf crisis, Israel is using that lacuna in order to further in a discreet, and sometimes not so discreet, manner its total annexation of the Palestinian territory and hegemony over the Arab world.

Thus the situation requires from the Arabs at this moment, although they are in a state of divisiveness and disarray, that they recapture their sense of identity and unity and realize the state system in its legitimate context, but also that they lessen the vulnerabilities within it. Then we can hope to become an integral part of the world order and not an annex to it. That is the challenge, and we hope that we will prevail.