

July 2, 1963

PAVILION OF THE

HASHEMITE KINGDOM OF

Jordan

GROUNDBREAKING

AT THE NEW YORK WORLD'S FAIR

1964-1965



Excerpts from transcription of remarks made by officials of Jordan and the World's Fair at the groundbreaking ceremonies for the Pavilion of The Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, New York World's Fair, Tuesday, July 2, 1963.

The Pavilion of The Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan will be a one-story structure with a concrete roof covered with gold mosaic. The gently rolling roof will depict Jordan as a land of sun, blue skies, sand, hills, mosques and churches, catacombs and tents. The exterior walls will portray the fourteen Stations of the Cross, and the interior will include bazaar-type exhibits specializing in products indigenous to the region. Mr. Victor Bisharat of Pasadena, California is the architect.



AMBASSADOR RICHARD C. PATTERSON, JR. [Chief of Protocol]: Your Excellency, President Moses, Governor Poletti, ladies and gentlemen. We are gathered here this afternoon for the groundbreaking ceremony for the Pavilion of Jordan which will portray in abstract symbolism the rich religious background of that Kingdom, as well as exhibit products indigenous to Jordan.

The first speaker is a renowned attorney and former Governor of New York. I have the high privilege of giving you Governor Charles Poletti.

GOVERNOR CHARLES POLETTI [Vice President, International Affairs and Exhibits]: Thank you. Ambassador Patterson, Ambassador Rifa'i, Mr. Moses, distinguished officials of Jordan and Kuwait, ladies and gentlemen.

I want to say how happy we are to have with us Ambassador Rifa'i. I've had the opportunity of knowing him, not well, but the occasions that we've had together developed what I believe are bonds of real friendship. I know the great interest that he's taken in achieving this Pavilion of Jordan.

It's not an easy task for a country like Jordan to undertake a pavilion here at the New York World's Fair. We appreciate that it's a sacrifice; it entails a substantial expense. But we hope that Jordan will profit from it by giving the American people a deeper insight and a keener knowledge of the great and rich background of the people of Jordan.

We know of its richness in history, temporal and also

biblical. And we are happy that Jordan is planning to give to the City of New York one of the pillars from Jerash. We look forward to this column being here in this great park for many, many centuries to come, to remind the people of New York of the contributions to modern civilization made by the people of Jordan.

I also want to take this opportunity of commending a member of the International Division, Lionel Harris, for his most ardent and devoted efforts which have brought about this Pavilion of Jordan. I think he's achieved one of the nicest pavilions that we'll have in the International Area of the World's Fair, designed by the genius of a young American architect Victor Bisharat.

We think it's very, very important for the American people to learn more about the Arab countries, and we are delighted to have as a leader in that group the Pavilion of Jordan. It seems to me only appropriate on this occasion, inaugurating the commencement of the work, that as Americans we express our appreciation for the staunch, steadfast and courageous devotion of His Majesty, King Hussein of Jordan to the freedoms in which we all believe. Jordan is lucky to have such a leader, and we wish for him many, many years of happiness and leadership of this fine people. Thank you very much.

AMBASSADOR PATTERSON: Thank you, Governor Poletti. I'd like to present The Honorable Saeed Shammās, Consul General of Kuwait who is here as an honored guest of Jordan. There are two other distinguished gentlemen here that I'd like to present for a

bow. One is Mr. Sami Awad, the First Secretary of the Jordanian Embassy, and Mr. Tuqan, Jordanian Consul in New York. And now I give you, with high pleasure, the president of the New York World's Fair, The Honorable Robert Moses.

MR. ROBERT MOSES: Ambassador Rifa'i, Dick Patterson and friends. I've only one quarrel, if it is a quarrel, with Jordan. I'm one of those funny fellows who likes to work in out-of-the-way places, and I had an ambition way back when Charlie Poletti and I were on the Power Authority of the State. We always talked about Jordan as one of the places where we'd like to operate; and the other was, of course, the Nile. Somehow or other, there didn't seem to be a great demand for us to go to either one of those places to help them out. These are the things that those of us who are on the practical, working side here in the United States have hoped we would be able to do: to help foreign countries, not only with money and loans, but with technical skill, so that we could point to actual achievements — not merely to foreign aid, and not merely to our goodwill and good nature and aspirations, but to actual accomplishments.

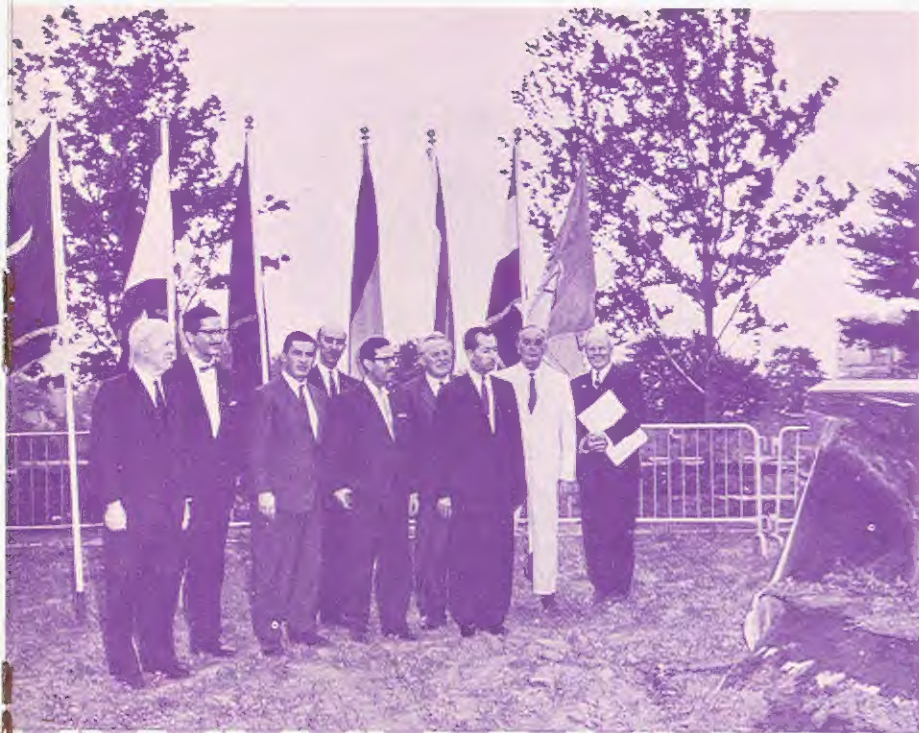
Jordan is a remarkable country, and the Jordanians have a good deal to show here. We want them here, and we're glad they're coming. All that we ask of them now is to get just as busy as they can in finishing their design, starting work — they have, in fact, started work — and get a roof over their heads as soon as possible and then begin to move in their exhibits. I think perhaps we've been spending too little time in recent months on con-

struction as such, and perhaps too little time in figuring out what we can do to help the exhibitors bring in the exhibits. Because the buildings, the façades, the packages, the boxes, however attractive, are not the important thing. The important thing is what you have inside—the amount of imagination that is brought to bear on your exhibits — the things that a country like Jordan wants to emphasize, wants to be known for.

AMBASSADOR PATTERSON: Thank you, President Moses. Our next speaker is a very distinguished diplomat who has received high decorations from his sovereign, as well as from many, many foreign countries. He was Ambassador of Jordan to the United States from 1953 to 1956, and he's also been Ambassador from his country to Great Britain, Egypt, Lebanon, Iran and Pakistan. For the last seven years he has been his country's chief delegate to the United Nations. It is my high privilege to present to you, at this time, His Excellency Abdul Monem Rifa'i, Ambassador to the United Nations from The Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan. Mr. Ambassador.

AMBASSADOR ABDUL MONEM RIFA'I: Ambassador Patterson — President Moses, Governor Poletti, Mr. Harris, ladies and gentlemen. The beautiful and kind words which were said about His Majesty, my King, about my country and about myself, require eloquence to enable me to reciprocate them. It suffices me to thank you wholeheartedly for your very kind and sincere compliments.

We are used, at the United Nations, to read our statements in a written form. Ladies and gentlemen, allow me



At the groundbreaking for the Pavilion of The Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan were: (left to right) Ambassador Richard C. Patterson, Jr., the Fair's Chief of Protocol; The Honorable Saeed Shammās, Chargé d'Affaires of Kuwait; Mr. Wael Tugan, Jordanian Consul in New York; Mr. Victor Bisharat, architect for the pavilion; Mr. Sami Awad, First Secretary of the Embassy of Jordan; Governor Charles Poletti, vice president of International Affairs and Exhibits at the Fair; His Excellency Abdul Monem Rifa'i, Ambassador of Jordan; Mr. Robert Moses, president of the Fair; and Mr. Lionel Harris of the International Division of the Fair.

to read these remarks: On the occasion of its centennial, the City of New York opens its precious soil today to hold, among the pavilions of other nations, that of The Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan at the World's Fair in New York.

Indeed, there could hardly be a center that entertains a wide international scheme of the magnitude of the World's Fair better than the City of New York. For on this island flourishes the greatest international organization in the history of mankind, where 111 nations are permanently represented; and on this island peoples of all races and languages live in one community as good citizens. It is quite natural that, at its 300th anniversary, New York should demonstrate human civilization at large and the progress of man.

If my country, Jordan, enjoys the privilege of joining with other governments in building a pavilion on this spot, it is not because we wish to present to other peoples what we have inherited and what we possess, but rather to show our brethren in humanity what belongs to mankind on the two banks of the Jordan River.

Whether we in April 1964 are going to see the products of this country or that country, the industry of this state or that state, the contribution of this nation or that nation, the treasures of this land or that land, the everlasting fact is that we shall see the achievements of man and his march throughout the ages within the space of his earth and, at present, beyond space.

But more than that, ladies and gentlemen, much more, is the concept which motivated my government to follow



His Excellency, Ambassador Abdul Monem Rifai receiving the official Fair medallion from Mr. Robert Moses. At left is Mr. Wael Tugan, Jordanian Consul in New York.

the procession of the makers of history and the builders of civilization at the New York World's Fair.

We who gaze at eternity, and for whom material life is nothing but a detail in the greater concept of existence, cannot, and must not, be represented in a space which manifests a physical force or a solid power. Our belief in the unity of the universe, the unity of time, and the unity of creation guides us to connect the past with the future in an infinite existence whose space is the Kingdom of Heaven and whose time is eternity. With this understanding of life we identify ourselves in our small pavilion.

My country will not be able to exhibit atomic power, or a special mechanical energy, or an advanced electrical device, or a remarkable invention; but we will be quite able to exhibit that which shall remain when everything else shall vanish. We shall show the love of God and peace on earth. We, who have within our potential people like Jesus Christ and Mohammad the Prophet, must be represented by a scheme that reflects the ideals of our life and the simplicity of our nature. In our pavilion the Ten Commandments shall echo, the birth of Jesus Christ shall shine, and the ascendance of Mohammad shall be reflected. In our pavilion, the oldest Torah, the Church of the Nativity, and the Mosque of the Dome of the Rock shall stand, symbols of righteousness, tolerance, peace and brotherhood.

It is not easy for a country which lives in the light of such high and moral values and supreme ideas to illustrate its spiritual existence in terms of buildings and designs.

It was therefore to our great satisfaction that a true son of Jordan whom you claim as American and we both claim equally, Mr. Victor Bisharat, came to be the designer and the architect of our pavilion.

We wanted the pavilion, in its modest appearance, to reflect the true face of a country which has limited physical capacities, and a people who do their utmost to live a decent, honorable and progressive life with what nature has provided them in water, resources and mineral wealth. And, on its highest level, we wanted our pavilion to rise to the level of a native land which was the shining spot of the three Divine Religions and the field in which the East met the West in its hills, and on its shores washed by the waves of the Mediterranean. The artist had to dig deep in his art to reach the depth of this concept.

We break the ground today with full devotion to the cause which prompted us to participate in the World's Fair of New York, and we therefore dedicate our pavilion to peace and brotherhood among all nations.

We view the World's Fair with this wide approach; and in the service of this wide approach we shall cooperate with you, you who have conceived the idea of establishing the Fair and who brought it into reality. To you all, my country and I extend our greetings and compliments. They are extended to every individual who works in the area of the Fair, indoors and outdoors, in summer and in winter, with unswerving loyalty. And to join with you in the construction of the great Fair, I have the honor to break the ground for the Pavilion of The Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan. Thank you.

PAVILION OF THE HASHEMITE KINGDOM OF JORDAN

HIS EXCELLENCY ABDUL MONEM RIFA'I, Ambassador of The Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan to the U. N.

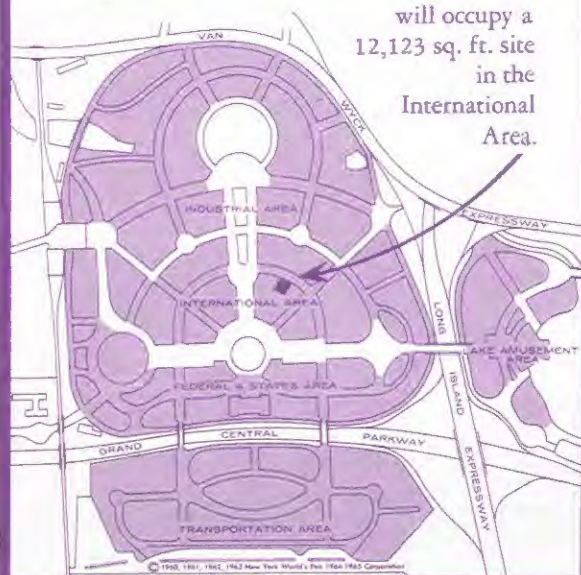
MR. SAMI AWAD, First Secretary, Permanent Mission of The Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan to the U. N.

MR. VICTOR BISHARAT, A.I.A., Architect of the Pavilion of The Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan

MR. JAMES A. EVANS, New York Architect for the Pavilion of The Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan

THE PAVILION OF THE HASHEMITE KINGDOM OF JORDAN

will occupy a
12,123 sq. ft. site
in the
International
Area.



Exhibitors: presented by  United States Seal
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