TOM FOLEY

Israel's War:
Six Days and
Two Years

"War is never an isolated act. . . .
War is a continuation of policy by
other means. . . . The political design
is the object, while war is the means,
and the means can never be thought of
apart from the object."
KARL VON CLAUSEWITZ, On War.

THE MIDDLE EAST war of June 5-10, 1967, can be seen in iso-
lation, or it can be seen as a continuation of a political design,
whose pattern is woven into the context of world political relation-
ships. Certainly, it is hard to conceive of the Middle East in isolation
from the rest of the world. It is the center, the hub of three continents,
and the midway point between them. It is the area where more than
65 per cent of the world's proven petroleum resources lie, 70 per cent
of them owned by the United States, which has over $3 billion invested
in them. It is an area where the Arab national-liberation movement
could threaten those investments and also threaten US dominance in
Asia, Africa, and Western Europe. The Middle East is the source of
Western Europe's oil supply, and modern industry and armies run
on oil.

The idea, then, that the 1967 Mideast war was a momentary aber-
ration, having no connection with wars in Southeast Asia, southern
and Western Africa, wars of national liberation, and sharpening con-
flict between the socialist camp and imperialism, seems unbelievable.
It was no "isolated act," but rather a "continuation of policy by other
means."

Two years have passed since the Israeli army inflicted a stunning
military defeat on the armies of Syria, Jordan, Lebanon, Iraq, and
Algeria. But this Israeli victory over the past two years has slowly

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evaporated. Israeli soldiers still remain on territories conquered from the Arabs, from Syria's Golan Heights to the north all the way down to the east bank of the Suez Canal to the south.

Israel lost slightly under 700 men killed in the 1967 war. The number of Israelis killed in the past two years since then is slowly, day-by-day, inching up toward that wartime figure. The armies of the Arab states, so badly smashed up in 1967, have been built up to the point where they once again have a defensive capacity. The economic losses caused by the war have been made up to a great extent. The progressive Arab governments in Syria and the United Arab Republic have not fallen.

The Israelis still hold Syrian territories containing the headwaters of the Jordan River. They still block the opening of the Suez Canal and control all of Sinai, with its producing oil fields at El Morgan, on the west coast.

But most important of all, Israeli military occupation extends over 300,000 Arabs in the Gaza Strip and 600,000 Arabs in the West Bank area of the old British mandate of Palestine, annexed to Jordan in 1951, who were refugees from the Palestine civil war of 1947 and the Arab-Israeli war of 1948-49. These, together with the other Arabs under Israeli occupation, brought the total up to 1.5 million Arabs— compared to 2.4 million Jewish Israelis.

The conquests of the 1967 war meant that the Jewish population of territory under Israeli control dropped from 89 to 55 per cent. Before 1967, the 270,000 Arabs in Israel formed 11 per cent of the total population and were in no position to do anything except lead quiet lives. Today, the situation is totally different.

Nearly 70 per cent of Israel, mainly the area south of Beersheba, is to all intent uninhabited. Israel's pre-1967 population of Jews was 75 per cent urban, closely concentrated in the north, in the cities of Tel Aviv-Jaffa, Haifa, Ramat Gan, and the Israeli-held sector of Jerusalem. Nearly a third of the total population lived in Tel Aviv-Jaffa alone.

Arab guerilla movements existed before 1967, but they were ineffectual in both a political and military sense. They operated to a great extent in sparsely-settled areas, and they had no mass base to create a resistance movement within Israel.

Today, the Israeli population has 26,000 square miles of additional territory to take care of, inhabited by 1.5 million Arabs who are implacably opposed to Israel and always have been. The mass base of resistance is there, in the occupied territories, among the Arabs who live there, and whatever strength the various Arab guerilla organiza-

tions have today, it is derived from that mass base. If it ceased to exist, the guerillas would go right back to their pre-1967 state of helplessness and ineffectuality.

The point should be clear: as long as Israel remains in the occupied Arab territories, Arab resistance will intensify until it reaches the level which typified Algeria in 1954-62. And the French nation outnumbered the Algerian Arabs four or five to one.

ISRAEL could end the Arab resistance overnight if it pulled out of the occupied territories, as the UN resolution of November 22, 1967, demanded. At the same time, it would remove the greatest single threat to its internal security it has ever faced. And it would prepare the basis for a lasting peace with all the Arab states.

President Gamal Abdel Nasser, of the United Arab Republic, in a February 10, 1969 interview with *Newsweek* magazine, has given what has emerged as a plan acceptable to all the Arab states for restoring peace to the Middle East. Nasser said that in return for an Israeli withdrawal, the combined Arab states would offer: "1) a declaration of non-belligerence; 2) the recognition of the right of each country to live in peace; 3) the territorial integrity of all countries in the Middle East, including Israel, in recognized and secure borders; 4) freedom of navigation on international waterways; 5) a just solution to the Palestinian refugee problem."

Essentially, this plan of Nasser's is a repeat of the UN's November 22, 1967 resolution. Nasser recently has added to it the statement that it is not a "package deal." The various proposals could be put into effect separately. The Arab demand for an Israeli withdrawal would not mean an immediate pull-back to the pre-June boundaries, but could be in stages, while both sides verified the implementation of the agreements. When Nasser was asked whether he would sit down with the Israelis after they began their withdrawal, his reply was affirmative.

The UAR President said: "I can tell you that we sat down with the Israelis after the 1948 war under the armistice agreement until the 1956 war, and that we are prepared to do so again. We had joint committees with United Nations observers and it was Israel who refused to continue this procedure after 1956."

But the Israeli government's position has not changed over the past two years. Israel's political leadership continues to demand "direct talks" with the Arab states while it occupies their territory and claims to have defeated them. It has not given any indication of what such talks might be about, other than a hint that the Arabs would be told to

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UAR-SOVIET STATEMENT

FOLLOWING meetings in Cairo June 10 to 13, 1969, between Soviet Minister of Foreign Affairs Andrey Gromyko and United Arab Republic President Gamal Abdel Nasser and UAR Foreign Affairs Minister M. Riad, a joint statement was issued.

The statement reported that discussion had been held "on the further development of the friendly bilateral relations between the Soviet Union and the United Arab Republic," and the exchange of opinions "on the dangerous situation . . . that has developed as the result of Israeli aggression against the Arab states of June 5, 1967 and the policy of territorial expansion" by the Israeli regime since then which is "preventing the establishment of peace in the Middle East."

The statement added: The USSR and the UAR "believe that Israel's refusal to fulfill the Security Council's resolution of November 22, 1967, and its continued occupation of the three Arab states confirm its expansionist policy, are a continuation of the aggression against the sovereignty and integrity of these states and a violation of the basic princeples of the United Nations charter. . .

"The Soviet Union and the United Arab Republic again state that the search for a peaceful settlement in the Middle East demands that the Security Council resolution of November 22, 1967, be fulfilled in all its parts and provisions and that Israel withdraw its troops. . ."

The statement reaffirmed the Soviet Union's "full support for the just struggle of the United Arab Republic and other Arab states to overcome the aftermath of the aggression" and stressed the UAR's oft-stated "acceptance of the Security Council's resolution and its readiness to fulfill it . . ."

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recognize Israel. Evidently there would be some hard bargaining about where Israel's permanent frontiers lie. Until these direct talks are held, the Israeli government refuses to take one step toward peace.

Israeli Premier Golda Meir, in an April 27, 1969 interview with the *New York Times,* said she did not expect Israel to give back the occupied Arab territories. She said the Jordanian part of Jerusalem was now "absolutely" part of Israel. These two statements mean that Israel rejects both the UN resolution of November 22, 1967, and the UN resolution of June 14, 1967 reaffirming the international status of Jerusalem.

Israeli officials dismissed as "nothing new" and as "propaganda" both Nasser's proposals and the near-identical proposals offered by King Hussein of Jordan on April 10, 1969.

Israel's government has shown that it does not consider the mission of UN special envoy Gunnar Jarring, Swedish Ambassador to the Soviet Union, to be at all useful. Jarring toured the Middle East,

sounding out various statesmen on where they might agree privately on what they could not acknowledge publicly. UN Secretary-General U Thant has "categorically" denied that the Jarring mission is over, even temporarily. The Secretary-General's unusually forceful denial was directed at the English-language Israeli newspaper *Jerusalem Post,* which had reported that Jarring had quit. The *Jerusalem Post* story was almost instantaneously picked up by US news media and spread all over the world before the story could be denied.

An Israeli cabinet decision places the Israeli government in complete opposition to Four-Power talks on the Middle East now going on in New York among the UN ambassadors of the United States, the Soviet Union, Britain, and France. Israel's official position is that it will not accept any solution "imposed" by outside powers. UN Ambassador for Israel Yosef Tekoah stated that the Four-Power talks actually blocked peace possibilities by encouraging the Arabs to resort to force.

The Four-Power talks are secret, but it is known that among the questions discussed in them is the boundary question: one proposal would set up demilitarized zones all along Israel's borders, so at no point would the Israelis and Arabs have contact with each other. The discussions were continuing over how wide the DMZ should be, according to sources close to the talks.

WHILE THE Israeli government has rejected every proposal for a negotiated settlement in the Middle East, its particular fury seems to be reserved for the Soviet Union. An outside observer might be forgiven for thinking that Israel is in a state of permanent military and diplomatic war with the USSR, if the intemperate and often insulting language used by Israeli officials to attack the Soviet Union were his only means of judging the situation.

When Soviet Premier Alexey Kosygin finished speaking at the emergency session of the UN General Assembly on June 19, 1967, Israeli Foreign Minister Abba Eban took the floor to denounce Kosygin, the Soviet Union, and all their works. The South African-born Israeli diplomat practically accused the Soviet Union of goading the Arabs into starting the 1967 war.

Eban was interviewed recently by the West German magazine, *Der Spiegel,* and his comments showed that his position has remained the same for the last two years. Eban said: "I cannot call the Soviet proposals peace proposals because the truth is they are intended to prevent peace." Eban said that the USSR's peace plans could not even serve as a basis for discussion: "The very fact that the proposals

emanate from Moscow makes them unacceptable to us from the outset."

This incredible anti-Sovietism was also reflected in Mrs. Meir's statement in her April 27 interview this year when she said: "I think that Russia is at least as responsible as the Arabs in the '67 war—maybe more so."

There are apparently three main points in the Israeli leadership's position: 1) refusal to get out of the occupied territories, in effect their practical annexation; 2) refusal to accept any negotiated solution, i.e., outright rejection of peace with the Arabs; 3) sharply increased and almost crusading anti-Sovietism.

If this Israeli position is merely denounced from a moralistic point of view, it cannot be understood. The Israeli ruling group is not being simply willful or stubborn because it enjoys the hostility of nearly the entire world.

THE ISRAELI leadership is caught up in a trap its own decisions prepared for it over the years. A fatalist would use the Arabic term "kismet," meaning the "share" or "portion" already alloted to someone by Fate, to describe this situation. It involves two major problems: the problem of Palestinian Arabs and the problem of the Arab guerillas.

Before 1918, there was no "Palestine." The area which came to be known as Palestine under the British mandate, 1918-48, under Turkish rule was divided up into the special administrative area known as the Sanjaq of Jerusalem (Jerusalem and the Negev area) and the Vilayet, or Province of Beirut (present-day northern Israel and Lebanon). The entire area east of the Jordan river was part of the Province of Syria.

The growth in consciousness of a separate Palestinian nationality came about during the years of British rule, as part of the Arab struggle to free themselves from foreign domination.

Britain retained control over Palestine for 30 years because it was able to play off Arab against Jew. By 1947, it was able to claim with some objective truth that the two communities could not live together, having done everything possible to pit them against each other.

The UN Partition Plan for Palestine of November 29, 1947 just barely might have had a chance. But Britain sabotaged every effort to implement it. In the meantime, civil war broke out in Palestine and the British did nothing to stop it, if they did not actually encourage it.

In this civil war the Arabs, that is, the poor Arab peasants of Palestine, did not stand a chance. Those of their leaders who could manage

to get out of the country abandoned them. The peasants were unarmed. Their sources of information about what was going on were few and unreliable. At the same time, as Frank Gervasi wrote on his *To Whom Palestine?* (1946), a pro-Zionist account, the Zionists had a well-trained if not well-equipped army of perhaps 60,000, which was more than a match for all the Arabs put together. Gervasi's statements are interesting because in his *The Case for Israel* (1967), he apparently fogot all he had written in his earlier book and triedto make out that the Zionists were the underdogs in 1947-48.

Today there is general agreement that of the nearly 800,000 Arabs who became refugees in the Palestine civil war and later Arab-Israeli war of 1948-49, some left voluntarily but for the most part they were driven out or expelled as a conscious act of Israeli state policy. Both Norman Bentwich and Nadav Safran, two pro-Israeli authors who are highly respected, say as much in their books *Israel* (1965) and *From War to War* (1969).

In view of the fact that this is a much-disputed point, the statements of Erskine B. Childers, who examined the complete BBC monitoring records of all Mideast radio broadcasts in 1948 should be quoted here: "There was not a single order, or appeal, or suggestion about evacuation from Palestine from any Arab radio station, inside or outside Palestine, in 1948. There is repeated monitored record of Arab appeals, even flat orders, to the civilians of Palestine to stay put."

The Arab refugees who were driven out of Israeli-held areas were forced to live on UN handouts for the next 20 years: 1500 calories a day of food and $38 a year (seven and a half cents a day). Israel even at that could not have afforded these refugees: the original partition plan gave the Zionists a "Jewish state" with a population of 500,000 Jews and 497,000 Arabs. Since the Arabs had a birth rate double that of the Jews, it seems obvious why so many were finally driven out of Israeli territory. It was a cold, calculated act of political inhumanity which maintained the "pure Zionist" aspect of the new Israel and incidentally the stranglehold of its political leaders on the Israeli people.

By the same token, it can be seen why the Israeli leadership persisted in refusing to carry out the UN resolution of December 11, 1948, which stated: "The refugees wishing to return to their homes and live at peace with their neighbors should be permitted to do so at the earliest practicable date, and that compensation should be paid for the property of those choosing not to return . . . "

If the 800,000 Arabs had been allowed to return, they would have had to be accommodated in the Israeli political and economic system

and might have disrupted the control of the Israeli ruling group. By not allowing the refugees to return, there were other advantages: more than two million acres of Arab land, much of it orchards, and 400 Arab villages. By 1953, then, matters had hardened; out of 370 "new" Israeli settlements, 350 were in these "old" Arab villages and areas.

But by carrying out this policy, the Israeli leadership assured the new state of the existence of groups of people permanently hostile to Israel located all around and just over the Israeli borders. It made certain that the neighboring Arab states would have in their midst constant living proof of the Israelis' inhumanity in war. And it made practically inevitable constant hostilities on the borders between the Israelis, the refugees, and the Arab states.

THE policy toward the refugees implied that Israel had to be as strong or stronger militarily than all the Arab states put together for years into the future. But in 1951-52, Israel was sliding into an economic depression, since it was apparent that it was not a viable economic entity in its own right. How was Israel to finance a military program of such dimensions?

The answer even today is not entirely known, but it is known that due to a lot of US arm-twisting, West Germany agreed to pay to Israel in reparations for Nazi crimes against Europe's Jewish population $882 million in capital goods (ships, machine-tools, etc.) over the period 1953-66.

West Germany also agreed to facilitate the payment of individual reparations to Israeli citizens of $1 billion. Through West Germany, Israeli obtained US military equipment. Israel sent its officers to West Germany to be trained, sold West Germany arms, and in turn received arms from the West Germans. It was a very cozy arrangement and it kept Israel above water at least until 1966.

Israel also received from the United States, in private and government aid, nearly $3 billion, more than all the Arab states put together and working out at about $1500 for every Israeli man, woman and child.

Still, military equipment and aid was something of a problem for the Israeli leadership until 1954. In that year, Israel began to develop secret and extensive ties with the French fascist military. Col. Benjamin Kagan, of the Israeli air force, in *The Secret Battle for Israel*, writes: "The French Right saw in us a natural ally in its fight against the policy of conciliation in North Africa and was therefore prepared to arm us. . . . The only people we could really consider our

friends were the generals" who with the Rightist politicians believed "that it was in Cairo that France faced her true enemy, the enemy of *Algerie Francaise.*"

By its policy toward the refugees, then, Israel was not only drawn into alliance on the side of the United States, West Germany, France, and later Britain, but also into opposition with the entire Arab national liberation movement, including the heroic people of Algeria who were battling French fascists and the Egyptian people who were recovering their national property, the Suez Canal, from the British and French capitalists who claimed to own it.

This refugee policy also led to the Israeli doctrine of "massive retaliation," i.e., sheer terrorism, against the Arabs. In the first of the raids the regular Israeli armed forces carried out under this policy, planned by then-Major Moshe Dayan, the Israelis attacked the Jordanian village of Qibya, in 1953, blowing up the houses of the village while keeping the villagers inside pinned down by machine-gun fire. Fifty-three Arabs, most of them women and children, were killed in this raid. It was only the first of a long series which caused Israel to be condemned in the UN 25 times, and led to constant armed hostilities on Israel's borders.

Israel's refugee policy was even more of a disaster in strictly political terms. Israel's admission to the United Nations on May 11, 1949 was gained only when the UN General Assembly went on record "recalling its resolutions of 29 November 1947 and 11 December 1948" (on repatriation and compensation of refugees). The fact that Israel ignored these strong suggestions once admitted to membership did not make its standing in the UN any stronger.

More importantly, perhaps, when the Arab states, were told by UN resolutions to open up the Suez Canal to Israeli traffic or to do other things, they always refused to do anything, asserting that since Israel had never shown any intention of acting on the December 11, 1948 refugee resolution, they were under no obligation to act until Israel fulfilled its duties as a member of the UN. However this is interpreted, there are grounds for asserting that human rights take precedence over shipping rights.

BY 1966, Israel found itself in deep trouble. Arab hostility continued, while progressive Arab regimes in Syria and the United Arab Republic were growing economically and militarily stronger than ever before. West German reparations were coming to an end. Immigration to Israel that year was only 12,000, while emigration was 11,000, not enough to keep alive those light industries which supplied immigrants

with tools, furniture, etc. Unemployment in one year jumped from three to ten per cent. The balance of payments gap for Israel was $500 million in 1966 and 17 per cent of its total national income was devoted to paying off the interest charges on debts and loans contracted earlier.

Moreover, France was seeking to recover its lost prestige in the Arab world now that the Algerian war was over and stood in little need of Israel as an ally. Britain was getting ready to withdraw "east of Suez" and was not interested in Israel either.

Only the United States and West Germany remained. The former was paying King Hussein of Jordan $45 million a year in direct budget subsidies to keep the Palestinian refugees quiet and had moved into Britain's old place in Jordan. The United States was also violently anti-Soviet and was willing to do practically anything to undermine the Arab regimes in Syria and the UAR. The CIA had already conducted several coup attempts against Syria, using in one Col. Salim Hatum, a former Syrian army officer who fled into Jordan after his plots failed.

Through the hard work of the Syrian and Egyptian peoples and the unselfish aid of the Soviet Union, not only a new industrial sector of the economies of these two Arab states was coming into being, but also a new social force — the industrial working class. It was, in fact, only a question of time until this class would be dominant.

The old ruling groups of Syria and Eypt were extremely antagonistic to these developments — not only to the workers and peasants of their own countries, but also to the Soviet Union for helping to strengthen the progressive and socialist forces.

It is unnecessary to go into the details of the 1967 war to point out that there was a certain identity of interests among the United States and its agencies like the CIA, the Israeli leadership, and the Arab social strata hostile to the progressive Arab regimes in Syria and the UAR. During the fighting in Syria in 1967, CIA agent Col. Hatum was found in the combat zone with a list of cabinet ministers for the new government he intended to set up once the Israelis had smashed the Syrian armed forces. His friends had assured him that the Syrian government would fall within the week. Who these "friends" were we are not told. But they told Col. Hatum that they would not fail in Syria as they had in the Cuban Bay of Pigs invasion.

Similarly, in the UAR, a group of reactionary army and civil officers intended to use the smashing military defeat inflicted on UAR forces by Israel to unseat Nasser and establish a new government which would have been anti-Soviet and based on the fanatical Muslim

Brotherhood. Ever since Nasser's "Arab socialist" decrees of 1961, which nationalized more than $1 billion in property from the Egyptian bourgeoisie and limited landholdings to 100 acres, the businessmen, landowners, and reactionary army officers had been trying to "get" Nasser and now they thought they had him.

The United States was gleeful over the 1967 war, mainly because it believed that the Soviet Union's close ties with progressive Arab states would be ruptured forever, these states would go over to the US side, and the USSR would be "pushed out" of the Mideast.

And the Israelis? They gained the sources of the Jordan River, in Syria, to use as they saw fit in developing southern Israel by pipelined water to hold a substantially larger population. The fervent (and nonsensical) appeal to the world to save Israel resulted in a huge influx of money which cancelled out the balance of payments gap of $500 million and gave a good deal more besides. They gained 26,000 square miles of additional territory for their use, including the UAR oil fields and the best-watered part of Jordan (which gets in its northeast section 30 inches of rainfall a year compared to 2 inches in the Israeli Negev). They got a part of the Suez Canal.

But most of all, they now had total military and police control of the troublesome Arab refugees, with whom they could do as they pleased, as most military conquerers usually do. At the same time they assumed this control, they canceled out the need to take these people back into Israel — they were, after all, "inside Israel" now, but not as rightful citizens returning to claim a share in Israeli politics and economic life. Rather, they formed a kind of Arab "Bantustan" on the South African model, where the original inhabitants of the land are granted the privilege of living on a small part of it.

NOW IT can be seen why today, in spite of all warnings, the Israeli leadership persists in staying in the occupied territories. And its narrowed sources of outside support commit it to a violently anti-Soviet posture in order to insure that the United States and West Germany do not tire of supporting it. It is hard to imagine a more anti-national policy on the part of the Israeli ruling group, a policy that at the whim of the American and West German monopolists could cut Israel loose from all support.

Yet, at the same time, Israel has a better chance now to take advantage of the peace proposals of the Arab states if it decides to do justice to the oppressed Palestinian Arabs and to admit them to Israel with full rights as citizens, and if it withdraws from the occupied Arab territories. This would certainly not be an easy pro-

cess but it would be easier than unending war which could only result in Israel's annihilation. And it would end more than 20 years of bitter conflict with the Arabs. Israel could cease being an armed camp and a tool of US imperialism and become a vital factor in the life of a Middle East at peace.

Soviet Premier Alexey Kosygin spoke to the special emergency session of the UN General Assembly on June 19, 1967, and said: "As long as the Israeli troops continue to occupy the seized territories . . . a military conflict can flare up at any minute with new intensity."

"One may ask," Kosygin said, "why is the Soviet Union so resolutely opposing Israel? The Soviet Union is not against Israel—it is against the aggressive policy pursued by the ruling circles of that State. . . . the very recent aggressive war unleashed by Israel against the Arab countries is a direct continuation of the policy which the extremist ruling circles in Israel kept imposing on their State throughout the lifetime of its existence."

The two years since the Soviet Premier's statement have confirmed his words and underlined them. The 1967 war was a continuation of Israeli policy in every respect, not an "isolated act," and in that sense Kosygin, Clausewitz, and the facts of history agree. But the political design of Israeli policy need not—and must not—continue to be woven with the same pattern, by the same "establishment."

SOVIET CREDITS TO MIDDLE EAST

ABOUT HALF OF ALL SOVIET CREDITS to developing countries are going to the countries of the Middle East. The USSR is now rendering economic and technical assistance to Middle East countries in the construction of over 300 industrial enterprises and other projects. A total of 170 projects have already been completed and gone into operation.

Soviet credits cover a large proportion of the capital investments necessary for the complete construction of each of these projects. As is usual in the case of Soviet credits, these are being redeemed by deliveries of staple exports to the USSR. Some countries are delivering commodities made at enterprises built with Soviet assistance.

The USSR is cooperating with countries of the Middle East in the development of important branches of industry, power engineering, agriculture and transport. In this way it is helping to meet the desire of developing countries to build up their own industries as an indispensable condition for their further development.

Soviet News, London, May 27, 1969