

Basic Policy of the Government Is the Root of Evil!

By Meir Vilner

The following article by Meir Vilner, General Secretary of the Communist Party of Israel, is excerpted from a speech delivered to the Central Committee of the CPI on May 30, 1985.

What is the basis of the policy of the Alignment (Labor)-Likud government? The war minister, Yitzhak Rabin, in an interview with the *Sunday Times* on May 26, 1985, which was published in the Israeli press on the next day, 5/27/85, defined the basis as follows: "A consensus exists between the Labor Party and the Likud, according to which Israel will never consent to the establishment of a Palestinian state. Such a state will constitute a catastrophe, a time bomb."

And further:

"To talk to Arafat means to accept the principle of an independent Palestinian state between Israel and Jordan, and we will not reconcile ourselves with that under any circumstance at all. I will not hold any talks with the PLO."

Rabin proposed to establish a joint Jordanian-Palestinian state, but as he says, "Every peace agreement must be signed between Jordan and Israel."

And finally:

"Such a Jordanian-Palestinian state is liable to include considerable parts of the West Bank and the Gaza Strip. However, Israel persists in holding a defense line along the river Jordan."

In other words — in the military respect Israel will continue ruling over the whole area of the West Bank.

This consensus between the Likud and the Alignment against the establishment of a Palestinian state, against the withdrawal from all the territories which Israel has occupied since 1967 is what has brought into existence the Alignment-Likud government. Labor and Likud fight amongst themselves but in the end they become reconciled. It is impossible to explain the existence of the government of Peres and Shamir as clinging to their seats. Indeed, this motivation also exists but it is secondary to their having a similar attitude and position on basic political questions.

The consensus in policy of the Alignment and the Likud will be still better understood if we quote the words of the present Prime Minister, Shimon Peres, on the matter of an international conference for the establishment of peace in the Middle East. His argument
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against such a conference, which is proposed by the Soviet Union and the UN, is the question of the participation of the Soviet Union. We oppose, he said, the participation of the Soviet Union because it supports the "extremist Arab positions," and demands of Israel to withdraw from all the territories occupied in the June 1967 war. He does not even say, as Mapam leaders try to explain, that Israel, or at least the Alignment, does not agree to an international conference with the participation of the Soviet Union because there are no diplomatic relations between it and Israel; and that if diplomatic relations were resumed, they would consent to an international conference with Soviet participation. It may be assumed that if the Israeli government would be prepared to go to an international conference under the auspices of the UN, with the participation of the Soviet Union and the United States, and also the PLO, as the sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian Arab people, and all the sides involved in the conflict — that this would be a step forward in the matter of resumption of diplomatic relations. Such an agreement on the part of Israel under today's conditions would mean a change in Israeli policy.

At the 1977 Geneva Conference on the Middle East, which took place under the aegis of the United Nations, the Soviet Union and the United States served as co-chairmen. Israel participated at the conference together with the Soviet Union, although the Soviet Union had the same political position which it has today, and despite the absence of diplomatic relations at that time, too, between the Soviet Union and Israel — relations which had been severed consequent upon the Israeli aggression in June 1967. It must be remembered that at the Geneva conference not all the sides involved in the Middle East conflict took part. From among the Middle East states only Israel, Jordan and Egypt participated. There were no Palestinian representatives nor any representative of Syria and other Arab states. Therefore if Israel would consent to an international conference with the composition which is proposed today, and not only the same composition as at the 1977 Geneva Conference, that is to a conference with Palestinian representatives on an equal basis with the other delegations, then this too would signify a change in Israeli policy.

Indeed, it must be remembered that the plan of the Geneva Conference was to widen the scope of participation in the conference. On October 1, 1977 the foreign ministers of the Soviet Union and the US, Gromyko and Vance, signed an agreement, in accordance with which the Geneva Conference should be assem-

bled in December of that year, with the participation of a united Arab delegation, in which the PLO would have been represented on an equal basis. This was a compromise in order to go on with a genuine peace process. However, as is known, the US withdrew from the agreement. Begin and Sadat rejoiced and had even demanded this retreat. This torpedoing of the Geneva Conference was the beginning of the Camp David plot against a comprehensive, just and stable peace, against the Palestinian people and its right to self-determination and an independent state. The American retreat from the signed agreement with the Soviet Union was a link in the process of the United States generally abandoning the policy of detente in international relations.

Let us examine the significance of Shimon Peres' argument for his opposition to the participation of the Soviet Union in the solution of the Middle East conflict: that is, the position of the Soviet Union in relation to the essence of a solution. Peres' position is really absurd. The United States holds a position which is opposed to the position of the Soviet Union. The U.S. is opposed to the establishment of a Palestinian state alongside the State of Israel. It follows, therefore, that while the Soviet Union does not accept the position of the United States and Israel on the issue of the Middle East conflict, it has no right to participate in its solution. However, no one demands of the U.S. or Israel to accept beforehand the position of the Soviet Union as a condition for the convocation of the international conference.

The truth is that the U.S. and Israel are not interested at all in a real, just and comprehensive and stable solution of the Israeli-Arab conflict. They are interested in leaving our region in the nature of a powder keg. This is part of the global policy of American imperialism, which has become especially conspicuous in the days of the Reagan administration.

There is yet another important aspect with regard to the international conference. There are some who try deceitfully to obscure the issue. These persons also speak about an international conference, but mean by these words something different at all. This is true, for example, of some of the leaders of the Israeli "Progressive List." They support the Arafat-Hussein accords and what is called the "Mubarak initiative," that is to say the setting up of a joint Jordanian-Palestinian delegation (in which the Palestinians selected for that purpose must be appointed with the agreement of the U.S.A. and Israel.) At Camp David, too, Carter, Sadat and Begin had concluded among themselves all the matters concerning the Middle East. They then cyn-

ically invited the Soviet Union to set its signatures to their already determined conclusions. Of course the Soviet Union refused to sign an agreement that does not recognize the right to self-determination of the Palestinian people and its representative — the PLO. Reality has proven that this agreement had been a preparation for the Lebanese war and the realization of the American intention to build up an Israeli-Arab military bloc under American control, against the national liberation movements, the independent states and against the Soviet Union. Now the Americans attempt, with the help of Hussein, Mubarak and Peres to realize their plan in a similar way. After concluding the deal among themselves as a version number 2 of Camp David, they promise "graciously" to invite the Soviet Union to sign what will have been concocted by them. They will even term this an "international conference." This is deceit and throwing sand into the eyes.

This matter must be clearly explained to the public. One must explain the essential difference between an international conference under the auspices of the UN, with the participation of the Soviet Union and U.S.A. and all the involved sides, including the PLO and Israel on one hand; and on the other hand a new American plot which would only complicate the situation in the Middle East, as the Camp David deal had done.

On December 4, 1984 the General Assembly of the U.N. renewed the decision of December 1983, which calls for the convocation of a peace conference for the Middle East under the auspices of the U.N. In Israel activity was unfolded, mobilizing public opinion to support such a convocation as the only way to establish a comprehensive, just and stable peace in our region. But this activity is still too narrow. Our Communist Party and the Democratic Front for Peace and Equality (DFPE), together with other peace loving forces must find the suitable forms for mobilizing the widest possible public opinion for supporting an international conference and against the policy of undermining the peace effort by the Israeli government, Arab reaction and the U.S. administration. Whoever opposes an international conference with the participation of the Soviet Union and the central factor in the conflict — together with Israel the representatives of the Palestinian Arab people, the PLO — acts against peace. The alternative to an international conference under U.N. auspices and to a joint solution is the continuation of wars in our region.

ABOUT THE SITUATION WITHIN THE PLO!

The situation within the PLO is extremely diffi-

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cult. The divergencies of views are sharp. The restitution of unity on the basis of a correct political plan, on an anti-imperialist basis and the assurance of Palestinian independence, is the interest not only of the Palestinian people, but of every one interested in advancing the cause of peace in the Middle East.

In Damascus, a committee for Palestinian National Salvation has been set up, including the dissidents of Fat'h-A-Saika, the organization of Ahmed Jibril and others. The Committee also includes the Popular Front headed by George Habash. This organization is also a component in the Democratic Alliance, together with the Palestinian Communist Party, the Democratic Front headed by Na'if Hawatmeh and the Front for the Liberation of Palestine. The supporters of Arafat agreed to discuss with the Alliance the introduction of corrections in the Aman agreement between Arafat and Hussein. The Palestinian Communist Party, the Democratic Front and also others replied to this that it is altogether impossible to discuss matters on the basis of the Aman agreement; that it is impossible to "correct" it, and that it must be cancelled.

The Aman agreement expresses a deeper development. We have here before us a class phenomena. The big Palestinian capitalists have become integrated into the economy of the pro-imperialist Arab countries, and the Palestinian national cause is not close to their hearts — and to their business affairs. These circles influence a part of the Fatah leadership. Such circles are also in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip and they sound the defeatist opinions and say that "one must save what can be saved; otherwise we will lose everything. . . ."

Very damagingly, the struggle between the supporters of the Fat'h and the supporters of the other organizations has very much sharpened also in the occupied territories, consequent upon the Arafat-Hussein accords. The situation in the occupied territories is a reflection of the general situation in the PLO today.

An objective evaluation must negate all the defeatist attitudes. In our period the cause of the Palestinian Arab people is firmer than in any other historical period. Never before have the national rights of the Palestinian Arab people been recognized more by the international community than today. The PLO has been recognized as the sole representative of the Palestinian Arab people by the U.N. The Soviet Union and all the socialist countries put their whole weight on the scales in order to bring about the establishment of a comprehensive, just and durable peace in the Middle East, one of the foundations of which is the establishment of an

independent Palestinian state alongside Israel. The decisive majority of states of the world support this.

The experience of the struggles of the national liberation movements after the Second World War proves that in spite of the fact that there may be along with periods of high tide also periods of ebb; and that in the end they emerge victorious and achieve their just aims. There is no doubt but that the national liberation movement of the Palestinian Arab people, just as that of Namibia in southern Africa will attain its objective: the realization of the just national rights including the establishment of independent Palestinian state alongside the State of Israel. A just solution of the Palestinian question, which is the center of the Israeli-Arab conflict, is also the real interest of the Israeli people, the interest of peace and safety of both peoples.

THE INTERNATIONAL SITUATION TODAY!

After the re-election of Ronald Reagan to the presidency of the United States in November 1984, there were some people who thought that in his second term the Republican administration would improve the relations with the Soviet Union in some measure. These assessments very quickly proved wrong. As against that, the Soviet Union exerts vast efforts in order to relax international tension and unceasingly initiates peace proposals. However, the Reagan administration acts in an opposite direction; in the direction of sharpening the confrontation with the Soviet Union in all spheres and in all regions. The global policy of Washington also prevents a solution of the conflict in the Middle East and the establishment of peace in this region, already saturated with gunpowder.

In the Soviet Union the meeting of the Soviet and American war veterans on the river Elbe was given much prominence when the 40th anniversary of the joint victory over nazi Germany was marked. The general secretary of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, Mikhail Gorbachev, sent them a special greeting in which he pointed out the military contribution of the Americans, French, British and other armies and also of the partisans of many people towards the joint victory over nazi Germany. Reports about a possible summit conference between Gorbachev and Reagan were published. But the facts prove that not only is there no change for the better in American policy, but that it has become still more aggressive. Washington sabotages the Soviet-U.S. negotiations in Geneva about the strategic weapons and the prevention of "Star Wars"; sharpens the acts of aggression against Nicaragua and Afghanistan; and initiates designs for new wars in the

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Middle East.

The visit to Bitburg is politics and dangerous politics. The visit of Reagan to the military cemetery of the nazi soldiers and SS officers is not only a desecration of the memory of the victims of nazism and of the fighters against the Hitlerite wild beast, but it is also a step towards the full joining of West Germany in the preparation of a third world war. It is no coincidence that the Kohl government in the Federal Republic of Germany supports the American "Star Wars" plan. Kohl as the Chancellor of West Germany takes part in rallies of the German revanchists of Silesian extraction. This is the continuation of Bitburg. The danger exists that the American administration will enable the Bonn government to obtain nuclear arms. All this is perilous for peace in Europe and the world.

The Jewish people of Israel are highly sensitive in relation to the rehabilitation which Reagan gives to the nazis and SS men. But the Israeli government has not published any announcement of condemning the visit of Reagan in the cemetery of the dregs of mankind in Bitburg. All that the Prime Minister, Peres, said was that "this is a mistake of a great friend of Israel". . . . Even the U.S. Congress demanded of Reagan not to go to Bitburg, but the Israeli Knesset ignored our demand to do so. □