

An atmosphere of despair and defeat: SPEAKING TRUTH FIRST TO OURSELVES, THEN TO POWER

MARK A. BRUZONSKY



Mark Bruzonsky is a well-known writer, researcher, and consultant on US policy, who for the past ten years has lived in Washington DC. Bruzonsky has a reputation for being outspoken and controversial. I&P is happy to publish his column from now on as it stands, even when not fully in agreement with some of the author's views.

Washington DC — Occasionally, the really important news is atmospheric rather than topical, mood rather than substance. That is very much the reality in today's Washington. There is a serious, still growing, and very powerful undercurrent of despair and cynicism rising in this Capital among those who would be described as moderate and progressive in their views and attitudes towards the Middle East.

Oppressive negativism affects nearly everyone — from organizational activists who are more divided and confused than ever, to the closet moderates who now pervade non-governmental and academic institutions; from the Arab press corps, which increasingly finds itself obliged to report hopeful distortions and misrepresentations in order to please editors and pay-masters back home, to the representatives of moderate Arab governments whose job it has been to try to portray the euphemistic "peace process" as pregnant with possibilities, rather than close to abortion — as it really is, due to American betrayals and one-sidedness.

The daily headlines continue to be dominated by news of traveling diplomats, hopes for possible peace talks between Israel and a kosherized Jordanian-Palestinian delegation, and of pleadings by Arab presidents and potentates that the "time is now" for a firm American peace initiative and that "this is the last...the final opportunity." "American credibility (in the region) is nearing its final test," Jordan's King Hussein reiterated in THE WASHINGTON POST of May 1. But many here wonder in how many ways and how many times Hussein can issue such warnings without losing all of his own credibility.

As one embittered former American ambassador who knows the Middle East very well sums things up, "foreign travel has replaced foreign policy for this administration. There is cause for little optimism."

Ever since Israel's invasion of Lebanon, the PLO's fracturing, and most importantly, since the increasingly apparent unlikelihood of true mutual recognition (i.e. the long-discussed two-state solution), the various moderate constituencies

here have been groping about, unable to adjust to the new circumstances. They are unwilling to face the full implications of the changes that have taken place, caught between dying hopes that all is not lost and their awareness that the possibilities that existed in the 1970s have slipped away.

The stifling atmosphere engenders such apprehension and mistrust that it is increasingly unlikely that even honest American diplomatic initiatives (of which there are none at the moment) would be treated as such. As former Ambassador Dean Brown, now President of the Middle East Institute, recently put it to an Arab audience: "Don't expect too much from the US. If you have noticed what has happened to Ronald Reagan on his way to the Bitburg Cemetery, don't expect much if major policy decisions about the Middle East are required from Washington." Brown added that Washington and the Arabs are "light years apart."

PROMOTING AMERICAN LETHARGY

Other analysts have not only forecast American lethargy, but have actually promoted it. Soon after the irrepressible opportunist Abba Eban, writing in FOREIGN POLICY, suggested the imperative of a more assertive American diplomacy to prevent a total stalemate and eventual renewed warfare, Fouad Ajami, one of the most articulate Arab-born commentators in this country, wrote an article in the NEW YORK TIMES under the headline "More US Benign Neglect of the Mideast."

Ajami's analysis upset many people here, as has his repetitious charge that the Palestinians brought on Lebanon's chaos and should be held responsible for Israeli assaults on the Shia. "He's beginning to sound like Amos Perlmutter," was one comment. Dr. Perlmutter, a notorious Zionist apologist, is close to Dr. Ajami, the director at SAIS (the John Hopkins School of Advanced International Studies).

Yet, the article challenged the final myth that somehow, at some time, the US would see the light and pressure Israel. The article also highlighted the proliferation of fractured alliances and broken relationships among Arab intellectuals in recent years.

These schisms between Arab intellectuals reflect acutely the political and psychological atmosphere of which I write. In some cases, senior Palestinian personalities who used to work with each other are no longer on speaking terms. In other cases, well-known Palestine National Council members, who have for years been associated with Yasser Arafat and the PLO mainstream group Fatah, are now talking disparagingly of the "Old Man." And they are clearly showing nervousness about having their names associated with the Palestinian-Jordanian agreement.

Furthermore, it is increasingly likely that the moderate groups and personalities that have arisen in the past decade in Europe and the US — among them diplomats, writers, academics, and activists — may be gradually giving way to regional nationalists and radical forces, heretofore held in check by clever financial and careful news manipulation.

As mutual recognition and the two-state solution — the conceptual glue which melded diverse groups and personalities together in the past decade — fade away, both the cohesion and the coherency of these coalitions are being eclipsed.

Arguments that it is precisely to the PLO that Israel and the US should turn for serious peace negotiations — because only the PLO has the ability to conclude a credible and lasting agreement with Israel — while very much on the mark, have had little impact here.

Merle Thorpe's Foundation for Middle East Peace is about to publish a pamphlet for Congressional distribution, in which Philip M. Klutznick, one of the few remaining senior, moderate, international Jewish statesmen, clearly endorses Israeli-PLO negotiations and a Palestinian state to coexist with Israel. "If the PLO is now prepared, finally, to talk and negotiate with the government of Israel, should not the government of Israel be prepared to do the same? Whether we like it or not, the PLO is the only representative of the Palestinian people empowered with the ability to reach a real agreement," Klutznick has courageously written.

And yet it all seems too little, too late, and without any serious political impact.

PLO'S ECLIPSE IMPACTS HERE TOO

On the Arab side, with the moderate wing of the PLO undergoing a crisis, its supporters are in miserable disarray. Usually such details reach Washington slowly, but in this case the topic is in the open.

Under these deperate circumstances, the style and manner of the PLO's Washington representative, Hassan Rahman, has caused considerable alienation here, even from many Palestinians and PLO supporters. Worse yet, there are substantial rumors of financial problems and nepotism — on top of charges of political incompetence.

A good example is the question of a Saudi-financed fund for Palestinian students and whether it has been used properly. When queried on this issue, Rahman was exceptionally defensive, first denying the existence of such a fund, and then suggesting it wasn't actually a fund, but rather a series of "checks from the Saudi Ambassador" administered by the PLO office. A follow-up question elicited a strongly emotional reaction from Rahman — "This is none of your business and has nothing to do with you."

On matters of political incompetence, the following examples are typical of the state of Palestinian confusion in Washington.

The National Association of Arab Americans was considering inviting Yasser Arafat to appear by satellite hook-up at their annual convention early in May. But for unexplained reasons, among them it seems Hassan's poor relations with the NAAA, the Palestine Information Office did not pursue the possibility and when queried about the matter indicated that "the Chairman is very busy with many important things." Thus another much-needed chance to address a friendly, Washington audience was missed, at a time when Arafat and the PLO's standing are nose-diving.

Another example is the excellent new book by Alan Hart entitled "Arafat," published in London. It is probably the best book ever written in English about the PLO and its Chairman, and it could have considerable impact on general perceptions of the legitimacy of the Palestinian cause — if it were available, that is. Nearly six months after publication of the book, the PLO office in Washington had not obtained copies and the representative himself had not read it.

The result of these attitudes in the American capital is the increasing disintegration and demoralization of those circles which have always supported the PLO, combined with a lack of serious Palestinian involvement even in important Arab activities here.

For instance, when most of the Arab-American community cooperated to hold a major rally on the steps of Capitol Hill, to demand Israel's withdrawal from Southern Lebanon, there was no visible Palestinian participation. Worse still, the Washington representative of the PLO was consider-

ed by the organizers — many of whom are quite sympathetic to the Palestinian cause — persona non grata, at a reception held the evening before at the home of the Ambassador of the Arab League in honor of Mustafa Saad. Saad is one of the better known Southern Lebanese resistance leaders, who was badly injured in an Israeli bombing earlier this year.

Though Saad went out of his way to make sure everyone at the demonstration was aware that the Shia and the Palestinians were together, struggling against Israel, the PLO representative managed to be out of town.

Another example: at the recent, unprecedented, three-day Arab League conference here, on the subject of "Israel's settlement in the Occupied Territories," not a single big name Palestinian intellectual or political figure was in attendance. Furthermore, Rahman himself, in his capacity as Washington PLO representative, had to work hard to get a seat at the podium at one of the lunches, and to read a message at one of the panels. He was never listed on the official program. Other, nationally known Palestinians weren't even informed the conference was to take place.

PROGRESSIVE JEWS IN RETREAT

On the Jewish side, in Washington, nearly all of the progressive organizations have been muffled, have disintegrated on their own, or have been destroyed by community and Israeli pressure. Only a few activists in a weak organization known as New Jewish Agenda, plus a scattered number of writers and concerned individuals, remain involved in any significant way. There is also the International Jewish Peace Union and a support group for Matty Peled and his small following in Israel; but these groups have next to no impact on Washington politics, though they do occasionally manage to get one of their rank to appear on media shows or before small audiences.

When all of the local Jewish groups got together to sponsor a speaking tour by a well-known Israeli peace activist and a Palestinian journalist from Amman, weeks of effort resulted in a scantily attended evening discussion at George Washington University. The next day, just a handful of partisans turned out when the Israeli pleaded for funds at a Washington think-tank.

Another example is the political corruption in Israel, which is associated with the so-called International Center for Peace in the Middle East. Conceived by David Shaham and Willy Gafni, two persons formerly with NEW OUTLOOK magazine, this front organization has become a vehicle for sponging up European and American Jewish guilt-money, which is channeled back to the "progressive" wing of the Labor party.

Worse yet, this organization which has succeeded in giving the impression that it is an umbrella of Israeli peace groups, has actually badly damaged more serious Palestinian-Jewish contacts, due to its frivolous and self-serving programs, and to its refusal to deal publicly with the PLO.

The late Issam Sartawi, the PLO's main contact person with Jews and Israelis, and a key Palestinian who was always at the forefront of serious and important Palestinian-Jewish contacts, had refused to be involved with this effort just before his assassination. And now even NEW OUTLOOK magazine is pulling away entirely from Shaham and Gafni, not only going its own way, but getting ready to compete with the International Center for funds and support.

Furthermore, the former editor of NEW OUTLOOK and the senior scholar-activist in these circles, Simha Flapan, no longer speaks positively of the group and is unable to obtain minor research funds from it, for the writing he is doing on the myths and lies of Israel's foreign policy.

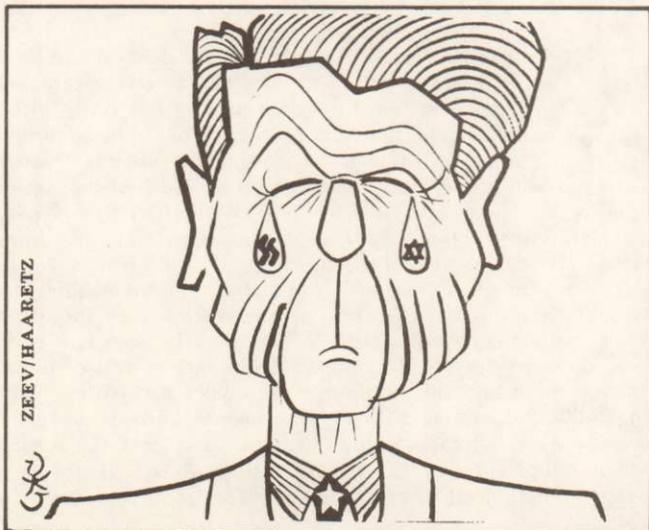
"PERES WANTS YOU TO GO TO AMMAN"

One example of political corruption, in which this "Center for Peace" has become involved, concerns a well-known left-leaning think-tank in Washington, the Institute for Policy Studies. On most other matters of foreign policy, IPS is among the most progressive forces in the US, often offering biting and penetrating analyses of the myths behind American foreign policy.

But when it comes to the Middle East, IPS has been paralyzed; largely because its chairman, Peter Weiss, who is also a major contributor to the Center for Peace in Israel, refuses to allow IPS to live up to its reputation and fill the void that has stymied Washington Middle East activities.

Until earlier this year IPS's profile on Middle East matters was very, very low. Only an occasional progressive lunchtime speaker, carefully balanced with appearances by the Israeli Ambassador, as well as the Executive Director of the Zionist Lobby, took place before small audiences who in almost all cases had heard the speaker somewhere else the day or evening before.

But early this year IPS allowed itself to become coopted by the Center for Peace in Israel, working in tandem with the new Labor-led government, and in so doing has not only damaged its own reputation, but caused everyone else to become even more gun-shy of Arab-Jewish contact.



The original idea was sound enough: get a group of reasonable American Jews to go to Amman for a conference with Jordanians and Palestinians, about the true prerequisites for achieving real peace. Actually, the inspiration for this came from former Senator James Abourezk, one of the few sophisticated and capable American Arab leaders, who convinced the Jordanian Foreign Minister to back the project. Having recently joined the board of IPS, Abourezk turned the idea over to it, no doubt unaware of possible repercussions.

Because of Peter Weiss, the affair quietly began to involve Drora Kass, a well-meaning but naive Israeli operative working for the Israeli Center for Peace. Truly progressive American Jews found themselves excluded. Mainstream, cautious, "kosher" (by Israeli standards) Jews were being invited. Indeed, phonecalls actually went out to some American Jewish leaders from Kass saying "Shimon Peres wants this conference to happen and wants you to go." In addition, the Jews were quietly promised that no PLO leaders would be formally invited to the conference; but that Yasser Arafat or others "might be available at the hotel for those who might want to meet such people..."

Whatever the motivations of the Jordanian Government in agreeing to this conference in the first place, when the Jor-

danians found out that an Israeli operative was inviting American Jews OKed by the Israeli Government to a conference they were sponsoring and paying for, the whole thing quickly collapsed, leaving bad feelings all around.

There were considerable recriminations in Jordan, some of which got into the Jordanian press. The end result: neither in Washington or Jordan will it be as easy as before to get people to take risks in bringing Jews and Arabs together, a very sound imperative if properly carried out. The end victors — Itzhak Shamir, Ariel Sharon, and the Likud elements in the coalition government, who work overtime to prevent all contact between the opposing sides — even those approved by their Prime Minister.

Unfortunately, this particular example is but the tip of the iceberg when it comes to the kinds of manipulations that are now going on here, in quiet coordination with the Israeli Government, all designed to give the illusion of hope and progress. Meanwhile, Israel's hold on the Occupied Territories becomes final, more American funds pour into Israel, and the demoralization of the Palestinians is purposefully furthered — in the vain, misguided hope that the resilient Palestinian national concept will somehow be eroded.

The IPS example is also illustrative of how even independent, progressive institutions find it very difficult to get thoughtfully involved on Middle East issues. Similar in many ways to IPS are THE NATION, THE NEW YORK REVIEW OF BOOKS, and WORLDVIEW MONTHLY magazines. During the 1970's all three magazines were at the forefront of thoughtful analysis of the Arab-Israeli issue. That changed for THE NATION when Victor Navasky became editor. A very thoughtful man on most other issues and an accomplished writer, Navasky seems unable to grapple with the Arab-Israeli issue, probably because of his own strong Zionist convictions, or possibly out of fears of losing readership.

Both of these considerations seem to apply to THE NEW YORK REVIEW OF BOOKS as well, with perhaps only the latter consideration relevant to WORLDVIEW MONTHLY's very perceptible move away from dealing openly and honestly with the Middle East situation, as it has evolved. The famous iconoclast journalist I.F. Stone (something of a legend as a fiercely independent writer and commentator) said some six or seven years ago on the Dick Cavett TV show, "If you really want to understand the Middle East then read THE NEW YORK REVIEW OF BOOKS and WORLDVIEW." This would no longer apply — and no establishment substitutes have emerged.

Just how pressures are brought to bear on these publications is a subject worthy of study. One known incident concerns one of the Washington think-tanks, which, only a few years ago, was active through invitations to nationalist, pro-mutual recognition, and pro-Palestinian personalities. This situation has changed, and one of the reasons was a nod to subtle warnings issued by a visiting Israeli scholar, to the director of this institute, that to continue on the same path "could mean trouble." Most recently, the scholars, including persons clearly associated with the Camp David Accords, the now-aborted Israeli-Lebanese pact of May 17, and Israel's West Bank policies, have been of a different complexion.

Another Jewish personality who in recent years has taken on a highly questionable role in Washington, is Judith Kipper of the Republican oriented think-tank, the American Enterprise Institute. For many years before Ms. Kipper ended up at AEI, some say with highly questionable sources of funding support, many questions about her have arisen.

But it must be said that Ms. Kipper has managed to ingratiate herself in a unique way with the powers that be in Washington, and that she works unceasingly to operate a kind of Washington Middle East carousel, which grabs visiting statesmen and gives them a platform on which to say what they came here for, to some of the Washington journalists and members of the business community.

Some years ago Kipper lived and worked in Israel, and this fact, coupled with activities which seem cleverly designed to infiltrate Arab groups in a possible effort to promote US and sometimes Israeli interests*, has led to an unusual spate of rumors and charges, few of which can be substantiated but many of which seem to be supported by circumstantial evidence. One senior Arab personality, queried about this situation, reported on his own "little test;" and, sure enough, the document he had leaked quickly turned up in the hands of American Government officials.

Finally, one apparently independent effort was begun by former State Department official Granville "Red" Austin and by Dr. Landrum Bolling, a former private advisor to President Carter and a leading Quaker. The idea was to involve American and Jewish-American personalities in speaking up in favor of mutual Israeli-Palestinian recognition and the two-state solution. Although the Ketterling and Rockefeller foundations contributed, few believe anything will come out of this effort — which is plodding and disorganized, and badly underfunded.

The truth is that at this time of great cynicism and despair, attempting to get establishment members of the American-Jewish community to do something beyond token trivial gestures is foolhardy, and at best, naive.

INTERNATIONAL JEWISH ORGANIZATIONS

As for the establishment organizations which in the past played a behind-the-scenes role — most importantly the World Jewish Congress, which was formerly in the forefront of a dialogue across the divide, and which often sponsored unpublicized peace initiatives — they have all nearly totally divorced themselves from such activities, under intense pressure from the Israelis, and in some cases from their own membership; thereby falling victim to, as well as contributing to, this atmosphere of despair.

In the case of the WJC, both its founding President, Dr. Nahum Goldmann, and his successor, Dr. Philip Klutznick, maintained excellent contact with the PLO and acted, at times, as go-betweens with progressive elements of the American, Israeli, and European governments. Indeed, Goldmann, Klutznick, and former French Prime Minister Pierre Mendes-France, publicly called for Israeli-PLO negotiations and Palestinian self-determination, during the 1982 invasion of Lebanon. Klutznick himself, in an article to be published in May, has publicly gone on record favoring creation of a "Palestinian state" through "negotiations with the PLO."

But under the new administration of Edgar M. Bronfman, a man with far less experience both in Jewish and international affairs, who took over a bankrupt international Jewish organization that no one else could afford and which few desired, the WJC has all but washed its hands of the Palestinian issue. It has, in fact, often become an apologist for many of Israel's repressive and brutal policies.

One example: rather than maintaining links with any of the major Palestinian personalities, the WJC has in recent years preferred to tell its constituents (and itself) "that it is already in touch with the Palestinians" — mostly through an American-Palestinian professor, Nafez Nazzal, who has been almost totally ostracized by his Palestinian colleagues.

THE WASHINGTON BLAHS

Hopelessness about peacefully resolving the Arab-Israeli conflict can be felt at dinner parties in this capital city, where serious discussion of Middle East diplomacy has become increasingly rare; at diplomatic cocktails where people now try hard to talk about "light, non-

political" things; at Washington thinktanks where a great effort is made to speak in restrained, non-controversial terms; and among those usually bedraggled private groups who have been at the forefront of Palestinian-Jewish dialogue, now practically non-existent at senior levels.

Dejection and despair could be felt as well, during the final days of March, at the Arab-American demonstration demanding Israel's withdrawal from Lebanon, held on the steps of Capitol Hill. In spite of weeks of efforts and inter-organizational cooperation, the protest went largely unnoticed to all but the few hundred participants themselves. No national media, only one Congressman (even though the event was held mere steps away from the Congress), little enthusiasm of the kind normally associated with winning causes; it was a demonstration of the defeated, still clinging to a few strands of hope that all will not be lost.

The same atmosphere hangs over every event taking place in this capital; be it the effort of one of the few remaining Jewish progressive groups or of the Arab establishment. The only major press report about the Arab League conference, for instance, was a page 24 article in THE WASHINGTON POST about how the Arabs were "vexed" that nobody came to talk with them; this plus Vanessa Redgrave's TV appearance on an all-night talk show...about two o'clock in the morning.

WASHINGTON HAJ FOR ARAB "LEADERS"

The recent visits to Washington by King Fahd and Hosni Mubarak were sad, almost pathetic spectacles. The King strutted into town passing out lavish gifts, throwing unseemly parties, waving to the bused-in admirers, buying TV time to tout his achievements. He was treated with subtle derision and occasional jest by much of the American press, most especially by THE WASHINGTON POST. Even the loyal-by-necessity Arab pressmen were at times scathingly critical, behind-the-scenes.

The rumor now seriously circulating around Washington is that the King spent nearly all of his time with President Reagan talking about football. And, as implausible as it may seem to outsiders, many insiders consider this credible. In one discussion this columnist personally had with a ranking State Department official, who should know what really went on, the diplomat didn't trouble to correct the record when queried about the rumor, but preferred silence — a long-honored Washington technique for back-handed verification.

Then came Hosni Mubarak — hot on the heels of his own missteps in attempting to support the Jordanian-Palestinian initiative. In reality, he was playing into Israel's hands by suggesting separate, direct negotiations in Cairo, rather than the international negotiations agreed upon in Amman.

Mubarak's entourage, including his now all-powerful policy advisor Osama el Baz, tried to appear positive. El Baz, to the amazement of many, even suggested in a TV interview that "because Reagan has so much credibility in the Arab world," now is the time for him to engage America in a serious peace process that will include the Palestinians.

Here too, the reality was too much to bear — and even Mubarak in his National Press Club address finally had to publicly accuse the Reagan Administration of policies that border on defeatism.

The truth is that Egypt is being treated as if she were America's mistress — but only so long as she remains satisfied with her current allowance, accepts occasional affection rather than love, doesn't complain too much, and does what is expected by her benefactor.

Meanwhile, the American marriage to Israel, after a long, long engagement, has now been fully consummated. Moreover, with Mubarak's last visit, the Egyptians have now been made fully aware that there is no room for promiscuity in Ronald Reagan's Middle East passions. Take it or leave it.

(Turn to last page)

* A good example being AEI sponsorship of the Benveniste work on the West Bank

First Arab League Washington Conference

(continued from page 9)

This atmosphere of dejection and defeat could be easily detected at the previously mentioned Arab League's late April conference in Washington. Speaker after speaker repeated what is now the litany of Israeli illegal deeds and repression. The theme of Palestinian rights was everywhere to be heard, though there were few credible Palestinians to be seen. After only one hour, one of the Arab old-timers in this town volunteered: "We never learn; here we are again, the Arabs talking to the Arabs."

Indeed, even for this major Arab League affair, for which important foreign personalities were imported** and at least a quarter of a million dollars expended — not one important American government official appeared, nor did the conference receive significant press coverage.

In contrast, at the very same time across town, and before a much larger and far more enthusiastic audience, the Zionist Lobby — formally known as the American Israel Public Affairs Committee — was holding its own annual conference, planning strategy for increasing even further American aid and support for Israel. And, it was host to large numbers of Senators and Congressmen who were all well aware of the influence of Jewish funds and the onus of Jewish opposition.

Zionist Jews, in contrast to the impotent Arabs, were able to parade, as usual, top Administration officials before their activists, one after another. Indeed, as the Arab League conference opened, the headline in the NEW YORK TIMES was about the Secretary of State's appearance the previous day at the Zionist conference, and how he was interrupted with loud applause more than two dozen times. The next day headlines told of the signing of the US-Israeli Free Trade Pact, Washington's first such agreement with any country. It was Ariel Sharon, Israel's Trade Minister, who took the credit and signed the deed for the Israelis.

It is within this larger context of Jewish power versus increasingly painful Arab impotence that the contemporary atmosphere of defeat is furthering a basic re-evaluation of the nature of the future Middle East struggle. Moderate, liberal personalities and their associated foundations and institutions are being rendered outdated and irrelevant. More assertive groups and movements, both from the radical left and the reactionary right, are gaining followings.

Professor Hisham Sharabi probably best outlined the situation some months ago, in an essay commissioned but then rejected as too gloomy by HARPER'S magazine, for their special issue dealing with the future of the Middle East.

Sharabi, Professor of Arab History at Georgetown University and editor of the JOURNAL OF PALESTINE STUDIES,

** Including Lord Caradon, Mahmoud Riad, Vanessa Redgrave, and Bruno Kreisky

(and himself known to have gone through two major re-evaluations: first towards accommodation and then towards renewed struggle), wrote that it is ironic that "Israel's militant maximalist policy is a major factor fueling the fundamentalist movement and destabilizing the status quo throughout the Middle East.

"This is one main reason why the Arab elites...seek, as a matter of self-preservation, to achieve political settlement of the Arab-Israeli conflict. Indirectly, they stand to lose most from Israel's refusal to conclude peace."

Concluding that, in his view, the possibility of the long-discussed two-state solution is "no longer possible," Sharabi's overall analysis leads him to believe that "in the new stage we are entering the Palestinians will probably be pushed off center stage, with the Palestine problem again becoming more and more the responsibility of the Arab states.

"What makes it so difficult, however, to entertain hope in the present context, is the structural character which the Arab-Israeli conflict has assumed in its new stage...As the conflict unfolds in this new phase, events seem to have a certain inexorable inevitability about them. Both sides look toward the future with the same sense of fatality."

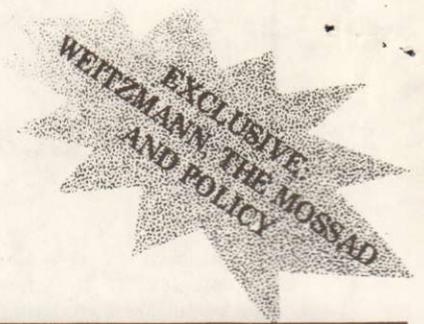
FACING REALITY, PEERING AHEAD

There are those, many in fact, who argue that revealing the weakness and demoralization of the few progressive forces still attempting to encourage a reasonable resolution of the Arab-Israeli quagmire, is itself demoralizing and thus counter-productive. And yet, it has been a general failure to face reality at most stages of this conflict, which has contributed to this state of paralysis and hopelessness.

We are all living through, today, the end of one phase in the struggle over Palestine and the opening round of a new struggle — one that many think can no longer be resolved through the niceties of the "two-state," i.e. the partition, solution. We are in the midst of an unmentioned nuclear arms race in the region — one actually stimulated by the Israeli attack on the Baghdad reactor in 1981 — which can only expand in future years. And we are witness to a period of desperation, out of which are likely to arise new movements, new leaders, new concepts, and far greater dangers than those with which we have become familiar.

If there is to be a rebirth of a vital, meaningful, international peace movement, then this difficult, painful self-analysis is necessary, in order to find out how we got to such a low point, what keeps us there, and what might realistically turn things around. Elie Wiesel lectured President Reagan in mid-April about the Jewish tradition of "speaking truth to power." Those of us lacking power, but knowing our own truths, will first have to speak it to ourselves, before anyone else is going to listen and take note. ■

Publisher: Louis MARTON * Editor in Chief: Maxim GHILAN * Assistant Editor: Rosalind SYKES *
Paris Office Director: Louis GUZMAN * Israeli Office Director: Irit BAR-NIR * Layout: Catherine DUVAL *
Documentation: Bracha GUR * Occupation Watch: Ilan KERNERMAN * Coordination: Robbie ETHRIDGE *
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israel & palestine political report

Published by MAGELAN, 5 Rue Cardinal Mercier, 75009 Paris — April/May 1985

ISSN 0294 1341, No. 113

Subscription: 30 US dollars per year

Additional copies of this article or subscriptions to *I&P* may be obtained by contacting:

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