

The peace process

Putting it all in perspective

From



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Washington

WE are entering another of the "hopeful" phases that have come to characterise the history of the seemingly insoluble Arab-Israeli quagmire.

There's a certain regularity to these phases — usually coming in the first half of a new American Presidential term, and usually coming at a time when diplomatic stalemate threatens the psychological stability of the region.

Just to reflect on the most recent history, there was the "re-assessment" of the Ford-Kissinger era, the "Palestinian homeland" episode early in the Carter years, and the Reagan "peace plan" of 1982.

In the end, each of these "crises" in US-Israeli relations passed with the US-Israel connection actually deepening, somehow, in the process.

The re-assessment" in which Gerald Ford was said to have threatened the Israelis with the imperative of their becoming less "intransigent" — that was the word in vogue at the time — soon faded.

We now know, in retrospect, that Henry Kissinger himself was working in tandem with the Israelis to undermine Ford's concern that the US-Israeli relationship had got too cozy and the Israelis consequently resisting and political settlement.

The Carter episode — engineered by Kissinger's replacement at the National Security Council, Zbig Brzezinski — was carefully undermined by both the Israeli/Jewish lobby and key members in Congress. At first the relentless attacks were rather personally directed at Brzezinski himself.

But President Carter himself felt the growing heat as the demonstrated when he refused a second White House invitation to then World Jewish Congress President Nahum Goldman. With considerable prescience, Goldman was then privately advocating that for Israel's own good an imposed peace was urgently necessary. Furthermore Goldman himself was in direct and constant contact with the PLO.

Carter had held an initial meeting with Goldman shortly after taking office. But then the pressures from Israel and the American Jewish lobby were so severe — Carter coming to realise that his entire administration might be threatened —

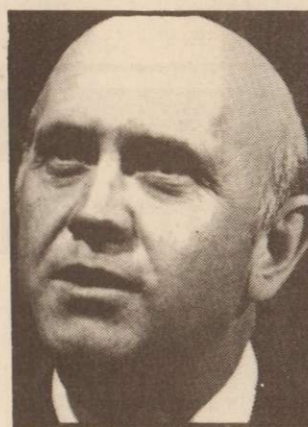
Deviating from its established foreign policy norms, the US is busy in forming a three-way axis aimed at economic dominance of the world where Israel is slated to play a new international, though secondary, role. That's why the Israeli coalition government collapsed this week.



Bush—Architect



Kohl—Check



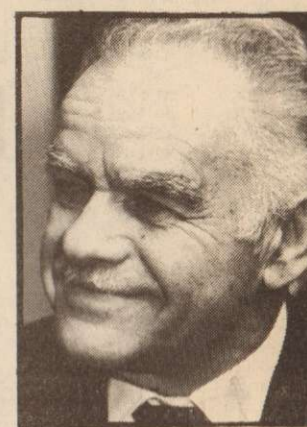
de Klerk—Origins



Baker—Mover



Tamer—Future



Shamir—Punishment

America's new triangle for the world

AMERICAN foreign policy today is moving along new lines that are completely different from the established norms and pursued actively by the US since World War II when it decided to emerge from its self-imposed political isolation.

The new change is widely interpreted as being motivated by Washington's desire to create a favourable international climate conducive to the realisation of the objectives of the new age of detente with Moscow.

But regardless of this and other interpretations that could be advanced to justify and understand it, the change in the US foreign policy is undoubtedly a significant attempt at radically revolutionising the stagnant pattern of international relations that has persisted throughout the past few US administrations which failed to alter them because of the pressures from several unseen forces that substantially influence the process of the US decision-making.

In fact this revolt against American's traditional foreign policy is so significant that some parallels could be drawn between it and the American War of Independence. In the same way as the revolution under the leadership of George Washing-

WITH THE EVENTS



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The significance of this US desire to determine beforehand the future political relations of united Germany lies in the fact that it clearly shows that the US is already fully aware of the plans of the Soviet Union which hopes that unified Germany would be completely disassociated from the network of regional affiliations that West Germany has at present so that it could utilize to its best advantage

new global economic realities.

In pursuance of this goal Washington has been prompted to formulate its new foreign policy on three axes. It is trying to develop the first axis by establishing direct close ties with what will eventually become united Germany so that it could tune in and couple its military supremacy to the economic might of Germany.

If such a concordance between the US and Germany is achieved, Europe's dream to become a major economic power by unifying the economies of EC members in 1992 would be completely shattered. This forms the second axis of the US foreign policy. It is also trying to extend the role of Germany beyond the EC and pave the way for the establishment of strong economic links between united Germany and South Africa by pressing that racist country into making some nominal concessions in favour of its Black majority.

This fact clearly shows that the release of Nelson Mandela from his long imprisonment was neither a coincidence nor a decision motivated by the desire of the White minority in Pretoria to do justice to the oppressed Black people who have been toiling under apartheid for centuries. It is an act dictated by political

along the axis linking South Africa and united Germany with the US having complete control over them.

Under this strategy and out of its keen resolve to see it work and succeed, the US government was naturally obliged to revise and even renounce its former international relations so that its old established ties with other countries would not torpedo the whole structure of this strategy which basically stands on the concept of economic supremacy.

It was out of this stand that for the first time in the US history, President Bush openly declared following his meeting with Japan's Prime Minister Toshiki Kaifu in Rancho Mirage, California, that his government was resolutely opposed to the building of new Jewish settlements in the occupied Arab territories including East Jerusalem and made it clear to Israel that the continuation of American aid to it largely depended on its policy in the occupied Arab lands.

He also warned that decisions taken by the US would be based only on its own independent outlook and that people everywhere should abide by them if they want their relations and dealings with it to continue.

This policy requires Israel to accept the peace formula presented by US Secretary of State

Sacrificing peace in the Mid-east is totally against the new line of US thinking, making it necessary to identify the concept of peace with the exchange of land, particularly since the Egyptian-Israeli experiment provides a conclusive evidence of the correctness of this approach.

This practical approach proposes restoration of land to its rightful owners, the Palestinians, including all installations erected on it (the settlements) against financial compensation in the same way that land was returned to Egypt along with installations built on it (hotel in Taba) in return for financial compensation.

The new US attitude toward Mid-east peace is based on its desire for economic predominance, for sacrificing the Arab's right jeopardises its vital interests in the Arab World. In the rapidly changing world national interests are not negotiable, not even partially.

On the strength of this new outlook, the US realises that its interests in the region would be jeopardised, if the Palestinians, despairing of obtaining their rights, begin to retaliate against Israeli brutality with a similar violence that would disturb the existing balance in the Mid-east. The ensuing military conflict will have dire consequences on the

the US-German-South African triangle by virtue of its existence as a nation in the Mid-east enjoying privileged links with the US.

Israel's independent movement within the clearly defined political framework eliminates its total dependence on the US owing to the financial income that would accrue to it and which would relieve it of acute financial difficulty provided that it knew how to make accurate political and economic moves through which it could win the trust of other international powers in its international strategic conduct.

However, the role required of the Israeli government stumbles on the American mistrust of the Israeli political figures.

The indispensibility of the Israeli role in the new strategic structure has elevated Tamer to the rank of leadership of Israel in the eyes of the US which is now trying to place him in a position of authority in Israel.

The US endeavour of creating a new leadership is aided by the rallying of Israeli intellectuals around Tamer. These intellectuals believe in Israel's ability to perform international roles much more significantly than the regional role it is playing in the Mid-east today, provided that it were able to eliminate the re-

that he sent word to Goldman he couldn't politically afford to invite him a second time and besides he'd already got the message.

By the time of the October 1, 1977 joint US-USSR communique which clearly hinted at a superpower-sponsored international conference, Carter was in considerable political difficulty at home. He and Secretary of State Cyrus Vance at first rejected Anwar Sadat's attempts to twist everything in an Egypt-first direction. But then they quickly succumbed in a process that lead away from a "Palestinian homeland", away from an "international conference," and eventually to the separate peace with Egypt that the Israelis had always sought.

By the time of Camp David it was Jimmy Carter who most of all could not afford a perceived failure, Jimmy Carter who had advocated a comprehensive peace and a Palestinian homeland who championed the separate deal, Jimmy Carter who found himself outmanoruvred by the Israelis and their many friends in the US.

As for Reagan's much-touted September 1982 speech, it never was much more than a cheap and easy way of putting a bit of verbal distance between the US and Israel — a way of pacifying critics at home and molifying pro-American Arab regimes abroad.

Reagan's verbalisation of what has in large part an Arab plan, "the Fahad plan", came at the very end of the unprecedented Israeli invasion of Lebanon, after the outrage over the Sabra and Chattila massacres, and at a time of increasing tension between the Arab world and both Israel and the US.

Remarkably, a few Presidential words were enough, for many at least, to disguise how Washington had basically endorsed (even encouraged) the Israeli attempt to destroy the PLO and reconfigure Mid-east politics. Reagan's utterances thus obscured, on purpose of course, the actual reality that his administration was all the while engaged in creating an ever-closer relationship with the Israelis.

With these few bits of history recalled, it's only realistic to view the situation today in a "here we go again" manner.

True, as we actually live through these diplomatic phenomena they tend to seem far more pregnant with possibilities than they usually end up being. Yet the reality is that today's "peace process" — just as in the past — is also far more likely to prove to be more illusion than reality.

We are still in a phase of diplomatic chicanery rather than historic political breakthrough. Don't let the headlines and the press releases fool you into thinking otherwise.

ton led to the independence of the country and the establishment of the US, the second revolution under George Bush is going to free American decision-making from external influences and enhance the US position as a leading force in the world.

However, it still remains difficult to specify exactly all the goals envisaged by the second American revolution against the currently prevailing pattern of international relations. This is basically because we do not yet know the full details of the rapprochement between Bush and Mikhail Gorbachev during their summit meeting aboard the Soviet vessel *Maxim Gorky* off the shores of Malta.

However, the absence of such details or our fragmentary knowledge of the goals of this American revolution does not obliterate the fact that it is bound to have deep influence on the way independent American decisions on foreign policy matters are going to be taken.

The outlines of this revolution first started to take shape when President Bush recently met West German Chancellor Helmut Kohl in Washington where he pressed his guest that West Germany should provide Israel with all the technology and related facilities it needed in return for its support to the unification of Germany.

It is evident that by its unreserved approach the US administration is seriously trying to link united Germany once and for all to the West and completely eliminate any possibility of its association in any form with communist powers such as the Soviet Union and China, or even with Japan.

could utilise to serve these ulterior motives of the US and portray South Africa in a more internationally acceptable image particularly as regards observance of human rights so that it could play the role assigned to it in this connection.

However, American apprehensions are not just stemming from what the Soviets are openly trying to achieve or could possibly contrive but also have roots in what seems at present quite unlikely. One such potential cause of American fears, albeit its implausibility for the time being, is the possible development of strong links between united Germany and China. By availing itself to the immense economic and technological resources of the former, Beijing could acquire enough strength to achieve the status it is aspiring to reach and successfully complete with the new world powers that are going to emerge as a result of the detente between Moscow and Washington.

But because the chances for the emergence of such close ties between united Germany and the Soviet Union or China are quite slim in view of the irreconcilable ideological differences, America's major cause of worry derives from the possible development of close relations between united Germany and Japan. Naturally its main concern is currently focused on blocking any such affiliations between these two economic superpowers which—in the event they co-operate—could well develop into a menacing military power reminiscent of their notorious Axis of World War II.

All these facts provide ample evidence that by embarking on this new foreign policy the US is trying to bolster in line with the

expediency to serve these ulterior motives of the US and portray South Africa in a more internationally acceptable image particularly as regards observance of human rights so that it could play the role assigned to it in this connection.

In fact picking united Germany and South Africa in particular as the two parties to this relationship was the result of a profound socio-economic study conducted by the US government. It may be noted here that the actual positions of the three countries on racial issues do not differ fundamentally from each other.

The US study is instituted on the following two premises.

First, the ethnic composition of the White population of South Africa is largely of German or Tuntonic origin. This, it was held, would facilitate direct dealings between united Germany and South Africa because of their common ancestry.

Secondly, the economic supremacy of South Africa—which ranks among the richest countries of the world—is closely next to Germany. This would naturally make the two countries more agreeable to understand each other and co-operate on the international level in view of the interests they would share in this regard.

The nominal concessions made to South Africa's Black majority has enabled the US to start drawing out the third axis of its foreign policy which involves establishing strong links with South Africa. This would enable the US to move directly along the two axes linking it to united Germany and South Africa respectively and indirectly

represented by US Secretary of State James Baker for the selection of a Palestinian delegation from the residents of occupied territories to the Mid-east peace negotiations which has become an American demand.

Prompted by Yitzhak Shamir to reply to George Bush, Israeli Communications Minister Moshe Katsof stated that with due respect to Bush's opinions, Israel could not accept his proposal because it is against making crucial decisions under external pressures even if those pressures came from its friend and close ally, the US.

In fact, Bush is not much concerned with the Israeli government now after he has reached an understanding with Shamir's emissary to him, cabinet secretary General Avraham Tamer.

Though Tamer refused to speak to the US press, a departure from the Israeli tradition, it is rumoured now in Washington's International Press Club as well as the UN press hall that Bush has told the Israeli envoy that the US could not accept the Israeli position that it had the right to keep the land conquered through war, because that is fundamentally against the UN Charter, and the UN resolution 242 of 1967 that ordered Israel to return the land it had conquered to its Palestinian owners.

Bush, however, did not only remind Tamer of the UN Charter and the resolution but also conveyed to him the views of Arabs who told him that ceding territory to Israel after each war would encourage it to continue making trouble and foment wars in order to get more land, making it impossible to reach a peace settlement in the Mid-east.

have dire consequences on the strategic interests of the big powers, which are of far more importance and magnitude than the regional significance of the Mid-east.

The US is not ready to make such sacrifice and it needs a sensible government in Israel to carry out the role required of it in the game of international balance by the US.

A sensible government in Israel is also needed in order to avoid the chance of taking individual surprise decisions that entail commitments transcending in scope the local situation to the wider international situation.

So long as the decisions entail certain international participation in political action, they must be accompanied by common effort in making those decisions of international nature by all parties who are to be bound by those decisions and their consequences.

The joint American-Israeli effort in decision-making proves the US keenness on its obligations for Israel so long as the latter abides by the agreed political lines.

This means the US government is wooing Israel to effectively participate in the politico-economic moves that consolidate the strategic reality in the new international triangle in a way that serves their common interests.

In the US view, Israel is qualified today to work within this triangle by virtue of its special ties with South Africa and its favoured status for technological co-operation with West Germany on recommendations from the US government.

This qualification will enable Israel to play an effective role in

were able to eliminate the regional problems hampering its desired international activity.

The role in which Tamer found himself made him abandon his mission of negotiations on behalf of the Israeli government, for which he was sent to Washington.

He began collaborating with US leaders on plans aimed at bringing him to power in Israel, and this explains his refusal to talk to the American pressmen.

The Israeli government, through the hardline Zionist lobby in the US, learned of the new role of Tamer and recalled him from his mission. He pleaded for more time to discuss vital issues still pending with the US administration.

The Israeli government has entered into a long race with Tamer: Whether it has to win the race by removing him from his post or eliminating him physically, or he will win the race by toppling it and assuming power by himself.

The US is backing Tamer in his race against Israeli rulers because it is in dire need of a prudent ruler in Israel to protect the US interests. If he failed to assume power or if the US failed to bring him to power, then it would try to bring another, and yet another person until it succeeds in collaboration with moderates of the Zionist lobby in the US, to bring down hardline rulers and replace them with moderates who fully appreciate the present stage in international relations.

It is a matter of supreme importance to the US, that is not negotiable, because it cannot go on dealing with the present Israeli rulers who exercise power with anachronic mentality.



Border woes plague Poland since 1772

By John Daniszewski

POLAND'S borders are again an issue in European politics, as they have been during peace and war for more than 300 years.

This time, Poland is wary that a united Germany will want to change frontiers established after the German defeat in World War Two and re-open the "Polish question" that has vexed European diplomacy for centuries.

In 1688, Poland stretched from the Baltic Sea almost to the Black Sea and its territory encompassed much of what is now the Ukraine and Byelorussia.

A century later, a united Poland and Lithuania came under pressure from Russia, Austria and Prussia and was systematically dismembered in three stages between 1772 and 1795, when Poland ceased to exist.

The country was not established again until 1919.

The traditional fragility of Poland's borders and the need to guarantee them was behind Prime Minister Tadeusz Mazowiecki's determined campaign to win a place at talks on German re-unification.

In the 20th century, Europe has been reshaped three times around Poland: after World War I, in the secret 1939 Soviet-German Pact and in 1945 at meetings of the victorious allies in Yalta and Postdam.

Through it all, Poles have endured borders that were seldom of their own choosing.

After Russia, Prussia and Austria erased Poland in 1795, Poles kept alive dreams for their own state. Their chance came in 1919 after the World War I collapse of the three partitioning powers. The separated parts of Poland united to establish their own government.

President Woodrow Wilson of the US had made an "independent and autonomous Poland with free, unrestricted access to the sea" one of his fourteen points in the post-war settlement.

Through a combination of negotiations, plebiscites and military actions that lasted until 1922 and managed to alienate all its neighbours, Poland carved out a saddle-shaped territory with a narrow corridor to the Baltic dividing the main body of Germany from East Prussia.

The oddly contoured country bordered Romania in the extreme south east and included Vilnius, the heavily Polish-populated city in Lithuania.

Though shrunken, Poland was roughly similar in outline to the Poland that existed in 1772.

The re-establishment of an independent state caused bitterness in Germany and the Soviet Union.

The main irritant was the so-called Polish corridor to the Baltic guaranteed by the victorious World War I powers at Versailles. It made the German city of Danzig (now Gdansk) at the mouth of the Vistula river into a "free city" under protection of the League of Nations, with Poland and Germany sharing some administrative responsibilities.

The German government of the 1920s and Adolf Hitler's regime of the 1930s agitated to get Danzig and to recover its "historic lands" in the corridor.

After incorporating Austria in 1938 and Czechoslovakia in early 1939, Danzig and the Polish corridor became Hitler's target.