

Israel After the Elections

by Meir Vilner

This article by the Gen. Secretary of the Communist Party of Israel was excerpted from a lecture delivered at the 24th Plenary Session of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Israel.

In the election campaign all the parties severed their relations with the world. We were the only party which did not disconnect itself. All the other parties spoke about problems of Israel, the Palestinian problem, the Middle East, the U.S.A., as if those spheres were outside the rest of the world. For them no world exists beyond that. This is one of the calamitous scourges here in Israel. Very numerous persons, not just politicians, are detached from the wider range of our problematics. They disconnect our problematics from that of the world. However, without that connection it is impossible to understand the problems facing Israel.

The elections to the 11th Knesset were held under conditions of great international tension, of the worst relations between the USA and the Soviet Union. Why do I mention this in the context of the theme? Because the international situation influences the climate here in Israel. The fact that at present there are no suitable international conditions — because of the sabotage by Washington — for a solution of the crisis in the Middle East; this fact prevents a perspective in the very near future for solving the fundamental problems, and first of all the Palestinian problem.

Consciously or sub-consciously this influenced the atmosphere in Israel too. In certain circles this gives rise to a pessimistic mood, that is exploited by fascist elements.

I would like to speak about the new danger to world peace. Here, in Israel, there is almost no talk about that. But in the international scene, one of the central issues is the danger of installation of nuclear arms and the use of rockets in the cosmos by the USA. Such a development is liable to bring about a most perilous arms race in the cosmos. This is a peril whose repercussions on the future of mankind is hard to imagine. In the USA it has already been decided to allocate budgets to start this activity. The Soviet Union raises this issue in every forum, at every opportunity and calls on the peoples to frustrate the new design against world peace.

We must explain to the Israeli public that if the development in the international arena continues in the adverse direction and a danger of extermination of mankind is created, Israel is a part of mankind. Let no one think that the world will be destroyed and . . . Israel will remain keeping the occupied Arab territories in its hands.

But in spite of the grave international situation, lately initiatives for a solution of the conflict in Middle East are being taken. As known, the Soviet Union has long ago proposed to convoke an international conference as the only path to a solution. It also puts forward a peace plan for the Middle East. The "Brezhnev Plan" of September 1982 was one of the outstanding initiatives. In December 1983, the UNO General Assembly adopted a resolution about the convocation of an international conference for the Middle East in the spirit of the Soviet proposal. The initiative to convoke an international conference for the establishment of comprehensive peace in the Middle East is thus also the initiative of the UN. The General Secretary of the UN, Peres de Quellar, approached 20 states which are closely related to the issue or have relations with the PLO, and requested them to support the resolution of the Assembly. The majority of those 20 states expressed their agreement. Only two (the USA and Israel) expressed their opposition.

The new Soviet initiative of July 30, 1984 for a peace settlement in the Middle East, which has been published as an official proposal of the Soviet government, is of great importance, because of its contents as well as because of its timing. What is new in this Soviet plan is the specification of matters, a specification which convinces any unbiased person, for this is the only feasible peace plan, which takes into account the rights of all sides involved in the conflict, and that this is the sole road to achieve peace. The fundamental lines of the solution naturally remain intact: the establishment of an independent Palestinian State in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, alongside the State of Israel; East Jerusalem shall be the capital of the Palestinian State; the line of June 4, 1967 shall be the peace frontier; effective international guarantees shall be given to the agreements with the participation of all members of the UN Security Council, or part of them, among them the Soviet Union.

In its new proposal the Soviet Union sets out a detailed plan for the work of the international conference (committees, sub-committees, etc.). It thereby stresses its serious attitude towards the convocation of the conference and the establishment of peace in the Middle

East. Of course, a preparative activity towards such a conference must be carried out. But the out-of-hand rejection from the side of the USA and Israel of an international cooperation for the solution of the crisis in the Middle East shows that they are not interested in peace. They continue the line which undermines the endeavors towards peace, made by the Soviet Union and numerous other states, which are concerned about the existence of a hotbed of war in our region, that is liable to endanger the peace of the world.

I should like to point out that in spite of the Camp David accords, and despite the fact that there are pro-imperialist Arab states, all the Arab states which were approached, have agreed with the UN resolution regarding the convocation of the international conference for the Middle East. It is very important to point out that pro-imperialist Egypt and Jordan as well as Syria and Lebanon and the PLO have expressed their agreement to the convocation of the international conference. This proves that also pro-imperialist factors are afraid of a dangerous slithering down in the Middle East.

As against this, in Israel we witness an additional negative development: the deepening and widening of the strategic alliance with US imperialism. The beginning of direct military collaboration took place already in the Lebanese war. Meantime also joint military Israeli-American manoeuvres were held.

In Lebanon certain positive developments are apparent. The various political bodies in Lebanon have signed an agreement and started to put it into practice. Indeed, from day to day we witness distinct provocations from the side of the Israeli authorities and their agents in Lebanon, and also from the side of international reactionary factors, from the side of CIA agents, and other elements. The forced closing down of the Israeli representative offices near Beirut has been used by the Israeli government as a new pretext for taking steps which cause a more difficult life in Southern Lebanon and erect obstacles regarding the communications between south and north. Israeli warships and planes attack towns, villages and refugee camps in Lebanon.

The ruling circles in Israel and the USA view with anxiety the process of stabilization of the situation in Lebanon, under the leadership of the Rashid Karami government and its agreement with Syria. Therefore still great dangers loom ahead.

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