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THE PEACE PROCESS AFTER ONE YEAR

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Common Jordanian-Israeli Strategic Interests

The Israeli-Jordanian Treaty is very important. Not that Israel did not have peace with Jordan before. Moshe Dayan used to say, "We have a peace agreement with Egypt that is very cold, and without having an agreement with Jordan the peace is quite warm." In fact, we have had a de facto peace with Jordan for many years, since very shortly after the Six-Day War. As many are aware, 80 percent of the agreement that was signed had already been reached over a year ago.

If the Israeli government and the Jordanian government will pursue the essence of this agreement, the new relationship should go beyond matters of common tourist objectives. Economic relations will necessarily be quite

limited because Jordan has a very small economy which limits the potential for direct development beyond the various projects we have heard about involving water development and desalination. But the main outcome could be that Israel and Jordan will be able to expand this agreement to its logical strategic end, a recognition that both countries have common strategic interests. In that respect they both, in different ways, have worries about outside aggression, but even more so share a concern for Palestinian subversion, whether involving the Palestinians in the territories, in whatever configuration, or in Jordan itself where between 60 and 70 percent of the population is Palestinian, a factor of which King Hussein is well aware.

The Oslo Agreement is Unenforceable

For those of us who looked critically at the Oslo agreement when it was signed, the DOP, the Cairo agreement, the London agreement, we expected that the negative results would be greater by far than the positive gains. At the time all this was only a matter of conjecture and we could only state our views. I think by now the failure of Oslo is no longer a matter of conjecture, it is a matter of fact which even some supporters of the Oslo process would admit. They do not yet say it in so many words, but people in the security services in Israel have said to me that in effect the Oslo agreement is unenforceable. The problem which we have is that, although the Oslo agreement is unenforceable, the government will continue to try to enforce it for political reasons, because it will be almost impossible for them to admit that things went wrong, that things just did not go according to their own expectations and certainly not according to the way the agreement was sold to the Israeli public.

The Oslo agreement was sold to the Israeli public principally on the strength of one argument — that there would be an end to violence. A year ago people would say, "Yes, we don't trust

of killings, mainly of civilians — mainly inside Israel, inside the "green line," not in the territories — in the year since Oslo, has risen by about 30 percent compared to the year before Oslo. Some 70 percent were done by Hamas and another 10 or 12 percent by Islamic Jihad, with the rest committed by groups associated in one way or another with the PLO, but not necessarily all of them with Fatah. In the year since the signing of the Oslo agreement, 64 Israelis were killed by Arab terrorists compared to 49 in the year before Oslo, and by the end of November the number of Israeli terror victims had risen to 100.

An Incapable Terrorist Leadership

A second piece of evidence for the bankruptcy of Oslo is the failure of the Palestinian leadership to assume the civilian administration of Gaza and Jericho in an orderly fashion. The Israeli leadership made a basic mistake in assuming that the terrorist leadership would be capable of creating a normal civilian administration capable of coexisting with Israel.

would more or less do what Israel intended, as well as think as Israel thought. Yet I am not sure the Israeli government ever had a clear-cut picture or road map of exactly what it wanted to achieve with that agreement.

Arafat and his people are now fighting a very effective campaign to get their hands on all these promised international funds, but the donor countries are being careful and are in no hurry to give Arafat the money without a system of accountability. Arafat does not want to give accountability because the exclusive control of funds has been the source of his political clout all these years. This very question surfaced in the recent episode with Abu Alla and whether or not he would represent the PLO in economic discussions. Abu Alla is one of their main economics experts, and, although he will not state it too openly, he does not want the international money to go to Yasser Arafat. He wants the money to go directly to certain Palestinian functions because he knows full well that if the money does not go through these channels, much of it will never reach the Palestinians in the territories for its proper and fair use.

A Palestinian State and Israeli Security

I see the process in motion today leading almost inevitably and unavoidably to the creation of a Palestinian state that is going to extend more or less all the way to the former "green line" with perhaps minor rectifications. I think Rabin himself still believes, and he certainly still hopes, that the Jordan Valley can be kept in Israeli hands, but keeping the Jordan Valley without looking for some link between the Jordan Valley and other parts of the territories and the State of Israel itself could be more of a problem than a solution.

The Palestinians certainly view the process as the road leading toward a single aim, the creation of a Palestinian state in all the territories with east Jerusalem as their capital. If the process continues along the way it has been going, this outcome is almost inevitable. If this is the case, Israel must ask itself what its long-term expectations are from a security point of view.

The question here is not one of ideology, not

that ideology is not important. If we were not Zionists, we would not be here. But let us restrict our focus to the military-strategic aspect of the question and try to lay out the components of the equation.

It is the view of many military experts that it would not be possible to defend the State of Israel against a potential aggressor from the east from the outskirts of Tel Aviv. Such a threat could originate from Iran, Iraq, and Syria, perhaps going through Jordan. For this reason, it is generally accepted that in order to afford Israel the optimum ability to withstand such a potential threat, Israel will have to maintain objective control at least of certain areas in Judea and Samaria (though perhaps not Gaza), including the mountain ridges and the high ground which, on the one hand, controls two-thirds of Israel's economic and population concentrations, and on the other hand, constitutes a natural barrier against the possibility of advancing armor and troops from across the Jordan.

The Continued Importance of Territory

George Bush used to speak about geography no longer being important, but this is simply not true. All wars, including the Gulf War and in Yugoslavia, have been wars determined by conquering territory. The Americans recently forced the Iraqis to agree to a territorial cordon sanitaire north of Kuwait. That means that all of the previously-held considerations about geography obviously are still important. It is the view of the chief of the general staff, General Barak, and our former heads of the general staff, General Shomron and others, that not only does the missile age not diminish the importance of territory, but it actually increases the importance of territory. Missiles can serve as a protective umbrella for ground forces, but they do not determine the outcome of a war.

In Israel, territory is intensely important. If, God forbid, the missile attacks on Israel that occurred during the Gulf War would be repeated, perhaps more seriously next time, this could mean that Israel might be prevented from mobilizing its largely reservist army. Unless Israel holds those natural barriers, whether the high ground in Judea

and Samaria or the Golan, we could find a potential enemy at the outskirts of Tel Aviv before we are even able to mobilize our troops.

I am sure the current Israeli government is aware of all these arguments, but it believes that the Palestinian entity will agree to demilitarization, and that Israel will be able to maintain certain early warning systems at all times. But the key is sovereignty. If the Palestinian entity, which today does not essentially endanger the State of Israel, were to evolve into a full-fledged sovereign state, that would be the end to demilitarization unless Israel remains in physical control of at least part of the area.

The Need for a Security Zone

Perhaps ultimately, with Jordan in the picture and with a different sort of leadership among the Palestinians, it will still be possible to arrive at some sort of solution where Israel will continue to be the paramount authority in all things pertaining to security — the security of the territories and the security of Israel (there is no difference).

What is required is a security zone in Judea and Samaria that would be part of the State of Israel. Israel may or may not immediately impose sovereignty in this zone, but it will be, for all intents and purposes, part of the State of Israel. The areas involved should include the primary strategically important parts of the territories. An effort should also be made to have this security zone be as identical as possible with those areas where most of the Israeli settlements are already located. Some settlements may not be included, but many will be. They were put there originally because they are in strategic places.

This perspective contradicts the misleading conception that our troops are forced to be located near the settlements in order to protect the settlers. In fact, the shoe is really on the other foot altogether. Overall, the settlements are there in order to enable Israel to maintain its troops in areas that are strategically important to it.

Hamas and the PLO Share the Same Aims

The government's policy is based at least

verbally on two basic false assumptions: The first is that there has been a basic sea change in the attitude of the PLO, with whom Israel has made an agreement.

We realize now that Hamas is working very hard to prevent any peace and that it is an organization that has to be stamped out. However, we must also realize that there is no great difference between the PLO and Hamas. The long-term aims of Hamas and the PLO are the same. Farouk Kaddumi, the foreign minister of the PLO, himself continues to repeat that the PLO and Hamas have the same aims. We know what the aims of Hamas are — the destruction of the State of Israel, not just gaining authority in the territories. I have no doubt that this also remains the aim of the PLO. It is not just happenstance or an accident that the PLO has not repealed the Palestinian Covenant. It is not a matter of one or two paragraphs, but their whole charter is based on one aim exclusively, how to replace the State of Israel with the Palestinian state. The main debate between Hamas and the PLO is about tactics and timetables, but there is no difference in their long-term perspectives or targets.

We must also understand that despite whatever Arafat may say, he thinks he cannot afford to fight Hamas, not only because Hamas is a fact on the ground, but because he believes, perhaps erroneously, that by not being too forceful and not acting against Hamas, there remains a chance that Hamas will accept his political leadership once the Palestinian state comes into being, and he wants to be the president of all the Palestinians. Therefore, although he knows that they are opposed to him on the political level and that they are more funda-

mentalist and he is supposedly more secular, he will do his very utmost not to annoy Hamas too much and try to get Hamas support. Both may be expected to honor their agreement not to attack each other and not to act too forcefully against one another.

There is No "New Middle East"

The second false assumption is that there is a new Middle East. There is no new Middle East, as Saddam Hussein so vividly reminded us a few weeks ago when he moved his troops again toward the border with Kuwait. The question of the stability of the Middle East is not just a function of the Israeli-Arab conflict or even of the Palestinian question. A report prepared by the U.S. Army Staff College noted that out of nineteen wars in the Middle East since 1947, Israel was not involved in more than five. Most of the instability in the area has nothing to do directly with the Israel-Arab conflict. Yes, there are new facts in the Middle East, including the impact of America as the sole superpower. Israel and the United States must exploit these new realities, but they do not necessarily mean that we live in a completely different world from the one in which we lived before.

There are Arab countries in the vicinity and on the periphery of our region who have a common interest with us. We must do our very best to try to bring these common interests to fruition, economically and otherwise. But it is important for us to realize that the basic part of the calculus of Israel's security and survival has not greatly changed.

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