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**ZIONIST IDEAS  
AS REFLECTED IN ISRAELI  
GOVERNMENT POLICY  
ON A MIDDLE  
EAST SETTLEMENT  
IN THE EARLY 1980s**

From the moment that the State of Israel was formed Zionism has been the dominating ideology and policy of its ruling circles whatever political coalition has been in power. Furthermore, the Israeli leadership has made increasing use of the state and political institutions to inculcate Zionist dogma among the masses, since by the early 1980s it had become clear that Zionism was beginning to lose its grip in Israel. This was because the "besieged fortress" condition in which the Israeli State had lived through its own fault for a period of nearly 35 years has seriously affected the attitudes of its population and those of the Diaspora Jews with the result that Zionism is losing its power of attraction even for the Jews living in Israel itself. According to Rabbi Irving Greenberg, director of the National Jewish Resource Centre, "growing emigration from Israel, coupled with a drop in immigration, suggests a waning of the magnetism of Central Jewish values and of Zionism".<sup>1</sup>

When in May 1977 the Likud bloc came to power, Israel was under the illusion that the new, Begin government was really a cabinet that, in the words of its leader, "could rule". The last seven years (during this period there was a general election on June 30, 1981, in which the Likud was returned with a small majority) have dispelled the illusions of many Israelis. The late Moshe Dayan characterised the period thus: "Gallopung uncontrolled inflation...and the government incapable of stopping it... Lack of economic policy: one policy announced one day (and not implemented) and another policy trumpeted the next (and also not implemented). And no one in the Cabinet able to explain the government's policy or how inflation is to

be stopped or how the balance of payments deficit is to be reduced."<sup>2</sup>

The clear incompetence of the Israeli rulers with regard to the economy can be seen in the sharp increase that there has been in the amount of money in circulation, which has inevitably led to rising prices in the domestic market and increased imports which have further contributed to the balance of payments deficit and increased foreign debt. The critical condition of the Israeli economy has been considerably worsened by the rise in military expenditure. Thus the "economic miracle" promised by Begin never came. Already two years after the 1977 election state spending had risen sharply and the number of civil servants and persons employed in the services sphere was 52 per cent of the working population. Each year the Israeli economy became more complicated and alarming.

Israel is a good example of interdependence of foreign and domestic policy in a bourgeois state. The worsening internal situation and increased economic difficulties have pushed the government into headlong adventurism in its foreign policy. Behind many of the foreign policy acts of the Israeli leadership during the early 1980s lay internal political undertones, the desire to weaken social conflict in the country by diverting attention to Israel's international position.

In going through with the Camp David in October 1978 and in concluding a "peace treaty" with Egypt on March 26, 1979, the Zionist leadership in Israel was sure that these agreements would result in Egypt ultimately leaving the group of countries opposed to Israel and make it impossible in the foreseeable future to form any more or less serious anti-Israel coalition of Arab states.

Egypt's late president, Sadat, agreed to the signing of the Camp David accords and a "peace treaty" with Israel in the belief that Washington, while being interested in forming an anti-Soviet "strategic consensus" of a few Middle East states and including Egypt in that "consensus", would put pressure on Israel for it to make concessions over the Palestinian question. Then the isolation of Egypt in the Arab and Islamic world, an inevitable consequence of the Camp David capitulation, might significantly weaken and an agreement on the prin-

ciples of "administrative autonomy" for Palestinians on the West Bank and in the Gaza Strip, for which Sadat held out high hopes, could be achieved to his credit.

Washington, for its part, based itself on the clearly erroneous supposition that the consistently deepening isolation of Egypt in the Arab world, the increasing social discontent and internal political tension in the country, and the evident collapse of the "economic miracle", which was supposed to occur in Egypt as a result of Sadat's policy of close cooperation with the United States, could be compensated for by American military and economic "aid".

These calculations both on the part of Sadat and the US administration were also erroneous for the fact that Begin, who had with US support removed the threat of further military and political confrontation between Egypt and Israel, considered himself in control of the situation and thus able to dictate Israeli-style conditions to both Egypt and the United States.

The failure of Sadat's attempts to at least partially change the obstructionist line taken by Israel on the Palestinian question and to get the tripartite talks on Palestinian autonomy off the ground showed to the whole world the treacherous workings of the Camp David agreements in relation to the Palestinians. After Sadat's murder it became quite clear that the withdrawal of Israeli troops in April 1982 from the last occupied third of the Sinai peninsula was essentially the result of an *a priori* refusal on the part of Egypt to make progress in solving the Palestinian problem.

Even before the withdrawal became a fact, the former director of the American Middle East Institute, Leonard Binder, said: "As the Camp David process drew to a close, it became clearer that it had only produced a separate peace between Egypt and Israel. Egypt had failed to open a bridge between Israel and the moderate Arab states, and Israel had failed to make any promising concession on the Palestine question."<sup>3</sup> At the cost of conceding Sinai Israel not only established itself in the far more important from the political, strategic, economic and even religious points of view territories of the West Bank and Gaza, but virtually unambiguously affirmed its intention of directly annexing these lands in the same way as it had occu-

pied the Golan Heights and the Arab part of Jerusalem. This approach was fully in line with Zionist thinking. The Israeli political observer, Shlomo Avinery, stated directly in this connection that "Begin viewed Camp David as a unique opportunity to trade Sinai for the chance to bolster present Israeli control over the West Bank and Gaza and future permanent claim to them".<sup>4</sup>

It is especially important to stress that Israel's withdrawal from Sinai was not simply advantageous, but essential for the United States, since it restrained the new Egyptian President Mubarak from anti-Israeli and therefore anti-American acts. The American leadership could not but realise that Israel's refusal to withdraw its troops from Sinai would undermine the whole architecture of Camp David, accelerate Egypt's return to the united anti-Israeli front and finally destroy US hopes of attracting the "moderate" Arab countries into what Washington calls the "peace-creating process" in its American-Israeli scenario.

The political intentions of the Israeli leadership in relation to the Arab territories that were occupied after the Six Day War in June 1967, the exploitation of which is extremely important to the Israeli economy, have never been a secret, though they were disguised under notions about the importance of these lands for the achievement of Zionist "purely peaceful" aims.

This exploitation amounted, in the first place, to using these territories, including that of the Sinai peninsula, for political bargaining, and, second, it was clear from the start that Israel's ultimate aim was the annexation of a larger part of these lands. Israeli action in relation to the Golan Heights which were "incorporated" as part of Israel by extending Israeli legislation over these territories was analogous to its action over the Arab (Eastern) section of Jerusalem.

In laying claim to Palestinian lands, Israel advanced a whole load of groundless arguments, which could be divided into two kinds. On the one hand, it was said to be essential to keep these territories under Israeli control so as to ensure the "security" of Israel; on the other, these lands that for centuries had been owned by the Arabs were claimed to be "Biblical lands" which supposedly belonged to Israel by "God's law". But even the

American press in its comments on the claims of the Zionist Israeli leadership justly noted that "ancient history... is entirely inadmissible as a definition in international law or diplomacy".<sup>5</sup> The thesis of the necessity to ensure the security of Israel is beyond any criticism, since the territorial enlargements that Israel has made at the expense of its Arab neighbours are the true reason for the deepening of the Arab-Israeli conflict.

Official Israeli propaganda tries to present the territorial claims of the Israeli leadership on its Arab neighbours, irrespective of which coalition is in power in Israel, as different "orientations" in the foreign policy of the various Israeli political parties. The former director-general of the Israeli Foreign Ministry, Shlomo Avinery, wrote in an article in *The Jerusalem Post*: "The real political debate in Israel is not between doves and hawks. It is between those who believe Israel's policies should be determined by considerations of security and those who believe that its policy should be dictated by history."<sup>6</sup> Avinery naively tries to assure his readers that these "debates" began only after the Six Day War. But even he was forced to admit that both the Likud and the Labour Party considered it essential for Israel to consolidate its hold on the Arab territories taken during the war, and that they had no differences in attitude to the problem of Jerusalem, which they considered to be eternally united under Israeli sovereignty.

The desire for more and more territorial claims, which continually appears in the various declarations and concrete actions of the Israeli leadership, has been brought into line with the demands of the day by implementation of the famous Zionist slogan-winning "land without people" (which is what the Zionists used to call Palestine) for a "people without land" (i.e., the Jews). The Zionists were never concerned about what the Arabs thought of their plans. The late Nahum Goldmann, a prominent Zionist leader in his time, said that "Zionism committed the unintentional error of ignoring the importance of the Arab attitude for the realization of Zionist aspirations".<sup>7</sup> To describe the Zionist action as "unintentional" is disproved not only by the history of the formation of the State of Israel, but by the present policies of the Zionist leadership in that country. Examples from most recent times are known to everyone.

In the matter of choosing the time for annexing the Golan Heights the Israeli leadership very likely counted on the usual outbreak of serious inter-Arab disagreement, which this time was the result of the so-called Fahd Plan and the failure of Saudi hopes to get it accepted in the Arab world as a plan for a Middle East settlement at the first stage of the conference of the heads of Arab states and governments in Fez (Morocco) in November 1981.

The Fahd Plan was, naturally, turned down off-hand by the Israeli leadership who did not even want to hear about the formation of a Palestinian state.

The official reaction of Washington was more restrained. After the first, brief period of confusion some positive statements were made about the plan which contained a certain degree of flexibility and even a veiled criticism of the Camp David "peace formula". Congressman Paul McCloskey, who is well known for his pro-Israeli sympathies, stressed: "This is the only way we can proceed moving initially through the Camp David process, and hopefully correlating this process with the Saudi peace proposal."<sup>8</sup>

By the end of 1981 US policy in the Middle East could be characterised like this: there was the declared intention to begin a new stage in the "peace efforts" on the basis of the common aims of Camp David, which did not, however, exclude departing from the close framework and more odious aspects of the "Camp David scheme"; efforts were continued to form an anti-Soviet "strategic agreement" among the pro-Western regimes in the area, a proposal that was first made by Alexander Haig in spring 1981; there were attempts to make use of the Fahd Plan despite the fact that US Middle East policy was always anti-Palestinian in its approach to the majority of issues in the region.

Obviously, an effective symbiosis of the Camp David agreements and the Fahd Plan (from the point of view of the US administration) required as a prime condition the maximum weakening of the military, political and ideological force of the Palestinian Resistance Movement, which was always the main obstacle in the way of US-Israeli plans. Washington (let alone Israel) always considered equally unacceptable both aspects of

the Palestinian movement that determine its place in the inter-Arab and international arena: the forging of Arab unity through support for the Arab cause on an anti-imperialist, anti-Zionist basis, even at times despite the wishes of ruling circles in these countries, and the simultaneous process of the inevitable radicalisation of the Arab national liberation movement as a whole. For this reason the large-scale Israeli aggression in Lebanon was in full accordance with the long-term political and military objectives of Washington. It was, naturally, part of the framework of the now traditional policy of expansion and aggression against its Arab neighbours which for more than three decades now the Zionist leadership in Israel has conducted.

The physical annihilation of the armed forces of the Palestinian Resistance Movement and the destruction of the political structure of the PLO was in line with the interests of American policy in the Middle East which clearly relies on the use of force. In the Western, and particularly the American press there are numerous reports that the Reagan administration gave the green light to the Israeli aggression and that the American-Israeli contacts, including those at the highest level, held in the first half of 1982 had the particular objective of working out the details of the "operation" and "assigning roles". According to *Paris Match*, "in late January-early February 1982 everything was prepared for launching a major punitive raid".<sup>9</sup> Particularly noteworthy was the information published in *The Middle East International* journal to the effect that the United States knew beforehand about the Israeli invasion as can be seen from the fact that two American warships arrived in the area immediately before the invasion. The *Kennedy* naval vessel was anchored not far from the Lebanese-Israeli coast, and the *Eisenhower* near the Island of Crete in order to observe the disposition of Soviet naval vessels. Both these ships had left their berth on June 1 so as to be in place on time.

A whole list of reasons could be given why Begin decided on large-scale anti-Palestinian aggression in Lebanon in June. Suffice it to recall the conflict between Britain and Argentina over the Falklands and note the complex character of inter-Arab relations, which made it possible for Israel to justifiably suppose that the reaction of the Arab countries to the Israeli in-



vasion would be feeble and uncoordinated. Finally, it should also be mentioned that there was an oil surplus on the world market, a clear instance of supply being higher than demand, which *a priori* made it pointless for the Arab oil producers to introduce an embargo.

It is highly characteristic that the decision to invade Lebanon was made by Begin at a time when Reagan and Haig were in Western Europe and occupied with problems of relations with their Western allies. Also, Vice-President George Bush and William Clark, head of the National Security Council, were both on a short holiday outside Washington. Obviously, this decision by Israel was also dictated in no small measure by the desire to localise possible accusations of coordinating its actions in Lebanon with Washington and create the impression that the American leadership was caught unawares. This approach, in the opinion of the Israeli leadership, made it possible for the United States to conduct large-scale political manoeuvring.

Many political observers think that the bombing of the nuclear centre in Baghdad in June 1981 and the massive Israeli invasion of South Lebanon in July of the same year were in fact rehearsals. Their main objective was to test reaction in the West, particularly in the United States, to the possibility of a full-scale war in Lebanon. And, convinced that there was nothing to fear, Begin decided to act.

In June 1982 the normal toleration for their annexation policy that the Israelis had come to expect from the US government turned into a terrible tragedy for the Palestinian and Lebanese peoples. Knowing the Israeli intentions Washington did not even raise a finger to stop Tel Aviv from implementing its criminal plans.

Declarations from highly placed persons in the US administration that Washington was "concerned" at the scale of the Lebanese-Palestinian tragedy are not worth a farthing. The mendacious character of these laments comes out particularly clearly against the background of the frank statements made by the Israeli leaders. "Relations between Israel and the United States have not worsened," said Sharon in an interview with the *Europeo* magazine. "The Americans... share our goals and agree with our programme... Our alliance with the United States

is based on mutual interest and the United States knows this perfectly well." In the same interview Sharon went on to say that he had coordinated the aggressive plans with Haig and Weinberger as early as September 1981. In the then talks in Washington Sharon, in his own words, declared to his highly-placed listeners: "Do not pretend that you will be shocked when we do it [i.e., invade Lebanon.—*Author.*]." <sup>10</sup>

The objectives of the Israeli aggression in Lebanon can be divided into two groups: the overt objectives, those that lie on the surface and are borne out in one way or another by official Israeli declarations; and the covert objectives, those that are carefully concealed by the Zionists from public opinion.

The most obvious of the Israeli objectives in Lebanon were:

- the destruction of the military and political infrastructure of the PLO, the weakening of its political positions and undermining of its authority, and the complete withdrawal of the Palestinian armed forces from Lebanon;

- the strengthening of the puppet buffer enclave of Major Haddad in the south of Lebanon. According to the *International Herald Tribune*, "another possibility, officials say, would be to create a buffer zone under the control of... Maj.Saad Haddad... Prime Minister Menachem Begin in effect set the stage for such a zone... by turning over to Maj.Haddad the Beaufort Castle..." <sup>11</sup>

- the weakening of the Muslims and the simultaneous strengthening of the right-wing Christians in the country's political structure, the creation of the necessary conditions for forming such a government in Lebanon which would agree to sign a peace treaty with Israel that would include a special clause on ending the "Palestinian presence" on Lebanese territory in any form;

- the withdrawal of Syrian troops from Lebanon, which had been there as part of the Arab security forces on a decision of the League of Arab States;

- a demonstration of the power and "omnipotence" of Israel and its leading role in questions of war and peace in the Middle East.

These objectives clearly reflect the ideas of militant Zionism, which is the ideological basis for the actions of the Israeli gov-

ernment. Another characteristic circumstance is the fact that the Israeli government and the international Zionist organisations have taken great pains to somehow justify the crimes committed by the Israeli military in Lebanon in the eyes of the world public. In many countries the Jewish communities have been called upon to give a practical demonstration of their support for Israel and its action in Lebanon at the precise moment when indignation at this action was growing throughout the world.

The Zionist leaders have always maintained that support for Israel is the essential condition for all Zionists and the duty of every Jew wherever he may live.

But the Israeli aggression in Lebanon showed that even individual Zionist organisations abroad, particularly in the United States, would not wholly support such bloodshed and genocide against the Palestinian and Arab peoples in Lebanon, for the indignation of the world was too great at these clear examples of the expansionist nature of Zionism. Once more (and how many times is this!) was the correctness of the UN General Assembly borne out, when at its 30th session in 1975 (November 10) it adopted by a majority of votes the well-known Resolution No. 3379 in which Zionism was characterised as a form of racism and racial discrimination.

Returning to the events of the summer and autumn of 1982 in Lebanon mention should be made of the covert objectives of the Israeli aggression. First of all, there was the opportunity to use the southern part of Lebanon (as far as the River Litani, the so-called red line) for the economic development of Israel, and particularly for providing parts of the country with fresh water. Immediately after the Israeli aggression started and the southern part of Lebanon was occupied, reports were carried in the American press that the Israeli government was sending to Lebanon "experienced civilian and military administrators from the West Bank and the Gaza Strip to enable it [Israel] to run civilian affairs in the southern portion of the country for a long period".<sup>12</sup> The London *Times* wrote that in the occupied parts of Lebanon such work was being carried out as not only attested to Tel Aviv's intentions to maintain in some form or other its occupation of the land but confirmed that Israeli plans were of a long-term nature. These plans included "the construction of

new roads and buildings, . . . and the consolidation of local water sources".<sup>13</sup> The Israeli leadership consistently avoided any specific declarations on this matter but several members of the government expressed themselves quite clearly on the issue. Thus Youval Ne'eman, a parliamentary deputy of the Hatehiya Party, which is part of the ruling right-wing Zionist coalition, stressed that the long stay of Israeli troops in Lebanon would help bring peace to Galilee. The Israeli armed forces, he claimed, could guarantee security more reliably than a multinational peace-keeping force, and Israel would be able to achieve a definite level in the social, economic and technical development of the region, which geographically and historically was an inalienable part of "Greater Israel". Furthermore, Israel might even be able to come to an agreement with Lebanon to change their mutual borders.

The second covert objective of Israeli aggression in Lebanon bore a frankly provocative character and amounted to allowing the wave of Palestinian terrorist activity to increase against Israel and, possibly, the USA in response to the crude military acts of the Israelis and their right-Christian allies. An increase in "Palestinian terrorism" would make it possible for the Israeli government to maintain the internal tension and divert public opinion from the complex domestic, especially economic problems. Furthermore, instances of Palestinian terrorism could be directly used by Israel's leadership to justify its long-term occupation of Lebanon, to step up its armed acts against the Palestinians and to refuse to participate in any settlement of the Palestinian problem whatever from it might take.

The intention of the Israeli leaders to crush the Palestinians militarily reveals one further objective pursued by Tel Aviv. This was to pave the way for the direct annexation of the West Bank and Gaza and for holding talks on so-called administrative autonomy for the Palestinians on Israeli terms. This was directly indicated in the American press. A report in *The Washington Post* stated: "Without the PLO in Beirut, thinking here goes, the West Bank's nationalist leaders will lose support and be replaced by others willing to work with Israeli occupation authorities. Thus relieved of demands from the PLO and the West Bank for genuine self-determination, Israel, Egypt and the

United States can come relatively easily to an agreement on West Bank autonomy that does not challenge permanent Israeli sovereignty or increased Jewish presence in the area, officials predict."<sup>14</sup>

The "administrative autonomy" of the Palestinian territories should, in the opinion of the Israeli leadership and the US administration, become the final solution of the Palestinian problem. However, US-Israeli plans for such autonomy have nothing in common with the problem of securing the genuine national rights of the Palestinian Arabs. The tripartite Egyptian-Israeli-US talks on ways to implement these plans are an open attempt to "solve" the Palestinian problem without the Palestinians and against their interests. So far these talks, which were begun in May 1979, have brought no results. This is because the Israeli position at the talks is clearly obstructionist and there has been no change in it since May 1979. This position boils down to three points:

- the autonomy of the West Bank and Gaza should be based on the juridical status of the people living there and not on the territories themselves;

- responsibility for self-rule on the West Bank and the Gaza strip will remain with Israel, through its military government;

- the authorities of self-ruling councils to be elected will be largely restricted to social and educative services; they will not have the right to enact legislation.<sup>15</sup>

It is characteristic that even today when the Palestinian movement is working under the most difficult conditions as a result of the Israeli aggression in Lebanon in 1982, the Israeli "programme" for the Palestinian question demonstrates how far the Zionist leadership in Israel has departed from reality. Despite the withdrawal of a large part of the Palestinian units from Lebanon, the Palestinian problem has still not yet been solved. The "new" American proposals that President Reagan made on September 1, 1982 could not ignore this fact. And although the "Reagan Plan" was based on the so-called "Jordanian option" for the solution to the problem, i.e., it virtually ignored the right of the Palestinians to self-determination and the formation of their own state, it could be seen as an indication of US disapproval of Israeli plans to directly annex the

West Bank and Gaza. There can be no doubt that the Palestinian problem remains, as before, the dominant factor in Middle East politics and exerts an inevitable influence over the policies of practically all states involved in the area, including the United States.

Convinced of the fruitlessness of trying to form an anti-Soviet "strategic consensus" and virtually admitting the lack of any real chances to revive the "Camp David peace process", the US government now basically relies on the proposals made by President Reagan on September 1, 1982. Here official Washington is relying very much on cooperation with the American Jewish community and the Zionist organisations in the USA. In general outline the picture is of the United States trying to offer the Palestinians the old goods of "administrative autonomy" and telling them that the "Jordanian option" for the solution to the Palestinian problem will "suit everyone". The Israeli government at the same time rejects the slightest attempts on the part of the United States to even mention the need for a solution to this problem among the complex of issues affecting a Middle East settlement. In other words, Washington is saying to the Arabs, particularly the Palestinians: "Agree to administrative autonomy under the Israeli occupation forces, otherwise Israel may take fresh action and it will be too late."

Obviously, this approach will not bring the peoples of this explosive region of the world any nearer to the achievement of a just and lasting peace.

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The whole history of international Zionism is an example of how bourgeois nationalism, blown up to extremes, becomes militant chauvinism, one of the most dangerous forms of racism and racial discrimination. The events of the early 1980s have once more shown the bestial nature of Zionism and exposed—for the umpteenth time!—the inhumane character of Zionist ideas.

The American-Israeli strategic alliance makes Israel's foreign policy extremely dangerous. Furthermore, international Zionism has not renounced its plans for a "Greater Israel" and one of the attempts to fulfil them was the invasion of Lebanon. The

imperialist "division of labour"—whereby Israel has the dirty work of forcibly suppressing the Palestinians, while Washington uses diplomatic manoeuvring to try and split the various Palestinian organisations and individual Palestinian leaders and set them against each other—fools no one. Only US support makes it possible for the Zionists to sabotage a stable and constructive peace in the Middle East that is based on justice for all.

The way to establish this, the only possible kind of peace, which is not to the liking of the Zionists, has been set out in the Soviet proposals for a settlement of the Middle East conflict, which were put forward in September 1982. The truth is that a genuine peace in the Middle East is only possible if the national interests of all peoples and states in the area are taken account of and satisfied. Until the Israeli leaders renounce the racist ideas of militant Zionism, the Middle East situation will remain tense and potentially explosive. And they will also have to renounce their long-exposed annexationist plans, when they are faced with powerful resistance from a united Arab front supported by all those who want a genuine peace and a peaceful solution to international disputes and problems. The creation of such a front is the object of all genuine Arab patriots and all political forces that support the Arab countries and peoples in their just struggle to prevent the aggressive ideas of Zionism, which Zionist ruling circles in Israel have been pursuing for three and a half decades, from being put into practice.

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