NEVERTHELESS, IT DOES MOVE - AND WILL GO ON MOVING !

Four Years after the June War
("Zo Haderekh", June 2, 1971.)
By Wolf Ehrlich

Four years have already elapsed and it looks as if nothing has changed. The Security Council Resolution has not been implemented. Israeli forces continue ruling the areas occupied in June 1967. The Palestinian refugees continue to live as refugees. The Israeli Government continues to prevent a political solution of the crisis; continues to oppress the Arab population in the occupied territories. The privations are continuing - the detentions, deportations, tortures and demolitions of houses. The Israeli government ministers and the Israeli daily press continue their bitter play of pretense that "we" are right in carrying out a policy which is entirely based on the sword. The American Administration continues to finance this policy, supplying "Phantoms", "Skyhawks", (planes and missiles - Ed. IB) and tanks, continues to provide political backing.

At first sight it looks as if at the lapse of 4 years we could repeat what we said at the lapse of the third year. At first sight it looks as if history has stopped here - and taken up position with the wrong side, with the side using force - and that this is going to continue.

The only matter that looks different in June 19771 from the situation in June 1970, is the cease-fire. No longer is there any bloodshed with so many victims for the peoples. Obviously this fact has to be valued, for mothers can better sleep now. At the same time, the bosses of Israeli policy abuse the prolonged cease-fire in order to fortify their official position aimed at perpetualizing the occupation.

But...

But this sort of appraisal of the situation, which engenders cynicism or despair, is a superficial one, as it does not envisage the historical process, the quantiative, small - and not-so-small - changes which necessarily lead to qualitative changes, to a fundamental change of the whole situation, to the realization of the provisions of the

Security Council Resolution No. 242 of November 22, 1967, to the withdrawal from the occupied areas. At the end of its fourth year the occupation has become more fragile and this process will continue. Let us examine the matter. The great majority of the progressive anti-imperialist forces in the world, in particular the Soviet Union, the socialist countries and the communist movement, right from the beginning took up the demand for implementation of the Resolution. They considered it as the apt instrument for the solution of the crisis and for the elimination of the results of the aggression. The Soviet Union has waged a consistent struggle for a political solution, which will lead to a just and lasting peace, a peace based on respecting the rights of all the peoples and all the countries in the region. The Soviet Union, which fully supported the struggle of the Arab peoples for eliminating the results of the war, has brought into play all its power of influence in order to convince them to pursue a realistic policy and to struggle for a peaceful solution. The Soviet Union convinced the UAR and other Arab countries to express their preparedness for cessation of belligerence, for recognizing the sovereignty of the State of Israel, for concluding with it a peace agreement, for granting it free navigation in the Suez Canal and the Tiran Straits, in exchange for Israel's readiness to withdraw from the occupied areas, to make possible a just solution of the refugee problem, and to avoid aggressive acts. The Soviet Union also convinced them not to demand of Israel any territorial concessions and to consider the truce lines of June 4,1967 as the recognized and secure frontiers about which Resolution No. 242 speaks. The Soviet Union acted resolutely in favour of such a settlement, as would enable all the countries and peoples in the region to live in security and without fear of aggression and intimidation.

The Pact of Friendship and Collaboration concluded on May 27, 1971 between the Soviet Union and the UAR constitutes an additional stage in the relations between these two states, strengthens the power of the UAR and enhances the chances for arriving at a political solution of the crisis, and at a just and stable peace in our region.

Alongside with this, the Soviet Union has intensified, together with other factors, the pressure on the US rulers and the Israeli rulers to consent to implementing Resolution No. 242.

The policy favouring such a solution has won still more ground in the Arab world in the course of last year. The Syrian Government, too, for example, despite its hesitations regarding the practibility of this plan, has now reached a positive position relative to a political solution, if and when it should be achieved. This line has even begun to affect the Palestinian Resistance organizations. The organ of the Jordanian Communist Party, "El-Jamahir", wrote at the beginning of January 1971, after sharply criticizing the opposition to the Security Council Resolution on part of the Palestinian Resistance Organization: "Lately some change has taken place in the positions of the majority of the Palestinian Fadayun Organizations (Guerilla Organizations - Ed. IB) in relation to the Security Council Resolution and the political solution..."

In this context there is of interest the appearance of the Palestinian representatives in the Assembly of the World Peace Council in Budapest: They favoured the incorrect project of establishing a democratic Palestinian state, in which there would reign full equality of Jews, Moslems and Christians. But at the same time, they did not vote against the Appeal and against the Resolution Concerning the Middle East, nor did they abstain from voting on the ratification of these documents, though in the Appeal there was the following statement:

"The establishment of peace in the Middle East requires: the unconditional implementation of the Security Council Resolution of November 22, 1967 and of the decision of the UNO General Assembly of November 4, 1970; the withdrawal of the Israeli forces from all the territories occupied in the 1967 war; the recognition of all the states in the region and of the just national rights of the Palestinian Arab people; guaranteeing the right of each and every people to live and to develop in its own way."

And in the Resolution there was the following statement:

"A just political settlement is possible and suits the interests of all the peoples of the region; it is the only alternative solution to the present situation, which bears within it grave perils for world peace. The Security Council Resolution of November 22, 1967 provides the basis for this settlement. The peace forces have the power to ensure its implementation..."

This idea, in a different formulation, is also included in the Manifest of the World Peace Council, which was unanimously adopted in the Assembly.

In relation to the solution of the Middle East crisis, there is a growing consolidation of the anti-imperialist forces in the world around the demand for fully implementing Resolution No. 242, and thereby it will be in their power to influence more, to exert more pressure on, the Western factors.

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Ruling circles in the capitalist countries are also crystallizing, of course for different reasons, a similar position, and here too a constant development in the same direction is observable.

Thus, for instance, on April 26-27, 1971, in Stockholm the foreign ministers of Sweden, Finland, Norway, Denmark and Iceland met, and decided that the settlement of the conflict in the Middle East must be carried out by means of implementing all the instructions of the Security Council Resolution of November 1967.

In May 1971 the foreign ministers of the six European Common Market countries (France, West Germany, Italy, Belgium, the Netherlands, and Luxemburg) decided jointly to support a peace agreement in the Middle East based on the implementation of Resolution No. 242. The French Foreign Minister conveyed a document on this decision to the UNO General Secretary, U Thant, who expressed his satisfaction at this decision. The foreign ministers of four additional countries (Great Britain, Norway, Denmark and Ireland) also expressed their consent to this decision.

It thus has become evident that all the principal NATO countries in Europe have rallied round the demand addressed to the governments of USA and Israel, to work for implementing the Resolution. If in previous years some dexterous Israel journalists could still present this line as a personal caprice of De-Gaulle, today this is the offical line of the European NATO countries.

Simultaneously in the USA too there is a growing number and weight of those factors which believe that this line expresses the interest of the over-all policy of USA.

The Decision of November 4, 1971

The development which has arisen in the past year is characterized by the fact that Security Council Resolution No. 242 has been given a clearer and sharper validity.

The official circles in USA and Israel and the sensation-mongering journalists close to them, like to talk much about "Arab interpretation" and "Soviet interpretation", when mention is made of the withdrawal from all the occupied territories and other obligations, arising from the Resolution. In fact, these circles attempt to dissect the Resolution into isolated elements, and then to stick them together in a form convenient for them (a striking example is their formula : "Withdrawal to secure and recognized borders") and also to introduce into the reading of the Resolution elements which it does not contain ("agreed borders", "direct negotiations" "withdrawal in the framework of peace agreement" etc.).

As against this, the programme of the European Common Market, which was also joined by Great Britain and three other countries, stands on the principle of "withdrawal from all the territories to the previous borders", with the possibility of only slight border adjustments, which would be agreed upon by the two sides. ("Davar", May 20, 1971.)

What has been termed "Arab and Soviet interpretation" was clearly confirmed by the supreme international institution - the UNO General Assembly - in November 1970. The diplomatic struggle in UNO around this question was sharp, last autumn. The American

delegation did all it had in its power, employed all the scope of intimidations and enticements at its disposal, in order to muster at least one third of UNO members, so as to foil the ratification of the decision in the General Assembly. The Israeli press reported daily about these efforts, and emphasized that only in rare instances the USA has conducted such an extensive and powerful campaign. But it turned out that even in this question the influence of USA has completely declined and it failed to mobilize even just one third of the votes.

On November 4, 1970 the General Assembly confirmed with a majority which by far exceeded two-thirds (57 : 16) the decision on the Middle East, which constitutes the most important document in matters of the region adopted in the past year.

In the decision of the Assembly the following is said, inter alia (retranslated from Hebrew):

* The General Assembly, being very much concerned in view of the fact that the perilous and aggravating situation in the Middle East constitutes a serious danger for international peace and security -

* confirms anew, that no territorial acquisition stemming from threatening and using force, will be recognized;

* expresses sorrow over the continuation of the occupation since June 5, 1967, of Arab territories, being extremely concerned in view of the fact that Security Council Resolution No. 242 of November 22, 1967, which was unanimously adopted, and which includes instructions for the peaceful settlement of the conflict in the Middle East, has not been realized yet...

1. confirms anew that forceful territorial acquisition cannot be reconciled to, and that therefore the territories occupied in this manner must be restored.

2. confirms anew that the establishment of a just and lasting peace in the Middle East must include the realization of the following two principles :

* withdrawal of the Israeli armed forces form the territories occupied in the course of the last conflict,

* and cessation of all belligerent declarations and all belligerence, and respecting and acknowledging the territorial domination and political independence of every state in the region, and its right to live in peace within secure and recognized borders, protected from intimidations or violent actions..

4. categorically demands the immediate and full implementation of Security Council Resolution of November 22, 1967, which includes instructions for the peaceful settlement of the situation in the Middle East..."

It has become evident that against the falsifications and attempts to distort the instruction of Resolution No. 242 the UNO General Assembly decided most authoritatively to establish its meaning, especially regarding the point of withdrawal and it has established that the question "where to withdraw to does not constitute any subject for negotiations. This decision unequivocally expresses the fact that the nations of the world will not reconcile themselves to the continuation of the present situation, will not reconcile themselves to any annexations and will not reconcile themselves to the continuation of the Israeli occupation.

In the decision of November 4, 1970, the General Assembly was not content with confirming the Security Council Resolution of November 1967 and rendering an authoritative interpretation to that Resolution, but also stressed that "the respect of the rights of the Palestinians constitutes a necessary foundation for establishing a just and lasting peace in the Middle East". UNO started from the correct assumption that the peace shall be just, and therefore also lasting, if the legitimate interests of the State of Israel and of the Arab countries and the rights of the Israeli people and of the Palestinian Arab people alike will be taken into consideration.

We have mentioned above the policy of the socialist countries and of the European NATO countries; it will be only right to add now that among the UNO members there was only one Afro-Asian country (Dahomey), which voted against this decision.

The Tactics of USA

Only one factor in the international arena has remained at the side of the Israeli Government : the US Government. The tactics of the USA regarding the problems of the region are now still more complex than in the past.

In the Report of the Central Committee of the CPSU delivered to the 24th Congress, comrade L. Brezhnev said :

"The zigzags that appear often in the foreign policy of the USA, are probably connected with a sort of internal political movements, which stem from short-range considerations, and they make talks with the USA very difficult. We must consider if we have here to deal with a real aspiration for solving controversial problems at the conference table, or with attempts to wage a policy from positions of strength..."

At the side of many phenomena in US policy relative to the Middle East whose source is sheer demagogy, in that policy there also appear zigzags, inconsistencies, vague positions; precisely regarding our region there exists a sort of confusion of a policy from positions of strength - and this is the dominant element - and of an aspiration to settle things at the conference table.

The US rulers have reached the conclusion that frontal attacks on the Arab countries are less and less efficient (the failure of the bombing-in-depth in the UAR at the beginning of 1970). Hence the zigzags : The "Rogers Initiative" in the summer of 1970 and the resumption of Dr. G. Jarring's mission on the one hand, and the attempt of direct American activity in the matter of reopening the Canal, on the other hand; hence the continuation of the supply of heavy aggressive weapons to the Israeli Government, on the one hand, and the attempt to deepen contacts and renew ties with the UAR and other countries, on the other hand.

And though the American Administration is still prepared to take into consideration the annexationist aspirations of the Israeli Government, what will be decisive in the last account, is its calculations regarding its own global interests. And here is the

origin of the nervousness shown by the Israeli rulers, who fear lest a day may come when the American Administration will not content itself any longer with mere pronouncements about non-identity between its own position and that of official Israel, but will exert real pressure on the Israeli Government in the framework of its attempt to win influence in the Arab countries.

Thus, after it has become clear that American imperialism is the last stay of the Israeli rulers, obviously its weakening strengthens the prospect for a peaceful solution of the conflict in our region. We shall metion here only three facts : The strengthening of the world socialist community, which found its expression in the 24th Congress of the CPSU; the failure of the American aggression in Indo-China, expressed in the strategic defeat in South Laos ; and the crisis that has overtaken the USA, expressed in the dollar crisis.

The International Balance-of-Power and the State of Israel

It is evident that in the fourth year of occupation the isolation of the Israeli Government has become still more pronounced. In the world there is a growing number of factors, and not only of the progressive and anti-imperialistic ones, which manifest sympathy with the position of the UAR and lack of sympathy with the position of the Israeli Government. This is not an "anti-Israeli" position, as presented in the Israeli press, but reflects the assessment of the positive replies of the UAR to Jarring's questions and the negative replies of the Israeli Government.

The decisive question to what degree the isolation of the Israeli Government is relevant, to what degree it is decisive and meaningful. In this question too cynicism is out of place. The answer can be only positive.

Why ?

Because especially in our times public opinion has become a real power. The balance-of-power in the world affects each and every country : A strong country is less affected, a weak country, more. Hence it is clear that the influence on the State of Israel will be very strong, for in the State of Israel there exists an enormous disproportion between the real political, economic and

social potential and the aspirations of its rulers for territorial expansion. The sympathy for the UAR and the support of its position constitute already today a heavy pressure on the Israeli Government.

UNO adopted decisions which contradict the policy of the State of Israel. It has still not decided on sanctions. But the Israeli Government cannot be sure that this will not be done in future

The Israeli rulers will be able to continue their occupationst and annexationist policy only if they will be able to continue relying on any imperialist power. There is no possibility left to manoeuvre between various imperialist powers; all their hopes depend only on the USA. The strengthening of the factors which act against the continuation of the occupation, for the full implementation of Resolution No. 242, for a withdrawal to the lines of June 4, 1967, increasingly influences the American Administration. And the latter calculates coldly : Does the backing given to the expansionist policy of the Israeli Government strengthen or weaken its own positions in the Middle East. And in this calculation the USA will in due time arrive at the conclusion that its positions are weakened by its current tactics.

The Changes Within Israel Itself

All this concerns the pressure from outside, which gradually weakens the positions of the Israeli Government. But, to our joy, the past year has also testified to a growing pressure from within.

When the Prime Minister, G. Meir, on May 19 met with representatives of the Union of Immigrants from Morocco, she said in relation to the emergence of the "Black Panthers" :

"This matter concerns our very life, for the power with whose aid we confront our enemies is our unity. There can be no greater disaster than division. The Israeli army will not be sufficiently strong, if we let the poison of division spread inside it" (Ha'aretz", May 20, 1971.).

The Government can continue its anti-national and anti-popular policy as long as it is able to lead the bulk of the people astray, and as long as there exists the "unity" around this policy. The "division", that is to say the rising of part of the people against this policy, will constitute a great disaster for this government.

This awakening has already commenced in the spring of 1970 (the "Goldman Affair", when the Government foiled the attempt of Dr. N. Goldman, President of the World Jewish Congress, to negotiate with the late UAR President, G. Abdel Nasser - Ed.IB.). and it extended throughout the past year.

Some of the details of this awakening : There were numerous anti-government-policy appearances of intellectuals of different views in public meetings. Various groups emerged as a mounting force against the establishment, against annexations, for peace. Big peace demonstrations were held in that year in the country and variegated factors took part in them.

The slogans of the Communist Party of Israel regarding the peace settlement were adopted by various factors.

The struggle of the "Panthers" belongs to this category only indirectly, for its content is a specific social problem. But the natural sincerity of this toiling youth, its aspiration to assist all the suffering people, its readiness to listen and learn, all these evoke the hope that their struggle will find the link with the more general struggles and that they will direct their struggle also to the questions of peace, as has happened with the "Black Panthers" in USA.

Mention must also be made of the strike movement in this country. When confronting any concrete struggle, the Establishment hoists the flag of "national unity" and tries to scare the strikers with the slogan of "national treason". Hence each and every struggle is not only objectively a political one, but also the authorities themselves emphasize this and introduce this idea into the mind of the public.

Many have begun to understand that the real discussion in Israel is not being held between Gahal and the Alignment, between extreme

annexationists and moderate annexationists (though we do not disregard this diference), but between the anti-annexationist forces and the annexationist forces.

This is the main discussion, even though among the peace forces there continue the ideological differences concerning the struggle in Israel - as an integral part of the great world-wide struggle of all the anti-imperialist forces - the socialist countries, and first and foremost the Soviet Union, the international working class and the national liberation movements - against imperialism.

As long as the occupation continues, it destructively affects the Israeli economy. The difficulties arising in consequence of the inflated military budget proves that despite the endeavours of the Government, capital, and the Histadrut leadership to lower the living standard of the working people, despite the exceedingly big profits from the occupied areas, the Israeli economy is unable to bear these gigantic expenditures.

If Israel will continue the present policy, its foreign debts will till the end of this year reach 3,500 million dollar (for the sake of comparison : at the end of 1969 they amounted to 2,100 million dollars).

This was reported by the chairman of the Knesset Finance Commission, MK I. Kargman ("Ha'aretz", May 24, 1971.).

This proves the existence of an economic hanruptcy, and the solution lies not, as Kargman claims, in the intensification of export, but in the change of policy. If a power so mighty as the USA, is unable to overcome its economic-financial difficulties, which stem from the adventure in Indo-China, how can Israel overcome its difficulties, if it continues its present adventurist policy ?

There can be no doubt that the attempt to continue this policy will engender further contradictions and will aggravate the existing contradictions, and this will create explosives dangerous for the rulers.

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The internal and external forces which work for a peaceful solution of the crisis, by implementing Resolution No. 242, strengthened in the past year, and this is not a passing phenomenon, but one which necessarily stems form the conformity with the law of development, and will continue strengthening with every further month of occupation, of continuation of the present policy.

A fundamental change of this policy and a political solution of the conflict will serve not only the cause of peace in the world and the region, the interests of the Arab peoples, but also the interest of our own people. The Israeli Government bases its policy on the unholy alliance with the CIA, the Pentagon, - American imperialism in general, an alliance which prepared the June 1967 war (recall the revelations of David Nes about the assistance of the American espionage services to the Israeli rulers in ordder to enable them to reach a speedy victory). This alliance increasingly sharpens the Middle East conflict, imperils the peace security of Israel, the life and spiritual health of our youth, distorts the Israeli economy, lowers the living standard of the toilers.

The solution, based on the implementation of the Security Council Resolution opens bright vista for a life in peace and security. We look with optimism to the near future, hoping that it will bring the necessary changes.

ACTS OF OCCUPATION AUTHORITIES CONTRADICT GENEVA CONVENTION

Advocate Felicia Langer Interviewed by Miriam Galili ("Zo Haderekh", June 2, 1971.)

Advocate Felicia Langer is well known to many among the inhabitants of the occupied territories. For 4 years now she has been appearing in trials, whose common denominator is the fact that the accused are opponents of the occupation.

With the lapse of 4 years of the occupation and all the infamous concomitant phenomena , the editorial board of our paper requested her to answer a few questions.

- In the course of these 4 years, what has been the main expression of resistance to the occupation, as reflected in the courts ?

- As there exists no legal possibility whatever to oppose the occupation, each and every thing directed against it, even the most passive one, is considered a crime and the person held responsible has to pay the penalty for it.

- For example ?

- It is prohibited to strike; it is prohibited to close a shop; it is prohibited to stay away from school in an organized manner; any demonstration is prohibited, even the quietest one; to distribute leaflets of any political content is prohibited; it is even prohibited to lament the dead, the victims of the war : We recall the trials of those who organized the commemoration of the anniversary of the June war, and the subsequent heavy punishments imposed in Jerusalem. In these trials they forbade me to mention the fact that the Arab inhabitants have the right to mourn on June 5. The judge told me that there is no connecttion between the date and the demonstration. Bringing a communist newspaper, which is legal in Israel to an occupied area or reading it there, leads to heavy penalties; an organization of students intended for mutual assistance in studies was declared illegal and its members were convicted to prison sentences.