



SWASIA

NORTH AFRICA

a weekly news digest of southwest asian and north african events plus translations from the hebrew and arabic press focusing on the israeli-palestinian conflict, the arabian/persian gulf, and the great power policies

Vol. II, No. 51

December 26, 1975

from YEDIOT AHARONOT, Israel's evening newspaper with the second largest circulation

November 28, 1975

The Palestinian Question

by Yishaiahu Ben Porat

The surprising things said this week by Yitzhak Navon on this question and the uncommon tunes heard during the conference of the liberals testify that it will not be long before the Israeli Government finds itself obliged to confront the Palestinian problem. In Jerusalem they are looking for new tactical "formulae" but no one has a comprehensive plan yet.

Knesset Committee for Foreign Affairs and Security, was the one to ring the bell this week in a way that sounded like an alarm signal.

We must declare, Navon said in a public appearance, that we are willing

to negotiate with any Palestinian factor, body or organization that accepts the following three conditions: to recognize Israel and acknowledge her right to exist; to undertake a commitment to cease from terroristic activities; and to attach its signature to Resolution 242 of the UN Security Council. Up until now the Israeli Government has been specifying only with whom among the Palestinians it will not negotiate: not with the PLO or

(Continued on page 7)

from AS-SIYASAH, Kuwaiti newspaper as reported in FBIS

November 19, 1975

Palestinian Policies of the U.S.

a commentary

On the superficial level of things Jerusalem seems to be busying with the question of whether to institute or not to institute the problematic office of prosperity and is fearful of the coalition and personnel crises that the matter may entail. This is on the superficial level, only. In truth, only party activists of the third rate and below are taking this business seriously as if our future will depend on the answer to the fateful question of who will stand at the head of the yet unborn office — Victor Shem-Tov or Moshe Baraam.

Below the surface and far from the spotlights of public opinion the political leadership is preoccupied with another, more fateful question the public discussion of which always arouses deep embarrassment with us. I mean, of course, the Palestinian question.

Perhaps it was not an accident that Yitzhak Navon, the chairman of the

Once again the United States has denied the existence of plans for a new agreement on the Golan, but certain Arab circles still insist that such an agreement is under preparation.

It is clear, however, that attention is at present being focused on the position of the UN forces on the Golan and whether their mandate will be renewed or not.

We must notice the scheme which began with a statement by U.S. official Harold Saunders who repeated an old cliché about the need to give consideration to the Palestinian people's interests--flowery words void of meaning or commitment. The statement, nevertheless, gave rise to a false Israeli uproar which, no doubt, is part of the game. The purpose is quite clear to those who can detect the facts behind the words.

The American statement made by Saunders stopped at the usual American barrier, arguing that the problem is that the PLO does not recognize Israel, and therefore the United States cannot talk to it or recognize it.

It is the same American-Israeli game. The Americans are implicitly

asking the PLO to hang itself, since nobody else has been able to do it.

This raising of the "Palestinian balloon" by the Americans at this time, and the related Israeli anger, have the interim aim of misguiding others and promoting the changes of extending the UN forces mandate on the Golan, particularly since the Syrians have openly linked their attitude with the Palestine question.

INSIDE

The Game and the Time

an editorial

from *Ar-Ra'y Al-'Amm* 2

Eban Asks Israel For a Bold Peace Plan

by David Landau

from the *Jerusalem Post* 2

Palestinian Spokesmen Comment

from the *Daily Star* 4

Ath-Thawra's View of the Saunders' Document

a commentary

from *Radio Baghdad* 5

This issue of SWASIA is a continuation of last week's special issue: "The Saunders' Testimony on Palestinians." Our intention in these two topic-centered issues has been to present as fully as possible the diversity of viewpoints from the Hebrew and Arabic press. — Editors.

from AR-RA'YAL-'AMM, Kuwaiti newspaper
 excerpts as reported in FBIS

November 20, 1975

The Game and the Time

an editorial

In the early seventies the United States drew up a plan of action on the Middle East and the Palestinian issue. It seems that nothing new has been added to this plan. The then Secretary of State, William Rogers, began implementing it through his well-known plan. It is within the framework of this plan that Dr. Henry Kissinger has moved, implementing some parts and still seeking to implement the other parts. On closer examination it becomes clear that Kissinger has added nothing to the Rogers plan except a flexible method for implementation, because in this case flexibility derives from Kissinger's creation of conditions following the June war which tended to make the implementation of the Rogers plan easy and acceptable to the people.

The U.S. plan, which Rogers began to implement in the Middle East and which still exists, contains well-known objectives, including:

1) The achievement of Egyptian recognition of Israel. The justification for concentrating on Egypt is that it is the strongest and most influential Arab state and that if it did something the other Arab sides would sooner or later follow it.

2) The achievement of Palestinian recognition of Israel as a legitimate political entity in the Middle East. The achievement of this recognition would mean official Palestinian relinquishment of lands occupied in 1948 and restriction of discussion on the 1967 borders.

3) Israeli withdrawal from occupied Arab territories to borders near those of 1967, with Israeli acceptance of a political entity for the Palestinians.

In addition to the above, political circles know that what neither Rogers nor Kissinger have declared about the Palestinian future is the possibility of establishing their state not only on the West Bank and Gaza but also on the East Bank. Thus, the United States would leave it open for a solution to the Palestinian problem to begin with any of a number of possibilities: A state on the East Bank that would later move to the West Bank and Gaza; an entity established through the United Nations and the Geneva conference to end on the West Bank and Gaza; or a civilian administration for the West Bank, the leadership of which would

gradually change to absorb the PLO after several years.

Regardless of all details and phrasology, what should remain known is that the prime international concern in the Middle East, whether of Washington, Moscow or Europe, is to coax the Palestinians to recognize Israel in a manner acceptable to the

Palestinian and Arab peoples. If this aim is achieved, the knot in the Middle East problem would be untied and anything else would become a matter of detail.

Now that Kissinger has succeeded in getting public recognition of Israel from most Arab countries, he is concentrating on getting Palestinian recognition of Israel. It seems that Washington has delegated this task to the Soviet Union within the framework of preparations for the Geneva conference. Everyone knows that this task is difficult and almost impossible despite all the calculations being made on the attitudes of some leaderships.

from the JERUSALEM POST,
 Israel's English-language daily newspaper

November 21, 1975

Eban Asks Israel For a Bold Peace Plan

by David Landau

an interview with Abba Eban by David Landau, the POST'S
 diplomatic correspondent

"In spite of my basically optimistic temperament," says Abba Eban, "I can't believe that 1977 will be better than 1976."

As a number of high-level briefings made clear this week the government's policy aim is to weather 1976 without any dramatic diplomatic activity. Premier Rabin intends to concentrate on the economy and other internal problems. If he can narrow the balance of payments deficit and improve the general economic outlook, the Premier believes he will be able to face a possible confrontation with the U.S. in 1977 from a position of strength.

But, asks Eban, why plan for a confrontation? And what reason is there to believe that the economic situation can be drastically improved, that our dependence on America can be meaningfully reduced? None of the experts seems to think so.

His own advice to the Labor Alignment would be: seek a mandate from the nation to negotiate with all our neighbors on the best terms possible, draw up at last a bold and realistic peace plan — and seek to win U.S. support for it.

Like the government, Eban sees almost no hope of an interim accord with Syria. Unlike the government, he mourns as a "lost opportunity" the failure to negotiate an interim accord with Jordan during summer 1974 (before Rabat put paid to that prospect). With both these options ef-

fectively closed, the government must consider an overall settlement, he says, even if that means grappling with the awkward Palestinian issue.

Eban lists the government's policy planks:

1) No further interim accords with Egypt.

2) No interim accord with Jordan. (These two points are included in the U.S.-Israel Memorandum of Agreement of September 1. Eban "questions the wisdom" of both of them.)

3) The room for maneuver for an interim agreement with Syria is negligible. (Eban agrees.)

4) Israel will not talk to the PLO — except on the battlefield.

5) Israel takes note of the Rabat decision which effectively removed Jordan from the diplomatic arena — therefore there is "no one to talk to" about the West Bank.

6) The time is not ripe for the Labor-led government to win a national consensus on an overall settlement.

"What is the difference," Eban asks, "between the amalgamation of all this and what is called 'stagnation'? The sum total of it all means explaining why every door is closed and every window bolted."

The government's tactical purpose might be to prove that the absence of peace is not Israel's fault, but the

(Continued on page 3)

Eban's View, from page 2 . . .

Arabs' — and this is very largely true, especially in respect of the PLO. But any tactical gain could not outweigh our basic strategic interest — which is in movement towards a settlement.

"We need movement," says Eban, "because time is not working in our favor. Developments during 1975 have clearly proved that."

Credits for '75

On the credit side there was the interim agreement with Egypt which, despite Sadat's virulence, is still "on balance plainly advantageous."

(Never having himself been starry-eyed over the interim agreement, Eban says, his disappointment at Sadat's utterances was less than those who had overly extolled its advantages. He always saw the agreement in the "hard-headed" terms of two sides wishing to "remove themselves from the volcanic imminence of war," but preferred then, too, overall settlement talks.)

Debits for '75

On the debit side, however, 1975 saw many adverse trends:

- Jordan forsook its traditional moderation and moved into a close rapport with Syria.

- The PLO achieved broader international legitimacy without moderating its ideology.

- The Arabs grew more confident in their mineral and monetary predominance.

- Israel's psychological malaise continued: aliya was down, yerida up; tourism languished, investments almost totally dried up, the balance of payments deficit widened, dependence on the U.S. grew.

In the U.S. the burden of Israel's dependence weighed ever more heavily, even upon Israel's friends.

"Unless one can prove, Eban argues, "that the future will bring a reversal of these trends, one must conclude that now is the best time to enlist international support — and that means primarily American support — for a rational Israeli peace plan.

"I challenge those who think otherwise to show that we can come unscathed through 1976, or to show that some undefined deliverance will come to us in 1977."

It is at least doubtful, Eban says, whether, Syria will keep the peace through 1976 if it has not even the pretext of diplomatic activity to justify its military inactivity.

Premier Rabin contends that if war does erupt in the north, Israel will be

well placed — militarily and politically — to deliver a quick knock-out blow to the Syrians. The Sinai interim agreement effectively precludes a Yom Kippur-type coordinated attack by Syria and Egypt, and in the day or two that Egypt would require to intervene meaningfully, Israel would be able to devote its energies to the northern front. Moreover, U.S. political support would be ensured, the government believes. In a secret undertaking accompanying the Sinai settlement (apparently in the form of a personal letter from Ford to Rabin) the U.S. government pledged not to press Israel for greater concessions in Golan interim talks than the "cosmetic" proposals outlined by the Premier. That pledge, the government believes, will hold firm at least until after the Presidential elections.

These military and political advantages ought to deter the Syrians, the government reasons.

Will Reason Prevail?

But reason, Mr. Eban notes, does not always prevail. Despite its pledge to Israel, the U.S. has continued to warn that it will not tolerate "stagnation." Furthermore, the U.S. "does not alone call the tune," particularly where Syria is concerned. Inactivity would lead to intensified Soviet pressure for the resumption of the Geneva Conference, Eban predicts.

Some critics of the government, Eban notes, choosing his words carefully, "express the view that the policy of delay includes at least reconciliation to the idea of a successful engagement with Syria."

(There are hawks who actively urge a policy of courting a confrontation with Syria.)

As to the "undefined deliverance" which some Israelis look to in 1977, Eban rejects the notion that a Democratic Administration, even if led by Hubert Humphrey, would have a significantly different policy from Ford and Kissinger on Middle East peace. Democrats and Republicans since 1967 have all along envisaged minor border changes while opposing calls for a complete return to the pre-war lines. Eban feels the policy is dictated by an "objective balance of American interests" — in the Middle East and at home." None of the leading Democrats," he says, "would qualify for membership in the Land of Israel Movement."

There might well be "a better chance" of winning U.S. support for an Israeli peace plan in 1976, an election year, than in 1977 — whoever wins the election. And if the present Administration commits itself to support the

Israeli position, that commitment would bind the new Administration, says Eban, citing precedents.

Nor need we be discouraged by the knowledge that U.S. notions of minor border changes clash even with Eban's minimalist security map. "We have a record of influencing U.S. positions," he says. Recently, for instance, the Rabin government held firm on the Umm Hashiba Sinai warning station — and the U.S. eventually came around. The U.S., too, has indicated that it sympathizes with Israel's position on Sharm el-Sheikh. And American visitors from Nixon down have expressed understanding for Israel's reluctance to descend from the Golan Heights.

New Tactic and Strategy

In practical terms, Eban is urging both a new tactic, and a new strategy. The tactic should be to adopt the Yariv-Shemtov formula on the PLO; that is, that Israel will not talk to the PLO at present, but would talk to any Palestinian group, if that group recognized Israel's existence and accepted Resolutions 242 and 338.

That formula was in fact what Mr. Saunders advocated in his testimony last week, the testimony which aroused such vigorous reaction here. Eban says he cannot understand the surprise. "If you had asked me a month ago to define American policy on the Palestinians, I would have defined it just as Saunders did."

Saunders himself seemed to imply that the Yariv-Shemtov formula in effect is — or at least ought to be — the Israel government's policy. Eban says he is not sure if that is so now, but that in the unlikely event of a Palestinian organization recognizing Israel and accepting the Resolutions, "pressures at home and abroad" would oblige a dialogue with it.

Meanwhile, he sees, "no advantage whatever" in the government's rehearsing only the "negative side of the formula." This is one of the few instances in which formulation really matters. "If we said the whole formula, the ball would be in the Arabs' court. It would be clear that the deadlock was the PLO's fault."

Perhaps the government's consideration is to be seen not to exclude Jordan permanently from the Palestinian issue. But this could be overcome by saying simply that Israel would talk about the West Bank *both* with the Palestinians who accept her existence *and* with Jordan. "A sharp dichotomy," says Eban, "is no longer possible . . . Realistically what is needed is a triangular discussion."

(Continued on page 5)

from the DAILY STAR (Beirut),
Lebanon's English-language daily newspaper

December 2, 1975

Palestinian Spokesmen Comment

comments by PLO and by PFLP spokesmen (the PFLP is part of the "Rejection Front") on U.N. diplomatic activity and the U.S. role

The main thrust of Palestinian reactions to the recent agreement of Security Council members that the PLO should be invited to a Council session next January was that this step had been achieved in the face of massive Zionist and American opposition.

"In spite of all their pressures, we are able to gain ever more victories," a spokesman for Fatah told the *Daily Star*, "and we are able to inflict consecutive defeats on their frenzied diplomacy."

The spokesman stressed that the Security Council's decision is "a positive development in the handling of the Palestinian people's cause by the UN and its organs," and that "it further emphasizes the strength of the Palestinian cause and its influence on events in our area."

He pointed out that the latest decision is in full accordance with General Assembly Resolution 3376, which was adopted at this year's session and was in turn based on last year's Resolution 3236. (Resolution 3376 called for a PLO presence at any future international discussions on the Middle East situation.)

After emphasizing that its decision was achieved in the teeth of fierce American and Zionist opposition, the Fatah spokesman expressed the hope that the Security Council would support General Assembly Resolution 3376 by working out a timetable to implement Resolution 3236.

"This session of the Security Council," he said, "will be a battle against American imperialist policy, which continues to ignore our people's rights."

In addition to this battle, the spokesman stressed that the military battle of the Palestinians would continue. "Our strength must be supported and reinforced by escalating our political struggle and our armed struggle, as well as by increasing efforts to strengthen our existing alliances and to win new alliances and new friends." But dissension on this point continues among the Palestinian organizations. The self-styled "Rejection Front" apparently still distrusts the motives of the main body of the PLO when it engages in diplomacy, fearing that such activity can become an alternative to the continuation of the armed struggle.

A spokesman for the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP), a leading component of the Rejection Front, assessed the recent events at the Security Council as a further "attempt to pull the PLO inside the net of the so-called political solution."

He commented, nevertheless, that "we appreciate any growing recognition of the legitimate rights of the Palestinian people."

"It is our right," he said, "to make use of any step taken by the international community toward the recognition of our struggle. But in spite

of this, we cannot accept any resolution whose concrete interpretation would be to pull the PLO into the diplomatic arena in order to stop its present struggle, or to limit it to the borders of present settlement projects."

And the recent agreement of Security Council members in his view falls into this category. (The PFLP [Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine] spokesman was at pains to point out that this decision was made not by a formal Council resolution, but by an "agreement among members" voiced by its president.)

He called for the PLO to return to the principles of the national charter agreed at the eleventh and twelfth sessions of the Palestine National Council, since these explicitly reject Security Council Resolution 242 "and all similar resolutions."

"If the basis of the discussion of the Security Council session to which the PLO is invited is to be such resolutions," he continued, "then the PLO should not attend. This is why we are against attendance at Geneva also."

The PFLP spokesman conceded that there has been a change in American attitudes as expressed by President Ford, U.S. Secretary of State Henry Kissinger, and Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs Joseph Sisco and most recently by State Department official William Saunders. "But this change," he emphasized, "is based mainly on trying to fulfill the American solution in the area, taking into account first and foremost the interests of the Israelis."

"And besides, the Americans only do what they are forced to do by the Palestinian armed struggle. Therefore much more struggle is needed to bring the Americans to the correct position."

Second Class postage paid in Washington, D.C.

SWASIA is published weekly by the Middle East and Europe Working Groups, Division of Overseas Ministries, of the National Council of Churches, Room 626, 475 Riverside Dr., New York, N.Y. 10027. Richard Butler, Director, MEEWG. Allan Kellum, Norton Mezvinsky, Editors. SWASIA's general business offices are located at 3631 39th St., N.W., Washington, D.C. 20016. Subscription rates: U.S. and Canada, \$20/year. Overseas: Surface mail, \$25/year; Airmail, \$40/year.

SOURCES AND ABBREVIATIONS: BBC Summary of World Broadcasts (BBC), Christian Science Monitor (CSM), Economist (Ec), Foreign Broadcasts Information Service, Part V (FBIS), Israeleft (Islf), Jerusalem Post (JP), Le Monde (LeM), Le Monde Diplomatique (LeMD), London Times (LT), Manchester Guardian Weekly (MGW), National Observer (NO), Newsweek (Nswk), New York Times (NYT), Religious News Service (RNS), Time (Tm), U.S. News & World Report (USN), Washington Post (WP), Wall Street Journal (WSJ). **ARABIC:** Al Ahrām (Cairo), Al Baath (Damascus), An Anwar, Al Hurriya, Al Muharrer, An Nahar (Beirut). **HEBREW:** Davar, Haaretz, Haolam Hazeh, Maariv, Yediot Ahronot (Israel). **NOTES** refer to the publication date and page number of Swasia's sources (e.g. JP 1/21-1 means Jerusalem Post, Jan. 21, page 1). Page numbers on notes of the BBC Summary of World Broadcasts refer to Section IV, Part A, "The Arab World and Israel." The letter(s) after the page number denotes the origin of the broadcast as follows: A (Algeria), B (Bahrain), E (Egypt), I (Iraq), Is (Israel), J (Jordan), K (Kuwait), L (Lebanon), Li (Libya), M (Morocco), O (Oman), S (Saudi Arabia), Su (Sudan), Sy (Syria), T (Tunisia), U (United Arab Emirates), V (Vatican), VP (Voice of Palestine), Yn (North Yemen), Ys (South Yemen). For example (BBC 1/19-6-VP) refers to a Voice of Palestine broadcast cited in Section IV, Part A, page 6, of the Jan. 19 Summary.

from RADIO BAGHDAD (Iraq)
as reported in FBIS

December 1, 1975

Ath-Thawrah's View of the Saunders' Document

a commentary

In a commentary today on the Saunders document, the newspaper *Ath-Thawrah* reveals dangerous facts about the political moves which are aimed at find formulas for a settlement between the Arab regimes and the Zionist entity.

The document is named after Harold Saunders, U.S. Assistant Secretary of State for Near East and South Asian Affairs. Saunders made the document public in the middle of last month when he submitted it to a U.S. congressional committee. The document includes a comprehensive visualization by the U.S. State Department of a political solution in the Arab area.

Ath-Thawrah, organ of the Socialist Arab Ba'th Party, points out the predicament of the Syrian regime on the domestic and Arab levels and its attempts to involve the PLO by prompting it to accept participation in the Geneva conference. *Ath-Thawrah* affirms that "all sides are taking part in the political game whose aim is to recognize the Zionist entity."

Ath-Thawrah says that the coming months will witness further moves, most prominent of which will be the exertion of Palestinian-Syrian-Soviet-Egyptian efforts to amend UN Security Council Resolution No. 242. The PLO would recognize the amended resolution and declare the establishment of a Palestinian state in the event these efforts succeeded and the enemy accepted the participation of the PLO in the Geneva negotiations, which are based on Security Council Resolutions 242 and 338.

The paper explains that the Arab area is witnessing large-scale activities in which "the United States is playing a basic and active role in order to achieve practical formulas to reach a settlement in which certain commands of the Palestinian Resistance movement would be included."

Ath-Thawrah says that these activities have prompted the Syrian regime to involve a number of Palestinian commands in the settlement game under the pretext of having the Palestinians participate in the Geneva conference and in the steps

leading to a settlement.

Ath-Thawrah affirms that the Syrian regime is living in a state of confusion, which has placed it in a critical predicament on the domestic and Arab levels, and that it is seeking to involve the PLO in the game of a settlement by considering the convocation of the Geneva conference and the PLO's participation in it as a "victory and a gain," with the aim of covering up its predicament and deviation.

Ath-Thawrah says that the Syrian regime is seeking to obtain a separate pledge from the United States, or with a Soviet guarantee, to review Resolution 242 and to establish a "Palestinian state in the occupied Arab areas."

Ath-Thawrah continues: Within the framework of these signs come the U.S. step represented by the Saunders document, which the United States will consider as a plan to be submitted for

practical implementation together with other U.S. proposals and plans regarding the Arab-Zionist dispute.

Ath-Thawrah adds: Although the details of the document are not yet fully known, it includes a new viewpoint regarding the Palestinian role in the settlement.

The statement issued by the U.S. press office in Beirut, which announced the document, said: "There has been no agreed upon definition of what is being said regarding the rights of the Palestinians."

The Saunders document refers to this issue, since "what is required as a first step is to make a diplomatic move to facilitate the drawing up of a reasonable definition of Palestinian rights, to draw up a framework for negotiations and to define the goals of these negotiations, and to reach a joint formula which the Palestinians and the Israelis can accept."

Ath-Thawrah speaks about the statement in the document that the Palestinian issue is the heart of the crisis and that the crisis cannot be solved as long as the Palestinian problem is not solved. The paper says: It is evident from this that the document represents an American "solution" of the Palestinian role in

(Continued on page 6)

Eban's View, from page 3 . . .

Eban has criticized the present government for missing an historic opportunity, in summer 1974, of bringing Jordan into the peacemaking process and thereby taking the wind out of the PLO's sails. The "tragic fact, he says, is that the government was constrained by internal political considerations (the pledge to the NRP) from attempting an interim settlement with Jordan. Government supporters argued later that King Hussein's demand for a disengagement along the Jordan River — the very area that Israel seeks to retain — effectively foreclosed the negotiating option.

Eban rejects this. The Syrian opening gambit in the May disengagement was far more wildly implausible, he recalls. Had Israel invested as much energy in a Jordanian negotiation as it did on the Golan, it might well have achieved an accord based on the return of Jericho to Hussein. But it did not try.

Summer 1974, after the Egyptian and Syrian disengagements, was the

most promising moment since 1967 to try for a settlement with Hussein, Eban says. In the early years after the Six Day War Hussein had argued, very tenaciously, that he would be taking an enormous risk in negotiating alone with Israel — therefore he must at least be able to show the other Arab states that he had regained *all* his territory.

In fact, Eban reveals, the negotiating with Jordan never went beyond generalities and into specifics. The King stuck to his publicly declared position: that Israel could have peace, or territories — but not both. Eban refuses to acknowledge that they ever did.)

The Rabat Summit in October 1974 radically changed the situation, and it would be idle not to recognize this fact.

The new strategy which Eban advocates is to "cease" postponing the inevitable. "There should be an Israel government mandated to make peace with whoever wants to make peace with us."

The Labour Party should go to the electorate not with a map — that would be to compromise the negotiating tactics — but with a platform pledging "to do our best" in negotiations with all of our neighbours.

Ath-Thawra's View, from page 5 . . .

the settlement. The paper adds: The release of this document cannot be viewed separately from the developments which have taken place in the area, including the situation in the Golan, since the leader of the Syrian regime has set the condition that he will not accept any new initiative unless it is accompanied by certain steps on the path of a settlement with the PLO.

The paper affirms that the Syrian President would not have placed himself in this predicament had it not been for his realization--gained through the contacts which preceded his speech in October in which he put forth the condition that the United States "seriously" think about some role for the PLO in the settlement--that the Saunders document can solve two major problems in the settlement process: one, the problem of making it possible for the Syrian regime to conclude a new agreement with the Zionist entity through asserting the role of the Geneva conference, and two, the problem of drawing up a "legal" political introduction for solving the problem of official Palestinian participation in the work of the conference.

Amending 242

Ath-Thawrah says: Therefore, the PLO will not oppose a new solution in the Golan. The document will thus be tantamount to tacit U.S. approval of amending Security Council Resolution 242.

The paper points out that the municipal elections which the Zionist authorities are holding are part of the developments in the area taking place in accordance with the visualization included in the document. The paper says that what should be taken into consideration is the stand of Fatah and the PFLP in this connection, claiming: "Why let the reactionaries win the elections. Why shouldn't our supporters win?"

Ath-Thawrah adds: Although the Zionist game of alternatives regarding the question of elections has been exposed to a great extent, particularly "the invitation to the 'Arafat-Hawatimah current to make major concessions such as recognition and reconciliation," the stand of this current has more than one significance, particularly if we take into consideration the statements made by Zionist Foreign Minister Yigal Allon to the effect that "Israel is ready to negotiate with Palestinians whose

slogan is not the elimination of the state of Israel."

Dangers of Coexistence

The paper affirms that the association of this Palestinian current with the elections represents a dangerous beginning on the road of the "possibility of Zionist-Palestinian coexistence" as put forth by the Saunders document, since the document says: "The PLO might accept a formula of coexistence between a Palestinian and Israeli state."

The paper adds: The recent UN resolution calling for PLO participation in the negotiations and discussions related to the Arab-Zionist dispute is part of the developments which the Saunders document visualizes.

Ath-Thawrah adds: Although the recent UN resolution did not specifically refer to the Geneva conference, it is in line with Geneva if we take into consideration the circumstances under which the resolution was issued, since it came after As-Sadat's speech in the UN General Assembly in which he called for PLO participation in the Geneva conference.

The paper also speaks about Romanian President Ceausescu's mediation between the PLO and the Zionist entity. It says: This mediation has made it clear that the PLO is prepared to recognize "Israel" if the latter is prepared to recognize a Palestinian entity adjoining it on the West Bank and Gaza Strip.

The paper adds: It is natural that more than ever before, the Geneva negotiations are forwarding the concept of the "role of the Palestinians," and the Syrian regime and the Soviet Union are playing a prominent role in this connection. Furthermore, the United States does not oppose the convocation of the Geneva conference after the Syrian regime reaches "a new separation of forces agreement" with the Zionist enemy.

The course of its analysis of the indications of the situation in the area,

Ath-Thawrah inquires about the objectives behind the Saunders document. It says: What is forwarded now is the U.S. acceptance of the Palestinian-Soviet-Syrian wish to amend Resolution 242.

Ath-Thawrah explains that the Arafat-Hawatimah line is prepared to enter into the Geneva negotiations on the grounds of an amended Resolution 242, which deals with the Palestinian Arab people as refugees.

Ath-Thawrah adds: The joint Soviet-Palestinian statement issued in May 1975 during Arafat's visit to Moscow explained the desire of the two sides to establish a just peace recognizing the rights of the Palestinian people. "In the Soviet-Arafat-Hawatimah visualization, this means the establishment of a national authority."

The paper explains that in light of the Saunders documents, the United States will not oppose in principle a draft law which the Soviet Union or Yugoslavia might submit for amending Resolution 242.

Ath-Thawrah affirms that both the Zionist authorities and President As-Sadat are aware of the contents of the document, before it is to be submitted.

The paper says: The U.S.-Zionist maneuver is based on extorting the maximum possible before reaching agreement on the minimum concessions. *Ath-Thawrah* explains that the document "enjoys the support of the Egyptian and Syrian regimes, the Arafat-Hawatimah line, and the satisfaction of the Soviet Union." The paper says: The Zionist entity also accepts the document from a strategic standpoint as a means for reaching a settlement. It is currently opposing the document for known tactical reasons.

Possible Practical Progress

Concluding its article, *Ath-Thawrah* says that the U.S. stand "which is not being opposed by the Soviet visualization from a theoretical standpoint, will lead to practical progress in the course of reaching a settlement."

Do you know others who should read SWASIA?

IF you do, why not give them a gift of a year's subscription.

____ Please send a sample
copy of SWASIA to:

____ \$10 (for one year) enclosed.

____ Please enter a subscription for:

____ Bill addressee.

____ Bill me (attach address)

Name _____

Address _____

PLEASE LIST ADDITIONAL NAMES ON A SEPARATE SHEET

Room 626, 475 Riverside Dr.
New York, N.Y. 10027

Palestinian Question, from page 1 . . .

any other Palestinians organization. It is high time the Israeli Government declare openly and loudly with whom it is willing to negotiate. A declaration in this spirit will give us, according to Navon, not only a tactical advantage that would ease the propaganda difficulty of Israel in the world but may also in due time, engender a desirable political development.

Navon's statement came as a surprise and it constitutes a conspicuous aberration from the sacred political line. On July 21, 1974, the Government reiterated its stand on the Palestinian question at the end of its discussion of that issue and confirmed the Prime Minister's earlier statement before the Knesset on June 3, 1974, in which he stated: "The Israeli Government will not negotiate with terrorist organizations whose objective is the destruction of the state of Israel."

Yariv's Cold Shower

Since then no variation of this formula has been heard from the Prime Minister or any other official spokesman of the Government. The then Minister of Information, Aharon Yariv, tried to come up with a different, relatively daring formula which calls on Israel to negotiate with the PLO if the PLO abandons its anti-Israel stand. For this effort Yariv received a cold shower from the Prime Minister; his original formula fell apart; and he himself resigned from the Government soon after that.

Now, the Chairman of Security and Foreign Affairs Committee of the Knesset is coming up with a formula different in form but identical in content with that of Yariv. Yitzhak Navon is trying to pave the way for Israeli-Palestinian contacts or for the participation of Palestinian elements in the Arab-Israeli talks.

Coordinated Effort?

Is Yitzhak Navon, unlike Aharon Yariv, working in coordination with the Prime Minister? The question is legitimate because not long ago Navon carried out a first-rate public mission that was designed to prepare public opinion for an important political development. This mission was assigned to him by the Prime Minister and found expression during his broadcast appearance on "Moked" on the eve of Kissinger's previous shuttle trip: To the surprise of everyone present, including the show host, Navon drew the original English draft of the future agreement from his pocket and em-

phasized the benefits that Israel would reap from it.

The fact that the Chairman of the Security and Foreign Relations Committee carried out a pioneering task in preparing the public opinion for a major political act on behalf of the Prime Minister a few months ago does not necessarily mean that Navon spoke on the Palestinian question this week also in coordination with, or on behalf of the Prime Minister. Perhaps the opposite of this is true: In contrast to other members of the Government the Prime Minister does not see need at this stage to make any change in the Government's line and decisions on this question. In July 1974, the Government adopted a resolution rejecting negotiations with the PLO and approving negotiations with Jordan drawing thus, on the resolution passed by the Labor Party after the October War to the effect that: "In a state whose boundaries will be determined through negotiations between Israel and Jordan the independent identity of the Palestinians and the Jordanians will find expression."

Rabin's Previous Stance

In this regard it is worthwhile mentioning that Rabin was then also, more than a year ago, in the minority when in a vote of nine to seven the Government turned down his suggestion to append to the Government's decision on the Palestinian question the clause: "Israel rejects the idea of establishing a separate Palestinian state between Israel and Jordan." The majority of the Government, led by Yigal Allon and supported by Haim Tsadok, the ministers of Mapam and the Independent Liberals approved the more loose formula stating that: "Peace will be founded on the existence of only two independent states (my stress — Y.B.P.) . . ." It must also be mentioned that in this government debate over the Palestinian question the proposition of the ministers of the Independent Liberals "to conduct peace negotiations with Jordan and with Palestinian elements who are willing to recognize the state of Israel and its independence and who will be willing to reach a viable peace agreement with Israel on the basis of secure and agreed upon boundaries" was voted down by a majority of eleven to five. Since July 21, 1974, the subject has not been brought to Government discussion and there seems to be no indication that the Prime Minister intends to put the Palestinian question on the Government's agenda anew.

How long can this refusal to resume the discussion of the question which,

from many aspects and as a result of the changes that took place in the area and the world is becoming increasingly more urgent and, as the Foreign Minister said after his tour in Europe is becoming, "more and more acute in the world," how long can this refusal last?

Sense of Urgency

The sense of urgency is becoming sharper among us as well. An indication of this may be found, among others, in Navon's statement of this week. It may be claimed, of course, that Navon, although an ex-Rafi member and Ben Gurion's political secretary in the past is a "dovish dove" not just since yesterday. It may be mentioned in this regard, and this in no way to Navon's discredit, that at the time he was the father of one of the most extreme proposals concerning the Palestinians that were ever put forth by the ruling circles in Israel. This was a week or two after the Six-Day-War in June 1967 when the late Levi Eshkol instructed the general manager of his office the late Jacob Hertzog to convene a small group of experts and advisors on Arab affairs. Messrs. Eliahu Sasson, Ziamia Dibon, Ezra Danim and others were there, but it was precisely Navon who came up on this occasion with a far reaching plan the essence of which was "to help the Palestinians solve their own problem." How? "It is high time, Navon said, that Hussein be sent to London and the Palestinians be helped to establish an independent state for themselves in East Jordan and most of the West Bank which we will put at their disposal."

Unexpected Tunes

Navon's plan surprised his listeners and, of course, was not accepted. But it is interesting to check, particularly in light of his recent statement of this week, the second part of his old plan — i.e., what he demanded in exchange for "helping the Palestinians establish their state on both banks of the Jordan": The Palestinian state east and west of the Jordan will commit itself to absorbing the Arab refugees from the Gaza strip while the strip with its non-refugee population be annexed to Israel.

Enough with Navon "the dove" and his Palestinian plans which even he himself concedes are no longer practical because it is inconceivable to him that the U.S. would support or even allow the removal of Hussein from Jordan and the establishment of a Palestinian state in his place. But, here, all of a sudden we hear unexpected tunes on the same subject coming from

(Continued on page 8)

Palestinian Question, from page 7 . . .

the conference of the Liberals. In the opening session of the conference two leaders of this party Dr. Elimelekh Remlat and Arie Dultchin voiced an uncommon, unexpected tune. "The Palestinian question has become a political fact now and ignoring it will not make it disappear," said the first who adhered to the view that this problem must find its solution in Jordan. "The Palestinian problem exists and it must be solved," said the second.

These things said at the forum of a party that aligned itself with Herut in the Likud are innovations and they indicate a change in public sentiment in Israel.

Not everyone shares this feeling and the conclusions that follow from it. This fact was demonstrated in an interview which Moshe Dayan gave to an American periodical. Dayan's retort against criticism of his views teach that the ex-Defense Minister still clings to his old views that Jews and Palestinians should live together, beside each other in the West Bank, in the future, without either annexing the West Bank to Israel or returning it to Jordan. His retort to the criticism of his views found expression in the interview he gave this week: "Whoever is talking about the Palestinians and

about negotiating with them must make clear not with whom negotiations should be conducted but on what." That is, the idea of negotiating one day with the PLO does not disturb Dayan, but rather the question of on what can negotiations with an organization whose declared objective is the destruction of the Jewish state and the establishment of a "secular democratic state" in its place, be based. Dayan has always rejected the idea of establishing a Palestinian state in the West Bank.

A New Orientation

The confusion in Jerusalem is great. Some are searching for "formulae" that could open up new tactical avenues but, as of now, no one has any comprehensive plan for the solution of the problem. Some pin their hopes on the Foreign Minister, Yigal Allon. In the Government's session this week he informed his colleagues that he intends to present an outline for a new orientation on the Palestinian question soon. On the grounds of what Allon wrote, said, and did on this issue, including his contacts with Arab dignitaries from the Territories, his talks with Hussein, the plan bearing his name which was rejected by the other side, his age old realization that the Arab-Israeli wars broke out because of the Palestinians, his willingness to recognize an emerging Palestinian nation (he said this during a party discussion a few days before the Oc-

tober War) and his predilection to toy with the idea of an Israeli-Jordanian-Palestinian confederation that is founded, of course, on far reaching territorial concessions on the part of Israel — all these things qualify Allon, theoretically, to undertake the difficult task of paving an essential, imperative course in our policy before foreign factors impose such a course on us.

One of Allon's close associates who has a great deal of respect for him rightly said this week: The question is whether Allon will act on this issue as Moshe Sharet did at the time — i.e., compromise and give in, or see in this the challenge of his life and go this time until the end.

Either way it may safely assumed that before long the Israeli Government, whether willingly or out of coercion, will have to confront the Palestinian question.

**EXTRA COPIES
of this or any other issue
are available from:**

**SWASIA, 3631 39th St., N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20016**

**The price is 25 cents per copy
(or 20 cents for five or more)
for orders in the U.S. and Canada**



Vol. II, No. 51; December 26, 1975

Second Class Postage
PAID
at Washington, D.C.

Postmaster: Send form 3579
to SWASIA, 3631 39th St., N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20016

Newspaper