

to the PLO (keeping in mind that the US itself rejects meeting with such persons).

In the recent period, when Peres made his UN speech putting forward the «Israeli peace initiative», a violent campaign was launched against the PLO. Peres claimed that «no one has inflicted greater tragedy on the Palestinian people than has the terrorism of the PLO.» Israeli officials repeatedly called on Hussein to cancel his alliance with Arafat if he seriously wants to negotiate. On October 28, 1985, Peres declared in the Knesset that he rejects any PLO role, adding that «it is a terrorist organization which uses violent methods instead of the political alternative.» In brief, the Zionist entity rejects negotiations with the PLO in any form, no matter who may be at its head.

Neither this Israeli government, nor any previous one, nor any official, has ever expressed the possibility of negotiating with the PLO under any conditions. However, conditions have been made by former officials and are documented in Labor's 1984 election platform. These conditions can be summarized as follows: The PLO must forego the Palestinian National Charter and the armed struggle, and must clearly recognize the right of 'Israel' to exist within secure borders as stipulated in Security Council resolution 242.

As stated in Labor's election platform: «The basic position of Labor stipulates that neither the PLO, or any other organization which is committed to the Palestinian National Charter and rejects the right of Israel to exist and the national status of the Jewish people, or which adopts terrorist methods, will be a participant in the negotiations...It is possible to give the opportunity of negotiations to Palestinian figures who recognize Israel and reject terror.»⁶

These conditions mean no less than that the PLO should abolish itself and stop being a liberation organization, instead becoming an instrument for facilitating the liquidation of the Palestinian people's rights. Neither this Israeli government or previous ones mention what role the PLO or its representatives might play if it were to do so. Nor is there any mention of the results to be gained. All that is declared is: «A solution to the Palestinian problem should be brought about within a Palestinian-Jordanian state on Jordanian land with a Palestinian majority, and within limited areas of Judea and Samaria and Gaza which are densely populated with Arabs, and from which the Israeli army will withdraw.»⁷

The Likud's position is well known: (a) rejection of any withdrawal; (b) accepting only Israeli sovereignty; (c) supporting annexation; and (d) rejection of the PLO.

The Zionist position rejects any form of Palestinian entity whether a state or purely Palestinian autonomy. The solution

of the Palestinian problem is always connected to Jordan, concealing the Palestinian identity. This means that the Israeli government will not agree to anything for the PLO, no matter how many concessions it makes. It is hypothetical to speak of negotiations with the PLO during the present Israeli government's term.

Negotiating with Syria

The present Israeli government has not directed a call for negotiations with Syria under any particular conditions. It has completely neglected this matter in all documents and initiatives. In the government's basic document, there is no mention of Syria or the Golan Heights. Nor did Peres' UN initiative mention Syria, although it explicitly spoke of Jordan and a Jordanian-Palestinian delegation. Peres said: «The aim of negotiations is to reach a peace agreement between Israel and the Arab states, as well as solving the Palestinian problem.»⁸

Presently 'Israel' concentrates on Syria's 'extremism' and 'aggressive tendencies' and calls for alertness to Syria's growing military strength. Foreign Minister Shamir's statement is indicative: «The Syrian government is extremist to the last degree, and there is no possibility of negotiating with her and reaching fruitful results.»⁹ This was in answer to Japan's suggestion for 'Israel' to negotiate with Syria, proposed during Shamir's visit to Japan.

The Labor Party's election platform states: «The Labor government will have peace negotiations with Syria without preconditions...The Israeli government should be on the alert and prepared in the face of the growth of the Syrian army and the threats of war issued by Syria...Israel will strive for dialogue with Syria even before peace discussions, to prevent an escalation between the two countries.»

It is clear that the main Israeli concern is preventing confrontation with Syria at a time which is unsuitable for 'Israel'. This is the reason for the constant references to Syrian military growth. The question of negotiating with Syria (mentioned in the Labor program but not in that of the government) is clearly of secondary importance. The present government has no desire to negotiate with Syria. Like its predecessors, this government declares readiness to negotiate with any Arab government without preconditions.

With regard to Syria's occupied Golan Heights, the Zionist government is not prepared to rescind the 1981 decision to annex this land. It is important to note that Labor and Likud agree on this point. Given these facts, it can be said that the Israeli government will agree to hypothetical negotiations with Syria, provided the latter recognizes 'Israel' and its occupation of Arab land.

Notes:

¹Maarev, Sept. 14, 1984. Davar, Sept. 10, 1984.

²Yediot Aharanot, Oct. 22, 1985.

³Haaretz, July 10, 1985.

⁴Israeli Radio, Nov. 4, 1985.

⁵Yediot Aharanot, Oct. 22, 1985.

⁶Maarev, June 15, 1984.

⁷Ibid.

⁸Yediot Aharanot, Oct. 22, 1985.

⁹Al Nahar, Sept. 11, 1985.