
US Search for Peace

Imperialist efforts continue to enforce a capitulationist settlement in the Middle East, based on negation of the Palestinian people's rights of return, self-determination and establishing an independent Palestinian state. In addition to imperialism and Zionism, the settlement efforts have gained the support of Arab and Palestinian reactionaries. The settlement includes different concepts for resolving the Palestinian issue. These range from 'autonomy' in the West Bank and Gaza Strip, with continued Zionist control, as specified in the Camp David accords and advocated by the Likud; to a Jordanian-Palestinian confederation under the control of King Hussein (the position of the Jordanian regime and the Arafat leadership).

Reaching an imperialist settlement is a cornerstone in the US's foreign policy, in order to consolidate the Zionist entity and its own domination of the Middle East. The US drive for imposing such a settlement is two-pronged. One prong is attacking and intimidating the nationalist forces as manifest in the US aggression on Libya and the US-Zionist threats against Syria. The Zionists' iron fist policy in occupied Palestine is another component of this policy. Since August 1985, 33 Palestinians have been deported and 125 remain under indefinite administrative detention. To this is added the Jordanian-Zionist attempts to find alternatives to the PLO - the sole, legitimate representative of the Palestinian people. These attempts include the efforts to appoint the municipal councils in the West Bank and the new Jordanian election law.

The other prong is reorganizing the Middle East in preparation for a settlement that would liquidate the Palestinian cause. To this end, US Vice-President George Bush and Undersecretary of State Richard Murphy visited the Middle East in the second week of April. Although Bush's statement, that the US was beginning a new 'peace' initiative, was denied by the State Department, another of his statements was more to the point. Bush said that one of the main reasons for the trip was «to survey the possibilities of moving the peace process forward.» It is well to remember that, to the US, the 'peace' process

means reaching at a settlement without the PLO, or with a non-effective PLO that has surrendered totally to the imperialist-Zionist conditions. This was the reason for the magnitude of the US-financed Zionist invasion of Lebanon, and the timing of the Reagan plan which was forwarded in September 1982, right after the withdrawal of the Palestinian revolution's forces from Beirut.

The settlement process gained momentum on the Arab level after the deviating PLO leadership broke the isolation of the Camp David regime in Egypt, and then signed the Amman accord with King Hussein. The Amman accord states that Jordan and the PLO will work jointly for 'peace' with a view towards a confederated Jordanian-Palestinian state. The process faced obstacles when King Hussein failed to get Arafat to give up his last card by recognizing Security Council resolutions 242 and 338 in accordance with US demands, without any assurance that the US would recognize the Palestinians' right to self-determination. Those tactical differences between Hussein and Arafat caused Hussein to announce the freezing of their coordination. This in turn caused alarm in the Arab reactionary camp. Egypt, Saudi Arabia, Morocco and Iraq all offered their services to mediate between Arafat and Hussein. At the same time, King Hussein and the Zionist state failed in their efforts to find acceptable figures to act as an alternative leadership for the PLO, especially after the execution of the collaborator, Zafer al Masri. Afterwards, Hussein cooled down his overt attack on the PLO, while US State Department spokesman Charles Redman said, «It is obvious that we have embarked on a period of reflection on the part of all parties.»

Hussein opens a new front vs. the PLO

King Hussein changed his tactics in keeping with the essence of his strategy for absorbing the Palestinian cause. He worked to weaken the PLO through new methods. The new election law in Jordan is one of these efforts. This law is in contradiction with the Rabat summit decisions that the PLO is the sole legiti-

mate representative of the Palestinian people. The election law divides the seats in the Jordanian parliament into two equal categories: those for the West Bank and the Palestinian refugee camps in Jordan on the one hand, and those for the East Bank, i.e., Jordan, on the other. This is an attempt to give legitimacy to Jordanian claims to represent the Palestinians.

Hussein's other effort was sponsoring a mutiny among Arafat's military forces in Jordan. The leader of this split is Atallah Atallah (Abu al Zaim), well-known as a puppet of the Jordanian regime. One of the issues raised by the mutineers was blaming Arafat for the deteriorations of relations with Jordan, in a direct echo of King Hussein's February speech. Hussein is coupling these steps with an ongoing campaign of repression against democratic and even liberal forces. (See update on Jordan's iron fist.)

Arafat, however, has disregarded these facts, just as he disregards the hopes of the Palestinian people for the cancellation of the Amman accord.

Meanwhile, the reactionary Arab forces continue preparations for a settlement. The godfather of Camp David, King Hassan of Morocco, has repeatedly called for a meeting between an Arab leader selected by an Arab summit, and the Zionist prime minister Peres. This is part of the efforts to condition the Arab people into accepting the existence of the Zionist entity, as a precondition for enforcement of the capitulationist settlement.

Zionism's preparations

Preparations for a settlement also continue on the Israeli side. Polarization has become more apparent on the Israeli political scene. On the one hand, there are the extremist, vocally racist Zionists that refuse any possibility of giving even token concessions. This includes the majority of the Likud and small ultraconservative parties like Kach and Tehiya, who remind us of the Ku Klux Klan. On the other hand, there are the so-called moderate, but essentially no less racist Zionists who are more in tune with imperialist policy. This camp is mainly represented by the Labor Party