

Forswear annexation. Stop settlement activity. Allow the schools to reopen...»

However, the Zionist leadership will not begin to translate criticism into rethinking of how to guarantee Israeli security in new ways, unless its allies pressure it into doing so. With the reception given the Shamir plan - outright US support and a relative slowdown of European diplomacy - It seems that Israel's allies are not yet prepared to pressure it to do what they think would be logical in the given situation.

A good gage of the US position is found in «Building for Peace: An American Strategy in the Middle East,» prepared by the Washington Institute's Presidential Study Group on US policy, chaired by Lawrence Eagleburger and Walter Mondale. This report was completed before the PLO launched its peace initiative in November 1988, but there is little indication that the Bush Administration has departed from its basic premises, despite changing events. A quote from this study explains the US failure to pressure Israel on any basic issue so far: «The inter-communal conflict between Palestinians and Israelis manifest in the uprising, has now become a chronic problem, rendering peacemaking more urgent and more difficult. Israel feels now it can take fewer risks for peace; the Palestinians seem to believe they can achieve more than is possible or, from the US viewpoint, desirable; and Jordan appears to have retreated to the sidelines. The interstate conflict between the Arab states and Israel now threatens to become increasingly dangerous and volatile...Another ambitious American plan for solving the Palestinian problem is not only likely to fail but will also be counterproductive...The first task of diplomacy is to lay the foundation upon which negotiations can be built.»

One concrete proposal of the report has been implemented: «strengthening Israel's deterrent by advancing strategic cooperation.» In April 1988, the US and Israel signed yet another memorandum of agreement for political, security and economic cooperation, including development of the Arrow missile, and the Marines training on the ground in Israel (Israel radio, July 21, 1988). Strategic cooperation is being further advanced with the current US proposal to preposition \$100 million worth of military equipment in Israel, suitable for both armies, which Israel could draw on according to a pay-as-you-use agreement. (In return, Israel is requested not to oppose US tank sales to Saudi Arabia.)

Unprecedented US criticism of Israeli practices in the occupied territories, and the fact that influential legislators put questions to US aid to Israel in the future, initially led to optimism in some circles that the US might pressure Israel on meaningful issues. However, ensuing developments show that while the uprising has raised questions as never before, it will have to be even more prolonged and radical before the projected separation could be created between Israel and its main financier, to the extent of enforcing Palestinian rights. In a paper entitled «Political Implications of the Uprising,» Rashid Khalidi noted: «In spite of the opening of contacts with the PLO, the isolation of the United States has increased as a result of the uprising. I would strongly argue, however, that there is still no



crisis for American policy makers. Until there is one - whether it's a crisis on the ground or some crisis in the domestic situation here or in Israel - I think the United States and Israel can hold out in splendid isolation indefinitely («American-Arab Affairs, Winter 1988-89»). This is, of course to a great extent the case due to the absence of a satisfactory response to the uprising in the Arab world, whether from the regimes or the national liberation movement.

If this situation continues, US policy can shelter Israel, giving it time to resolve its internal contradictions about the questions of withdrawal and a political settlement. Abba Eban expressed this in a commentary which appeared in the *Washington Post*, July 24, 1989: «The only thread that now separates the Israeli-Palestinian area from early explosion is the fact that the United States is in a simultaneous discourse with all the parties. Ending the American-Palestinian dialogue now would lead to despair of peace, escalation of violence and the growth of extremism on both sides of the conflict. It would be injurious to Israeli interests for the United States to withdraw its restraining presence from this area.»

One can conclude that the guarantees of security which Israel receives from its main allies have not as yet been decisively affected, though this might happen in the future as the intifada continues. In evaluating how Israel may react to potential US pressure in the future, it is useful to refer to a book published in New York, 1987, in cooperation with the Hebrew University: *Israel, the Superpowers, and the War in the Middle East*. The author, Yaakov Bar Siman Tov, lists eight counterstrategies used by Israel in the past to offset US pressure: self-restraint; swift military offensive before a ceasefire is imposed; escalation to provoke confrontation with the Soviet Union and force a US response; bargaining; penetration of the domestic system of its US patron; blackmail by weakness; threatening regional instability; and military confrontation with the Soviet Union. Reviewing this book in the *Journal of Palestine Studies*, Winter 1989, Michael Collins Dunn remarked that these counterstrategies «would appear to be singularly ineffective in dealing with the US on the issue of the intifada.»

The enemy within/demography/transfer

If Israel does not appear to be threatened in terms of its reliance on international aid for security and well-being, the