

UN, Israeli Institutions Tell Sharon: Make Peace

by Michele Steinberg and
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In an unprecedented move, on Nov. 13, four former heads of the Shin Bet, the Israeli national security service, blasted the hardline policies of Israel Prime Minister Ariel Sharon towards the Palestinians. They declared, in a joint interview to Israel's largest-circulation daily, *Yedioth Aharanot*, that Israel faces "catastrophe" unless it makes peace with the Palestinians. The move by these senior officials follows the intervention, no less stunning, by the *current* Chief of Staff of the Israeli Defense Forces, Gen. Moshe Ya'alon, who briefed reporters that Sharon's policies were responsible for the collapse of the government of former Palestinian Prime Minister Mahmoud Abbas (Abu Mazen).

Reporting on General Ya'alon's remarks, *Ha'aretz* reporter Uzi Benziman wrote on Oct. 29, "The high command of the Israel Defense Forces believes that Israel contributed to the collapse of former Palestinian premier Mahmoud Abbas' (Abu Mazen's) government by making only stingy demonstrations of support." Benziman added that unnamed senior military sources said, "It is the dominant feeling in the IDF General Staff . . . that Israel should have treated Abbas differently, by giving him control of every Palestinian city he asked for." Abu Mazen was also undercut, these sources told *Ha'aretz*, by Sharon's threats about the "fate of Yasser Arafat."

These anti-Sharon statements by military and intelligence chiefs are not individual, but *institutional*, say intelligence sources in Israel and Washington, and they have rocked Israel—and perhaps, to an even greater extent, the United States.

UN Vote Makes Sharon Unhappy

Reflecting this reality, on Nov. 19, was the UN Security Council's *unanimous* vote to pass a Russian-sponsored resolution that made the Road Map peace plan an official UN Security Council policy; the United States voted in favor of the resolution, despite the hysterical opposition of Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon's government.

Nasser al-Kidwa, Palestinian envoy to the UN, said the resolution "could be a watershed in the history of the Middle East peace process," as it is "the first that focusses entirely on the two-state solution." On behalf of the Russian government, Deputy Foreign Minister Yuri Fedotov said, "The purpose of this resolution is to give an additional impetus to international

efforts, including efforts made by the four international co-sponsors [the United States, European Union, United Nations, and Russia] to promote the fulfillment of the parties' obligations under the Road Map." It was exactly this international pressure—especially the possibility of international monitors—that Sharon wanted to avoid.

There is still more to the story. Commenting on the resolution, Lyndon LaRouche, the Presidential candidate who is second in popular support among the Democrats running for the 2004 nomination, said that the passing of the UNSC resolution will make Cheney and Sharon very unhappy. Indeed, Cheney's forces have been behind every U.S. veto of a Security Council resolution that attempted to curtail Sharon's violence.

LaRouche had in fact set the stage for the passing of the UNSC resolution, when he supported the "Geneva Accord" peace initiative of Palestinians and Israelis, at his Oct. 22 international webcast, called "The Post-Cheney Era." LaRouche is the *only* Presidential candidate to support the Geneva Accord, which has taken the world by fire, and is due to be signed by the Palestinian and Israeli leaders who initiated it in a special ceremony on Dec. 1 in Switzerland.

LaRouche has also led the movement in the United States to oust Cheney from government, exposing how the Vice President runs a parallel government from a war room in his offices, staffed by the neo-conservative followers of Nietzschean Leo Strauss. In a campaign pamphlet, LaRouche dubbed this Cheney network, the "Children of Satan: The Ignoble Liars Behind Bush's No Exit War"; and the label has stuck. Cheney's operatives, including his aide, David Wurmser, Pentagon advisor Richard Perle, and Undersecretary of Defense for Policy Douglas Feith were all co-authors of the 1996 document, "A Clean Break," which calls for abolishing the Palestinian Authority and for the Nazi-style mass exile of Palestinians, as well as regime change in Iraq, Syria, and Iran. Cheney's neo-cons want to wipe out the Palestinian leadership under the rubric of the "war against terrorism." But with the revolt of the Israeli institutions, the Sharon/Cheney plans are threatened.

Washington sources report that secret polls available to the White House show Bush does not even command the support of Jewish Americans—despite his 1,000% support for Sharon's every deadly move. Jewish citizens in America and Israel realize that there is no military solution, and are turning away from Cheney's buddy Sharon, who promised "peace and security" and brought neither to Israel.

Expanding Peace Process

"These statements by the Shin Bet Chiefs have to be seen as part of a growing movement" for peace, one Israeli intelligence source told *EIR*. He pointed to developments over the past several weeks including the letter of refusal to serve in the occupied territories by reserve Air Force pilots—considered the elite of the elite—including a brigadier general. This

was followed by General Ya'alon's powerful statements against Sharon's policies. In addition, young IDF soldiers, including some who recently emigrated from America, have been coming forward, in regional U.S. newspapers, with stories of how they are ordered to brutalize and humiliate Palestinian civilians.

But the intervention by the former Shin Bet chiefs was the most dramatic, covered in four full pages of *Yedioth Aharonot*. "We are heading downhill towards near catastrophe," said Yaakov Perry, Shin Bet chief from 1987-93. "If . . . we go on living by the sword, we will continue to wallow in the mud and destroy ourselves." Israel must "dismantle the illegal settlements." Perry even specifically referenced the violent West Bank settlers saying, "We will have to clash with them."

Ami Ayalon, Shin Bet head from 1996-2000, called for unilateral withdrawal of troops and settlers from Gaza and the West Bank, saying that if the occupation continues, "We are taking sure, steady steps to a place where the State of Israel will no longer be a democracy and a home for the Jewish people." Ayalon is also an initiator of a peace initiative called the People's Voice, with Sari Nusseibeh, a Palestinian intellectual and President of Al Quds University in East Jerusalem. That statement of principles for a peace agreement has been turned into a petition which over 100,000 Palestinians and Israelis have signed, and Ayalon and Nusseibeh jointly toured the U.S. promoting it.

Carmi Gillon, Shin Bet head from just after the Rabin assassination until 1996, called the government incapable of "getting out of this mess." Avraham Shalom, chief from 1980-86, said Sharon's policies were "contrary to the desire for peace. We must once and for all admit there is another side, that . . . that it is suffering and that we are behaving disgracefully. . . . This entire behavior is the result of the occupation."

These courageous outcries have in turn triggered forceful action from international leaders, most notably, Russian President Vladimir Putin and Pope John Paul II. On Nov. 16 in St. Peter's Square, the Pope, for the first time, denounced Israel's apartheid wall, pointedly, on the eve of Sharon's arrival in Italy, saying, "The Holy Land does not need walls, but bridges. . . . [T]he wall . . . is seen by many as a new obstacle" to peace. Just two weeks before, Putin had told Sharon point-blank that Russia would neither withdraw nor alter its UN Security Council resolution on the Road Map and a Palestinian state, which was to be adopted on Nov. 19. "Unfortunately, the momentum for peace seems to have stopped," said the Pope, but his intervention helped turn the tide.

The wide American audience for the voices of peace was reflected in the highly successful Nov. 1-4 tour by Gen. Amram Mitzna, former Labor Party chairman, appealing to America to support the Geneva Accord (see box).

Mitzna: 'We Are Back' For Peace

Gen. Amram Mitzna (IDF-ret.) former chairman of the Israeli Labor Party and current member of the Knesset (parliament), gave this Nov. 1 keynote speech in Boston, Mass., to a conference of Brit Tzedek v'Shalom, the U.S.-based Alliance for Justice and Peace. Mitzna also spoke to capacity crowds in Philadelphia and New York—but not one major U.S. newspaper reported his speeches, showing thus the media bias for the pro-war Likudniks. Here is the opening and an excerpt of Mitzna's Boston speech.

I'd like to begin with telling you that just a few hours ago, thousands of people gathered in the Square. And I'm talking about Rabin Square in Tel Aviv. I remind you that it is eight years since Rabin was assassinated by extremists for the Jewish organizations in Israel. And I think that we should do the same as the people in the Square did. Let's stand up for one minute of silence. . . .

Rabin was assassinated . . . after he was so brave to change his mind and to understand that the reality in the Middle East is not what we thought. . . .

In 1987, 20 years had passed since the war in '67, and many people in Israel thought that it is possible to continue to occupy—then 2.5 million Palestinians, now 3.5 million Palestinians—and we did it so easily, without any real problems. But the Intifada in 1987 showed that it is over. And Rabin, I think, as Begin before, realized that instead of fighting the Palestinians, and losing everything we have, we will have to reach the idea of "Two States for Two Peoples." Instead of fighting, let's negotiate. Instead of occupying . . . let's see what kind of concessions that we have to make—painful concessions—if we want to live as a Jewish and a Democratic state.

He was assassinated, and for the last eight years . . . we went "off-road." I think that the Geneva accord—the Geneva Initiative—the Geneva Agreement is a sign that we are back, talking about "Two States for Two Peoples," with a just conclusion to the conflict. . . .

Now it is very important that the Jewish communities in the United States will raise their voice. . . . and you are not alone—it is in Israel also that the right-wing . . . are much stronger. But now we have an agenda. . . . I believe we were so brave in wars and in combat, we are able to be brave in taking risks in peace attempts and peace initiatives.—*Michele Steinberg*