

the Arabs. On June 24, Weizman said he would like to meet PLO Chairman Yasser Arafat, but then added, "I'll tell him what I think of him, and he will tell me what he thinks of me. If he shoots me, I'll shoot him back." Then in an interview with a Danish newspaper, Weizman invited the Arabs to start a war, "because this would perhaps help solve the Mideast problem. Either the two peoples learn to live together, or else one of them will be kicked out."

Ariel Sharon, the warhawk Agriculture Minister, promised to set up dozens of new Jewish settlements in the West Bank, despite international law and Arab public opinion, which will become inflamed by such provocations.

The EEC Angle

In London, a meeting of the heads of state of the European Economic Community (EEC) on June 29 called the Carter bluff in the Middle East. After months of vacillation, during which the EEC refused under U.S. pressure to issue a declaration on the crisis in the Middle East, the EEC Summit declared in favor of a concrete expression for the Palestinian "national identity," a return by Israel to the 1967 borders, and offered EEC support for a system of international guarantees for a peace settlement in the framework of a United Nations decision. The EEC also called for an "urgent" return to the Geneva Conference.

Naturally, in the Arab world, the EEC statement was welcomed. Cairo, which had earlier urged the EEC to not postpone its statement, was reported to be jubilant, and Foreign Minister Fahmi of Egypt called the move a "positive step." The PLO also endorsed the EEC call, but qualified its endorsement by noting "generalities" — a

reference to the fact that the EEC refused to mention the PLO by name.

More important however is the Israeli reaction. On the surface, of course, the Israelis condemned the EEC for capitulating to the pressure of Arab oil. In a fiery speech, Prime Minister Begin referred to Europe as a "continent drenched in Jewish blood," and vowed that Israel would never relinquish the occupied West Bank or recognize the Palestinians. But it is likely that Begin was largely playing to the galleries in Israel, while, quietly, Israeli diplomats were pursuing the EEC channel as an alternative to the U.S.; mediation and the horrors of Carter diplomacy.

Israeli sources in Rome, for instance, reported yesterday that a delegation from the Israeli foreign ministry arrived secretly in Italy for unofficial talks with Arab officials. Of note is the fact that Foreign Minister Khaddam of Syria was in Rome from June 28-30. In addition, the Israeli ambassador to Rome, on the inaugural day of the EEC-Israeli accords, July 1, said that the links between Israel and the EEC, like the links between the EEC and the Arab world, could lead to a general rapprochement between Israel and the Arabs in the Middle East.

The ambassador's statement was virtually unprecedented in Israeli history, since the Israeli attitude toward Europe — expressed most crudely by former Israeli Foreign Minister Allon — was to tell the Europeans to stay out of the politics of the Arab-Israeli dispute.

Even more interesting is the report from Capitol Hill, from a source close to Israeli circles, that Prime Minister Begin was considering declaring a debt moratorium. A hint in this direction was provided by the chairman of the Israeli Industrial Association, who said, "Israel is bankrupted. It has a foreign debt of \$10 billion."

— Bob Dreyfuss

PLO Rejects Carter Plans

The Carter Administration is beginning a concerted effort to dilute and ultimately replace the current leadership of the Palestine Liberation Organization with pro-U.S. agents from the Palestinian rightwing on the West Bank and in the Syrian branch of the PLO, Saiqa. The move against the leadership of the PLO including chairman Yasser Arafat is part of the Carter-Brzezinski plan to establish a Jordanian-Palestinian confederation on the West Bank. The plan has been roundly rejected by the PLO leadership, who have also "categorically excluded" any possibility of discussion with members of the current Israeli government on this issue.

PLO Foreign Minister Farouk Kaddoumi demanded instead the formation of an Independent Palestinian state which, once independent, could form relations with Jordan or any other state. A Palestinian-Jordanian state on the West Bank would be little more than an "Arab province" of Israel if the Brzezinski plan is carried out. When asked whether the Arab states will accept the Carter Administration formula for the West Bank, PLO leaders were reported by the French daily Le Figaro to have "smiled and claimed to be able to play, for a long time yet, on Arab contradictions."

The following are excerpts from Falastin Ath-Thawra, the original organ of the PLO, warning against U.S.

peace efforts as but a cover for a war drive.

The pseudo peace-efforts of the United States will only lead to regaining a very insignificant part of the occupied Arab areas, at the expense of creating a dangerous situation in the Arab area. This will make the Arab demand for regaining their lands look like provocation to Israel, justifying a new aggression of the June 1967 type, with guaranteed results for Zionism and imperialism on the local and international levels.

The small U.S. peace steps are only a cover for big conspiracies against the Arab and Palestine liberation movements. This will lead the area to an inevitable war if the imperialist attempts currently taking place fail to subjugate the Arab area by easy capitulation to imperialist and Zionist conditions. We are confident that the Arab circumstances currently existing — aimed at reaping the fruits of the June 5, 1967 aggression and imposing imperialist and Zionist hegemony and influence on the Arab area for a long time to come. The Arabs have been given general phrases, hints and suggestions, void of any practical significance. Even the phrase "a homeland for the Palestinians:" which U.S. President Carter reiterates is merely general and vague lipservice imposed by the Palestinian steadfastness on the facts of the situation.

The vagueness in Carter's statements is part of the continuing plot against the Palestine revolution and people under the slogan of the "alternate homeland" adopted by the individuals and regimes which are hostile to the rights of the Palestinian people to self-determination and the establishment of their national, independent state. The administration of President Carter knows exactly what it is doing. It is currently working for the establishment of a local front to oppose the Palestinian people and to prevent them from exercising their right to self-determination. Carter's statements are instigating these forces to unleash a criminal war against the Palestinian revolution. Emerging from the circle of illusions created by the United States and entering the circle of patriotic and nationalistic action are the only thing which can save the Arab position from falling victim to another aggression of the 5 June type. The American solution has dismembered the Arab front through illusions, promises and aid. Consequently, it has created unpatriotic alliances which take national decisions without an independent will, but totally linked with the American decisions.

Arab-Soviet relations should be restored to normal, consolidated and strengthened. The experience of the last 6 years has proven that ignoring Arab-Soviet friendship has always led to subjugation to U.S. imperialism, whether under the pretext that the solution is in the hands of the United States or that Washington is giving economic and financial aid to this or that Arab regime and protecting it against inevitable collapse. Arab-Soviet friendship certainly creates the objective conditions for the liberation of the land, while Arab-American friendship creates the objective conditions for Arab capitulation and for further Zionist military adventures against the Arab nation.

The role of the Palestinian revolution in Lebanon must be consolidated. The plot against the Palestinian revolution in the last 2 years has been a basic link in the comprehensive design to subjugate the Arab nation. It is now evident that the American solution will be imposed by the Zionist tanks which are getting ready to unleash aggression.

* * *

Soviets: Israel Breakaway A Hoax

The following commentary by Viktor Viktorov was broadcast by Radio Moscow June 29 in English to North America. It concerns President Jimmy Carter's decision to sell \$115 million in arms to Israel.

This pact cannot be looked upon as anything but more encouragement to the expansionist designs of the Israeli leaders. It is especially dangerous because the head of state is the leader of the right-wing extremist Likud bloc, Menachem Begin. His government does not hide its intention to block all efforts for a peaceful settlement in the Middle East. Washington has not spared efforts to indulge the Tel Aviv war government... (In his recent speech, Vice President) Mondale stressed the consistent and unchanging nature of the so-called special relations between Tel Aviv and Washington. A similar statement has been made by Secretary of State Cyrus Vance. These statements, as has been noted in the American press, should create an appropriate climate for Menachem Begin's trip to the United States in July.

But the United States, as everyone can see, is not only giving verbal support to the Israeli leaders. The latest weapons are leaving the Pentagon arsenals in a steady stream for Tel Aviv. Some of these weapons are not even used by the American armed forces...

And after all this, Washington still insists that the United States is putting some kind of pressure on Tel Aviv, supposedly in an attempt to have Israeli troops withdrawn from the occupied Arab lands. Washington's

pro-Israel position is actually encouraging the Tel Aviv hawks... It is not hard to prove that such policy threatens a military clash in view of the tense atmosphere in the Middle East.

* * *

The following are releases from the Soviet press agency TASS:

CAIRO — At a ceremony of graduation of a group of officers from the naval college in Alexandria, Egyptian war minister A. Al-Gamassi spoke. Concerning the situation in Israel, he stated: "We are very carefully following the activation there of extremist attitudes, and our armed forces are again prepared to show their strength in confrontation with the enemy. Israel's goals and its military strategy are not new for us, and Egypt, while calling to establish a just and firm peace, continues to strengthen its army."

DAMASCUS — The decision of the American Administration to make new arms deliveries to Israel does not do anything for the cause of peace. It is a new affirmation of the unchanged nature of U.S. policy in the Middle East, which helps prolong the illegal occupation and is a challenge to world public opinion, writes the Syrian newspaper *Al-Baath*.

The latest White House statements, continues the newspaper, demonstrate that Washington will continue to refuse to play an effective role in this region as far as reaching a settlement of the Middle East crisis goes.

In light of the present situation, stresses *Al-Baath*, the Arab masses are right to demand that their leaders take a more serious position and mobilize all forces, before it is too late, in order to be prepared for any turn of events.