

Editorial

A political solution in the Middle East

What follows has been abridged from remarks by Lyndon H. LaRouche, Jr. to a presidential candidates' conference on Middle East policy, which fellow Democratic candidate Stephen Kozcak also addressed, in Nashua, N.H. on Feb. 14.

A political solution to the long-term conflict to the Middle East cannot be realized without a sound economic foundation. We have a number of Palestinian Arabs, who are generally poor: The Palestinian Arabs tend to have, on the average, the highest cultural level of the Arab population in general. They have excellent economic potentials, given the opportunity to express them. The Palestinian Arabs are employed, as refugees or displaced persons, throughout the Middle East and Arab countries, where they represent a repository of skills, upon which other governments depend. If they had their own autonomous region, in which to govern themselves, and had the means of investment to develop the economy, they would do relatively very well.

Can we bring that about? Can we bring about an accommodation among the Israelis and Arabs, in the region, which would make this solution possible? If that economic solution is possible, this would mean a viable solution. This has been recognized in Israel for a long time, particularly among military figures in Israel, apart from some of the nuts that are generally broadcast widely in the United States. They say that Israel has no long-term prospect of existence, unless Israel comes to terms with its Arab neighbors, and this means they all agree on some solution for the Palestinian Arab problem.

Recently, this has become more obvious, particularly since Alexander Haig's and Ariel Sharon's conspiracy to destroy what was called the "Reagan Policy" for a peaceful solution to the Middle East. It wasn't a very good policy, but at least it was a probe for some solution. In 1982, Haig, in collaboration with channels to Mr. Kissinger and Sharon, launched a war—an invasion of southern Lebanon, which became, in a small but significant degree, Israel's Vietnam war.

The Israelis recognized increasingly after that, that a four-to-five year process of general deterioration would lead to an impossible situation.

In the meantime, as some of you know, we've been discussing this with our Arab friends. We originally discussed this, some time ago, with Shimon Peres, the prime minister of Israel, and his staff, and we were working on a plan to do something in this direction with the Gaza Strip. And then, unfortunately, Mr. Peres had to rotate his position by prior agreement with Shamir, who's a little bit of a wild man and a butcher. What was called the "New Marshall Plan" which Peres had proposed, which Egyptians and others had found sympathetic, was sabotaged by our State Department, and particularly Mr. Shultz. And so, when Mr. Peres went out of office, he went out, without the New Marshall Plan being adopted.

There are features of the Camp David agreement, which could be construed as stepping-stones toward some measures of cooperation as specified here.

The four key elements in the situation are: the Palestinians' representatives, of course, and the three governments of Jordan—particularly King Hussein—and Israel, and Egypt. If those three governments and the representatives of the Palestinians can agree upon this, with outside help—sponsorship—and if the problem of the holy places to three religions of the region is solved, in such a manner that there's no destabilization by desecration of the holy places, then a solution is possible. There's no guarantee. It might blow up.

With the help of the Vatican, perhaps, with the help of possibly the government of France, and with backing and support by the government of the United States, particularly on certain modifications in economic and monetary conditions for the region, we could actually achieve, during this year, or the early part of next year, a durable, if fragile, peace in the Middle East. Durable, in the sense, that it's sound in conception. Fragile, in the sense, that you must be careful not to make any mistakes to destabilize the process until it begins, after a number of years, to take on a life of its own.