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*Yossi Beilin addresses the Socialist International Council, Tel Aviv and Ramallah, May 2005. He is currently a Member of the Knesset and chairman of the Meretz-Yahad party.*

to begin negotiations with Israel create better circumstances for a second Madrid Conference than existed on the eve of the first.

It is also worth adding that the gaps in the matter of the final status arrangements have been greatly narrowed over the last 15 years. In Israel of 2006, there is a near-consensus about a Palestinian state, and Israel's Prime Minister is ready to give up 90 percent of the West Bank, unilaterally. The Clinton document, the Bush 'vision,' the Road Map, the Arab League Summit decision of 2002, and the Geneva Initiative all paint a clear picture of a permanent Israeli-Palestinian agreement. The public and secret talks with the Syrians since 1991 also sketch, nearly completely, the outline of an Israeli-Syrian agreement.

In 1991, it was the U.S. that invested the effort in persuading Israel to take part in such a conference. This time it will be Olmert's job to persuade President Bush that prying Syria out of the Axis of Evil, peace with Lebanon, and an end to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict are practical moves, which—if they work—could save the Middle East and help achieve the reforming vision Bush believes in so much.

## LaRouche Offers Qualified Endorsement of UN Res. 1701

On Friday, Aug. 11, 2006, the United Nations Security Council unanimously approved Resolution 1701, calling for an immediate ceasefire in Lebanon, and spelling out the terms of a phased withdrawal of all Israeli forces from Lebanon, as both an augmented United Nations Interim Force In Lebanon (UNIFIL) and troops from the Lebanese Army, assume security control of the area south of the Litani River. The resolution held Hezbollah responsible for initiating the crisis, demanded the unconditional release of two Israeli hostages, and also encouraged "efforts aimed at urgently settling the issue of the Lebanese prisoners detained in Israel."

After carefully reviewing the events at the UN Security Council, Lyndon LaRouche declared on Aug. 12 that the resolution represented a qualified triumph for former Presidents George H.W. Bush and Bill Clinton, Brent Scowcroft, and others who worked with U.S. Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice to get the Lebanon crisis under control. Although critical of some features of Res. 1701, including the focus of blame on Hezbollah, and other concessions to Israel and to President Bush, LaRouche observed that

"these kinds of things happen" in the course of difficult diplomacy. "Sometimes the truth is sacrificed for the sake of peace."

LaRouche, however, added that the full truth must be told. The situation remains, he warned, "tricky as hell." There are players in Washington, Tel Aviv, and elsewhere, who want the war to go ahead, despite the actions by the UN Security Council. The recent hype of the terror threat in London is but one indication that there are many possible triggers for a renewed larger war. LaRouche called for effective security and intelligence work, to roll up the potential terrorist networks, while refusing to succumb to the kind of war-hype tactics employed by Bush, Cheney, and Blair around the London arrests.

LaRouche added that the greatest threat to peace is the state of mind of President Bush, himself. Watch for Benjamin Netanyahu to pull some major move inside Israel, in the name of Dick Cheney, LaRouche cautioned. While saner voices in the United States prevailed for the moment over the would-be mass murderers, the threat of war has not been eliminated. Just one look at John Bolton's face as Condi Rice was casting the vote in favor of Res. 1701, tells you that the war party is very upset, and will not give up.

LaRouche concluded, the people around the Bush Sr. family deserve credit for trying to stop the war. Will it succeed? That is unknown.—*Jeffrey Steinberg*