

paring a plot with Israel, which could give the U.S. neocolonialist hegemony in the Middle East.

Adapting themselves to the present conditions in the Middle East, the U.S. ruling circles, albeit without consistency, are forced to recognize the inevitability of a withdrawal of Israel occupation troops "approximately" to the 1967 borders. In this regard, they want to catch the Arab side on the hook of demagogy. At the very same time, they consent to Israel's revising the previous borders to its advantage and creating double borders: 'state borders and "security borders," which will run across Arab territory and thus limit their sovereignty. What's more, the period of withdrawal is more than drawn out. In the Sinai, for instance, it is a full three years.

U.S. Vice-President Mondale, in his June 17 speech in San Francisco, stated generally that "Israel ought not to withdraw from occupied Arab lands, until it obtains genuine peace from the Arabs," i.e., more simply, until the Arab countries accept the Israeli-American conditions for a settlement. And after this, the State Department spokesman talks about taking into account the interests of all sides concerned!

Ardent defenders of the Zionists, such as Senators Jacob Javits and Charles Percy (both Republicans), have again become involved in the matter. After the "hawks" headed by Begin came to power in Israel, Javits advised Begin not to withdraw from the occupied territories at all, so as not to lose negotiating aces. Begin immediately grabbed this advice from the U.S., and declared that there can't be any talks about evacuating the Israeli troops, especially from the West Bank and Gaza, since these are supposedly "in fact Israeli lands." With this, he not only tries to fend off any sort of measures

towards a settlement, but also backs up the U. S. government thesis about giving the Palestinian refugees a "national place" preferably somewhere else, just not on the West Bank and Gaza. Israel and its protectors abroad thus want to completely avoid the question of creating an independent sovereign state of Palestinian Arabs on Palestinian land.

And so, in all the talk about trying to solve the Middle East crisis "in the interests of all sides concerned," Zionist and imperialist interests stick out like rabbit ears.

The only path to a just settlement of the Middle East crisis in the interests of all countries and peoples of the Middle East is the proposals of the Soviet Union, supported by all progressive forces of the world. A firm peace in the Middle East can be established only on the basis of the withdrawal of Israeli troops from all Arab territories occupied in 1967, respect for the independent and secure existence of all states and peoples of this region, restoration of the legal rights of the Arab people of Palestine, including its right to create a sovereign national state. To realize these tenets, it is necessary to convene the Geneva peace conference on the Middle East as soon as possible, with the indispensable participation, on equal footing, of representatives of the Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO).

There is no other path to peace in the Middle East. Otherwise, the Middle East can again find itself at the threshold of a new armed conflict, which will pull not only the Middle East states into its orbit. Liquidation of the Middle East spot of military tension is a foremost task of all who seek peace and security.

EXCLUSIVE

Israel's 'Europe Option'

Khaled Hassan, a leading member of the Palestine Liberation Organization, broke with precedent this week in offering Israel the hand of the Arab countries in a joint effort to develop and build up the industry and agriculture of the Middle East. In a Brussels press conference, Hassan said that if Israel recognizes the PLO's right to establish an independent state on the West Bank and Gaza, then Israel and Arabs can work together. Once Israel is ready to negotiate, said Hassan, "it will be forced to turn itself toward the countries of the region to survive."

The initiative by the PLO, while only an indication, might signal that a much broader and significant process is underway, in various European capitals, to reconcile the Arabs and Israel.

A curious exchange this week between Prime Minister Menachem Begin of Israel and Egypt's President Anwar Sadat is an example of a possible new spirit of cooperation, in which the supposedly hard-line Likud bloc in Israel, contrary to expectations, may now be considering dumping the Carter Administration's bungled Middle East diplomacy and moving directly toward a peace agreement with the Arabs.

Begin, speaking in Israel early this week, announced in an almost offhand manner that Israel proposes October 10 for the reconvening of the Geneva peace conference. In the West African country of Gabon, where Sadat was present to attend a meeting of the Organization of African Unity, the Egyptian president told a reporter that he welcomed the call from Begin, and refused to dismiss the statement from Begin as a rhetorical game. Then, in Israel, Begin responded to the Sadat statement with warm words.

"For the first time between the Arabs and Israel, an exchange and not a polemic has taken place," said the influential Italian newspaper *Il Giorno*, which noted that Arab-Israeli relations are "going well," and added that "between now and October the question of the PLO has time to be addressed." This point was underlined in Italy's Parliament by Foreign Minister Arnaldo Forlani, who, in commenting on the Begin-Sadat exchange, warned that it would be wrong to consider Begin "a simple hardliner, as his openness to Sadat shows."

"This can open the road to peace," said Forlani. "Begin, in contrast to the previous Labour government (in Israel), is flexible."

The Forlani evaluation of the Begin-Sadat exchange reveals much more than the simple fact of the exchange itself. The Mideast policy of Italy, which has won the backing of the Soviet Union and key Arab countries, involves what Forlani calls a "global Mediterranean approach." The concept of a Mediterranean security pact, first mooted by Malta and Algeria in 1976, has gained ground since this spring, over the violent objections of the Carter Administration. Since early in June, there have been increasing indications that both Israel and the Arabs, *as options*, are considering to move with Europe and the USSR toward a Middle East peace, with Italy as the key mediator. Italian sources have revealed the occurrence of meetings in Rome, secretly, between Israeli and Arab diplomats intent on exploring areas of compromise.

At the same time, the Israeli ambassador to Rome said last week that the European Economic Community (EEC) might play a role in mediating the Arab-Israeli dispute — completely reversing the policy under former Foreign Minister Yigal Allon, who demanded that the EEC stay out of the Middle East and leave the diplomacy to Washington. The ambassador's statement followed a move by the heads of state of the EEC, at their London meeting, to release a policy statement calling for peace in the Middle East after having long suppressed the statement at the behest of Secretary of State Cyrus Vance.

The key foundation for a possible Israeli-EEC accord is the question of trade relations. On July 1, the protocol for Israel's new relationship with the EEC went into effect, and officials from both sides were predicting a rapid expansion of trade. Israel's exports to the EEC are not simply agricultural produce and diamonds as before, but according to the Italian daily *Il Sole* will include such high-technology products as laser equipment for surgery.

A good example is the growing relations between Israel and West Germany. Deputy Finance Minister Flumin, in an interview with the financial daily *Handelsblatt*, said that West German-Israeli relations must be stabilized to support an increase in industrial activity and investment. A West German parliamentary delegation visited Israel, and the European Friendship Association in Israel is being revived.

On the other hand, *Handelsblatt* also reported this week that there is basis for expanding trade between Israel and the Comecon. *Handelsblatt* noted that tens of millions of dollars in trade already takes place between Israel and the Comecon, with Rumania and Yugoslavia being the two most important trade partners. But more interesting is the fact that the USSR — via Hamburg, West Berlin, and Vienna — maintains a regular flow of trade with Israel despite the lack of diplomatic relations. In addition, *Handelsblatt* reported, Czechoslovakia and Hungary trade with Israel indirectly through Rotterdam, Vienna and Switzerland.

Ecevit's Fall Could Lead To New Cyprus Crisis

TURKEY

The failure of Turkish Prime Minister Bulent Ecevit to win a vote of confidence in parliament July 3 threatens to lock Turkey into a continuing spiral of internal chaos that could trigger a renewed Greek-Turkish crisis over Cyprus. Such a crisis is now being covertly nurtured by the Carter Administration.

Carter has consistently refused to put forth a viable foreign and economic policy for debt-burdened Turkey — or the Aegean region as a whole — and, as a result, NATO has lost much of its controlling influence over the Turkish military and bureaucracy. Instead, the Carter-Brzezinski clique has adopted a purely defensive "strategy" of backing the efforts of extremist forces in Turkey to keep the country destabilized and embroiled in "left-right" violence, thereby preventing a much-feared "drift" by Turkey toward the Soviet Union.

Eugene Rostow of the Committee on the Present Danger decried Carter's policy as "insane" and certain to backfire. Rostow, who recently returned from two months in Turkey, warned that Turkey is on its way to becoming "another Egypt" within the year, and, like

Egypt, will start to gravitate toward closer military and economic cooperation with the Soviets. Concluded Rostow: "Carter is conducting affairs in a dreadful manner."

The Vote of Confidence

On June 5, Ecevit's Republican Peoples Party — a blend of traditionalist military layers and pro-socialist tendencies — won a plurality of seats in Turkey's National Assembly, 13 short of a majority. Rather than form a coalition with the fanatic fundamentalists of the National Salvation Party (MSP) of Necmettin Erbakan, Ecevit tried to win over defectors from the MSP and other opposition groups and rule with a single-party minority government. At least five MSP deputies were considering crossing over to the Ecevit camp, along with several members of former Prime Minister Suleyman Demirel's conservative Justice Party. To ensure an Ecevit victory and the formation of a stable government in Turkey, five Arab sheikhs visited Ankara and met with conservative deputies from eastern Anatolia, urging them to cast their lot with social democrat Ecevit. In response, Demirel issued orders not to break ranks during the vote of confidence. No one did, and Ecevit lost.

With the collapse of Ecevit's 10-day-old government, Demirel has now been asked to try his hand. It is widely