

Editorial

The Cheney-Sharon Block

As long as Dick Cheney and the neo-conservatives remain in power in Washington, there is no chance that Washington will force Ariel Sharon to back the Road Map or any peace plan with the Palestinians. This was shown again by the White House' Dec. 19 "congratulations" to Israeli Prime Minister Sharon. It was almost an about-face from Washington's immediate reaction the day before, to Sharon's outrageous Dec. 18 address; and it bore Cheney's hand.

Sharon delivered a threat to the Palestinian people—and to the world—that Israel will soon annex much of the West Bank and "draw its own borders" with its so-called security wall. He intends completely to ignore the Road Map which was adopted last month as an official UN Security Council resolution; ignore the Geneva Accord; and ignore decades of other UN Security Council resolutions that demand that Israel's border be returned to the 1967 "Green Line."

An Israeli source told *EIR* that Sharon, together with Defense Minister Shaul Mofaz, is rapidly accelerating the building of the "apartheid wall" which will annex about 60% of the West Bank. This scheme will deprive the Palestinians of precious farmland and economic viability, and will render thousands of families homeless, turning them into a new generation of refugees. The source urged that there be a broadening among U.S. political leaders, of the commitment by Presidential candidate Lyndon LaRouche to support the alternative of the Geneva Initiative; and LaRouche's demand that President Bush use the economic leverage the United States has over Sharon, by immediately cutting off aid unless there is an implementation of the Road Map Sharon had "agreed" to last Summer.

On Dec. 9, the United Nations General Assembly voted 90-8 to send to the International Court of Justice, the issue of Israel's "apartheid wall." Even though the United States voted against the UNGA resolution, U.S. Ambassador to Israel Daniel Kurtzer told Israeli Radio that the wall, which Sharon insists is a "security fence," must follow the Green Line.

Speaking after Sharon's Herzliya speech, Palestinian Prime Minister Ahmed Qureia said that he was "disappointed. . . . If Mr. Sharon is ready to start negotiations, we can do it sooner than anybody can expect," said Qureia. Palestinian chief negotiator Saeb Erekat added, "With this unilateral approach, they may make peace with Israelis and Israelis; they'll not make peace with the Palestinians. We invite Sharon to come immediately with no conditions to the negotiating table, on the basis of the Road Map, and let the Americans, Europeans, Russians, and the UN—the Quartet members—to be the judges of the both of us."

In the context of the tremendous international welcome that has been given to the Geneva Accord, dialogue between pro-peace Israeli circles and pro-peace Palestinians is growing. This was reflected in Prime Minister Qureia's confidence in directly addressing the Israeli public in an interview with *Ma'ariv* on Dec. 11, where he predicted that the kind of unilateral "peace plan" that Sharon advocates, means that "the conflict would continue, fires would burn, terror would increase, and no one would gain." Qureia added, "If Sharon wants to remove the settlements, fine. [But] you cannot build a fence on our land, put us into cages like chickens. . . . It will cause a disaster."

Qureia's statements are tapping a chord inside Israel, in particular after the truth was stated—by no less a figure than Israeli Defense Forces chief of staff Gen. Moshe Ya'alon—that it was Sharon who brought down the previous Palestinian government of Prime Minister Mahmoud Abbas (Abu Mazen), by refusing to implement any aspect of the Road Map. The potential to isolate Sharon is greater than ever, as indicated by Dec. 11 interview of Palestinian President Yassir Arafat by Henry Siegman, a renowned American Jewish leader, who now heads the Middle East Task Force at the Council on Foreign Relations. Siegman's interview broke up Cheney's and the neo-cons' year-long anti-Arafat game, and is being noted at the highest levels in Israel and in the United States.