

Explanation & Analysis

One must justify, elucidate and scrutinize the Alternative Solution to realise why certain points have been made, in what context they are used, and, in some ways to determine their overall significance in the overall goal - a peaceful solution to the ongoing Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

The constructed solution is not set in stone. It can be dissected, disseminated and utilised so as to arrive at a solution that is mutually beneficial to both Israelis and Palestinians.

This Explanations and Analysis also shows the bigger picture. ie how a peaceful solution in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict may lead to a dampening of the crisis that presently besets the Middle East.

Phase 1

Initial withdrawal of Israeli troops; Political conversion of militants; Removal of Yasser Arafat's effective power; normalising Palestinian way of life; initial cessation of violence from Palestinian terrorists.

The initial phase should take place over eighteen months. A long period of time is required for such a massive operation. Considering the amount of Palestinian insurgents, the sheer presence of the Israeli military and Yasser Arafat's unrelenting and damaging grip on the PA, coercion and action will need time to succeed.

It is apparent to all, that to begin the process of peace, The IDF must withdraw from the occupied territories. They must withdraw to the pre 1967 borders of Palestinian territory. Their existing presence is fuelling the fires of 'resistance' / 'insurgence', call it what you will, and, with the resultant trans-border terrorism, causing the violence that besets the population of The West Bank, Gaza Strip and Israel.

As I have written in Phase 1. The extraction of troops from the occupied territories will result in an equally matched decommissioning of arms, including the antagonistic Qassam missiles. As it will be extremely difficult to monitor such an operation, and prevent Hamas and other groups from sabotaging such a process at its embryonic stages, international monitors must be used to work together with domestic counterparts. For this position, I purposefully chose, a UN representative – for their monitoring ability and to keep The Quartet informed of progress and pitfalls; a Syrian government official (suggestion: Farouq Al-Shara) - this was for several reasons, into which I will now delve. Using a Syrian, would immediately put the Palestinians more at ease. The Syrians have also suffered at the hands of the Israelis and they too have some of their land currently occupied, they will be seen as a 'comrade sans arms' perhaps. At the current time, the Syrians are also in a very dangerous position and are quickly becoming US' number one in their 'hit list' foreign policy. To actively work with the US (as well as other members of the Quartet), and Israel, will begin the process of dragging Syria out of the potentially suicidal position in which it currently stands. It will do this in a way that also saves face. ie aiding its oppressed Arabic neighbour. The Syrian official will also have stronger contacts with the militant groups and thus perhaps hold a more persuasive power. The reason why I have chosen the Hamas leaders of the occupied territories as overseers, is simple and two-fold. Firstly, no militant under their power will lay down their arms without the command.

Obviously there are other powerful groups in the occupied territories that are not under the control of Hamas, but with these players in a prominent position and working towards peace, it is the best tool one could hope for in the political conversion process. Secondly these leaders (who will soon be seated within the political council), need to be seen by the outside world (especially Israel) as having the ability to work within diplomatic channels, not just military ones.

Although some may oppose the idea of an Arafat removal. The general majority would agree that at the present time, Arafat is a major obstacle to peace. Sharon will not enter into political discussion with him, much of the world sees him as a terrorist, and the corruption within his political playground is rife. The Palestinians need a President and a Prime Minister. Qureia is not inspirational but wants peace. Arafat inspires his followers, but is obstinate in the face of diplomacy. Other figures that should be considered for an appointment are the previous Prime Minister, Mahmoud Abbas and former Gaza strongman, Mohammed Dahlan. The latter two need to be considered for what would be the newly vacant position of President. However, that is for the Palestinian people to decide.

What is important is the removal of Arafat, and perhaps even more importantly, his effective power base. He needs to be given a position of visible authority, and yet wield little or no power over (what would be) the newly created Palestinian government, this obviously also means the removal of his nephew, Mousa, from head of security operations. Those that also need to be considered are Arafat's closest advisers, Azzam Muhammad, Ramsih Roh, Hanni al-Hassan, Saher Habash, Nabil Abu Rodeina and Force 17 commander Faisal Abu Serah. These and the self-exiled deputy chairman of Fatah, Farouk Kadoumi. These people are currently in France attending the 'recovery' of Arafat (30/10/2004)

The question that proves difficult is, how can a position be created that he will freely take, but will also cause him to lose all his power? The only answer, I can come up with is this.

Arafat is currently very ill. He is housed in a compound in Ramallah and has been for the last three years. He needs to be given a 'book cover' position of power to see out the rest of his days and maybe during this time, and in this position he could control his rhetoric and in doing so, perhaps subdue the anti-Israeli feelings within his followers. The position that may well afford all of these pre-requisites is that of UN Representative to the newly created State of Palestine.

A problem that could be foreseen, is that of the warlords and gang violence in the occupied territories, and their resultant negative effect on the peace process. The process itself cannot, and will not be able to, go ahead, if territories are in a state of chaos. However, the power vacuum that is currently in place is the instigator of these troubles and perhaps with the establishment of a political council, this problem may be negated. To enforce law and order, and conceivably induce a high opinion of the newly formed Palestinian authorities, the domestic state security officers will be trained and put to use on the streets, acting as a deterrent to insurgency and crime. The reason I have incorporated the 45 or so that receive specialist training each year in Egypt, is because they will be highly trained and relatively immune to previous political influence. They and the officers chosen by the Quartet will train previous militia members, as this not only takes those who know how to use weapons out of the sphere of influence of the warlords, but it also aids the process of politicisation.

It is important that with the movements towards peace, a 'quick fix' is not used, as it is a longstanding and secure peace that is required to end the crisis. The first step in this process is both states recognising each others' right to exist. If the newly formed political council, containing previous militia leaders issues a statement iterating Israel's right to exist. If these powerful and influential people do this, then their followers will, in turn come to accept Israel as an inevitable conclusion in the search for peace.

Likewise, if the Knesset recognise the state of Palestine, this produces obstacles, perhaps even barriers, to the use of excessive force in future. The recognition of Palestinian statehood however, is one of the Israeli reservations of The Roadmap to Peace although they did state the nature of a provisional state would be a matter for bilateral negotiations between the two parties. The Israeli government insisted, however, that the provisional state would be demilitarised and Israel would control its borders and airspace. This is not entirely incorporated within my Alternative Solution. The Palestinian state will be demilitarised (see phase 2), and the forces active within Palestine would be purely for domestic use. Secondly, the Israelis would have some power in border control, but not total control. However they would not have control over Palestinian airspace. The recognition of a state recognises its right to exist as an entity entire, and control over Palestinian airspace is in itself a form of occupation.

The initial phase of this peace plan must contain steps to secure a viable political body. The political council and The Quartet need to begin work immediately so as to provide the possibility of elections immediately post completion of the peace process. No single country should have a veto on the presence of any political member, a majority vote should decide. This negates the chances of an outside country holding sway over a preferred candidate so as to provide them with an influential presence within the newly formed state.

Phase 2

Israeli repatriation of their Jewish population housed in settlements built after September 2000; Progressive and selective withdrawal of West Bank Israeli settlements, relative to population size and geographical location; extension of the Israeli north-eastern border; selective right of return for Palestinian refugees; water rights; political prisoners

As the current *intifada* began on this date, all settlements built after this date should be dismantled as otherwise occupation has lead to an expansion of borders, an international illegality. Some may suggest that incorporates all those settlements built since the six day war of 1967, but if one is hoping for compromise and a successful peace plan then it is apparent that the Israelis would never accept such a proposal. All Israelis housed in said settlements should receive compensation from the Israeli government, but this is a domestic issue and one to be decided by The Knesset.

The reason, some settlements have been chosen as those to be vacated are purely based on geographical and demographic grounds. The settlements that are not vacated house the largest populations. It is thus a necessity that enlargement is approved, so as to house the natural population growth. However, a lateral expansion would incur further occupation and expansionist tendencies. Thus only vertical settlement growth

or growth within current borders should be legalised. This may incur an increase in population density and the problems that brings, but then every country in the world has to tolerate such inevitability without expansion onto other's lands and therefore so should Israel.

Although, it does not seem fair to allow some refugees the right of return, it is a reality that given the size of land that will be the State of Palestine it would be impossible to house a further population of approximately three million. It is imperative that a solution be reached and therefore certain concessions need to be made. For the State of Palestine to succeed as a country certain elements need to be present. An influx of educated and trained professionals will act as a catalyst for economic and social growth. The key professions must include doctors and teachers as these professions are necessary in a society requiring the expertise to reform and establish itself.*(see end of Explanation & Analysis)

As the settlements that are vacated are not being dismantled they can be used to house some of the returning population of refugees. This takes some of the pressure off the newly formed Palestinian Political Council. Thus, the refugees should only return at a speed that they can be accommodated.

Probably the most contested point in this Peace plan would be the extension of the Israeli north-eastern border. The idea is this. Where previously there existed DMZs between the original border and the occupied Golan Heights, these would be incorporated into Israel (including the area around the town of Senir in the far north-west). With the Golan Heights relinquished from Israeli occupation, this negates the purpose of the UNDOF Zone and the DMZ to the west of Al Qunaytirah.

The annexation of this small section of The Golan Heights is for the following reasons:

Syria would be seen as making a very positive move in ceding this area to Israel for the sake of peace. As Syria is currently regarded as one of the main terrorist harbouring states, containing the headquarters of some of the most prominent terrorist organisations, losing this damaging and potentially crippling accolade, would be highly beneficial to their future standing. They are currently in the top 2 of the US foreign policy 'hit list' and a prominent member of George Bush's 'axis of evil', but by ceding this small area they could remove themselves from said list.

It would at least make it extremely difficult for the US to impose trade sanctions let alone launch a pre-emptive strike.

Some schools of thought suggest that Israel may withdraw from the Golan Heights in the relatively near future (Moshe Yaalon said as much on a recent radio interview), however this would be done under a series of provisos and probably via an unfavourable route for Syria. Syria could cede this area (one containing Israeli settlements in the majority) under their own provisos and with a treaty of their making. Also, with the annexation of the south-western tip (and Senir) of The Golan Heights, this means Syria would still keep the strategically important mid and northern sector.

Israel would probably be unwilling to withdraw from and dismantle settlements in The Gaza Strip, West Bank as well as withdrawing from The Golan Heights. It is a loss to great for the strongest military and economy in the area. However, annexing this part of The Golan Heights gives them reign over the joint water resources of the

upper Jordan River and its tributaries, including Lake Tiberias around which its new borders are set. Although under international law, this is a jointly owned water resource, it would be under the auspices of the Israelis and thus they would be more keenly observed in their water distribution (as set in Phase 2) by the international community. Within the new Israeli borders would be the Israeli owned Transformer substation and IAI Plant, as well as many of their settlements.

Phase 3

Israel, Iran and the IAEA; creation of the 4 point DMZ

Israel is currently the world's nuclear enigma. There are others, such as North Korea which we know has the ability to use seven or eight nuclear weapons, and Iran which is seeking to enrich Uranium for uses other than domestic energy, and thus could have the ability to create a nuclear weapons in the next two years or even less. But Israel is thought to have in the region of 200 nuclear weapons (thus similar in capabilities to the UK). Many countries have requested sanctions on Israel because of this very reason. It is a point of contention by all Arab countries which do not see why Israel does not have to adhere to the strict inspections and limitations imposed by the UN and the IAEA.

If Israel are given to the end of the peace process to declare their nuclear sites open to weapons inspectors, observation of their activities will be more intense, which would release some of the pressure exerted by Iran as the Iranians would not be able to declare Israel's secret nuclear capabilities as a basis for their own pursuit of nuclear resources. This is possibly the most globally dangerous 'stand-off' presently transpiring. With Iran's successful testing of their new Shehab-3 missile, which could strike Tel Aviv and the war of words between the two states, a peaceful solution between Israel and Palestine which incorporates Iran in some way quells this melting pot.

If Israel allow weapons inspections at the culmination of the peace process, they could then be accepted as a nuclear power, and thereby negating the need for secrecy. As a nuclear power they would have to adhere to certain restrictions and thus be stopped from making any 'go-it-alone' decisions. This would ease Iran's anxiety. Thus UN and EU representatives would be able to approach Iran to halt its nuclear quest with a more positive framework.

The creation of the 'four point DMZ' is a positive move for allaying the time bomb that is Syria, Iran, Lebanon, Israel and Palestine. Running along Israel's north and Lebanon's southern borders, this would force the removal of the Hizballah owned missiles stationed in southern Lebanon as a deterrent to Israel. The other DMZ incorporating all Palestinian owned territory addresses one of Israel's major conflagrations for not giving full support to the original Road Map. Only domestic forces will be allowed to operate within the State of Palestine. This also aids the argument for preventing Israel controlling Palestinian airspace, and having full control of their borders. This means the complete destruction (by the Palestinian Authorities, with the aid of Hamas, Islamic Jihadi, Fatah and the popular front) of weapons smuggling tunnels. This DMZ will be monitored by an International peacekeeping force.

The DMZs will obviously be temporary. After the completion of Phase 7 with the signing of the non-aggression pacts, the deterrent of having a US or NATO (in line

with the non-aggression pacts – see Phase 7) strike for breaking agreements will be as great as any DMZ prevention scheme.

Phase 4

The removal of specific UN resolutions, and other initiatives

Another of Israel's 14 points for disagreement with the Road Map was that certain UN Security Council resolutions and other initiatives must be removed.

As of the completion of Phase 3, Resolution 1397, the Saudi Initiative and the Arab Initiative adopted in Beirut, as well as UNSCR 1322 and 194 (III) should be withdrawn from international law. With the completion of Phase 2 the UNSCR 194 (III) would be partly completed, and as was previously stated, the prospect of peace, many would consider, more important than the adherence to a particular resolution.

However, UNSCRs 242 and 338 would remain as international law to prohibit any further expansion in the future (although hopefully their purpose would be insignificant after the completion of this plan).

Phase 5

The division of Jerusalem to enable a cultural capital to both states; Accessibility of all holy sites for respective religions; A similar process to be put into action in Hebron.

Jerusalem and Hebron's cultural division is crucial if this peace initiative is going to succeed. Both Arabs and Jews are extremely religious and there will be no compromise over the holy sites and of their respective religions and the necessary access to said sites.

Both states consider Jerusalem as central to their ability to worship and demonstrate their faith. Thus Jerusalem should not be under the auspices of either state. It should be a dual capital accessed by both states for the purpose of both populations and their beliefs. An attempt to ascertain to which state Jerusalem and its holy sites belongs, provides a whirlpool of events dating back over more than a thousand years. Basing a peace initiative on biblical promises and family ties would not prove fruitful.

Jerusalem must act as a capital to both states.

Hebron must also be divided in a similar way so that comparable conclusions are drawn.

As the city is a volatile place it would be wise to initially install a separate police force a given time to enable the cultural and geographical split. If a dual-national place force was used from the start, there would be conflicts of opinion, ultimately leading to a demise of the peace process. That is one of the reasons the division of Jerusalem has not been discussed before Phase 5, as it would need a large amount of trust by both states for such an occurrence. This trust will be built over the time taken to complete the previous phases.

Phase 6

The removal of the separation barrier; UN-Israeli controlled border access; creation of a viable interim Palestinian governing body.

The removal of the separation barrier is an obvious necessity. Even if no other suggestion is adhered to, this must be. It has been declared illegal by The Supreme Court of Israel and by The International Court of Justice in The Hague.

If the peace process should get this far, it would be a show of faith and perhaps a formality for the withdrawal of this illegality.

However, the border between Palestine and Israel should be under dual control – via a joint UN-Israeli force. After a given time period the UN, Palestinian government and the Israeli government can come to an agreement whereby the Palestinians can control their own borders.

The rest of this phase is self-explanatory.

Phase 7

Signing of non-aggression pacts.

The signing of non-aggression pacts should be by this point somewhat of a formality. However, for future security, Palestine, Israel, Syria and Lebanon should sign non-aggression pacts which are enforced and backed by the US and NATO. All members of The Arab League should sign a non-aggression pact with Israel, and recognise its right to exist as a state.

Syria and Lebanon must sign an agreement to ban all terrorist organisations and their HQs from their country. This and previous moves would make it immune to sanctioning and invasion.

The rest of this phase is self-explanatory

With the signing of these pacts, all demilitarized zones can be removed. However, the Palestinians must still sustain purely a domestic armed force. The ceiling limit for such a restriction can only be decided by The Quartet.

* Monies previously given to Yasser Arafat by the EU, as well as loans from the IMF and World Bank should be used to set in place a five year programme to rehabilitate and rejuvenate the nigh on defunct Palestinian schooling system. There needs to be one school for every 500 children aged between 5-11, and one school for every 2000 youths aged between 11-15. All students deemed suitable will receive scholarships to western universities under the assurance that they return to Palestine (or Palestinian refuges in other countries) on completion of their degree, so as to continue the growth of the Palestinian economy.