

In Lebanon, meanwhile, the leftist forces have made major gains in fighting since the election of the Syrian-backed President Elias Sarkis in early May. The heartland of the Falangist-controlled area is under heavy attack, and key mountain villages have fallen to the left in areas around the fringe of the shrinking Christian-held territory. According to Israeli reports, the Falange arms supplies have been depleted. The Arab political pressure on Syria has hampered Syrian efforts to back up the Christian right, further weakening their position in Lebanon.

Kissinger Readies Israeli Hawks

The possibility that both Syria and Lebanon might fall to the revolutionary left — an event that would ensure the collapse of the entire NATO strategic position in the Middle East and the eastern Mediterranean — underscore the frantic preparations by Kissinger and his Israeli allies to unleash a Middle East war.

An open split has emerged in the Israeli government. Shimon Peres, along with ex-Defense Minister Moshe Dayan and the former "Rafi" faction of the Labour Party, has openly threatened to bolt the government and form an alliance with the rightist Likud opposition. The threat from Peres — who controls much of the Israeli military and intelligence establishment — to wreck the government forced impotent Prime Minister Rabin to capitulate to the hawks' demands, according to the Jerusalem Post. In effect, the Peres move serves as a quiet coup against Rabin and Israeli centrists.

Two open signs of factional division emerged this week. First, a provocative "peace plan" floated by the Israeli embassy in London and circulated by AP, which did not

mention either the Palestinians or an Israeli territorial withdrawal, was flatly denied by the Israeli foreign ministry! At the same time, the Chicago Daily News had a report on May 21 that Israel and the USSR had undertaken discrete diplomatic contacts on reconvening the Geneva Conference with the participation of the PLO. The News also reported a Soviet offer to reestablish relations with Israel, broken off in 1967.

Then, while Israeli hawks around Peres were demanding a stepped-up policy of repression in the occupied West Bank, where three Arabs were gunned down by Israeli soldiers and hundreds arrested this week, an official Defense Ministry spokesman stated that Israel did not consider the PLO responsible for the rebellion, removing a possible cause for war. The spokesman added that Israel would take steps to soften its repressive policy toward the occupied area.

Publicly, the Israeli Cabinet hushed up its sharp factional battles, with Peres and Rabin supposedly reaching an accord on policy, but the Israeli press was skeptical of the sudden rapprochement between the two political enemies. The consensus in the Israeli press is that the government must fall. "Pro-Peres sources" in the Jerusalem Post were quoted as saying that Peres is being "intolerably -and in Peres' view deliberately — undermined by Rabin, and that the situation cannot continue even on an interim basis." The Chicago Daily News speculated May 19 that two governments could emerge from the crisis; the first, a war government, headed by Peres, with Yigal Allon as Defense Minister, and the second, a peace government led by Rabin, with dove leader Abba Eban as foreign minister and Haim Zadok, an ally of Eban, as defense minister.

Text Of Remarks By Sen. Adlai Stevenson III (D.-Ill.) At Hearings Of The Neareast Sub-Committee

For many years American policy in the Middle East has consisted of little more than a series of efforts to buy time. The passage of time without movement toward peace — has moved the situation toward war.

The lines harden, the tensions mount, the most immoderate elements on all sides gain authority.

Now the survival of a moderate Sadat government in Egypt may depend on its immoderation, as well as sufficient weaponry from the West to keep the officer corps from turning restless — and sufficient capital for the distressed Egyptian economy to keep the people from turning restless.

Much of the authority lost by the Sadat government in the Arab world was recovered by the government of President Assad in Syria.

The Palestinians are the central problem. And the PLO, while suffering from serious internal disunity and some distrust in Arab capitals, now stands without significant rival as the representative of the Palestinians.

Now the Arab side has limitless financial resources. The Israeli economy is depressed by the burdens of war—and the Israeli people are divided.

The passage of time has advantaged no one really, except perhaps the Soviet Union. Arab states are dependent on the Soviet Union. Even Jordan is turning to the Soviet Union for weapons.

Whatever else may be said about American policy in the Middle East, the impasse has resumed. Step-by-step diplomacy has run its course. The U.S.-Israeli "end of war" formula never was realistic. American efforts appear to be confined to keeping the Israelis and Syrians from warring over Lebanon.

The deadly impasse has resumed. The movement is toward war. And the levels of violence for the next battle in the long war are raised, as happens in every such interlude. The nuclear threshold has now been reached in the Middle East.

Now for the good news.

As we all find on our trips to the Middle East, communication proceeds on two separate planes, one public and one private. Arab public utterances, in particular, are distorted by the exaggeration and hyperbole which mark Arab culture. It strengthens the hard liners in Israel who say "they want to destroy us."

And the hardliners, sometimes with religious overtones, influence Israeli policy and create events, most conspicuously in the occupied territories, which cause Arabs to say, "You see they seek **lebensraum** (the German term for "living space" used by the Nazis), not peace."

This circular process has created gulfs of fear and hate which can only be bridged by outside powers.

The task, as I see it, is to put communications on the more moderate, realistic plane and seek an overall settlement on the basis of simultaneity. The trade offs are basically, occupied territory for recognition and security guarantees.

All sides recognize that another war is a war no one can win — except possibly the Soviet Union. And the Arabs relish dependence on the Soviet Union no more than Israelis welcome dependence on the U.S. They are all nationalists. They all seek independence. And now the Arabs have a chance to build stability and nationhood not on war, but with their new found oil wealth. They all seek development — and development is not consistent with a continued state of belligerency. All the warring parties have a common interest in peace.

With some exceptions, Arab leaders are prepared to accept the right of an Israeli state to exist — and for good reason. It is a reality. And the American commitment is, and must remain, unequivocal. But now America is not being tested; Israel is. A long-term occupation of Arab territory is not consistent with American interests, nor with UN Security Council Resolution 242 — nor the Fourth Geneva Convention. It is not consistent with Israel's security — which will only be assured by demilitarized zones and unequivocal guarantees. Boundaries are all indefensible in the nuclear age — and boundaries which trap the aggrieved adversary within are imprudent in the extreme as recent events in the West Bank make evident to many Israelis and American Jews.

Continued stalemate can only lead to another outbreak of the war. Its consequences would be serious — not alone for the direct participants — not alone for the victims of another

oil embargo in the non-Communist world — but for the nuclear superpowers confronting each other.

The Soviet Union is not paralyzed by an election. It is moving to establish a new relationship with Jordan, even to repair its relationship with Egypt. Syria is moving to expand its authority in Lebanon and to form a common front with Jordan.

The U.S. dare not wait. Next year will be an Israeli election year. It is past time we faced the obvious — and put aside the wishful thinking and the myths which have obscured reality in the U.S. and Israel. Judging from my own experience, Americans are ready for the truth, more so than their representatives in Congress and the executive branch.

The most charitable thing that can be said about step-by-step diplomacy is that it has run its course. Now is the moment, perhaps the last, to seek an overall settlement without war.

The principles for an overall settlement should be established and with some specificity by the U.S. and, if possible, the Soviet Union. The Soviet Union must be made to understand that if it seeks to enjoy the economic benefits of detente it must accept the responsibilities of detente. Those principles, including the territorial concessions by Israel, Arab recognition, guarantees and demilitarized zones should be made the basis for negotiation in a process involving all the parties prepared to accept the existence of all the others. These principles could be accepted by all the parties simultaneously through the good offices of outside powers. Other questions, including the status of Jerusalem and Palestinian rights could be resolved in negotiations once the momentum was reversed. The Palestinian question is after all as thorny an issue for the Arabs as for the Israelis. Its resolution is no one's pre-condition for serious negotiations.

It did not take another trip to the Middle East to bring me to these conclusions. This trip gave me a sense of greater urgency and a belief that it is still not too late. That is a view which is not shared by all authorities. It is, however, not too late to try.

Excerpts From Hearings Of Senate Foreign Relations Subcommittee On Neareast Affairs

May 22 (IPS) — The Neareast Subcommittee of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee held the first of a series of scheduled hearings on the Mideast situation on May 29. The Subcommittee, chaired by Senator George McGovern (D-SD), took testimony from four senators who recently visited

Opening Remarks by Senator Abourezk

I want to comment on how the United States is acting in the Middle East — something I have never been able to understand. The U.S. continues to act as if it is presuming that it is our interest to maintain the status quo of constant turmoil, with the Palestinians having no homeland. ...But more and more the Administration and congressmen and especially senators see that to maintain that status quo is not in U.S. interest.

Because of the special U.S. relation to Israel, if we wanted to we could bring Israel to negotiations.

We have not done that because we have not adopted a U.S.

the area. James Abourezk (D-SD), Adlai Stevenson (D-Ill), Floyd Haskell (D-Colo) and Jacob Javits (R-NY). The four were questioned by Senators McGovern, Charles Percy (R-Ill), and Clifford Case (R-NJ). Following are excerpts from the testimony.

Mideast policy, but an Israeli Mideast policy.

This is what we can accomplish: (1) Guarantee of Israel's security would help matters and is in reach. (2) A return of occupied territories. (3) The establishment of Palestinian national identity and (4) A demilitarization of the area.

Regarding the new (Israeli West Bank) settlements, there have been some mild rebukes from the press and Congress, but these were not strong enough. The settlements will create many problems in a year or two — guerrilla war and terrorism, if you want to call it that. We will regret very much that we were so mild in rebuking Israel in allowing them.