

Olmert's Arrogance

By Ari Shavit, Haaretz

In September 2000, the Palestinians began a terror offensive against Israel. They did this because they refused to accept the Camp David Proposal, which promised them the entire Gaza Strip and 91 percent of the West Bank in exchange for full recognition of Israel and an end to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. If Ehud Olmert is elected Prime Minister and implements his Convergence Plan, then in September 2010 the Palestinians will have sovereignty over the entire Gaza Strip and some 91 percent of the West Bank, and all this without recognizing Israel and without ending the conflict.

Thus will the national Palestinian movement fulfill the objectives of its wars and obtain a full strategic resolution against the State of Israel. The history books will record Olmert's unconditional withdrawal as the unconditional surrender of Zionism. No, it will not be the end. But it will be the beginning of the end. While relying on big money on one side and big journalism on the other, Olmert will lead the country to the beginning of the end.

At first glance, Olmert's Plan appears enchanting - no fear, no hesitation, and very Israeli. Here, we'll take our destiny in our own hands. Within three years we'll evacuate some 80,000 settlers. Within less than five years, we will undergo a final disengagement from the Palestinians and converge within the borders of a flourishing lowlands country. We will surround our existence with a high wall, which will protect us from both the craziness of the Land of Israel and from the threat of Palestine. And so, in one term, we will isolate ourselves from all the sickness and terrors of the Middle East. So simple. So clear. How did we not think of this sooner. Why did we wait so long so that the man who saved Jerusalem could also save the State of Israel.

However, on second glance it becomes clear that the Olmert Plan has a small flaw: It has no Palestinians. This is a Plan whose logic is simplistic and patronizing. This is a Plan for Israelis only, which ignores its ramifications on Israelis. It takes an extreme unilateral position to the point of absurdity, totally ignoring the fact that the conflict is bilateral and the political reality is multilateral. The Plan, then, is an arrogant one, and the hubris that characterizes it is no less than the hubris of the person who formulated it.

What Olmert plans to do in the next few years is to establish an armed Hamas state in Judea, Samaria and Gaza. Via the nearly complete withdrawal, Olmert will promise Hamas almost total control in the Palestinian state for generations. The Palestine of Olmert will be hostile, dissatisfied and violent. Its founding ethos will be „we've chased them out of Ofra, we'll chase them out of Tzahala too.“

Since Olmert is establishing this country without first assuring its demilitarization, it will have significant military capability. Since he is establishing it without removing the right of return from the agenda, it will have a destructive claim against Israel, whose legitimacy is recognized by the international community. The combination of political sovereignty, military power and a commitment to demanding return will transform Olmert's Hamas state into one that will endanger the very existence of the State of Israel.

Despite the irony, the Convergence Plan will not implement the Bush vision, but will destroy it. It will not build a stable two-state solution, but will create an unstable reality in which an Islamic Palestinian state systematically undermines the foundation of the Jewish democratic state.

But it is not just the stability of Israel that Olmert is endangering. He is also endangering the regional stability. A Hamas state will accelerate Jordan's collapse. There is no chance that the Hashemite rule will stand up against a Palestinian state on its doorstep whose religious fervor has just subdued the Zionists. Egypt will also be threatened. A victorious Muslim Brotherhood

rePUBLIC that Controls a third Of Jerusalem and Devours the Temple M Ount will Be the Beacon Of zealotry for the M USlim B rotherhOoD in C airo. A nD in D amascus. A nD in Amman.

A nD O lmert will Be sUPP Orting not only anti-Israeli terror, But also the anti-w estern revolutionary mOvem ent. H is radical unilateral P rocess will DisRU P the A merican strategy in the area and will Bury U .S. P resident G eorge W . B ush'S D ream Of stAbility and D emOCracy in the M idD le E ast.