**Netanyahu and Trump will fulfill the Palestinian dream**

**Shaul Arieli, Haaretz, May 31, 2019** [**https://www.haaretz.co.il/opinions/.premium-1.7307061**](https://www.haaretz.co.il/opinions/.premium-1.7307061?fbclid=IwAR3fIO_Oseoky4z-Td7XQppgtSgqCmGh7N_g70_9yF3qocHQBPQoE1Q_WPg)

President Donald Trump, who embodies the violation of the legitimacy of international resolutions, was warmly adopted by Benjamin Netanyahu, his government and all those who reject a political agreement with the Palestinians. After the recognition of Jerusalem and of the annexation of the Golan Heights, in sharp contrast to Article 2 of the UN Charter, which prohibits the acquisition of territories (the application of sovereignty) by force, and to UN Resolutions 242, 252, 476, 338, and others, Netanyahu and his partners are waiting for the "deal of the century". Its anticipated rejection by the Palestinians will be perceived by the Israeli government as an opportunity to unilaterally annex the settlements in the West Bank, in contrast to the 1991 US guarantees letter to the PLO, and in complete contradiction to UN Security Council Resolution 2334 (from 2006) which ruled that the settlements were illegal (the resolution was supported by 14 of the 15 council members and the United States abstained).

Such a move would be another expression of Israel's disregard for the international community and its exclusive reliance on the aggressive Republican Trump administration in an unprecedented manner. The Netanyahu coalition sees Trump's support as an opportunity to expand Israel's sovereignty beyond the 1967 lines (and East Jerusalem); This is despite the fact that the history of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, which is more than a century old, teaches us other things about the influence of the international position on the recognized borders of the State of Israel and on the division of the land.

The 1922 Mandate was seen by the Zionist movement as a confirmation to the establishment of a national home in all of the western land of Israel, even if the Balfour Declaration and Churchill's White Paper (the first) explicitly stated otherwise. On the other hand, the Arabs, who constituted 90% of the population, rejected the Balfour Declaration and the Mandate, and demanded that they establish their state in 100% of British Mandate Palestine. The British, emissaries to the League of Nations, rejected the Arab demand.

The Arab revolt in 1936 and the demographic balance, which was still clearly in favor of the Arabs (70:30), and the political developments in the Middle East and Europe, led to the Peel Commission's (1937) proposal to establish a Jewish state on only 17% of the land. The Zionist movement, led by Chaim Weizmann and David Ben-Gurion, adopted the proposal, but the Jewish Agency presented a partition plan that required a doubling of the area to 34% of the land. The Arabs rejected it completely and the proposal was eventually removed.

The partition plan of November 1947 granted the Jewish state 55% of the territory and the Arab state 45% of the territory, with the "separate entity" of Jerusalem under the control of the United Nations. The Jewish community, which numbered only a third of the land's population, warmly embraced the partition proposed at the beginning of that year by Ben-Gurion. Ben-Gurion stated "the only possible immediate arrangement with an essence of finality is the establishment of two states, one Jewish and one Arab," and declared in May 1948 the establishment of the state "on the basis of the resolution of the United Nations General Assembly". The Arabs continued to reject the partition and the mufti Haj Amin declared: "A nation that aspires to a life, does not accept the division of its homeland". Later, the Palestinian charter stated: "The partition of Palestine from 1947 and the establishment of Israel are fundamentally mistaken".

The War of Independence broke out at the initiative of the Arabs, as Jamal Husseini, the representative of the Arab Higher Committee, defiantly declared to the Security Council in April 1948: "The representative of the Jewish Agency told us yesterday that they are not the aggressive side ... that the Arabs are the ones who started the fighting... we do not deny this fact... we told the world ... that we do not agree that little Palestine will be divided ... and that we intend to fight". At the end of the war, the Palestinians became a nation of refugees and were absent from the political discourse regarding their future, while their representation was transferred to the Arab states. The young Israel expanded its borders to 78% of the land and applied the Israeli law on to it. The international community recognized these borders as armistice lines.

The 1967 Six-Day War gave rise to Resolution 242 ("land for peace") that implicitly recognized Israel's 1967 lines, but the UN still continued to ignore the Palestinians, who rejected any recognition of Israel. Only the PLO's decision to recognize the partition resolution and Resolution 242 at the end of 1988, led to a series of UN resolutions that led in 1988 to the recognition of Palestine in the 1967 lines as a non-member state. In other words, 22% of Mandatory Palestine.

Since 1967, Israel - immeasurably stronger than it was in 1948 and enjoying military supremacy over the Palestinians and the surrounding Arab states - has not received international recognition for a single step it has unilaterally taken to expand its borders - annexing East Jerusalem and the Golan Heights. Its borders with Egypt and Jordan, both of which adopted Resolution 242 and recognized Israel, were established in peace agreements according to the Mandatory borders of the Land of Israel. From South Lebanon Israel withdrew under UN Resolution 425 (1978) and from the Gaza Strip it unilaterally withdrew to the Green Line.

These historical milestones of the past century teach us that both sides have embarked on this conflict, each claiming "it is all mine", and the international community has generally sided with the Zionist movement. The basic insight that permeated the consciousness and the position of the international community, that it is "a struggle between two national movements whose claims are valid and can not be reconciled with each other ... apart from partition ..." opened the door to the Palestinians as well; However, their continued refusal to recognize the right of the Jewish people to a state in the Land of Israel and to accept the decisions of the international community, gradually reduced the area designated for the Arab state: In the Peel Commission's proposal, the Arab area (under Abdullah I, Amir Transjordan) stood at 70% of the land, in 1947 at 45%, and in 1988 at 22%, as Mahmoud Abbas admitted in an interview in 2008: "The opportunity of the 1947 partition was lost, and before that the opportunity of the Peel Commission was lost. But we do not want to lose another opportunity. Therefore we accepted the division of 1948 and 1967, which does not include more than 22% of historic Palestine".

The Zionist movement, under the leadership of Weizmann and Ben-Gurion, who cooperated with the international position, increased the area of ​​the Jewish state respectively from 17% to 55%, and eventually to 78% of the land. The conclusion is clear - the side that sticks to international resolutions eventually wins the greater part of the country.

Drunk with power, the Netanyahu coalition, backed by the Trump government, does internalize this insight. Naftali Bennett, who launched his plan for the annexation of Area C at the beginning of 2012, referred to the international community with contempt and arrogance: "The world will not recognize our sovereignty there, as it does not recognize our sovereignty over the Western Wall, Ramot and Gilo in Jerusalem and in the Golan Heights. Never mind. It will get used to it over the years". Many of the members of the coalition, who are demanding the annexation of most of the West Bank, often mention the final line in Defense Minister Ben-Gurion's speech at the IDF's march on Independence Day, April 27, 1955: "Our future depends not on what the goys say but on what the Jews will do", and reference to the words of Prime Minister Moshe Sharett, who said that the Partition Plan established the State of Israel at the cabinet meeting held on March 29, 1955:" Only the daring of the Jews established the state and not the United Nations resolution".

All this ignores Ben-Gurion's position, in most cases, of the importance and weight of the international community, as he explained in 1956: "It will be a mistake if someone says that there is no real value to the UN. The United Nations is the supreme stage of human public opinion today ... and the enormous value of this public opinion should not be underestimated". It also ignore Ben-Gurion's disillusionment after the Sinai Campaign, from his quest to establish the Third Kingdom of David, which included not only Sinai but also half of Jordan, the Golan Heights, and southern Lebanon. This aspiration was replaced after Israel's withdrawal from Sinai, which was imposed by the superpowers, with a different insight, as Ben-Gurion said in an interview with Haaretz in October 1959: "Anyone who believes that today only military force can solve historical questions among nations does not know in what world we live in". He added: "Every local question is now internationalized, and therefore our relations with the peoples of the world are no less important than our military power, which we must continue to nurture, in order to deter attacks and to win if we have to fight".

If Israel is not freed from the illusion of annexation and does not remove its opposition to the establishment of a Palestinian state alongside it, the international community will stand by the Palestinians when they change their position and demand equal rights in one state. It would be sad to discover that after a little over a century, the Palestinian aspiration for one Arab state between the Mediterranean Sea and the Jordan River with a diminishing Jewish minority will be fulfilled by the Israeli government itself.