

Directions of Israel's Foreign Policy- lecture by Deputy Premier and Foreign Minister Allon- 26 December 1974

As in the past, so today, our goal and dream has not changed and will not change. It is achievement of a real peace with all our neighbours, or at least with any Arab State prepared for it. This is and will be the central goal and the primary objective of our policy. The intention is, of course, a total peace, just, stable and durable, based on contractual agreements and accompanied by mutually effective security arrangements and systems of bilateral and regional cooperation which will remove once and for all the threat of recurring war from our stormy area. This is our central goal and, distant though it may be, we refuse to despair. Our secondary objectives and the tactical measures related to them are derived from this goal.

Thus, if one of the neighbours were prepared for negotiations, towards an overall peace, without any prior conditions, we would have been glad and would not hesitate a moment before entering such negotiations. Regrettably, however, no such readiness has been shown by any Arab State and as long as this situation continues, I would formulate our secondary objectives in the following order: the prevention of war; if this is impossible, its postponement in the hope of eventually avoiding its outbreak; if this cannot be achieved limiting the war to a minimum of battlefronts. If this too is impossible, then preventing the multiple-front from becoming a simultaneous one. Of course, all these steps must be taken while doing our utmost politically and information-wise to gain maximum understanding and sympathy for our position and policy in America, among friendly nations in the West and among all those circles and peoples in the rest of the world who are disposed to such understanding.

I shall not prophesy as to whether another war can be avoided, or at what price. Though let me say that there is obviously no point in buying off a possible war in the near future at the cost of certain war under worse conditions some time later. However it is not out of place to stress once again that even when war appears more and more possible, it should not be regarded as inevitable. For as long as war is not absolutely unavoidable and so long as the count-down has not been started, there is still some prospect, even if very slight, of preventing war, or at least of postponing it, in the hope that it can be avoided.

Israel has no reason and no desire to seek war. On the contrary, she has every reason and every desire to strive for its prevention. We will not initiate war, nor be dragged into one, unless it is imposed on us against our will. Then, and only then, as the French say "A la guerre comme à la guerre", which includes taking

the appropriate initiatives, as dictated by military needs and political considerations.

All this, without falling prey to illusions, pursuing pipe-dreams. Our sincere and neverending desire to prevent war must be accompanied by continual strengthening of our security and by remaining highly alert in accordance with changing circumstances. A realistic striving for peace must be accompanied by preparedness for war, just as readiness for war, should it be unavoidable, must be accompanied by a real and visible desire for peace.

Peace is generally a most important component in the system of national security, just as military power is a vital factor in the system of peace. So long as the words of the prophet "the wolf shall dwell with the lamb" have not materialized, then each State is bound to the proper balance between peace and military security. However, Israel, as the only State in the world whose very existence is threatened and which is deprived of peace, is still in a state of asymmetry between the two. Therefore we have had to place the emphasis on our military and defensive strength, although we well know that this alone will not bring peace.

Moreover, we are well aware that without defensive capability, not only do we fail to bring peace closer but are inviting another war. Hence at the same time as searching every path for political progress towards a settlement, a primary task of Israel's foreign policy continues to be the fulfillment of its parts in strengthening the State's military capacity. This, however, whether it be by laying the groundwork for the political conditions to enable Israel to purchase the armaments she requires, or by helping to obtain easy financial terms for these purchases, or achieving political understanding for Israel's strategy and actions in the present or future.