



U.S. Policy Toward Israel: A Much-Needed Shift in Emphasis

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The following statement was issued by Democratic presidential candidate Lyndon H. LaRouche, Jr. on December 30, 1983.

The sometimes disgusting, and sometimes immediately self-defeating feature of recent decades' U.S. policy toward Israel, is that Washington's visible policy-thinking degrades Israel to the status of a restive, and often troublesome Anglo-American "agent of influence," both in the Middle East and in other regions of the world in which Israel's intelligence capabilities are judged a significant factor.

Since the doctrine of "Flexible Response" was formally introduced to U.S. strategic doctrine, approximately 20 years ago, U.S. strategic thinking and foreign policy generally has focussed upon actual or probable local "hot spots" in various parts of the globe, and upon "local wars" associated with such "hot spots." This thinking is reminiscent of British colonial policy during the late 18th and 19th centuries. Accordingly, U.S. policy-thinking towards Israel has degraded Israel to the role of "agent of influence," as British practices defined "agent of influence" from Prime Minister William Pitt the Younger onward.

Only those features of Israel's policies and internal life which touch upon that nation as such a supposed "agent of influence" command serious attention in Washington and our nation's major news media. The internal development of Israel as a nation in which people live and raise families, appears just plain "uninteresting" among our policy-shaping circles.

Specifically, Israel's national economy is in a crisis. Week by week, the effects of a worsening economic and financial situation become more savage. Israel's economy is being cranked-down by the same kind of austerity measures suffered by many developing nations under "IMF conditionalities." True, Washington feels itself obliged to act occasionally to take some of the worst of these pressures off the back of Israel, but we do so only to keep Israel in shape for its assigned role as an "agent of influence." The question of measures needed to create a self-sustained economic recovery appear to attract no interest around Washington.

Earlier this month, two of my representatives spent a period of time in Israel, during which they had the opportunity for meetings with a fairly representative sampling of government officials and other leading influentials. Among the foremost topics discussed was a paper which I had written and submitted on the subject of the economic development of Israel. Israelis were most energetically forthcoming on matters related to this proposal.

I had drafted that paper by putting myself mentally in the shoes of some Israeli citizen with my general philosophical world-outlook. If that citizen knew what I know, what would he or she desire for Israel's internal development? From that standpoint, what would such an Israeli citizen resent deeply about the kinds of pressures his nation received from both private and official circles in the United States? From the reports relayed to me through my representative, my own thinking and theirs on this subject is not far apart.

Of course, I have certain advantages in taking up that kind of work. Since April 1975, I have been constantly involved in proposing U.S. and Western European economic policy for economic development of Israel and its Arab neighbors as the only pathway to durable peace in that region of the world. I have worked with both Israelis and Arabs to the purpose of understanding their nations and their aspirations more exactly, to learn to put myself mentally in their shoes on the matter of economic-development policies. At the same time, helped by the fact that the fellow-members of my international philosophical association are patriots of various countries, I have worked on questions of economic-development policies for many nations, including those of the Americas, Africa, Western Europe, South Asia, Southeast Asia, Japan, and so forth. In each case, I have attempted to determine where the vital interests of those nations and of the United States properly coincide. So, personally, I had important special advantages in composing the report I circulated to leading circles in Israel on the subject of that nation's prospects for economic development.

True, the United States has supported certain elements of Israel's policy generously, even over-generously, and sometimes wrongly. Yet, at the same time, we have badly mistreated Israel, especially on matters which affect the internal condition of Israel over the long run. Not only have we imposed an "agent of influence" role upon Israel through official channels of policy-shaping; we have mediated our relationship to Israel's internal life through what is often called the "American Jewish Lobby," often to the point of making Israel a virtual captive of that "Lobby." The point is: Israel's policy ought to be a sovereign power of the people who live in Israel, not something controlled by people from Minneapolis, Chicago, or New York, who sometimes go there to visit—and to fly back here to safety whenever trouble breaks out in that region. The key lever by which this "Lobby" dominates Israel's policy-making so frequently, is money. By leaving Israel's internal economic development and survival significantly dependent upon the so-called American Jewish Lobby's financial power

to reward and punish the Israeli people, we place Israel to a very large degree under the control of foreigners. The foreigners may happen to have Jewish names and pedigrees—at least, the visible leadership of this private interest, but their own fate is not tied up with Israel’s fate; they are not citizens of Israel who must share the fate of that nation. Moreover, this “Lobby” is not representative of some average among pro-Israeli American Jews; control over the fund-raising and flow of funds to Israel has been held since the formation of the “millionaires club,” back during the late 1960s, by a very small grouping of picaresque gentlemen, who are not the sort of people one might regard as “philosopher-kings.”

Financial realities being financial realities, as long as the internal economy of Israel continues to be dependent to a significant degree on the good will of the small clique controlling the money-flows of the “American Jewish Lobby,” Israel cannot afford the luxury of untainted sovereignty over its own policy-making. As long as this continues, a U.S. president can never be quite certain whether he is negotiating with the government of Israel, or perhaps with Max Fisher, Burton Joseph, Meshulam Riklis, or the Bronfmans instead. This arrangement will tend to exist until Israel develops the sovereignty of successful internal economic development. The development of Israel’s sovereign qualities of internal economic development ought to be a focal-point of U.S. Middle East policy in general.

The flaw in U.S. policy-thinking toward Israel is not caused by some special treatment of Israel in particular. We make the same fundamental mistake in policy thinking about the republics of the Americas, about Western Europe, about Africa, and all of Asia.

The fundamental strategic interest of the United States requires the establishment of unchallengeable world-hegemony by a network of sovereign national republics: what Secretary of State John Quincy Adams defined as a republican “community of principle” in his arguments for adoption of the 1823 Monroe Doctrine. We require a world-system of scientific and technological progress, maintained by fully sovereign national republics, such that each republic fosters the development and opportunities of each and all of its individual persons, and does so in a political system consistent with the heritage of Solon of Athens.

The rock-bottom of the proper policy of the United States toward each and every nation of the world, is our desire that it become such a republic, and that we help to create a climate of opportunity for it to achieve that goal. This must be our fundamental relationship to other nations, the foundation of our foreign policy. We require no “empire,” no “colonies,” no nations degraded to the rank of “agents of influence.” We require something more durable than a mere system of treaty-alliances. We require a conscious commonality of vital self-interests among an aggregately republican community of principle, a community of republics made powerful by the highest rates of scientific and economic development, cooperating with one another to establish and maintain the community and its strength as a whole.

This must also be our policy toward Israel and its neighbors. That must be the foundation of our policy, from which the rest follows quite logically.