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SECTION 01 OF 05 TEL AVIV 15233

EXDIS

E.O. 12356: DECL: OADR
TAGS: PREL, KPAL, KPRP, IS, US
SUBJECT: TALKING AUTONOMY: AN EXERCISE IN HAND
-- WRINGING

1. ENTIRE TEXT.

2. SUMMARY. THE CONVENTIONAL WISDOM HAS ASSUMED THAT LIKUD'S OFFER TO RESUME AUTONOMY TALKS HAS BEEN LITTLE MORE THAN SOMETHING TO SAY WHEN PRESSED FOR ALTERNATIVES TO AN INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE. WHILE THAT IS TRUE FOR SOME, THERE ARE OTHERS IN LIKUD WHO SEE THE PURSUIT OF GREATER AUTONOMY AS GENUINELY THE ONLY WAY TO GO. UNILATERAL AUTONOMY OR DEVOLUTION (VIRTUALLY NO ONE SPEAKS OF REAL UNILATERAL WITHDRAWAL) IS CONSIDERED BY SOME LABOR CIRCLES TO BE A NECESSITY NOT ONLY TO PRESERVE THE TERRITORIAL OPTION FOR PEACE NEGOTIATIONS, BUT ALSO TO DECREASE THE CORROSIVE EFFECTS OF OCCUPATION ON ISRAELI SOCIETY. BUT WE SEE LITTLE EVIDENCE OF A REALISTIC ACTION PLAN FOR AUTONOMY IN EITHER CAMP. END SUMMARY.

3. THE CONCEPT OF AUTONOMY HAS BEEN AROUND FOR MANY

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YEARS AS A PERMANENT OR TRANSITIONAL SOLUTION TO THE PROBLEM OF WHAT TO DO WITH THE OCCUPIED TERRITORIES AND THEIR ARAB INHABITANTS. A SUBSTANTIAL FACTION OF THE LABOR PARTY HEADED BY MOSHE DAYAN, SHIMON PERES AND GAD YA'ACOB'S RAFFI COLEAGUES FAVORED A "FUNCTIONAL SOLUTION" IN CONTRAST TO A TERRITORIAL

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SOLUTION) WHICH WOULD GIVE RESPONSIBILITY FOR MANY DAY-TO-DAY AREAS OF LIFE TO THE PALESTINIAN INHABITANTS OF THE TERRITORIES. THE 1972 AND 1976 WEST BANK ELECTIONS WERE HELD UNDER THE FRAMEWORK OF THIS INFORMAL CONSENSUS. TODAY, MOST OF THE FORMER LABOR PARTY ADVOCATES OF FUNCTIONAL AUTONOMY DO NOT BELIEVE THAT A FUNCTIONAL SOLUTION CAN BE A PERMANENT SOLUTION. MOST LOOK TO NEGOTIATIONS WITH JORDAN AS THE PATH TO A LASTING SOLUTION TO THE PALESTINIAN PROBLEM AND BELIEVE TERRITORIAL COMPROMISE MUST BE A PART OF ANY SOLUTION. ITS CURRENT-DAY LABOR ADVOCATES VIEW AUTONOMY AS A POSSIBLE INTERIM STAGE IN AN AGREEMENT WITH JORDAN. SOME ALSO VIEW UNILATERAL STEPS TOWARD AUTONOMY AS AN INTERIM MEANS TO RELIEVE THE PROBLEMS OF OCCUPATION FOR ISRAEL, THE OCCUPIER, AND ISRAEL, THE JEWISH STATE.

AUTONOMY IN CAMP DAVID AND IN LIKUD

4. PM BEGIN SEIZED UPON AUTONOMY EVEN BEFORE CAMP DAVID AS THE ALTERNATIVE TO THE UNTHINKABLE TERRITORIAL COMPROMISE. THE BEGIN GOVERNMENT'S FLEXIBILITY AND READINESS FOR SUBSTANTIAL DEVOLUTION OF AUTHORITY WERE SEVERELY TESTED IN THE SUBSEQUENT AUTONOMY NEGOTIATIONS. WITHIN LIKUD TODAY, EVEN THE FORMER OPPONENTS OF CAMP DAVID POINT TO CAMP DAVID AS

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THE WAY TO PURSUE THE PEACE PROCESS. SHAMIR HAS SUGGESTED THAT THE RESUMPTION OF AUTONOMY NEGOTIATIONS COULD BE CALLED SOMETHING OTHER THAN CAMP DAVID IN DEFERENCE TO JORDAN WHICH WAS NOT A PARTNER TO CAMP DAVID. BUT, THE ESSENTIAL PRINCIPLES OF THE LIKUD LEADERSHIP REMAIN THE SAME: NEGOTIATIONS WITH AN ARAB STATE PARTNER OVER THE TERMS FOR AUTONOMY. LIKUD CONTAINS ADVOCATES OF UNILATERAL AUTONOMY IN ITS RANKS, BUT THEY ARE IN THE MINORITY.

SOMETHING TO SAY

5. IN THE COURSE OF THE LAST SIX MONTHS, PRIME MINISTER SHAMIR HAS STATED PUBLICLY AND PRIVATELY THAT HE WAS READY TO RESUME AUTONOMY TALKS, AND DIRECT PEACE TALKS IN THE FORMAT OF A MINI REGIONAL CONFERENCE (JORDAN WITH SOME PALESTINIANS, EGYPT,

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U.S., AND "MAYBE EVEN SAUDI ARABIA"). ASKED HOW THE PRIME MINISTER PROPOSED TO BRING ABOUT EITHER AUTONOMY TALKS OR DIRECT NEGOTIATIONS (WHICH IN SHAMIR'S LEXICON WOULD BE DIRECT TALKS ABOUT AUTONOMY), SHAMIR (AND HIS AIDES) HEDGED BY NOTING THAT A) THERE IS NO RUSH, B) THE REAL PROBLEM IS THAT THERE ARE NO ARAB LEADERS WILLING TO TALK DIRECTLY, AND C) THERE WOULD BE A BETTER CHANCE IF THE USG WOULD MAKE UNAMBIGUOUS ITS SUPPORT FOR DIRECT TALKS, STICKING WITH CAMP DAVID'S PRESCRIPTION FOR AUTONOMY.

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EXDIS

E.O. 12356: DECL: OADR
TAGS: PREL, KPAL, KPRP, IS, US
SUBJECT: TALKING AUTONOMY: AN EXERCISE IN HAND
6. ABSENT ANY INDICATION OF ARAB WILLINGNESS FOR

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RESUMING AUTONOMY TALKS OR EMBARKING ON DIRECT NEGOTIATIONS, SUCH PROPOSALS ARE "SAFE" OFFERS, AND THE PRIME MINISTRY RUNS NO RISK OF HAVING TO WORK ON A STRATEGY OR ACTION PLAN TO IMPLEMENT ITS PEACE PROPOSAL.

7. PROBED ON THE SUBSTANCE OF WHAT AUTONOMY IN THE OCCUPIED TERRITORIES WOULD MEAN IN PRACTICAL TERMS, ONE SHAMIR AIDE TOLD US THE PALESTINIANS SHOULD UNDERSTAND CLEARLY THAT ISRAEL WILL ALWAYS REMAIN IN CONTROL OF THE LAND, WATER, SECURITY, AND THE PROTECTION OF JEWISH RIGHTS TO SETTLE ANYWHERE IN THE LAND OF ISRAEL. PALESTINIAN POLITICAL EXPRESSION AND REPRESENTATION COULD ONLY TAKE PLACE EAST OF THE RIVER JORDAN. "WE WILL NEVER BE SEPARATED FROM THE TERRITORIES," AND AUTONOMY IN PRACTICE WILL HAVE TO BE CONSISTENT WITH THAT PRINCIPLE. WE WERE TOLD THERE WAS NO TASKING OF WORK ON AUTONOMY DETAILS, THERE BEING VIRTUALLY NO LIKELIHOOD OF NEED FOR THEM.

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BUT SOME WANT MORE THAN JUST SOMETHING TO SAY

8. OTHERS IN LIKUD, MOST NOTABLY MKS DAN MERIDOR AND EHUD OLMERT (BOTH OF WHOM ARE CONSIDERED PART OF SHAMIR'S TIGHT INNER CIRCLE), HAVE EXPRESSED CONCERN FOR ISRAEL'S FUTURE WITH A BURGEONING PALESTINIAN POPULATION. THEY HAVE TAKEN A MORE SERIOUS STAB AT THINKING ABOUT AUTONOMY FOR THE TERRITORIES, WITH A FOCUS ON DIVESTING ISRAEL OF SOME OF THE ONEROUS BURDENS OF OCCUPATION. ISRAEL WOULD REMAIN IN CONTROL OF SETTLEMENTS AND STRATEGIC AREAS, BUT ARABS WOULD ASSUME GREATER RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE CONDUCT OF THEIR DAILY LIVES.

9. THE PREFERRED APPROACH FOR MERIDOR AND OLMERT WOULD BE TO ACHIEVE AGREEMENT WITH JORDAN FOR A COORDINATED TRANSITION TO JORDANIAN CONTROL OF LOCAL POLICE, ECONOMY, AND ADMINISTRATION OF ARAB MUNICIPALITIES. A NEGOTIATED AGREEMENT COULD BE BLESSED BY AN INTERNATIONAL FORUM OR CONFERENCE, AND JORDAN COULD PORTRAY ITS SHARE OF THE ACHIEVEMENT AS AGREEMENT ON INTERIM MEASURES, WHILE ISRAEL COULD HERALD IT AS A PERMANENT SETTLEMENT. ABSENT .. JORDANIAN WILLINGNESS TO RETURN TO THE TERRITORIES VIA THIS APPROACH, OLMERT WAS PREPARED TO CONSIDER

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UNILATERAL IDF WITHDRAWAL FROM MAJOR ARAB CENTERS OF POPULATION AND VIEW THE PROGRESSION TOWARDS AUTONOMY WITH LIMITS ONLY ON SECURITY, AND TO INCLUDE EVEN ARAB CONTROL OVER LAND AND WATER.

10. THE AMIRAV CONTROVERSY LAST MONTH REFLECTED MORE

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DRAMATICALLY SOME UNDERCURRENT OF LIKUD FRUSTRATION WITH THE DEARTH OF SUBSTANTIVE ALTERNATIVES. HIS PROPOSAL CROSSED THE RED LINE OF SELF-DETERMINATION FOR THE PALESTINIANS THROUGH NEGOTIATIONS WITH THE PLO, IF THAT MUST BE THEIR REPRESENTATIVE. SELF DETERMINATION IN AMIRAV'S LEXICON WOULD PRECLUDE SEPARATE STATEHOOD, AND OFFER PALESTINIANS AN AUTONOMY AS CLOSE TO STATEHOOD AS POSSIBLE IN ORDER TO GIVE THEM A VESTED INTEREST IN MAINTAINING A COOPERATIVE RELATIONSHIP WITH ISRAEL. (HE ADVOCATED PALESTINIAN CONTROL OVER VIRTUALLY EVERYTHING, INCLUDING LAND AND WATER; THE BOTTOM LINE WAS ISRAELI CONTROL OF SECURITY, FOREIGN AFFAIRS, AND PROTECTION OF THE SETTLEMENTS.)

11. THIS PROPOSAL ALSO PREEMPTED THE NEED FOR AN INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE WHICH, IN AMIRAV'S VIEW, WOULD RESULT IN EMPTY RHETORIC ABOUT ISRAEL'S REPRESSIVE OCCUPATION OF THE TERRITORIES. NEGOTIATIONS WITH JORDAN WOULD BE NECESSARY AT SOME POINT TO ACHIEVE APPROPRIATE CONFEDERATION WITH ISRAEL AND ITS AUTONOMOUS PALESTINIANS, BUT IT COULD COME MUCH LATER. THE NECESSARY EVIL OF NEGOTIATING WITH THE PLO FROM THE BEGINNING, AMIRAV ASSERTED, WOULD PAY DIVIDENDS IN THE END OF TERRORISM AND THE "GUARANTEE" OF NO SEPARATE PALESTINIAN STATE, WHILE ISRAEL COULD PRESERVE ITS SOVEREIGNTY OVER ALL OF THE LAND OF ISRAEL. AMIRAV'S PROPOSALS WERE SOUNDLY DENOUNCED WITHIN HERUT WHEN THEY SURFACED.

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[REDACTED] SECTION 03 OF 05 TEL AVIV 15233

EXDIS

E.O. 12356: DECL: OADR
TAGS: PREL, KPAL, KPRP, IS, US
SUBJECT: TALKING AUTONOMY: AN EXERCISE IN HAND

OTHRFRS FOCUS OM THE NEED TO PRESERVE THE TERRITORIAL
NPTION

12. LABOR MINISTER OF ABSORPTION YAACOV TSUR ISSUED
A PRNPNSAL LATE LAST YEAR TO ADDRESS THE NEED FOR
ISRAEL TO MINIMIZE THE EXTENT OF TIES BETWEEN THE
CHEAP LABOR SOURCE AND CAPTIVE MARKET OF THE
TERRITORIES AND THE ISRAELI ECONOMY. FOR TSUR IT IS
VITAL TO CONDUCT THE OCCUPATION OF THE TERRITORIES
FOR EVENTUAL RFTIRN AS PART OF A NEGOTIATED
SETTLEMFMNT WITH JORDAN. IN TSUR'S VIEW, CURRENT
OCCUPATION PRACTICES PRECLUDE A TERRITORIAL OPTION
FNR PFACE NEGNTIATIONS, AND THEREFORE DO NOT SERVE
ISRAEL'S INTERESTS.

13. ABSENT NEGNTIATIONS, ISRAEL SHOULD PROMOTE
ECONOMIC DEVFLOPMENT IN THE TERRITORIES AND
INCRFASING ARAB SELF RELIANCE AND RESPONSIBILITY.THE
BANK, THE MAYORS, AND JORDAN'S DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM

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WERE EFFORTS IN THE RIGHT DIRECTION, BUT NOT NEARLY ENOUGH. UNLESS ENERGIES ARE CONSCIOUSLY DIRECTED TO HALTING AND REVERSING THE EXISTING ENCROACHMENT, IT WILL BE IMPOSSIBLE FOR ISRAEL TO SEVER ENOUGH OF THE TERRITORIES FROM ITSELF FOR A SETTLEMENT. TSUR WOULD FREEZE THE SETTLEMENTS, ENCOURAGE SEPARATE PALESTINIAN ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT (INCLUDING COMPETING WITH ISRAEL FOR THE SAME MARKETS), AND PROMOTE INDIGENOUS LEADERSHIP (FALLING SHORT OF ELECTIONS). ASSUMING A LONG PERIOD OF CONTINUING OCCUPATION, TSUR WOULD HAVE IDF WITHDRAWAL FROM CENTERS OF ARAB POPULATION. AUTONOMY WOULD NOT INCLUDE THE JORDAN VALLEY, ETZION BLOC, JERUSALEM, OR JEWISH SETTLEMENTS. AN EVENTUAL NEGOTIATED SETTLEMENT WOULD BE SOME VARIATION OF ALLON PLAN TERRITORIAL RETURN.

14. LABOR MINISTER OF ECONOMICS AND PLANNING GAD YAACOBY ISSUED A SIMILAR CALL FOR "UNILATERAL AUTONOMY." YAHAD MK (AND FORMER CIVIL COORDINATOR) BINYAMIN BEN ELIEZAR WOULD HAVE ISRAEL ANNOUNCE IMMEDIATE FREEZING OF THE SETTLEMENTS, IMMEDIATE IDF WITHDRAWAL FROM ARAB MUNICIPALITIES, AND GIVE THE PALESTINIANS SIXTY DAYS IN WHICH TO SELECT LEADERS FOR ISRAEL TO WORK WITH TO TRANSFER LOCAL CONTROL (EXCEPT LAND AND WATER) OF THE TERRITORIES (EXCEPT THE JORDAN VALLEY, ETZION BLOC, JERUSALEM, AND SETTLEMENTS). IF, AFTER THE SIXTY DAYS, PALESTINIAN LEADERS HAVE NOT BEEN SELECTED (OR HAVE NOT AGREED TO PARTICIPATE), BEN ELIEZAR WOULD HAVE ISRAELI APPOINTED PALESTINIANS RECEIVE CONTROL.

"LOOK AT WHAT OCCUPATION IS DOING TO US"

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15. FOR AN INCREASING NUMBER OF ISRAELIS, ALTHOUGH STILL A MINORITY, THE STATUS QUO IMPINGES ON THE HUMAN RIGHTS OF PALESTINIANS AND THE HUMANITY OF THE JEWISH POPULATION. OPINION POLLS WHICH SHOW INCREASING TOLERANCE OF DOUBLE STANDARDS FOR THE TWO SOCIETIES ARE DISTURBING TO MANY ISRAELIS, LABOR AND LIKUD ALIKE. AS ONE POLITICAL AIDE PUT IT, "MY SON IS LEARNING THAT IT'S NOT SO BAD THAT EVERY OTHER DAY

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AN ARAB IS SHOT." CONTINUED OCCUPATION HURTS THE
OCCUPIER INSIDIOUSLY. THE CIVAD HAS ACKNOWLEDGED THE
INCREASED "NERVOUS DISORDERS" AMONG YOUNG IDF
SOLDIERS CONFRONTING ENRAGED SETTLERS ON ONE HAND AND
STONE THROWING PALESTINIAN YOUNGSTERS ON THE OTHER.
ON THE EVE OF YOM KIPPUR, ONE OF OUR CIVAD CONTACTS
ON DUTY IN THE TERRITORIES REFLECTED THAT THE SPECTRE
OF CONTINUED ISRAELI OCCUPATION OF TWO MILLION
PALESTINIANS WAS DAUNTING; THE OCCUPATION OF FOUR
MILLION OR MORE PALESTINIANS WOULD BE UNACCEPTABLE IF
THE JEWISH DEMOCRACY WERE TO SURVIVE.

TALKING AUTONOMY DOES NOT GET BEYOND THE GENERAL

16. IN ALL OF THESE PROPOSALS, WE SEE LITTLE
EVIDENCE OF PRACTICAL STRATEGIES FOR IMPLEMENTATION.
BOTH LABOR AND LIKUD AUTHORS HAVE SPENT THEIR
ENERGIES BUILDING THE CASE FOR THE NEED TO CONFRONT
ISRAEL'S FUTURE IN THE EVENT OF CONTINUED
OCCUPATION. EXCEPT FOR HERUT'S MOSHE AMIRAV (WHO

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E.O. 12356: DECL: OADR
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SUBJECT: TALKING AUTONOMY: AN EXERCISE IN HAND

STANDS ISOLATED AND REPUDIATED), THE PROponents HAVE NOT IDENTIFIED TO WHOM THEY WOULD TRANSFER CONTROL OF THE TERRITORIES, HOW THEY COULD INDUCE POTENTIAL PARTNERS INTO AUTONOMY TALKS, OR WHAT WOULD HAPPEN IF POTENTIAL PARTICIPANTS WERE TOO FEARFUL TO PARTICIPATE. PALESTINIAN MAYOR ARAJ OF BEIT JALLA (NEAR BETHLEHEM) BLUNTLY TOLD ONE OF OUR VISITORS THAT HE WOULD NOT WANT AUTONOMY THRUST UPON HIM WITHOUT JORDANIAN POLICE IN PLACE. THE CRIMINAL ELEMENTS AND STRUGGLES FOR POWER BY COMPETING FACTIONS OF PALESTINIAN ORGANIZATIONS OF ALL STRIPES WOULD BE MORE THAN ANY MAYOR COULD HANDLE. AN OUTBREAK OF VIOLENCE OR TERRORISM WOULD END THE EXPERIMENT OF AUTONOMY, SAY ALL THE AUTHORS OF THESE PROPOSALS.

"WHAT IF WE CAN'T GIVE IT AWAY?"

17. LABOR MK ABBA EBAN RECALLED HIS ADMONITION TO
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ARABS THAT THE DAY MAY COME WHEN THE ARABS WILL DIAL 242 AND 338, AND ISRAEL WOULD NOT ANSWER THE PHONE. FOR SOME IN LIKUD AND THE RELIGIOUS SETTLERS, THAT DAY HAS ALREADY ARRIVED. AT THE SAME TIME, MANY POLITICAL COMMENTATORS ARE INCREASINGLY VOICING CONCERN THAT THE 1967 VICTORY HAS BACKFIRED.

18. THE DEMOGRAPHIC DISPARITY IS SHIFTING RAPIDLY; THE BABIES ARE ALREADY BORN WHO WILL PRODUCE THE GENERATION OF PALESTINIANS BETWEEN THE RIVER AND MEDITERRANEAN WHICH COULD OUTNUMBER THE JEWISH POPULATION. ASST. DEFMIN DEKEL'S TALK OF TRANSFER (WHICH USED TO BE ASSOCIATED ONLY WITH THE FANATIC MEIR KAHANF) OF THE ARAB POPULATION MET WITH REVULSION IN AN HERUT PARTY SYMPOSIUM. ISRAELIS ACROSS THE POLITICAL SPECTRUM WANT ANSWERS TO THE DILEMMA OF HOLDING ON TO THE LAND WITHOUT EXPELLING

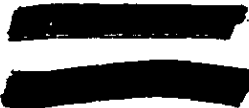
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THE PALESTINIANS OR GRANTING THEM THE RIGHTS WHICH COULD CHANGE THE ZIONIST CHARACTER OF THE STATE.

10. IN ADDITION TO RENEWED CALLS FOR ENHANCED PRO-NATALIST POLICIES, SOME ISRAELIS ARGUE THAT INCREASED JEWISH IMMIGRATION WOULD HELP AT LEAST TEMPORARILY MAINTAIN THE JEWISH EDGE DEMOGRAPHICALLY. ISRAELIS BROADLY SUPPORT STEPPED UP EFFORTS TO INCREASE JEWISH IMMIGRATION AND TO RETRIEVE THOSE WHO HAVE EMIGRATED. AS LABOR MINISTER EZER WEIZMANN TOLD ONE CONGRESSIONAL VISITOR, THE ZIONIST MOVEMENT STILL HAS THE TASK OF CONVINCING JEWS THAT ISRAEL COULD BE A REALITY. IN ADDITION TO REALIZING THE DREAM THAT JEWS SHALL NEVER AGAIN BE HOMELESS, INCREASED IMMIGRATION IS NEEDED TO OFFSET THE DEMOGRAPHIC EFFECTS OF CONTINUED OCCUPATION OVER



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SO MANY PALESTINIANS. IT IS AT BEST BARELY A STOPGAP MEASURE.

LAND FOR JEWS, NOT LAND FOR PEACE

20. ONE POLITICAL OBSERVER MUSED THAT THE EQUATION OF LAND FOR PEACE SHOULD BE PUT ASIDE. THE SINGULAR EXPERIENCE OF PEACE WITH EGYPT HAS MADE SOMEWHAT QUESTIONABLE THE IDEA THAT PEACE WOULD BE WORTH THE SACRIFICE OF JUDEA AND SAMARIA, HE ARGUED. THE WINNING EQUATION FOR TODAY'S ISRAEL SHOULD BE LAND (AND ALL THOSE PALESTINIANS) IN EXCHANGE FOR JEWS. THE DEAL WOULD DEFINE U.S.-SOVIET AGREEMENT THAT FULL RELEASE OF SOVIET JEWRY WOULD BE ACHIEVED IN EXCHANGE FOR ISRAELI WITHDRAWAL FROM TERRITORY.

21. MANY ISRAELIS ARE STRUGGLING WITH THE PRACTICAL, MORAL, AND DEMOGRAPHIC COMPLEXITIES OF CONTINUING OCCUPATION. THERE IS A GROWING MINORITY VIEW WITHIN LIKUD THAT PRIME MINISTER SHAMIR IS TOO WILLING TO LIVE WITH THE STATUS QUO, AND THAT HIS ADHERENCE TO RESUMING DIRECT AUTONOMY TALKS IS LITTLE MORE THAN SOMETHING TO SAY. LABOR LEADERS ON THE OTHER HAND SHOW MORE WISHFUL THINKING THAN REALISM AS THEY SPEAK OF AUTONOMY, EVEN AS AN INTERIM MEASURE PENDING PEACE NEGOTIATIONS WITH JORDAN. REGARDLESS OF THE MOTIVATIONS BEHIND THE VARIOUS AUTONOMY PROPOSALS, OR THEIR LACK OF DETAILED SERIOUS STRATEGY, THE PROLIFERATION OF THESE PROPOSALS ARE ATTEMPTS TO

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EXDIS

E.O. 12356: DECL: OADR
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SUBJECT: TALKING AUTONOMY: AN EXERCISE IN HAND

RESPOND TO A GROWING DEMAND FOR IDEAS.
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