

## REFLECTIONS ON THE CYCLE OF CONFERENCES

### The Geneva Accord

Against the current background of renewed tensions and uncertainty along the West Bank many people might well doubt the usefulness of continuing discussions within the framework of the Geneva Accord. They might even wonder if the Accord is still alive – or if it was just one more good intention strangled at birth by overwhelming political circumstances.

Silence shrouds the talks and yet this is all to the good.

By meeting in secret officials of both parties are free to discuss all aspects of the Accord unburdened by media pressure to produce “instant results”. As always, there are no quick fixes. For Israelis and Palestinians the peace process is a long, laborious and painful journey towards political maturity. No-one understands this better than the men and women engaged in the talks. The input by WGW co-workers focused on bringing light to bear on their efforts should greatly aid them in this difficult task.

The on-going Israeli/Palestinian saga is englamoured by the talion law, that ancient “an eye for an eye” mindset responsible for destroying lives and property on both sides of the divide. However, this *quid pro quo* response doesn’t just affect the human race. It is a problem that concerns the whole of the planet.

No human situation can be considered in isolation from its physical environment and the Israeli/Palestinian question is no exception. The energies released by its divisive thoughtforms affect **all** kingdoms in Nature. They poison the air and foul waterways, destroy vegetation and animal life. Hatred and bitterness lay waste to the land, dust shrouds its ashen bones. And it does not end there. The underlying interconnectedness of all forms extends to the greater Cosmic entity in which the Planetary Logos lives and moves and has its being. Every thought, word and action on this earthly planet, no matter how apparently insignificant impinges on the surrounding universe and beyond. The sooner the human race becomes intelligently conscious of this fact, the faster its progress along the evolutionary path.

Clearing away the region’s collective miasma is essentially a task of transformation, of shifting focus from the antagonistic position of **either/or** to the unifying one of **and/and**. Given the prejudices and hostilities dividing Israelis and Palestinians the task requires not only courage and humility, but an active desire by both parties to be reconciled. To quote E H Chapin, “*Never does the human soul appear so strong and noble as when it forgoes revenge and dares to forgive injury*”. Wisdom therefore counsels discarding those ideas which lead to creation of exclusive instruments such as guard-walls, shields or protective barriers – whether physical or non-physical in their manifestation. While the outward intention might appear attractive, in reality exclusive instruments of any kind only serve to perpetuate a separative mindset.

In the current status quo – *qui bono*? Who benefits? No-one.

The initial draft of the Geneva Accord deals to a large extent with the security and military aspects of the problem. This is an understandable concern from the perspective of the delegates around the conference table – the security issue is a constant time-bomb. However, resolving the economic situation is of equal, if not greater importance. Beating swords into ploughshares or

turning guns into butter has never been easy! The exercise tends to create mountains of ploughshares and towering summits of butter, an imbalance which even in health economies leads to market chaos. Given the economic disparity between Israel and its Palestinian neighbour it would certainly increase the latter's resentment and frustration, fuelling yet more violence and retaliation.

For this reason striking a right balance in the overall economy of the area is a major priority that must be addressed with the utmost urgency. The starting point is to resolve the key question of land. A change in the prevailing attitude of "what's mine is mine and what's your is also mine" is essential if there is to be a successful outcome.

To this end both parties need to sacrifice their prejudices and self-centred pride, to think what has previously been unthinkable. Certainly success won't happen overnight, but by applying intelligent and practical goodwill to the "bread-and-butter" issues that affect ordinary Israelis and Palestinians much headway can and is already being made.

The many positive, small-scale actions between two populations weary of a conflict that has dragged on for generations go largely unreported by the world's media. Yet these actions are the foundation stones of the future. Grounded foursquare in the desire for right relations and with the goodwill to turn that desire into concrete action, ordinary Israelis and Palestinians are leading the way by creating the right conditions for an end to enmity and the beginning of a viable peace.

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