

Peace, 1948 Style:

Regional War and the Israeli/Palestinian Conflict

by Hilla Dayan

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We all know that the geo-politics of the Middle East is complex and full of contradictions, fraught with either latent or explosive conflicts that entail far-reaching consequences to the people of the region and the world. But Bush's latest "war is peace" rhetoric points only in one direction—that the domino effect of a regime change in Iraq will be the spread of democracy throughout the Middle East. At the end of the long road from Baghdad to Ramallah, paved by American armed forces, awaits the overdue end-of-days vision: once and for all ending the Israeli/Palestinian conflict.

At the teach-in, I tried to

show how Israel prepares the ground for Bush's lofty ideal of a Palestinian democratic state. Although the worst predictions have not yet materialized, the regional uncertainties and current conditions for a future breakthrough are not encouraging. Regime change in Palestine has been a vocal campaign of Sharon's government long before 9/11 and the ensuing militarization of U.S. foreign policy. In fact, by July 2001, the Israeli Army headed by Mofaz (today, Sharon's defense minister) completed its plans for "the destruction of the Palestinian Authority (PA)." On the ground, targeting both military and civilian infrastructure, the proclaimed plan to destroy the PA has taken the shape of a full-scale destruction of Palestinian social, economic and political capacities. Using excessive means—air raids, bombings, and frantic demolition of "terrorist headquarters"—Israel has destroyed major Palestinian cities, killing scores of civilians and bystanders. By December 2001, the assault on the meager Palestinian resources for agrarian subsistence had resulted in the destruction of 3,669,000

