

EIR Israel & Palestine

INTERVIEW: MAXIM GHILAN

Israel's General Staff: 'A Bunch of Dr. Strangeloves'

Maxim Ghilan, writer, journalist, and poet, is the editor of I&P, the Israel & Palestine Strategic Update, founded in 1971 by Ghilan and Louis Marton. Maxim Ghilan is also founder of the International Jewish Peace Union (IJPU), the first Jewish outfit to recognize the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) as a partner in dialogue.

Because of his views favoring Palestinian statehood next to Israel, and his active role in the peace process—before Madrid, or Oslo, and although no Israeli government supported the idea of a two-state solution before 1993—Ghilan was forced to live outside of Israel for 23 years (1969-1993), during which time he became a living bridge between the Israeli peace camp and Yasser Arafat's PLO leadership. He returned to his country only after Prime Minister Yitzak Rabin signed the Oslo Accords. Israel and Palestine is the longest-existing publication on the Middle East, and favors a just peace for the two peoples, the Israelis and the Palestinians. He was interviewed in early May from Washington by Michele Steinberg, with Dean Andromidas of EIR in Wiesbaden, Germany. The concluding portion of the interview, on Maxim Ghilan's background—from his arrival in Palestine in 1944 as a refugee from Franco's Spain, where his father had been killed by Francisco Franco's Falangists, to his historic role for Israeli-Arab peace, will appear in the next issue of EIR.

EIR: Welcome to *EIR*, Maxim Ghilan. Sharon had declared he would unilaterally separate from the Gaza Strip; but around May 13, Israeli tanks and troops entered Gaza, in one of the largest incursions in history, wreaking havoc both in Gaza Town and Rafah. What happened?

Ghilan: Sharon's position inside Israel became untenable because of the Intifada Al Aqsa and his own involvement in corruption scandals. He decided to annex, unilaterally, large

parts of the West Bank, and to withdraw tactically from Gaza, where 2,300,000 Palestinians are inflicting a heavy price on the occupation troops and Jewish settlers. However, the imbecile fanatics in his own Likud Party did not understand Sharon's scheme and refused to budge from Gaza. In an internal Likud Party polling, some 60,000 imbecile fanatics foiled their leader's attempt. The army brass, which wants to continue their perpetual wars, then forced Sharon to launch the "Rainbow in a Cloud" operation in Gaza.

EIR: On April 14, there was a meeting and exchange of letters between Ariel Sharon and George W. Bush, where Bush lifted the requirement of Israel returning to UN defined borders. Who was responsible for this policy? And what are the implications, in your view?

Ghilan: There are two elements in Israel responsible for this policy change. One of them is the army general staff; the other, the fanatics, the zealot nationalist Jewish camp, to which Sharon has always belonged (as well as being a pure product of the military mind), and for which he was always willing to do anything necessary, including massacres, such as Sabra and Shatila in Lebanon in '82; or even before that, in the '50s, when Sharon headed incursions into the Gaza Strip, which was then still in Egyptian hands. Sharon then commanded Unit 101, a death squad which went into Arab territories and killed people, and so forth.

So, that's one. Sharon is the most outstanding representative of the fanatics, because he is the best strategist, and holds a long-range view.

The present versions of Sharon's plan, the ones approved in Washington by Vice President Cheney and President Bush, are tailored for Sharon by the high brass of the Israeli Army, the general staff of Israel's army. These elements command,