



The Carter Center

Jimmy Carter brought to bear the enormous prestige of a former President of the United States, to talk with conflicting parties in the Mideast—those who will have to make peace with one another, if peace is to be achieved at all. He met top Syrian and Palestinian leaders, as well as Israeli President Shimon Peres.

when he mediated the peace between Israel and Egypt. Although the pros and cons of that agreement are under debate to this day, the fact is that, for the three decades since that peace, not one shot has been fired between those two nations, which had gone to war no fewer than four times in the previous three decades.

Carter's Middle East "Study Mission" was a carefully thought-out diplomatic effort, which presented a course of action that the current and next occupier of the White House should follow to achieve peace in the region. The mission is already bearing fruit. Carter conducted the mission in much the same way that LaRouche has advised, including using the tremendous prestige of a former President of the United States, to bring together conflicting parties while involving other relevant regional forces.

Thus, Carter very clearly acted on the idea that establishing a Syrian-Israeli peace process, backed by the United States, is key to shift the current dynamic of war. At the same time, Carter sought out the advice and cooperation of other key regional powers, including Egypt, Jordan, and Saudi Arabia.

Breaking the Hamas Taboo

Carter's meetings with Hamas leaders, including Khalid Meshal, who lives in exile in Damascus, broke the taboo en-

forced by the Bush Administration, which has left the group boycotted by the United States, Europe, and Israel. It is already hoped that a ceasefire between Hamas and Israel in Gaza could be finally concluded, in addition to a rapprochement between Hamas and Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas's Fatah faction of the Palestine Liberation Organization. Carter also met with Abbas (Abu Mazen).

Carter was widely considered to have been snubbed by the Israeli leadership, because he was unable to meet Prime Minister Ehud Olmert, Defense Minister Ehud Barak, or Foreign Minister Tzipi Livni, and even the Israeli press, citing

LaRouche Congratulates President Carter

Lyndon LaRouche offered his congratulations April 23 to former President Jimmy Carter, for his just-completed peace mission to the Middle East, in which he met with top officials of Hamas, and attempted to mediate a prisoner release agreement between the Palestinian organization and Israel.

Carter's courageous efforts to revive the peace process are to be commended, LaRouche said, noting that the Bush Administration, under British prodding, is pushing for a new regional confrontation. Some Bush Administration officials, led by Vice President Dick Cheney, are attempting to create the conditions, in which they can induce a mentally fragile President George W. Bush to authorize a bombing campaign against Iran.

Under those specially ominous circumstances, LaRouche concluded, former President Carter's actions, breaking the taboo against speaking with Hamas leaders, have opened up new avenues for war-avoidance. And any such actions are sorely welcome, with the world on the brink of British-manipulated global war.

Carter's harsh criticism of the Bush Administration, for sabotaging prospects for a peace treaty between Israel and Syria, echoed LaRouche's own well-known assessments. LaRouche has urged that Israel and Syria reach a comprehensive agreement, as an important first step to an overall regional peace settlement. On two occasions, in 1994 and 2000, Israel and Syria almost reached a final peace deal, involving the return of the Golan Heights to Syria. Both Israeli and Syrian officials have publicly acknowledged, in recent months, that the details of a peace accord between the two countries is "98% completed."