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Middle East

Hypocrisy: The Conflict of Zionist Hawks and Vultures

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What is the conflict within the Zionist power elite about? Do not believe that it is a conflict between hawks and doves as the Western media portrays it. Nay, do not even think that most of the Israeli masses who are demonstrating to demand an agreement leading to a new exchange of captives between their government and Hamas, are seeking to end the tragedy of Gaza and withdraw the occupation army from it. No, as we have repeatedly stressed, the Zionist army will not withdraw from the Strip a second time, since even the “moderates” in its ranks believe that a new withdrawal would mean a repeat of the same mistake.

The Israeli political conflict is not between those who call for a complete withdrawal from the Strip and those who insist on remaining there, but rather between the far right, which calls for annexing the Strip to the Zionist state by expelling most of its residents from most of its territory and replacing them with Jewish settlers, and the Zionist “centre” that realizes that the price of annexation and expulsion is higher than their state can bear, so they prefer to adhere to the framework of the “Allon Plan” of 1967 that governs the situation in the West Bank, where Israel controls strategic sites and roads surrounding areas of Palestinian population concentration.

In other words, the political conflict within the Zionist power elite, as we already said, is not between hawks and doves, but between hawks and vultures. This is the case of the conflict between Benjamin Netanyahu and the Zionist “centre”, which includes the opposition parties to the current government, as well as a minority of the Likud party itself represented in the government by War Minister Yoav Galant. The Israeli press reported on the recent confrontation that took place in a cabinet meeting between Galant and Netanyahu, stressing that the minister was expressing the view of the military and security establishments. What was the confrontation about? The subject of discussion was the ceasefire agreement that Washington, with the help of Cairo and Doha, seeks to conclude between the government and Hamas.

We warned from the beginning against any illusion that this agreement might bring an end to the Israeli occupation of Gaza, stressing that most that is at stake from the Israeli perspective is acceptance of a temporary truce with a limited withdrawal of occupation forces from some areas of the Strip, in order to allow the release of the majority of those held by Hamas, before continuing the aggression and seeking to fully achieve its goals. In this context, we described Netanyahu’s dilemma as follows:

“The latter is caught between two fires in Israeli domestic politics: the fire of those calling for priority to be given to the release of Israelis held in Gaza, naturally led by the families of the detainees, and the fire of those who reject any truce and insist on continuing the war without interruption, led by the most extremist ministers of the Zionist far-right. The greatest pressure that Netanyahu is exposed to is coming from Washington. It coincides with the wishes of the families of the Israeli captives in the quest for a ‘humanitarian’ truce that would last a few weeks and allow the Biden administration to claim that it is eager for peace and concerned about civilians, after it has been and remains fully co-responsible of the genocidal war that Israel is waging, which it would not have been able to wage without US military support in the first place.”

The above was published exactly four months ago (“The Game of Poker between Hamas and Netanyahu,” 7 May 2024) and nothing has changed in the political equation since then. The Biden administration still needs to achieve something that proves its good faith before US and international public opinion, and it has now become a need of Kamala Harris’s electoral campaign after Biden withdrew from the race in her favour. The Zionist “centre” is still keen on creating an opportunity to release the largest possible number of hostages, especially since the popular pressure for this involves its supporters in the main. However, they all agree on maintaining Israeli control over Gaza in the long term. They differ on the form and scope of control, not on its principle.

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There is no clearer evidence of the truth of the disagreement between Galant and Netanyahu than what the war minister was reported saying in the Zionist cabinet meeting during which the two men clashed. The discussion focused on Hamas's demand, supported by Cairo, for the withdrawal of the occupation army from the "Philadelphi corridor" on the border between the Gaza Strip and Egypt. While the Zionist military and security apparatuses are in favour of this withdrawal, the Zionist far right represented in the cabinet categorically rejects it and threatens to dissolve its coalition with Netanyahu if the latter accepts the agreement, which would force new elections that could put a final end to the man's political career. We therefore saw Netanyahu cling to his position of rejecting the withdrawal from the border corridor with security arguments that no member of the Zionist power elite can refute, as they all know that weapons and tunnel-building equipment entered the Gaza Strip from the Egyptian Sinai and they have no trust in the Egyptian side regarding the oversight of the corridor, or in anyone else for that matter.

Galant and the Zionist opposition's response was not that there was no need for Israeli control of the corridor. Instead, some of them relied on proposals from the security establishment to conduct electronic oversight of the border without a permanent deployment of Israeli troops, while Galant summarized the disagreement between him and Netanyahu, according to what was reported by the Israeli media, as a choice "between the hostages' lives or staying in the Philadelphi corridor for six weeks". In other words, in Galant's view, the matter is no more than a withdrawal from the corridor for six weeks, to allow the release of most of those held by Hamas, knowing that the occupation army would return to direct control of the borders after the completion of the first stage of the deal that Washington is seeking. Everyone knows that the second hypothetical stage of that deal, which calls for the occupation army to withdraw completely from the Gaza Strip, will never happen. They are all hypocrites.

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