PEACE-MAKING (P-M)

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SUMMARY OF MAIN POINTS

A Goo Sommetions

- P-M IS AN ACTIVITY THAT PRESUPPOSES A POTENTIAL OR ACTUAL CONFLICTUAL ENGAGEMENT BETWEEN INDIVIDUALS OR PARTIES. IT IS PRIMARILY THEREFORE A PREEMPTIVE OR REACTIVE MEASURE.
- THE NATURE OF SUCH CONFLICTS VARIES, BUT THEY OFTEN INVOLVE AN ATTEMPT TO EXPAND THE MATRGIN OF ONE PARTY'S SPACE AT THE EXPENSE OF THE OTHER'S.
- SUCH ATTEMPTS ARE OFTEN JUSTIFIED IN TERMS OF A DISCOURSE OF RIGHTS. RIGHTS ARE THEN USED AS A BASIS OF JUSTIFICTION FOR ACTS. WHERE A RIGHTS-DISCOURSE IS NOT USED FOR A PARTICULAR AGGRESSION, JUSTICE (OR THE REINSTATEMENT OF A STUS-QUO-ANTE) CAN BE ENACTED VIA THE APPLICATION OF LAWS, BACKED BY AUTHORITY AND FORCE. WHERE A RIGHTS-DISCOURSE IS USED, JUSTICE IS AN ACT OF DETERMINATION OF VALIDITY OF CONFLICTING RIGHTS-CLAIMS, AND THE PURSUIT OF A BALANCE IN HUMAN AFFAIRS.
- IN PURSUIT OF SUCH A BALANCE, RIGHTS MUST BE MEASURED AGAINST THE GOOD. P-M IS THE ACTIVITY OF BRINGING ABOUT CONSENT BETWEEN THE CONFLICTING PARTIES FOR SUCH A BALANCE.
- PALESTINIAN RIGHTS, INCLUDING THE RIGHT TO BE SOVEREIGN IN THE ENTIRETY OF PALESTINE/ISRAEL, MUST THUS BE SCALED DOWN TO ACCOUNT FOR THE

GOOD, FIRST, OF THE PAESTINIAN PEOPLE THEMSELVES. AND ISRAELI OR JEWISH RIGHTS, INCLUDING THE RIGHT TO LIVE IN SECURITY OR TO RULE OVER THE ENTIRETY OF THE LAND BETWEEN THE EUPHRATES AND THE MEDITERRENEAN MUST BE SCALED DOWN TO ACCOUNT FOR THE GOOD OF THE JEWISH PEOPLE THEMSELVES. THEN THE GOLDEN MEANS OR BALANCE MUST BE STRUCK SO THAT THE GOOD OF BOTH PEOPLES IS ACHIEVED. P-M IS THE ACTIVITY TO BRING ABOUT CONSENT TO SUCH A GOLDEN MEAN.

- CLEARLY, FORCE CANNOT BRING ABOUT SUCH CONSENT. IT CAN ONLY BRING ABOUT TEMPORARY SUBJUGATION. ONLY BEING GUIDED BY HUMAN VALUES (VALUES WHICH THEREFORE APPLY EQUALLY TO OTHERS AS TO ONESELF) AND BY THE PUBLIC GOOD, RATHER THAN BY SELF-CENTERED OBSESSION WITH PERCEIVED RIGHTS, CAN MUTUAL CONSENT BE ACHIEVED.
- P-M IS THEREFORE IS AN ACTIVITY INFORMED BY HUMAN-VALUES RATHER THAN BY PAROCHIAL OR TRIBAL ATTITUDES OR BELIEFS. PEACE-MAKERS ARE BLESSED INSOFAR AS THEY ARE AGENTS OF HUMAN VALUES AND THE GOOD, RATHER THAN MERELY OF PAROCHIAL PERCEPTIONS OF RIGHTS.
- IF ISRAELIS AND PALESTINIANS CAN BY CONSENT LIVE TOGETHER AS EQUALS IN ONE STATE (ON THE BASIS OF A DEMOGRAPHIC SYSTEM OF RIGHTS-DISTRIBUTION), JUSTICE CAN THUS BE ACHIEVED. IF THEY CAN BY CONSENT LIVE AS EQUALS IN NEIGHBOURING STATES (ON THE BASIS OF A GEOGRAPHIC SYSTEM OF RIGHTS-DISTRIBUTION), JUSTICE CAN ALSO THUS BE ACHIEVED. SUCH JUSTICE WILL CLEARLY NOT BE AN ABSOLUTE ENACTMENT OF UNILATERAL RIGHTS (A RETURN TO A STAUS-QUO –ANTE, WHETHER REAL OR PERCEIVED), BUT A BALANCING OF CONFLICTING RIGHTS-CLAIMS IN FAVOR OF THE PUBLIC GOOD.
- TOGETHER WITH BEING AN ACTIVITY TO BRING ABOUT SUCH CONSENT, P-M AS A HUMAN-VALUES INFORMED ENDEVOR IS ALSO AN ACTIVITY TO SPEAK OUT

AGAINST VIOLATIONS OF SUCH VALUES PERPETRATED IN THE NAME OF ABSOLUTE RIGHTS OR ABSOLUTE JUSTICE (WHETHER REAL OR PERCEIVED). IN PARTICULAR IT IS TO SPEAK OUT AGAINST ALL USES OF FORCE AS ALTERNATES FOR CONSENT, OR AS MEANS TO ACHIEVE IT.

AT ALL EVENTS, HUMAN LIFE AND VALUES MUST RULE SUPREME OVER RIGHTS-CLAIMS. AS GHANDI ONCE SAID, WHILE ONE CAN UNDERSTAND DYING FOR ONE'S COUNTRY OR IN THE DEFENCE OF ONE'S CAUSE, THE TAKING OF HUMAN LIFE FOR IT IS A TOTALLY DIFFERENT MATTER. A RELIGION, A BELIEF-SYSTEM, OR A CAUSE WHICH, HOWEVER CIRCUITOUSLY, CAUSES THE DEATH OF INNOCENT LIVES IS NOT A RELIGION OR CAUSE WORTH UPHOLDING.

SARI NUSSEIBEH JERUSALEM NOVEMBER, 2003

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