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Trends. Can One be Against the Withdrawal of an Occupying Force? The Case of Israel and Editor: Southern Lebanon

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IBPP previously has commented on the motivation of some Arab nation-states and non-state actors to agitate against the unilateral withdrawal of Israeli troops from southern Lebanon--the motivation being not desiring to give up a political control mechanism over the Israelis that has been useful in conceptualizing and managing conflict. However, besides the realpolitik aspects of power relations, there are still other rationales for being against the withdrawal.

The Israeli military presence in Southern Lebanon has weakened (if not destroyed) the local rule of law (or what passes for a rule of law), a local sense of political autonomy, and supporting local political infrastructures. The military presence also has weakened the same assets from a Lebanese national objective. A unilateral withdrawal leaves a significant power vacuum that may be filled with malign politico-military forces noxious to many Lebanese citizens. The Israelis, then, can be perceived as having caused significant injury to a territory and its people and leaving the injury for treatment by others.

There are at least two reasonable counters to this viewpoint. The first suggests that the Israelis occupied southern Lebanon to confront a legitimate security threat, that Syria has done something similar in Lebanon--if grander in scope--and that the noxious consequences of the Israeli occupation were unfortunate side effects. This is indeed the case. However, many legal, moral, and ethical precedents--e.g., two wrongs don't make a right, an eye shouldn't be taken for an eye--mitigate against the validity of this argument. So do operational precedents reinforced by the plain fact that the occupation does not seem to have worked (from the Israeli perspective).

The second counter is that the Israelis prefer a multilaterally supported withdrawal, but few other nation-states and non-state political actors are willing to provide support. Moreover, even if there were more multilateral support, there would still be at least the perception (in many Lebanese citizens' eyes) merely of the newest occupation beginning. In addition, one might rightfully posit that Israel is obligated to reverse or rectify noxious consequences of its own making. Underneath all of this is yet another ethical question: should the victim help the victimizer help the victim, even if the victim and victimizer, to a certain extent, may concurrently and spontaneously change roles?

Reasonable analysts can disagree about how to approach the above discourse. But they should agree that they should be incredulous in the face of outright incredulity of resistance to the withdrawal of an occupying force. (See Daskovsky, D. (1998). The abuser and the abused: Sources of resistance to resolving splits in the countertransference in the treatment of adults who were sexually abused as children. *Psychoanalytic Psychology*, 15, 3-13; Fanjoux-Cohen, L., Mouly-Bandini, A., Werner, P. D. , & Green, R. -J. (1998). Rethinking marital enmeshment: Distinguishing intrusiveness from closeness-caregiving among French couples. *European Psychiatry*, 13, 46-51; Langan, R. (1999). Coming to be: Change by affiliation. *Contemporary Psychoanalysis*, 35, 67-80; Ledgerwood, D. M. (1999). Suicide and attachment: Fear of abandonment and isolation from a developmental perspective. *Journal of Contemporary Psychotherapy*, 29, 65-73; Syria, Lebanon, and Israel: Is There a Psychological Difference

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Between The Abusive and the Abused? (March 31, 2000). IBPP, 8(12).) (Keywords: Israel, Lebanon, Security.)