

PERSPECTIVES

Was it Santayana who said, "we should not forget the lessons of history, or we will be forced to relive them?" America seemed destined to face tyrannical realities like German fascism, Russian Communism and now Islamic terrorism. Each have their own perspectives, objectives and consequences.

History reminds fascists/communists led an uncompromising ideology of adherents backed by military power. Compromise and accommodation were seen as weakness and the tide rushed on. Islamic fanaticism broaches a similar theme. Goose stepping North Koreans remind of Germans and Russians on the march, linear expertise, precise and fanatically patriotic...while suicide martyrs play out their final acts apart from and in parody of Iranian lust for power on stage as the world watches and wonders! As fascists and communists parried in Spanish Civil War scenes, Iraq seems comparably in a Dance Macabre...Israel/Palestinians a sideshow!

The 1950s reminded the honeymoon was over between the United States and the Soviet Union. A Cold War was on certified by Soviet dominance of Eastern Europe soon to be countered by a European Recovery (Marshall Plan) and a military alliance of Significance (NATO) exacerbated by a nuclear shot of the Soviets in 1949. Irony revealed America offered the Soviets opportunity to share in the control of Nuclear technology and the Marshall Plan. They refused perhaps due to an assumption Germany was to be made an agrarian society without industrial capability daily being cannibalized by the Russian in their part of the occupation zone. Spoils of war seem whetted by Soviet prominence, dedication and locale.

Adversarial Cold War relationships were ignited by the sudden invasion of South Korea by North Korea on June 25, 1950 and immediate response from America through UN auspices and Soviet intransigence. Vietnam in similar scenario of proxy-like war would surface later as part of the United States 'containment' of Soviet/Chinese appetites. US-Soviet confrontation tended to affect the birth pangs of Israel and Arab animosity.

Policy towards Israel and her neighbors was altered by the new international realism and tension. Both the Soviet Union and the United States began to treat both sides with a modicum of economic aid and support. Retirement took Israel's Ben-Gurion and Weizmann, Eisenhower replaced Truman and Stalin died in 1953. King Farouk was overthrown by a military coup led by Naguib and Nasser and the international broth took on a new taste: promise and peril in mixture. What was the portent? Aswan!

The Nasser (Egyptian) plan to build the Aswan Dam with United States help as offered. Vision was to irrigate and stimulate economic growth along the Nile to Cairo. When learning of Nasser perfidy, he played off the US offer with Soviet entreaties-the US opted out of the deal. Among other effronteries to the national honor of Egypt, Nasser in July of 1956 threatened to nationalize the Suez Canal and pay for the dam with the proceeds therein earned. Britain and France in condemnation would seek to take back the Suez Canal and oust Nasser; while Israel proposed a combined para-infantry strike at Mitla Pass and an armored thrust in Sinai. The 100-hour war would begin.