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ANOTHER VIEWPOINT
(AVP)

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The Elephant and the Mouse

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The mother of all elections just took place in Israel. It was closely watched and debated in the United States. Media programers, analysts, and commentators lost no opportunity to report, discuss, evaluate, forecast, and at least indirectly endorse one candidate or another. The prize elections are now over but the watchers are still devoting much attention to the results. Probably the reason is that the US elections are not yet in full gear and the campaign is bound to be dull any way. The Russian elections are uninteresting and not that close to home. The Indian elections have come and gone with little fanfare. Indian elections actually belong in a different world, a few Americans would know or appreciate. It is not the size of the country, nor its commitment to democracy, nor its relevance to national security that drives American fascination with all things that are Israeli. American fascination with and commitment to Israel are beyond rational explanations, except that the Israelis did in Palestine what the Europeans did in America, though less successfully. Probably flattered by the imitation, the United States offers Israel a reward by changing the roles: the mouse has turned into an elephant and the elephant into a mouse.

The Mouse has roared, the Elephant has surrendered.
The Elephant has gone blind, the Mouse has become its seeing eye.
What one sees, the other sees and where one goes, the other goes.
No questions asked.

Israel invades, the United States protects the spoils.
Israel grabs, the US pacifies the loser.
Israel challenges its neighbors, the US says bravo.
No questions asked.

Israel creates Arab refugees, left and right, the US mounts its aid.
Israel bombards its neighbors, the US provides jets and artillery.
Israel violates international law, the US says it is a matter of interpretation.
No questions asked.

The peace broker has turned into Israel's protector.
Challengers of Israel beware.
Jewish immigrants settle by the thousands where Palestinians ought to be, but are not allowed.
American dollars flow in just the same.
No questions asked.

Israel hits a UN compound and sheds the blood of civilians.
The US barely whispers disapproval.
The UN complains and the US screams:
Mend your ways and rewrite your report. Israel must be right.
No questions asked.

Objectivity, fairness, and honest mediation: whither have they gone?
The Arabs wonder, the French ponder, and the British stand asunder.
Even the Israelis are puzzled !
The Mouse has roared, the Elephant must surrender.
No questions asked.

The Arab leaders know.
Their own people are their best and only friend.
Large number, empty rhetoric, even bursting oil wells
Cannot create reliable friendships, respect, or awe.

Knowledge, technique, and true concern
Produce the backing, support, and diplomatic scores.
No one ignores the achiever,
Whether friend or foe.

Learning for all, male and female, rich and poor;
Equality, self-reliance, and free thinking;
These bring wealth, independence, and much more.
A new light may shine and an Arab star may glow.

The mouse will cease to roar, the elephant will stand big and tall.
The Arabs will have learned.
Serious questions will be asked.
Prejudice, unfairness, and aggression will be delivered a deadly blow.

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<http://polar.ucdavis.edu/Econ/Tuma/tuma.html>