

ISRAEL HAS NUCLEAR CAPABILITY AGAINST SOVIET UNION

NEW YORK, N.Y., Nov. 3 (IPS)--Israeli nuclear capability, first exposed in New Solidarity and IPS, can be used directly against the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe, according to an evaluation of technical material carried out by the Labor Committee Intelligence staff this week.

A strategist from American Enterprises Institute, a Washington, D.C. thinktank, told New Solidarity recently that the Israelis possessed as many as a dozen nuclear bombs in the 20 kiloton range. This is confirmed by the American magazine Science, which has published articles stating that since 1972 Israel has been using the laser separation method to enrich nuclear material, a process which can be used to produce the concentration of fissionable material necessary for manufacturing nuclear weapons.

The laser method is a relatively recent, low-cost way of separating out U-235, the radioactive isotope of uranium which is used as fuel in nuclear reactors. While it is now not known how many such laser separation units Israel has, several dozen units could be set up at small expense. A single laser unit, which is small and difficult to detect, could produce enough nuclear material for one A-bomb in the 20 kiloton range every month.

Israel also has the effective means to transport such weapons to targets both inside and outside the potential Mideast war zone. In a professional strategic study, "The Arab-Israeli Military Balance Since October, 1973," author Dale R. Tahtinen reports that Israel possesses now at least 127 F-4 fighter-bomber aircraft. The U.S.-built F-4, which can be equipped to carry small weapons, has a combat radius of 1000 miles. That capability puts the entire Mideast within range of Israeli nuclear attack.

Moreover, if it is decided to expend machines and pilots in suicide missions, the effective range of Israeli nuclear attacks could be nearly doubled. Flying until its fuel was completely consumed, an F-4 could reach targets in both Western and Eastern Europe including the industrial heartland of the Soviet Union as far north as Leningrad.

C. L. Sulzberger, U.S. CIA press spokesman, has suggested that if cornered in a new war, the Israelis would act like their first century B.C. forebears in the desert fortress Masada. Rather than surrender to their enemies after a bitter siege lasting for years, the Masada warriors committed suicide en masse.