

Dayan Putsch in Israel to Set-up Regional Nuclear War in Middle East

May 1 (IPS)— A threatened military putsch in Israel by General Moshe Dayan and Defense Minister Shimon Peres, covertly backed by Secretary of State Henry Kissinger, has raised the danger of unleashing a regional nuclear war in the Middle East. A growing Israeli government crisis, fed by the crisis in Lebanon and on the Israeli-occupied West Bank of Jordan, is widely expected to result in the fall of the government of Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin, and knowledgeable political observers have expressed the expectation that Peres, a leading Israeli warhawk, will become the next prime minister. A Cabinet showdown between extremists and moderates, now scheduled for May 9 could occur as early as tomorrow.

A Peres government, which would draw its support entirely from the hardline Israeli military elite and the rightist fanatics of the Likud bloc, would hold the dangerous potential of moving into the Rand Corporation's "breakaway ally" scenario, in which an Israeli pre-emptive strike — possibly involving nuclear weapons — would appear unconnected to its real sponsors, the U.S. National Security Council. Military sources believe that the Peres-Dayan faction could enforce its political will by a covert coup d'etat via an ultimatum from the Israeli general staff.

The threat of an Israeli nuclear attack yesterday prompted Egyptian Foreign Minister Ismail Fahmi to issue a warning to Israel against any use of nuclear bombs. "It is no longer a secret," Fahmi told the Cairo daily Al Ahram, "that Egypt has Egyptian scientists who can react if Israel made use of nuclear arms." According to today's Baltimore Sun, Egyptian officials are worried about a growing Israeli acceptance of nuclear arms, "now being pushed hard by Jerusalem's hawks to an increasingly receptive Israeli public."

The Lebanon crisis, which erupted again today with the sudden collapse of a ten-day ceasefire, and a deep social crisis in Israeli society are being manipulated by the Dayan hawks to create the necessary terror climate in which an Israeli use of its nuclear arsenal would seem "justified" to preserve the existence of the Israeli state.

Doves Unorganized

Pro-peace forces in Israel, led by former Foreign Minister Abba Eban, are completely unprepared to deal with the crisis about to engulf them. Short of a successful international mobilization of the working class and the world Jewish community, especially in the U.S. to create the proper climate of support for Eban and his allies, the victory of the Peres-Dayan clique and its disastrous consequences is virtually assured.

Israeli General Ezer Weizmann, a brother-in-law of Dayan and the founder of the Israeli Air Force, this week demanded that political attacks on Dayan be halted, and warned ominously that Dayan "has not yet spoken his last word on Israel." According to the April 28 Baltimore Sun, the popularity of the fascist ex-Defense Minister is growing in Israel, and "more and more Israelis now talk about shifting to reliance on nuclear weapons," a position chiefly sponsored by the Dayanists.

By all indications, Israeli doves are operating on the basis

of a suicidal six-month perspective, relying in the meantime on pathetic Prime Minister Rabin to withstand the pressure from Peres and Dayan. According to BREIRA, a dovish Jewish umbrella organization in the U.S., the pro-peace opposition in Israel is gradually organizing itself toward the formation by late summer of a parliamentary caucus comprising Labour Party doves led by Eban, the Mapam party fraction, and the various smaller left-leaning parties, a coalition that eventually could win a national election with a peace program.

The Jerusalem Post reports that the pro-peace forces are totally disorganized, noting that so far they have "failed to organize a united front." Until now, said the Post, there have been no consultations between Mapam and the ILP (another dovish party) and the Labour doves, although Eban is seeking to organize an "ad hoc alignment." With this perspective, Israeli peace forces will hardly be prepared to offer a united government program when the Cabinet showdown occurs.

According to Tel Aviv radio, however, "very hard discussions" took place yesterday between the Mapam party and the majority Labour Party over the future of the ruling common front coalition between the two parties. The radio reported that Mapam asked "precise questions" to be resolved by the Labour Party, including the latter's position on recent provocative attempts by religious fanatics to illegally settle in the West Bank and on Mapam's own recommendations that Israel withdraw to its 1967 borders.

The showdown between the hawks and the doves will be prompted by the ostensible issue of settlements in the occupied West Bank. Extremist Israelis, discreetly backed by Peres and Dayan, have demanded an unlimited right to establish Jewish settlements in the West Bank. In a cautious counterattack, Justice Minister Haim Zadok, an Eban ally, denounced the extremist Gush Emunim group's march on the West Bank as a "threat to Israeli democracy."

Today, on the West Bank a general strike organized for Mayday resulted in violence and at least one death as Israeli military police fired into crowds of stone-throwing youths in Nablus. The violence, certain to further raise Arab-Israeli tensions, feeds the atmosphere of hysteria inside Israel on which Dayan and Co. are relying in their bid for power.

Dump Kissinger Drive

At the same time, however, the effects of a week-old U.S. Labor Party mobilization to dump Kissinger, liquidate the Falange, and bring about initial moves toward Arab-Israeli reconciliation have begun to be felt. Numbers of Democratic Party spokesmen have either called for Kissinger's resignation or are considering doing so as a result of briefings from the USLP. Tentative commitments to investigate links between the CIA and the Falangists have been received from two congressional offices, and nearly one million copies of USLP Presidential candidate Lyndon LaRouche's emergency statement on the Middle East have circulated to U.S. workers.

In the first three days of the Mideast mobilization, 20,000 leaflets and 4,000 copies of New Solidarity warning of the extreme danger of nuclear war in the Middle East circulated in major Jewish communities across the continent, and Labor Party organizers briefed 100 local rabbis and 200 local

branches of national Jewish organizations. The response was overwhelmingly against the man responsible for creating the Mideast crisis: "Kissinger is the enemy of the Jewish people," said the head of the Jewish Community Council in one New York city. Others were equally blunt: "He's a Nazi."

A prime tactical objective of the USLP drive is to create a climate in which Israeli dove leader and former Foreign Minister Abba Ebban can form a government and bring Israel to a Geneva peace and development conference together with the U.S., the USSR, the Arab states, and the Palestine Liberation Organization.

Show of Force

The threat of an Israeli nuclear strike at the Arabs is not prompted by internal Middle East politics. The Dayan faction and its State Department sponsors are pushing the Middle East to the brink of thermonuclear war to obtain a "credible show of force" as a demonstration of NATO ruthlessness. According to the Schlesinger doctrine for limited regional nuclear wars, Middle East conflict would terrify the USSR into passive acceptance of Wall Street's drive to impose Schachtian austerity regimes in Western Europe, beginning with a scheduled coup d'etat in Italy. Sane military strategists, however, are well aware that even the intention to pursue a Middle East war and Italian coup plans threatens to cross the Soviet Union's "tripwire" for a defensive pre-emptive strike against NATO.

Official statements by the Soviet government this week and by Soviet Foreign Minister Andrei Gromyko in Paris have consistently hit on the theme of a world nuclear holocaust growing out of the Middle East. The Soviet government issued a statement April 28 which is unprecedented both in the sharpness of its warning of the danger of war and in its call for economic development of the entire region including Israel. "The USA is supplying various modern weapons (to Israel)," the statement said, including missiles which can carry conventional as well as nuclear warheads. It is especially alarming in this respect that Israel is creating or has already created its own nuclear warheads. It is not difficult to see what a potential danger to peace is posed by this." There have been four Arab Israeli wars, the Soviet statement said, and "it would be naive to assume that this will not happen a fifth time. It has become clear to all what consequences a new war in the Middle East would have, including consequences for the entire international situation."

The day after the Soviet statement on the Mideast was released, Soviet Foreign Minister Gromyko reiterated the Mideast war danger in statements made in France. "The world and European situations demand a solution of questions connected with averting military confrontation," Gromyko said, specifying the Mideast as a major danger area. According to West German radio reports, Gromyko and the French government leaders with whom he was meeting termed the Mideast situation "immediately explosive," possibly leading to a "major confrontation."

Simultaneously with Gromyko's warnings in France, the French daily *Le Monde* reported that the Soviet trade union daily, *Trud*, had specified in an article April 29 that Israel has 14 nuclear bombs now in operational status.

The danger of the Mideast conflict triggering a nuclear war was acknowledged as well by major spokesmen for the U.S. administration, including Kissinger himself in an April 22 press conference. Kissinger's Undersecretary of State for Near Eastern Affairs, Joseph Sisco, followed up Kissinger's warnings by stating in congressional hearings April 30 that the idea that a third world war can occur due to the Middle East situation "can't be rejected."

New Explosions in Lebanon

Despite such dangers, new explosions in Lebanon and the West Bank today threaten to unleash a disastrous war between Israel and Syria, which could rapidly escalate into a regional nuclear conflict. The outbreak of violence in both locations is the direct result of deliberate provocations by U.S. Secretary of State Kissinger.

In Lebanon, a campaign of military and political provocations by the extremist CIA-controlled Lebanese right resulted today in the postponement of scheduled May 1 elections to our pro-Falangist President Franjeh. Hours after the announcement of the postponement, heavy fighting erupted across the country between forces of the Lebanese left and the Syrian-backed Christian rightists, leaving 115 people dead.

Both Syria, which already has several thousand troops inside Lebanon, and Israel have threatened full-scale military intervention into Lebanon.

Syrian President Hafez Assad, a long-time collaborator of NATO now under heavy pressure from Saudi Arabia and the Rockefeller's Aramco oil company interests based there, has staked his regime's prestige on "mediating" Lebanon's civil war. According to a right-wing Lebanese newspaper, Assad this week stated that Syria would "maintain order" in Lebanon "even if it costs me a war with Israel." With the new outbreak of civil war today, Assad will be pressed to commit major forces to the fighting, and Israel has repeatedly warned that a heavy Syrian presence in Lebanon might trigger an Israeli pre-emptive strike.

Yesterday it was reported that up to 12000 Syrian troops had entered Beirut and taken up strategic positions around Beirut airport in anticipation of a renewed outbreak of warfare.

It was deliberate provocations from the rightists that forced the postponement of the elections. The scheduled election was arranged on the basis of a secret agreement reached two weeks ago between Assad and Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat, whose forces are allied with the Lebanese left, to arrange for the withdrawal of Syrian troops from Lebanon. Assad, however, reneged on the accord under pressure from Saudi Arabia and the Lebanese right, and redoubled Syrian threats to crush the left and install a puppet president, Elias Sarkis, now governor of Lebanon's Central Bank and a key ally of the Falange. The threat of a Syrian-imposed Sarkis candidacy forced the left to demand that the elections be postponed.

However, Syria's ability to intervene in Lebanon has been called into question. Intense opposition to Syria's previous role in Lebanon has been gathering among pro-Iraqi and nationalist officers in the Syrian army and the Baath party. In late March, the Egyptian press reported this week, a nearly successful coup d'etat was foiled by Assad, and over 4,000 Syrians were arrested. The Italian newspaper *Il Tempo* reported that opposition to Assad's alliance with the Falangists and with Jordanian King Hussein sparked the revolt. Under such pressure, Assad may be reconsidering his adventure in Lebanon, and there are rumors that Assad is considering purging both Zuhair Mohsin, the head of the fascist Saiqa commandos, and Foreign Minister Khaddam, likely the two leading provocateurs in the Syrian regime.

At the same time, Assad gave an interview to *Newsweek* in which he called for a Geneva conference, a peace agreement for Lebanon, and an Israeli-Palestinian agreement over the West Bank. Such policies directly contradict the previous position of Syria, and may reflect, among other influences, certain Byzantine pressures from Egypt. Egyptian President Sadat this week issued virtually identical demands.