

# Soviet Union plays the 'Great Game' for control over the Middle East

by Judith Wyer

The U.S. news media which hailed Secretary of State George Shultz's recent "shuttle diplomacy" in the Middle East are now beginning to echo *EIR's* warning that Shultz in fact assembled all the ingredients of war and superpower confrontation in the region.

Shultz's "success in pressuring Lebanon to sign an Israeli troop-withdrawal agreement that cannot conceivably be accomplished without Syria's consent has created a dilemma for Shultz that has the makings of a major foreign policy disaster," wrote Rowland Evans and Robert Novak in their syndicated column on May 27. National security officials within the administration are cited as fearing a "grievous setback for U.S. interests in the Arab world."

## Defender or destroyer of sovereignty?

Since Franklin D. Roosevelt pledged to eliminate British colonialism after World War II, the United States has been the chief defender of the fragile sovereignty of the nations of the Middle East, as shown by President Eisenhower's defeat of the British Foreign Office's stratagems during the 1956 Suez crisis.

Now, American policy faces the greatest test that has been posed during all the crises which followed that success. The Soviet Union is moving to take control over the Middle East, including the oil producers of the Persian Gulf, by 1984.

The Soviet leadership under Yuri Andropov is playing a cynical game by allying with the Anglo-European oligarchic families that orchestrated the Nazi invasions of the Soviet Union and killed over 20 million Soviet citizens. Andropov intends to subject the Middle East to the same imperial tactics known in 19th-century Britain as the "Great Game."

Perhaps the closest Western collaborator of Andropov is Lord Peter Carrington, the former British foreign minister who, along with his business partner Henry Kissinger, is delegated to induce a defeated United States to retreat to the Western Hemisphere, leaving the Mideast and Europe to the kind attentions of the U.S.S.R.

## The PLO issue

The Soviet KGB, working through old imperial connections in the Eastern Orthodox churches, is now supporting a

power play within the Palestine Liberation Organization: against PLO leader Yasser Arafat, Moscow is backing a wing of the PLO led by Khomeini allies Nayef Hawatmeh and George Habash, both members of the Greek Orthodox Church. This is the wing of the PLO which works with Palestinian terrorist Abu Nidal and European terrorist groups such as the Red Brigades.

Since the beginning of May, Palestinian ranks positioned in Lebanon's Bekaa Valley have mounted a mutiny openly backed by Libya's Muammar Qaddafi, a shared asset of Moscow and Swiss-based neo-Nazis and Freemasons.

Official relations between the Arafat-led Fatah wing of the PLO and Moscow have reportedly become chilled since Arafat's meeting with Andropov in January. At this year's Soviet May Day celebrations, very little support for the Palestinian revolution was shown.

A transformation of the PLO into a terrorist organization would destroy the last hope of the Palestinian people for regaining their homeland, and expand assassination capabilities against pro-U.S. Arab leaders and others.

These radical Palestinians, allied with various extremist Muslim groupings, threaten to launch all-out civil war in Lebanon by increasing attacks on Maronite Christians in East Beirut. Lebanese sources warn that heightened ethnic warfare in Lebanon is aimed at creating the preconditions for the assassination of Lebanese President Amin Gemayel. Should that happen, Lebanon would become a grisly map of warring fiefdoms, spawning splinter enclaves beyond Lebanon—beginning with a Druze Muslim micro-state to be carved out of Syria.

Qaddafi himself has unleashed a campaign against Gemayel. In a speech broadcast by Tripoli's "Voice of the Greater Homeland" radio May 22, he called on the Lebanese people to mutiny against Lebanon's "false president," reaffirming his support for the anti-Arafat movement in Lebanon.

Moscow announced the fourth week in May that it had sold the Beirut building housing the Moscow Norodny Bank, a well-known KGB front, and had scaled back the number of employees remaining in Beirut. Two weeks earlier, the Soviets suddenly pulled all dependents of diplomats out of Lebanon, Jordan, and Syria, in anticipation of a full-scale blow-out in Lebanon.

The U.S.S.R.'s support for the fascist Ayatollah Khom-

eini's so-called Islamic Revolution was more than simple opportunism. It reflects Moscow's bid to create its own Khomeini-style "Islamic Card," surrounding Iran geographically and capturing it politically from within.

### The Soviets' Islam Card

Moscow's cultivation of religious and ethnic assets in Iran has superseded the usefulness of the Iranian communist party (Tudeh) in Moscow's bid to control Iran. British intelligence and the Soviet KGB collaborated to provide Khomeini with information to purge the Tudeh Party in May, working through a Soviet diplomat who defected to London last year. *EIR* reported that, beginning in late January, secret contacts began outside London involving high officials of the Khomeini regime.

Moscow has specifically expanded its assets among the mullahs of the ruling Islamic Republican Party (IRP). According to Radio Iran, a clandestine Persian language radio station established by former Iranian Prime Minister Shapour Bakhtiar, Moscow has continued to tighten its relations with a powerful faction of the IRP calling itself the Followers of the Imam's Line. This is the same group that orchestrated the seizure of the U.S. embassy and hostage crisis.

Within the Kremlin, the chief architect of Moscow's Islamic Card is First Deputy Prime Minister Geidar Ali Reza Aliyev, an appointee of Andropov. Aliyev, who comes from a Persian Shi'ite family in Soviet Azerbaijan on the Iranian border, has been active in penetrating "every pore" of Iran, beginning in 1938 while he was in the Red Army. Aliyev has cultivated Soviet allies in Iran spanning the ideological spectrum, including assets within the major tribal entities in northern Iran's Kurdistan and Azerbaijan. He is also reported to have established contacts with such leftist Iranian leaders as the exiled leader of the People's Mujahiddine and the son of the conservative Iranian Ayatollah Shariatmadiari.

In early April, as *EIR* has reported, Moscow warned of its intention to "isolate" Iran in a message delivered to the Khomeini regime by a senior Soviet foreign ministry official in early April. According to a report in the Jordanian daily *Al Akhbar al Usbu*, the message cautioned Iran that, if it did not halt its war with Iraq, Moscow would cut off arms shipments to Iran, and hinted at a cut off of vital Comecon trade. The daily reported that the Soviet strategy is to forge a rapprochement between rival Syria and Iraq, thereby creating a Soviet bloc on Iran's western border. With 1,500 miles of Soviet border to the north and Afghanistan to the east, Iran would, in effect, be surrounded. Moscow now favors an end to the 32-month old Gulf war in order to expedite its plan for a unified pro-Soviet bloc from Syria to Afghanistan.

According to French intelligence sources, the likely victim of such a strategy will be Iraqi President Saddam Hussein, who is disposed toward closer relations with the United States. Palestinian terrorist Abu Nidal has reportedly been given a contract to assassinate Hussein.

Iran's willingness to accept an Arab mediation team led

by Algerian Prime Minister Abdelghani is seen as the most promising sign that Khomeini may be willing to end the war. Curiously, in recent months Iran has halted its repeated demand that Saddam Hussein be ousted as a condition for peace. There is speculation in intelligence circles that the assassination contract against Hussein is the cause of Iran's silence.

### Closing in on the Gulf

In early April Moscow installed a new ambassador to Kuwait, installing what has been described as a highly placed diplomat in order to advance Moscow's bid to establish relations with the Gulf oil producers, notably Saudi Arabia, which have been firm allies of the United States.

Moscow's bid is not going unanswered in Saudi Arabia. As in Iran, longstanding British intelligence assets in Saudi Arabia are now being activated to move closer to Moscow. Saudi First Crown Prince Abdullah, a leader of the fundamentalist Muslim Brotherhood and a British intelligence asset, stated two months ago in an interview with *As Siyassah*

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*Andropov looks toward the fracture of Lebanon, the transformation of the PLO, and the encirclement and control of Iran. The oil producers of the Persian Gulf are also to be brought into the Soviet orbit, a process fostered by Britain's anti-American political efforts in the region.*

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that "when the time is right" relations with Moscow will be established. Abdullah, leader of the British intelligence created Muslim Brotherhood and of the National Guard (which spawned the leader of the terrorist group that seized the Grand Mosque of Mecca two years ago) is now waging an all-out power play against King Fahd.

Andropov is aiding Abdullah's efforts by pushing to break Saudi King Fahd's longstanding exclusive alliance with the United States. In April, OPEC began talks with Moscow aimed at winning an agreement to reduce Soviet petroleum exports to the West, which have seriously eroded OPEC oil prices. Saudi Arabia, in particular, has suffered a massive drop in oil revenues, which has caused dissension within the Saudi leadership. Saudi Arabian Oil Minister Zaki Yamani publicly acknowledged for the first time in mid-May that Soviet oil exports were undercutting OPEC's price. Andropov is reported to be demanding diplomatic relations with Saudi Arabia in exchange for lower export levels.

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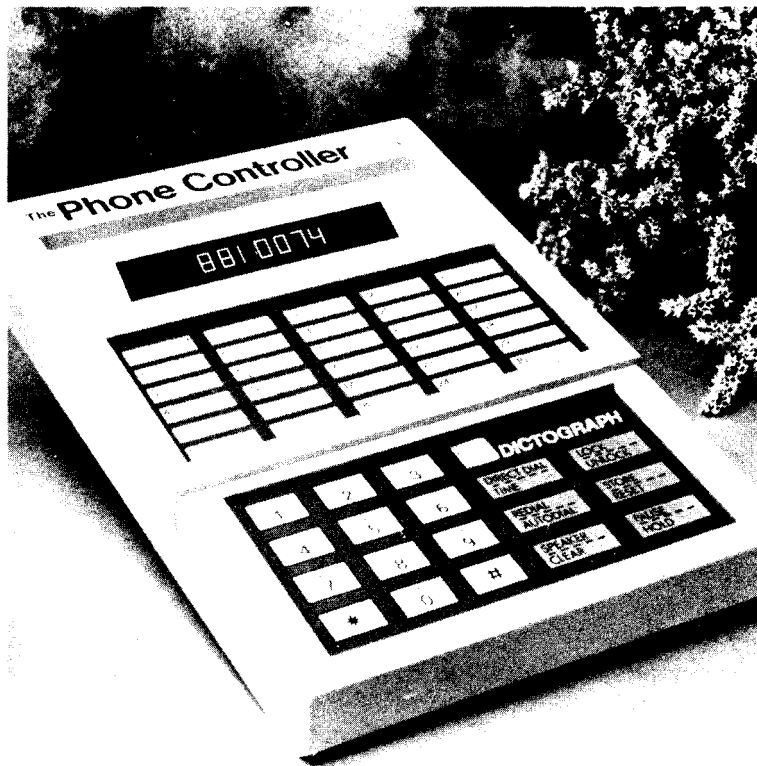
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