

## Carter's Mideast Policy: All Out Push for War

Jimmy Carter's call earlier this week for Middle East leaders to come to Washington, one by one, to meet him *after* Israeli elections take place May 17 was a sharp rebuff to the various nations pushing for a Geneva peace conference by March 1977. The announced Carter approach is a resurrection of the much-discredited "step-by-step" diplomacy of U.S. Secretary of State Henry Kissinger. It is unquestionably provocative in particular to Egypt and the Soviet Union, the two foremost organizers for an early resumption of the Geneva conference.

Since most of the Arab world had been involved in the peace offensive led by the Saudis and Egypt as an antidote to the Carter election, the latest policy line from Washington could not have been delivered unless accompanied by an array of war and terror threats. The Carter advisors carried out their threats via Israel and Syria, whose governments have frequently operated in the past 18 months as a U.S.-controlled "joint command."

No sooner had Carter issued his one-by-one invitation, than a tough, intransigent line began to emerge from Israel — a line that contrasted sharply with the intention of Prime Minister Rabin's Dec. 20 resignation and call for early general elections. At a Dec. 28 conference of visiting American and Canadian professors in Jerusalem, Israeli Foreign Minister Yigal Allon, a reliable barometer of the prevailing political winds in Israel, denounced Egypt's call for the U.S. and Soviet Union to immediately reconvene Geneva. Allon adamantly opposed any substantial role for the Soviets at Geneva, declaring that "the USSR was in the Arab's pockets."

On the same day, "official Israeli circles" cited by Agence France Presse labeled the Dec. 21 joint Egypt-Syria communique calling for a Geneva conference under U.S.-Soviet auspices a sign of growing Arab "extremism." Finally, two of the top Rockefeller faction control agents in Israel, Shlomo Avineri and Yehoshofat Harkabi, special advisors to Allon and Rabin respectively, announced over the weekend that the Palestine Liberation Organization had shown no signs of "moderation" and that Israel would refuse to negotiate at all with representatives of that organization.

### *Increased Pressure on the Palestinians*

This latter view, in particular, encouraged Syrian dictator Hafez Assad to radically increase his pressure on the Palestinians in Lebanon. With the aid of 30,000 of his troops in Lebanon, Assad is trying to force the Palestinians to disarm throughout Lebanon, except the southern part of the country. There the Palestinians are being pressured to congregate for the "battle against Israel." At the same time, however, Syria is arranging to send

10,000 fascist Christian militiamen to the south to join with Israeli forces in a joint policing effort against incoming Palestinians. In the past week, tensions in southern Lebanon increased sharply.

The Syria-Israel operation against the Palestinians is especially designed to shake the Egyptian government, which has traditionally been a strong supporter of PLO autonomy. To help the Egyptian destabilization, top Rockefeller intelligence controllers in Washington and Bonn have circulated the rumor in the past 72 hours that Sadat and the conservative rulers of Saudi Arabia are targeted for assassination by Soviet-Libya-backed "Palestinian terrorists." The same sources are spreading the line put forward by the Carter advisory circle in the Committee on the Present Danger, that the Soviets will use the Mideast as a "test" of Carter to "see if the U.S. will fire the first shot of World War Three."

Under the psychological pressure of the threats emanating from the Carter administration, both Beirut and Cairo have been flooded with rumors this week that a Geneva conference will not be possible in 1977 and that the region will plunge into war. In two consecutive interviews with the *Washington Post*, Sadat reflecting the atmosphere of terror, has called for closer ties between the Palestinian movement and Jordan while attacking in hyperbolic terms his Libyan neighbor Colonel Muammar Qaddafi, who has been instrumental in bringing the Middle East oil-producers closer to a new world economic order. The *Post* added to Sadat's discomfort by exaggerating his tentative formulation of Palestinian-Jordan ties and by lying outright that Sadat was "complicating" the process leading toward Geneva.

### *The Peace Moves*

At the same time, the consistently pro-U.S. Sadat regime — with encouragement from leading socialist non-aligned, and European leaders — has begun to search for alternatives to the Rockefeller-controlled dollar empire. Egyptian Foreign Minister Ismail Fahmy, in an interview with the West German news agency, DPA, this week, called for Europe as a bloc to break with the U.S. by supporting a Palestinian state and recognizing the PLO as a valid negotiating entity. Fahmy also called upon the U.S. and the Soviets to spell out their views on Geneva in order to expedite a settlement. To drive home the Egyptian point of view, Fahmy met several times with U.S. Ambassador to Egypt Hermann Eilts.

Together, Fahmy and President Sadat have issued appeals for a Geneva conference to the governments of France, Great Britain, Somalia, Yugoslavia, Iran, and others. An important force pushing for Geneva, Yugo-

slavia's Marshal Tito, will be in Egypt Jan. 20-28 for consultations with Sadat.

In Europe, Britain and Italy have so far had the most encouraging response to Egypt's appeals. According to the Algerian government daily *El Moudjahid*, Britain officially endorsed Egypt's position on Geneva and, for the first time ever, came out in favor of the formation of a Palestinian state. Former shadow cabinet foreign minister, conservative Reginald Maudling was in Egypt last week for meetings with Fahmy, and top British Middle East operative Lord Caradon, the author of the UN Resolution 242 on the Mideast, has just returned to Britain from an extensive Mideast tour. Caradon is lobbying

within ruling British circles for an extensive British role at Geneva and support for the creation of a Palestinian state.

Italian Premier Giulio Andreotti has announced a trip to Syria at an unspecified date in the near future, while Italian Socialist Party leader Bettino Craxi is traveling to the other wing of the joint command to counsel Israel's leaders on the necessity for a Mideast settlement. Andreotti-linked editorialists, meanwhile, are warning of the imminence of an international crisis over the Mideast, and the Italian government has signaled its support for Egyptian peace efforts by granting a moratorium of \$80 million on the Egyptian debt owed to Italy.

## Rabin's Dissolution of Israeli Gov't: Opens Way for New, Pro-Peace Regime

*Exclusive to NSIPS*

The dramatic resignation of Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin two weeks ago—an event that startled both Israeli and U.S. political circles—has opened the way for the consolidation of a new, pro-peace government in Israel that is willing to make territorial concessions and to negotiate an overall peace settlement with the Arab states.

Rabin's deliberate dissolution of the government was a virtual coup d'etat against Israel's pro-war factions. By resigning, Rabin has ensured that Israeli elections, formerly scheduled for late 1977, will be held May 17, a move that undercuts the power bids by hawkish forces inside and outside Rabin's Labour Party alignment. At the same time, Rabin, who will continue as caretaker prime minister until the elections, has afforded himself badly needed maneuvering room to establish a pro-peace government.

Rabin's move has thrown the Israeli rightwing into disarray. The neo-fascist movements being built by generals Yigal Yadin and Ariel Sharon have effectively collapsed, and Sharon, according to reliable reports, is about to rejoin the traditional opposition party, Likud. Leading warhawk Defense Minister Shimon Peres was "stunned into uncharacteristic silence," as the *Washington Post* put it, upon learning of Rabin's action.

While the rightwing forces flounder, a poll carried out by the liberal Israeli daily *Haaretz* revealed that as much as 47 percent of the Israeli population favors negotiations with the Palestine Liberation Organization under certain conditions. Armed with this popular mandate, Rabin must rapidly put forth a comprehensive peace program to ensure that Peres does not seize the Labour Party nomination for the premiership or coalesce with the forces in the Likud and around Yadin, Sharon, and several other rightwing splinter groups that adamantly oppose recognition of or conciliation with the PLO.

The consolidation of Jimmy Carter's pro-war cabinet, however, threatens to strengthen the hand of the rightwing forces in Israel led by Peres, former defense

minister Moshe Dayan, and Likud leader Menachem Begin.

Last week Yigal Allon, Israel's foreign minister and a supposed ally of Rabin, suddenly announced that Israel will not negotiate a Middle East peace under pressure, even at Geneva. Allon further insisted that talks be held face-to-face with the Arabs *without* the PLO, and he categorically opposed an important role for the Soviet Union at Geneva on the grounds that "the Russians are accelerating their hostile propaganda against Israel every day."

Similarly, in their first response to the meeting between Egyptian President Anwar Sadat and Syrian President Hafez Assad two weeks ago in Cairo, Israeli officials charged that the Arabs have adopted an extreme position. According to *Agence France Presse*, the Israeli officials said that the Arab demand to include the PLO at the Geneva talks makes the question of a Middle East peace "problematic."

*Rabin: Pressured for Peace*

Rabin's decision to collapse the Israeli government was a direct response to the mounting pressure exerted on him from within Israel and from leading Arab and socialist sector leaders to ensure the establishment of a comprehensive Middle East peace settlement. His resignation, pre-empted a move by the Likud, the extremist National Religious Party, and several related groups to bring down the government via a parliamentary no-confidence vote after Rabin fired three Religious Party cabinet members.

The pressure continues to build on Rabin to ensure that he does not abandon or compromise his decisive moves. Former foreign minister Abba Eban, a leading pro-peace moderate in the ruling Labour Party, announced last week that he will run against Rabin for the Labour Party nomination for prime minister at the party's national convention in February. Eban's challenge is an effort to pressure Rabin, who is almost certain to get the nomination, to stand firm in his fight against warhawk Peres, the third contender, in a fight the *Montreal Star*