

# Anglo-Americans add oil to Mideast fire

by Joseph Brewda

On July 24, spokesmen for the Bush administration announced that its entire Persian Gulf Naval Task Force had begun an unscheduled "exercise" at the request of the United Arab Emirates. On the same day, a Bush spokesman issued a warning to the Iraqi government against its alleged "coercion and intimidation" of its neighbors.

The pretext for the U.S. threat is statements made by Iraqi President Saddam Hussein on July 17 accusing neighboring Kuwait of being part of a U.S.-Zionist cabal that has conspired to drive down the price of oil. Iraq is calling for a minimum price of \$25 per barrel. Since Saddam Hussein made his remarks, Iraq has deployed 30,000 troops near the Kuwaiti border.

Regional observers note that the primary motivation for Saddam Hussein's assertions is that Iraq owes the Gulf States some \$30 billion for their part in financing the Iraqi side of the destructive eight-year Iran-Iraq War. Iraq can not pay this debt, and Hussein's saber-rattling appears to be largely intended to facilitate debt negotiation. Ironically, the stage has now been set for a dramatic increase in the price of oil—a long-term Anglo-American objective, despite the Iraqi President's apparent views to the contrary.

While an inter-Arab war in the Gulf is not probable, despite the rhetoric, the Middle East region as a whole is clearly moving in the direction of war. The reason for the coming war, which will probably take the form of an Israeli assault on Jordan and Iraq, is Anglo-American manipulation.

## Kissinger's 'gang of five'

In an interview with Sana Voice of Lebanon on July 10, Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) chairman Yasser Arafat came right to the point on why there is a Middle East war danger. "Bush and Baker make good statements," the PLO chairman sarcastically noted, "but the gang of five—the pupils of Kissinger in the U.S. administration—decides what takes place in the Middle East."

Referencing the killing of Palestinians in the Israeli-occupied West Bank, Arafat added, "Those pupils of Kissinger say: 'Kill the Palestinians, but away from television cameras.'" He emphasized: "Israel is a U.S. project," therefore "the issue is not Israel, but America."

U.S. National Security Adviser Brent Scowcroft and Deputy Secretary of State Lawrence Eagleburger, both former business partners of Kissinger, are among the "gang of five" Arafat was referring to. So is State Department planning head Dennis Ross. It is not certain if Arafat was also referring to George Bush personally, who got his start in diplomacy under Kissinger's tutelage.

Regarding the current war push, Arafat analyzed, "The Israeli cabinet is a cabinet of war. . . . There are two war scenarios: A scenario of a war of positions and a scenario of a war of targets. The scenario of the war of selected targets is that of striking at targets in Libya and Iraq. The scenario of positions will be directed at south Lebanon and Jordan." Israel has launched several "actions" against Palestinian "terrorists" in south Lebanon over recent days, and the PLO's military bases there are an eventual target. Israel has a long-standing plan of overthrowing Jordanian King Hussein, and declaring Jordan to be "Palestine."

## The immigration trigger

Arafat's views of the war threat were paralleled by Jordanian King Hussein in an interview on ABC's "Nightline" on July 16. Hussein warned that the trigger for the projected war is the influx of Soviet Jews into Israel. One million Soviet Jews are expected to arrive in Israel over the next 18 months, Hussein reported. "How can everyone fit in without something happening?" he asked. Rents have jumped as much as 300% in Jerusalem since January because of the huge influx, leading to a new element of instability: homelessness in Israel. Most of the immigrants will be settled in the occupied West Bank, as part of a ploy to make that occupied territory a permanent part of "Greater Israel."

As a result of the 1989 deal between the United States, Israel, and the Soviet Union, Soviet Jews are no longer allowed to emigrate to the country of their choice but are flown on direct flights to Israel. Before the deal, over 90% of these Jews chose to emigrate to the United States, to the great consternation of parts of the Israeli government.

Hussein criticized the United States for its "unwillingness and inability" to do something to correct the dangerous situation caused by this immigration policy. In order to ease the pressure, PLO representatives met with Finnish diplomats in Algeria on July 10 to plead that Soviet Jews transiting through Finnish airports be allowed to freely immigrate wherever they want.

Several days before Hussein's remarks, Gen. Colin Powell, chairman of the U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff, toured the Mideast. While in Tel Aviv in early July, Powell ridiculed the talk of a war danger as "exaggerated." He met with Israeli officials to discuss delivering the Patriot missile defense system to Israel. European sources report that while he was Assistant National Security Adviser in the second Reagan administration, Powell had been the case officer for the project of forcing Soviet Jews to immigrate solely to Israel.