

Cheney Pushing Israel Towards Fascism

by Dean Andromidas

Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Olmert has sealed an agreement to bring into his government Israel's answer to Benito Mussolini. This new partner, Avigdor Lieberman, chairman of the right-wing Yisrael Beitenu (Israel Is Our Home) Party, has called for "transferring" Arab Israelis out of Israel, and bombing both Cairo and Tehran. An emigré from Russian Moldavia in 1978, Lieberman also reputedly has ties to the Russian Mafia.

Slated to become Israel's "Minister in charge of strategic questions," Lieberman will be responsible for "coordinating" Israel's policy towards Iran. His entry into the government is widely seen as a signal that Israel would attack Iran, as Israel devolves into a full-fledged fascist state.

But make no mistake: It is not the Israeli Prime Minister who is putting Israel on the road to fascism, but U.S. Vice President Dick Cheney and the powerful financial interests who stand behind him. Hell-bent on a new war against Iran, Cheney wants to ensure that he can use Israel as his hand-grenade in his plans for a new Mideast war. According to Israeli intelligence sources, since the end of the Lebanon war, Cheney and his neo-con allies have been working to bring into power their real candidate as Israel's Mussolini, Benjamin "Bibi" Netanyahu, chairman of the Likud Party and protégé of U.S. synarchist George Shultz.

Referring to Netanyahu as Cheney's "high commissioner to Israel," one source told *EIR* that the Lieberman move is a desperate attempt by Olmert to block Netanyahu from coming to power. This same source, who is close to the Labor Party, said: "Lieberman is a fascist, and Olmert is a cynical politician who would do anything for self survival. They belong together. Olmert knows that Cheney wants to bring Netanyahu into power, but without Lieberman's party, it would not be possible to bring down Olmert, at least for another few months." This source called for the Labor Party to pull out of the government.

Ehud's Hands, Bibi's Voice

Olmert may think that he is keeping Netanyahu out of the Prime Minister's seat, but as Cheney's "high commissioner," Bibi is running the show. Last June, Netanyahu held a secret meeting with Dick Cheney on the sidelines of an American Enterprise Institute closed-door conference in Beaver Creek, Colorado, where they plotted what became Israel's disastrous second Lebanon war. In the aftermath of the war, leading

Israeli political and military figures called for opening peace negotiations, including renewing peace talks with Syria, taking up the Arab peace initiative of 2002, and convening a new Madrid peace conference. Syria, the Palestinians, and other Arab states were ready to reciprocate, but the Bush Administration, under Cheney's command, ordered Olmert to refuse such offers.

This was confirmed by former head of the Mossad, and long-time Labor Party member David Kimche. Speaking at a conference in Washington, D.C., Oct. 24, Kimche urged the United States to begin talks with Syria. "There have been a number of peace-feelers from Syria," he said, "but we haven't responded, because the U.S. was against it."

Although Olmert thinks he has out-manuevered his great rival, in reality he has become Bibi's puppet. Aluf Benn, the leading political correspondent for *Ha'aretz*, wrote on Oct. 25: "Olmert has adopted the positions of Likud Chairman Benjamin Netanyahu [who] is steering the government policy from the opposition benches. The hands are the hands of Ehud, but the voice is the voice of Bibi. Now Olmert is carrying out the Netanyahu policy, point by point. The Prime Minister is sending veiled threats to Iran, burying the convergence plan [withdrawal from the Occupied Territories] and allowing accelerated construction in settlements. His social economic policy, too, was copied from Netanyahu. . . ."

Israeli political observers say that Netanyahu is biding his time, while Olmert's own Kadima Party continues to be on the verge of splitting, with half its members likely to return to the Likud. The Labor Party, sitting at the same table with fascist Lieberman, could self-destruct before the year's end, these sources say, and the next government will be led by Bibi, with Lieberman by his side.

A Fascist, the Russian Mafia, and the Neo-Cons

Lieberman's extremist views include the ethnic cleansing of Arabs from Israel. In the last year, under the direction of his American political advisor Arthur Finkelstein, Lieberman voiced support for a Palestinian state, but not the one envisioned in the Oslo Accords. He called for annexing the Jewish settlements on the West Bank, leaving "Palestine" as a state of tiny bantustans to which Arab-Israeli communities, and those in the Occupied Territories, would be "transferred."

In 2002, Lieberman said: "I would not hesitate to send the Israeli army into all of Area A [the area of the West Bank under the Palestinian Authority] for 48 hours. Destroy the foundation of all the Authority's military infrastructure, all of the police buildings, the arsenals, all the posts of the security forces . . . not leave one stone on another. Destroy everything." He also suggested to the Israeli cabinet that the air force systematically bomb all the commercial centers, gas stations, and banks in the Occupied Territories, as reported in the *Independent March 7, 2002*.

As Minister of Transportation in Ariel Sharon's first gov-



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Extremist Avigdor Lieberman, newly appointed to the Israeli Cabinet by Prime Minister Olmert, wants an Arab-free Israel. He is widely viewed as a front man for George Shultz protégé Benjamin Netanyahu.

ernment, in 2001, Lieberman called for bombing Tehran and Cairo, when the Palestinian Intifada was at its most violent phase. Egypt—which has had a peace treaty with Israel since 1979—then recalled its ambassador. As "Minister of Strategic Coordination," Lieberman will be in the "security cabinet," where he will again be calling for the bombing of Iran.

This wannabe Mussolini is nothing more than a clone of Benjamin Netanyahu. Until 1998, Lieberman was Netanyahu's bureau chief when the latter was Prime Minister. Lieberman left the Likud, and in 1999, formed the Yisrael Beitenu Party whose voter base is almost exclusively ethnic Russian. Some political observers have said that he formed his party as Netanyahu's stalking horse in this important sector, where the new party would become the natural coalition partner in any government Bibi formed. In fact, there have been discussions recently to merge the two parties.

Lieberman's political advisor in the last elections was (and continues to be) the U.S. right-wing Republican political operative Arthur J. Finkelstein, who managed the campaigns of New York Republicans, former Sen. Alfonse D'Amato and Gov. George Pataki, as well as those of Bibi Netanyahu and Ariel Sharon in Israel.

Although Bibi is notorious for getting millions from American Christian Zionists, Lieberman is rumored to get his money from the Russian Mafia, and he is currently under investigation for this by the Israeli police. The police investigation dates back to events in 1998, after Lieberman left the

Likud, and became a “businessman” in the former Soviet Union, operating from Moldova, where he was born. At the height of the 1998 Russian currency crisis, the Austrian bank Credit Anstalt faced the prospect of tremendous losses because of the free-fall of the Russian ruble. After learning that Lieberman had “friends” in Russia who could help prevent a further collapse, the bank gave him a \$3 million fee for his help. Shortly after this transaction, the free-fall of the ruble was miraculously reversed. Nonetheless, the Israeli police, who do not believe in miracles, soon opened an investigation after reports that Lieberman’s “friends” were, in fact, Russian Mafiosi. The police believe these same “friends” financed the new Yisrael Beitenu Party in the election campaign of 1999.

Lieberman’s other good friends include Israeli entrepreneurs with diamond mines in the Congo. But his most important buddy, and reputed financial supporter, is the exiled Russian tycoon Michael Chernoy, who is wanted in Russia where he is considered a mafia kingpin. Chernoy is the founder and chief funder of the Jerusalem Summit, a think-tank that sponsors an annual security conference. Its board includes Christian Zionist Gary Bauer, and top neo-cons Daniel Pipes and Hillel Fradkin, who are both named in *EIR*’s investigation of the “Big Sister” Gestapo apparatus on American campuses, led by Lynne Cheney. Another member is the U.S. Gen. (ret.) Paul E. Vallely, who has called for the nuclear bombing of Iran.

Ehud ‘Von Papen’ Olmert

With Cheney in the White House, Lieberman in the government, and Bibi—who is a Mussolini and Hjalmar Schacht rolled into one—waiting in the wings to take power, Israeli peace activist Uri Avnery has compared Israeli Prime Minister Olmert to Reichskanzler Franz Von Papen, who in 1933 advised President Hindenburg to appoint Adolf Hitler as his successor.

In his weekly commentary Oct. 19, Avnery wrote: “There is no scientific definition of fascism. But from experience one can say that it is a combination of world view and personality type, radical nationalism, racism, a cult of violence, dictatorship, and more. When asked who is a fascist, I answer: ‘When you see one, you will know.’”

While Meir Kahane, Avnery wrote, was one of Israel’s first true fascists, he never really managed to create a mass following. But with Lieberman, “Israeli democracy is threatened by a much more dangerous individual.” Lieberman calls for the transfer of Israeli Arabs, and the territory on which they live to a future Palestinian state, which Avnery wrote, is wrong: “the turning of Israel into a state cleansed of Arabs. In German that would be called Araber-rein. . . . The chances of this actually happening are, of course nil. But the very voicing of this idea prepares the way for something even worse: the simple expulsion of the masses of Arabs from Israel proper and the occupied territories. Without euphemisms, without exchanges of territory, no power can stop it

before it leads to disaster.”

Avnery warned that these dangers threaten Israeli democracy. “Years of brutal occupation have corrupted the state and the army, racism is flourishing in our daily life—not only against the Arab citizens of Israel proper. . . . There exist in our society deep schisms that can be exploited by fascism in its search for power. . . .”

As for Olmert, Avnery said: “In a few years, nobody will remember him. Unless he acquires the status of the Israeli von Papen.”

The U.S. Role

Lieberman will enter the cabinet unopposed. Even the Labor Party and its leader, Amir Peretz, are widely seen as discrediting themselves because only one of its cabinet ministers and five of its 19 Knesset members opposed Lieberman’s entry into the government. These five—Avishai Braverman, Danny Yatom, Nadia Hilou, Shelly Yachimovich, and Raleb Majedele—signed a letter declaring, “Sitting together with Lieberman [in government] would legitimize a perception backing the expulsion of Arabs and would legitimize Lieberman as a leader; it would harbor a Netanyahu-style economic policy and a diplomatic deadlock that could lead to a military escalation.” The letter was sent to the Labor Party’s central committee, but did not stop the committee’s approval of remaining in the government.

If Israel and the region are to be rescued, Cheney and Bush have to be kicked out of Washington. This is what people there are desperately waiting for.

In a forum sponsored jointly by the New America Foundation and the Center for American Progress Oct. 24 in Washington, D.C., former Mossad head David Kimche was asked by *EIR*’s Bill Jones to comment on the call for a new Madrid peace conference by Yahad Meretz Party chairman Yossi Beilin, as a possible rallying point for those who want to move away from the path to war. With a possible shift in the Congress after November elections, the whole political geometry in the United States could be transformed, Jones said, giving a much better opportunity for garnering support for Madrid II from the United States.

“I couldn’t agree with you more,” Kimche said. “I still believe such a conference would point the way forward. I can’t understand why there isn’t more being done on this issue. If there were some sort of movement from here or from the Arab world for such a conference, it would be readily accepted by Israel.”

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