

Cheney and Blair Intervene in Israeli Elections To Promote Regional War

by Dean Andromidas

The transparent orchestration of the Israeli attack on the Palestinian prison in Jericho in the occupied West Bank March 14, leaves no doubt that the Bush Administration and the government of British Prime Minister Tony Blair are working to bring to power in Israel a government that will be a full partner in an attack on Iran, Syria, and a resulting new regional war. On the same day as the assault on the prison, Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov issued a warning, in an internationally circulated interview in the Russian daily *Vremya Novosti*, of the danger of a wider war: “Maybe someone is counting on intervening in this situation, establishing order, and destroying Hamas. But this would invite a very big war in the Middle East,” Lavrov cautioned.

While the attack on the Jericho prison was clearly an attempt to influence the March 28 Israeli elections, there is a larger, geostrategic objective that Blair and British Foreign Secretary Jack Straw are aiming for, with backing from the Cheneyacs in Washington: a new Crusade against Islam, including an attack on Iran, possibly triggered by an Israeli “breakaway ally” scenario.

Commenting on the Jericho attack, veteran Israeli peace activist Uri Avneri declared, “This was an almost uncamouflaged campaign ploy by [acting Prime Minister] Olmert, prepared in a cabal with the British and the Americans.” And the Israeli daily *Ha’aretz* presented documentation that the raid was organized over three weeks before the fact. Ehud Olmert is the candidate of the Kadima party. His advisor, attorney Dov Weissglas, who had been the contact man of former Prime Minister Ariel Sharon with U.S. Vice President Dick Cheney, coordinated the operation with British and U.S. officials. The prisoners were being held under an international agreement which had been guaranteed by the United States and Great Britain. The decision by London to withdraw the British monitors who were keeping watch over the prison, was the signal for the Israelis to move in, destroy the prison, and capture six Palestinian prisoners. Ten minutes after the monitors were withdrawn, the Israelis attacked.

The timing of the attack on the prison, just two weeks before the election, exposes as a sophistry, the claim by Jack Straw that the decision to remove the monitors was based on concern for their “security.” The press is frankly describing

the affair as a political “Jericho effect,” and polls taken after the assault showed Kadima scoring substantial gains, at the expense of the Labor Party. As *Ha’aretz* wrote: “Kadima’s strategists could not have wished for a more successful operation only a day before the pollsters began their work for the weekend papers.”

‘Return Territory and Kill Arabs’

In addition to the “Jericho effect” on the elections, foreign funds are pouring into the country to back Kadima and the right-wing parties. Foreign tycoons, including the shadowy Geneva-based financier and shipping magnate Bruce Rappaport, and the American billionaire David Abraham, who is a member of the “Mega Group” which includes Edgar Bronfman and Michael Steinhardt, have poured hundreds of thousands, if not millions of dollars into the campaign to support Kadima.

One Israeli political observer told *EIR*, “These same millionaires are backing all the right-wing candidates, including the right wing of the Labor Party who have either gone to Kadima, like Shimon Peres, or are undermining [Labor Party Chairman] Amir Peretz, like [former Prime Minister Ehud] Barak.”

Whether the Israeli elections will be “completely safe and without violence,” as former President Jimmy Carter declared the recent Palestinian elections to be, is doubtful, since the essence of Kadima’s campaign is violence—that is, violence against the Palestinians—which will, predictably, affect the safety of Israeli voters. This is confirmed by the vile slogan, “To return territory and kill Arabs,” which, according to *Ha’aretz*, is a favorite expression of the so-called “ranch forum” of Sharon’s advisors, who now serve as Olmert’s campaign consultants. These include the above-mentioned Cheney intermediary Dov Weissglas. It has become part of the cynical game of Israeli election politics to heat up the security situation in order to influence the outcome of elections. Since the announcement of the elections over three months ago, the government has stepped up violence against the Palestinians, including targetted assassinations, mass arrests, roadblocks, and sieges of Palestinian cities and towns. The Gaza Strip has been turned into a virtual Warsaw Ghetto.

All this is calculated to provoke revenge attacks by Palestinian militants.

This is the true nature of the unilateral disengagement policy of the Olmert government, a plan fully backed by Cheney and his synarchist controller George Shultz (see "In Israeli Elections, It's Shultz/Cheney vs. Sanity," *EIR* March 17, 2006). The creation of Kadima by Sharon (who now lies comatose in an Israeli hospital), with the backing of former Labor Party Chairman Shimon Peres, and, behind the scenes, Cheney and Shultz, was intended to perpetuate a "no war, no peace" policy which has, for four decades, enabled the Israeli right wing to continue expanding the settlements. It is a policy that has kept the entire Middle East embattled since the end of World War II. As in the 1956 Suez Crisis, when France and Great Britain conspired with Israel to attack Egypt, today, Blair, Straw, Cheney, and Shultz are conspiring with their Israeli agents to start a new regional war.

The building of the West Bank "Berlin Wall" is part of this policy. It serves the dual aim of lulling the Israeli population into a false sense of security, while signalling to the Palestinians that there will never be a peace process, there will never be a Palestinian state.

A senior British intelligence source told *EIR*: "The disengagement and the Wall are part of the 'Jordan is Palestine' policy. It tells the Palestinians, 'You have no hope. Emigrate to Jordan; that is the Palestinian state.' This year alone, 240,000 Palestinians have left the occupied territories. But it will not work," the source said. It will lead to further radicalization of the region and a new war, whereby Sharon's "Jordan is Palestine" policy will be implemented.

The fraud that Kadima will "end the occupation" unilaterally, by building its "separation wall," has served to marshal support from across the Israeli political establishment, which supports either Kadima or the Likud, whose candidate is Benjamin Netanyahu.

Coalitions for War and Peace

While the Israeli election campaign has been dominated by polls showing Kadima with a commanding lead, it is clear that, with the help of Cheney and Blair, everything is being done to ensure that Labor Party Chairman Amir Peretz, who has been campaigning on a program for peace and economic development, gets nowhere near the leadership of the next government. Under the leadership of Peretz, a coalition for peace, as organized by slain Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin, and embodied in the Oslo Accords, could come to power. When Rabin became Prime Minister in 1992, he formed a coalition for peace which included his own Labor Party, the pro-peace Meretz party, and the Shas party, whose base of support are the Orthodox Sephardim.

The much-talked-about possibility of a post-election coalition between Kadima and Labor has been mainly aimed at undermining the leadership of Peretz, rather than representing an actual possibility. Even if such a coalition did come into

power, it would be a replay of the failed Labor-Likud coalition which Sharon organized in 2001. With Kadima at its head, such a coalition government could be dragged into a new war by Cheney and Blair.

There are other coalitions that would lead to war even sooner. The campaign of violence against Palestinians and hysteria about the "existential threat" of a nuclear Iran, being pushed every day by Kadima and the Likud, is driving the electorate further to the right. The latest polls show Likud gaining over the Labor Party, moving into second place. Already Likud Chairman Netanyahu, the favorite of George Shultz and the U.S. neo-cons, has sought out allies to form a government after the elections. Netanyahu has reportedly contacted the ethnic Russian-Israeli Beiteinu and Shas parties. According to the latest polls, Likud could get up to 19 seats, and the latter two parties could get as many as 10 apiece, which would give them 37 to 40 seats out of the 120-seat Knesset, exceeding the 35-37 seats Kadima is expected to win. If the three parties agree to back Netanyahu as Prime Minister, he could conceivably be chosen to form a government.

Beiteinu is led by the fascist Avigdor Lieberman, who was, at one time, in the Likud, and served as Netanyahu's bureau chief when the latter was Prime Minister. Lieberman formed his party as a stalking horse for Netanyahu in the Russian community, which is predominantly right-wing. An anti-Arab racist, his policy is to transfer the small areas in Israel where Israeli Arabs live to the other side of the West Bank wall.

These parties could ally with other right-wing parties, including the National Union-National Religious Party lead by Rabbi Benny Elon, a leading member of the lunatic Temple Mount Faithful, who want to destroy the mosques on Jerusalem's al-Haram al-Sharif/Temple Mount and rebuild the "Third Temple" of Solomon. Elon was once the spiritual advisor to Yigal Amir, the assassin of Yitzhak Rabin. Elon's program is to "transfer" all the Palestinians out of the West Bank.

Speaking to the *Jerusalem Post*, Elon expressed enthusiasm about the elections. He believes the polls are all wrong, and that the right-wing parties will gain enough seats to form a government. "Olmert will not be Prime Minister," he proclaimed.

It should not be forgotten that the Israeli right wing is still enjoying the financial support of U.S.-based Christian Zionist fundamentalists, who have poured millions of dollars into the settlements. In Israel, one well-financed right-wing group, Moving Right, is conducting a nationwide campaign against the Kadima party, in order to ensure Netanyahu's election. Its leader, Yaakov Sternberg, also leads another right-wing group, Mateh Ma'amatz, which has organized demonstrations in the past against the Oslo Accords, and Sharon's disengagement from Gaza. Sternberg believes that Kadima will likely win the most seats, but the right wing could actually set up a government with Netanyahu at its head.

“From our perspective, the battle is measured by the results between blocs,” said Sternberg. “Kadima, Meretz, and the Arabs are on one side. On the other side are all the opponents of the disengagement and the future disengagements: the Likud, National Union-National Religious Party, Avigdor Lieberman, Shas, and United Torah Judaism. If, in the 17th Knesset, we manage to create, from all these groups, a bloc of at least 61 MKs, we have won. In such a situation we have a good chance of persuading the parties in the bloc to unite around Netanyahu.”

According to Sternberg’s statistics, Kadima will get only 15% of the votes in Jerusalem, and less than the polls are giving him in Tel Aviv.

The group is sending activists door to door, and conducting a telephone campaign to get the Likud members who otherwise were not planning to vote, to vote for one of the other right-wing parties, if not for the Likud. They are planning on contacting no fewer than 800,000 voters. Sternberg figures that the polls now give Kadima, the left, and the Arab parties, 67 mandates, while the right could get 53. Their aim is to shift eight of those mandates to the right.

Either way, there could be some important surprises on Israeli election day. But the issue of war or peace between Israel and its neighbors will, more than anything else, depend on removing Cheney and the cabal behind him, from the White House.

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