

# Israel Moves Closer To Attacking Iran

by Dean Andromidas

April 3—The swearing in of Benjamin Netanyahu as Israel’s Prime Minister on March 30 brings Israel one giant step closer to launching an attack on Iran. But if Israel attacks, it will not be to stop Iran’s alleged nuclear weapons program, but rather to overturn the Obama Administration’s foreign policy, which features hammering out an Arab-Israeli peace and opening a dialogue with Iran. Netanyahu is not working for Israel’s national interests, but as an agent of the British Empire, which is determined to destroy any policy that threatens to overturn its domination of Southwest Asia since the Sykes-Picot agreements of 1916, which carved up the Ottoman Empire between France and Britain.

In a statement released on March 23, Lyndon LaRouche warned that the Obama Administration is facing a “breakaway ally” scenario, whereby Israel would launch war on Iran: “We have an ally, Israel, that is no longer capable of rational behavior,” said LaRouche. “What you have being pulled together in Israel is a war cabinet, including [Defense Minister Ehud] Barak for Labor—the same Barak that ran the Gaza operation.” LaRouche drew the parallel between how we must deal with Israel, and the precautions you take with a mentally-ill member of your family. It is also evident that former British Prime Minister Tony Blair is pushing Israel to launch an attack on Iran, LaRouche said.

Wasting no time, Netanyahu threatened Iran at the swearing in of his government at the Israeli Knesset. After some sophistries about “lasting peace,” Netanyahu raved: “The greatest danger to the State of Israel and to all of mankind will come from a radical regime that will try to arm itself with nuclear weapons.”

The next day, *Ha’aretz* columnist Aluf Benn asked the question: “Does his return as prime minister necessarily bring Israel nearer to war with Iran?” To which he answered: “In political circles the view is that yes, Netanyahu as prime minister brings Israel closer to war with Iran. Politicians in touch with Netanyahu say he

has already made up his mind to destroy Iran’s nuclear installations. . . . The basic assumption is that diplomacy and sanctions will not gain a thing, and the only way to stop Iran’s nuclear program will be by force, which only Israel is motivated to apply.”

Benn added, “Netanyahu is counting on Barack Obama, and on their meeting next month, where he will tell Obama that history will judge his presidency over the way he handles the Iranian nuclear program.”

In the days before his swearing in, the Israeli and international media were filled with stories of an alleged Israeli attack in January on a convoy of trucks in Sudan, supposedly laden with Iranian-supplied weapons destined for Hamas in the Gaza Strip. Although not confirmed by any government, including that of Israel, the story was used to build up a drumbeat against Iran, just as an Iranian delegation was being welcomed at a U.S.-led international conference on Afghanistan in The Hague (see article, this section). Quoting unnamed Israeli sources, *Time* magazine reported that “dozens of aircraft” participated in the attack, which was 1,600 kilometers from Tel Aviv. The fact that this distance is the same as from Tel Aviv to Tehran did not go unnoticed, as a “warning for Iran.”

## Netanyahu’s War Cabinet

While Netanyahu has assembled a monster coalition of six parties and a Cabinet of 30 ministers, the key to whether Israel goes to war will be determined by the security cabinet. Although not officially named, *Ha’aretz* reported on April 1 that it will include Netanyahu, Defense Minister Barak, Foreign Minister Avigdor Lieberman, and Strategic Affairs Minister Moshe Ya’alon, all of whom want to attack Iran.

The most dangerous is **Netanyahu** himself. He grew up in the shadow of the fascist and Zionist revisionist Vladimir Jabotinsky (1880-1940), the spiritual father of the Likud and a top British agent. Although “Vladimir Hitler,” as Israel’s first prime minister, David Ben-Gurion, called him, died long before Netanyahu was born, his father, Ben Zion Netanyahu, was not only a devoted disciple of Jabotinsky, but as an historian, was an archivist of Jabotinsky’s writings. A long-time house guest of the Netanyahu family was the British Col. John Henry Patterson, one of Jabotinsky’s British controllers. (See “How British Imperialists Created the Fascist Jabotinsky,” *EIR*, Jan. 23, 2009.)

Sitting in the galleries of the Knesset during Netanyahu’s swearing-in ceremony was a personal represen-



World Economic Forum/swiss-image.ch/Christof Sonderegger

*Benjamin Netanyahu now heads the most bellicose government in Israel's history. Here, he is shown at the World Economic Forum in Davos, Switzerland, Jan. 29, 2009.*

tative of media baron Rupert Murdoch, the British Empire's modern-day Lord Beaverbrook. Others included Netanyahu's financial backers such as Ron Lauder, a U.S. billionaire and right-wing Zionist; and New York *Daily News* publisher Morton Zuckerman.

Next in the war cabinet is Defense Minister **Ehud Barak**, a former prime minister and Israeli Defense Forces (IDF) chief of staff, who oversaw the recent brutal war against Gaza, for which Israel has been accused of carrying out war crimes. Since his time as chief of staff and prime minister, Barak has been preparing the IDF for an attack on Iran. In 1999, as one of his last acts as prime minister, he approved the purchase of 102 Lockheed Martin F-16i fighter bombers. A two-seater version of the well-known fighter was especially redesigned for Israel, with a long-range capability to attack targets deep inside Iran. He also oversaw the acquisition of F-15i strike aircraft capable of hitting Iranian targets. The last deliveries of these aircraft were completed last year.

Strategic Affairs Minister **Moshe Ya'alon**, the former IDF chief of staff who led former Prime Minister Ariel Sharon's war of attrition against the Palestin-

ians, told an interviewer in 2006, that the world was already fighting "World War III, which is the war between radical Islamists and the West." The leader of the former, he said, is Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad (*College Zionists*, Winter 2006-07). While brutally repressing the Palestinians when he was chief of staff, Ya'alon told *Ha'aretz* that the Palestinian resistance was a "cancerous manifestation" to which he was "applying chemotherapy."

In a speech before an international security conference held in Herzliya, Israel, in January 2009, he thundered that Tehran must be "must be stopped ... by diplomatic and economic isolation and, if necessary, military force."

Last but not least is Israel's top diplomat, the former Moldovan nightclub bouncer, Foreign Minister **Avigdor Lieberman**. Currently chairman of the right-wing Yisrael Beiteinu party, Lieberman has grabbed all the international attention as the ultra-rightist in Netanyahu's government. This is misleading, since it deflects attention from Netanyahu's own dangerous policies. Lieberman in fact has been a crony of Netanyahu for the last 20 years. When Lieberman was in the Likud, he served as Netanyahu's cabinet secretary, when the latter was prime minister in the 1990s.

Speaking both from the Knesset floor and in previous governments, Lieberman has repeatedly called for bombing Iran. At the end of last year, he also infamously said that Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak could "go to Hell" if he refused to make an official visit to Israel. Lieberman is now *persona non grata* in Egypt.

On the occasion of Lieberman's second day in office, Egyptian Foreign Minister Aboul Gheit said on Egyptian TV that "Lieberman should check the connection between his brain and his tongue. As long as Lieberman's views remain unchanged, then if I run

into him at an event, I will keep my hands in my pockets. The Egyptian foreign minister must uphold the dignity of Egypt. Whoever insults Egypt needs to take responsibility.” Egypt is one of only two Arab countries, the other being Jordan, that have signed peace treaties with Israel.

Yasser Abed Rabbo, an aide to Palestinian Authority President Mahmoud Abbas and a former Palestinian negotiator, said that Lieberman constitutes “an obstacle to peace,” according to the *Jerusalem Post* on April 2. “We are not obligated to hold talks with a racist hostile to peace like Lieberman,” he added.

Closer to home, there are other reasons why Lieberman might not be traveling to other countries to represent Israel. In his second day in office, the police, who have been conducting a criminal investigation against him for months, interrogated him for seven and a half hours, on suspicion of “bribery, money laundering, and breach of trust.” according to an Israeli police spokesman. He was questioned again on the following day.

In a ceremony at the Foreign Ministry, Lieberman voiced his views on the foreign policy of the new government. He called it a mistake to make concessions to the Palestinians for peace, and added that, “those who want peace should prepare for war.” He disavowed the commitment Israel made to a two-state solution at the 2007 Annapolis conference, and said the Netanyahu government has no obligation to hold peace talks with Syria.

### **More Than Half of Israelis Disapprove**

Even before the Netanyahu government was sworn in, an *Ha'aretz* poll revealed that 54% of those polled disapproved of the new government. The cause for this dissatisfaction is not hard to find. Netanyahu's coalition government looks more like a bazaar than a government, with more than half of the coalition's Knesset members sitting in the Cabinet. With 30 ministers and 7 deputy ministers, Netanyahu has created the largest Cabinet in the history of Israel, requiring a new and bigger table. Many of the ministers head ministries that never existed before, prompting opposition leader, Tzipi Livni of the Kadima party to dub them “ministers of nothing.”

The coalition includes Netanyahu's Likud, Lieberman's Yisrael Beitenu, the right-wing religious party Shas, the ultra-right-wing religious Zionist party Habayit Hayehudi, the religious party United Torah Judaism, and the Labor Party, which is providing the fig

leaf to cover the fact that this is the most right-wing government in the history of Israel. It promises to be the most unstable as well.

Barak's jumping into bed with the disciples of Jabotinsky has split the Labor Party, with 5 of the 13 Labor Knesset members having abstained from voting for the government. The smaller parties could split off at the first crisis, such as a possible criminal indictment of Lieberman. Veteran commentator Yoel Marcus wrote in *Ha'aretz* on March 30, “In any case, the Netanyahu government with its dozens of ministers and deputies, will not last its whole term.”

The crisis most ignored by the government is the economic and financial crisis, which threatens the livelihood of the vast majority of Israelis. Signs of a major banking crisis are starting to surface, as Israel's three top banks reported relatively large 2008 fourth-quarter losses. Bank Leumi, Israel's largest bank, reported a fourth-quarter loss of 1.18 billion shekels (about \$266 million), after reporting a doubtful loan portfolio worth 2.14 billion shekels. Bank Hapoalim, Israel's second-largest bank, last week posted a loss of 363 million shekels, larger than forecast. And Israel Discount Bank, the third-largest bank, reported a quarterly net loss of 121 million shekels (\$29 million), or 0.12 shekel per share, compared with a profit of 41 million shekels, 0.04 shekel a share, a year earlier.

*Ha'aretz* further reported that Israel's biggest borrowers need to pay off or roll over 90 billion shekels worth of loans and bonds during the next three years, while thousands of small businesses face bankruptcy. This could include 4,000 of the 40,000 small manufacturers who represent the core of Israeli employers. Unemployment is increasing at the highest rate in Israel's history.

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