

CIA Uses Arafat, "Arab Unity" to Ready Mideast for Looting

Sept. 15 (IPS) — With the announcement Sept. 13 that representatives of 20 Arab countries formally have requested the UN General Assembly to consider the Palestine question as a separate agenda item, the Rockefeller-Sadat forces began their fall campaign to consolidate Arab and Islamic unity in preparation for the full-scale looting of the Middle East.

The proposal that the UN consider the Palestine issue — almost certain to be ratified by a large majority of the delegations over the routine protests of Israel — is only a small part of the worldwide drive by the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO), financed by Rockefeller-puppet Saudi King Faisal, to gain "respectability" for itself and its scruffy, counterinsurgent guerrilla boss Yasser Arafat.

Over the course of the next six weeks until the scheduled Oct. 26 Arab summit meeting in Rabat, Morocco, the bogus, emotional issue of "who represents the Palestinians?" will serve as the focus of Arab politics. During this period the CIA has scheduled a series of programmed diplomatic high points and ceremonial crises, a month-long circus that is designed as a cover for quiet, behind-the-scenes maneuvering by the CIA.

Magical "Arab Unity"

The key to the CIA's political strategy in the Middle East is the current "evenhanded" policy in the region — a euphemism for Kissinger's "pro-Arab tilt" after last winter's Oil Hoax, a tilt which tumbled assorted Arab regimes into line behind Sadat's and Exxon's Faisal, at Israel's expense. By calling upon the magical powers of "Arab unity" to sway would-be dissidents, the Rockefeller forces are well on the way toward creating an integrated, EEC-style economic federation in the Middle East, with the Arab world anchored by Egypt and with Iran and Turkey giving the affair both military and "pan-Islamic" stability. This regional "Islamic Common Market," linked to the bankrupt and deindustrializing European economy, can serve as a sink for Rockefeller investment in work-intensive development zones, financed by the oil-rich Gulf states.

This so-called evenhanded U.S. policy depends on the maintenance of the proper mix of regional tension and gradual progress, based on the slowly phased Israeli troop withdrawals from occupied Arab territories. With

a shattered economy and with absolutely no friends outside the U.S. who would dare to provoke King Faisal's wrath, Israel has no choice but to accept the CIA's marching orders despite painful internal convulsions touched off by the shrinking Zionist empire. Egypt and Syria, on the other hand, fed alternately a few hundred million dollars from Faisal or the Shah or a few hundred acres of previously Israeli-occupied land to satisfy the "masses," have no non-revolutionary option but meekly to accept these CIA handouts.

Arafat Made "Respectable"

The announcement of the PLO's UN drive was timed to coincide with the end of the four-day visit of pathetic Israeli Premier Yitzhak Rabin to the U.S. Sept. 13. Rabin, while receiving routine assurances of U.S. support and normal allotment of weaponry, was told in no uncertain terms that the U.S. would continue to press Israel on further troop withdrawals. Because the Middle East controlled environment now is predicated on the apparent forward march of Arab "liberation forces," with the PLO in the vanguard, the CIA has undertaken to push Arafat forward as the "world-respected" leader of the Palestinians.

To this end, Arafat is currently dispatching 30 PLO delegations to 50 countries, brandishing the recent lukewarm Soviet endorsement of the PLO as its calling card. These flag-waving publicity stunt visits, combined with the proposed UN debate, will reinforce Arafat's status and pave the way for future U.S.-Arafat "negotiations." Such a meeting already has been mooted by the PLO, which two weeks ago requested and then denied the request that Arafat meet with Kissinger.

The Next Six Weeks

The period from now until the Oct. 26 Arab summit will be crucial for the CIA's Middle East strategy. The policies that were worked out in Washington during the past month, in which official representatives of Egypt, Syria, Jordan, Saudi Arabia, and Israel visited Kissinger and Rockefeller in the U.S., are slated for CIA implementation.

To resolve the Palestinian problem, the CIA must both purge the PLO of "extremist" elements like the pro-socialist PFLP backed by maverick Iraq, and must force

certain "liberalizations" in Jordan to make that despised kingdom palatable to the rest of the Arab world and the Palestinians in particular.

The latent strength of Jordan's King Hussein is beyond question. The long-established bureaucracy loyal to the royal family and Hussein's blatant pro-Western outlook make him just short of indispensable. In fact, the nervous king himself underlined his value to the West last week, just in case anyone had forgotten the strategic position of Jordan: "My collapse here will pose real dangers to the heart of the Arabian peninsula."

Nevertheless, the *Financial Times* was quick to point out to the butcher king that "the political institutions of the country have failed to keep pace with the rapid westernization of the population," a remark which clearly was a warning to Hussein to reform himself unless he wishes to follow the likes of Ethiopia's Haile Selassie into merciful extinction.

It is likely that Hussein received assurances that, in return for the gradual introduction of participatory

democracy into Jordan, the CIA will pressure Arafat to step up his campaign to wipe out the left of the Palestinian movement. Rumors already are being circulated in the Arab press that Sadat intends to "reorganize" the PLO without the "troublesome" presence of the radicals.

It is the prospect of being appointed overseer of a Palestinian state on Israeli-occupied territory on Jordan's West Bank that motivates Arafat to do the CIA's bidding. Constantly reminded by the Western press that the CIA wants "responsible" Palestinian leadership, Arafat eagerly pushes himself to outdo his past efforts at counterinsurgency.

As "liberalization" proceeds in Jordan and as Arafat purges the PLO, the attention of the world will focus on staged Arab-Israeli negotiations and the "Palestinian question." The visit of Kissinger to the Middle East in mid-October, the scheduled expiration of the Egyptian-Israeli accord Oct. 14, and the Oct. 6 "celebrations" for the anniversary of last October's war each will serve as mini-crises leading up to the Oct. 26 Arab summit.