

fighting and is ready to launch "a wide conflict against Syria on Lebanese soil." "Air strikes alone" cannot "break the PLO," said one Begin official.

Yehoshua Saguy, the chief of Israeli military intelligence, stated July 22 that one motive for Israel's massive bombing raid on Beirut was to generate Lebanese civilian resentment against the Palestinians. "I would say at least they have something to think about now," Saguy said.

Reports meanwhile persist that Syrian President Hafez Assad is considering deploying "air defense weapons in Beirut" to protect the Lebanese capital against Israel. A number of Syrian soldiers stationed in Beirut were killed in the Israeli bombing. In addition, 50 Soviet warships are reported to be positioned off the coast of Lebanon, having stayed in the area following their joint maneuvers with Syria last week.

Is Begin going too far?

A number of Israel's leading moderate newspapers have started to question Begin's policy. Israel's most prestigious paper, *Haaretz*, wrote that what "has already been harmed is Israel's moral superiority over its enemies." Another daily, *Al Hamishmar*, stated, "It is an illusion to think that it is possible to eliminate the terrorists, even if we use the air force against them." And the *Jerusalem Post* editorialized, "To what extent is this stepped-up military action guided by a well-thought-out policy? What was the decision-making process of the government, which in fact is only a transition administration? . . . Given [his] narrow majority [in the June 30 election] was it not incumbent on Begin to seek broad national support for such extreme action by consulting the Labour opposition beforehand? How far can Israel strain its already tense relations with Washington without dire consequences?"

Numerous American Jewish leaders have reacted similarly. In Philadelphia, one prominent Jewish spokesman stated how difficult Begin's bombing raids have made it for parents to maintain pride in being Jewish in their children. "Begin has gone too far," said another leader. "Begin doesn't know when to quit, when to restrain himself."

Even some of his erstwhile Anglo-American backers may be concerned about Begin. Signs that this may be the case appeared in the French daily *Le Monde* last month which reported that Begin's excesses are alienating the entire Arab world, including the moderates, making Alexander Haig's plans for a strategic military alliance among Jordan, Saudi Arabia, Egypt, the Gulf countries, and Israel an impossibility.

Whether, and for what reason, the Reagan administration will move to constrain Begin is still unclear. However, there are signs that the threshold of tolerance may have been crossed.

On July 22, Deputy Secretary of State William Clark, known for his personal loyalties to Reagan and not to Haig, made his first major public statement since assuming his position six months ago, and attacked Begin. Reflecting Reagan's growing irritation with Begin, Clark said, "Our commitments are not to Mr. Begin but to the nation he represents, and without question he is making it difficult to assist Israel." Clark's statement echoed an earlier comment by Reagan: "That fellow Begin sure makes it hard to help him."

Referring to the decision not to go ahead with the delivery of the F-16s, Clark said, "You just don't ship gasoline to a fire." Clark stressed, "Our commitments to the area may not parallel Mr. Begin's. Israel is not our only friend in the region." Clark went on to suggest that the delivery of the F-16s could be postponed indefinitely and that the ban may be widened to include F-15 jets and M-60 tanks as well.

Clark's statements take on added significance in light of reports that he did not clear his comments with Haig, who, it is estimated, would have disapproved. In addition, the *New York Times* reported July 22 that the prevailing view among Arabs is that one of the motives for Israel's provocations in Lebanon is to thwart the strengthening ties between the Reagan administration and several Arab countries, namely Egypt, Saudi Arabia, and Iraq.

The same day, Defense Secretary Caspar Weinberger also issued a round of milder criticism of Begin. "I think that [Begin's] course cannot really be described as moderate at this point," said Weinberger. "It is essential that there be some moderation and some general realization of how volatile the region is and how quickly individual acts of violence or individual acts of aggression or retaliation, or whatever, can lead to something much more violent."

New Arab moves toward Moscow

by Judith Wyer

The pro-Israel bias of the Reagan administration combined with the lack of support for pro-U.S. Arab nations is pushing those Arab states to make overtures to the Soviet Union.

This is not occurring because the leaderships in Saudi Arabia or Jordan are in ideological agreement with Moscow, but because they no longer see the United States as the trustworthy ally it used to be. "It's just a

question of power," observed a Middle East source. "The U.S. isn't as strong as it used to be, and Begin's current aggression against the Arab world calls into question whether Washington will rein Begin in. Under these circumstances the Arabs will seek out other allies that can exert power, so they go to the Soviets."

The recent visits of the foreign minister of Kuwait and Jordan's King Hussein to Moscow were closely coordinated with Saudi Arabia. Syria and Iraq, which both have close relations with the U.S.S.R., are reportedly acting as mediators between Riyadh and Moscow. Through these channels it is anticipated that Saudi Arabia may possibly renew direct contact and relations with the Soviets, should Reagan's Middle East policy remain unchanged.

Meanwhile, a faction within Britain associated with Foreign Secretary Lord Carrington is encouraging a certain amount of Soviet contact with such states as Saudi Arabia. This conforms to Britain's so-called new Yalta policy, which would give the Soviets influence in parts of the world until now exclusively associated with the West. According to this calculation, such a strategy would give NATO badly needed time for a military buildup in anticipation of a future confrontation with the presently militarily superior Soviets.

Carrington et al. meanwhile estimate that they can control Soviet influence in the strategic Persian Gulf through British agents within the Soviet KGB associated with triple agent General H. A. R. "Kim" Philby.

It is no secret in the corridors of power that Reagan and Carrington are at extreme odds on crucial strategic issues centering around the Soviet policy. Carrington would offer dangerous concessions to Moscow to postpone confrontation. Reagan envisages forging a world consensus now to confront and force a showdown with the Soviets. Thus Reagan values Israel as a chief ally in this pursuit. But if the Mideast is any example, Reagan may end up throwing U.S. Arab allies to the Soviets faster than Carrington. Begin's current terror raids against Lebanon have been labeled by the Arab world an American adventure, and have accelerated the Arab-Soviet relationship.

Syrian-Soviet exercises

Earlier last month, the Syrian forces and the Soviet Red Army held joint maneuvers. The Soviet troops landed in Syria, the first time ever they had operated on Arab soil during military exercises. The exercises occurred days after Begin's re-election, in the midst of a worsening conflict between Syria and Israel over Lebanon. Shortly after the maneuvers, Syrian President Hafez Assad told the French newspaper *Quotidien de Paris* that war with Israel over Lebanon was imminent. That same day Vadim Zagladin of the Soviet Communist Party Central Committee, in an interview with

French television, pledged Soviet backing to Syria in the event of such a war.

Assad then traveled to Libya and Algeria to confer with Algerian President Chadli Benjadid, who has just returned from a stay in Moscow, and Col. Muammar Qaddafi, on tightening Arab ranks for a confrontation with Israel. Following the brutal Israeli air raid on Beirut, even the press of the conservative Arab states issued harsh attacks on the United States for giving Israel a "green light." An editorial in Saudi Arabia's *Al Riyadh* newspaper blasted Philip Habib, Reagan's special envoy to the Middle East, calling him the successor to Henry Kissinger, hated in the Arab world for his role in fomenting the Lebanese civil war of 1976. Riyadh noted that "it has become necessary to watch the man's [Habib] movements very carefully. . . . In fact Habib has outdone 'dear Henry's' traveling to and fro across the Middle East as if the area were an American ranch under the command of the Zionist cowboy."

The day following the Israeli raid on Beirut, July 18, Palestine Liberation Organization chief Yasser Arafat held an emergency meeting with the Soviet ambassador to Lebanon, Alexander Soldatov. Arafat gave Soldatov a message for Soviet President Brezhnev. The week before Farouk Kaddoumi, head of the PLO foreign ministry, led a delegation to Moscow to tighten Soviet-Palestinian relations.

The Persian Gulf state Kuwait and the United Arab Emirates (UAE), both historic allies of Britain, have taken the lead in the Gulf region in pressing for increased contact with the U.S.S.R. Following the Israeli raid on Beirut, Kuwait urged Lebanese President Elias Sarkis to fly to Moscow urging that "now is the time to play Lebanon's Soviet card."

UAE president Sheikh Zayed in June issued an unprecedented statement of approval for the Soviet military occupation of Afghanistan, the first time an Arab Gulf leader has done so. The Gulf states have been vocally opposed to the Soviet occupation for fear that it might foreshadow a Soviet move into the Gulf. Zayed later retracted the statement, reportedly after Saudi Arabia expressed its displeasure. But the government of South Yemen, a strong ally of the Soviet Union, praised Zayed for the statement.

During the recent Ottawa summit, President Reagan was subjected to harsh criticism by the European participants. One French diplomat at the United Nations summed up that criticism to *EIR*: "The Soviets will win everything. Look at Jordan and Kuwait. They are already approaching the Soviet Union, as secret envoys of Saudi Arabia. The U.S. does not understand anything. They still support Begin after hundreds died in Beirut. Washington still refuses to condemn Israel. The European Middle East peace initiative is dead. The Arabs now have only one place to turn."

Israel and NATO versus the Arabs and U.S.S.R.?

EIR correspondent Mark Burdman conducted the following interview July 21 with T. Hazou, the information adviser to Prince Hassan.

Burdman: I saw the Crown Prince's comments in the *Observer* this week about Israel "balkanizing" the Middle East. Could you give us details?

Hazou: What the Crown Prince had in mind is the process of balkanization which is already ongoing. Israel has succeeded in breaking up Lebanon. The West Bank has been administratively broken into three zones: Samaria, Jerusalem, and Judea. This gives the Israelis more effective means of population control. Then Saad Haddad in southern Lebanon has created a mini-state. Israel would love to see the same process develop in Syria too. Being a minority themselves, the Israelis want to be *primus inter pares* [first among equals] among the minorities of the Middle East. I don't know of a more specific origin than that.

Burdman: I saw a reference to another interview of the Crown Prince where he talked of Israel being integrated into NATO. How would that work?

Hazou: Israel would prefer to be associated with NATO rather than with the United States alone. I think that is what the Crown Prince had in mind. But I don't think the Western countries like the idea very much; they see it as harming Western interests. What we expect next from Israel in the area is in the short term a lessening of tension immediately, but followed by new efforts to convince America that Israel wants to be the policeman in the region. So Israel's strategy, simply put, is to keep bringing the area to the brink of war, and then drawing back, to the brink and back. It's a very dangerous strategy. Lebanon has just nearly escalated into a wider conflict. And Begin personally might be carried away to do something irresponsible, you can never tell with him.

Burdman: Is the Crown Prince of the opinion that the Middle East is heading toward a kind of Euro-Arab perspective, in which European influence supplants a weakened U.S. position?

Hazou: The Euro-Arab idea is possible, if the Europeans decide to genuinely act with some independence from the U.S. . . . [Hassan] was impressed at Ottawa with the European efforts to impress upon the U.S. the need to

deal with the Middle East from a somewhat different perspective, to take the Palestinian issue more seriously.

Burdman: The Crown Prince referred to Arab-Soviet relations' now improving greatly, including possible association with the Warsaw Pact. What is the process going on here?

Hazou: It is unfortunate, but if the policy of the U.S. does not become more even-handed, then Arab-Soviet relations will improve. This will not go so far as joining or associating with the Warsaw Pact. It will involve, for example, increases in arms contracts with the Soviets, definitely, and other steps in that direction.

Jordan's Crown Prince cites Soviets' 'bold role'

Below are excerpts from an interview with Jordan's Crown Prince Hassan which appeared in the July 17 issue of the London-based Arab journal Al Majallah.

Begin and his military aides and the opportunist Zionist right in general are aware that this is the time for Israel to shift from the framework of coexistence with the area's states to the framework of imposing recognition of a fait accompli. In fact this constitutes part of a security deal to be concluded between Israel and the United States.

An American quarterly magazine refers to this matter in its latest issue. According to this view, Israel will in the next few months ask to become a full member of the Western alliance. I also believe that Israel will announce an effective nuclear stance and, on the basis of its concept of public security, will intensify its efforts to realize the world Zionist movement's dream of turning the inhabitants of the occupied territories into minorities. . . .

I believe that Israel is seeking to achieve a formula of "mutual dependence" between it and America. This could take the form of a defense pact. However, according to the concept I have mentioned, Israel should reject the idea of a permanent American military presence to safeguard the Zionist identity but would provide industrial, military, and medical services and everything the American forces would need in order to act in the area. . . .

The Soviets call for a comprehensive solution of the Middle East crisis and the area has begun to appreciate the boldness of their distinguished role. We used to advocate isolation from the big powers, but that is something which Begin would like to see so he can further the U.S. policy in the area.