

Will the Middle East be thrown into flames?

by Robert Dreyfuss, Middle East Editor

The Israeli military under General Ariel Sharon and Prime Minister Menachem Begin will destroy Beirut and then move into Syria and/or Jordan, after an act of terror blamed on Palestinian guerrillas but staged by the Mossad, Israel's secret service, according to intelligence sources. The Begin-Sharon regime intends to seize what it views as the existing opportunity to transform the Middle East for several generations to come, and it will not be stopped by the United States—unless the Reagan administration is prepared to play rough.

Issam Sartawi, a top PLO official and a leader of the PLO's moderate wing, charged in Paris that renegade Palestinian terrorist Abu Nidal was an agent of the Mossad. Meanwhile, from several world capitals, *EIR* has received information to indicate that Jordan—a key ally of Iraq in its war with Khomeini's Iran and a moderate Arab voice—is slated for invasion by Sharon.

According to intelligence sources, Israel's secret service, the Mossad, and David Kimche (Director General of the Foreign Ministry and General Sharon's candidate to head the Mossad) are planning to stage an act of terrorism inside Israel, to be blamed on the PLO, that would serve as a pretext for an invasion of west Beirut. Kimche, according to these sources, is shuttling back and forth into Lebanon to arrange with Lebanese and Palestinian mercenaries to carry out the attack. Kimche and Foreign Minister Yitzhak Shamir made a quick trip to Europe for secret talks in London and Switzerland,

returning to Israel on July 21.

It was, of course, the attempted assassination of the Israeli ambassador in London on June 3 that gave Sharon his long-sought excuse to carry out the Lebanon invasion. That terrorist assault was run by renegade Palestinian terrorist Abu Nidal, an Israeli agent in Syria.

"We have been warning for a long time about links between Abu Nidal and the Mossad," said Issam Sartawi of the PLO, at a Paris press conference on July 20, in response to a question from *EIR*. "This group has specialized in going after PLO targets, and they also attack Jewish religious institutions in Europe. We refer to the cowardly attack on the Vienna synagogue and on Jewish children in Antwerp." Noting that the PLO had warned that "as early as January of this year" Abu Nidal would be used by Sharon in this manner, Sartawi added, "Abu Nidal struck two or three days after Haig and Sharon made a deal for Israel to invade Lebanon. I will tell you people in the press that Abu Nidal used his own nephew in the attack, because he did not have his usual two weeks notice!" Less than 48 hours after Sartawi made these startling charges, one of his aides in Paris was killed in a grenade attack on a Paris street.

Sartawi continued: "I welcome with particular relief and pleasure the letter of the Iraqi Ambassador to France in *Le Monde* affirming that the attackers of Argov are a Mossad-connected group. This shows an Iraqi government recognition of the true identity of Abu Nidal, and

that measures are being taken to win Iraq to liquidate the officers and secret headquarters of the criminal gang. I hope that the government of Iraq will announce this act to the world. I also hope that the Abu Nidal branches in Damascus will be dismantled. There is no longer any excuse for any Arab government to harbor this criminal. In the same way that certain Arab government ask for help when they are in need, it is necessary that these governments cease harboring the Mossad agent Abu Nidal."

Israel tightens squeeze

Following President Reagan's meetings with Arab foreign ministers from Syria and Saudi Arabia on July 20—talks which reportedly did not go well—the Israelis began to set the stage for new attacks into west Beirut. Amid a number of warnings from Israeli officials that the time for diplomacy was running out, Shamir said: "All the terrorists are going to be finished off and nothing can change that."

The mood in Israel is edging toward an eerie replay of Adolf Hitler's Nuremberg rallies. Speaking to a fanatic crowd of 250,000 supporters of the war who gathered under the stars in Jerusalem on July 18, Begin said that he has killed or captured "90 per cent of the terrorists, and we are not going to let the other 10 per cent get away." In open defiance of Secretary Shultz's remark that Habib's diplomacy might take 30 days, Begin stated, "The murderers in Beirut do not have 30 days to leave." As he spoke, the crowd chanted: "Begin, Begin, King of Israel!"

Even more ominous, Begin and Sharon began talks to bring Yuval Neeman's fascist Renaissance ("Tehiya") Party into the government coalition. Neeman, one of Israel's top intelligence czars, opposed both the return of Sinai to Egypt and the Camp David accords, and his official party position is that the occupied West Bank and Gaza be annexed as Israeli land. In agreeing to join the coalition, the Neeman party declared that southern Lebanon up to the Litani and Zahrani rivers, is also integrally part of "Eretz Israel." Neeman is also the architect of the Israeli nuclear weapons strategy and father of the Israeli hydrogen bomb. Through his connections to the pro-Dark Ages Muslim Brotherhood secret societies throughout the region—including in Iran—Neeman is committed to "defending" Israel by destroying the nations around Israel's borders.

Israel has put out several signals that it intends to open a second front, after Lebanon, against King Hussein's Jordan. During his secret trip to Europe, Shamir reportedly held a meeting with Hussein to issue an ultimatum to the king: either join Camp David's discredited bloc or Israel will activate the "Sharon plan"

to establish a "Palestinian state" in Jordan. Inside Israel, there are reports that Sharon plans to inaugurate a reign of terror on the West Bank that would send thousands of refugees into Jordan and destabilize things there. In an interview, Menachem Milson, Sharon's West Bank overlord, announced plans to exterminate the PLO in the West Bank, including total controls over the press and elimination of all officials and aides who support the PLO. Israel has already banned the shipment of fruits and vegetables grown in the West Bank and Gaza on Israeli markets.

Joining Sartawi at his press conference in Paris, Israeli General Matti Peled warned: "Sharon now says that he wants to depose King Hussein, and displace a large number of Palestinians to Jordan, to create a Palestinian state there under Israeli tutelage. I advise everybody to believe this as a very serious intention," said Peled.

Will Reagan act?

The fate of the region now rests on whether the U.S. administration decides to challenge the Israelis' evident belief that they can emerge as the "superpower of the Middle East."

In his talks with Saudi Foreign Minister Prince Saud and Syrian Foreign Minister Abdel-Halim Khaddam President Reagan reportedly did not budge on the issue of the PLO. Although key PLO officials had signaled their readiness to accept Israel, and although Sartawi announced this as the official position of the PLO, Reagan stuck to the Kissinger-era U.S. view that the United States will not talk to the PLO until the PLO renounces "terrorism," recognizes Israel unilaterally, and supports U.N. Resolution 242 of 1967. But almost no one believes that the PLO will do that without U.S. guarantees of support for a Palestinian state.

In fact, according to several sources, the U.S. stubbornness on this issue has strengthened the hand of PLO radicals like Abu Nidal and George Habash of the PFLP, who have reportedly joined forces to demand that PLO Chairman Yasser Arafat take a hard line. An Israeli diplomat in Washington said smugly, "We are not afraid of any U.S.-PLO dialogue, because the radicals, the Syrians, and the U.S.S.R. will sabotage it."

Nevertheless, there are hints that international forces are pushing for a Washington-Moscow dialogue on the Middle East. In an interview with *Time* magazine, King Hussein called for an "international conference" bringing together all parties to the conflict, including the PLO. That statement was endorsed by the USSR, and then, on July 21, Soviet President Brezhnev gave an interview to *Pravda* in which he called for a Geneva-style conference sponsored jointly by Moscow and Washington.