EIR International

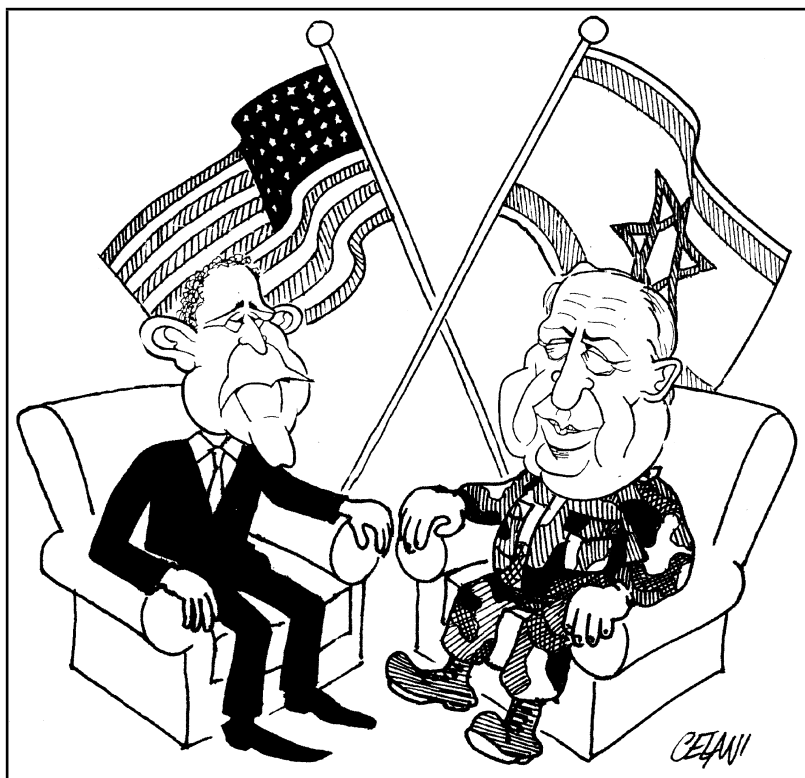# 'X Committee' Out To Blow Up Southwest Asia

by Jeffrey Steinberg

A number of well-informed sources in Israel, the U.S.A., and the Arab world have warned this news service of growing evidence that a "silent preparation for war" is now under way in Washington and Tel Aviv, which could blow up Southwest Asia in the immediate weeks ahead. Among the leading elements of the picture assembled from discussions with these sources, between June 7-9, are these:

• Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon, according to an Israeli source, is intent on instigating a crisis with Lebanon and Syria. On June 8, Israeli fighter jets and reconnaissance planes spent two hours conducting flights over Lebanese territory, as far north as Batroun, north of Beirut, and into the Bekaa Valley near the Syrian border, drawing anti-aircraft fire. The Israeli incursions came just days after Hezbollah candidates scored dramatic election victories in southern Lebanon.

In a May 29 interview with Lally Weymouth of the *Washington Post,* Saad Hariri, the son of the slain former Lebanese Prime Minister Rafik Hariri, and a leading candidate to be named Prime Minister after the ongoing Lebanese parliamentary elections, declared that he would seek to bring the Shi'ite party Hezbollah into any coalition government he formed. Hariri told Weymouth that he would oppose any immediate disarmament of the Hezbollah militias, because they are the key force preventing an Israeli seizure of the disputed Sheba Farms border area. He warned that if Hezbollah were to be disarmed, and the Sheba Farms conflict continued, it could lead to a full-scale war between Israel and Lebanon.

Bush Quacks Like a Lame Duck

The Israeli source emphasized that Prime Minister Sharon is increasingly concerned that U.S. President George Bush is becoming a lame duck, and is coming under pressure to pull American troops out of Iraq, as casualties mount and the situation on the ground be-

U.S. Vice President Dick Cheney (right) is reportedly out to manipulate Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon (left) to take such suicidal actions as launching a strike against Iranian nuclear facilities, possibly to coincide with a U.S. mini-nukes attack against North Korea.

comes more chaotic. Sharon is convinced that the conditions must be set for decisive military actions against both Syria and Iran, before an American military withdrawal from Iraq.

• The same Israeli source claimed that, in recent days, after the reported Syrian test-firing of new Scud missiles, some Sharon aides had pressed for a direct military attack on Damascus, but French and German pressure on Israel forestalled that for the time being.

• At the same time that Israeli provocations have escalated against Syria and Lebanon, some members of Sharon's war cabinet have been pressing for Israeli "breakaway ally" strikes against some nuclear targets inside Iran. The recent Iranian testing of a new medium-range missile using solid fuel was propagandistically seized upon by some Israeli hawks as a "red line," a development which accelerates the need to knock out, or seriously degrade, Iran's purported nuclear weapons program.

David Ivry, the former Israeli Ambassador in Washington, and the architect of the 1981 Israeli Air Force bombing of the Osirak nuclear reactor near Baghdad, told Reuters on May 30 that he favored Israeli attacks on Iranian nuclear sites. "You cannot eliminate an idea, a national will. But you can delay progress on a nuclear program with the appropriate military action. That is a valuable objective in itself," Ivry admitted.

The United States and Israel have different assessments of the Iranian nuclear program. Some Israeli military analysts claim Iran is just months away from obtaining all the technology needed to build a nuclear weapon, and Ivry told Reuters that Israel must act when "the threat has become insufferable. You set a deadline beyond which you believe you will lose the option of acting."

U.S. intelligence agencies reject the Israeli claim of an imminent Iranian nuclear arms breakout, making the assessment that Iran is several years away from obtaining the capacity to build and deliver a nuclear bomb. And factions in the Bush Administration are pressing for a diplomatic solution to the Iran issue. The uniformed military is dead set against any kind of American military action against Iran, arguing that the 150,000 American troops presently in Iraq would be, in effect, hostages to a potential Iranian or other Shi'ite retaliation. And the Bush Administration recently dropped its opposition to Iran's joining the World Trade Organization, and to building the pipeline through Pakistan to India. Just a month ago, in a visit to New Delhi, Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice had warned India not to go ahead with the oil pipeline deal with Tehran.

• A U.S. intelligence source warned that Israeli provocations against Syria could impel hardliners in Damascus to increase their assistance to the most violent factions of Hamas and Islamic Jihad. Any acceleration of attacks on Israeli targets from within the Palestinian territories would be seized upon by Sharon to stall the Gaza withdrawal, scheduled to begin in August. Or he could insist on a "Gaza only" policy, meaning no Israeli pullout from the West Bank, after a Gaza withdrawal. The source also cited the upcoming Palestinian parliamentary elections, where a strong showing by Hamas could give the Israeli right wing the excuse to walk away from any peace deal with the Palestinian Authority.

Not in Israel's Interest

Lyndon LaRouche commented June 7 on this compilation of warnings, that war with Syria and/or Iran is *not* in Israel's national interest. In fact, there are no intrinsic Israeli interests in any conflict with either state. Iran and Israeli have maintained long-standing, albeit sometimes strained ties, as two significant regional powers, and those ties have been kept up even under the Islamic Republic, as demonstrated by the Israeli role in providing secret arms shipments to Tehran, in what came to be known as the "Iran-Contra Affair." Therefore, LaRouche pointed a finger at U.S. and British circles associated with Vice President Dick Cheney and Prime Minister Tony Blair, as being the likely architects of a manipulation of Israel to induce the Sharon government to take such politically suicidal actions.

Cheney, LaRouche observed, is desperate, and becoming increasingly useless. Therefore, the people who use Cheney are also desperate, and are accelerating crises around the globe, from Southwest Asia to the Korean peninsula.

One senior American military historian pointed to the escalated rhetoric of Cheney and Rumsfeld recently against North Korea as one indicator that the Cheney crowd might be contemplating simultaneous provocations against North

Korea and Iran. The historian pointed to the parallels to 1956, when Britain, France, and Israel invaded and seized the Suez Canal, at the same moment that the Hungarian Revolution erupted against the Soviet occupation of Eastern Europe.

The Israeli source also noted that Cheney is well aware that if the United States launches a pre-emptive attack on North Korea, using mini-nuclear weapons, the international outcry will be so great that no near-term opportunity will exist to take on Iran. So, an American attack on North Korea, coinciding with an Israeli limited strike on Iran cannot, the two sources insisted, be ruled out. They both concurred with LaRouche's assessment of Cheney's desperation.

The 'X Committee' Factor

Both Cheney and Blair, LaRouche pointed out, are surrounded by the "X Committee," the Anglo-American neo-con apparatus that has been playing the Israeli "breakaway ally" game for decades. It is the X Committee that is out to blow up the Persian Gulf "oil patch" and the surrounding area.

The term "X Committee" refers to senior Reagan-era Pentagon officials suspected of deploying Israeli spy Jonathan Jay Pollard, but never caught. Among those still playing pivotal roles today in Washington are Richard Perle, Michael Ledeen, Paul Wolfowitz, Frank Gaffney, and Douglas Feith.

A number of these X Committee figures wrote the July 1996 report titled "A Clean Break" for incoming Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, spelling out a regional war scheme to knock out the governments of Iraq, Syria, Iran, Saudi Arabia, and Egypt. It is that plan, passed from the X Committee gang in Washington into Israel, that is still playing out today, and is behind the "Israeli" provocations against Syria and Iran.

One possible pathway to halting these "silent preparations for war" will be open soon in the Federal Courthouse in Alexandria, Va. On June 13, former Pentagon Iran analyst Lawrence Franklin will appear in court for the unsealing of grand jury indictments, which are expected also to name two "former" AIPAC (American Israel Political Affairs Committee) senior employees, Steven Rosen and Keith Weissman. The three, possibly along with several Israelis, are expected to be charged with espionage-related crimes, involving the passing of classified information to an Israeli embassy official, Naor Gilon, whom former U.S. intelligence officials have identified as the Mossad station chief in Washington.

Larry Franklin was the Iran desk officer at the Pentagon's Near East South Asia policy unit headed by William Luti, now a White House Special Assistant to the President. Luti came out of Cheney's VP office and was part of an X Committee cell at the Pentagon that reported directly to Cheney chief of staff I. Lewis "Scooter" Libby, according to eyewitness accounts. Other members of the cell, who apparently used Franklin as their patsy, included outgoing Assistant Secretary of Defense for Policy Doug Feith, one of the co-authors of "A Clean Break."

Israeli Computer Spying Linked to 'X Committee'

by Edward Spannaus

A computer espionage scandal with ties into the United States and Britain is wracking Israel, with top executives from a number of major Israeli companies, and employees from three private detective agencies, having been placed under arrest. The probe centers on the use of "Trojan Horse" computer software to spy on other companies and to steal secret computer data from them.

According to a well-informed Israeli with ties to the intelligence community, the Trojan Horse operation was also used to penetrate the British MI-6 intelligence service, and U.S. intelligence agencies, and is linked to the "Amdocs" operation which *EIR* had exposed shortly after the 9/11 attacks, in our investigation of the Israeli "art students" spy network operating in the United States.

On May 31, the Israeli press reported that top officials of Israeli telecommunications giants Amdocs and Bezeq International were marched into police stations in Tel Aviv for questioning. An Amdocs official acknowledged using one of the private investigators implicated in the Trojan Horse case, but claimed that it was all for legitimate purposes.

The spy scandal began last November, after police discovered that Michael Haephrati, a London-based Israeli who developed his computer skills during three years with the Israeli military, had developed a computer program which could penetrate target computers without being detected by anti-virus systems, and then transmit data from those computers to others. Some sources believe that Haephrati is using an updated version of PROMIS, a "trap door" spying program that was stolen from a U.S. software company, Inslaw, by the Justice Department during the Reagan Administration.

The scope of the current investigation is continually expanding. "Right now, it is a very sophisticated investigation," Tel Aviv police superintendent Peal Liat was quoted by the London-based *Computer Weekly* as saying. "We have something like 150 different computers that were taken by investigators. Every computer they open, they discover more. Every day it gets us more companies that ordered the information, and more companies that were infected."

"They were able to see everything, from e-mails to documents to information," Liat said. "And they were able to copy it and take it out. We think the Trojan had the ability to log