The Israeli Role in the Middle East Regional CIA Station

This is a continuation of the study printed in previous issues of *Democratic Palestine* on the role played by 'Israel' in the region, based on inciting war and developing nuclear weaponry. In this issue, we deal with Zionism's alliances and covert activities. These two fields are almost synonymous for the Zionist state, since its own aggressiveness has precluded normal relations with surrounding countries. Rather, in its efforts to secure and expand its artificial existence, 'Israel' has turned itself into the CIA's extended arm.

To secure the occupation of Palestine and defeat the Arab national movement, the first Israeli prime minister, Ben-Gurion, launched the periphery orientation to forge relations with non-Arab states on the perimeters of the Arab world, especially Iran, Turkey and Ethiopia, all under autocratic rule at the time. Parallel to this were Zionist efforts to manipulate religious or ethnic minorities in the Arab countries - Christians in Lebanon, Kurds in Iraq, etc. This second aspect was an extension of the original Zionist policy of singling out Arab Jews for immigration to 'Israel' or engagement in subversion in their homelands. This policy was carried out by covert means from the start, as when the Mossad planted bombs in Baghdad to scare Iraqi Jews into immigrating. Another example was when Zionist agents (Egyptian Jews) planted bombs in Egypt in the 1950s. Though this led to a scandal, forcing Lavon, the defense minister, to resign, 'Israel' this year honored the spies who carried out the sabotage. Speaking to surviving members of the team and their families, Defense Minister Rabin said, «The great (intelligence) effort during the wars and between the wars, including your efforts, brought us in the end to peace with Egypt,» showing that covert sabotage activities are indeed a cornerstone of the Zionist state's foreign policy (*Monday Morning*, October 5-11, 1987).

By accentuating religious and ethnic differences, the Zionists aimed to acquire justification for their own sectarian state, while countering the secular, progressive tendency in the Arab liberation·movement, ideologically and in the battlefield. This article focuses on the Zionists' two major success stories in forging regional alliances. Typically, these involved relations with ultrareactionary forces: the Shah of Iran and the Lebanese fascists. The first paved the way for the current Iran/contragate scandal, while the second culminated in the 1982 Israeli invasion and continuing occupation in Lebanon.

In connection with Irangate, an Israeli foreign ministry official complained that his country had become «a sort of second CIA available for dirty missions when the White House prefers not to go through the regular channels» (*International Herald Tribune*, June 1, 1987). Yet this is a role which the Zionist state has deliberately created for itself, not least via its policy towards Iran and Lebanon. Its regional role in turn laid the basis for its international role as arms supplier and military trainer for reactionary forces and regimes in Asia, Africa and Latin America.

Israeli radio reporter Haim Hecht wrote the following in *Monitin*, April 1983, about the Israeli plans for installing Phalangist Bashir Gemayel as president of Lebanon: «Mossad genuinely believed... that the political system used by the Shah of Iran, Heile Selassi of Ethiopia and General Delimi of

Morocco could work and enable Israel to control Lebanon... By the summer of 1981, Mossad's view had become that of the government and this had to end with the war in Lebanon» (quoted in *Al Fajr*, July 15, 1983).

Indeed the link between 'Israel' the occupier, the regional CIA and the international arms merchant is even reflected on the level of personnel. In the mid-70s, Brigadier General Binjamin Ben-Eliezer was military commander of the occupied West Bank, as well as the top liaison officer to the Phalangists. He had spent the years 1970-73 in Singapore, training its army. Uri Lubrani, one time Israeli representative in Uganda, Ethiopia and longest in the Shah's Iran, where he forged the Mossad-Savak connection, was appointed coordinator of affairs in South Lebanon after the 1982 Israeli occupation. David Kimche, former Mossad agent, built his foreign ministry career on relations with Black Africa, where the military aspects predominate in Israeli aid. He was also one of the architects of the Mossad's Lebanon policy and negotiated the ill-fated May 17, 1983 Israeli-Lebanese treaty. Kimche has gained recent notoriety as a key figure in the Israeli part of the Iran/contragate affair and was recalled to 'Israel' to avoid interrogation in the US.

ZIONIST—PHALANGIST RELATIONS

Israeli Minister of Science Yuval Neeman frankly expounded the Zionist attitude towards Lebanon on Israeli radio, February 22, 1985, saying, «Lebanon is not worth recognizing as a state.» Like his open advocation of annexing the West Bank, Neeman emphasized that Lebanese territory «up to the Litani is essential for Israel's security» and that «all elements who don't like us» should be pushed out «like in 1967.» Defense Minister Rabin expressed equal contempt for the Lebanese when explaining the Israeli withdrawal from Tyre: «We didn't want too many of the Lebanese in the security zone» (Israeli radio, April 29, 1985). On this background, the Israeli leadership has espoused the «protection of the Christians» while in reality encouraging a fascist minority whose bloody drive for hegemony has been catastrophic for Lebanese as a whole, Christians and Moslems alike.

Zionist officials gained contact with right-wing Lebanese Maronites as far back as 1920. «In 1948, a Phalange Party contactman proposed to Zionist leaders that Israel help the party organize an insurrection to overthrow the pro-war regime in Lebanon» (Benny Morris, *Jerusalem Post*, July 1, 1983, based on a declassified Israeli foreign ministry file for 1948-51. By pro-war regime, Morris refers to the Lebanese government's opposition to the creation of the Zionist state).