

The Fahd plan and its international opponents

by Nancy Coker

The government of Israeli Prime Minister Menachem Begin and Defense Minister Ariel Sharon is preparing "limited war" in Lebanon in order to destroy the peace plan of Saudi Crown Prince Fahd, according to informed intelligence sources close to General Sharon. The sources are considered to be reliable. Three weeks before Anwar Sadat's Oct. 6 assassination, they had predicted that Sharon wanted to "put a bullet in Sadat's brain."

The timing of the Israeli attack on Lebanon centers on the Nov. 25 Arab summit in Morocco, where the Fahd plan is to be discussed and possibly approved by the entire Arab League. Israel's Camp David partner Egypt, which is temporarily excluded from the League, has endorsed the plan, and President Reagan has given signals that the United States might also back Fahd's perspective.

Washington has thus become the pressure point for the realization of the Fahd plan. An Israeli parliamentary delegation arrived in Washington last month on the first stop of a national tour to lobby on behalf of Israeli war aims. The point man in the Reagan administration for this operation is Secretary of State Alexander Haig, the convert opponent of the AWACS sale to Saudi Arabia who defended last spring's Israeli bombing of Iraq's nuclear research facilities. Haig is said to support an Israeli strike into Lebanon now.

Working with Haig is Michael Ledeen, one of his Jesuit-controlled advisers, who is close to both Israeli and British secret services. At a Washington breakfast Nov. 10, Ledeen criticized the Saudi plan and made the

assertion that President Reagan "sees nothing in it."

Across town at a White House press conference, however, Reagan stated that the Fahd plan is a hopeful sign because it implies an Arab willingness to recognize the existence of Israel.

Sharon's plans

Backed by London and the Socialist government France, Begin and Sharon are planning military action to disrupt and radicalize the Arab world. Because Fahd's plan does imply recognition of Israel by the Arabs, extremist factions in Syria and the Palestine Liberation Organization—and Libya—oppose it. By attacking Lebanon and the PLO there, Israel hopes to strengthen these radical Arab forces.

On Nov. 9, six Israeli jets crossed into Saudi airspace and flew over Tabuk air force base in Saudi Arabia. A number of Saudi jets scrambled to meet Israel's planes, according to the Saudi press agency, and drove the six planes back toward Israel.

Sharon, after the incident, proclaimed that "Israel will treat the Saudis exactly as we treat every confrontation state." Then, in a press conference, Sharon threatened war against Lebanon and Syria. Charging that the PLO had illegally concentrated forces in south Lebanon and that the Syrian missiles in Lebanon had not been removed by "peaceful means," Sharon said that Israel "will have to act."

"Israel will not be able to wait for an indefinite period," said Sharon. "I wouldn't like to emphasize any

specific red line but, believe me, we have that red line. The voices that we hear from Washington and Europe [on the Fahd plan] do not encourage us. They give us the sign that we have to be much more careful."

Prime Minister Begin echoed Sharon. "We have made all the concessions we can possibly make and still protect our national interests."

A high-level source in the World Jewish Congress has explained what that means: "Israel is fed up with the Reagan administration and its pro-AWACS, pro-Fahd plan. . . . The only friend we have in the administration is Haig. That is why we are going to strike now."

"We'll have a little war," the source continued. "We'll invade Lebanon, maybe going as far north as Beirut, killing a lot of Palestinians in the process. We'll also challenge the Syrians, maybe hitting them directly through the Golan Heights or going after their missiles. We'll threaten Iraq and Saudi Arabia. The West Bank will start emptying out, as those Palestinian bastards start streaming across the bridges into Jordan. And, of course, war will ensure that we'll never have to give back Sinai."

"This won't necessarily happen before the Nov. 25 Arab summit. It may occur after, with the summit serving as a nice justification for the hit. There are some important side operations that will also have to be carried out. King Hussein of Jordan will have to be assassinated. And so will Arafat. And that, in short, will be the end of the Fahd plan."

Complicit in the operation, the source revealed, is King Hussein's brother Prince Hassan.

Mootings of the formation of a government of national unity, an option favored by Begin and former Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin of the Labour Party, underline the danger. Although deemed unlikely to succeed by most analysts, negotiations are reportedly under way. The last time a national unity government was formed was in 1967, one week before the Six Days War. Said the source at the World Jewish Congress: "A national unity government in Israel means war—nothing else."

The 'uncontrollable nuisance factor'

"I do not recall ever seeing the Middle East so hot, so close to exploding, than it is at this moment," noted one Washington source close to the Israeli government.

A State Department official seconded the assessment. "I am hard put to find a time in the recent past when the Israelis have been so excitable and so sensitive about everything. Israel has reached a state of paranoia we haven't seen in years. I can't rule out the possibility that they might do anything."

Commented one Israeli strategist: "We are uncontrollable—that is our secret weapon."

Apologists for Israel's provocative sabre-rattling

insist that Israel's agitation is "understandable" and that Begin must not be condemned but accommodated. Syndicated columnist Joseph Kraft recently called for "stroking" the Israelis, not "armtwisting" them, because when "it comes to determination, [they] command an absolute weapon"—the bomb!

In the same vein, the lead editorial of the Nov. 12 *New York Times* states that Israel's war "fever" should not be derided but treated with "Camp David medicine," not the Fahd plan.

President Reagan, however, is in no mood to tolerate military adventurism by Israel as Secretary of Defense Caspar Weinberger indicated at a meeting of the Anti-Defamation League in New York Nov. 16. Israel must not view American policy from the standpoint of that policy's being a threat to Israel, Weinberger warned. "Israel must understand this so as not to do anything drastic."

One Washington-based intelligence analyst filled in Weinberger's warning. "If Israel blows up Lebanon to disrupt the Saudi peace plan, I think they will find that the White House will take the strongest action, including a complete halt of U.S. arms shipments to Israel."

The eight points of the Fahd peace plan

Following is the text of the Middle East peace plan proposed by Crown Prince Fahd of Saudi Arabia.

1. Israeli evacuation of all Arab territories seized during the 1967 Middle East war, including the Arab sector of Jerusalem.
2. Dismantling the settlements set up by Israel on the occupied lands after the 1967 war.
3. Guaranteeing freedom of religious practices for all religions in the Jerusalem holy shrines.
4. Asserting the rights of the Palestinian people and compensating those Palestinians who do not wish to return to their homeland.
5. Commencing a transitional period in the West Bank of Jordan and the Gaza Strip under United Nations supervision for a duration not exceeding a few months.
6. Setting up a Palestinian state with East Jerusalem as its capital.
7. Affirming the right of all countries of the region to live in peace.
8. Guaranteeing the implementation of these principles by the United Nations or some of its member states.

The question remains: has Israel gotten the message? Or is Begin insane enough to risk a showdown with Reagan? A lot of people in Washington think the latter."

Arab diplomacy

The Fahd plan represents the most serious challenge yet to Israeli intransigence. In an interview with the *New York Times* Nov. 14, Saudi Arabia's acting ambassador to the United Nations Gaafar Allagany stated unequivocally that the Fahd plan recognizes Israel. Although the Saudi government later stated that Allagany's remarks had not been officially authorized, the directness of his comments cut through the game-playing of Israel and the Haig faction in Washington, who insist that the Fahd plan is a plan for the dismemberment of Israel.

The heads of state of the six-nation Gulf Cooperation Council, led by Prince Fahd, met in Saudi Arabia Nov. 12 and agreed to propose the Fahd plan at the Nov. 25 Arab summit. Although the Saudis anticipate that the radical states of Libya, Algeria, South Yemen, and possibly Syria will reject the plan, they consider endorsement by the other 16 Arab nations as sufficient backing to advance the peace process. The next step will be to present the plan to the United Nations General Assembly and Security Council.

The Arab summit coincides with the end of the Nov. 22-25 visit to West Germany by Soviet President Leonid Brezhnev, where the Fahd plan will be on the agenda of discussions with West German Chancellor Helmut Schmidt. During his October visit to Bonn, Prince Fahd reportedly asked Schmidt to mediate with the Soviet Union on behalf of the Saudi peace effort.

Israel's radical allies in the Arab world are conducting their own wrecking operation against the Fahd plan, under the tutelage of British and Soviet intelligence and related Orthodox and Anglican church networks.

According to the French newspaper *France-Soir*, Libya is pouring thousands of tons of arms into southern Lebanon to beef up extremist Palestinian forces associated with Colonel Qaddafi. In addition, Libya has called a meeting of the radical Arab Steadfastness Front to consider strategy on how best to torpedo the Fahd plan.

The PLO is under great pressure to succumb to Libya's anti-Fahd line. Combined with Israel's threats to invade Lebanon, Libya's pressure on the PLO is aimed at radicalizing that organization against Arafat, who has indicated his support for the Fahd plan.

Rounding out the opposition to the Fahd plan is the leadership of the American Jewish community, a leading spokesman of which is Max Fisher of Detroit, chairman of the Jewish Republican Caucus and a

leading figure in the anti-AWACS fight. On Nov. 19, Fisher, a kingpin in international drug-trafficking networks, and his 35-member Caucus met with Reagan and other White House officials to extend an ultimatum: either back off from the Fahd plan or Israel will be given the go-ahead to invade Lebanon.

In a recent interview, Fisher crony Rita Hauser, also of the Jewish Republican Caucus, stated: "The Fahd plan is the wrong policy for Reagan to be following. We will tell the President we are opposed to the Saudi plan and if he moves that way it puts in jeopardy Camp David. If Israel gets frightened, they may preempt into Lebanon in self-protection. This has to be factored in by the President."

Others, such as Philip Klutznik of the World Jewish Congress, are relaying a softer line on the Fahd plan as part of an effort to "squeeze the Saudis" and transform the Fahd plan into another Camp David non-solution.

Haig's role

The White House is definitely feeling the heat. Much to the surprise of the Saudi embassy, the State Department announced Nov. 18 that the visit of Prince Fahd to Washington, scheduled tentatively for Dec. 1, has been indefinitely postponed to at least the beginning of 1982. The Fahd visit on Dec. 1 was to have been crucial as a followup to Reagan's talks with Fahd at Cancún, Mexico, last month.

Linking the postponement of the Fahd visit to the increased pressure from the Begin lobby on Reagan, a Saudi source stated, "We expected this. It seems that the Zionists are going to start to play rough."

The inside man in the blackmail operation against Reagan is Haig, who is coordinating policy closely with London. The London gameplan, as seen by Lord Carrington, is to force the United States into a narrow alliance with Israel. Through such manipulation, Carrington believes that he can win Arab support for some sort of Anglo-French peace plan with the aim of establishing a European-Arab axis independent of Washington and Moscow. London, French President Mitterrand, and a faction of the Soviet leadership around ideologues Boris Ponomarev and Mikhail Suslov are agreed on this strategy for undermining American influence in the Middle East.

Carrington, who controls Haig, is using the self-infatuated General to wreck the possibility of U.S.-Saudi cooperation. That accomplished, the Fahd faction in Saudi Arabia will be isolated and eventually, Carrington hopes, compelled to join the Anglo-French axis. In the short term, however, the British and their friends in Moscow are quietly throwing their weight behind Israeli adventurism to disrupt the Reagan administration and wreck the Fahd plan. Whether or not they succeed depends on Reagan's will, and skill, in fighting back.