

Shultz sabotage of Reagan peace plan could spark Israeli-Syrian war

by Nancy Coker

If war in the Middle East breaks out during U.S. Secretary of State George Shultz's current stay in the region, the war, like its predecessors, will not insiders know, Shultz is working with Henry Kissinger and with Israeli Defense Minister Moshe Arens to block President Reagan's peace initiatives in the Middle East. The near-term result could be a Syria-Israel war, preparations for which are already well under way.

All along the Bekaa valley in Lebanon, large Syrian and Israeli troops movements have been reported, as both sides build up their forces and fortify their positions. On April 27, for the first time, Syrian and Israeli troops exchanged fire.

"If the situation isn't cooled off fast, there's going to be a war," commented one Israeli intelligence source. "The dynamics are the same as those just before the 1967 war."

An Israel-Syria war—an option worked out last year in a secret meeting in the United States between former Israeli Defense Minister Ariel Sharon and Rifaat Assad, brother of Syrian President Hafez Assad—would probably lead to the partition of Lebanon and the redrawing of the map of the Middle East, which are both long-standing goals of Henry Kissinger.

Shultz blackmails Reagan

In his weekly radio address to the nation April 23, Reagan pledged not to be "intimidated" by the bombing of the U.S. embassy in Beirut. "The best way for us to show our love and respect for our fellow countrymen who died in Beirut this week is to carry on with their task, to press harder than ever with our peacemaking efforts, and that's exactly what we're doing."

According to administration sources, Reagan is exasperated by Israel's continued refusal to pull out of Lebanon, and has considered cutting off military aid to Israel to force its compliance at the negotiating table. Shultz has been vigorously countering the President, using the specious argument that harsh action against the Begin government will only alienate it further from Washington and induce it to adopt an even more extremist policy.

Shultz's maneuvering on behalf of Arens and Arens's

extremist clique in Israel includes blackmailing Reagan into going along with Israel's Lavie project (see *EIR*, May 3). According to reports from Washington, Shultz went to President Reagan behind Defense Secretary Caspar Weinberger's back and told the President that if the United States refused to sell Israel high-technology component parts to help the Israelis develop a new-generation fighter jet called the Lavie, then there was little likelihood that the United States would be able to convince Israel to get out of Lebanon. However, if the President okayed the Lavie parts, then Arens would "probably" cooperate with Washington and push for an Israeli troop withdrawal as a "payback" to the President.

Shultz was lying. Arens has no intention of leaving Lebanon, and will perform cosmetic little withdrawals only on the condition that Maj. Saad Haddad, Israel's puppet Lebanese administrator in southern Lebanon, be allowed to run the show there. And as for Shultz, he has absolutely no intention of pushing Arens to go along with Reagan's peace initiative. Shultz opposes the Reagan plan, as do his Israeli collaborators—Moshe Arens, Minister of Science and Technology Yuval Neeman, and former Defense Minister Ariel Sharon—all of whom have denounced Reagan's peace efforts.

Swayed by Shultz's promises of a deal with the Israelis, Reagan disregarded the warnings of Weinberger and leading representatives of the U.S. defense industry, and agreed to allow U.S. firms to sell Israel parts for the Lavie.

As *EIR* has documented, the Lavie is the centerpiece of a long standing project backed by British intelligence, the Kissinger networks in the United States, and the Soviet Union, to transform Israel into an independent world-class superpower as part of a "New Yalta" redivision of the Middle East that would severely delimit U.S. capabilities in the region.

The Shultz shuttle

Prior to leaving Washington, Shultz asserted that 95 percent of his mission had already been accomplished, and he needed to push only for the last 5 percent. At the same time, the Israelis sent out signals that they would not let Shultz—described as "the best friend that Israel has in the Reagan administration"—go back to Washington empty-handed.

But Lebanese President Amin Gemayel has publicly rejected any bilateral peace treaty with Israel and has categorically asserted that he would not tolerate any role in southern Lebanon for Major Haddad, as Israel has been insisting.

At the same time, Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak told reporters that the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) is the sole representative of the Palestinian people. Mubarak's words fly in the face of Shultz's recent assertion that the PLO has "forfeited" its mandate to speak for the Palestinians.

The first stop on Shultz's shuttle was Egypt, where he met for four hours instead of the scheduled one hour with President Mubarak. "The meeting with Mubarak was tense," said one Israeli intelligence source. "There is a good chance that the United States may lose Egypt."

Shultz's then traveled on to Jerusalem and Beirut. In Israel, Shultz's talks centered not around Lebanon or the Reagan plan, but around reviving the strategic memorandum of understanding between Israel and the United States on joint security arrangements for Lebanon. Shultz also promised to lift U.S. congressional opposition to increased aid to Israel, and pledged that the Palestine Liberation Organization will never be allowed to come to the negotiating table.

Lebanon's chief negotiator in the troop withdrawal talks has accused Israel of deliberately stalling the negotiations "in order to hold the United States hostage" in the Middle East. Shultz's collusion with Arens and his clique makes the secretary of state a witting perpetrator of this hostage scenario.

Reagan's problems in the Middle East are compounded by the April 18 bombing of the U.S. embassy in Beirut, which wiped out the CIA's most crucial Middle East personnel and substantially disrupted all U.S. operations in the area. Intelligence sources report that the CIA's loss was not accidental but was part of an operation run by a faction in the Israeli intelligence service Mossad to undermine U.S. capabilities in the region on the eve of a new Middle East war and to increase the CIA's dependence on the Mossad at this critical time.

Meanwhile, Israel and Syria are digging in for war. Israel, which recently held military exercises in the Golan Heights, has built several bases along the western edge of the Bekaa valley in Lebanon. At one location, a base has been constructed to handle tank transporters, and the main road toward Syrian positions has been widened for tank movements. In addition, a major logistics base with a sophisticated radio-communications system has been built outside Marjayoun, Israel's headquarters in southern Lebanon and the home base for Major Haddad. A half-mile-long air strip has been constructed by Israel near Damur, south of Beirut.

At the same time, there have been significant Syrian troop movements in the Bekaa Valley. The Soviet Union has reportedly set up an integrated air defense system for the whole of Syria. Large numbers of Soviet advisers are said to be manning most of the new air defense sites, raising the possibility of direct Soviet involvement should war between Israel and Syria break out.

Interview: Saudi Foreign Minister

'Third World needs funds, not conditionalities'

At a press conference attended by EIR correspondents Hartmut and Ortrun Cramer during the March Non-Aligned summit meeting in New Delhi, Saudi Foreign Minister Saud al-Faisal spoke on North-South relations. Below is an excerpted transcript of that press conference.

Philadelphia Inquirer: One of the topics being discussed here is the question of a new bank for South-South cooperation. What is your position on this? What especially is the contribution of Saudi Arabia?

Al-Faisal: Well, there are two sides in the economics of global negotiations with other than member countries. So the conclusions of any one side has to reflect the willingness of the other countries. But as far as the basic directions of global negotiations are concerned, the Non-Aligned countries are pursuing them from the basis of cooperation rather than confrontation.

They have contributed positively during the United Nations discussions, and we are hopeful that the Paris conference of the industrialized countries will make a political decision to go through with the global negotiations. Again, we hope that this conference, given the statement that is coming out on the global negotiations, will serve as an entrance to the industrialized countries to begin global negotiations which will deal with the economic problems.

On the status of the international economy, our attitude is likely to establish a relationship on the international scale that would resolve many of the outstanding issues. Not just for the benefit for the industrialized countries, but for the benefit of all, since a booming economy is good for everybody. In fact, if the world can develop as a whole, to the extent that it provides expanding markets, this can also be to the benefit of the industrialized countries. Some basic decision has to come, to transfer wealth from these countries, so that the base of the international economy is expanding, which therefore benefits all the industrialized countries. The