

U.S.-Israel ties undergoing shift?

by Joseph Brewda

The U.S. vote to rebuke Israel at the U.N. Security Council meeting for its illegal expulsion of Palestinians from Israeli-occupied territories, on Jan. 5, is just one leading signal of a potentially promising shift under way in U.S.-Israeli relations. The U.S. vote against Israel, its first ever, follows by one week a highly unusual abstention from a similar resolution. At stake is whether the Israeli elites will finally rid their nation of such bankrupt political personalities as Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir, Foreign Minister Shimon Peres, and Defense Minister Yitzhak Rabin, and put together new political combinations to rule the nation based on an orientation toward economic development of the entire region, and peace.

Israel's bloody efforts to crush Palestinian riots in the Israeli-occupied Gaza and West Bank since they began last month, have revealed not only the barbarism, but the stupidity of the current Israeli political leadership. So far, the majority of Israel's leadership and factions has grouped around a savage policy of shooting into crowds, and mass expulsion of Palestinian teen-agers, as their only response to disturbances triggered by two decades of impoverishment and suppression.

Moreover, the unprecedented protest strike by Israel's 650,000 Arab citizens, which brought business to a halt in many regions of the country, exposes a growing polarization in Israel which could only lead to shattering of the Israeli state, despite the fond self-delusion of many Israeli strategic planners. The degree to which these Israeli planners are capable of combining short-term cleverness with strategic insanity is seen by the increasingly obvious disaster resulting from Israel's support of Ruhollah Khomeini and Shi'ite fundamentalism.

Since the beginning of the disturbances in December, Israeli police and military have killed an estimated 25 Palestinian youths and wounded several hundred more by firing live ammunition into crowds. Over 2,000 Palestinians have been arrested, most of them under 17 years old. First-offender rock-throwers are routinely being sentenced to eight months, and those arrested for the second time are being sentenced to as long as 12 years. Palestinian adolescents are being deported after mass, "quickie" trials, without defense

lawyers. Meanwhile, Israeli security patrols have used captured Palestinian youths, bound to their vehicles, as "human shields"—in glaring imitation of Nazi Germany's occupation methods.

In response to criticism, Defense Minister Yitzhak Rabin has cynically justified Israeli brutality as "in accordance with our laws," a view publicly expressed by most of Israel's present leaders.

Such flouting of civilized world opinion has even led to growing outrage in the normally docile American Jewish community. Typifying the ongoing break with the notion of "Israel right or wrong," one Zionist leader recently expressed it, "What good is this policy if in the process, Israel loses its soul?"

In Israel itself, the break with recent policies is being signaled in a variety of ways, largely low-key, including the abrupt resurrection of Israel's "Peace Now" movement, and the beginning of active-duty military officers' protests against Israeli occupation policy. These are the first such demonstrations to take place since former Defense Minister Ariel Sharon ordered the bloody and pointless invasion of Lebanon in 1982.

Pollard time-bomb

Meanwhile, Israeli and U.S. Zionist leaders have not lost sight of the warning on the state of U.S.-Israeli relations contained in a two-part UPI wire story in December, dealing with the real background to the Jonathan Jay Pollard espionage affair. The stories, written by Richard Sale, corroborate the analysis first published in *EIR* that while Pollard was employed by the Israeli secret services, the ultimate beneficiary of the information he stole was Moscow. The KGB has penetrated Ariel Sharon's Likud circles, the UPI wire states, and has gained access to the high command through negotiations with Israel over Soviet Jewish emigration.

The recent quiet ceremony by senior Israeli "old boys" commemorating deceased former CIA counterintelligence chief James J. Angleton, is viewed in some quarters as a signal that some members of the Israeli intelligence community would like to see Israel refrain from inflaming the region, and recognize that this policy has benefited only Moscow.

Regional observers also note the potential significance of Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak's upcoming trip to the Persian Gulf, Western Europe, and the United States (see page 50). Egypt is expected to play an increasing role in the region, as a result of last fall's Arab Summit, and U.S. negotiations with Persian Gulf states on their security needs. It is expected that the Palestine Liberation Organization's recently announced intention to create a government-in-exile, will lead to the formation of such an entity, based in Cairo. Whether a new regional combination for peace will come into being, first requiring a post-riot reorganization of Israel, remains to be seen.