

Israeli violence will help Sharon gang to power

by Joseph Brewda

Recently announced repressive measures by the Israeli government against the volatile Palestinian population of the occupied territories, are expected to trigger a dramatic escalation of rioting and killings in April. The effect of this new phase of violence, combined with the guaranteed failure of U.S. Secretary of State George Shultz's ridiculous peace plan for the Middle East, may be to create the conditions for bringing to power the most lunatic faction of the Israeli leadership, associated with Gen. Ariel Sharon. Already, spokesmen for a faction of the U.S. Eastern Establishment are beginning to call for imposing Sharon on Israel.

Speaking before the Israeli Knesset's legislative committee March 22, Israeli Defense Minister Yitzhak Rabin announced a new series of repressive, intentionally provocative measures allegedly designed to suppress the Palestinian riots which began last December. These new measures include the complete elimination of judicial review of detentions ordered by military commanders in the occupied West Bank and Gaza; and the official allowance of Israeli "settlers" in the occupied territories to act as vigilantes, and shoot Palestinian "rioters" on their own initiative.

In his address, Rabin also admitted that the Israeli government has secretly "detained" 3,000 Arabs since the riots began, 700 of whom were seized at the end of March. A new prison camp has been constructed behind barbed wire near the West Bank city of Nablus to accommodate these new prisoners. There are unconfirmed rumors that another camp has been constructed somewhere in the Negev desert. Where all the Palestinians have been detained is a state secret.

Under the Rabin procedures, local Israeli army commanders can order the detention of Palestinians for six months

without specific charges or evidence. Previously, these detentions could only be authorized by the two senior generals in the Israeli Military in charge of the West Bank and Gaza respectively, and were subject to prompt civilian judicial review. The six-month term of detention can be renewed by Israeli commanders indefinitely, without even nominal legal oversight. The state, in true Nazi-like *Nacht und Nebel* fashion, is not even required to specify to the families of victims of this seizure, where, or even if, they have been detained.

Rabin's announcement came one week after the Israeli government cut all telephone lines between the occupied territories and the outside world, allegedly to reduce "outside agitation." The occupied territories have been sealed off from foreign press correspondents for a month.

Violation of Camp David accord

An important feature of the 1979 Camp David accord between Israel and Egypt was Israel's solemn promise to formally charge and arrest individuals within 96 hours of their apprehension, or release them from custody. Thus, Rabin's decision to announce that Israel has suspended civil legal procedures is an overt violation of the Camp David agreement. Commenting on this unilateral action, Rabin claimed, "It wasn't easy to decide to cancel it because it was, after all, a commitment of a prime minister in the wake of the peace agreement with Egypt, but there was no choice."

Simultaneous with proclaiming the new policy, Rabin made the astonishing admission that his Defense Ministry has authorized the Jewish settlers in the West Bank, the most irrational component of the Israeli population, to shoot Palestinians found throwing molotov cocktails, thereby taking

the law into their own hands. The only nominal restriction on these civilian settlers is that they do not shoot into crowds. The riots were triggered on Dec. 8, 1987 by one such settler, who "accidentally" ran over four Palestinians with his truck in a camp in Gaza.

Since the riots began, these settlers have become increasingly deranged, as indicated by the formation of the "Committee for the Mass Expulsion of the Arabs," on Feb. 27, by retired Gen. Rehavam Ze'evi. Ze'evi, who formerly directed anti-terrorist actions and assassinations for the Israeli Prime Minister's Office of the Warfare against Terrorism, labels such a necessarily genocidal mass expulsion as the most "humane solution" to the Palestinian problem. The words of a U.S.-based spokesman for the Israeli Likud party indicate the suicidal psychosis that has gripped this Israeli layer. Speaking on the riots March 14, the spokesman ranted, "Israel must act toward the Arabs the same way Germany acted toward Poland in World War II."

Shultz 'peace plan' shot down

The increasingly dangerous situation in Israel and the Middle East has also been heightened by the circumstances of the failure of U.S. Secretary of Shultz's so-called Peace Plan. The failure of the plan has strengthened the worst elements of the Israeli political elite, associated with Likud Bloc leader and Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir.

Ever since Shultz's plan was triumphantly announced in February, observers have noted that the proposal was a guaranteed failure. Nominally designed to deal with the problem of the occupied territories, Shultz refrained from even mentioning the question of economic development. Without a "Marshall Plan" for economic development of the Middle East as a whole, any effort to bring peace in the region must fail. Such a plan was proposed by former Israeli Labor Party Prime Minister Shimon Peres, and has been given its most detailed form in the writings of American presidential candidate and economist Lyndon LaRouche.

In fact, the collapse of living standards of the Israeli Palestinian population has been a major factor triggering the riots. Since the riots began, Israeli authorities have imposed economic measures against the West Bank, including the cutting off of gas supplies, which only makes matters worse.

The Shultz plan is otherwise noteworthy for its strange proposal to have Jordan and Israel decide the fate of Gaza, even though the territory was seized from Egypt. This outrageous provocation against Egypt, the most long-suffering U.S. Arab ally in the region, merely accelerates the process of driving Egypt toward a radical takeover by "Islamic revolutionaries" controlled by Soviet intelligence services.

While the secretary of state may not have intended to strengthen Israel's hardliners, Shamir's trip to Washington beginning March 14 to discuss the plan, has led to an increase of his popularity among his supporters back home. During the trip, Shamir ridiculed the proposal, stating, "We have not

found the appropriate parties to negotiate with." Meanwhile, back in Israel, Shamir's supporters held demonstrations against the plan, as a "new Munich." Indicating the shifting mood, the Israeli daily *Yediot Ahronot* featured an editorial March 9 already speaking of sometime Shamir ally, Ariel Sharon, as the next prime minister of Israel.

Meanwhile, the Brookings Institution, one of the premier think tanks of the liberal wing of the U.S. Eastern Establishment, released a study March 23 entitled "Toward Arab-Israeli Peace." The author of the report, former Carter administration National Security Council official William Quandt, is an unabashed supporter of Ariel Sharon's prime ministerial ambitions. "There's been a change of perception in Washington," Quandt reported while releasing the study. "People here are disillusioned with Labor because they haven't used their opportunities. The key thing is that there be a stronger Israeli government. Maybe it'll be the Sharon wing. Sharon is not an ideologue."

While factions of the U.S. elite tout Shamir and Sharon and their policies, it has not escaped the attention of Israel's military elite that the methods already implemented by Shamir have already had disastrous military consequences.

Since the riots began, the Israeli Defense Forces have not been able to maintain necessary officer training or even maneuvers. Instead, Israeli troops have been deployed as mere policemen, engaged in the highly demoralizing task of shooting unarmed teenagers and beating up old women with two-by-fours.

Now, the indications are that the Druze population of the occupied Golan Heights might soon follow the lead of the Palestinians. Unlike the West Bank, the Golan Heights, formerly part of Syria, is a strategic area. The Druze sect, a Muslim minority centered in Lebanon, encourages its members to enter the Israeli military and officer corp. If the Golan Heights erupts, the area will become strategically insecure, while the Druze Israeli military units will become unreliable.

According to some reports, the Soviet-controlled Abu Jihad faction of the PLO is rapidly gaining ground against moderate factions. Until recently, the PLO wing led by Yasser Arafat has blocked its Israeli Palestinian supporters from using firearms as too provocative. Now, the Abu Jihad group is pushing to replace stone-throwing with armed guerrilla warfare. Ominously, on March 20, the first Israeli soldier was shot dead by Palestinians since the riots began. Gloating about the incident, for his own reasons, Prime Minister Shamir stated, "It is proof that we are engaged for the security of Israel. A war that has been misunderstood since now."

Armed guerrilla warfare, which both the Moscow-controlled Palestinian factions and the Russian-linked pro-Sharon extremists advocate, could rapidly plunge the entire region into war. Such a war would go a long way toward redrawing the Mideast map as mandated by the U.S.-Soviet "New Yalta" secret deals concluded at the INF December 1987 summit.