

## Will U.S. response to hostage crisis be worse than Irangate?

by Mark Burdman

For almost three years, the United States has been convulsed by the Irangate scandal. Shocking revelations and agonizing appraisals have been made about the dirty dealings involved in selling arms to Iran, in exchange for release of hostages. Yet the Bush White House is now responding to the Middle East terrorism-and-hostages crisis by repeating the same policy approach of the last three American administrations when dealing with hostages. The only difference is that the deals now being negotiated behind the scenes are potentially even more nefarious than what has been exposed in Irangate.

The talk in policy circles associated with the U.S. State Department and Henry Kissinger, as well as in "globalist" institutions like Helmut Schmidt's Inter-Action Council and the United Nations Association, is that the crisis that followed Israel's July 28 kidnaping of Hezbollah Sheikh Obeid and the ensuing release of a videotape purportedly of the executed American Col. William Higgins, opens up unprecedented vistas for "global condominium" arrangements with the Soviet Union, including in "cooperation against terrorism."

Matters have deteriorated so far, that the United States is not only, once again, relying on a sign of "good faith" from Iranian "moderates," particularly from President Ali Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani, but Soviet Foreign Minister Eduard Shevardnadze is being treated as a de facto U.S. government envoy to Teheran. In exchange for what Deputy Secretary of State Lawrence Eagleburger calls Soviet "good faith" on such matters, the Soviets are being promised the proverbial kitchen sink, including U.S. concessions in arms control discussions, expanded U.S. aid and trade to the Soviet Union, U.S. agreements not to support anti-Moscow dissident movements in the East bloc, and a whole range of "regional crisis" deals around the world.

In a statement issued from federal prison in Rochester,

Minnesota Aug. 2, former presidential candidate Lyndon LaRouche charged that the truth of what is now being negotiated among Washington, Moscow, Beijing, and Damascus is being hidden from American citizens, although no such secrets are being kept from Moscow and Beijing's Communists, nor from Iran's ayatollahs. LaRouche hypothesized that Israel made its sensational kidnap of Obeid, in order to break up such global dirty dealings. He asked: "Why are the Israelis frightened of what the United States is negotiating with Moscow? Why are the Israelis desperate to deal with the present situation?"

Ironically, one key reason that LaRouche was framed up, was because of the revelations published by *EIR* and other LaRouche-linked publications dating back to 1979-80, about U.S. arms sales to Khomeini's Iran. One can only wonder what future bigger-than-Irangate scandals will erupt, when the full story is told, of what the U.S. has offered Moscow, in exchange for Moscow's promises of favors.

### Kidnap an anti-condominium move?

Another irony is what LaRouche is pointing to vis-à-vis Israel. The July 28 action by Israel, according to evidence so far, was taken to *disrupt* the condominium, by asserting the right of individual states to take action to defend their sovereign national interests, irrespective of supranational, multi-lateral "arrangements." Also, Israel's action was breaking with the method of dealing with hostages that has been hegemonic over the past decade. A sane Western world would have welcomed what Israel did, not in and for itself, but as an action that opened up new room for maneuvering against terrorism and fundamentalism in the Middle East. The Israeli move put the Iranian Shi'ite Hezbollah terrorists on the defensive for the moment, pending further decisive action in

the coming days and weeks.

The regional backdrop to Israel's July 28 action, was that the United States had frantically begun a series of secret meetings with Iranian envoys, starting in June, around the time of Ayatollah Khomeini's death. Of particular importance, were meetings in Nicosia, Cyprus and Paris between U.S. envoys and Iranian Parliament Deputy Speaker Mehdi Karroubi. Other meetings took place in London and West Germany. Details of these meetings were published exclusively in *EIR*'s sister publication *Middle East Insider* earlier this summer.

Israel's kidnap of Sheikh Obeid was a well planned and well calculated operation, which had precise aims. Although little known in the West, Sheikh Obeid was the leader of the Hezbollah for all of southern Lebanon for the past four years, answering only to orders from arch-hardliner Ali Akbar Mokhtashemi, Iran's interior minister. Iranian ambassador to Damascus in 1982-85, Mokhtashemi is the Iranian personality most directly responsible for creating the Hezbollah in Lebanon, as well as the Islamic Jihad. He personally has been overseeing most of the Western hostage-taking, as well as the 1983 suicide missions against the American Embassy in April, which killed 13 high-ranking officials of the CIA, and against the U.S. and French military headquarters, which killed more than 400.

Obeid himself was responsible for the kidnap of Colonel Higgins in February 1988. Shortly after his capture by the "Islamic Resistance," a commando name used by the Hezbollah, Higgins was sheltered in Obeid's cellar. Later, Obeid was responsible for countless suicide missions at Israel's borders, as well as the murder of leading elements of the rival Shi'ite Amal militia, such as Amal Politburo member Daoud Daoud, assassinated last September. Daoud Daoud, known for his regular contacts with the Israelis, had launched an unsuccessful assault on Obeid's house in February 1988 to obtain Higgins's release.

## Utopians exult

No matter what Israel's intentions were, influentials in the transatlantic liberal Establishments have been drawing the most perverse conclusions from the post-July 28 situation. In the United States, both the *Washington Post* and the *New York Times* have called for closer U.S.-Soviet coordination around Lebanon and the Middle East.

A senior official in Schmidt's Inter-Action Council stated Aug. 3 that Israel's leadership are "apprentice witch-doctors," who did not calculate the consequences of their actions. He insisted that the Americans and Soviets would coordinate their actions in the Middle East more closely than ever, with a kind of division of labor, in which the U.S. uses "carrots and sticks" with Israel, while the Soviets do the same with Teheran.

Says this source, "the U.S.-Soviet condominium is so far advanced, that not even George Bush is aware of how far it

has gone." Aside from U.S.-Soviet arms-control negotiations on various levels and preparations for a Bush-Gorbachov summit later this year, "there is an agreement, that in all the zones of conflict where both superpowers are involved, both will act to cool things down, while in areas where there is no direct superpower conflict, the superpowers will do what they can to make sure tensions don't get too high." He claimed that "regional crisis" discussions don't apply only to known areas like Cambodia, Afghanistan, Namibia, etc., but also to the Horn of Africa, and even, on a more informal basis, Yugoslavia and the Balkans.

Both the Inter-Action Council and the United Nations Association—which includes among its leaders former Secretary of State Cyrus Vance, former Attorney General Elliot Richardson, former Defense Secretary Robert McNamara, and former arms-control negotiator Max Kampelman—are involved in studies on "limiting" or "redefining" sovereignty, in which studies U.S.-Soviet cooperation against terrorism plays a central role.

Similarly, a counterintelligence specialist at the Georgetown University Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS) in Washington welcomed the "dramatic" events in the Middle East, claiming that "the crisis precipitated by the Israelis may lead to some good things. . . . The Soviets have made some overtures to cooperate on terrorism." He said that there should be efforts to create "bilateral crisis linkages" between the U.S. and Soviet Union, in the context of "different regional condominiums" applied to the Far East and Near East.

CSIS anti-terror adviser Robert Kupperman was one of several Americans who traveled to Moscow for a January 1989 conference on the theme of U.S.-Soviet cooperation against terrorism, which several key figures from the KGB-linked weekly *Literaturnaya Gazeta* attended.

Despite all this frantic condominium motion, the realities of the global situation are likely to blow all such arrangements sky-high. For one thing, as one senior European military-intelligence official stressed to *EIR*, the Soviets cannot be trusted to act "in good faith." While the American liberal media gloated about the Shevardnadze trip to Teheran as a sign of Soviet cooperation, Shevardnadze himself was discussing upgraded military cooperation with Iranian President Rafsanjani; Rafsanjani has been playing a similar "smile and doublecross" game with the United States over the past months, especially since his June 20 trip to the U.S.S.R. European sources express concern that the Soviets will exploit U.S. spinelessness on the hostages affair, to launch a diplomatic drive in the Middle East, perhaps including a spectacular Gorbachov tour of the region this year.

More broadly, when both parties to the condominium are committed to brutal austerity for the world's population, the resulting starvation and repression will lead to political upheaval and explosions around the world, in which context the condominium deals will explode as well.