

## New Bernard Lewis plan will carve up the Mideast

by Joseph Brewda

In 1980, *EIR* warned that the strategy behind then-U.S. National Security Adviser Zbigniew Brzezinski's "Arc of Crisis" was a British plan to destroy the nation-state. The "Bernard Lewis plan," as it came to be known, was a design to fracture all the countries in the region, from the Middle East to India, along ethnic, sectarian, and linguistic lines. This, we warned, was the strategic gameplan behind the U.S. overthrow of the Shah of Iran in 1979 and his replacement by Ayatollah Khomeini, and the Oct. 31, 1984 assassination of Indian President Indira Gandhi.

Lewis is a British Islamicist who had entered British intelligence and served in the British Foreign Office during World War II, before he returned to his post at the University of London School of Oriental and African Studies. In 1974, Lewis was seconded to Princeton University. From this location, he has published an update on his thesis, which appears in the Fall 1992 issue of *Foreign Affairs*, the quarterly of the New York Council on Foreign Relations, the sister agency to Britain's Royal Institute of International Affairs (RIIA).

Lewis's plan is modeled on the imperial methods of the Roman Empire: Grant local autonomy to a myriad of squabbling and politically impotent ethnic enclaves over which Rome can wield its military strength without difficulty. The subjected enclaves have a long leash, as long as the tribute is paid to Rome.

A geopolitical aim of the Bernard Lewis plan was the breakup of the edges of the Soviet empire. With this now accomplished, Lewis, in his article "Rethinking the Mideast," predicts that the Middle East will undergo a process of "Lebanonization"—a reference to the years-long civil war unleashed in Lebanon in 1975 by then-U.S. Secretary of State Henry Kissinger. The war pitted Lebanon's Catholic, Palestinian, Shiite Muslim, Sunni Muslim, Druze, and Greek Orthodox populations against each other. With a steady sup-

ply of arms to all sides, the war resulted in the de facto partitioning of Lebanon by Israel and Syria. Today, the nation-state of Lebanon, once considered the jewel of the Mideast, no longer exists.

### The end of Arab nationalism

The process of disintegration of the Mideast, projected by Lewis, is facilitated not only by the collapse of the Soviet Union, but what Lewis calls the "demise of pan-Arabism." The *coup de grace* for Arab nationalism, Lewis states, was the United States-led war against Iraq. Lewis asserts that the war was primarily a war among Arab states, in which the United States only became involved "reluctantly." The lineup of the Arab nations against Iraq "marked the formal abandonment of the long-cherished dream of pan-Arabism, of a united Arab state or even a coherent Arab political bloc. . . . As a matter of current politics and for the foreseeable future, [Arab nationalism] no longer counts as a political force. . . . It is not a factor in international or inter-Arab or even domestic Arab politics."

Further marking the political impotence of the Arab world, Lewis states, is the "end—at least for the time being—of the effectiveness of oil as a weapon in the hands of the producer countries. This weapon, so powerful as an instrument of policy in past crises, was in this particular crisis totally ineffectual."

These two phase-changes in Mideast politics represent a significant achievement for Lewis, who is regarded as the dean of Mideast area specialists within the Anglo-American elite. For him, the collapse of Arab nationalism removes the threat of industrial development and national independence in the Mideast. The unstated assumption of all of Lewis's ruminations is the maintenance of the economic status quo; the Mideast will be developed, if at all, only under circum-

stances controlled by powers outside the region.

Lewis does not mince words when it comes to the military strength of such outside powers. The "most important lesson of the war," Lewis proclaims, is that "the swift and overwhelming defeat of the Iraqi armed forces reminded the world of something that it had begun to forget: the technological and military edge that the modern West had achieved over the rest of the world, and which in the past had enabled even small European countries like Holland and Portugal to conquer and govern vast empires in Asia and Africa."

This outside military strength will only be used to thwart threats to itself, Lewis implies, but the western powers will not directly rule the region. "Because of some resemblances of language and institutions, there is a widespread belief in the Middle East that the United States is the British Empire back in business with new management, a new trading name and a new address. This is not so. . . . The United States will no doubt seek to remain the predominant outside power in the Middle East, but the operative word is 'outside.' "

Instead, Lewis states, U. S. policy is the "balance of power" method that is associated with Kissinger. American policy, he says, "is to prevent the emergence of a regional hegemony—of a single regional power that could dominate the area and thus establish monopolistic control of Middle Eastern oil." This overriding concern explains American flip-flops on Iran and Iraq.

The apparent exceptions to such tactical arrangements are U.S. reliance on the "steadfastness of the northern tier"—i.e., Turkey; and "the presence of a powerful, self-reliant and stable democratic power in the region"—Israel. Lewis is known in the intelligence community for his affection for Turkey. In the 1960s, he published a book for the RIIA, *The Emergence of Modern Turkey*, in which he focused on the potential use of religious, class, and ethnic differences to bring an end to the industrialization policies of the founder of modern Turkey, Mustafa Kemal Ataturk.

In the case of Israel, Lewis states, Americans recognize the United States as having "stronger links, stronger mutual loyalties, and commitments and a more enduring relationship." Otherwise, the U. S. has no loyalties to any state in the region: "The United States has obviously felt free to abandon such allies, if the alliance becomes too troublesome or ceases to be cost-effective—as, for example, in South Vietnam, Kurdistan, and Lebanon."

The Lewis-Kissinger balance of power strategy outlaws the concept of a "community of principle"—alliances of sovereign nation-states based on a commitment to mutual economic development. Lacking such a community of principle and given the worldwide economic breakdown imposed by such agencies as the International Monetary Fund (IMF), the countries of the underdeveloped sector are expected to explode into civil strife and wars.

As long as the extraction of oil and loot is assured, Lewis makes clear, no one should expect the "outside" powers to

become involved in such chaos. Lewis states explicitly: "The West would no longer be concerned but would remain indifferent to whatever happened, to wars, disasters, and upheavals, as long as the oil continues to flow. . . . The western capacity for turning a blind eye, already manifested in other respects, should not be underrated. In the past, outside powers have sometimes intervened to prevent, to limit or to halt Arab-Israel wars. Arabs and Israelis alike would be unwise to count on such interventions in the future."

In this regard, Lewis looks with favor on a particular variant of the diverse and often competing movements misleadingly termed "Islamic fundamentalist." That British-run variant which he favors is opposed to modern science and technology and, in opposition to the tenets of Islam banning usury, is loyally committed to paying IMF debt. As such, Lewis sees such a variety of fundamentalism as a battering-ram against the nation-state.

"The eclipse of pan-Arabism" he writes, "has left Islamic fundamentalism as the most attractive alternative to all those who feel that there has to be something better, truer and more hopeful than the inept tyrannies of their rulers and the bankrupt ideologies foisted on them from outside." He notes that British subversive movements acting under such a cover enjoy a practical advantage in societies like the Middle East. "Dictators can forbid parties, they can forbid meetings—they cannot forbid public worship, and they can to only a limited extent control sermons." As such they represent a "network outside the control of the state . . . the more oppressive the regime, the greater the help it gives to fundamentalists by eliminating competing oppositions."

Elaborating on the subversive capacities of that variety of fundamentalism run out of Britain, he adds: "In a program of aggression and expansion these movements would enjoy, like their Jacobin and Bolshevik predecessors, the advantage of fifth columns in every country and community with which they share a common universe of discourse. There is also the possibility that they might have nuclear weapons, either for terrorist or regular military use."

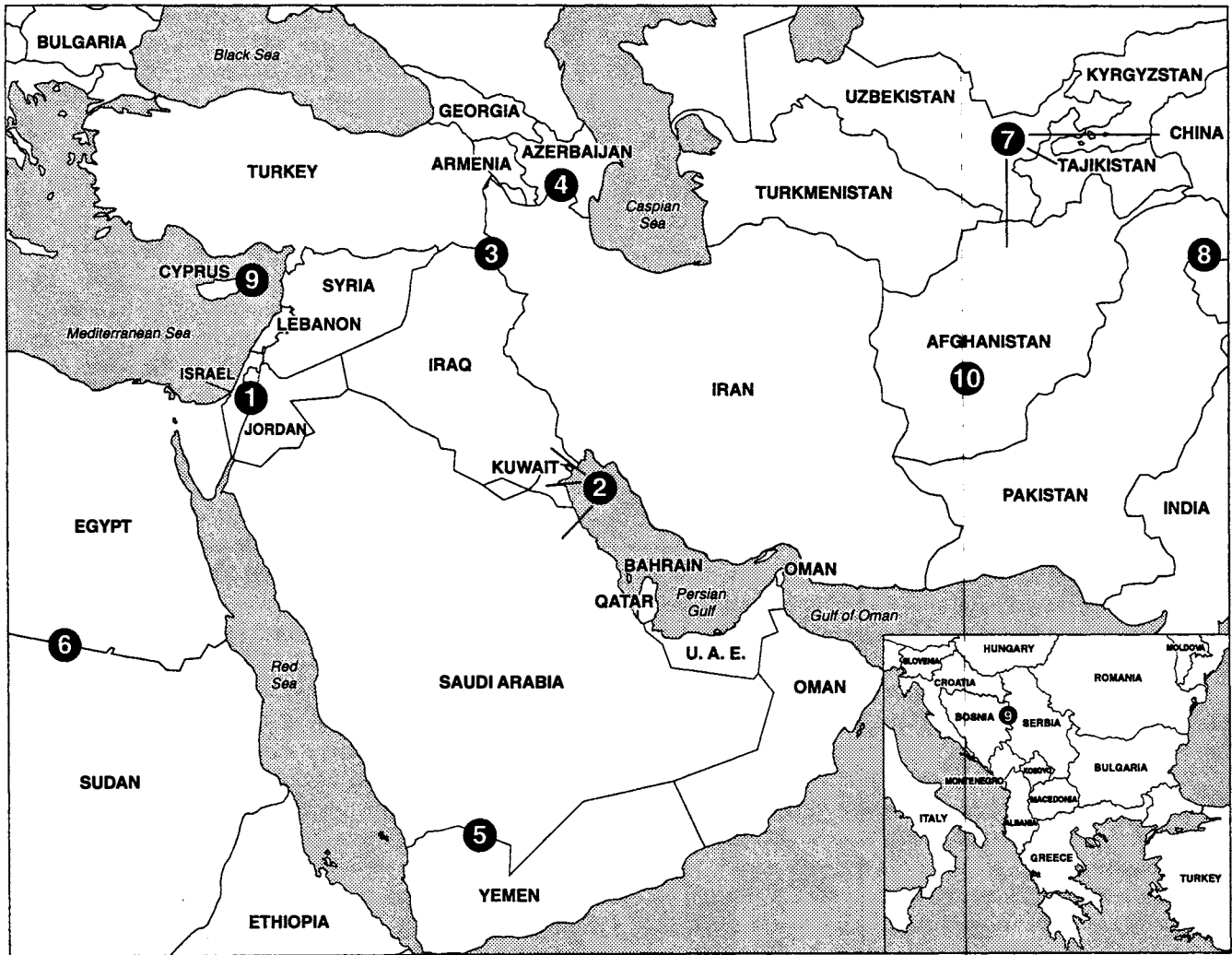
Such developments will lead to the process which he dubs "Lebanonization."

"Most of the states of the Middle East . . . are of recent and artificial construction and are vulnerable to such a process," he analyzes. "If the central power is sufficiently weakened, there is no real civil society to hold the polity together, no real sense of common national identity or overriding allegiance to the nation-state. The state then disintegrates—as happened in Lebanon—into a chaos of squabbling, feuding, fighting sects, tribes, regions and parties."

### **A new phase of wars**

A look at the area of the world Lewis designates as the Middle East shows that Lewis's pronouncements are active Anglo-American policy.

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## The wars planned to destroy nations

- 1. Jerusalem:** Jewish zealots' plans to blow up Islamic holy sites set the stage for tearing apart Jordan.
- 2. Southern Iraq** is being given to Iran, while a Shiite revolt in the Arab Persian Gulf states is being prepared. The result: a new Arabian/Iranian conflict.
- 3. The Kurdish region** straddling Iraq, Turkey, and Iran is blowing up, could lead to war.
- 4. Turkish** support to Azerbaijani claims to northern Iran, and Iranian support of Armenian claims on Azerbaijan, will lead to a Turkish-Iranian war.
- 5. Yemen:** A planned civil war is intended to spill

over into Saudi Arabia.

- 6. Egypt** is being encouraged to go to war with Sudan, and to grab Libya.
- 7.** Manipulated conflict between Iranian Tajiks and Turkic Uzbeks will spill over into the Turkish/Iranian ethnic region in neighboring China, and into Afghanistan.
- 8. Pakistan:** An Iranian-supported Pakistani claim on Indian-occupied Kashmir will accelerate a developing Indian/Arab and Indian/Israeli alliance. Ethnic strife is set to tear apart Pakistan.
- 9. Balkans:** Serbia's invasion of Bosnia and planned attacks on Kosovo will lead to conflict with Albania and Turkey; while Greece will enter the war supporting Serbia. Everything is set to blow up Cyprus, contested by both Turkey and Greece.
- 10. Afghanistan:** The civil war will split Afghanistan into three parts: a Tajik entity in the north, a central Uzbek entity, and a Pushtun entity in the south.

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Take the case of Iraq. The Anglo-American/French imposition of a "no-fly" zone over southern Iraq in August has accelerated the dismemberment of that state into three parts, a Kurdish north, a central Baghdad region, and a Shiite south. Because of a common denomination, Shiism, as well as diverse geographic and historical factors, a Shiite statelet carved out of southern Iraq would tend to fall under the control of neighboring Iran. This fact, in addition to Iranian ambitions toward other Arab Gulf sheikdoms, will tend to foster the condition for a new Iranian-Arab war.

A Kurdish statelet carved out of northern Iraq will tend to fall under the control of the increasingly ambitious Turkey. Control over oil-rich Iraqi Kurdistan was one of the promises made to the Turkish establishment to induce them to enter the war against Iraq. But the creation of an even nominally independent Kurdistan carved out of Iraq would also inflame the adjacent Kurdish regions in Iran, and in Turkey itself, where a near war between the Turkish army and Kurds is ongoing. For such reasons, the division of northern Iraq will tend to provoke an Iranian-Turkish war. Such a war is made more likely because the Turkish-allied former Soviet republic of Azerbaijan is laying claim to Iranian Azerbaijan.

In the Balkans, the war in former Yugoslavia is rapidly drawing in neighboring powers. If Serbia invades Kosovo as projected, Albania and then Turkey will join the war against Serbia, while Greece will side with Serbia.

In Central Asia, Anglo-American planners are attempting to pit Tajikistan, an Iranian-ethnic republic, against Uzbekistan, which is Turkic. The war could spread into neighboring Afghanistan, already in a civil war, and even into neighboring Chinese Turkestan, whose population is ethnically the same as the new Central Asian republics.

While provoking wars, the Anglo-Americans are hard at work in assembling regional alliances to administer the region on their behalf, most notably a Saudi-Israeli and Turkish-Israeli axis. As part of this effort, the Anglo-Americans are fostering a Camp David-style separate peace deal between Syria and Israel. Under earlier arrangements, Syria and Israel gobbled up Lebanon. Now, it appears, Jordan is set to be "Lebanonized." As far back as 1990, Pentagon planners began reconsideration of an old plan to overthrow the Hashemite dynasty of Jordan and put in its place a "Palestinian state," jointly administered by Israel and Syria. The August arrest of Jordanian parliamentarian Laith Shubeilat on U.S. orders has destabilized the country, especially given the fact that Shubeilat has been associated with a pro-Iraq policy. As Lyndon LaRouche has warned, an Israeli move to blow up the Islamic holy sites in Jerusalem can be expected. Such attempts have been made by Jewish zealots before, under the professed aim of clearing the way for constructing the Third Temple of Solomon. The ensuing riots would set the stage for broader religious warfare in the region.

## Will Afghanistan be partitioned?

by Ramtanu Maitra

Afghanistan may become one of the first major nations to become subject to the "Bernard Lewis plan." The country of 9 million has been subjected to war for 13 years, with millions killed, maimed, or forced to flee the country. Now, as press accounts predict starvation in Afghanistan this winter, the guerrilla and former communist leaders are squabbling for power along ethnic lines. The western powers, which sought to impose peace on the country through the United Nations, have stood by and watched as the country is pulled to pieces. The economic reconstruction of Afghanistan appears to be on no one's agenda.

On Oct. 26, the second phase of the Peshawar Accords, signed by all major Sunni Mujahideen groups, will come to an end, and the crucial third phase will begin, with the purpose of establishing a lasting Afghan government in Kabul. However, bloodbaths during the first two phases and hectic activities in recent days by the Mujahideen leaders, making forays into the neighboring countries, raise little hope for any constructive development during the third phase.

The Peshawar Accord, a dubious document, was signed by 10 Peshawar-based Mujahideen factions on April 19 in the wake of the collapse of the Najibullah government and takeover of Kabul by the Dostum-Massoud combine. The accord was signed following a prolonged meeting between Pakistani Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif and the Peshawar-based Mujahideen leaders.

But the situation following the collapse of the communist regime of Dr. Najibullah in April, has grown increasingly dangerous. Mujahideen leaders, particularly those who had taken shelter in Pakistan during the Soviet occupation (1980-88) and directed guerrilla activities from Peshawar, have turned their guns against each other and have sought help from outside of Afghanistan to seek power or remain in power.

Conflicts, some of historical origin, along ethnic lines, political ideologies, and religious sectarianism have come to the fore. There are distinct indications that the old Khalq and Parchami factions within the now-defunct Communist Party have become active and are adding to the ethnic divisions. Most of the Khalqis are Pushtuns ethnically, while the Parchamis are mostly non-Pushtuns. Now, even non-Mujahideen leaders, such as Rashid Dostum of the Gillam Jam militia, which had served the communist regime faithfully before pulling down the Najibullah government, are now