

Report from Bonn by Rainer Apel

German role in Palestine development

Israel has defended Germany's contacts with Iran in order to further chances for peace in the Mideast.

The Germans have repeatedly come to the assistance of Israel without making a great fuss about it. They have thus become the Jewish state's closest and most important European partner. In the Arab world, Germany enjoys great respect and trust—in contrast to Britain and France, it never had colonial ambitions in the Near East. Indeed, a good point of departure for united Germany, along with the United States and other countries, to take an active role in furthering the peace process in that region.”

This statement, taken from an English-language commentary by Daniel Dagan, the editor-in-chief of the *Allgemeine Jüdische Wochenzeitung*, the weekly of the Jewish communities in Germany, published on Oct. 20, may tell a bit about the timing of the new international scare campaign against alleged German government talks with “Iranian terrorists.”

That campaign began with a team of U.S. “experts” arriving in Bonn Oct. 4, with the aim of presenting “evidence” on secret deals between 600 German industrial and trading companies with the “terrorist Iranian regime”—which the Americans claim is working on an “anti-Israeli atomic bomb.” The team’s testimony was aimed against secret talks between German and Iranian foreign intelligence officials which were taking place in Bonn at the same time. But if there were anything as serious as a German-Iranian conspiracy against Israel involving nuclear weapons, the Israeli government would have been the first to protest.

The Israelis, whose intelligence services have proven in the past to be

clever enough to profile such threats long before they are made public by agencies such as the CIA or Britain’s MI-6, have not filed any protest with Bonn. On the contrary, Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin declared in an Oct. 26 interview with the *Hadashot* journal in Jerusalem, that he supports these German talks with the Iranians, as they involve “humanitarian interests of Israel.”

Rabin’s remarks refer to triangular deals between Germany, Iran, and Israel to neutralize the radical currents of the Palestinian movement and remove them as an obstacle against the Gaza-Jericho agreement. This means that Germany’s traditionally close relations with Iran are being utilized for the Palestinian development project.

When Dagan published his commentary, Israeli Minister of Science Shulamit Aloni began a four-day tour of Germany, meeting with experts in the R&D sector. And when Rabin came out in defense of Germany’s talks with Iran, a delegation of Iranian industrialists began a one-week tour of Germany.

The government in Bonn just might repeat the coup of Chancellor Konrad Adenauer who, with Nahum Goldmann, then president of the World Jewish Congress, and Israeli Prime Minister Ben-Gurion, struck a deal in 1960 on economic assistance which bypassed the dominant monetarist banks of the Anglo-Americans and provided Israel with a vital loan of DM 3.5 billion for industrial and infrastructural improvements.

This was done at a time when Germany had no formal diplomatic relations with Israel, and when there were

heavy attacks by radical Zionist groups on Germany, which equated postwar Germany and the pre-1945 Nazi holocaust regime.

Rabin’s intervention on behalf of Germany against the Iran scare campaign did not come out of nowhere. Israeli Foreign Minister Shimon Peres, who made a surprise visit to Bonn Oct. 5, spoke of a “major role” which German industry should play in the “triangle of cooperation between the Palestinians, Jordanians, and Israelis” in joint development projects in the Dead Sea region to stop desertification and develop a modern infrastructure.

This appeal to the Germans was echoed in a speech that Abdallah Frangi, the PLO’s official envoy to Germany, gave two weeks later before a select audience of the German Foreign Policy Association in Bonn. He said that Bonn “shall help us in the same way it helped Israel in building its infrastructure.” Frangi added that a peaceful and blossoming Mideast would be an important market for products from Germany.

In an interview with the *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung* daily Oct. 16, Frangi said that if the potential of the Gaza-Jericho project were realized, the “new Palestine will be the new Andalusia”—like Islam’s Spanish province of Andalusia, which was the most-developed part of the Arab world from the 8th to the 15th century.

Frangi said that he anticipated that even Iran, which officially opposes the Israeli-PLO deal, would “see in the long run that constant obstructionism won’t pay off.”

Some people in the Anglo-American intelligence milieu ostensibly are, as the new Iran scare campaign indicates, more afraid of losing their scapegoat Iran than losing the peace in the Mideast. The attacks on Germany’s role are an attempt to sabotage the peace.