

Temple, but, as *EIR* has documented, deployed members of its "circle of correspondents" to help found the Temple Mount Faithful.

Through such individuals as the elusive American Christian evangelical Terry Risenhoover and others, there is significant financial support from the 60 million British-spawned Christian Evangelicals in the United States for rebuilding Solomon's Temple.

Gershon Salomon revealed in the interview that when he makes his fifth trip to the United States starting on June 2, his number-one goal will be to meet with Christian evangelical leader Dr. Rev. Jerry Falwell. It had been Falwell to whom Prime Minister Netanyahu turned on his recent trip to the United States, to mobilize 200,000 churches to deliver sermons, that President Clinton must not pressure Israel to "give up one inch" of land to the Palestinians, and to condemn President Clinton's alleged immorality in the Monica Lewinsky affair. Salomon's second goal is to re-appear on Pat Robertson's "700 Club" TV show, to update Robertson's Christian evangelical followers on how the "endtimes" (that Salomon claims center on the fate of Jerusalem) are progressing.

(For further information on Netanyahu's conspiring with the "Elmer Gantry" crowd, see *EIR*, Feb. 27, 1998, "Will British Assaults on the Presidency Succeed?")

## Opposition to Israel's Netanyahu is growing

by Dean Andromidas

In early March, more information became public supporting *EIR*'s report that Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu had deployed a Mossad team to Bern, Switzerland, to stage a major provocation aimed at creating an uncontrollable escalation of the Middle East crisis. At the same time, the appointment of Ephraim Halevy, former Mossad Deputy Director and Israel's Ambassador to the European Union, as the new Mossad chief, indicates that an effort is under way by forces within the Israeli security establishment to rein in the reckless ambitions of the Israeli Prime Minister.

Various Israeli sources have leaked stories aimed at masking the real mission of the Mossad team uncovered by Swiss authorities on Feb. 19, the same day that United Nations Secretary General Kofi Annan departed for his eleventh-hour mission to Baghdad. These stories, all datelined in Israel, claim that the Mossad was targetting Hezbollah- and Iranian-linked persons for wiretapping and surveillance. One story, in the Swiss mass circulation tabloid *Sonntag Blick*, went so far as to claim that those targetted were planning to bomb the Israeli Embassy in Bern. Another line was that the team was caught because of leaks by individuals in the Mossad itself who wished to get rid of chief Danny Yatom, whom they held in low esteem.

*EIR*'s own investigation demonstrates that most of the information released publicly is false, and aimed at masking the Mossad team's true purpose: that being, a major Israeli provocation aimed at blowing up a new regional crisis. Furthermore, there was clearly an international effort, most likely involving anti-Netanyahu elements within Israel, to sabotage the provocation.

### Prior knowledge

*EIR* has learned from highly reliable Swiss sources that the Swiss have not released the full details of what happened in the early hours of Feb. 19. Contrary to the official story, that police had been called to the scene by a little old woman who noticed several people below her apartment window at 2 a.m., Swiss authorities had prior knowledge of the Mossad operation and were prepared to preempt it. According to these sources, the two arresting police officers were backed up by a special intervention team. These teams, which are used in

For previews and information on LaRouche publications:

## Visit EIR's Internet Website!

- Highlights of current issues of EIR
- Pieces by Lyndon LaRouche
- Every week: transcript of the latest **EIR Talks** radio interview with LaRouche.

<http://www.larouchepub.com>

e-mail: [larouche@larouchepub.com](mailto:larouche@larouchepub.com)

counter-terrorist and hostage situations, require at least three hours to mobilize, indicating that the Swiss authorities had been prepositioned and prepared for what could have been a very violent confrontation.

Furthermore, prior to executing such operations, the Mossad, as would any other national intelligence agency, would inform other services such as the CIA, the French services, as well as the Swiss, in some way, to help ensure the success of the operation. Thus, knowledge of Israeli plans could not, and would not, have been kept secret within the Mossad itself.

These sources flatly reject the suggestion that a wiretapping or surveillance operation was being conducted, underscoring that the profile of the five-person Mossad team conforms to standard Mossad procedures in assassination and kidnapping operations. In such operations, normal procedure is to send in a reconnaissance team one week prior to the execution of the assassination or kidnapping. The second team, comprised of five to seven individuals, is sent in only hours prior to the plan's execution. In the Bern incident, the five-person team, three men and two women, arrived in Bern on Feb. 18, hours before the operation.

Meanwhile, an Arab source based in Switzerland and who enjoys very high-level contacts throughout the Middle East, told *EIR* that the Mossad team was part of a much broader kidnapping and assassination operation targeting businessmen with links to Iran, "the kind of people who would attend a celebration at the Iranian Embassy on a national holiday." While certain individuals were to be targeted for assassination, others were to be kidnapped and brought to Israel for interrogation to force "confessions" detailing Iranian backing of terrorist operations. These "confessions" would be used by Netanyahu to influence public opinion to support military strikes against Iran.

This assessment corroborates an article in the March 3 London *Times*, based on an interview with a Mossad officer stationed at the Mossad's European directorate, in Brussels. Under the headline "Objective of Bungled Mission Was Murder, Says Mossad Agent," the *Times* quoted the agent: "The target had been two businessmen suspected of helping the Iranian-backed Hezbollah guerrillas to acquire biological and chemical weapons from eastern Europe and ship them to the Middle East via the Balkans." This officer said that one of the targets was Abdullah El Zein, who had been identified in the press as having lived in the house at one time. He was a Shia Muslim from southern Lebanon. The team was going to use the same deadly aerosol sprays that were used in the failed attempted murder of an Hamas leader in Jordan last year. The source claimed that the operation was approved by Danny Yatom, who just resigned as Mossad head and who had been opposed "root and branch" within the service.

Unlike all the other stories, this Mossad agent spoke of



*Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, who faces growing opposition because of his reckless ambitions, and incompetent economic policy.*

an assassination operation, a charge, by definition, that would involve Netanyahu, who, as Prime Minister, must approve all assassination operations carried out by the Mossad.

### **Netanyahu's growing isolation**

The miserable failure of the Bern operation represents the best evidence of widespread opposition within Israel to Netanyahu. The reasons for the opposition go well beyond his sabotage of the peace process, and extend to his political and economic policies as well.

The naming of Ephraim Halevy as new chief of the Mossad points to Netanyahu's failure to gain the control over Israel's official security establishment, and therefore Israel's nuclear trigger, which Netanyahu has set his sights on since coming to office.

Halevy has resided in Brussels since his appointment as ambassador in 1995. A professional Mossad officer, Halevy specialized in political liaison with other services. In this role, he spent a number of years in Switzerland. In the 1970s, Yitzhak Rabin, during his first term as Prime Minister, asked Halevy to serve as secret liaison to King Hussein of Jordan.

Rabin later tapped him to lead negotiations for the peace treaty with Jordan.

Netanyahu had hoped to appoint his adviser on terrorism, Gen. Meier Dagan, an assassination specialist and 30-year crony of right-wing hard-liner Ariel Sharon. That Netanyahu felt compelled to consult with Labor Party leader Ehud Barak prior to Halevy's appointment, points to the fact that Netanyahu is bowing to the necessity to achieve a national consensus on such appointments.

Netanyahu also named Maj. Gen. Amiram Levine, operational commander of the Northern Command, as Halevy's deputy. Halevy will be in charge of managing the entire organization, while Levine will serve as head of operations and special assignments. Levine is said to be closer to Netanyahu's extreme views.

A second major defeat for Netanyahu was the reelection of President Ezer Weizman by the Israeli Knesset (parliament). It is political tradition for a standing Israeli President to be reelected for a second term, and Netanyahu had promised Weizman that he would not oppose his reelection, even though Weizman is a member of the Labor Party. But, at the end of last year, Netanyahu called on Shaul Amor, of his own Likud party, to run against Weizman. Israeli press commentators referred to Amor as Netanyahu's "potential marionette." Weizman, who enjoys an 80% approval rating among Israeli citizens, won the election on the first round with a majority of 63 votes, to 49, indicating that members of Netanyahu's coalition deserted to Weizman.

### **Economic incompetence**

Netanyahu's troubles go well beyond internal Israeli politics and the Arab world. Israeli observers point to the collapse of support for Netanyahu even among many of his leading foreign backers. One Swiss security specialist said that several of his most important Swiss backers have broken all ties with him, particularly over his economic policies. This source said, "More dangerous than the political hard-liners are the economic hard-liners," meaning the radical free marketeers. The breaking point among these circles, came when Netanyahu stopped every key infrastructure project, including rail and water projects and other industrial projects, which had been initiated under the Rabin government and involved Palestinian and Jordanian cooperation. This particular Swiss group and its international collaborators had lined up more than \$2 billion for these projects, and now that they have been cancelled, they have lost hundreds of millions of dollars. Although these circles prefer a right-wing government in Israel, they nonetheless see the creation of a Palestinian state as inevitable and necessary for these projects to go forward.

One member of the Likud with long experience in Israel's military-industrial complex was even more explicit on the economic incompetence of the Netanyahu government. "This government doesn't have any serious people capable of an

analysis of economic possibilities. It's a government dominated by private, selfish interests who understand nothing about economic policy. It is not a question of ideology or even policy; the people in this government understand nothing of economics," he said. He criticized Sharon, who, as Infrastructure Minister, is responsible for an important aspect of economic policy. "He has no idea what his subordinates are doing or not doing," he said, indicating that Sharon is using his position merely as a political platform.

The collapse in state-backed infrastructure projects in a country like Israel, which receives very high numbers of poor immigrants from all over the world, is disastrous. The financial crisis in Asia, a leading market for Israel, has led to a collapse of cut-diamond exports, Israel's number-one export. Furthermore, foreign investment has collapsed from several hundreds of millions of dollars, to less than \$10 million in the last six months.

### **Netanyahu's counter-deployment**

This growing isolation is only making Netanyahu more desperate. His latest ploy is to withdraw Israeli troops from southern Lebanon, where the Israeli Defense Force has been battling Hezbollah guerrillas for two decades. The fact that the proposal does not include peace talks with Syria is seen throughout the region, including within Israel, as merely an attempt by Netanyahu to buy time until he can organize another major provocation. The proposal nonetheless serves as a cover for various international deployments aimed at blocking any new initiative to restart the stalled peace talks.

Recently, no less than three of Netanyahu's top aides have been sent to the United States. Netanyahu's diplomatic aide, Uzi Arad, was in Washington, where he met with Bruce Riedel, the National Security Council Middle East expert, and Leon Fuerth, the National Security Adviser of Vice President Al Gore. According to the *Jerusalem Post*, Arad is expected to push for Gore to put pressure on Russian Prime Minister Viktor Chernomyrdin over Russia's alleged "export of ballistic missile and nuclear technology" to Iran. Arad is also scheduled to go to New York, to discuss the same issue with Frank Wisner, President Bill Clinton's special envoy.

In addition, David Bar-Illan, Netanyahu's American spokesman, went to Washington in a bid to convince the United States not to present any new initiatives on the peace process or proposals for an Israeli withdrawal from the West Bank, Israeli radio reported. Also, Israeli Finance Minister Yaakov Neeman, one of the "economic hard-liners," was in Washington to discuss with U.S. Secretary of State Madeleine Albright ways Israel could cut down on the amount of massive aid it receives from the United States.

Netanyahu himself will be on a tour in Europe, which will include Britain, Germany, Norway, and Spain, while his Defense Minister, Yitzhak Mordechai, will go to France and the Netherlands.