

The Forlani evaluation of the Begin-Sadat exchange reveals much more than the simple fact of the exchange itself. The Mideast policy of Italy, which has won the backing of the Soviet Union and key Arab countries, involves what Forlani calls a "global Mediterranean approach." The concept of a Mediterranean security pact, first mooted by Malta and Algeria in 1976, has gained ground since this spring, over the violent objections of the Carter Administration. Since early in June, there have been increasing indications that both Israel and the Arabs, *as options*, are considering to move with Europe and the USSR toward a Middle East peace, with Italy as the key mediator. Italian sources have revealed the occurrence of meetings in Rome, secretly, between Israeli and Arab diplomats intent on exploring areas of compromise.

At the same time, the Israeli ambassador to Rome said last week that the European Economic Community (EEC) might play a role in mediating the Arab-Israeli dispute — completely reversing the policy under former Foreign Minister Yigal Allon, who demanded that the EEC stay out of the Middle East and leave the diplomacy to Washington. The ambassador's statement followed a move by the heads of state of the EEC, at their London meeting, to release a policy statement calling for peace in the Middle East after having long suppressed the statement at the behest of Secretary of State Cyrus Vance.

The key foundation for a possible Israeli-EEC accord is the question of trade relations. On July 1, the protocol for Israel's new relationship with the EEC went into effect, and officials from both sides were predicting a rapid expansion of trade. Israel's exports to the EEC are not simply agricultural produce and diamonds as before, but according to the Italian daily *Il Sole* will include such high-technology products as laser equipment for surgery.

A good example is the growing relations between Israel and West Germany. Deputy Finance Minister Flumin, in an interview with the financial daily *Handelsblatt*, said that West German-Israeli relations must be stabilized to support an increase in industrial activity and investment. A West German parliamentary delegation visited Israel, and the European Friendship Association in Israel is being revived.

On the other hand, *Handelsblatt* also reported this week that there is basis for expanding trade between Israel and the Comecon. *Handelsblatt* noted that tens of millions of dollars in trade already takes place between Israel and the Comecon, with Rumania and Yugoslavia being the two most important trade partners. But more interesting is the fact that the USSR — via Hamburg, West Berlin, and Vienna — maintains a regular flow of trade with Israel despite the lack of diplomatic relations. In addition, *Handelsblatt* reported, Czechoslovakia and Hungary trade with Israel indirectly through Rotterdam, Vienna and Switzerland.

Ecevit's Fall Could Lead To New Cyprus Crisis

TURKEY

The failure of Turkish Prime Minister Bulent Ecevit to win a vote of confidence in parliament July 3 threatens to lock Turkey into a continuing spiral of internal chaos that could trigger a renewed Greek-Turkish crisis over Cyprus. Such a crisis is now being covertly nurtured by the Carter Administration.

Carter has consistently refused to put forth a viable foreign and economic policy for debt-burdened Turkey — or the Aegean region as a whole — and, as a result, NATO has lost much of its controlling influence over the Turkish military and bureaucracy. Instead, the Carter-Brzezinski clique has adopted a purely defensive "strategy" of backing the efforts of extremist forces in Turkey to keep the country destabilized and embroiled in "left-right" violence, thereby preventing a much-feared "drift" by Turkey toward the Soviet Union.

Eugene Rostow of the Committee on the Present Danger decried Carter's policy as "insane" and certain to backfire. Rostow, who recently returned from two months in Turkey, warned that Turkey is on its way to becoming "another Egypt" within the year, and, like

Egypt, will start to gravitate toward closer military and economic cooperation with the Soviets. Concluded Rostow: "Carter is conducting affairs in a dreadful manner."

The Vote of Confidence

On June 5, Ecevit's Republican Peoples Party — a blend of traditionalist military layers and pro-socialist tendencies — won a plurality of seats in Turkey's National Assembly, 13 short of a majority. Rather than form a coalition with the fanatic fundamentalists of the National Salvation Party (MSP) of Necmettin Erbakan, Ecevit tried to win over defectors from the MSP and other opposition groups and rule with a single-party minority government. At least five MSP deputies were considering crossing over to the Ecevit camp, along with several members of former Prime Minister Suleyman Demirel's conservative Justice Party. To ensure an Ecevit victory and the formation of a stable government in Turkey, five Arab sheikhs visited Ankara and met with conservative deputies from eastern Anatolia, urging them to cast their lot with social democrat Ecevit. In response, Demirel issued orders not to break ranks during the vote of confidence. No one did, and Ecevit lost.

With the collapse of Ecevit's 10-day-old government, Demirel has now been asked to try his hand. It is widely

expected that Demirel will announce a coalition of the Justice Party with the reactionary MSP and the neo-fascist National Action Party of Alparslan Turkes, giving him a parliamentary majority of eight seats. Such a coalition would be almost identical to the last Demirel-led government, which plunged Turkey into long months of bloody left-right clashes and brought the country to the edge of military rule.

Erbakan is reportedly demanding "stiff conditions" from Demirel if the MSP joins the Coalition. Erbakan — described once by a leading Washington-based thinktanker as "the last counterinsurgent the National Security Council has left in Turkey" — is the Carter Administration's prime instrument for keeping Turkey destabilized and incapable of forging alternative alliances outside of NATO's aegis. Erbakan has vociferously opposed any concessions by Turkey on Cyprus, a stand that threatens to keep the Cyprus crisis inflamed and the Demirel regime weak and divided.

Also facing Demirel is the likelihood that he will be prosecuted for his alleged involvement in the Lockheed scandals and in financial crimes of his family. If he succeeds in becoming prime minister and is prosecuted in that capacity, Turkey's internal crisis will only be intensified.

The armed forces are known to look with extreme disfavor on the participation of either Erbakan or Turkes in the government, and have given out strong signals that they will not tolerate the continuation of violent clashes that are occurring on a daily basis throughout Turkey as a result of the provocations of Turkes and Erbakan sympathizers. However, most Turkey watchers concurred last week that the Turkish military will intervene only as a last resort to wipe out once and for all the NATO-controlled Turkes terrorist network.

According to one Turkish specialist, traditionalist generals in the Turkish military, led by Chief of Staff Semih Sancar and President Fahri Koruturk, a former admiral in the Turkish navy, are firmly in command of the armed forces as a result of their effort to dismantle

the network of Turkes, a former army colonel, in the military. In 1960 and again in 1971, Turkes and his backers were directly involved in successful NATO-backed coups to clear the way for International Monetary Fund "reorganization" of the Turkish economy.

As recently as last month, Turkes launched another coup attempt, just three days before the elections, aimed at blocking the elections and preventing Ecevit, who is supported by the military's traditionalist leadership, from coming to power. The coup was aborted when Koruturk and Sancar moved swiftly against the Turkes faction, removing from power Turkes collaborator and commander of the ground forces Namik Kemal Ersun as well as two other generals (one of whom, Musa Ogun, was known to be a leader of the 1971 military coup d'etat). They also arrested hundreds of other pro-Turkes officers.

Despite these victories by the traditionalists, Turkes still maintains a tenuous hold on the Fourth Army, formed three years ago as a special strike force operating out of the Mediterranean port city of Izmir, location of NATO's regional command headquarters. The Fourth Army adamantly opposes Turkish concessions over Cyprus and has played a key role in "fomenting repercussions" with Greece over the disputed island, reported one source recently in Turkey.

The governmental stalemate has set the stage for such "repercussions" and possible provocations by Turkes-linked extremists in the Fourth Army who favor confrontation with Greece. Because of uncertainties about the political makeup of the next Turkish government, Greece is becoming increasingly edgy over matters of security and sovereignty and has issued a warning to the Turkish armed forces not to violate Greek airspace during ongoing Turkish military maneuvers in the Aegean. Only two weeks ago, the Greek government expressed its hope of working out a solution to the long-festered Aegean crisis with an Ecevit-led government in Turkey.