

Yadin, Dayan Open Up Power Play In Israel

A major fight for control over the state is about to break out in Israel.

In a sudden turnabout, Israel's Democratic Movement for Change (DMC) grouping this week decided to join the ruling governmental coalition led by Prime Minister Menachem Begin. Talks between Begin's Likud Party

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and the DMC headed by former Chief of Staff Yigal Yadin had been prolonged but were resolved in favor of joining the coalition after Yadin held hours of intense negotiations with Begin.

Yadin renewed the discussion with Begin after days of consultations in Washington D.C. with U.S. Secretary of State Cyrus Vance and National Security Advisor Zbigniew Brzezinski.

According to the Oct. 20 *Washington Post*, Yadin cited "grave political issues" as his reason for joining the coalition. The *Post* itself linked the decision to the deteriorating health of Begin and to the possibility of a power struggle for the succession developing in the event of Begin's death, with Yadin a possible consensus candidate to take over as premier after he has entered the government as deputy premier.

The sudden prominence of Yadin in the Israeli leadership group brings into relief the battles developing between various U.S.-based and London-centered international financier factions over the control of events in the Mideast. Yadin's DMC — a grouping of former military intelligence chiefs and generals mixed with influential Israeli liberal professors and ideologues — was created in 1975-76 with heavy input from Brzezinski's Trilateral Commission with the intent of transforming Israel into a "technocratic" society modelled on Brzezinski's writings. In mid-1976 *Foreign Policy* magazine, edited by Brzezinski, featured a piece written by Yadin's brother-in-law Amos Perlmutter describing the transformation of Israel from a social democratic society run by the Istadrut labor confederation into a "modern," "managerial" society — a theoretical basis for the DMC's operations.

At the same time, however, Yadin is the candidate favored for ruling Israel by the "Jewish Lobby" investment houses such as Kuhn, Loeb and the leading U.S. controllers such as Max Fisher of Detroit. DMC policy-makers such as former intelligence head Meir Amit are known to advocate an Israeli invasion of Arab oilfields in the event of a Mideast conflict — the New York banking house Lazard Freres-London policy par excellence.

If Yadin's factional allegiance is in contention, the same could also be said of Foreign Minister Moshe Dayan, a longstanding ally of the Lazard-London axis. Dayan has, in fact, become the center of a controversy in Israel over the past week for his persistent war-mongering antics.

According to the French newspaper *Le Matin*, a

mouthpiece for French Socialist Party leader François Mitterrand, Dayan is the "most likely successor" to Begin in the event of the latter having to step down for reasons of health. *Le Matin* insists that Dayan is "the most flexible" of all potential candidates in his foreign policy conceptions and thus will be able to navigate Israel through the present Middle East process to Geneva.

But reality disputes the Mitterrand outlet's fantasies. Dayan has hardly any independent political power base at this point since he is widely distrusted and disliked for sabotaging Israeli intelligence capabilities prior to the 1973 Mideast war and for his bellicose secretive diplomatic operations.

As testimony to his unpopularity, Dayan became the target of cross-party attack last week. Leading Israeli moderate Yossi Sarid, a close political ally of former Foreign Minister Abba Eban, accused Dayan in a parliamentary session of having "faked" a document purporting to be a written U.S. commitment to oppose Palestine Liberation Organization participation at Geneva, and then leaking this "document" to the *Ha'aretz* newspaper's Washington correspondent. Sarid accused Dayan of "pulling the wool over the eyes" of the Israeli population and called for an "urgent debate" in the parliament to "clarify" Dayan's actions.

Within the ruling Likud Party, challenges to Dayan's activities are scarcely concealed. France's *Nouvel Observateur* reported Oct. 18 that Samuel Katz, Israel's information and press director and ally of Begin for almost four decades, wants to take over the Foreign Minister's post from Dayan. The magazine also reports that when Dayan recently threatened to resign if his policies weren't accepted by the Cabinet, the threat drew "hardly an echo" in the Likud, whose leaders were "eagerly waiting for" Dayan to quit.

According to *Newsweek* magazine, the first source to suggest that Begin may soon step down for reasons of health, Dayan will be seriously challenged by Defense Minister Ezer Weizmann in the event that Begin resigns. Weizmann is the second-in-command of the dominant Herut faction in Likud, and is probably the succession candidate closest to Begin's thinking.

One highly informed New York source commented Oct. 20 that Israel "is on the brink of a major fight for power" involving Yadin, Dayan, Weizmann, and former General and current Agriculture Minister Ariel Sharon, an extreme nationalist who advocates Israeli annexation of the West Bank and who has recently met with disfavor in Begin circles for his wild-eyed statements. The source attacked Yadin and Dayan in particular as "vultures" watching health reports from Begin's hospital in order to make a power play.

Begin, however, is actively guiding Israeli policy, having been strengthened by the DMC's numerical strengthening of his coalition. The Premier has recently received support for his foreign policy initiatives from Eban, who is in the U.S. for a speaking tour.

— Mark Burdman