

militarize the Mideast "overreaction."

Military sources reveal that Jones threatened the Saudis that the outlaw regime of Iran might wage a bombing campaign against Saudi oilfields, something the regime of Ayatollah Khomeini has more than once threatened to do. Shortly after Riyadh agreed to AWACS, the Defense Department announced that the United States would deploy ground radar systems to Saudi Arabia. The decision by the Saudis to increase U.S. surveillance technology came after reports of the bombing of Iraq's nuclear facilities, widely attributed to Israel.

The Defense Department this week revealed that the American military has full control over the sophisticated radar apparatus, with one of the U.S. military's top air defense authorities, Maj. Gen. John L. Piotrowski, and full staff manning the equipment. The deployment of a top-flight team of U.S. military officers to Saudi Arabia represents a major foot in the door for Washington's bid to militarize the Persian Gulf. And Undersecretary of State Warren Christopher this week formally offered American aid to the Arab emirates on the Persian Gulf if the Iran-Iraq conflict expands (see page 37).

Washington has quietly made similar offers to the Gulf states since the outbreak of the war. On Oct. 4, U.S. Ambassador to Bahrain Peter Sutherland and a U.S. military mission held talks with Bahrain's defense minister, Hamad Bin Issa Al Khalifa. The same day, sources in Kuwait announced that the United States had delivered antiaircraft missiles to Oman to enable that country to protect the Straits of Hormuz at the mouth of the Persian Gulf. Just after the outbreak of the Iran-Iraq war last month, Britain sent 500 Special Air Services troops to Oman to "guard the Straits."

A Gulf NATO

The same week the Iran-Iraq war began, the *London Times* cited unnamed sources as asserting that a Persian Gulf military alliance should be established to ensure future security. Lenore Martin, a professor at Boston's Emmanuel College, two weeks later made the same proposal in an editorial for the *New York Times*. Entitled "For a Gulf 'NATO,'" Martin suggests that:

... the United States not only needs to base forces in the Gulf area, it must also develop a regional defense alliance along the lines of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization. Ground forces based in the region would not only be able to respond to crises faster than a Rapid Deployment Force, they would also provide a more tangible demonstration of America's commitment to the security of the Gulf nations.

Doubtless the idea of a Gulf States Defense Organization would at first encounter skepticism

in a region wary of great-power intervention. However, it might be palatable to Gulf nations because of the threat to their survival posed by the region's revolutionary powers. . . . Moreover, such a defense organization might include Egypt, which in the past has sent forces into the area, and other Western nations recently mentioned as members of a possible international naval force to keep open the Straits of Hormuz, through which about 60 percent of the world's oil trade passed before the war.

Soviet-Syria treaty a net loss for U.S.S.R.

by Robert Dreyfuss

The treaty slated to be signed between the Soviet Union and Syria during President Hafez Assad's Oct. 8 visit to Moscow does not represent a net gain for the U.S.S.R. in the Middle East. In fact, according to highly informed Syrian sources, it represents a dramatic blunder by the Soviet leadership.

At the same time, Soviet influence in Egypt—where Moscow once reigned supreme—is virtually nil, and despite the existence of a Soviet-Iraqi treaty, relations between Baghdad and Moscow are chilly at best.

But the decline of Soviet influence in the Middle East is not occurring to the advantage of the United States. The real beneficiaries of the simultaneous collapse of American and Soviet presence in the area are primarily Great Britain, and, in a subsidiary sense, Israel.

The Syrian regime with which the Soviet Union is presently establishing a formal alliance is already on a policy track that will soon collapse its authority.

Internally, President Assad is following an almost suicidal course of action. The Assad regime, based originally on a rather narrow section of Syria's population, the minority Alawite sect, has recently narrowed its base even further to the point where it has become a *sectarian regime*. Other than the Alawite sectarian clique that includes Assad, his immediate family, and such figures as Muhammad Haider of the ruling Baath Party's foreign relations department, no one else in Syria has a share of power.

Syrian intelligence, according to informed sources, actually encourages terrorist violence by such movements as the anti-Alawite Muslim Brotherhood secret society. In so doing, Assad believes that he can at once strengthen the cohesiveness of the inner circle of Alawites

around him while discrediting his opposition as terrorists and Muslim fanatics.

But Syrian nationalists, merchants and businessmen, and Sunni Muslim moderate currents have all been shut out of power by the Alawite clique. It is an explosive situation most observers think cannot last.

In supporting Assad, the Soviet Union is therefore making two related blunders. First, they are associating Soviet prestige with an isolated regime; by helping to maintain Assad in power, the Soviets are viewed as furthering their own interests, not necessarily Syrian ones. Many Syrians are upset about reports that KGB advisers, including torture specialists, are assisting Syrian security officials. Second, the Soviets are de facto collaborating with the policy of sectarianism in the Middle East, which carries great risks of instability for virtually every Middle East country.

The policy for increased sectarianism and tribalization in the Middle East is a long-time Anglo-Zionist policy objective. In more recent years, it has been organized under the code name "The Bernard Lewis Plan," after Princeton's Professor Lewis, an Oxford University British intelligence specialist on Islam and minorities. Informed Syrian sources say that because of Assad's shortsighted policy, the possibility exists that a Lebanon-style civil war could erupt within Syria and spread to other Arab states, as well as Turkey.

For the Soviet Union, the architect of that policy is Mr. Kim Philby, currently a KGB general and very active in formulating U.S.S.R. Middle East policy. Philby, who defected to the Soviet Union in 1963 after supposedly serving as a Soviet double agent in British intelligence, is in fact still a serving officer of London's secret service. For many years, until 1963, Philby was active in Lebanon, Syria, and the Arab world, among contacts delivered to him from his famous father, St. John Philby, the "Philby of Arabia" who helped to set up the Muslim Brotherhood.

The Syrian government's recent attacks against Iraq, Jordan, and Saudi Arabia, and the deliberately provocative Syrian stance on the Palestine question—for instance, Syrian Foreign Minister Khaddam's foolish call to expel Israel from the United Nations, a call that dismayed many Arabs—reflect the "Philbyite" anti-West confrontationist posture. This posture suits the interests of a certain, militant faction of the Soviet leadership.

Who benefits?

To the extent that the Soviet Union and the United States are placed on a confrontationist course in the area and regional stability is undermined, then the possibility of stepped-up European-Arab cooperation, along the lines suggested by France and West Germany, is eliminated. In that context, only the British—who have long been set on undermining the "Paris-Baghdad-Riyadh" axis—and the Israelis gain.



Mossad faction targets France

by Dana Sloan

The current series of neo-Nazi bombings and acts of terrorism in France, which has profoundly shaken the country, is seen by counterterror experts in the United States and Europe as a move unleashed from the outside, with the objective of creating a broad upheaval against the French president, Valéry Giscard d'Estaing. On a secondary level, the objective of the bombing is to create a highly charged atmosphere among European Jews to foster support for the policies of Israeli Prime Minister Menachem Begin's government.

Operations put into motion over the last few months by a number of intelligence agencies, including the Israeli Mossad, have succeeded in setting off a process of mass street demonstrations and creation of self-defense vigilante groups in France's Jewish community. The mass demonstrations in Paris and other cities this week coincided, in fact, with an official Israeli defense cabinet declaration on "the right and duty" of Jews to form self-

Eight thousand in Paris protest terror Oct. 2.

Photo: Wide World