

Gulf: U.S. 'one step ahead of Soviet'

by Jeffrey Steinberg

With the arrival of the formidable battleship *USS Missouri* in the Persian Gulf on Aug. 24, and the anticipated addition of the *USS Iowa* and Italian and West German minesweepers to the already operational British and French naval contingents, the Persian Gulf has become such a priority theater of operations for NATO forces that some high-level Washington sources are now referring to it as the "European Gulf."

More significant, however, than the military tonnage deployed to secure Gulf shipping lanes against Khomeiniac attack, is the fact that a deepening political alliance between Washington and moderate Arab capitals is delivering a strategic blow to Moscow's imperial goals in the region. Even as the added naval forces were steaming into the Gulf, the United States was signing a bilateral friendship agreement with the government of Iraq. The Reagan administration also announced that Defense Secretary Caspar Weinberger, the architect of the dramatic turnabout in American policy toward the Middle East, will soon go to Cairo in what is being billed as a major state visit. The United States, Egypt, and Jordan have been engaged in a series of joint maneuvers over the month of August—coincidentally bringing additional large contingents of American forces into the area.

Furthermore, Saudi Arabia has followed through on its initial tough response to the Iranian plot to overthrow the House of Saud through last month's Mecca riots. Riyadh delivered an unequivocal threat to the Khomeini regime: Any further "sabotage and any aggression" against Saudi Arabia will be considered a *casus belli*, declared Saudi Interior Minister Prince Nayif Ibn Aboulaziz at a press conference in Riyadh on Aug. 25.

High-level sources in Washington have told *EIR* that the success of the Reagan administration and allied Gulf deployment has put the United States into a position of being "one step ahead of the Russians" for perhaps the first time in 30 years. This, the sources emphasize, has far-reaching implications for America's posture in all dealings with the Soviet regime.

As the result, these sources say, the Reagan administration—under the direction of Secretary Weinberger—is in the

process of effecting a fundamental shift in strategic doctrine. At the heart of this shift is a repudiation of "crisis management" and a reemphasis on the necessity for sustained military commitments on a global scale.

Moreover, for the first time in decades, the concept of a "just war" is being actively debated in the context of appropriate American response to the Khomeini regime's bellicose stand. Not only has the Khomeini government formally declared itself at war with the United States. After an unsuccessful "diplomatic" trip to the United States in mid-August by Iranian Deputy Foreign Minister Larijani (whom U.S. sources have identified as a Soviet agent within the Khomeini regime), Iranian Prime Minister Hussein Moussavi declared on Aug. 27, in an IRNA Iranian News Service release, that Iran will never agree to the United Nations ceasefire proposal.

Hot pursuit

Democratic Party presidential candidate Lyndon H. LaRouche, Jr. has called on the Reagan administration to pursue a policy of "hot pursuit" against any acts of Iranian aggression in the Gulf. By hot pursuit, LaRouche specifically means that defensive actions by American forces must include the taking out of both Iranian military forces responsible for acts of aggression as well as the Iranian resources that those forces are deployed to protect. Such a bold unequivocal policy by the United States would bring about the rapid collapse of the Islamic republic and lay the basis for a sane, pro-Western regime to return to power in that strategically vital nation.

In a radio broadcast aired on stations throughout the United States on Aug. 26, LaRouche elaborated on his policy toward Iran:

"I have recommended to our government that it is not necessary for us to issue a formal declaration of war on Khomeini. We must recognize simply that Khomeini's government has declared war on us. . . .

"Together, the allies, United States, France and other cooperating nations have overwhelmingly superior military force facing Khomeini's forces in the Persian Gulf. . . . Nothing should or need be done to cause the United States to become involved in a war against the people of Iran. The overwhelming majority of those people were friends of the United States before Khomeini came to power, and will be again, as soon as the Khomeiniacs are thrown out of power.

"Our object is to obliterate the Khomeiniacs' credibility throughout the Islamic world and inside Iran itself. The time has come and passed to draw the line. Our patience is exhausted with Khomeini's terrorism. We are going to bottle him up inside Iran, and destroy his ability to launch military actions in and beyond the Persian Gulf, and we are going to wipe out his terrorists wherever they come within our reach. We are going to free the people of Iran and throughout the Islamic populations of the world from all belief in Khomeini's mystical powers; we are going to humiliate him and what he stands for before the entire world."