

claimed that he was a member of the Pakistani Secret Service Group who was trained at a special camp in Pakistani-occupied Kashmir by Chinese instructors. The third hijacker is from Azad, the Pakistani-held portion of Kashmir.

But it is other features of the job which give it away. According to even the Pakistani accounts, it is the hijackers who identified their "leader" as Murtaza Bhutto. Despite their claims that Murtaza Bhutto met them at the Kabul airport, Bhutto, in a message reported in the *Guardian*, explicitly denied any foreknowledge of the hijacking.

Indeed, aside from the footprints placed at Murtaza's door, there is no evidence at all, even of the kind the regime is manufacturing, to link Mrs. Bhutto and Benazir to these activities outside the country or to the hijacking.

This writer can reveal that well before these events, early in 1980, Benazir Bhutto sent a message to London in which she explicitly warned that the army "defectors" were "fifth-columnists" who were not to be trusted. She sent instructions to regard all army "defectors" as plants of the regime. Apparently these messages never reached Murtaza. Further, to our intimate knowledge, there was absolutely no contact for an extended period of time between Murtaza and members of the family inside the country. We also know that it was the wish of Mrs. Begum Bhutto that the use of Kabul as a base of operations cease precisely for fear that the regime would use that fact to its own ends.

### The plot against the Bhuttos

The plot against the Bhuttos is not over yet. Pakistani circles seriously fear that the regime is now set to eliminate the entire Bhutto family. On March 18 General Zia proclaimed that he would take "severe action" against the hijackers and those responsible. Asked how he would do that with the hijackers now in Syria, the general replied: "You just keep quiet and see the result. If they are not in the country, it doesn't mean that they will escape Allah Almighty."

Indeed, according to well-informed sources in London four teams of Pakistani hitmen, four men in each and trained as commandos, have now been dispatched. Their targets are the two sons of Bhutto, Murtaza and his younger brother Shahnawaz. Mrs. Bhutto and Benazir are under arrest in an increasingly repressive situation in which the regime is trying to isolate them from the rest of the political opposition.

Will General Zia and his backers in London and Washington succeed in this plot? That cannot be foretold. But, the Pakistan Peoples Party and the Bhutto tradition remain the best hope for stability and development in Pakistan and the region. Any attempt to remove that hope is a formula for disaster.

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## Israel

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# Shimon Peres makes overture to Arabs

by Mark Burdman

The intensifying political fight in Israel leading up to that country's June 30 national elections has taken an important turn with the March 25 unveiling by Labour Party prime minister candidate Shimon Peres of a major new initiative toward Israel's Arab neighbors and, indirectly, toward resolution of Israel's economic problems.

Although Peres's initiative, detailed in an interview with the Jerusalem Domestic Television Service, has gone almost completely unreported in the Western news media, it is potentially the most significant policy formulation made by an Israeli statesman since at least the October 1973 Arab-Israeli war.

In the March 25 interview, Peres offered to several of Israel's Arab neighbors an arrangement in which "promoting economic cooperation" would be linked to "joint action against terrorism and fanatic movements."

While not all the details of this conception were made public in the interview itself, Peres indicated that a key salient feature of his plan was Israeli cooperation with France and other European nations in opening up lines of communication with the Arab states—a departure from the wall-to-wall hostility toward France that has tended to operate in the Israeli political spectrum.

Peres also asserted that his plan signaled the opening of a "new chapter" in Israel's history, as Israel makes efforts to become a working partner in the development of the Middle East. This, again, is a new departure, this time away from the dominant geopolitical notion of Israel serving as a NATO-connected proxy power.

Finally, Peres insisted that Israel must "take the initiative" in launching a new political arrangement in the Middle East. This quality of voluntarism challenges the "victim mentality"-induced passivity that has characterized mainstream thinking in Israel for much of its history. In the past, Israeli leaders have characteristically used the excuse of Arab hostility to avoid extending economic cooperation-linked peace offers to its Arab neighbors.

According to an assessment presented to *EIR* by an associate of Peres, the March 25 offer is "not only meant for Egypt, Jordan, and Saudi Arabia [the countries named explicitly by Peres in the interview], but also to Iraq and other countries as well, as the circumstances become appropriate."

The same source told *EIR* that Peres hopes to "make the outlines of his policy clear in personal meetings with Arab leaders and to enlist Western European leaders, particularly West Germany's Helmut Schmidt, in exploring the viability of the plan."

The source indicated that Peres's plan is "fully consistent" with the many Middle East policy statements made by *EIR* founder Lyndon H. LaRouche. LaRouche has insisted that regional economic development packages are the only basis for isolating the fanatical Qaddafi-Khomeini axis and shifting the regional configuration out of the destabilization-and-crisis-management framework defined by British intelligence and its allies in the European black nobility.

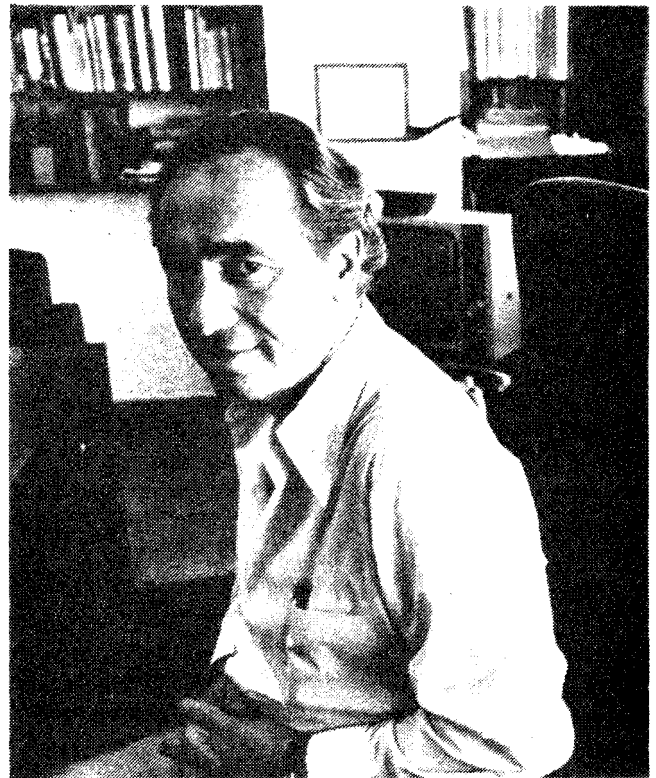
LaRouche has also indicated that a credible Israeli offer of regional economic cooperation and approaches toward Europe would open up the possibility for Israeli integration into the French-German plan for eventual expansion of the European Monetary System into a European Monetary Fund capable of extending vast gold-based credits for large-scale nuclear-energy-based projects in the developing world.

Peres's nod toward France is particularly interesting in this light, since it is the French who have most vigorously pursued an atoms-for-peace conception in the Middle East, through nuclear reactor export arrangements with Egypt and Iraq, and well-advanced discussions with Morocco, Algeria, and other Arab nations.

### **A new Israeli nationalism?**

As promising as Peres's "new initiative" may be, the danger exists that it will die in its infancy, unless it becomes the *foundation* for actively mobilizing the Israeli electorate around a new role for Israel in the Middle East. Such a mobilization would depend on defining clearly, for the first time in Israel's 33-year history, what Israel's interests are as a *sovereign nation-state in the Middle East*. Heretofore, Israel's interests have largely been defined in terms of Zionist ideological baggage and British geopolitical gamesmanship, a combination that has created a capability for a certain kind of unity in times of crisis, but hardly for a truly positive sense of national identity.

A *nationalist* alternative to the Zionist-geopolitical conception that would be consistent with Peres's March 25 design would be to define Israel as the *radiating center of technological and scientific development for the entire Middle East*. Such a conception would reflect the density of scientists, engineers, and skilled workers that Israel has developed over the past decades. It would also be the key to reversing the profound sense of national malaise reflected in sagging national economic performance, high rates of emigration, and growing talk about the need for a dictatorial "strongman" to run the country.



*Shimon Peres*

Short of the aggressive organizing perspective indicated above, Peres's plan is likely to fall prey to some of the seamier facts of life in the Middle East today.

### **A delicate situation**

The Middle East is presently entering an extremely delicate phase, as a result of the intersection of several factors, including the irresolution of policy determination in Washington, the continuation of the Iraq-Iran war, and scarcely disguised British intelligence efforts to destabilize Saudi Arabia and its Gulf neighbors. The situation is made even more volatile by the incendiary antics of certain of Peres's political opponents in Israel.

For the past several days, Prime Minister Menachem Begin and Chief of Staff Rafael Eytan, in collaboration with their mirror-image extremists in the Palestinian movements, have been heating up border tensions with both Lebanon and Jordan, tensions that could be transformed into giant international crises in the weeks leading up to Israel's elections. Top-level Israeli intelligence sources have in fact warned *EIR* that the Begin team may be counting on just such an eventuality to declare a national emergency and usurp the election process by virtual fiat.

Particularly menacing is the sudden—and timely—March 31 raid into Israel by Palestinian guerrillas operating out of Jordan. Chief of Staff Eytan labeled

the raid a "very unusual development which is viewed with extreme gravity in Israel." The "development" occurred only days after both Syrian President Hafez Assad and Ahmed Jibreel, the leader of the Syrian-controlled extremist Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine General Command, announced that Jordan would be used as a base for Palestinian terrorist operations into Israel.

Reliable intelligence experts estimate that Assad, Jibreel, Begin, and Eytan are in full alliance in a conspiracy to destabilize Jordan's King Hussein, and thereby knock the props out from one of the main countries mentioned by Peres in his March 25 interview. Assad notably accused King Hussein on March 26 of "high treason" because the king's brother Muhammad had reportedly met with Peres in London. In a parallel deployment, the pro-Begin press in Israel has been lambasting Peres for his public and private overtures to Arab leaders.

### The Dayan factor

Another is the close collaboration in the Israeli electoral campaign between the Herut-Likud and Moshe Dayan, whose family is intimate with top Israeli mafioso Mordechai Sarfati ("Mentesh"), according to revelations published in the March 27 *Jerusalem Post*. *Post* reporter Mark Segal reveals that "Mentesh" funded the weddings of Dayan's children; one of these children was arrested by West German authorities in the 1970s and implicated in coordinating a massive drug and prostitution ring extending throughout Europe and into Latin America.

Dayan has become the near-linchpin of the entire Likud-Herut re-election strategy. He is expected to announce at any moment that he is going to head a new political party in the elections. Previously, Dayan had acknowledged that such an election bid would have only one aim: to wreck Labour's chances for a majority.

Begin aides and Dayan representatives have meanwhile been meeting to map out how they can prevent the public release of the Agranat Commission Report on the 1973 war. The report allegedly contains extensive sections, never before made public, documenting how Dayan sabotaged Israel's intelligence capabilities on the eve of the war. According to one Israeli source, "Release of the report now could wreck Dayan's career forever. Begin is determined to prevent this from happening."

Peres's allies are lobbying for the report's release, as a countermove to Dayan. One irony of the current Israeli situation is that it was Labour's anxiety over Dayan's moves that was in part responsible for motivating Peres's March 25 new foreign policy offer. But precisely to nip Peres's initiative in the bud, Begin and Dayan are greatly intensifying their collaboration.

## From the Peres interview

*Excerpts of a March 25 interview granted by Israel Labour Party Chairman and prime ministerial candidate Shimon Peres to the Jerusalem Domestic Television Service.*

In my estimation, the entire Middle East, and Israel in particular, is currently in a special predicament. The next four years will not be like the previous four years. After Camp David, given a new administration in the United States, and Reagan signifies not only a personal change but a change of world concept and a view of this area in a regional and global perspective. . . .

Yet I am convinced that with a correct Israeli policy it would be possible to establish a regional antiterror setup to counter Soviet or alien penetration and fanatic forces and at the same time promote economic cooperation. Israel should take this initiative. As party leader, it is my duty, on the eve of the elections, to go and meet all the prominent figures to examine the possibilities and the incumbent interlocutors. Let me tell you one thing: I have returned optimistic from my travels. . . .

In my opinion, under the term "Jordanian option," a host of things can be done, such as, for instance, beginning economic cooperation—and I talked about this with Arab leaders and European leaders, and, again, I am not impressed with declarations. . . . I am not walking around feeling that I represent a weak Israel; I walk around feeling that I represent an Israel that has strength, an opinion, initiative, and also needs the appropriate—restrained—style. . . .

I believe that Saudi Arabia needs peace and stability in the Middle East no less than we do. . . . Let us fight terrorism together. . . . We can achieve economic cooperation, we can achieve joint war against terrorism, we can face up to fanatic movements. . . .

[O]n the regional level, Israel can make a contribution in the region. In my opinion, the Middle Eastern chapter has now opened in Israel's foreign policy. I know many people do not like this. It is not the first time in my life that I, and not only I, have reached a conclusion that there is room for a new situation, for a new initiative, and then all the people of routine who are accustomed to slogans begin to ask: What is this? Who is this?

Believe me, the same happened to me in France . . . surprise and criticism. I do not intend to be frightened by this. It is my duty, as a representative of a responsible party, to examine new situations. I believe that the Middle Eastern chapter has now begun in the Israeli foreign policy. We are not used to this. It seems strange to us. . . . I believe that a lot depends on Israel's initiative. . . . I do not want others to make peace for us and instead of us.