

# Will Guns of August Be Fired In Middle East?

by Dean Andromidas

At the brink of a new Thirty Years War spreading from the Mideast, a war that would involve the deployment of nuclear weapons by Israel, Prime Minister Ariel Sharon and his Palestinian and Arab opponents are being manipulated by powerful Anglo-American financier geopolitical interests. These are determined to use war, to prevent ongoing moves to foster Eurasian economic development as an alternative to the current financial collapse.

It is Lyndon LaRouche's assessment, published on July 27 in *EIR*, that Anglo-American factions will allow Sharon to launch a war of destruction against the Palestinian Authority, with the full knowledge that it would unleash region-wide irregular war which would destroy Israel. In such a dynamic, anything is possible, including the assassination/"martyrdom" of Sharon, following which even more extreme forces would come to power in Israel, who would not hesitate to launch a nuclear strike against Iran or Iraq. Such a strike would ensure the global religious war, which would crush any hope for a Eurasian economic development alternative.

The past week's events are confirming those warnings.

## Haig to Israel: 'Bomb Iran'

Former U.S. Secretary of State Alexander Haig, representing these Anglo-American interests, made clear that these forces want the deployment of nuclear weapons by Israel when a new Middle East war breaks out. Haig told the *Jerusalem Post* on July 25, that he fully endorsed an Israeli strike against Iran's alleged nuclear weapons program.

"I think the Iranians ought to know that, if they develop nuclear weapons, they are risking that," said Haig. "If the Israelis do launch a preemptive strike, it may be saving the world a lot of trouble." In an earlier interview, Haig attacked Russian President Vladimir Putin for allegedly supplying nuclear technology to Iran, "I think we have been extremely naïve about Mr. Putin. But he gives every evidence of being extremely dangerous."

His attacks on both Russia and Iran, have less to do with nuclear weapons, than the fact that the developing Iranian-Russian economic relationship is a key component of the Eurasian economic cooperation, which also involves China, India, and the republics of Central Asia. The Haig interview should not be taken lightly. For the last three decades, Haig has spoken for the Anglo-American geopolitical policy establishment. He started his political career as deputy to Henry Kissinger during the Nixon Administration, and, in fact, Haig

and Kissinger were protégés of the founder of the American school of modern geopolitics, Fritz Kraemer. Enjoying close ties to former President Sir George Bush, Haig has more recently been acting as representative for major U.S. and European multinational corporations, in their activities throughout the Eurasian region, from the United Kingdom, to Eastern Europe, Russia, Central Asia, and China.

Moreover, the *Jerusalem Post*, owned by Canadian media czar Conrad Black's Hollinger Corp., is the mouthpiece for precisely the Anglo-American faction gunning for a new Middle East war. There can be no doubt where Conrad Black's loyalties lie. He gave up his Canadian citizenship in order to accept a British peerage from Queen Elizabeth II.

Haig's earlier interview was given to NewsMax.com, an Internet news service backed by the right-wing Mellon Scaife family. Haig is a member of its board of directors, whose chairman is Lord William Rees-Mogg, former chief editor of the *Times* of London.

In the interview, Haig added that he felt "very disturbed" by the war crimes charges brought before a Belgian court against his good friend Ariel Sharon, charging him with responsibility for the massacre at the Sabra and Chatila refugee camps during the 1982 Israeli invasion of Lebanon. Haig should feel "very disturbed," since as Ronald Reagan's secretary of state, he gave Sharon the "green light" to invade Lebanon: both a disaster for Israel as well as American Middle East policy.

## Worse Than Sharon?

LaRouche has warned that if war explodes in the Middle East, the assassination of Sharon could not be ruled out, because he might hesitate in deploying Israel's weapons of mass destruction. The "martyrdom" of Sharon—to be blamed on Arabs—would open the way for worse madmen to take power, who would not hesitate to launch a nuclear strike against Tehran, Damascus, or Baghdad. In the last week of July, more and more of these fanatics are surfacing.

Because the U.S. administration has yet to openly give the green light for Sharon to launch his regional war, Sharon has been forced to slow his policy of crushing the Palestinian Authority. This is steadily turning the Intifada uprising into a war of attrition, and, as in all wars of attrition, it is deeply demoralizing and frustrating Israeli society.

An Israeli source in the peace camp, related to *EIR* how Israelis are reaching a psychological breaking point. Nine months of Intifada have left a heavy toll on both the Palestinians and Israelis. While the Palestinians are suffering from tremendous hardship and frustrations, with more than 500 Palestinians killed and thousands wounded, the situation in Israel is not much better. With 128 Israeli deaths, the large majority of them civilians, the atmosphere of death, fear, and feeling of helplessness pervades Israeli society. These large numbers of civilian casualties far surpass any other period in the post-1948 history of Israel. The fighting in the occupied territories, conducted largely by Israeli reservists, has had a



*Former Secretary of State Alexander Haig's wildly provocative statements July 25 to the Jerusalem Post, confirmed Lyndon LaRouche's insistence that the drive for a general Mideast war is coming from Brzezinski-like "geopolitical" circles outside the region.*

brutalizing effect on the population. Consider the fact that, while the Army has lost 31 soldiers killed in action, it has also suffered "other losses," such as 13 soldiers committing suicide while on duty. Another sign of demoralization is demonstrated by the fact that there is a dramatic increase in wife beatings, and not just by overstressed husbands in the military, returning from duty in the territories.

For a large proportion of the population which is drawn from the post-1950s waves of immigration, primarily from the Oriental Jewish communities of Iraq, Iran, and North Africa, and more recently Russia, Israeli nationalism does not equate with Zionist fervor. For these people, the Jewish settlements in the occupied territories mean less than the fact that unemployment is now over 9%, affecting both blue-collar workers, and also Israel's high-tech sector, where unemployment rates are even higher.

These conditions have left the population hysterical and confused. The very polls that show that 70% of the public supports Sharon, show that the same percentage would support a negotiated agreement, including a freeze on Jewish settlements in the occupied territories.

This confused population is led by a political class that supports hard-line policies against the Palestinians, but whom voters see as corrupt and incompetent. In the last election, as much as 50% of the electorate stayed away from the polls. Moreover, the peace camp has been neutralized by the national unity government between Sharon's right-wing Likud and the Labor Party. Making matters worse, there is a tremendous increase in ultra-Orthodox Jewish fundamentalism that threatens to turn Israel into a full theocratic state.

In this atmosphere, given the failure of the United States to put an end to Sharon's war policy and apply the pressure

required to get the Mitchell peace plan implemented, the radical right is gaining strength.

### **'Bibi' Comes Back**

This has been dramatically seen through the re-emergence of former Likud Prime Minister Benjamin "Bibi" Netanyahu, and the most radical religious fanatics of the so-called "Temple Mount Movement."

Ever the opportunist, but always enjoying support among the so-called Christian "Religious Right" in the United States, Netanyahu all but challenged the leadership of Sharon at the July 22 meeting of the Likud's Central Committee. Whereas Sharon's speech was interrupted by hecklers, Netanyahu was met by cheers as he called for "rapid victory," rather than "continued restraint." Netanyahu's performance left the commentators convinced that if Sharon falls, Bibi will be again in the prime minister's seat.

Nonetheless there are those to the right of Netanyahu, such as Moshe Feiglin, the head of the Zo Artzenu ("This Is Our Land") movement, who recently told an interviewer, "War is the best thing that can happen today." Within the Likud, Feiglin represents a link between the Temple Mount Faithful fanatics and the party's secular right wing, and the settlers movement. Feiglin recently sponsored an ad calling for the murder of Arafat. He spurns waiting for approval from the Bush Administration, but called on Israel to set a clear deadline when it will launch a war.

In the same interview, Feiglin attacked Sharon, saying, "He has no strategy at all. He is an old man like [Labor Party leader, Foreign Minister] Shimon Peres, who wants to leave the stage as nice guy." He predicted new elections will come within six months, because "Sharon is going in circles and

these circles are getting smaller and smaller; therefore one can expect his government will collapse.” When asked whether he could envision himself coming to power, he said, “No one knows what will happen. We are in the hands of God. If God wills it we will be His tool.”

Although he is not expected to win the leadership fight, Feiglin is expected to become a “swing” factor, whose views will play a significant role.

Meanwhile, on July 19, three Palestinians were killed, including a three-month-old baby, when their car was sprayed by automatic machine-gun fire. A Jewish terrorist group called “The Committee for Road Safety” claimed responsibility, thus signalling the possibility that militias from the Jewish settlements will start battling with the Palestinians. Although those responsible were not arrested, the name of the Committee for Road Safety was used in 1987 by the late Rabbi Meir Kahane’s terrorist organization Kach, to carry out attacks against Palestinians during that Intifada.

### Provocations on the ‘Temple Mount’

More ominous is the fact that the ultra-right is mobilizing new provocations over the al-Haram Al Sharif/Temple Mount, where, last September, Sharon sparked the current conflagration by his provocative visit to a Muslim holy site, during Friday prayers, guarded by 1,000 police officers. An attack or other provocation on this site would directly provoke a region-wide religious war. In recent weeks, the Temple Mount Faithful and similar groups of the so-called “Temple Lovers,” have been mobilizing to celebrate the annual Tisha B’Av ceremony on July 29, commemorating the fall of King Solomon’s Temple on this site, 2,000 years ago. These groups want to destroy the mosques that are among Islam’s most holy of places, in order to build the “Third Temple.”

Unlike other years, these groups are planning a series of events that could have explosive consequences. A group of 40 rabbis representing the “Rabbinical Council of Judea, Samaria and Gaza,” who represent Jewish settlers in the occupied territories (they refer to the West Bank as “Judea and Samaria”), called upon rabbis to bring their communities to the al-Haram al-Sharif complex. Since the start of the Intifada, Jerusalem police have forbidden non-Muslims to enter the complex. Leaders of the terrorist Kach movement, Yehuda Etzion and Baruch Marzel, along with six other rightists, sent a letter to the Jerusalem police chief, threatening to enter the complex disguised as Arabs, and then conduct prayers, unless they are allowed to enter the complex openly.

The July 29 event will involve a parade through the Old City of Jerusalem and a demonstration at the entrance of the al-Haram al-Sharif/Temple Mount complex. A huge cornerstone of the “Third Temple” will also be transported in the parade. For the first time, an Israeli court has granted permission to allow the stone to be placed in front of the Dung Gate.

Although considered ultra-rightist, these fanatics have considerable support within the Sharon government, starting with the Prime Minister himself.

### Don’t Forget the Military Establishment

An Israeli intelligence source reminded *EIR* of another side to Israeli politics: the military and intelligence establishment that permeates Israeli society, and its political and economic structures. In the current cabinet, there are no fewer than five retired generals. In the previous, Labor government of Prime Minister Ehud Barak, there were even more. The ultimate decision for war will lie with this establishment, and like the political class, it is going through a transformation. Under Chief of Staff Shaul Mofaz, the Israeli high command has shifted to the right. It is they who have proposed using F-16 fighter-bombers against Palestinian targets and have been promoting “military solutions” for the Intifada.

Writing in the Israeli daily *Ha’aretz* on July 26, military commentator Reuven Pedatzur warned: “If war breaks out, it will be a bizarre, and above all, unnecessary, military confrontation, fueled by the kind of political culture that has taken root here in Israel and which the IDF [Israel Defense Forces] has assiduously nurtured. According to this political culture, every problem has a military solution. This will also be bizarre, because its planners have been unable to come up with a single reasonable goal — except the satisfaction of the Israeli public’s desire for revenge.”

Moreover, the Israel military, especially the officer corps, is permeated with religious Zionists and officials and sympathizers of the Jewish settlements.

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