

Plan Afoot To Redraw Map of the Middle East

by Muriel Mirak-Weissbach

No one can say for sure, what the next phase of the war in the Middle East will look like in detail. However, high-ranking diplomatic and intelligence circles in the Arab world have been intensely discussing various scenarios reportedly being pursued by those forces in Israel and the United States that are jointly committed to expanding the conflict. One leading figure in the Israeli peace camp has publicly issued his forecast, which dovetails with that of the Arabs.

The basic idea, is that Israel would strike against Lebanon and/or Syria, justifying its actions by the claim that the two governments have been fuelling Hezbollah hostilities on the Israeli-Lebanese border, and in the contested Shebaa Farms area. As a consequence, Syria and Lebanon would be repartitioned, whereby Syria would receive Muslim parts of Lebanon (in the north and south) as parts of a new confederation, under an alternative regime to that of current President Bashar Assad, while Lebanon would become a Christian state. Syria's gains would be offered in compensation for the Golan Heights, which Israel would keep.

In this context, the recent redeployments of Syrian troops inside Lebanon make a lot of sense. The United States has threatened Syria, and Lebanon, that they will be bombed by Israel, if Syria does not redeploy out of Lebanon. This was the gist of the message delivered by U.S. Secretary of State Colin Powell, on his quick visits to Beirut and Damascus following his talks with Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon in mid-April. The United States also delivered a threat to Iran, via its Swiss liaison, that it would give the green light to Israel to bomb Iran, if Iran did not also move against the Hezbollah in Lebanon. The visit of Iranian Foreign Minister Dr. Kamal Kharrazi to Lebanon, parallel to Powell's tour, should be seen in this light. Kharrazi discussed the need to avoid any provocations which Sharon could use, to ignite the wider conflict which he has publicly stated is on the agenda.

As for the Palestinians, the operational plan Sharon seems to be following, foresees making life impossible for the Palestinians, continuing his reoccupation drive, and expelling them into Jordan. Jordan would become a "republic" of Palestine, and the Hashemite dynasty there would move to Saudi Arabia, reassuming custody over the Holy Places. Saudi Arabia would also be destabilized.

As Sharon's recent statements and actions have made clear, Israel intends to consolidate its control over the occu-

pied territories, to maintain the settlements, and to make no concessions on the Golan Heights or other occupied territory. Thus, Israel seeks to consolidate its position as the regional superpower, extending its influence from Turkey through the Persian Gulf.

Following the attacks against Lebanon/Syria, Iraq would be attacked, according to military plans already discussed in the public domain, and Saddam Hussein would be replaced by a puppet regime. Any attack on Iraq, as we have documented (see "The Coming War on Iraq Will Not Be Desert Storm II," *EIR*, March 29, 2002), would unleash destabilization throughout the region. Egypt would be the hardest hit. According to Arab sources, Egypt could be hit by a military coup, organized by officers and business interests with close U.S. ties. Any such coup, would be based on accusations that the current government is guilty of human rights violations, especially against the minority Copts, and of corruption. The coup plotters, it is believed, would profile themselves as the true defenders of the Palestinian cause. The new regime would promise economic and political reform.

The final component of this war plan, involves Israeli orchestration of terrorism in Europe and the United States, through cells it has established, which operate under Arab cover.

The 'Wolfowitz-Sharon Plan'

This reading was confirmed in its essential points by Max Ghilan, publisher of the peace journal *Israel and Palestine*, in a speech delivered on April 16 at the Center for Policy Analysis on Palestine, which is one of the most prestigious Washington think-tanks on Palestinian issues. Ghilan, whose articles have been published in *EIR* over the years, discussed the breaking strategic situation as a grave danger, and part of a "Wolfowitz-Sharon" design for a larger regional war.

Ghilan, who is Jewish, discussed his long history in the Israeli peace movement, and laid out clearly the intentions of the "neo-fascist" Sharon government. Ghilan said that Sharon is acting on a *premeditated*, completely developed plan to "redraw the map" of the Middle East, which he called the "Wolfowitz-Sharon plan." Sharon's intention is to drive all the Palestinians out of the West Bank, but there is a broader U.S. plan, reflected by the "Clash of Civilizations" types around Deputy Secretary of Defense Paul Wolfowitz, to exert American unilateral domination of the entire oil-producing world, from the Middle East to Central Asia, to areas of the Indian Subcontinent where the energy resources have not even been developed yet.

Ghilan stated that the Wolfowitz-Sharon plan placed the war on Iraq at center stage, in the context of a regional project. He stressed that the intent is to eliminate all Palestinians, and to eliminate the state of Jordan, which, in his view, would be absorbed into a U.S.-controlled "new Iraq" regime. This new Iraq would also incorporate part of Saudi Arabia, which would be broken up into pieces.