

to ten bombs. Israeli cabinet approval led to the building of an eight-storey (six of them underground) complex at Dimona in the Negev, to house the reactor. The two states signed an agreement on nuclear cooperation, one aspect of over a decade of close military cooperation. A principal actor in this was today's Israeli foreign minister, Shimon Peres, who served as director-general of the Defense Ministry in the years 1953-59. In 1954, Peres was dispatched by Ben-Gurion on the first of many trips to Paris to negotiate arms deals. In his book, *David's Sling*, Peres characterized this as a «new era of Franco-Israeli relations... enabling Israel to overcome most of her security problems...» Left unspoken was the linchpin for Israeli 'security', i.e., nuclear weapons.

In the late fifties, 'Israel' collaborated with France on the design of the Mirage warplane capable of delivering nuclear bombs. In the sixties, Israeli scientists were on the scene when France staged nuclear tests in desert areas of Algeria. In 1961, 'Israel' launched its Shavit II missile patterned on a French model used in the Sahara tests, i.e., equipped to deliver nuclear warheads. 'Israel' went on to develop the Jericho missile originally begun in cooperation with a French firm and capable of nuclear delivery. The Jericho II can thrust a 1,000-1,500 pound warhead over 400 miles. It was tested in the Shah's Iran and in South Africa. In May 1985, the US newsletter, *Aerospace Daily*, reported that 'Israel' had deployed potentially nuclear-tipped Jericho II intermediate-range missiles with a 700 kilometer range in the Negev and Golan Heights, mounted on trucks and supported by nuclear-hardened underground facilities.

As prime minister in the national unity government, Peres may have revived the Israeli-French nuclear cooperation which was cooled by President de Gaulle in the sixties. Peres' December 1984 visit to Paris was accompanied by reports that France wanted to sell two nuclear power plants to 'Israel'. Complications arose and to our knowledge the deal has not gone through, though 'Israel' has on its own announced plans for a new nuclear station, supposedly for electric power generation. *Jerusalem Post*, on January 1, 1986, reported on the Tagar project to be situated in the Negev, pending final approval and the acquisition of technology from West Germany, Canada and the US.

With the advent of Mitterand's presidency, France has moved decidedly closer to 'Israel' again, and there may be more cooperation than is announced. *Jerusalem Post*, on August 11, 1985, revealed that a French agent, involved in the bombing of the Greenpeace's Rainbow Warrior ship, had

spent two weeks in 'Israel' following the crime. This suggests close intelligence cooperation in combatting anti-nuclear activities.

In a 1972 interview with *Davar*, Peres, as permanent secretary of the Defense Ministry, spoke of the concept of non-conventional «compellence» in an implicit reference to Israeli nuclear capacity. Indeed the man who today promotes his image as a 'dove', championing the Israeli version of an international peace conference, more rightfully deserves the title of Mr. Nuclear Bomb.

NUCLEAR BLACKMAIL

In the Zionist reality, the 'dove' and the bomber are two means to the same goal. Peres' international conference is a political trap to force the Arab regimes and the PLO to submit to Israeli conditions, i.e., to accept the consequences of four decades of Israeli state terrorism. If the aggression of the past is not enough, nuclear capacity remains as the trump card of the Zionist state's dangerous game of blackmail. It warns of the possibility of the Zionists staging their ultimate blitzkrieg-a nuclear first strike. In the book *Two Minutes Over Baghdad*, the Israeli/American authors write: «... there is no doubt that one of the greatest factors that motivated Sadat to choose this direction in policy (his 1977 visit to occupied Jerusalem) was the Israeli nuclear threat. In the long-running negotiations between Israel and Egypt, the nuclear issue had been paramount - although both sides, including the Americans, were reluctant for the world's media to publicize it.» On November 8, 1978, the *New York Times* reported that 'Israel' had rejected two Egyptian offers to give up the nuclear arms race in the Middle East and to limit the conventional arms race.

Short of wreaking a nuclear holocaust in the Middle East, Israeli nuclear blackmail serves a variety of purposes. The mere knowledge that the Zionist state has the bomb is intended as a deterrent to the Arab state's attempts to redress their grievances. This is probably the main reason that a variety of Israeli officials have made statements hinting at their nuclear capacity. 'Leaks' have often been timed to match impending aggression, such as just before the 1967 and 1973 wars. In June 1981, a year before the Zionist army invaded Lebanon, by which time the invasion was in the final planning stages, Moshe Dayan warned that 'Israel' had the capacity to produce nuclear weapons «in a short time.» For these reasons, the why's of Vanunu's revelations, though not the substance, initially elicited some scepticism.

For a state like 'Israel', the line separating psychological warfare from actual aggression is quite thin. *Two Minutes Over Baghdad* recounts how 'Israel' prepared to use nuclear weapons in the 1973 war: «There were indications that Dayan gave an order secretly to put in combat readiness, for the first time, Israeli-made Jericho SS missiles, carrying nuclear warheads, as well as Kfir and Phantom bomber fighters equipped with nuclear devices. Altogether, 13 Israeli-made nuclear weapons were put on alert.» This was blackmail of both friend and foe: It aimed to push the US for a quick weapons delivery, a demand that was obliged in the US airlift. More important, it was a warning to Egypt and Syria to back down from their initial victories in the battlefield.

US 'OVERSIGHT'

Besides funding Israeli nuclear research, the US, in 1955, provided 'Israel' with its first nuclear reactor, accompanied by a wealth of research material on nuclear power. Over the five

Shimon Peres - Mr. Nuclear Bomb

