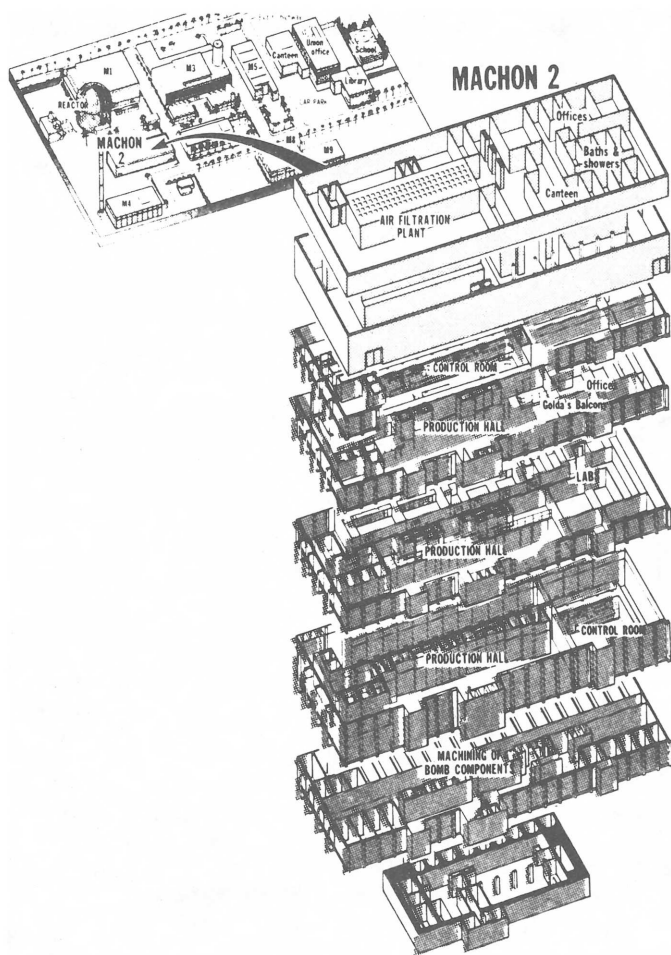


Indoctrinated in the fortress state mentality, the Israeli public generally accepts nuclear weaponry. In the mid-seventies, a poll showed that 62% thought that the country had the nuclear bomb; 77% thought that if it didn't, it should.

GLOBAL REACH

While defense minister, Ariel Sharon outlined his conception of the strategic problems facing 'Israel', emphasizing the following main tenets: «... Israel's security interests are affected by developments and events far beyond the area of direct confrontation upon which Israel has concentrated her attention in the past... The Soviet factor... is arousing increasing alarm both here in Israel and in the Western world, and it is



«Sunday Times» diagram of Dimona, based on Vanunu's revelations

by no means impossible that it develop to become the principal challenge in the eighties.» Besides advocating strategic cooperation with the US, Sharon proposed to «expand the field of Israel's strategic and security concerns in the eighties to include countries like Turkey, Iran, Pakistan, and areas like the Persian Gulf and Africa, and in particular the countries of North and Central Africa.» Sharon also links 'security' policy with the economic structure of the garrison state: «We are determined to see the development of security industries and production as one of the vital constituents of our national security» (*Maariv*, December 18, 1981, as translated in the *Journal of Palestine Studies*, Spring 1982, p. 169).

Some ascribe such ideas to Sharon alone, citing the grandiose nature and recent failures of his projects, such as in

Lebanon. However, he is only stating bluntly the thinking that has historically guided the Zionist leadership. Such global ambitions are the only real rationale for developing the bomb. Obviously it would be counterproductive for 'Israel' to use strategic nuclear weapons in direct 'self-defense', i.e., on or adjacent to the territory of occupied Palestine claimed by the Zionist state. The real reason for the Israeli bomb then is Zionism's quest for broadly defined regional dominance, where a first strike could be aimed at a more distant target - an Arab capital, the PLO or other revolutionary presence in a more removed country. Equally important are the Israeli ambitions to be part of the NATO bloc opposing the socialist countries, and especially the US drive for unchallenged nuclear superiority over the Soviet Union. In advocating Israeli participation in Star Wars, Dore Gold of the Jaffe Center of Strategic Studies at Tel Aviv University, predicted, «We can expect an enlarged battlefield in a future Middle East war» (*New York Times*, March 9, 1986).

In the global context, 'Israel' has a special role to play in conjunction with other illegal states like South Africa and Taiwan. Together they augment the pro-imperialist, global nuclear capacity, while serving reactionary aims in their respective regions. In 1976, 'Israel' and South Africa signed an agreement on nuclear cooperation. Tel Aviv contributed technology and expertise, while South Africa offered access to testing space and uranium mined in occupied Namibia. The Zionist state has helped South Africa circumvent international sanctions regarding needed nuclear technology. Vanunu testified that South African scientists often worked at Dimona, while Israelis travel to South Africa for joint work at a huge industrial complex in the Kahari desert, built by West German and other European firms. Some experts think that the final assembly of Israeli nuclear devices occurs there. The world acquired evidence of the two racist states' collaboration with the 1979 nuclear explosion over the Indian Ocean; some think this might have been a neutron bomb.

There are reports of 'Israel', South Africa and Taiwan working to develop a cruise missile with a 1,500 mile range, enough to hit targets in the Soviet Union from 'Israel'. The indications of Israeli-South African work on a neutron bomb are perhaps the most horrifying in terms of the danger of immediate use. This is an ideal weapon for racist regimes as it kills people while inflicting minimal damage on structures. This would fit neatly into the Zionist recipe for wanting the land but not the people of Palestine and other occupied Arab territories. The ANC has maps made by the South African military, showing black population concentrations, which might indicate where a neutron bomb could be used. All in all, nuclear weapons in the hands of racist states, whether 'Israel' or South Africa, are not only an element for blackmail, but a concrete danger to the peoples and to world peace.

The quotes and facts used in this study, and not otherwise documented, are to be found in the following sources:

1. *MERIP: Middle East Report*, November-December 1986, no. 143.
2. Stephen Green, *Taking Sides: America's Secret Relations with a Militant Israel*, 1984.
3. *AfricaAsia*, November 1986, no. 35.
4. *Israeli Foreign Affairs*, September 1985.
5. *Granma*, January 18, 1987.
6. Perlmutter, Amos; Michael Handel and Uri Bar-Joseph; *Two Minutes Over Baghdad*, 1982. (Perlmutter is a former member of the IAEA and military consultant to several Israeli governments, now teaches at the American University in Washington; Handel is at the Harvard Center for International Affairs, formerly of the Hebrew University in Tel Aviv; Bar-Joseph was formerly in the Israeli Air Force.)