

ject, employees of the state-owned Israeli Aircraft Industries staged riotous demonstrations against the anticipated layoff of 3,000. Then the demonstrations suddenly stopped.» The *Jerusalem Post*, November 9, 1987, wrote about Pretoria's recruitment campaign. Around the same time, the Israeli military closed its special office for recruiting laid-off Lavi employees, because it had received no applications. The Italian daily *Il Giornale* wrote, «It seems that there is a secret agreement between Israel and South Africa to produce the Lavi aircraft.» The same newspaper commented that it is «very interesting that the USA does not react to the news about the production of the Lavi in South Africa,» wondering if the US had actually given its blessing to the deal.

NATO STATUS

In the last decade, a specific aim of the Zionist leadership in offering its military and intelligence services to imperialism, has been attaining for 'Israel' a status equivalent to a NATO ally. General Keegan, head of US air force intelligence, assessed the Israeli intelligence-gathering role at a Washington symposium in May 1983, saying: «Today the capacity of the American Air Force in particular and the American armed forces in general to defend NATO positions is indebted to the attention of Israeli intelligence more than any other intelligence source, in the fields of tracking satellites, electronic listening posts, etc.» (*Yediot Aharanot* as translated by *Al Fajr*, December 16, 1983).

Following the November 1983 memorandum on strategic military cooperation, US Defense Secretary Weinberger and his Israeli counterpart, Arens, signed an unprecedented security agreement in March 1984, «integrating Israel into the US global defense system» (*Jerusalem Post*, May 25, 1984). In September of the same year, 'Israel' delivered 12 Kfir jets to the US Navy on a no-cost, four-year lease for use in combat training, with the Israeli Aircraft Industries assuming responsibility for maintaining the jets during this period. In December 1984, there were US—Israeli joint naval maneuvers. In November 1985, there were joint military exercises and the biggest armada yet of the US 6th fleet docked in Haifa. The February 12, 1986 edition of *Newsweek* reported that US 6th fleet jets had been practicing precision attacks in the Negev for more than three months. By June 1986, 'Israel' and the US had agreed on a major re-equipment of the Israeli navy and the upgrading of Haifa port to facilitate its use by the 6th fleet. According to the *Financial Times*, June 2, 1986, all this was related to the «Israeli navy's wish to expand the range of its operations well out into the Mediterranean, and meet the perceived danger from an increase in the power of the Syrian navy...»

One of Defense Minister Rabin's main tasks in 1986 was campaigning for equivalency to a NATO power. «The acquisition by Israel of the *de facto status of a NATO member would thus be a valuable insurance for the future,*» wrote the *Jerusalem Post*, July 31, 1986, adding that Rabin had argued for this in his most recent visit to Washington. Speaking to a United Jewish Appeal mission, including a number of US Senators, «Rabin yesterday called for upgrading the military relationship between Israel and the US to that of major, non-NATO allies of the US, such as Japan, Australia and New Zealand,» (*Jerusalem Post*, August 19, 1986).

This also entails closer Zionist military cooperation with countries such as West Germany. According to the *Jerusalem Post*, June 27, 1986, organized groups of West German

military personnel began visiting 'Israel' in 1985 on «study trips» including tours of the occupied Golan Heights and West Bank. The only other place visited by such groups is the USA.

COUNTERREVOLUTIONARY SECURITY

Parallel to providing more facilities for imperialist military presence in the Middle East, the Zionist state worked to take the lead in «anti-terrorist» cooperation to emphasize its usefulness to the Western alliance. Avraham Tamir, responsible for the Israeli military's strategic planning from 1970-84, before becoming Peres' national security adviser in 1984, spoke before American audiences emphasizing the «fight against terrorism, in which Israel has more experience than any other country,» giving the Entebbe raid as an example (*Jerusalem Post*, June 6, 1986). In May 1986, the Zionist state hosted US Attorney-General Meese for eight days, so that the two countries could institutionalize «anti-terrorist» cooperation. In the same month, 'Israel' reached an agreement with Italy on closer intelligence cooperation. The following month, General Dan Shomron, who led the Entebbe action in 1976 and is now Chief of Staff, visited France in his capacity as Deputy Chief of Staff - the highest ranking Israeli officer to visit France since 1967. There he toured military installations including the paratrooper base used by the French Rapid Intervention Forces which has had missions in Africa and Lebanon. Also in June 1986, Deputy Prime Minister Shamir visited Paris and reached «broad agreement on anti-terrorist» cooperation with Premier Chirac (*Jewish Telegraph Agency*, June 24, 1986).

So-called anti-terrorist cooperation has economic advantages as well: «Israel's latest military export, according to the (Israel) television report, is anti-terrorist expertise. Twenty companies, usually headed by former senior officers from elite Israeli army and secret police units, offer such services,» advertising proficiency in assassinations, etc. (*Los Angeles Times*, September 18, 1986).

US—ISRAELI ALLIANCE CONFIRMED

This year the prolongation of the Palestinian uprising poses serious questions to the Zionist state's ability to continue in its role as US imperialism's forward base and rapid deployment force in the region. At present, the bulk of the Zionist army is deployed in the 1967 occupied territories, repressing civilians. 'Israel' spends \$4.4 billion, about 15% of the 1987 gross national product, to maintain the world's 3rd or 4th mightiest army (*International Herald Tribune*, February 23, 1987). Still, it has been unable to stop the uprising of an unarmed people. The brutal Israeli attempts to squash the uprising aim not only to maintain the Zionist state's internal security, but also at reestablishing its image as the region's 'superman'. Though Israeli repression has met with international outcry, the US so far seems determined to preserve the status quo of its no. 1 ally. As the uprising raged on, «Congress and the Reagan Administration were handing Israel a gift package of \$2 billion in debt relief benefits, equal bidding rights with NATO allies on military contracts, and a US agreement to pay 80% of the development costs of a new Israeli missile» (*Israel and Palestine*, January 1988). As 'Israel' celebrated its 40 years of illegal existence, Shamir and Reagan signed a new memorandum of understanding, basically reaffirming their strategic alliance in a time of crisis.