

New US—Israeli Memo of Understanding

In the last week of June, Israeli Defense Minister Rabin visited Washington D.C., in an attempt to confront the Palestinian uprising from the safe heights of increased military cooperation with US imperialism.

While in Washington D.C., Rabin met with top US officials, including President Reagan and Secretary of State Shultz. Two topics featured most prominently on his agenda. The first was convincing US public opinion of the legitimacy of the brutal methods being used by the Israeli state in its attempt to suppress the Palestinian uprising. The second was to draw attention to the supposed 'threat' posed by the missiles China is selling to Saudi Arabia and Syria, as well as the Soviet missiles in Syria, Libya and Iraq. Rabin worked to persuade Reagan in particular that this phenomenon posed a threat to US as well as Israeli interests in the region.

Despite all appearances, this second point is also intimately connected with the uprising in that 'Israel' desperately needs to draw attention to an issue outside Palestine, and far removed from what is going on there, specifically Israeli inability to deal with the Palestinian uprising.

Judging from US officials' statements during and after Rabin's visit, Rabin did not succeed in getting the Reagan Administration to publicly endorse the fascist measures being used against unarmed Palestinians. However, he did succeed in obtaining a new memorandum of understanding which provides for more and qualitatively advanced US-Israeli military cooperation. This shows that US verbal criticism of Israeli human rights violations is little more than crocodile tears, designed as a cover-up for consistent US support to Israeli aggression. Even if the US begins to take this issue more seriously in order to polish up the Israelis' image, the strategic advantages of military cooperation with 'Israel' remain the

overriding concern of the US administration. The Reagan Administration had prefaced Rabin's visit by vetoing the Security Council resolution raised in mid-April, condemning Israeli handling of the uprising.

NEW MISSILES FOR 'ISRAEL' — NEW INPUT FOR SDI

Meeting with Rabin, Reagan concurred on the question of the «Arab missile threat.» On June 28th, he issued a statement that he was troubled by the «ominous new military developments in the area» - referring to missiles and chemical weapons. This set the stage for the signing of an agreement for collaboration on the development of a new surface-to-air, antiballistic missile - the Arrow - for 'Israel' with the US funding 80% of the development costs. The agreement was signed by David Ivry, director of the Israeli Defense Ministry and Lt. Gen. James Abrahamson, director of the US Strategic Defense Initiative Organization (Star Wars). US Secretary of Defense Carlucci stated that the Arrow missile would «make a contribution to our SDI program, and has applications as well in other areas.» The connection between the new Israeli missile and the SDI program is another evidence that this program is not simply a crazy idea or a matter of research alone. Rather it is a framework for developing new types of offensive weapons for the US and its allies. There is, in fact, no reason to think that 'Israel' wants the new missile for its deterrent value alone. In June, Israeli Chief-of-Staff Lt. Gen. Dan Shomron publicly stated that 'Israel' would strike Syrian missile sites if the surface-to-surface missiles Damascus is reportedly buying from China, are deployed.

In view of the bolstered US—Israeli

military cooperation, Reagan's hypocrisy is doubly obvious when he calls for international efforts to stop the spread of arms and nuclear arms. Meanwhile, the US obstructed the UN's third session which was dedicated to disarmament and to examining the extent of the Zionist nuclear arsenal. Also Shultz, who brags about his 'peace' initiative in the Middle East, was quick to term the new US—Israeli military agreement an essential contribution to deterring war, adding, «If you are sitting in Israel and surrounded by short-range ballistic missiles, you will realize the great importance of learning how to defend yourself...» In fact it was apparent that Shultz's greatest worry on his last visit to the Zionist state was how to rescue the Israelis from the dilemma caused by the Palestinian uprising.

MORE US AID

Less than two weeks after Rabin left the USA, the Senate adopted the fiscal year 1989 foreign aid bill that maintained 'Israel' as the main recipient of US aid worldwide, to the tune of 1.2 billion dollars in economic aid and 1.8 billion in military assistance. At the same time, the first publicly announced, full-scale US-Israeli navy maneuvers began with the arrival of the 6th Fleet's USS Eisenhower in Haifa port. The exercise included mock combat and the refueling of this aircraft carrier by Israeli naval vessels. On August 23rd, the Israeli navy announced plans for a 1.2 billion dollar, US-financed program to build a new generation of missile boats and two submarines, adding to the current Israeli fleet of 28 missile-carrying boats. Everything points to the continuation of Israeli state terrorism on land, air and sea, even as the Palestinian uprising challenges the viability of this prime US base in the Middle East. ●