

in wartime and in times of national crisis, has an influence on the constitution of ad hoc coalitions between political and military authorities» (*Israeli Society and its Defense Establishment*).

This observation is highly relevant to 'Israel' which has engaged in more wars than any other state since World War II. If one looks closely, disagreements in the Israeli leadership do not usually go between the politicians and the generals, but between factions with representatives in both sectors, who have differing tactics for achieving shared Zionist goals. According to Benjamini, neither was there any decision in 1967 to take the West Bank or the Golan Heights, but subsequent developments show a high degree of unity on exploiting the facts created in the field. It took over a decade for the question of territorial compromise to become a controversy in Israeli politics, and the dispute is not between politicians and generals. Labor which contemplates territorial compromise is the same political force that commands the political allegiance of most of the army elite, in 1967 and today.

What Benjamini terms «ad hoc coalitions between political and military authorities» are not so very ad hoc in 'Israel', but a consequence of how the state was organized in the first place. When the state was formed, Ben Gurion dissolved the Palmach which was dominated by Mapam, in order to concentrate power in the hands of Mapai (later the Labor Party); meanwhile, the Haganah became the army. His slogan was separating the military from politics, but the real effects of his reorganization was to concentrate power in the cabinet, and actually the inner cabinet. Although 'Israel' is formally a parliamentary democracy, in practice the cabinet leads the Knesset and has a wide range of military and security prerogatives. Control over the military, in fact all contact between the military and the Knesset, goes through the defense and prime ministers who in at least three periods have been the same person. Though the defense minister is formally part of the political leadership, most of them have considered themselves as representing the military before the cabinet. The result is that though the military is subordinate to the political leadership according to law, there exists a de facto partnership.

This system is reinforced on the level of personnel. «Extensive research has been conducted on the subject of the representation of the professional military in Israel's political elite. Peri, for example, has indicated that between the 1948 War of Independence and 1977, one-third of all retired generals have become involved in a full-time political career. Since the 1967 Six-Day War, there has been a marked increase in the number of senior reserve officers in key policy-making bodies, such as the Cabinet and the Knesset (up to 1967, there had never been more than two reserve officers in the Cabinet, whereas since then, the range increased to 3-5; parallel figures for the Knesset for the pre- and post-1967 periods are 0-5 and 4-10, respectively). Even more relevant to our study is the transition of senior officers to positions of direct responsibility for Israel's security... Up to 1967, the office of Defense Minister had never been filled by a senior army officer,

whereas three such officers have assumed the position since then (Rabin's current term as Defense Minister raises this figure to four - our note). A similar trend was noted among Deputy and Assistant Defense Ministers (only one senior reserve officer had held this post prior to 1967, while four have assumed it since then... The transition of senior IDF officers to other parts of the complex should also be noted. The heads of the Mossad, Border Police, Civil Guard, Civilian Administration, Airports Administration and the like are nearly always senior officers. A similar situation prevails in government concerns considered essential to security (e.g. the Electric Company, the oil refineries and El Al), while a more recent trend is the 'parachuting' of generals into the defense industry - primarily the state-owned defense industries and other key manufacturing plants supplying the IDF...» (Alex Mintz, «The Military-Industrial Complex: The Israeli Case,» in *Israeli Society and its Defense Establishment*).

With this set-up, who needs a military coup?

As a footnote about the allegiances of the Israeli elite, we add a single fact which appeared in the *Jewish Telegraph Agency* on June 10, 1986: According to US immigration authorities, in the past twenty years, 402 Israeli government officials have been naturalized as US citizens.

CORPORATE STATE

Heavy state control of the Israeli economy has not precluded the free development of private capital. In fact, Pinhas Sapir, Finance Minister in several governments led by the Labor Party, the main proponent of the state sector, created several new millionaires by lending capital at low rates and granting production monopolies and tax concessions to private investors who were often not Labor supporters. This was done to encourage private Jewish capital investment in 'Israel', especially from abroad, and to cement political alliances between Mapai and its coalition partners - the General Zionists (forerunner of the Liberal Party and junior partner in the preceding Likud government) and the religious parties. «Since 1948, there has been increasingly more interpenetration between collective and private capital, although collective capital... remains the dominant element...» (Joel Beinin, *MERIP*, September-October 1986).

Added to the overlap between the political and military leadership, then, is the increasingly unified interests of the Israeli bourgeoisie, which cut across the tactical contradictions which divide the two major political blocks (Labor and Likud). This tendency can only increase in view of the rise of hightech industry in 'Israel'. In 1984 alone, nearly 700 new hightech companies were started in 'Israel', many of them based on joint Israeli-US capital. This phenomenon in turn links up with the military industry where the state is dominant.

In view of the factors we have reviewed above, 'Israel' can be categorized as a corporate state with the military playing a role in all spheres of life. It is this internal make-up that qualifies it to be US imperialism's no. 1 ally in the strategic Middle East. ●