

Israel: Renewed Peace Effort Or Another Assassination?

by Dean Andromidas

Nov. 13—Every November, for 13 years, Israel has commemorated the late Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin, who was cut down by an Israeli right-wing extremist on Nov. 4, 1995. This year, his courage to fight for peace was reaffirmed as an example for today's Israel and the region.

Speaking before 100,000 Israelis at a ceremony in Rabin Square on Nov. 8, Rabin's daughter Dalia said, "We all came here to tell you, father, clearly and loudly, that we guard your spark and we will never stop doing it." She called on the people of Israel to show responsibility and to vote in the national election on Feb. 10 for "a leadership that will uproot the hatred, and will be wise enough to give hope and prosperity to the silent majority."

Breaking from the "political correctness" that has generally characterized commemoration of Rabin's assassination, Prime Minister Ehud Olmert, in a nationally televised address, took the opportunity to become the first Israeli Prime Minister to call for a return to the 1967 borders and the division of Jerusalem. Calling Rabin's assassin a "despicable good-for-nothing," Olmert said: "I feel a need to say a few things not on what has been, but on what will be. Excuse me if I deviate from the standard address and touch upon a few painful points relating to our lives in this country.... [Rabin] understood that if we want to maintain Israel as a democratic Jewish state, we must concede to a lack of choice and to our great torments and give up parts of

our homeland for which we dreamt for generations of yearning and prayers.

"We must also give up Arab neighborhoods in eastern Jerusalem and return to the seed of the territory that is the State of Israel up until 1967, with obligatory amendments as a result of the reality created in the meantime," Olmert said, referring to land captured by Israel during the 1967 Six-Day War. He is the first Prime Minister ever to call for accepting the division of Jerusalem. This also brings Olmert's position closer to former President Bill Clinton's plan for an Israeli-Palestinian peace agreement, announced only weeks before he left office. It has been widely considered an unofficial U.S. policy statement internationally, as well as among many Israelis and Palestinians, and could serve as the model for any future agreement.

Warning that Israel must act now, Olmert added, "If, God forbid, we procrastinate, we could lose support for a two-state solution. The decision must be taken now, without hesitation, before ... the narrow window of opportunity to plant [that] solution in the consciousness of our people and the nations of the world vanishes in front of our eyes."

Meanwhile, Israeli President Shimon Peres evoked the slaying of Rabin in the opening of his address at an interfaith conference at the United Nations on Nov. 12: "He was murdered while singing a song of peace. Assassins may take a life, but they cannot kill a dream.... Then came three shots. However, we were not alone in our de-

spair... Arab and Muslim leaders came, and at the time it felt like sorrow shattered barriers. Tragedy had united the sons and daughters of all religions. Our shared agony shed light on our shared hopes, our hunger for fraternity, the dream of peace which we nurtured in our hearts.”

Peres was addressing a conference initiated by King Abdullah of Saudi Arabia, a rare occasion in which an Israeli head of state was able to participate in a conference with Arab states with which Israel is technically in a state of war, or without diplomatic relations. The rest of Peres’s speech was a warm endorsement of the Arab Peace Initiative, which he called “inspirational and promising, a serious opening for real progress.”

Will Next Messenger for Peace Be Killed?

Since Rabin’s murder, the progress of peace in the region cannot even be measured in inches, as blood in the region continues to flow. His murderer was not a deranged lone assassin, but a member of a political movement committed to sabotaging any effort for peace in the “land of Israel.”

But even as talk of peace was heard, a brutal blockade of Gaza, a reaction to the Hamas election victory, was dominating Israeli policy. After exchanges of rocket fire between Gaza and the Israeli army that began around Nov. 5, Israel imposed a total blockade on Gaza, cutting off food and fuel. By Nov. 14, the United Nations Relief and Work Agency (UNRWA), which is the main source of food, announced its supplies had run out. Crushing Hamas in Gaza, and an Israeli strike against Iran, are two of the major aims of the right-wing networks that killed Yitzak Rabin.

At the same time, Labor Party chairman Ehud Barak, speaking at the Nov. 8 Tel Aviv rally, warned, “We used to call them bad seeds, but now they are tumors with secondary growths. This is no longer a warning sign, it’s a threat to democracy, the IDF [Israeli Defense Forces], the police, and all the authorities of a normal



UN/Evan Schneider

Ehud Olmert is the first Israeli prime minister to say he would agree to a return to Israel’s 1967 borders, including the division of Jerusalem.

society. I promise you we will uproot this evil from within us.”

While Barak has clearly identified the threat, he must be reminded that the drive to block Israeli support for a peace settlement is not a lone Israeli movement, but is supported politically and financially from outside the country. The long tail of this movement stretches to the United States and Great Britain. It would also be wrong to identify it simply as the creature of international right-wing Zionism. This is an apparatus that ultimately serves Anglo-Dutch financial interests committed to keeping Southwest Asia as a cockpit for war and destabilization.

The upcoming elections in Israel could be a real turning point, where Israel could either move to peace with the Palestinians, Syria, Lebanon, and the broader Arab world, through embracing the Arab Peace Initiative, or it could continue on

a path which would inevitably lead to more war and conflict. Concretely, the danger is an election victory by Benjamin Netanyahu, chairman of the right-wing Likud Party. Israeli political observers warn that, given the splintered nature of Israeli politics, even if Foreign Minister Tzipi Livni, who heads Olmert’s Kadima party (the lead party in the current coalition government), wins the election, she will not have an absolute majority. If other pro-peace parties fail to garner enough seats, she could fail to form a coalition, as occurred last month.

A Netanyahu government would incorporate all the right-wing parties whose roots are deep into the illegal settlements on the West Bank and in East Jerusalem. This is the environment which gave birth to Rabin’s assassin, Yigal Amir.

Netanyahu’s Network

We start at the top of this network in Israel: Netanyahu himself.

The man who brought Netanyahu on the long road from his position as a salesman at a furniture store in Philadelphia, to the Israeli premiership in 1996, was

former U.S. Secretary of State George Shultz (see Steven Meyer, “Netanyahu’s Fascist Record: All Roads Lead to Shultz,” *EIR*, Feb. 24, 2006). Shultz was also the chief architect of the George W. Bush Administration. He is no Zionist, but an agent of the Anglo-Dutch Liberal financial system. As a member of the Nixon Administration in 1971, he was instrumental in dismantling the Bretton Woods system by removing the U.S. dollar’s link to gold and letting exchange rates float. (See Scott Thompson and Nancy Spannaus, “Profile of a Hit Man,” *EIR*, Dec. 10, 2004.)

In his first term as prime minister in 1996, Netanyahu adopted the policy platform prepared for him, “A Clean Break: New Strategy for Security of the Realm,” written by the neocon cabal of Richard Perle, Douglas Feith, David Wurmser, et al., who, five years later, implemented this same policy document in the Bush Administration. The policy dragged the United States into two wars and a clash of civilizations. One can expect Netanyahu to try to finish the job left incomplete by the Bush Administration.

Netanyahu is also the Israeli poster boy for the Christian Zionist movement in the United States, which enjoys massive support among Christian fundamentalists. It has been a source of millions of dollars in support of Israel, on the basis of what it sees as a Biblical prophesy that the founding of Israel would lead to Armageddon and the “Rapture.”

Netanyahu’s Likud has direct links with the “bad seeds” and “tumors” referenced by Barak. The most notorious is **Moshe Feiglin**, who founded, with the Likud, the “Jewish Leadership” faction. In 1993, Feiglin founded the Zo Artzeinu (This Is Our land) movement, which staged demonstrations against the Oslo Accords, helping to create the atmosphere of incitement within which Rabin was assassinated. Feiglin’s partner in these operations was **Shmuel Sackett**, a follower of the late **Meir Kahane**, the founder of the Jewish Defense League and the Israeli Kach



U.S. Embassy Tel Aviv/Matty Stern

Likud chairman Benjamin Netanyahu meeting with Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice, Sept. 19, 2007 in Jerusalem. If he becomes the next prime minister, his government would incorporate the persons and policies of the extreme right-wing parties.

Party (which was banned both in Israel and the United States as a terrorist organization).

Feiglin is believed to have support of as much as 10% of the Likud, and therefore is likely to get a high position on the party’s slate of candidates for the Knesset in the elections, giving him a good chance of entering the Knesset, or even joining a Netanyahu Cabinet.

The Likud is filled with dyed-in-the-wool advocates of the Zionist Revisionism of the late Vladimir Jabotinsky, who was a devotee of Italian Fascism; there are also members with links to the even more extreme religious fanatics and rabbis who were the spiritual guides of Rabin assassin Yigal Amir.

Take for example **Limor Livnat**, former education minister under Prime Minister Ariel Sharon. Her brother is **Rabbi Noam Livnat** of the Joseph Still Lives Yeshiva (Od Yosef Chai) in Nablus, one of the most radical settlements on the West Bank. He reportedly inspired in Amir the zeal for religious Zionism that led him to murder.

If Netanyahu wins the election, he will gather together the Israeli right. High on his list are the “settler parties,” which include the National Union and National Religious parties, and other smaller factions which are currently considering forming one party. Among their leaders is **Rabbi Benny Elon**, another of Amir’s spiritual guides. His niece was convicted for complicity in the murder of Rabin, because she did not



Moshe Feiglin

inform the police when Amir confided in her his intention to kill the Prime Minister. Elon has served as the chief rabbi of the Ateret Cohanim Yeshiva. Located in the Old City of Jerusalem, it is at the center of the fanatic “Temple Mount Faithful,” who wish to destroy the mosques on the al-Haram al-Sharif/Temple Mount, which is Islam’s third holiest cite. These parties promote the notorious call for the “transfer” of the Palestinian population from the West Bank—ethnic cleansing.

Another leader is **Effi Eitam**, a former brigadier general, who is often characterized in the Israeli media as a right-wing fanatic or a fascist.

Another likely coalition partner is the Yisrael Beiteinu party led by former Russian nightclub bouncer **Avigdor Lieberman**. A former member of the Likud, Lieberman was Netanyahu’s bureau chief in the latter’s first term as Prime Minister. He left the Likud to form this primarily Russian-Israeli-based party. Living in a West Bank settlement, Lieberman is a racist, calling for a loyalty test for Israeli Arabs, and their transfer to a Palestinian “state” similar to the bantustans of apartheid-era South Africa.

Building a Climate of Incitement

At the base of this organizational pyramid for which Netanyahu is the pinnacle, are the fanatical settlers. For the last several weeks, they have been on a rampage throughout the West Bank, attacking Palestinian farmers who have been harvesting their olive orchards, and battling with Israeli police and military at various sites. In September, there was an attempt on the life of Israeli peace activist Prof. Ze’ev Sternhell, who was the target of a pipe bomb placed at the front door of his home. Although he was lightly wounded, Israeli Minister of Police and Security Avi Dichter declared, “We should



Rabbi Binyamin Elon



Juda S. Engelmayer
Effi Eitam



State Department/Michael Gross
Avigdor Lieberman

see the explosive as aimed as aimed at killing.” He added that the attack “takes us back to the days of Rabin’s assassination.”

Suspicious for the attempted murder are directed at the “bad seeds” and “tumors,” one of whose leaders is currently on trial for assault on Israeli police officers, **Noam Federman**, whose connections bring us again to the United States. Federman is a second-generation terrorist and former leader of the terrorist Kach party. Although no youth, Federman is the leader of the “hill top youth,” or third-generation settler crazies, who have set up illegal “outposts” throughout the West Bank. Violent clashes occurred on Nov. 5 when the police dismantled one of these outposts occupied by Federman and his family, and dismantled the shipping container they were living in.

Federman is directly linked to the so-called **Jewish Task Force** in the United States, which is nothing more than a front for the banned Kach party. The JTF is led by **Victor Vancier, a.k.a. Chaim Ben Pesach**, who has been in and out of jail for several terrorist attacks in the United States. Vancier is banned from entering Israel because of his affiliation with Kach. The JTF serves as a conduit for funds from the United States to Kach and other terrorist-fascist groups in Israel.

During the U.S. elections, the JTF also ran the organization Jews Against Obama, which claimed that Obama was a Muslim, and generally spread Islamophobia. If their campaign continues, it could constitute a threat to the President-elect.

The JTF is part of a network of organizations throughout the United States that builds political support while raising millions of dollars for the settlements. A key figure in this apparatus is a New York State legislator from Brooklyn, **Dov Hikind**, who was one of Meir Kahane’s first disciples. His wife, Shani, is the spokesperson of the Jerusalem Reclamation Project, which raises funds to buy property in the Old City of Jerusalem, and to fund the Ateret Cohanim Yeshiva.

While officially a Democrat, Hikind has supported New York City billionaire Mayor Michael Bloomberg, and backed Republican Sen. John McCain’s campaign for President.

Peace in the Middle East desperately needs the help of the Presidency of the United States. As we have shown, the anti-peace forces in Israel draw their support, financing, and even orders from outside Israel, from a force that can only be countered by the power of the U.S. Presidency.