

Boosting the morale of Arab reactionary regimes

Another reason for the Bright Star 85 maneuvers is to reaffirm to the Arab reactionary regimes that they can count on US military might to protect them from the anger of the masses, and that the US will not leave them to their fate if they enter into direct negotiations with 'Israel'. Of course, the Shah of Iran, Sadat of Egypt and Numeiri of Sudan counted on US aid too, and they all experienced a letdown.

The maneuvers are in line with the US and Israeli policy since the early fifties, of pitting one Arab state or policy against another, i.e. divide and rule. Specifically this means strengthening

the reactionary, pro-US regimes so that they can threaten or contain any popular movement or nationalist regime attempting to pursue an independent policy. The basic concept of Bright Star is involving the forces of the reactionary regimes in joint action with the US Rapid Deployment Force, to be ready to strike any anti-imperialist regime or movement.

Such muscle-flexing is a basic element in US foreign policy. The training of the Rapid Deployment Force in the tactics of military intervention reveals to what degree the US counts on military and political blackmail in its foreign policy. This is not a new orientation; it was the case under Presidents Truman and Eisenhower; it was seen in the Baghdad

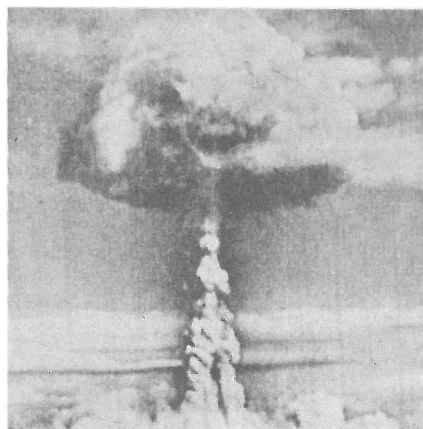
Alliance, and more recently in the policy of Haig, Reagan and Schultz.

On the other hand, the question of direct military intervention involves certain dilemmas and risks. The two most recent occasions on which US troops have been directly interjected in the Middle East, met with dismal failure. The mission to retrieve US hostages from Iran aborted totally. The Marines, who came to Lebanon to bolster fascist rule and the May 17th accord, were forced to withdraw after many losses and failure to impose US goals. In this context, Bright Star 85 is another step in the US aggressive policies, designed to fill the gaps that were exposed by previous failures, in order to assert hegemony by force if necessary. ●

ISRAEL

Israeli Nuclear Strategy Stealing Uranium

Another in a series of uranium thefts occurred recently, stunning intelligence and political circles. According to the International Nuclear Energy Agency, 'Israel' illegally acquired 40 tons of nuclear grade uranium, produced by Great Britain, via Luxembourg. («International Herald Tribune», July 11, 1985). As an isolated case, this incident may not appear significant, but taken in the context of the Israeli strategic nuclear program, the issue demands the attention of all anti-nuclear, peace forces.



During the Eisenhower Administration, an Israeli agent, Zalman Shapiro, was assigned by the Israeli government to build a nuclear factory in the city of Apollo, Pennsylvania. Shapiro and his factory, called Numec, were responsible for secretly providing 'Israel' with numerous shipments of saturated uranium under various seemingly ordinary trade agreements. Shapiro's role in this conspiracy was significantly advanced

when then President Eisenhower decided, under the slogan, «Atoms in the Service of Peace», to allow Numec to cooperate with the Westinghouse Corporation in the production of uranium oxide, an essential substance for the activation of nuclear reactors, for US nuclear submarines. It was this cover which allowed Shapiro to produce this rare substance and deliver it, secretly and illegally, to 'Israel'.

Shapiro's operations soon became public with the announcement that a subsidiary of Numec, the Israeli Radioactive Isotope Company Ltd., would begin operations in 'Israel' in partnership with the Israeli Energy Committee, a government agency. The openness of Shapiro's dealings attracted attention and suspicion. US political opposition figures forced the American Nuclear Energy Agency to investigate, and the results were hardly surprising. It was discovered that 361 pounds (164 kgs) of nuclear grade uranium, supplied by the United States

Government, were missing. Their eventual destiny, as then claimed, was unknown. Shapiro rationalized the disappearance, insisting that the uranium was disposed of with radioactive waste. However, test samples of the waste found no traces of saturated uranium.

The investigation continued with the suspicion that the uranium had reached 'Israel'. After it was discovered that another 190 pounds (86 kgs) of uranium had disappeared, President Johnson ordered the Nuclear Energy Agency to stop its investigation so as to avoid «further complications». Soon afterwards, Shapiro sold Numec to avoid an international scandal, especially in light of his illegal employment of non-Americans, i.e. Israeli citizens who were actually agents of Mossad (the Israeli intelligence network).

US-Israeli nuclear cooperation reached its climax in 1968, when 200 tons of nuclear grade uranium were smuggled from Belgium to 'Israel'. According to Ellen Davenport, Paul