

# Israel's Nuclear Weapons Policy: From South Africa to Iran

By [Prof. James Petras](#)

Global Research, June 01, 2010

1 June 2010

Region: [Middle East & North Africa, sub-Saharan Africa](#)

Theme: [Militarization and WMD](#)

In-depth Report: [IRAN: THE NEXT WAR?, Nuclear War](#)

On May 24, 2010, The Guardian (U.K.) published a highly confidential document released by the South African government. The 1975 document reveals a secret military agreement signed by Shimon Peres, Israel's Foreign Minister at the time (and today Israel's President) and South Africa's Defense Minister P. W. Botha. Israel offered to sell the apartheid regime, weapons of mass destruction, including nuclear, chemical and conventional weaponry to destroy and defeat the million person African resistance movement. The presidents of major American Jewish organizations, immediately set in motion the Lying Machine claiming the official minutes of the Israeli nuclear offer and a far reaching agreement on military ties between two apartheid regimes were merely a "conversation" (sic) and that Israel did not "make an offer".[1] Then without blinking Israel's apologists went on to contradict themselves by speculating that a nuclear agreement would not have had the approval of Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin (Daily Alert May 25, 2010). The documents were discovered by a US academic, Sasha Polakow-Suransky, in South African archives and are published in his book, *The Unspoken Alliance: Israel's Secret Alliance with Apartheid South Africa*. Apparently the Israeli's regime thought the documents were more than a "conversation" because they pressured the post-apartheid South African government not to release them.[2]

The Israeli nuclear offer and the South African request took place at a time of rising popular struggles throughout South Africa, from Sharpeville to Soweto, including armed resistance and the beginning of international boycotts. South Africa expanded its military offensive invading Angola where they were eventually defeated by a joint Cuban-Angolan army. As a result it was facing problems buying the kinds of deadly weapons of mass destruction which would not only decapitate the leadership of the South African freedom movement but destroy its grass roots support and national allies. Israel was prepared to serve as a willing accomplice to a Nuclear Solution.

## The Genocidal Implications of Israel's Nuclear Offer

Most liberal commentators and critics of Israel's offer to supply apartheid South Africa with nuclear warheads merely focused on Israel's "irresponsible behavior" in violating the non-proliferation treaty.[3] For others the issue was merely an "embarrassment" for the Jewish state, given a forthcoming meeting (June 2010) on non-proliferation.[4] Few if any raised the great moral and political question of the profound human consequences of complicity in a genocidal nuclear assault on millions of Africans. The question is Israel's moral responsibility, if South Africa had followed up the Jewish State's offer, bought the nuclear

warheads and sent the missiles raining down on millions of Africans demanding freedom. One might ask if complicity in a potential genocidal act is subject to a war crimes tribunal, in the same way that the German industrial manufacturers of poison gas for concentration camp prisoners were put on trial at Nuremberg for complicity in the war crimes of the Nazi State.[5]

Israel's offer to supply nuclear missiles if implemented would most likely have led to the shelling of shanty towns and refugee camps across the borders, housing millions of South Africans, killing hundreds of thousands and radiating many more to a slow painful death. Nuking a mass popular resistance in this case through the deliberate efforts of two racist regimes, is more than a 'war crime', it is a monstrous crime against humanity.

More than any other single factor, American Zionism's defense of Israel's military alliance and support of Apartheid South Africa deeply offended knowledgeable Afro-Americans and soured longstanding amicable relations between Jews and American blacks.

On the other, Israel had no compunctions about strengthening its military and economic ties with racist South Africa[6], a relation backed by Zionist business leaders in Johannesburg.

### Why Israel Offered Nukes to Botha

Israel's decision to offer nuclear missiles to South Africa was based on commercial, political and ideological considerations. South Africa was an emphatic and unconditional backer of Israel's invasions of Arab countries, its occupation of the West Bank and Gaza. Above all it sympathized with a likeminded settler-colonial regime at a time when Israel was condemned by the United Nations, most of Europe, and the newly independent post-colonial countries. Two pariah states had a lot of common enemies and a need to support each other in the face of the world's rejection of colonial-settler regimes.

Secondly, the two had an ideological affinity based on a racial ideology rooted in biblical belief of Chosen People destined by Divine power as Superior People. Judaism and Christianity rooted in ethnic pre-eminence legitimated rule over blacks and Arabs! Equally important arms sales and military advisory services were the leading export sectors of the Israeli economy and the backbone of its manufacturing, technology and communications sectors. The Zionist-racist trade union confederation Histadrut was deeply rooted among workers in the war industries and was a champion of arms sales to South Africa. Israeli Uzis upheld white capital and repressed black labor especially in the mines.

### The Central Role of Israel's Labor Left in the Nuclear Arms Offer

Contrary to the assumptions of many gentile and Jewish leftists, liberals and progressives who attribute all of Israel's crimes against the Palestinians to neo-conservatives or "Likud" or rightwing religious parties, the authors and proponents of a nuclear weapons sales to South Africa were leaders of the Labor Party. Shimon Peres (the Defense Minister) and Yitzhak Rabin (Prime Minister) were the major figures involved in the nuclear deal. All of Israel's early wars of conquests, massive expulsions of Palestinians and the construction of Israel's nuclear weapons stockpile were undertaken under the aegis of the Labor Party. The latter never lacked in socialist rhetoric [they are members of the "Socialist" International (sic)] or anti-racist speeches when the occasion warranted, but never lost an opportunity to sell conventional arms to a Latin dictator (Pinochet in Chile, Videla in Argentina, Rios Mont in Guatemala), or offer nukes to a brutal South African regime under siege from its black

majority.

The central role of the Israeli Labor Party in offering a nuclear solution to the minority white regime demonstrates that all major Israeli parties are capable of pursuing a genocidal policy if it serves their perceptions of “Jewish interests”. The leading role of the Labor Party confirms the idea that there are no basic differences between the Israeli Left and Right when it comes to committing crimes against humanity. The underlying belief system is that Chosen People are exempt from the laws against war crimes.

#### Nuclear Revelation: The Reactions of the Leading American Jewish Organizations

The presidents of the major American Jewish organizations, true to their role as an unconditional transmission belt of the Israel state, echoed the line that Israel did not offer nuclear weapons to South Africa, denying the documented proof and predictably refused to condemn Israel’s complicity with the genocidal implications of nuking millions active in the African freedom movement[7]. One of the leading Zionist organizations the “Anti Defamation League”, in fact had a long standing relation with South Africa’s secret services, hiring private agents to collect information and spy on the anti-apartheid movement up through the 1980’s.[8] Most of the Zionist influenced mass media including the New York Times, CBS, NBC, Fox, CNN and the Washington Post blocked the story ,as if Israel’s complicity in a plan nuking millions of Africans was unworthy of publication, let alone an object of the harshest condemnation. Let us be clear about why this crime, comparable to the Holocaust was not consummated. It was not because of any influence of the Hebraic moral traditions or “Jewish guilt” or even irresolution because of fear of the subsequent worldwide outcry. The Israeli sale of nukes did not go through because, according to authoritative South African accounts, the latter decided not to go through with the purchase, relying on Israeli “conventional” arms instead.[9] There is no definitive explanation for why Israel’s nuclear war industry lost a sale but there are several possible explanations, from the high price that the Jewish state was asking, to the fear that the fallout from nuclear weapons might radiate whites as well as blacks. The “collateral costs” to the white racist population may have caused the apartheid regime to rethink its purchase.

Let us be clear: Israeli complicity in this venture into nuclear genocide was freely given, under no duress. In fact the Jewish state in the best traditions of a Nazi haberdasher, offered the racist state a choice of three ‘styles’ of weapons: nuclear, chemical and conventional. Take your pick they all fit in nicely with protecting the user from any further annoyances by the black majority.

Given the enormity of this crime of complicity, is it surprising that the Zionist and even most of the anti-Zionist media and spokespeople gave scant attention to this crime against humanity. A mention one day, a pronouncement here or there, nothing more. More likely, if the genocidal act was carried out, the moral outrage would have focused exclusively on ... the South Africans not their weapon suppliers and accomplices before the act.

What explains the fact that the vast majority of American Zionist Jews who play a leading role in defending and apologizing for Israel’s role in offering nukes to racist South Africa, are high income, well educated professionals, businesspeople, scientists, academics, media performers and the like? Many are respectable family persons and civic minded. A majority consider themselves liberals, defenders of the environment and social programs. A few even speak favorable of ‘democratic socialism’. Yet, they are the same individuals who

willingly support and apologize for a regime ready and willing to supply the means to radiate millions of Africans in the past , nuke tens of millions of Iranians today and massacre scores of peaceful humanitarians on the high seas.

The key to this apparent “contradiction” is the capacity of pro-Israel Jews to compartmentalize their professional work, family life and civic activity from their obsessive commitment to Israeli war crimes and genocidal pathologies. We have a case of respectable and focused high achievers with intense irrational attachments to a state engaged in crimes against humanity. An attachment voluntarily given and with full access to the knowledge and information pertaining to the deadly consequences of the Jewish state’s acts. Actions sanctioned at the highest level of the Israeli state and approved by the most prominent members of the mainline Jewish organizations.

Some liberal Jewish critics of Israel take offense at gentile and anti-zionist Jewish critics, accusing them of “picking on Israel”. This is a deliberate evasion, knowing full well that many of these same critics denounce criminal acts around the world. But there are reasons why Israel warrants special attention. It is the only state to offer nuclear weapons to a racist regime to destroy a liberation movement, nay an entire people. Israel is the only country which has blockaded an entire people 1.4 million Palestinians in Gaza, having bombed and destroyed their sources of water, food and habitation..Israel is the only country which butchers dozens of pacifists in international waters. More to the point today Israel along with its Zionized supporters in the US government are the only two regimes which openly threaten to launch a nuclear war of mass destruction against 72 millions Iranians.

Given what we know about Israel’s nuclear complicity with South Africa this is not idle speculation. The precedent of collaborating with South Africa in the proposed nuking of millions of Africans, with absolutely no moral compunctions, makes Israel the major nuclear threat in the Middle East today.

Raising the issue of Israel’s sale of nukes to South Africa is not merely a historical incident of academic interest. Some liberal Zionists might say “after all Israel didn’t actually supply the nuclear missiles and the South Africans didn’t nuke the blacks” ...More to the point, the same Israeli and American Zionist mindset that threatens to use nuclear weapons against Iran, especially evident in the rantings of Secretary of State Clinton ,exhibits the same propensity to sell nuclear weapons as a means to resolve conflicts in the past.. Worse still Israel and its American Zionist followers have instilled the same moral indifference to genocide among vast sectors of their captive mass media audience and their colonized American Congressional and White House leaders. One has only to glance at the news reports of how Clinton dismissed the Turkey-Brazil-Iran diplomatic resolution of the enriched uranium exchange.[10] Clinton insists on proceeding with sanctions because her paymasters, led by ultra-Israel Firsters like Haim Saban, demand that Iran must be brought to its knees at best and nuked if necessary.[11] Clinton knows that new sanctions will destroy the negotiated compromise, even if it is on the same terms proposed by the US several months earlier. A compromise which Israel never accepted and now insists, through each and every major Jewish Organization that the United States should sabotage via new harsh sanctions.

Despite Clinton’s claim of a “consensus” on new sanctions, Russia, China, India , the league of Arab States and even France have publicly praised the Iran-Turkish-Brazil diplomatic agreement.[12] Only the British toadies themselves infested by Zionist parliamentarians at fundraisers toed the Clinton-Obama line. The question is whether the US Zionist power

configuration, headed by Rahm Emmanuel and Hilary Clinton, will secure the sanctions over and above the wishes of governments representing two-thirds of mankind.

The policy of nuclear genocide by proxy, proposed by Israel toward Iran, is executed by its bimodal high achieving fifth columnists operating from the top positions in the State Department, National Security Council, Congress and above all in the White House. Let us remember and never forget that Israel's willingness to supply nukes to South Africa has immense relevance to their efforts urging our own servile public officials to become perpetrators of nuclear genocide against 70 plus million Iranians. With racist South Africa, Israel was helping a racist ally and making a profit. With Iran it is destroying an adversary of colonial oppression. Today May 31, 2010 American Zionists defend the Israeli assassination squad which machine gunned 600 pacifists, humanitarians, Nobel Prize winners, murdering 20 and wounding dozens in international waters. In both cases, Israel's nuclear policy and its slaughter on the high seas, and their defense by American Zionists are acts of moral depravity. The sooner the Middle East – namely Israel – is denuclearized, and demilitarized and the USA dezionized the safer the world will be.

## Notes

[1] Daily Alert May 24, 2010; Daily Alert May 25, 2010.

[2] BBC News May 24, 2010.

[3] Jonathan Cook, "Israel's Nukes out of the Shadows" Counterpunch, May 26, 2010.

[4] Max Blumenthal, "The Banquos' Ghost of Israeli Foreign Policy", The Nation 5/23/10.

[5] Diarmuid Jeffreys, Hells Cartel: I.G. Farben and the Making of Hitler's War Machine/ New York: Metropolitan Books 2008, especially Ch. 10 – 15.

[6] Max Blumenthal op cit.

[7] Daily Alert May 24, 25 (2010).

[8] Blumenthal (op cit).

[9] Chris McGreal, "Revealed: How Israel Offered to Sell South Africa Nuclear Weapons" Guardian, May 24, 2010.

[10] Associated Press, May 25, 2010; AFP May 25, 2010.

[11] Connie Bruck, "The Influencer", The New Yorker, May 10, 2010. Saban states his "greatest concern" is to influence American politics to "protect Israel". His main vehicle and relationship is with Bill and Hilary Clinton, whom he showers with millions of dollars in political contributions.

[12] Ray McGovern "US/Israel Challenged on Iran" Information Clearing House, May 22, 2010.

[\*\*Comment on Global Research Articles on our Facebook page\*\*](#)

[\*\*Become a Member of Global Research\*\*](#)

Articles by: [Prof. James Petras](#)

**Disclaimer:** The contents of this article are of sole responsibility of the author(s). The Centre for Research on Globalization will not be responsible for any inaccurate or incorrect statement in this article. The Centre of Research on Globalization grants permission to cross-post Global Research articles on community internet sites as long the source and copyright are acknowledged together with a hyperlink to the original Global Research article. For publication of Global Research articles in print or other forms including commercial internet sites, contact: [publications@globalresearch.ca](mailto:publications@globalresearch.ca)

[www.globalresearch.ca](http://www.globalresearch.ca) contains copyrighted material the use of which has not always been specifically authorized by the copyright owner. We are making such material available to our readers under the provisions of "fair use" in an effort to advance a better understanding of political, economic and social issues. The material on this site is distributed without profit to those who have expressed a prior interest in receiving it for research and educational purposes. If you wish to use copyrighted material for purposes other than "fair use" you must request permission from the copyright owner.

For media inquiries: [publications@globalresearch.ca](mailto:publications@globalresearch.ca)