

COOL REACTION TO ARAB FOREIGN MINISTERS RESOLUTIONS

By David Landau

JERUSALEM, Sept. 6 (JTA)—Officials here reacted with studied calm today to reports of a series of tough decisions taken by the Arab foreign ministers who have been meeting in Cairo since Saturday. Apparently there was a conscious decision here not to engage in vituperative public exchanges so soon before the foreign ministers of the Mideast area go to New York and Washington later this month to hold talks with President Carter and Secretary of State Cyrus Vance.

The Arab foreign ministers urged the upcoming United Nations General Assembly to take strong measures against Israel and intend to urge the world body to condemn Israel's settlement policy in the occupied territories. They have also approved a draft resolution asking the UN to call on member states to halt military and economic aid to Israel; urging the restoration of all rights of the Palestinian people including their right to return, self-determination and the creation of a Palestinian state.

In addition, the resolution, which is reportedly to be submitted to the General Assembly after consultations in New York with Moslem and non-aligned foreign ministers, also calls on UN member states to halt the emigration of their citizens to "Palestinian and other Arab occupied territories."

Reacting to the emigration halt, an Israeli official here said: "Soon they will be calling on us to introduce compulsory birth control." Israeli officials also pointed up the discord between Egypt and Syria which the Cairo conference had bared.

While Damascus pressed for extremist positions but failed to receive endorsement by the majority of the ministers, Egypt sought to hammer out more moderate platforms, apparently in the hope of getting American support for them or at least not incurring American opposition. Thus, Damascus sought approval of a resolution calling on the General Assembly to suspend Israel's membership. Egypt suggested, instead, that the UN condemn Israel's "expansionist" policies. Egypt's approach was adopted.

LEBANESE CHRISTIAN COMMANDER PRAISES ISRAEL FOR HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE

By Yitzhak Shargil

TEL AVIV, Sept. 6 (JTA)—The commander of Christian forces in the western sector of southern Lebanon visited Nahariya today and praised Israel for the humanitarian assistance it has rendered his co-religionists in that war-torn region. Maj. Abu Emille, accompanied by several of his officers, surprised the Mayor of Nahariya and other Israelis by addressing them in fluent Hebrew. He said he learned the language during a four-month stay at a hospital in northern Israel recovering from battle wounds.

Emille said that the villages of southern Lebanon are cut off from all communications except those via the open fence on Israel's border which provides them with telephone and postal services. He said that several villages rely on Israel for their water supply, some are planning to link up with Israel's electric power system and all buy their merchandise in Israel. The officer spoke bitterly of the outside world that sees what is happening in Lebanon but does nothing.

Meanwhile, a group of 45 villagers from

southern Lebanon spent the weekend at the Jerusalem Plaza Hotel as guests of the hotel management. The invitation was extended as a "humanitarian gesture." The group was escorted by Msgr. Augustin Harfoush, head of the Maronite Christian church in Israel.

WORLD-WIDE SOLIDARITY WEEK FOR SOVIET JEWS SLATED FOR DEC. 5-12

By Edwin Eytan

PARIS, Sept. 6 (JTA)—The Presidium of the Brussels Conference for Soviet Jewry ended a two-day meeting here today with a decision to hold a world-wide "solidarity week" for Soviet Jews from December 5-12. The occasion will be used for seminars, demonstrations, exhibitions and a public information campaign.

Yosef Almogi, chairman of the Jewish Agency and World Zionist Organization Executives who opened the conference, said the solidarity gesture and other efforts on behalf of Jews in the USSR were needed because the Soviet Union has become "a world center for anti-Semitic propaganda" and responds only to world public pressure.

Philip Klutznick, chairman of the World Jewish Congress Executive Board, said Soviet anti-Semitism was state-organized and manipulated. He cited the Soviet Academy, a government-controlled body, as one of the main disseminators of hate material in the Soviet Union and abroad. He said the Soviets no longer even try to use anti-Zionism as a pretext for their open anti-Semitism.

The conference here examined the consequences of the Helsinki accords and evaluated the prospects of the forthcoming Belgrade conference. It also dealt with the issues of Jewish prisoners in the Soviet Union, anti-Jewish measures and Jewish culture inside the USSR. Participants at the meeting included Jewish Agency Treasurer Leon Dulzin and Rabbi Alexander Schindler, chairman of the Conference of Presidents of Major American Jewish Organizations.

BRITISH OFFICIALS IN CONTACT WITH PLO

By Maurice Samuelson

LONDON, Sept. 6 (JTA)—The recent meeting in Damascus between the British Ambassador to Syria and a high Palestine Liberation Organization official was only one of several such contacts between British representatives and the PLO, the Foreign Office told the Jewish Telegraphic Agency. Other meetings had taken place in New York and in London, but all were below ministerial level. They did not imply British recognition of the PLO, a spokesman said.

The Foreign Office was also commenting on the report that Dr. David Owen, the Foreign Secretary, would meet PLO chief Yasser Arafat in Beirut on Oct. 13. The report, on Baghdad Radio, was categorically denied. The Foreign Office said it had no knowledge of a projected visit to Lebanon by Owen.

It remains to be seen, however, whether there will be further British contacts with the PLO at the forthcoming United Nations General Assembly. Owen is expected to arrive in New York on Sept. 22.

Meanwhile, no new date has yet been set for Owen's visit to Israel, originally to have taken place at the beginning of the summer. The Foreign

Office denied that the cancellation in any way signified a change in relations between the two countries, saying that the original date had not been convenient and that it had been cancelled by mutual agreement between Israeli Foreign Minister Moshe Dayan and Owen. Talks had subsequently taken place on a new date, but none had yet been fixed.

The next opportunity for a meeting between the Israeli and British Foreign Ministers will now be at the United Nations later this month.

HUSSEIN WARNS OF NEW MIDEAST WAR

PARIS, Sept. 6 (JTA)--King Hussein of Jordan warned here today that a new Middle East war may break out again and might turn into a world conflict. The King, who is on a working visit to Paris where he arrived yesterday, said "this is not a matter of optimism or pessimism. It is a question of realism and the danger of war is real."

Hussein, who last night was guest of honor at a state banquet, told reporters as he was leaving the Elysee Palace that he had had "intensive talks" with French President Valery Giscard d'Estaing. French sources said the position of the two countries is fairly close.

The monarch came to France to seek West European backing for his plan for a Palestinian-Jordanian federation with himself as head of state.

GUR SAYS ARMED FORCES STRENGTHENED By Yitzhak Shargil

TEL AVIV, Sept. 6 (JTA)--Chief of Staff Gen. Mordechai Gur said in an Army Radio interview over the weekend that Israel's armed forces are now strong enough to give Israel almost complete freedom of political maneuver during the coming year. He warned, however, that cuts in the defense budget would limit freedom to maneuver between political and military constraints.

In the course of the interview, Gur charged that Egypt was repeatedly violating the interim agreements and that Israel's complaints were not always supported by the United Nations or the United States. He also spoke at length of the increased use of women personnel in jobs hitherto occupied by male soldiers, sailors and airmen in order to free them for combat duty.

He disclosed that the Air Force is now offering pilot training to women. He said one woman officer is presently training to fly a Hercules transport or a helicopter. The Navy is training women for shore duties such as the operation of electronic and other sophisticated equipment which will free men for combat duty at sea.

Gur said that the armed forces have been strengthened significantly on land, sea and air during the past year. The tasks, he said, are to maintain a state of readiness along the borders, to keep alert for any changes in the Arab states and to advance development for the years ahead.

He said before future strategies can be mapped it must be established whether the Arab intention to destroy Israel will subside with time or whether the only course is for Israel to remain armed to the teeth. He said that if the Arabs seek a decisive battle with Israel there is the need for a deterrent and the condition for such a deterrent is an unbeatable Israeli army.

GOVERNMENT SEEKING TO CONVINCE GUSH TO POSTPONE WEST BANK SETTLEMENTS By Gil Sedan

JERUSALEM, Sept. 6 (JTA)--The government is trying to persuade the Gush Emunim to postpone

their new mass settlement drive into the West Bank scheduled to begin later this month. Indications that the Likud government may be responding to international political pressure to restrain the militant Gush appeared yesterday when Premier Menachem Begin addressed ceremonies marking the 10th anniversary of the restoration of the Etzion bloc settlements south of Jerusalem.

Begin made no mention of settlement plans for the West Bank, a subject on which he has been outspoken in the past. He said that those who support Israel's right to the entire country have a humanitarian vision of Arabs and Jews living side by side on the same land. "Our vision for the future is peaceful co-existence of a Jewish majority and an Arab minority in the Jewish State," Begin declared, adding that the time has come to end bloodshed and "to start building a life of cooperation between Jews and Arabs."

But the thousands of celebrants, who had expected another tough statement in support of their settlement plans for the Judea and Samaria regions, were disappointed. Begin confined his speech to reminiscences of the past, dwelling on the rebuilding of the Etzion settlements after the Six-Day War. The Etzion bloc was captured by Jordanian forces during Israel's war for independence in 1948.

Earlier, Agriculture Minister Ariel Sharon, one of the strongest advocates of massive Jewish settlement on the West Bank, met with members of the Gush Emunim secretariate and asked them to hold off on their plans. The Gush leadership announced at a press conference last Thursday that 12 new settlements would be established on the West Bank during the Sukkot holiday period beginning Sept. 26. They said the settlements would be started with or without government assistance and services.

Sharon, who urged restraint, said he spoke in behalf of Begin. The Gush leaders said they would meet with Begin during the next few days for a "decisive" discussion. Some ministers reportedly have said that if the Gush attempted to settle without government approval they would be removed, by force if necessary.

ISRAEL BARS LANSKY AS TOURIST By David Landau

JERUSALEM, Sept. 6 (JTA)--Israel has barred its gates to 76-year-old Meyer Lansky, the reputed underworld figure from the U.S., who was refused immigrant status and ousted from Israel in 1972. Lansky told the Jewish Telegraphic Agency, in a telephone interview from Miami, that he wanted to visit Israel "for a few weeks" on a tour organized by his local B'nai B'rith lodge.

But Interior Minister Yosef Burg, backed by the State's top legal authorities, has rejected Lansky's application for a tourist visa. Burg held that the deportation order issued against Lansky five years ago was still valid. A senior official here told the JTA today that Lansky is considered "one of the most dangerous men in the world." The official said there was nothing arbitrary in the decision to keep him out. "Whatever line you draw, Lansky would be on the other side of it," he said.

The alleged gangland boss came to Israel in 1971 as a tourist. When the Interior Ministry refused to extend his tourist visa, he applied for immigrant status under the Law of Return. The Ministry rejected that request on grounds that Lansky had "a criminal past likely to endanger the welfare of the State." The Law of Return denies citizenship to known criminals. After the Supreme Court refused to overrule the Ministry's decision,

Lansky was deported. He was arrested in the U.S. for alleged tax evasion but was subsequently acquitted at a trial in Miami.

ISRAEL TO ASK U.S. FOR \$2.3 BILLION IN ECONOMIC AID

By Gil Sedan

JERUSALEM, Sept. 6 (JTA)—Israel is preparing to ask the United States for economic aid in the amount of \$2.3 billion for the next fiscal year beginning October 1, it was learned today. The formal request will be made by Finance Minister Simha Ehrlich when he is in Washington next week and simultaneously by Deputy Finance Minister Yehzekel Flumin at a meeting here with U.S. Ambassador Samuel Lewis.

The aid package Israel will request consists of \$1.5 billion in military security assistance and \$800 million for civilian purposes. The request includes a detailed breakdown of Israel's economic needs for the coming year and reviews the government's efforts to narrow its balance of payments deficit. The latter was improved by \$800 million this year but next year's improvement is projected at only \$200 million due to changing circumstances.

Israel will also ask that \$300 million of the civilian aid package be given it in cash rather than credits for purchases in the U.S. The reason given is that it is difficult to supply the necessary documents for purchases in the U.S.

During the current fiscal year Israel received \$1.8 billion in U.S. aid, \$500 million less than it had requested. The new request for aid states that Israel finds it difficult to balance its budget, partly because of the cut in American aid, and therefore must receive the full \$2.3 billion asked for.

Ehrlich will be joined in Washington next week by Amiram Sivan, director general of the Finance Ministry; Dan Halperin, deputy director general; and Ephraim Dovrat, economic advisor. They will attend the International Monetary Fund convention and will meet with Jewish investors.

FORMATION OF 'DEBATING SOCIETY' BY DAYAN SEEN AS START OF NEW FACTION

Three Major Parties Express Concern
By Yitzhak Shargil and Tuvia Mendelson

TEL AVIV, Sept. 6 (JTA)—The formation of a "debating society" by Foreign Minister Moshe Dayan and his supporters is arousing concern in Israel's three major parties that the group may be the embryo of a new political faction aimed at enhancing Dayan's position in the government and eventually propelling him to national leadership.

The initiators of the group, who include some prominent members of the Labor Alignment, Likud and the Democratic Movement for Change (DMC) deny this and insist that the "debating society," as they call it, will be limited to discussions of vital policy issues that confront Israel.

They claim that the present government's policies in foreign affairs, defense and relations with the Arabs enjoy wider support than is reflected in Likud's narrow Knesset majority. They have extended invitations to some 500 members of various parties and of the kibbutz and moshavim movements to attend the inaugural meeting of the group on Saturday, Sept. 10 at Kfar Hamaccabiah in Ramat Gan.

Strong Resistance Encountered

But strong resistance has been encountered. Prof. Yigael Yadin, leader of the DMC, criticized the group and warned that any DMC member who

joined it was violating a party rule forbidding members to join other political bodies. He referred to the Sept. 10 meeting as a proposed convention and declared there was no doubt as to its political character. But Israel Granit of the DMC said membership involved no political obligation.

The La'am (State List) faction of Likud is split, although one of its leaders, Likud MK Zalman Shoval, is among the organizers of the Dayan-led group. Other Likud MKs—Amnon Lin, Ehud Ulmert and Yigal Cohn—said they would not attend the inaugural meeting to which they have been invited.

Minister of Commerce and Industry Yigal Horowitz of Likud said he might attend just to hear what the people have to say. But Laborite Aharon Harel who heads Histadrut's Organization Department and was one of the Dayan forum's organizers, said that he would withdraw from it because it seemed like the beginning of a new political faction and he did not want to hurt the Labor Party.

Labor Is Most Agitated

Labor seems to be the most agitated by formation of the new group. The party issued a statement last Friday urging all members to avoid participating in the Sept. 10 meeting which, it claimed, was aimed at undermining the Labor Party. Labor is still smarting from its May 17 election defeat and the defection of Dayan who was elected on the Labor Alignment list but quit to become Likud's Foreign Minister.

Dayan still has a substantial following in Labor ranks, especially among members of the former Rafi faction. He has not joined Likud but remains an independent one-man Knesset faction and his former colleagues are anxious to find out which way he will "jump." Alignment leader Shimon Peres is understood to be keeping a close watch on the new forum.

Dayan has not been formally designated its leader but he will open and summarize the first debate. The subject will be the policies Israel should follow "leading to Geneva." Although Dayan and other organizers insist they have no intention to "break up" the existing parties, Shoval would not rule out the possibility that a new political party eventually may emerge. He said he expected many members of the moshavim movement and Labor's kibbutz movement (Kchud Hakvutzot Vehakibbutzim) to attend the Ikar Hammaccabiah meeting.

ATLANTA MAYOR PROCLAIMS ISRAEL BOND WEEK SEPT. 5-12

NEW YORK, Sept. 6 (JTA)—Mayor Maynard Jackson of Atlanta has proclaimed the week of Sept. 5-12 as Israel Bond Week in tribute to the Israel Bond Organization which will hold its 1977 International Fall Leadership Conference in Atlanta from Sept. 9-11, it was announced here today by Sam Rothberg, general chairman of the Israel Bond Organization. Jackson will attend the conference and welcome Jewish leaders from all parts of the United States and Canada who will take part in the sessions at the Hyatt Regency Hotel. The three-day conclave will plan the fall and winter campaign activities of the Bond Organization.

Jackson's proclamation points out that Israel Bonds have "provided substantial resources for the economic development of Israel which is so vital to its hopes for a future of peace and security." He said that Atlanta "shares the interest of the United States of America in aiding the development of Israel and thus the cause of peace for all people."

BEHIND THE HEADLINES**ROMANIAN JEWRY: PENT-UP LONGINGS**

By David Landau

JERUSALEM, Sept. 6 (JTA)—A brief encounter with Romanian Jewry can be a haunting and moving experience, as Premier Menachem Begin discovered last week. For this reporter, who accompanied the Premier on his official visit to Rumania the experience was even more heart-wrenching because he, unlike the Premier, was able to mingle freely and speak directly with numerous Jews in Bucharest, the capital.

The all-pervading fear of even the most chance contact with foreigners which used to daunt all Rumanians has apparently eased somewhat in recent years. There were many opportunities for conversation, although, of course, some sensitive subjects were, by tacit understanding, ruled taboo and carefully avoided.

Chief among these was the subject of aliya. It is the desire of many of Rumania's remaining Jews to re-unite with their relations in Israel. If the desire is present and yet it has not been realized, the reason, in most cases, is the authorities' refusal to grant an exit permit. Hence the reticence on the subject. Some of the cases one comes across are painfully poignant.

Some Poignant Cases

One devout, bearded man mentioned in passing that he had a son studying at a yeshiva in Israel. In the course of the conversation it emerged that the boy is now aged twelve, that his doting father had sent him alone to Israel two years earlier ("How can I bring him up the way I would like to here?") and that there is no knowing when the two will meet again. The man's elderly parents are living in Israel and the boy spends his weekends with them.

There is also the story of an older man, also devoutly Orthodox, who lost a wife and seven children in Hitler's death camps. He married again and had one daughter, whom he brought up in his own devout traditions. When he found the girl was having a hard time at her school (They lived in a provincial town) because she observed the Sabbath, he sent her to Israel. One meets a good many Jews who have visited Israel—but never as a family. "Don't let's talk about that any more," said one meaningfully. His hint was clear enough.

Fortunate To Be In Rumania

At the same time there is a very conscious awareness among all the Jews one meets of how fortunate they are to be in Rumania rather than anywhere else in the Soviet bloc. For only in Rumania could they maintain their religious and communal life, freely and openly, actively encouraged by the authorities.

Moreover, as one bearded and sidelocked Jew from a provincial town told me, every sign or semblance of anti-Semitism is quickly and forcefully slapped down by the authorities and thus a Jew who looks like a Jew need have no fear to walk the streets or travel on the trains even in the most isolated areas. Every Rumanian knows that a tangle with them is to be avoided at all costs—even at the cost of foregoing the joys of Jew-baiting.

Ironically, it is this relative freedom and well-being that the Jews of Rumania enjoy which itself is the major reason why one basic freedom is denied them: the freedom to leave. This is because the government seeks to prove to the world—both East and West—that it is genuinely tolerant of religious

practice and religious minorities without this prejudicing its Communist orthodoxy. It is yet another pin with which to prick the Kremlin.

But to achieve this a primary prerequisite is the existence of a Jewish community upon which to lavish the religious tolerance and governmental care and protection. With an estimated 400,000 Rumanian Jews (Holocaust survivors—some half a million were killed by the Nazis) having gradually left, mainly for Israel, over the years, the government is apparently concerned to retain the remaining few thousands. (According to Israeli estimates the current figure is around 50,000. The Rumanian authorities put it lower.)

Thus Begin's plea for free family reunion for all those who wish it did not meet with an immediately positive response from President Nicolae Ceausescu and his aides. Nevertheless, Israeli sources professed themselves not discouraged. Apparently they took heart from the sympathetic hearing which the Rumanian leaders gave to Begin on the Jewish issue.

Message Of Hope, Encouragement

Obviously, though, the fate of Rumania's remaining Jews is linked with the broader issues of Rumania-Israel relations and of Rumania's own policy considerations, in which the Soviet connection is always the predominant factor. Begin could only give the Jews of Bucharest who flocked to the Choral Synagogue on Friday night to hear his vague and unspecific message of hope and encouragement. But, given Begin's rousing oratory and the passionate sincerity with which he spoke, this was clearly enough to lift the hearts of those who heard him—as their faces so vividly portrayed.

He spoke in Hebrew, and then in Yiddish—"the language which my mother spoke to me." He recounted his own previous visits to Rumania in 1938, and again in 1939, at the head of large groups of Bessarabian youngsters fleeing the Nazi scourge and headed for Palestine.

The first groups were able to embark on a freighter and made their destination. The second was turned back at the Rumanian border when the British envoy in Bucharest intervened to invalidate their visas. Eventually they all went back to Poland. "I am one of the very few of that group of 1900 young Jews and Jewesses who survived the Holocaust," the Israeli leader said.

When a choir of youngsters in blue and white gave a rendering of "Jerusalem of Gold" Begin could no longer contain his emotions and wept openly. "We shall always remember your tears," Rumanian Chief Rabbi Moshe Rosen told Begin later. "Your visit was a true reunion of brothers."

BEGIN TO BRITAIN

JERUSALEM, Sept. 6 (JTA)—Premier Menachem Begin will pay an official visit to Britain later this year, it was officially announced here last night. The precise timing is still to be set, but officials said both governments wanted the visit as soon as conveniently possible after the Jewish holidays. British Premier James Callaghan's invitation was submitted to Begin last Wednesday by British Ambassador John Mason.

Israeli officials are especially pleased by this development. They recall that Begin's visit to Britain in the early 1970s was marred by some bad press and public opinion comments pertaining to his record as Irgun leader in pre-State days (when he was the British Mandatory police's prime target and a high price was put on his head).