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THE SCENE FROM JERUSALEM: BEGIN TERMS SENATE VOTE ON WARPLANES 'DEFINITELY A NEGATIVE TURNING POINT'

By David Landau and Yitzhak Shargil

JERUSALEM, May 16 (JTA)—A gloomy Israel began to assess today the damage—military and political—done by last night's 54-44 Senate vote that opened the way for the supply of advanced U.S. warplanes to Saudi Arabia and Egypt as well as to Israel. Premier Menachem Begin termed it "definitely a negative turning point from the standpoint of Israel's defense."

Defense circles said the American decision will have adverse effects on Israel which would now be compelled to devote special attention to a possible aerial threat from Saudi Arabia where no such threat existed before. Defense Minister Ezer Weizman was quoted in Maariv as saying that Israel fought against the planes deal and "I hope we shall not have to fight against the planes."

Shimon Peres, leader of the opposition Labor Alignment, said "It's a sad day in Israel-U.S. relations." He noted that "It was the Senate, not the Administration that voted against us," implying that Israel's traditional strong support in that body was seriously eroded. "The Senate voted on a security issue that will have serious implications for the balance of power in the Middle East," he said. "The American weaponry changes the whole situation."

Peres, and his Laborite colleagues, angrily castigated the Begin government for its clumsy handling of the whole matter. The government "stammered" instead of speaking out strongly against the planes sales to the Arab states, they said. They demanded to know why Begin failed to raise the issue with President Carter when he was in Washington two weeks ago.

Says U.S. Reneged On Undertaking

Begin, who briefed the Knesset's Foreign Affairs and Security Committee this morning, told reporters afterwards that the Cabinet would discuss the aircraft sales issue at its regular session next Sunday and will announce "the way we will proceed."

He expressed "deep regret" over the Senate vote and charged the U.S. with reneging on its "undertaking" to Israel in September, 1975 to supply it with F-16 warplanes on an "entirely unconditional" basis. The undertaking was made in return for Israel's agreement to make further withdrawals in Sinai under its second interim agreement with Egypt.

There was "certainly no justification" for the Administration to tie the present aircraft sales to Israel to sales to two Arab countries that are still in a state of war with Israel, Begin claimed. Informed sources here said that an additional U.S. undertaking to supply Israel with F-15 warplanes was made in 1974 in an unpublished part of the disengagement agreement with Syria. No conditions or linkage were attached to that undertaking, the sources said.

Political Recriminations Developing

While Israelis of all parties were dismayed by the American decision, angry political recriminations were developing here with unpredictable

repercussions for the Begin government. Even before the outcome of the Senate vote was known, knives were being sharpened for the inevitably bloody postmortem. Most informed observers were by then resigned to the planes package deal going through and the various government ministries and departments were searching for shoulders other than their own on which to lay the blame for Israel's political fiasco.

The Labor daily Davar reported yesterday that feeling exists in some government quarters that Israel's Embassy in Washington failed to function efficiently during the long propaganda battle that preceded the Senate Foreign Relations Committee hearings last week.

A writer in Haaretz faulted Begin, Foreign Minister Moshe Dayan and Defense Minister Ezer Weizman—especially the latter—for not speaking out more forcefully and at an earlier stage against the linkage of sales to Israel with those to Arab states.

The battle was joined today in the Knesset's Foreign Affairs and Security Committee where Peres bitterly criticized the government for failing to present Israel's case properly to the Senate and American public opinion. He said former Labor governments had been much more effective in doing so.

Committee chairman Moshe Arens, of Likud, accused the former Labor-led governments of having delayed the development of Israel's own advanced jet combat plane, the Kfir, which would have made Israel less dependent on American equipment. Arens, a professor of aeronautics and a former top official of Israel Aircraft Industries which produces the Kfir, urged the government to commit greater resources to develop new warplanes for the eighties.

The reaction of the Israelis in general was that oil has once again triumphed over logic, friendship and ideology.

SCENE FROM WASHINGTON: OMINOUS SIGNS OF ISRAEL'S WEAKENING INFLUENCE, GROWTH OF ARAB PRESSURE

By Joseph Polakoff

WASHINGTON, May 16 (JTA)—The Senate's confirmation last night, by a 10-vote margin, of President Carter's Middle East warplanes package, ominously portends a visible weakening of Israel's influence at the Capitol and a commensurate growth of persuasion with the Congress that the Arab governments already have with the White House.

The consequences of the struggle between the Carter Administration and supporters of Israel are seen as encouraging the White House to take further initiatives that will create "new realities" bearing on issues such as Israel's withdrawal from occupied Arab territories and the creation of a Palestinian "entity" for "a just peace."

News reports from Jerusalem today indicate that Israelis feel a sense of betrayal over the Carter warplanes package and some contend that both the Begin government and the American Jewish community have been deficient in promulgating Israel's program for peace.

Actually, the media tide in favor of Arab

perceptions of a peace settlement has been flowing with increasing breadth for 15 months. On the aircraft issue, the major American media, including top television commentators, leading newspapers and news magazines, have been siding with the President's proposal, observing that Arab oil is paramount and implying that Jewish considerations are in the backwash.

Repercussions flowing from Carter's 54-44 victory in the Senate point to an increased division between his Administration and Israel and its American supporters. The voting, after 10 hours of intensive debate, including two hours when classified material relating to the impact of the aircraft sales on the military balance of power was discussed in closed session, found 28 Democrats and 26 Republicans supporting the aircraft package and 33 Democrats and 11 Republicans opposed. Two Senators were absent for the vote.

See Setback For Settlement

"We have put the Israelis in doubt as to a 30-year-old commitment," Sen. Jacob K. Javits (R.N.Y.) told reporters after the Senate voted. "I am going to look for evidence now that the result will be a hardening of the Arab line. It will be more difficult to bring about a peace settlement," he said.

Sen. Clifford Case (R.N.J.) denounced the vote outcome as devastating to Israel's morale and called the Administration's action "one of the worst mistakes our government has made in a long time."

Sen. Joseph Biden (D.Md.), who introduced the resolution disapproving the planes sales in the Senate Foreign Relations Committee last week, said the vote represented a "defeat for a sound policy, a setback for a negotiated settlement in the near future. I don't know why Israel would move toward constructive negotiations," he said.

White House Modifies Its Statement

Sensing the bitterness induced by the stunning defeat for Israel's backers, the White House modified its initial statement that the President was "delighted" by the vote in a longer, formal statement issued later designed to mollify the losers and avoid the appearance of gloating over the Administration's victory.

The statement said that President Carter was "deeply gratified by the Senate's decision" and promised to "intensify our effort to help the parties narrow their differences" in the Middle East. The statement pledged that Israel "will continue to have the unwavering support of this Administration and the American people." The President also noted that the Senate "vote strengthens our ties with moderate Arab nations who share our goal of peace and stability in the region."

Arabs Are Gratified

The Saudi Arabian Ambassador, Ali Abdullah Alireza, who led the intensive lobbying effort for the aircraft sales in which his country's leaders participated, said "We are very gratified" by the vote and "I look forward to close cooperation and continuation of close friendship with the United States." A spokesman for the Egyptian Embassy, Mohammed Haki, said the vote meant the Congress is "helping bring about the just and lasting peace we have been aspiring to have" and is "further testimony of the end of polarization in the Middle East."

International observers and some Senators spoke of the vote as a "watershed" in Israeli-

American relations and suggested that the President may now take a tougher position toward Israel to obtain what he regards as a "just settlement" in the Middle East. "He will now believe he has the support of Congress to speak out on points necessary for a settlement," one source said.

"He now has freedom of action and has taken an independent U.S. action. It would be logical for the U.S. to be more than a neutral intermediary and publish its points of view and put them to use," the source said.

Another commentator observed that the Senate vote went beyond the sale of planes to issues of U.S. ties to Israel and to "Arab moderates." Still another referred to "oil and the 'new realities'" and noted that three years ago 76 Senators had signed a letter to President Ford attacking his reassessment of Middle East policy while last night "for the first time in many years, Israel lost a high priority, high visibility test on the floor of Congress." The reason "cited often," he said, is "oil."

'National Posture Is Kneeling'

Sen. Lowell Weicker (R.Conn.), a bitter opponent of the Administration's Middle East policy, charged that the Administration was mesmerized by Arab governments with their political power, petroleum and wealth. "The national posture is kneeling. The backbone is spaghetti and the heart is for sale," Weicker said.

But Weicker's Democratic colleague from Connecticut, Sen. Abraham Ribicoff, broke with the pro-Israel faction to manage the Administration's campaign for the aircraft package during the Senate debate. He was described by observers as "an eloquent leader both in public and private" and may have influenced many Senators to vote for the sales because they could point to him and say, "If Ribicoff can, why can't I?"

Sen. Howard Baker of Tennessee, the Republican leader in the Senate who also backed the Administration, said the two-hour closed session which Ribicoff had asked for did not change any votes but the "strange case Ribicoff made might have."

Senate Action Was 'Litmus Test'

Sen. Mike Gravel (D.Alaska), who voted for the sales, said the Senate action was a "litmus test" that would prove "the watershed year of Jewish influence in this country." Sen. Charles Mathias (R.Md.), who usually supports Israel but voted for the planes package, said it was "unfortunate to choose among friends" but there will be "many opportunities in the future to reaffirm our support for the security of Israel. This may be the only chance to indicate we have other interests in the Middle East," he said.

The division among the Senators pitted liberals and conservatives of both parties against each other. Both Senators from Georgia voted against the President's proposal while Sens. Thomas Eagleton (Miss.), Muriel Humphrey (Minn.), Adlai Stevenson (Ill.) and Warren Magnuson (Wash.), all Democrats, voted with the President.

With more than two-thirds of the Republicans voting with the Administration, thereby ensuring its victory, the Republican National Committee today blamed President Carter for "forcing a Senate vote" on "an artificial legislative choice."

Committee chairman William Brock called the vote "an extremely unfortunate step in President Carter's effort to shift traditional U.S. policy in the Mideast away from the commitment to the survival of Israel by past Republican and Democratic administrations." He said the President made "an

effort to salvage an image of indecision" and he chose "confrontation over principled leadership, parliamentary subterfuge over moral commitment."

U.S. Waiting For Israeli Answers

Replying to reporters' questions about possible future moves in the diplomatic field now that the Mideast aircraft package has been approved, the State Department's chief spokesman, Hoddie Carter, said, "We clearly believe that our position has been enhanced by this and will help the peace process in going forward."

He indicated, however, that the U.S. is waiting for "the answers we have requested from the Israelis" which "have not come yet" before new moves are made. "I don't have any new initiative to offer you because our next step," as Secretary Vance said, "does await some of those answers." He added: "The Israeli position has been clearly the position which they have maintained all along. We hope now that the debate on this matter (the aircraft sales) is over, we can go forward."

Responding to reporters' questions, a spokesman for the Israeli Embassy, Avi Pazner, reiterated his country's position that "it regards with deep concern the supply of advanced weapons systems, including modern aircraft, to countries maintaining a state of war with Israel." He expressed "Israel's concern over the linkage of long-standing commitments made to Israel for the supply of aircraft with the supply to other countries."

White House Offers Reassurances

Meanwhile, the White House was engaged in an intensive effort today to assure American Jewish leaders and other supporters of Israel that the Administration was not motivated by anti-Semitic sentiments or a desire to punish Israel in its vigorous campaign for the warplanes sales.

Presidential Press Secretary Jody Powell disclosed that President Carter, Vice President Walter Mondale and other top officials have been making telephone calls to thank supporters of the aircraft package but were also calling opponents of the deal to stress that the American commitment to Israel's security remains unshakable. Powell indicated that the President was distressed by what he said were innuendos of anti-Semitism on the part of some Administration officials.

"There is certainly no bitterness or bad feelings from our point of view," he said, "but one of the unfortunate aspects of this debate is that there have been suggestions on rumors made for political purposes. . . . I have noticed reports that the White House staff was engaged in a vendetta or anti-Semitism. That certainly concerns us and we will attempt to lay them to rest. Whether we will be successful remains to be seen," Powell said.

He also said that the President stood by his offer last week to sell an additional 20 F-15 jets to Israel after delivery of the 15 contained in the present package is completed in 1983.

THE SCENE FROM THE JEWISH COMMUNITY: LEADERS SAY SENATE MOVE HARMS PEACE

By David Friedman

NEW YORK, May 16 (JTA)—American Jewish organizations reacted today with disappointment over the Senate's support last night for President Carter's proposal to sell jet warplanes to Egypt and Saudi Arabia. They stressed the danger to Israel's security, especially in the sale of the 60 F-15s to Saudi Arabia, and saw the Senate action as a setback

back to Middle East peace efforts.

The Conference of Presidents of Major American Jewish Organizations, in a statement issued by its chairman, Alexander Schindler, said "it is up to the President to make his word good" that supplying the planes to the two Arab countries "would encourage the forces of 'moderation' in the Middle East and promote the cause of peace. Now it is up to the President to bring Egypt back to the negotiating table and to win the public support of Saudi Arabia for the renewal of the peace process."

Noting that Secretary of Defense Harold Brown, in a seven-page letter to the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, said the Saudis would use their F-16s for defensive purposes only, the Presidents Conference declared that "President Carter has bound himself and his successors in the White House to the proposition that the F-15 fighter-bomber will never be used against Israel."

Meanwhile, he noted, "Israel remains at war and under siege, its security dangerously imperiled by the Carter package," the Schindler statement said. "If there is to be peace, and if Israel is to be secure, our country must redress the dangerous arms imbalance resulting from the President's arms package. . . . our country's original commitment to provide a full complement of arms to Israel must now be honored."

Security Of Israel Affected

B'nai B'rith president David Blumberg said the sale to Egypt and Saudi Arabia "will adversely affect the security of Israel." He said that "in light of the first sale of offensive military planes to Egypt (30 F-5Es), it is imperative that the White House and State Department encourage President (Anwar) Sadat to return to the peace table." He added that the sale of the F-15s to the Saudis "gives the United States the right to seek greater moderation" from them.

In a harsh statement, Rabbi Joseph Sternstein, president of the Zionist Organization of America, charged the White House with "turning America away from its commitment to a proven ally, the democratic State of Israel." He charged that "It is clear that the Administration has succumbed to Arab petrodollar pressure and this new and dangerous factor is now shaping American foreign policy." He added that Israel cannot be blamed now for having doubts about the reliability of U.S. guarantees.

Chagrined By Senators' Actions

Howard Squadron, president of the American Jewish Congress, declared that "the Senate vote is a setback to the cause of peace." He said the sale of the planes to the two Arab countries "will justifiably heighten Israel's fears for its security and increase its concern for territorial protection against renewed Arab attacks."

He stated that the AJCongress was "disappointed" by the President's intensive lobbying for the sales "particularly in view of the campaign promises he made about rejecting Arab oil blackmail and slowing down the arms race. We are equally chagrined by those Senators who for many years publicly professed their deep concern for peace and their personal abhorrence of the proliferation of arms sales in the Middle East and nevertheless voted for the Carter package."

Burton M. Joseph, national chairman of the B'nai B'rith Anti-Defamation League, stressed that "since it is the Administration's position that the plane package deal will make the peace process

easier, it is now incumbent upon President Carter to urge Egypt to return to the peace table." He said the Saudis should also "urge President Sadat to be less intransigent and more forthcoming." Joseph declared that "the burden of proof is now on the Administration to move the Saudis and Egypt to take meaningful steps toward peace."

Harry S. Taubenfeld, national chairman of Herut-USA, charged that "Israel stands alone, the victim of an American foreign policy which considers no U.S. promise binding and no pledge enforceable." Taubenfeld said the "lesson" of the Administration's victory yesterday is that "never again can the Jewish State retreat from her borders in return for American guarantees."

NCC BOARD ASSAILS NAZI ACTIVITIES; RAPES ISRAEL FOR USING CLUSTER BOMBS

MINNEAPOLIS, May 16 (JTA)—A resolution denouncing Nazi activities in the United States was approved without dissent by the governing board of the National Council of Churches (NCC) meeting here last week. The action followed prolonged debate about whether to broaden the resolution so that it would condemn all forms of racism. The initiative to broaden the resolution came from Black and Orthodox delegates.

The governing board also adopted a resolution sharply critical of Israel's "illegal use" of American-made cluster bombs during its invasion of south Lebanon last March. The resolution asserted that the U.S. "shares in the moral responsibility" for the "illegal" use of such weapons. It asked Israel to adhere to the provisions of the U.S.-Israel arms agreement "which specifies" that the cluster bomb must not be used "except in the event of full-scale war against well entrenched emplacements."

The resolution dealing with Nazi activities expressed "concern about the recurring signs of Nazism evidenced in the recent demonstrations by the National Socialist White People's Party in St. Louis and the Nazi planned march in Skokie."

It added that "we repudiate and oppose any anti-Semitic teaching or action and, in particular, those Nazi activities in the U.S.A. which give support to prejudice, contempt or hatred directed against the Jews and which have their precedent in the tragic event of the Holocaust." Churches were asked to "be alert to the implicit and explicit advocacy of Nazi ideology by various groups and persons in the U.S.A. and to resist that advocacy...."

Raps Resolution As One-Sided

Regarding the resolution criticizing Israel, Rabbi A. James Rudin, the assistant national director of the interreligious affairs department of the American Jewish Committee, who was an official observer at the board meeting, issued a statement terming the resolution unfair, imbalanced and anti-Israel.

Rudin said that by singling out Israel alone for condemnation, the governing board has engaged in an unconscionable act of selective moral outreach. He said the resolution totally omitted any reference to the March 11 Palestine Liberation Organization massacre of 35 civilians in Israel.

Israel Pledges Not To Use Cluster Bomb

Meanwhile, the State Department confirmed that Israel has signed a secret agreement with the U.S. renewing a pledge that Israel will not use cluster bombs except under special wartime conditions. Secretary of State Cyrus Vance said last

April that Israel "may have" violated a 1976 arms pact with the U.S. when it used the cluster bombs. He added that he would not recommend "any further action" against Israel to President Carter because of the Mideast diplomatic situation and Israel's assurance that it intended to withdraw from south Lebanon.

It was reported that the latest agreement, in the form of an exchange of memoranda dated Apr. 10 and 11, has been sent to the Senate Foreign Relations Committee and the House International Relations Committee but was reportedly classified and would not be publicized. The existence of the new agreement was made public by Rep. Paul McCloskey Jr. (R. Calif.), a long-time critic of the cluster bomb who had raised questions about its use in Lebanon by Israel.

WASHINGTON STATE U. CONSIDERING EXCHANGES WITH LIBYAN UNIVERSITIES By Abraham Feinglass

SEATTLE, May 16 (JTA)—Washington State University (WSU) in Pullman, Washington is considering the establishment of an exchange program with El Fatah University in Tripoli and Garyounis University in Benghazi, Libya. University president Glenn Terrell admitted that a delegation from that university visited Libya during the Christmas 1977 vacation at the invitation of the Libyan government.

The purpose of the trip, which was financed by the Libyan government, was to investigate the possibility of establishing a program of exchange and cooperation between WSU and the two Libyan universities. Also in the delegation were the WSU student body president, the president of the Board of Regents and the deans of the engineering and science departments.

In a recently released report on their Libyan visit, the delegation recommended that WSU and the two Libyan universities exchange faculty and students and cooperate in a number of scientific research projects. Student body president Mark Ulfek also proposed that WSU invite Libyan leader Muammar Qaddafi to come to the U.S. to speak but the university rejected his proposal. The delegation strongly recommended the sale of Washington state agricultural products to Libya.

The Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rith in Seattle has expressed its concern to Terrell that an American, state-supported university is cooperating with a government that openly supports and finances international terrorist movements like the Palestine Liberation Organization. "We are also interested in knowing," said David Stahl, ADL Pacific Northwest regional director, "just what the university plans to do about the fact that no Jewish faculty and no Jewish students from WSU would be permitted to take part in the exchange program since Libya does not allow Jews to enter the country."

NEW YORK (JTA)—A symbolic tree-planting ceremony in memory of the bravery of the one million children who perished during the Holocaust will be held by Long Island Jewish school students on May 21 in Eisenhower Park, East Meadow. Simultaneous with the Long Island ceremony, a tree-planting ceremony will take place in Israel, to commemorate the Holocaust, it was announced by Alvin Schiff, executive vice-president of the Board of Jewish Education of Greater New York. Nassau County Executive Francis T. Purcell has proclaimed the date "Remembrance Day for the Children of the Holocaust."