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ISRAEL INTELLIGENCE CONFIRMS PLO HAS SOVIET TANKS

By Yitzhak Shargil

TEL AVIV, Feb. 21 (JTA) -- Israeli intelligence services distributed two aerial reconnaissance photographs today showing Soviet-made T-34 tanks in the hands of Palestinian terrorists in south Lebanon. An army spokesman said the tanks, of World War II vintage, are positioned near Tyre, a terrorist stronghold on the Lebanese coast.

The photos bear out Israeli reports and corroborating information by the Christian Phalangist radio in Lebanon, that the Palestine Liberation Organization was receiving heavy equipment from Russia. The PLO has denied this. Israeli intelligence also has information that Palestinians are undergoing training in armored warfare in Syria and in Soviet bloc countries.

Meanwhile, Premier Menachem Begin had lavish praise today for the Merkava tank, designed and manufactured in Israel, and the man who designed it, Gen. Israel Tal. Begin was the guest of the army ordnance corp at an installation where the tank is produced. He noted its main characteristics which are maximum protection for its crew, its speed and maneuverability.

ISRAELI ENVOY COMPLAINS OVER LACK OF UNIFIED STAND ON U.S. ARMS TO EGYPT

By Gil Sedan

JERUSALEM, Feb. 21 (JTA) -- Ephraim Evron, Israel's Ambassador to the U.S., complained today that his Embassy in Washington finds it difficult to campaign against the U.S.-Egyptian arms deal because there is no unified stand in Israel on the issue. In the course of an address to senior Foreign Ministry officials, Evron lashed out at "yordim" (emigrants from Israel) in the U.S. who, he claimed, disparage Israel. He also suggested that feuding Cabinet ministers "watch their tongues" because reports of their disagreements reach the overseas press.

On the issue of the proposed sale of sophisticated American weaponry to Egypt, Evron said there were three views in Israel. Defense Minister Ezer Weizman believes that Israel should not oppose the deals while the two countries are striving to normalize their relations, he said. Another school, headed by Moshe Arens, chairman of the Knesset's Foreign Affairs and Security Committee, wants Israel to take drastic action to oppose the deals, and Premier Menachem Begin says Israel should concentrate on trying to limit the quantity and quality of arms sold to Egypt.

"How can one fight the American intentions to supply Egypt with sophisticated arms when Israel's leaders differ on the issue and when the American Administration knows of the difference?" Evron asked. He said Israeli information efforts in the U.S. faced objective difficulties. According to Evron, the yordim are one of the main evils because "for each information emissary that arrived from Israel we see ten yordim who spread slander against the country." He also said that Israel's interests were not served by reports of clashes between Israelis and Arabs on the West Bank which receive wide coverage in the American media.

CARTER REPORTED CONSIDERING F-15 FOR EGYPT

By Joseph Polakoff

WASHINGTON, Feb. 21 (JTA) -- President Carter was reported yesterday to be considering a plan to provide Egypt with F-15 fighters, the best combat aircraft in the U.S. arsenal, but wants Egypt to settle for the time being for the less sophisticated F-16s. According to White House sources, Carter told President Anwar Sadat in a letter over the weekend that he would be willing to consider supplying F-15s but the offer was essentially an attempt to show Sadat that he does not consider Egypt a "second class friend."

The Carter letter was reportedly in reply to a query by Sadat about the F-15s. Administration sources said the Egyptians also asked for 80 F-16s but the U.S. wants to provide only 38 at this time. The sources indicated that the Carter Administration will try to convince Egypt that, at least for the time being, it should not press for the F-15s because they cost more than \$17 million apiece, have expensive maintenance requirements and a long delivery period.

It was indicated, however, that the main reason for the Administration's caution is that it wants to avoid concern in Israel that the F-15s might conceivably be used against it should Sadat fall from power and another Egyptian leader take over who might not support the peace process or U.S. strategy in the Middle East. The U.S. is committed to sell the slower F-16s to Saudi Arabia and Israel. Israel is getting F-15s as well.

PENTAGON OFFICIAL IN ISRAEL FOR ARMS TALKS

By Yitzhak Shargil

TEL AVIV, Feb. 21 (JTA) -- David McGiffert, the U.S. Assistant Secretary of Defense, arrived here from Cairo today and immediately went into the first of two scheduled meetings with Defense Minister Ezer Weizman. McGiffert declined to make any statement on his arrival. Tomorrow he will visit the two U.S. financed airfields being constructed for Israel in the Negev and will also visit Israel Aircraft Industries. He leaves Israel tomorrow afternoon.

Deputy Defense Minister Mordechai Zippori told reporters that the talks with McGiffert will deal with three main topics: the Negev airfields, over which the Pentagon official is in direct charge; the question of a new generation of the Israel-made Kfir jet interceptor; and the matter of deferring some of Israel's arms requests. Zippori said Israel was not cancelling those arms but would prefer to purchase them at a later date because of its present financial difficulties.

American plans to provide Egypt with sophisticated weapons may also come up during McGiffert's visit. Premier Menachem Begin said today that Israel was keeping a close watch on that matter.

YADIN WARNS SYRIA

By Gil Sedan

JERUSALEM, Feb. 21 (JTA) -- Deputy Premier Yigael Yadin joined Premier Menachem Begin in warning Syria not to take any offensive measures in the north. Speaking before the 21st International Conference of the World Union for Progressive Judaism here, Yadin said thousands of Syrian tanks were stationed on the northeastern front. They were

moving from place to place, thus creating a focus of tension, he said.

Similar warnings were issued earlier this month by Begin. However, after having twice warned Syria in toughly worded statements, Begin made a point of saying that Israel had no interest in heating up the northern border. This statement was interpreted here as a response to American requests to keep a low profile on the northern border. Yadin's Syrian statement was the first in several weeks. Yadin did not specify what time period he was referring to.

NO PROGRESS IN LATEST ROUND OF AUTONOMY TALKS

By Gil Sedan

JERUSALEM, Feb. 21 (JTA) — The Israeli and Egyptian working groups concluded three days of deliberations on autonomy today with no apparent progress to report. The negotiators, meeting in Tel Aviv, made no attempt to deal with basic issues but devoted their time to an effort to categorize the various powers inherent in the autonomy scheme.

It was announced, meanwhile, that the chief negotiators of Israel, Egypt and the U.S. will meet in The Hague next week instead of London. The London venue was announced when Israeli Interior Minister Yosef Burg, Prime Minister Mustapha Khalil and President Carter's special Ambassador, Sol Linowitz, met earlier this month at Herzliya. British sources were quoted as saying the Israelis ruled out London as an expression of displeasure over Foreign Secretary Lord Carrington's latest Middle East initiative. Israeli officials denied this and said the reasons for the change were technical. They confirmed, however, that Israel refused to go to Paris, which was also under consideration, because of the French government's negative attitude toward the Israeli-Egyptian peace process.

During their meetings in Tel Aviv this week, the working groups attempted to classify the autonomy powers into three categories — those that would be transferred to the projected administrative council, those that would remain with the Israeli Military Government and those to be shared by Israelis and Palestinians. The delegations did not discuss any controversial issues such as the legal status of the land on the West Bank, control of water resources or legislative powers for the administrative council. Nevertheless, Israeli spokesman Dan Pattir said the practical, businesslike approach by the parties was in itself "an achievement."

ORTHODOX GROUPS BLAST JAKOBOVITS

NEW YORK, Feb. 21 (JTA) — Two American Orthodox groups sharply denounced British Chief Rabbi Immanuel Jakobovits today for remarks critical of Israel's approach to peace. Jakobovits had suggested, at a meeting with Jewish journalists in London last week, that a Palestinian state could be created eventually if the Palestinians proved they could live peacefully with Israel.

Rabbi Bernard Rosensweig, president of the Rabbinical Council of America, called Jakobovits' remarks "harmful statements which can damage the position of the legitimate government of Israel and which can bring comfort to Israel's enemies at a very delicate stage in the autonomy negotiations." He said the Rabbinical Council, which represents more than 1000 Orthodox rabbis

in the U.S. and Canada, "categorically rejects Rabbi Jakobovits' position and supports the government of Israel in its ongoing search for a just solution to the autonomy problems within the framework of the Camp David accords." He stressed that "It should be clear that the Camp David documents do not envision a Palestinian state with its capital in East Jerusalem nor does it envision the liquidation of the State of Israel under any circumstances."

Rabbi Louis Bernstein, president of the Religious Zionists of America, characterized Jakobovits' remarks as "mischievous statements" that "came at the very moment that an Israeli Embassy is opening in Cairo and an Egyptian one in Tel Aviv." Bernstein observed that "It is only respect for the position that he holds that has spared Rabbi Jakobovits from criticism previously. By asserting that he would accept an Arab state with Jerusalem as its capital, Rabbi Jakobovits has waived immunity." He offered to provide the British Chief Rabbi with a rabbinical forum at the RZA convention "to debate your position with other religious leaders." (See related story P. 3.)

U.S. CONFIRMS 'SLIGHT' DROP IN JEWISH EMIGRATION FROM USSR

WASHINGTON, Feb. 21 (JTA) — The State Department said today that there has been "a slight downturn" in Soviet Jewry emigration thus far this year and in the last two months of last year.

"Somewhat over 5000 (Soviet Jews) received exit permission so far this year," spokesman Tom Reston said. "If that figure is accurate, it does represent a slight downturn over the same period last year. The slight downturn, I want to emphasize this, was already evident in the last two months of 1979," he said. "To give you a standard of comparison the monthly total over the past 12 months was about 4200 departures a month." (See related stories P. 4.)

EGYPTIAN DIPLOMATIC PARTY ARRIVES TO OPEN EMBASSY

JERUSALEM, Feb. 21 (JTA) — Twelve Egyptian diplomats, the advance party of the Egyptian diplomatic mission to Israel, arrived today. Mohammed Hazandar, Charge d'Affaires at the new Egyptian Embassy, who heads the delegation, said that Ambassador Soad Mortada will arrive in Israel at the beginning of next week. The Egyptian Embassy will be quartered temporarily at the Tel Aviv Hilton Hotel until a permanent location is found in Tel Aviv.

Hazandar said he hoped the opening of the Embassy would lead the way to an overall peace in the Middle East. "Let us hope that this road will not be a long one," he added.

AMSTERDAM (JTA) — A high level meeting between officials of The Netherlands Foreign Ministry and the Palestine Liberation Organization took place this week in Damascus, at the initiative of The Netherlands. Nicholas Van Dijk, the head of the division for Africa and the Middle East of The Netherlands Foreign Ministry, and Johan Van Ede Der Pals, The Netherlands Ambassador in Damascus, met Abdel Hassan Abu Maizer, a member of the PLO and head of its International Affairs Division and Brig. Gen. Abdul Razzaq al-Yahia, Mideast director of the political department of the PLO.

CORRECTION: Zvi Brosh, the Minister of Information at the Israeli Embassy in Washington, was erroneously quoted in the Feb. 19 Daily News Bulletin as saying that Israel will spend 10 percent of its gross national product on defense this year. The correct figure is 40 percent.

JAKOBOVITS, REPLYING TO CRITICS, UPHOLDS RIGHT OF DIASPORA JEWS TO SPEAK OUT ON MATTERS AFFECTING ISRAEL

By Maurice Samuelson

LONDON, Feb. 21 (JTA) — Chief Rabbi Immanuel Jakobovits declared that it is his "belief that Jews in the diaspora, while not wishing or entitled to participate in Israel's decision-making process, should contribute to it by freely expressing their views, even in public and even if they are sometimes critical."

The British Chief Rabbi affirmed that position in a statement released today, responding to widespread criticism here and abroad of his recent remarks in which he took issue with the present Israeli government's approach to peace and a solution of the Palestinian problem.

Jakobovits, an Orthodox rabbi, also sharply assailed the use of religious beliefs to justify certain policies. "I regard it as hypocrisy to use the slogan 'the Bible is our mandate' to demand rights from others and not to impose duties on ourselves equally mandated by the Bible," he said. "I cannot see the justification for relying on divine providence for the security of Israel, unless we are prepared — by moral rectitude and spiritual excellence — to fulfill our part of the Covenant whereby the land was promised to us unconditionally."

He added, "I share the passionate hope that we are indeed now entering 'the beginning of the final redemption' but neither Jewish history nor Jewish teaching, in my view, entitle us to base national policy on the certainty that we have clearly identified the Messianic footsteps."

At another point in his statement, Jakobovits observed that "Religious or quasi-religious fervor is, after all, today the most vociferous dynamic of Zionist militancy at one end of the political spectrum, just as it is of militant anti-Zionism at the other end. Whether I live in Jerusalem or London, I cannot help being alarmed at the prospect of Jewish religious fundamentalism being seen (rightly or wrongly) as an impediment to peace, with incalculable damage to Judaism itself, especially in a world now threatened with reversal to the Middle Ages by religious fanaticism elsewhere. Hence, I want Jewish religious voices of moderation to be heard"

Clarifies Remarks On Palestinians

Rabbi Jakobovits went on to clarify and amplify those remarks he made to a group of Anglo-Jewish and Israeli journalists at his home a week ago which drew the most fire from critics here, in Israel, the U.S. and the British Commonwealth. These were his willingness to see the establishment of a Palestinian state, even with its capital in East Jerusalem, if the Palestinians proved over a substantial period that they could live peacefully with Israel; and his assertion that, "If I knew we could never attain peace with the Arab world, I would say 'liquidate Israel now'."

In his statement today, Jakobovits declared "Far from contemplating a Palestinian state now, or from expressing any views on the present autonomy talks, or even the settlement policies, I argued that all options should be left open after a ten-year period of completely normal relations with the Arabs to provide Israel with a breathing space, whilst gradually creating a new psychological climate of understanding between neighbors and greater sympathy from the world community."

"Far from advocating any immediate terri-

torial concessions as the Peace Now movement does, I would not surrender anything until convincing evidence of real peace has been demonstrated," Jakobovits said. "And far from contemplating Israel's liquidation (perish the thought), I asserted my absolute faith in the State, by spelling out the alternatives, designed to nourish the hope of an eventual settlement."

The Chief Rabbi expressed concern over "the threat of the existing policies generating ever more embittered polarization between 'hawks' and 'doves' inside Israel." He observed that "Perhaps it needs an outsider to advance a formula which provides some middle ground which may lead to a consensus neither to give up any territory until tangible experience of peace is at hand, nor to foreclose any future options, by the word, 'never'."

Sees Growing Arab Strength

Jakobovits suggested that "There are factors which are bound to be more clearly visible abroad and more objectively assessed in the perspective of distance, particularly when they are related to attitudes of a generally hostile world far beyond Israel's embattled borders. Moreover, a monolithic voice by diaspora Jewry, invariably echoing official Israeli policies, would lose its credibility; governments, newspapers and public opinion would know that the facade of unanimity is contrived."

Accordingly, Jakobovits said, "Jews throughout the world should be seen to wrestle with the problems of peace. By making no more secret of it than the Israelis themselves do, they would show not just artificial solidarity and their opinion in support of Israel's interests would carry greater weight, both with whom they want to identify and whose thinking would be enriched by the cross-fertilization of ideas in the quest for a solution to our perplexities."

Jakobovits warned that "Arab resources in wealth, manpower, modern weaponry and world influence will increasingly tilt the balance against Israel. Short of miracles and inexhaustible American goodwill, based on the hazards of American election carnivals, Israel's armed might could become irrelevant to her security in a convulsive world where might rules and powerful countries are rendered prostrate and defenseless overnight," he said.

DISPUTE OVER SECRETARY THREATENS FUNCTIONING OF CAIRO EMBASSY

JERUSALEM, Feb. 21 (JTA) — The smooth functioning of the new Israeli Embassy in Cairo was threatened today by a dispute between Ambassador-designate Eliahu Ben-Elissar and Foreign Ministry employes over who should be the envoy's personal secretary. Ben-Elissar insists on Fanny Ashkenazi, his private secretary for the past seven years.

But the general assembly of Foreign Ministry employes voted overwhelmingly today to demand that they select a new secretary from among qualified Ministry personnel. The employes claimed that about 15 secretaries at the Ministry are about to be dismissed for economy reasons and therefore every job opening is important. They rejected a compromise proposal to send Ms. Ashkenazi to Cairo as a staff member of the Prime Minister's Office to which she was credited when Ben-Elissar was Director General of that bureau. They also insisted that the Ambassador's private chauffeur in Cairo must be a Foreign Ministry worker. Ben-Elissar, who will go to Cairo next week, has yet to name the economic and press attaches for the Cairo legation. (By Gil Sedan)

