

JTA daily news bulletin

Published by Jewish Telegraphic Agency / 165 West 46th Street / New York, New York 10036

Vol. LIX - 64th Year

JUN 25 1981

Monday, June 22, 1981

No. 117

BEGIN, CABINET ASSAIL COUNCIL FOR CONDEMNATION OF RAID ON IRAQ

By David Landau

JERUSALEM, June 21 (JTA) -- Premier Menachem Begin announced after today's Cabinet meeting that the government of Israel "condemns the condemnation by the UN Security Council of the June 7 air attack on Iraq's nuclear reactor and expressed "deep regret" that the United States supported the resolution unanimously adopted by the 15-member Security Council Friday.

"This resolution gives expression to the double morality that rules the roost in this international organization," the Cabinet statement read by Begin said. The "Iraqi tyranny" built the reactor in order secretly to manufacture atomic bombs which would have been dropped "when the time came" on Israel's population centers, Begin stated. "Instead of condemning this, the Security Council has condemned the state (Israel) that had taken unavoidable action to protect the lives of its citizens."

Continuing, the Cabinet statement said, "With deep regret, we note that the U.S., our friend and our ally -- in the words of the U.S. Ambassador to the UN -- lent its hand to this grievous injustice perpetrated against Israel. America even conducted negotiations with Iraq to formulate an agreed draft."

Cabinet Says Israel 'Will Continue' Defense

The statement said that "Israel ... will continue to defend its people and will prevent its enemies from obtaining weapons of mass destruction aimed against it by all the means at its disposal. This is the supreme duty of the State of Israel."

Eban Assails U.S. Support For Resolution

Abba Eban, foreign affairs spokesman of the opposition Labor Party observed that the U.S. has supported "the most injurious" resolution ever adopted by the Security Council against Israel. The injury was tangible and "operative", Eban said because it required compensation to Iraq and inspection of Israel's (nuclear) facilities. "It was not, therefore, a run-of-the-mill condemnation."

According to Eban, "There is no justification for this U.S. position." He observed that the U.S. itself had invoked the principle of deterrent action during the Cuban missile crisis and had asserted the right of intervention across its sovereign borders in the name of its national defense. "A major effort will be needed to restore U.S.-Israel relations," Eban said. He added however that the Likud government was hardly helping by its "exaggerated pronouncements about ostensible unanimity between Jerusalem and Washington."

U.S. INSISTS VOTE IN COUNCIL CONDEMNED RAID, NOT ISRAEL, WHICH REMAINS 'FRIEND, ALLY'

By Yitzhak Rabi

UNITED NATIONS, June 21 (JTA) -- The United States has made it clear that it regards the Security Council resolution condemning Israel's June 7 air attack on Iraq's nuclear reactor to be a condemnation of the act itself but not of Israel which, accord-

ing to the U.S. Ambassador to the UN, Jeane Kirkpatrick, "We in the Reagan Administration are proud to call ... a friend and ally."

Mrs. Kirkpatrick and Iraqi Foreign Minister Saadun Hamadi hammered out the draft resolution adopted unanimously by the Security Council Friday, during two days of intensive private discussions at the offices of Secretary General Kurt Waldheim. Their objective was to arrive at a text acceptable to Iraq but not so harsh as to make a U.S. veto unavoidable. Kirkpatrick stressed in her speech to the Council that while her country condemned Israel's destruction of the reactor, this does not change America's commitment to Israel.

But Israel's Ambassador to the UN, Yehuda Blum, angrily denounced the resolution in a statement after its adoption. "Israel unreservedly rejects the biased and one sided resolution just adopted," he said. "The resolution fits into the pattern of so many resolutions of the same kind which have consistently and deliberately ignored the root cause of the Arab-Israel conflict and all of its manifestations, namely the refusal of most Arab countries to come to terms with Israel's existence and their avowed intention, expressed in their ongoing aggression against my country, to bring about its liquidation," Blum said.

Kirkpatrick said that, from the beginning, the U.S. opposed any "unfairly punitive" measures against Israel. "Yes, Israel should be condemned; yes the International Atomic Energy Agency (should be) strengthened and respected by all nations; and yes, Israel's neighbors should, each in its own right, enter into negotiation with her to resolve their differences," she said.

'Israel Is An Important, Valued Ally'

The American envoy added, however that Israel is an important, valued ally of the U.S. "Nothing has happened in any way which alters the strength of our commitment or the warmth of our feelings. We in the Reagan Administration are proud to call Israel a friend and ally. Nevertheless, we believe the means Israel chose to quiet its fears have hurt and not helped peace and security in the area," she said.

Blum called the resolution "a travesty ... an utter travesty," from which the Iraqis "can only derive encouragement ... in pursuit of its lawless conduct" and "so will other rejectionist Arab states determined to block the peace process in the Middle East. At the same time, this resolution can only further reduce the already low standing of the United Nations and of this Council in the eyes of people of good will throughout the world. Israel rejects the attempt to condemn an action carried out in the exercise of legitimate self-defense ... Israel will treat this resolution with the respect it so richly deserves," Blum said.

JEWISH LEADERS DENOUNCE VOTE

NEW YORK, June 21 (JTA) -- American Jewish leaders reacted with great anger over the weekend to the UN Security Council's resolution

condemning Israel for its destruction of Iraq's nuclear reactor and blasted the Reagan Administration for supporting it.

Howard Squadron, chairman of the Conference of Presidents of Major American Jewish Organizations, declared: "We are dismayed that our country decided to vote in the UN Security Council to condemn Israel for taking action to avert the threat of nuclear holocaust. Although the U.S. delegation to the United Nations deserves credit for acting to insure that the Security Council resolution imposes no sanctions on the Jewish state, it is distressing to find this country appearing to uphold a claim of injury by Iraq, a nation that has persistently proclaimed itself to be at war with Israel and that has continuously committed itself to the destruction of Israel."

Squadron observed that "We had been led to expect stronger resistance to the Arab-Soviet-Third World majority that has regularly perverted the peace-keeping purposes of the Security Council by using it as a one-side forum for attacks on Israel."

Rabbi Joseph Sternstein, president of the American Zionist Federation, stated: "we are profoundly disappointed and shocked at the role played by the United States in the formulation and ultimate adoption of the latest Security Council resolution condemning Israel. It is indeed disheartening that this Administration, which has consistently articulated a positive attitude toward Israel, could be party to the writing and passage of such a one-sided resolution which maligns one of America's most loyal and steadfast allies."

Nathan Perlmutter, director of the Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rith, called the vote "a charade" and "well-intentioned hypocrisy." He said that while the United States succeeded in rendering the resolution "toothless" this country nevertheless should not have lent itself to a "moral condemnation of an act of self-defense." Because Iraq was clearly moving toward a nuclear capability aimed at Israel, Perlmutter said, the U.S. should have opposed "even a de-fanged resolution condemning Israel."

Maynard Wishner, president of the American Jewish Committee declared: "We deeply regret that the United States has voted for the UN resolution condemning Israel's bombing of Iraq's nuclear reactor. We believe such a vote is particularly inappropriate when our own government has only just begun its hearings on whether or not this was a legitimate defensive act by Israel. Nor is it consistent with President Reagan's recognition that Israel had reason for concern in view of the past history of Iraq."

Jack Spitzer, president of B'nai B'rith International, called the UN resolution "incomprehensible." Spitzer expressed concern at the failure of the Security Council to address the problem of nuclear proliferation in the Mideast. "The UN has once again failed to consider ... the very real potential for the spread of nuclear weapons into the hands of unstable and aggressive leaders like Saddam Hussein of Iraq. There is an alarming need for more effective international safeguards against nuclear proliferation which should include an evaluation of whether a nation's program is for peaceful energy purposes," he said.

Alexander Schindler, president of the Union of American Hebrew Congregations (UAHC) asserted that the Council's resolution is "unjust and uncalled for." Contending that "Israel's 'crime' was to eliminate the threat of nuclear war in the Middle East," Schindler declared that "The United Nations is infamous for its hypocrisy in damning Israel no matter what it does, while ignoring the continuing acts

of aggression and violations of human rights perpetrated by members of the Arab-Soviet bloc. What is new -- and deeply distressing -- is the spectacle of America joining Israel's sworn enemies in condemning our country's friend and ally," Schindler said.

Rabbi William Berkowitz, president of the Jewish National Fund, called the American vote in the UN "deeply disappointing. Our country will rue the day when it embraced the murderous pro-Soviet regime in Baghdad and turned its back on the one free and democratic state in the Middle East."

Rabbi Walter Wurzbarger, president of the Synagogue Council of America, charged that "the present administration in Washington, which promised no double standards at the United Nations, has joined the blatant hypocrisy of UN voices in calling for Israel to pay reparations for its defense raid on Iraq." He added that "there should be payment. The nations of the world should refund Israel the cost of the raid on Iraq which was an heroic service to the world's quest for peace."

Ivan Novick, president of the Zionist Organization of America, noting that Mrs. Kirkpatrick, in a television interview, had called the acceptable resolution, "the lesser of two evils," asserted that both options, "sanctions or condemnations of Israel, were evil decisions and both of them deserved to be rejected outright by the United States."

NUCLEAR EXPERT SAYS INTERNATIONAL INSPECTION AGENCY COULD NOT HAVE DETECTED AN IRAQI PLUTONIUM SWITCH

By David Friedman

WASHINGTON, June 21 (JTA) -- A 33-year-old nuclear engineer who is the only American inspector in the Middle East section of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) said Friday the IAEA could not have detected a diversion by Iraq of plutonium from its nuclear reactor to build an atomic weapon.

Roger Richter who resigned from the agency Tuesday, said Iraq could have "thwarted the IAEA inspection." He said he disagreed with Sigmund Eklund of Sweden, head of the IAEA, who reported to the agency's Board of Governor's in Vienna last week that the IAEA could have detected a diversion.

Richter testified before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, which is investigating whether Israel acted in self-defense when it destroyed the Iraqi reactor on June 7. Senator Alan Cranston (D. Cal.) said Richter was a man of "conscience," who called him on June 12 from Vienna because he was concerned about the Iraqi nuclear program.

In Iraq, Richter said the IAEA inspectors were limited to checking only the equipment and material declared by France and Iraq to the IAEA. He said the inspectors would not be permitted to look at the "hot cells" provided by Italy or other material which he said Iraq could use to make nuclear weapons. He said Iraq would have been able to make a weapon in about three years.

Richter noted that clandestine material can easily be moved before an inspector arrives from the IAEA headquarters. He noted that before an inspector can go to a country, he must obtain a visa so that none of his trips can be unannounced. In addition, Richter said that since 1976 only Hungarian and Soviet nationals have been allowed in Iraq as inspectors. He added that a French national was approved in January, but he has not made any inspections as yet.

Doctor Herbert Kounts, chairman of the Nuclear Energy Department at the Brookhaven National Laboratory in New York, said that even if the inspector could not check other materials, there were always "tell-tale" signs if nuclear weapons were be-

ing built. Kounts also said that if Iraq wanted to produce nuclear weapons, there were more sophisticated reactors than the one France was building for them. Richter said that Iraq wanted the more advanced reactors but France would not sell it to them.

Kounts and Dr. Robert Selden of the Los Alamos Laboratory in New Mexico, said if the reactor had been operational when Israel bombed it, the radiation effect would only have been for about 1,000 yards around the area and Baghdad would not have been endangered. Premier Menachem Begin had said that Israel acted when it did because if it waited until the reactor became operational, it would have cost thousands of lives in Baghdad.

Richter said that while he was with the IAEA, he knew nothing about the French-Iraqi secret agreement which was revealed this week and which was claimed to be a safeguard against the development of nuclear weapons in Iraq. Senator Paul Sarbanes (D. Md.) asked why France and Iraq had kept it secret since he noted no one knew about it and thus the agreement could not reassure anyone.

KENNEDY SAYS U.S. 'PROFOUNDLY WRONG' IN WORKING FOR RESOLUTION

By David Friedman

WASHINGTON, June 21 (JTA) -- Senator Edward Kennedy (D. Mass.) strongly attacked the Reagan Administration Friday for supporting the United Nations Security Council resolution condemning Israel and said it was "profoundly wrong" for the U.S. to have worked with Iraq in drafting the resolution.

"I strongly oppose the decision of the Administration to join in the United Nations resolutions condemning Israel's military strike against the Iraqi nuclear facility," Kennedy said in a statement issued here. "It is wrong for the United States to support efforts at the United Nations or elsewhere to condemn, to punish, or to isolate Israel, our surest friend and strongest ally in the Middle East."

"It was wrong for the Carter Administration to vote for a UN resolution last year in condemnation of Israel. It is wrong for the Reagan Administration to do the same this year."

"And it is profoundly wrong for our UN Ambassador to join with the Foreign Minister of Iraq, one of Israel's most bitter enemies, in drafting this resolution of condemnation. Neither the United States nor the United Nations should censure Israel on an issue of utmost concern for its national security -- involving the prospect of nuclear weapons in the hands of a state sworn to destroy the 'Zionist entity.'"

"Instead of assailing Israel, the United States and United Nations should criticize the failure to forestall suppliers of sensitive nuclear technology to Iraq. We should insist that the effort to halt nuclear proliferation must become a major priority for our nation and the world," the statement said.

LIKUD, IN NEW POLL, SUBSTANTIALLY BOOSTS LEAD

By David Landau

JERUSALEM, June 21 (JTA) -- Likud has substantially increased its lead over the Labor Alignment according to the latest public opinion poll published in the Jerusalem Post today, ten days before the Knesset elections.

The poll, conducted by the Modiin Izrahi company following Israel's air attack on Iraq's nuclear reactor June 7, found that if the elections were held now, Likud would win 49 Knesset seats to 37 for Labor. The pollsters concluded that the results seemed to reflect widespread public support for the

attack for which Likud was credited. The pollsters noted however that the survey did not cover the kibbutz population which is traditionally pro-Labor or the Arab community which usually divides its vote between Labor and the Communist Party. Another significant finding was that some 23 percent of the voting public was undecided, a larger proportion than a poll taken several weeks ago. According to the pollsters, many former Labor supporters have reverted to the undecided category.

Behind the Scenes

FRENCH JEWS HAVING SECOND THOUGHTS ABOUT MITTERRAND

By Edwin Eytan

PARIS, June 21 (JTA) -- Francois Mitterrand's election last month as France's new President made many French Jews feel at the time as if the clock of history had been turned back 23 years to the heydays of Franco-Israeli friendship and the Fourth Republic. De Gaulle and his crippling arms embargo, Pompidou and his anti-Israeli initiatives and Giscard d'Estaing's pro-Arab policy seemed a bad dream from which France had finally awakened.

Even Israeli politicians, usually careful and even suspicious of foreign statesmen, seemed won over by the generalized satisfaction with the Socialist victory. Prime Minister Menachem Begin and opposition Labor leader Shimon Peres vied with each other on who had better or older ties with the new French President. A new era in Franco-Israeli relations, and many hoped, in Jerusalem's links with Western Europe as a whole, seemed to have started.

Now, six weeks later, many of France's Jews are worried and sometimes disillusioned with the new Administration. Most express their misgivings privately but others have come out into the open. Even the most pro-Mitterrand Jewish organization, "Jewish Revival," which had actively campaigned against the outgoing President and his administration has openly protested against some of the new government's statements and decisions. The militant Jewish organization took the new administration to task for its statements over Jerusalem and the Palestinians, its speedy condemnation of Israel's bombing of the Iraqi nuclear reactor and its attitude during the Security Council debate on this issue.

Disillusionment Started Slowly

The disillusionment started slowly. The first clear inkling that the new government's policy was not going to be exactly what some of its Jewish supporters had imagined, came on May 21, the day Mitterrand was inaugurated. The man, slated to become France's next Foreign Minister, Claude Cheysson, told reporters that France will honor "all its foreign contracts and international commitments." Two days later, Cheysson in an interview with the French paper "Le Monde," stressed that these commitments include arms contracts but also such diplomatic engagements, as the European joint statement on the Middle East issued by the EEC member states in Venice in June 1980 and reiterated last December in Luxembourg.

Behind the scenes, the new Finance Minister Jacques Delors was busy reassuring Arab businessmen that nothing will change in Franco-Arab relations while the Minister for Foreign Trade, Michel Jobert, was meeting Arab diplomats. Jobert's appointment as one of the new government's five Ministers of State, sort of a super-Cabinet title, had already surprised and shocked many French Jews. Jobert, Pompidou's Foreign Minister at the time of the Yom Kippur war, is known for his strong anti-Israeli and pro-Arab line.

Other apparently insignificant details contributed to further disturb Israel's friends: Mitterrand's friendly

message to PLO leader Yasir Arafat and Libya's Muammar Quaddafi, his messages delivered to the Arab leaders, one by his own brother, Gen. Jacques Mitterrand, and the general tone of rapprochement with the Arab world.

The real change in France's attitude came with the Tamuz bombing. Three hours after the news broke on Monday June 8, the new French Premier Pierre Mauroy condemned Israel with no mitigating circumstances. The following day, speaking in the city of Montelimar, Mitterrand reiterated this condemnation "in spite of our friendship for Israel." He said that any country "which breaks international law" would be condemned by France.

Officials remained discreet on whether France would renew its work on the bombed Iraqi site and replace the destroyed or damaged nuclear equipment. Mauroy said: "This will be decided when, and if, Iraq submits such a request." The Foreign Ministry issued a communique after communique rapping various Israeli declarations and especially Begin's claim that the Israeli raid had destroyed an underground secret chamber. The Quai D'Orsay, usually protocol conscious, used most undiplomatic language in qualifying Begin's statement as "pure fantasy."

A Royal Welcome For Saudi King

On Saturday, June 13, King Khaled of Saudi Arabia made a six hour stopover in Paris to confer with the new administration leaders. Mitterrand welcomed him at the airport and rode with him into Paris. After a banquet at the Elysee Palace, the King's brother, Saudi Defense Minister Sultan Abdel Azziz, said "The King is highly pleased with his talks, The French and Saudi positions on practically all issues concerning both Europe and the Middle East are near-identical."

French Foreign Minister Cheysson stressed after the meeting that the Palestinians have "a sacred right" to a homeland and denounced unilateral (Israeli) decisions on Jerusalem. He said the status of the holy places should be decided at an international conference attended by all the parties interested in the issue because of their religious or cultural links.

During the Security Council's debate, the French delegation not only asked for Israel's condemnation but also called for the payment of damages for the destroyed Iraqi site and equipment.

Many of France's Jews, including people who had voted for the outgoing center-right administration, were distressed not only by the concrete statement and decisions but also by the tone used by the country's new leaders. The French Jewish weekly "Jewish Tribune" wrote that some of the words and the tone "were sometimes offensive" in spite of the new administration's obvious good intentions.

Some French Jews, especially those who had supported the previous regime, condemned the new approach. Others expressed surprise but said that "We should wait to give Mitterrand a chance to apply his policies and views." Others still said they had "expected nothing else" and that a country's policy is determined by cold facts which, whatever the administration in power, remain the same.

Among those who expressed no surprise is Jacques Soustelle, a former Minister in the days of the Fourth Republic, a former Governor of Algeria during the Premiership of Socialist Guy Mollet and since then a warm and unwavering friend of Israel, Soustelle still is vice president of the "France Israeli Alliance."

Soustelle told the Jewish Telegraphic Agency "I never had any illusions concerning the new regime as far as Israel and the Middle East are concerned. I was unhappy with the outgoing administration because of its Middle East policy but I never thought that a Socialist takeover would change things. The tone, maybe, might become pleasanter, more amiable, but the policy would remain the same."

Soustelle, who practically broke with Giscard over the Middle East, adds "if anything, the new regime is even more dependent on Arab good will. Its main aim is to combat unemployment and Arab contracts will be ever more important. It has also decided to stop work on the Plogoff reactor, which would have supplied a large part of France's electricity and will increasingly rely on Arab oil."

The President of the "Jewish Revival" Henri Hajdenberg, admits that he is "shocked" by some of the new government's words about Israel. His movement was highly active in changing France's political climate during the long campaign and helped swing part of the Jewish vote against Giscard. Now, he told the JTA, he is "surprised at some of the things which have happened" but he wants to wait and "give Mitterrand a chance."

Hajdenberg, a 34-year-old attorney, said that "Begin and the Tamuz bombing have not made things easy for the new administration. Even in Israel, not everybody agrees with Begin's decision or his ensuing statements. In spite of this, some of the things said by France's new leaders are wrong. Should this become the country's policy, we will act against it but for the time being, we are still waiting to see how things will turn out."

One of the outgoing deputies, 38-year-old Jean Pierre Bloch, is far more critical. "The new Administration will be far worse than anything we have known in the past. Formerly, we could work from within, there were means we, the Jewish Deputies, as part of the former majority, could influence the President's decisions. Now, there are practically no Socialist Jewish Deputies. One or two at the worst, and all anti-Israeli. The new Socialist majority will do as it wants and what it wants with no restrictions whatsoever."

Pierre Bloch, who belongs to the beaten Neo-Gaullist party, is bitter for obvious political reasons but he also represents many attached Jews who feel the same, though they use more moderate terms in expressing themselves. Pierre Bloch, whose father is President of L.I.C.R.A. and the French B'nai B'rith, showed the JTA a tract against him distributed by pro-Mitterrand Jews. "They would rather see me, a Jew lose. And win another Socialist seat."

The new French Administration will have to clarify its position within the next few weeks unless it wants to risk disillusioning most of its Jewish electorate for good. Hajdenberg and other French Jewish leaders, said "something must be done within the coming months or weeks, to make it clear where Mitterrand and his men really stand."

BRANDEIS SCHOLAR GETS GRANT FOR RESEARCH ON VENICE JEWS

WALTHAM, MASS. (JTA) -- A Judaic scholar at Brandeis University has won an award to further his research on the Jews of Venice in the 16th and 17th centuries.

Benjamin Ravid, the Jennie and Mayer Weisman associate professor of Jewish History at Brandeis, is one of 101 American scholars who are receiving a grant-in-aid from the American Council of Learned Societies (ACLS) for post-doctoral research in the humanities and related social sciences. The amount of the grant was not indicated in the announcement. The ACLS is a private, non-profit federation of 43 national scholarly associations devoted to the advancement of humanistic studies.