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ISRAELI PLANES DOWN SYRIAN MIG IN BRIEF DOGFIGHT NEAR BEIRUT

By Hugh Orgel

TEL AVIV, July 29 (JTA) -- Israeli fighter planes shot down a Syrian MIG-25 jet interceptor in a brief dogfight north of Beirut today. A military spokesman said the Israeli aircraft were on a routine reconnaissance flight over Lebanon when the Syrians interfered. All Israeli planes returned safely to their bases, he said.

Israel has reserved the right to continue its surveillance flights over Lebanon while the cease-fire it agreed to last Friday remains in effect. The flights are described as non-combat reconnaissance to monitor any Palestinian build-up of weapons and forces indicating preparations to renew hostilities against Israel.

A Syrian spokesman said yesterday that Israeli spy planes would be shot down over Lebanon. Premier Menachem Begin, addressing a world conference of Jewish jurists in Jerusalem today, noted that "it is easier said than done because today we shot down a MIG-25."

The U.S. has apparently agreed with Israel that reconnaissance flights over Lebanon would not be regarded as a violation of the cease-fire worked out by special envoy Philip Habib. It brought to an end 11 days of intense rocket and shell fire against Israeli towns and settlements in Upper Galilee and heavy Israeli bombing raids on Palestinian targets in Lebanon.

According to Israeli sources, the overflights are an essential element of security. The terrorists reportedly are receiving large quantities of weapons through ports in northern Lebanon. They are sent to Syria where they are issued to Palestinian units which then move south toward the Israeli border.

Palestinian Concentrations Pinpointed

The Israeli sources claim there are about 15,000 Palestinians in Lebanon who are gradually being transformed from guerrilla bands into regular army units. They are now equipped with heavy weapons, including tanks, field artillery and multi-barrel rocket launchers. Those weapons inflicted severe damage on more than a score of towns and settlements in northern Israel and claimed six lives before the cease-fire took effect.

The Israelis say they have pin-pointed Palestinian concentrations. About 5,000 Palestinians are said to be located in the southern region between the Zaharani River and the Israeli border. Another 3,000-5,000 are in Beirut. There are about 1,500 in the area of Sidon, about 800 in the zone controlled by the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL) and about 500 in the area of Tripoli in northern Lebanon, the Israelis say.

COALITION TALKS RUN INTO SNAG AS RELIGIOUS PARTIES BALK

By David Landau

JERUSALEM, July 29 (JTA) -- Premier Menachem Begin has summoned all of his potential coalition partners to a "crucial" meeting tomorrow after

a meeting this morning failed to remove the major obstacles to the establishment of a new Likud-led government in partnership with the religious parties.

He and his aides have reminded the religious factions that unless a coalition agreement is reached now, he will return his mandate to President Yitzhak Navon next Tuesday when the 21-day period allowed by law to form a government expires. While Begin can request an additional 21 days, he said at the outset that he would not take advantage of the extension.

To achieve a bare 61-seat majority in the Knesset, Begin must have the 13 mandates held by the National Religious Party and the ultra-Orthodox Aguda Israel, plus the three of Tami, the faction headed by Religious Affairs Minister Aharon Abu-Hatzeira who broke away from the NRP shortly before the June 30 elections.

Pressing Hard For Demands

The religious parties, though weak themselves, hold the balance of power and are pressing hard for their demands. The NRP is insisting that its leader, Interior Minister Yosef Burg, receive the Religious Affairs Ministry as well. The Aguda's price for joining a coalition is a guarantee from Begin that the new Knesset will amend the Law of Return so as to exclude from citizenship any convert to Judaism not converted by an Orthodox rabbi "according to halacha."

While Begin, whose Orthodox practices have endeared him to the religious parties, personally supports the amendment, he has refused to make a commitment until now, mainly because Likud's Liberal Party wing is strongly opposed to the amendment. At today's meeting, he reportedly offered a pledge to amend the law "within two years." There was no immediate response from the religious parties.

CONGRESS WILL NOT BE ASKED TO ACT ON SALE OF AWACS TO SAUDIS UNTIL AFTER LABOR DAY

By David Friedman

WASHINGTON, July 29 (JTA) -- The Reagan Administration announced today that it will not send to Congress its proposal to sell Saudi Arabia AWACS reconnaissance planes and other sophisticated military equipment until after Labor Day.

The announcement came in the form of a statement by State Department spokesman Dean Fischer that the Administration would not begin the 20-day informal notification period of Congress until after Congress returns from its summer recess. This does not mean that the notification to Congress would necessarily go to it in September, Fischer said.

He maintained that the decision on the timetable still depends on the advice to the Administration from Congressional leaders. The Administration has been postponing action since early May because leading Republicans in the Senate have advised that if the proposal was sent to Congress it would be rejected.

The 20-day information notification period which includes only working days, is followed by a 30-day formal period, in which the sale can be prevented if both Houses of Congress vote to reject the proposal.

The State Department announcement came a day after the resignation of Robert Neumann as Ambassador to Saudi Arabia reportedly because he had criticized Secretary of State Alexander Haig for, among other

things, not pushing the AWACS sale through immediately. Neumann, Ambassador to Saudi Arabia for only two months, had been in Washington for the past week lobbying Congress on the AWACS proposal.

Reportedly, he had criticized Haig to Senators and was quoted as saying the U.S. should "crack down" on Israel for its raids on the Iraqi nuclear reactor and the terrorist headquarters in Beirut.

Fischer maintained today that Neumann resigned for "personal reasons" as he stated in his letter of resignation to President Reagan and not over policy differences. The spokesman did acknowledge that "there were discussions leading to Neumann's resignation but refused to elaborate.

Neumann, a 65-year-old foreign policy analyst who headed the Reagan transition team at the State Department, will continue to serve the State Department as a senior consultant. Fischer said he will earn the usual consultant fee of \$192 a day not to exceed the limits set for consultants of \$51,112 a year. Fischer said Neumann will consult in his field of expertise noting that Neumann had been Ambassador to Afghanistan and Morocco as well as Saudi Arabia.

The position of senior consultant is the same as that to which Ernest Lefever was appointed after the Senate Foreign Relations Committee rejected him for the post of Assistant Secretary of State for Human rights. Consultants do not need to be confirmed by the Senate.

Meanwhile, Fischer said Richard Murphy, the 52-year-old diplomat who Reagan named yesterday to succeed Neumann, was flying directly to Jidda from the Philippines where he has been Ambassador since 1978. Fischer acknowledged that the usual practice is for an Ambassador to be confirmed by the Senate and sworn in before taking up his post. But he said the U.S. places "high priorities" on its relations with Saudi Arabia. "We felt that it was important that we had a representative there right away," Fischer said.

Murphy, who was also Ambassador to Mauritania and Syria, has served most of his career in the Middle East. Before becoming an Ambassador he served in posts in Syria, Saudi Arabia and Jordan.

U.S. Disturbed Over Dogfight

On another Mideast issue, Fischer said that the U.S. found the dogfight between Israeli and Syrian jets over Lebanon today "disturbing and we hope there will be no repetitions. We continue to urge all involved to exercise maximum restraint."

Fischer refused to say whether the U.S. considered Israel's reconnaissance flights over Lebanon a violation of the cease-fire. He referred to his statement Monday when he said the flights were not armed actions.

Fischer stressed that the situation in the "area" is fragile and delicate. Any actions which tend to increase tension are obviously of serious concern." He specifically pointed out that everyone involved in the area, including the Syrians, have an interest in seeing that the cease-fire works.

UNION BACKS WORKERS FIRED FOR FAILING TO REPORT TO WORK DURING TWO WEEKS OF SHELLING

By Hugh Orgel

TEL AVIV, July 29 (JTA) -- The Kiryat Shemona works committee of local municipal employees has threatened to call a general strike in

the township if five workers dismissed by the government-appointed local council are not immediately reinstated. The five were dismissed because they left the town and failed to report for work during the two weeks of rocket fire and shelling by Palestinians which ended with last Friday's cease-fire.

The council said their absence without permission cast a heavy burden on other municipal employees, mainly senior personnel, who stayed on and worked 20 hours a day trying to maintain municipal services. The workers committee said there was no law ordering anybody to continue work under shellfire. They also say the police and army ordered all residents to remain in shelters.

According to some reports, well over 80 percent of the residents of Kiryat Shemona left the town for safer areas further south during the shelling. Most of them complained the government had failed to take adequate precautions by providing suitable shelter accommodation in advance of any measures taken in Lebanon which might have resulted in retaliatory action by the terrorists for any length of time.

For the past year, Kiryat Shemona has been run by a government-appointed mayor and council following the dismissal of the elected mayor and town council on grounds of inefficiency. Residents are demanding the re-appointment of the elected body, claiming that government appointees from outside the township cannot properly look after local interests.

JNF ESTIMATES SOME 100,000 TREES DESTROYED BY TERRORIST SHELLING

By David Landau

JERUSALEM, July 29 (JTA) -- The Jewish National Fund estimated today that close to 100,000 trees it planted in northern Israel were destroyed during the two weeks of warfare across the Israel-Lebanon border which ended with the cease-fire agreement last Friday. Moshe Rivlin, chairman of the JNF, made that report to the Executive of the World Zionist Organization. He said the JNF has begun replanting and refurbishing its extensive forests in Galilee.

According to Rivlin, the forests have more than ecological value. He said they prevented local Arabs from encroaching on State-owned land. "Ensuring Jewish ownership of the lands of the Galilee is one of the primary purposes of the JNF's work," he said.

Rivlin listed the JNF's three top priorities for the current year: afforestation around Jerusalem from the city's western environs to the Judean desert in the east; forestry in the Negev to reclaim presently arid land; and infrastructure work at some 350 rural and urban settlements throughout the country.

DECLINE IN SOVIET JEWISH ALIYA ATTRIBUTED TO DROP-OUT RATE AND WORSENING U.S.-USSR RELATIONS

By David Landau

JERUSALEM, July 29 (JTA) -- The severe decline in Jewish emigration from the Soviet Union this year was blamed today on the high percentage of drop-outs and on deteriorating relations between Moscow and Washington.

According to Avraham Harman, president of the Hebrew University and a former Israeli Ambassador to the U.S., "Russia is not prepared for its citizens to emigrate to the West." Therefore, the fact that most Jews leaving the USSR choose to go to the United States rather than to Israel is responsible for the drastic reduction in exit visas granted by the Soviet authorities, Harman said. He contended that "Whoever wants to see Jews leaving Russia must demand that they go to Israel."

Speaking in his capacity as president of the Public Council for Soviet Jewry, Harman noted that only 868 Jews left the Soviet Union last month compared to 1,967 in the corresponding month last year and 4,358 in June, 1979. Ever since the beginning of this year, the monthly exit figure has been under 1,000, Harman said, with the result that the number of refuseniks now stands at 1,700 families.

The Soviet authorities, he noted, allow "family reunions. It allowed them in the case of Germans and Poles and it is allowing them in the case of Jews. But it will not encourage family reunions in the United States." He said that lately, the Soviets have refused even to consider applications to emigrate, a new and deeply disturbing development. Harman said the cause of Jewish emigration was also suffering from the worsening of U.S.-Soviet ties.

U.S. MOVES AGAINST TWO ALLEGED WAR CRIMINALS

By Kevin Freeman

NEW YORK, July 29 (JTA) -- Two alleged Nazi war criminals face revocation of their citizenship and deportation for concealing their past activities during World War II when applying for citizenship to this country, according to two separate complaints filed by the federal government.

The government charged in Federal District Court in Newark, N.J. that 65-year-old Juozas Kungys, had falsified information in his visa and citizenship applications to conceal his participation with German forces in the firing squad murders of 2,000 Jews near the village of Kedainiai around August 1941.

The complaint against Kungys, a Clifton, N.J. dentist, also said that he had not revealed that around July 1941 he participated in the killing of approximately 100 unarmed civilians near Babences, Lithuania. Kungys vehemently denied the charges to reporters last week, adding, "This is slander -- it's the Russians who are doing this." He said he knew of no mass slayings in either Kedainiai or Babences.

Meanwhile in Sacramento, Calif., Otto Albrecht Alfred von Bolschwing has been given until Aug. 10 to respond to a complaint filed May 27 by the Justice Department for concealing his membership in the Nazi Party, the SS and the Sicherheitsdienst, the SS intelligence and security arm, when he obtained U.S. citizenship in 1959.

The defendant's response, unusual in a case like this, will be sealed by orders of presiding Federal District Judge Milton Schwartz, because the case involves, according to United States Attorney William Shubb, "the potential of some classified information." Von Bolschwing, 71, who resides in Carmichael, Calif., maintains that he served for the United States Office of Strategic Services (OSS) during World War II.

JEWISH LEADERS URGE EMERGENCY MEASURES TO HALT TORAH THEFTS

NEW YORK, July 29 (JTA) -- The continuing rash of thefts of Torahs from metropolitan area synagogues was termed a "plague that must be stopped" by leaders of the Jewish Community Relations Council of New York (JCRC).

Two recent incidents brought to more than 70 the number of Torahs stolen since last Jan. in the five boroughs. This is 20 more than in all of

1980 and "surpasses the entire decade of the 1970's," according to Peggy Tishman, chairman of the JCRC Commission of Jewish Security and Police Liaison.

Louis Weiser, chairman of the JCRC's Monitoring Unit, and Rabbi Israel Miller who is chairing a special committee on Torah registry, noted that "the current crisis requires emergency measures on the part of citizens, synagogues, police and legislators." The three leaders announced a broad-scale program on which their respective bodies and the 29-member agencies of the JCRC have been working.

Included are plans for "block watcher" programs near all synagogues, and unarmed patrols; visitations by crime prevention officers to every synagogue and implementation of basic security measures; state and federal legislation to increase penalties, parental liability and to bring additional resources to supplement ongoing police efforts; a sizeable reward for information leading to the arrest and conviction of those responsible; a community education program; and, most importantly, a Torah Identification and Registry System.

Miller noted that "intensive efforts are underway to finalize the system," which he said should be announced in the next two weeks. There are a few technical details that must be resolved to assure the effectiveness of the system and its compliance with Jewish religious law. The system involves a numerical marking system using a special invisible ink.

Laurence Tisch, JCRC president, said "We are in contact with the police departments in New York City and the surrounding counties. They are most concerned and have given high priority to protecting houses of worship. It is up to the community now to institute emergency measures to prevent further occurrences and assist in every possible way to recover stolen Torahs."

LATE NEWS BULLETIN

TEL AVIV, July 29 (JTA) -- Four passengers in a bus travelling from Jerusalem to Ma'aleh Hahamisha were injured Wednesday evening when the vehicle was attacked by two terrorists, police said. Police were reported searching the area of the attack on the outskirts of Jerusalem. It was the first terrorist attack inside Israel for some time.

EL AL LOST \$47.5 MILLION IN 1980

TEL AVIV, July 29 (JTA) -- El Al lost \$47.5 million last year, according to its annual budget. Nevertheless, the airline's management expressed satisfaction with the deficit, pointing out that it was about half the loss it incurred in 1979. They said this was the result of strict measures taken to reduce expenditures.

Of the total deficit, \$38 million was an operational loss with another \$9.5 million due to payment of severance pay to pilots and others persuaded to retire as an economy measure. El Al director general Yitzhak Shander said the airline will ask the new government, as soon as it is formed, to improve the capital structure of the company.

He also wants the government to ensure that the national airline's interests are fully catered for in any agreements reached on charter flights to and from Israel.

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GENEVA (JTA) -- The annual David Prize awarded by the Swiss Jewish weekly, Israelitisches Wochenblatt, to persons who have made outstanding contributions to Jewish life, will be given in September to West German publisher Axel Springer, Zurich's Chief Rabbi Mordechai Piron and Nazi-hunter Simon Wiesenthal.

BEHIND THE HEADLINES ITALIAN JEWS DISTURBED OVER CAPUCCI'S UNRESTRAINED ACTIVITIES

By Liza Palmieri-Billig

ROME, July 29 (JTA) -- The Italian Jewish community is seriously disturbed by the Vatican's inability or unwillingness to restrain Msgr. Hilarion Capucci, the former Melchite Catholic Patriarch of Jerusalem, who has emerged of late as the foremost propagandist for the Palestine Liberation Organization in Italy if not all of Western Europe.

Despite the Vatican's pledge that he would not be allowed to engage in activities "detrimental to the State of Israel," Capucci is currently touring Italian cities championing the Palestinian cause and condemning Israel. His flair for self-dramatization has gained him immense exposure in the press, radio and television. The media regularly refers to him as "The Vatican's ambassador for Mideast affairs."

Capucci was convicted in Israel on Dec. 9, 1974 of gun-running for Palestinian terrorists and sentenced to 12 years' imprisonment. But he was released in 1977 by President Ephraim Katzir in response to an appeal by Pope Paul VI. The Papal intervention was accompanied by written assurances from the Vatican that Capucci would be restricted thereafter to pastoral duties away from the Middle East.

Violated Vatican's Undertaking

But after a brief stint in South America, Capucci brazenly violated the Vatican's solemn undertaking by attending PLO meetings in Syria and Lebanon and resuming his propaganda activities on behalf of the terrorist organization. Protests from Jewish community leaders have been to no avail.

His Palestinian connections apparently convinced church authorities that Capucci could be "useful" in Vatican attempts to mediate the Iranian hostage crisis last year. He "intervened" on behalf of the American hostages without success but with considerable publicity for himself. Later, he played a role in arranging an audience for Farouk Kaddoumi, the PLO's foreign affairs spokesman, with the Vatican Secretary of State, Cardinal Agostino Casaroli.

The Jewish community protested vigorously. Last April 1, the vice president and the secretary of the Union of Italian Jewish Communities, Tullia Zevi and Alberto Levy, respectively, were received by the Vatican Secretary for Public Affairs, Msgr. Achille Silvestrini who acknowledged their protest. But the Vatican never denied Capucci's involvement in gaining an audience for the PLO's No. 2 man -- a clear violation of its promise that he would not be allowed to engage in political activities.

Major Publicity In The Media

Jewish community leaders have been trailing Capucci on his propaganda tour. But their letters to the editors are a weak response to the lengthy interviews with Capucci published in the newspapers of Leghorn, Genoa and Padua.

His most recent stopover was in Venice at the end of June. He was received there by a committee of local political leaders headed by Carlo Bernini, president of the Venetian regional government. Two days of dinners, speeches and press conferences, attended by representatives of the region and the province, were arranged for Capucci by Walid Chazal, head of the PLO office

in Rome and Gianfranco Lai, leader of the leftist Partito Democratico di Unità Popolare.

Capucci states that his objective is to "inform" public opinion on the plight of the Palestinian people and the "PLO program." He insists that his motivation is "religious, not political."

But his propaganda line is identical to the most extreme positions of the PLO. In an interview published in the Leghorn daily, *Il Tirreno*, on May 24, Capucci contended that Europe must concentrate on "recognizing the inalienable national rights of Palestinians, that is, the right to national self-determination, to the return of the refugees to Palestine, to the building of an independent Palestinian state and the recognition of the PLO as the only legitimate representative of the Palestinian people."

Propagates A Hard Line Against Israel

While Capucci insists that his aim is "peace and brotherly love, particularly on the part of my Jewish brothers," he fails to mention the PLO's covenant calling for Israel's destruction. He insists, in fact, that Israel's return to its 1967 borders would be only a first step toward "a re-unification into a single Palestinian nation with a democratic, secular state in which three religions can live in peace."

Jews here are particularly concerned by the way the Italian media accepts Capucci's propaganda without question while ignoring his involvement with terrorists. To overlook his false claims to have been "Archbishop of Jerusalem," a post he created for himself, or to be now the "representative of the Palestinian (Christian) church in exile" is almost farcical.

More serious is the residue of anti-Israel sentiment Capucci leaves wherever he appears. Italian Jewry is looking to the Vatican to keep Capucci in line but so far there has been no move in that direction.

AZF LEADER URGES MAJOR ACTION TO REPULSE EFFORT TO LEGITIMIZE PLO

NEW YORK, July 29 (JTA) -- Rabbi Joseph Sternstein, president of the American Zionist Federation, warned last night that an orchestrated effort to legitimize the Palestine Liberation Organization is to be expected in the wake of the PLO's role in the cessation of hostilities in Lebanon which went into effect last Friday. He urged that "a major effort be made to repulse this insidious effort" and called on the Zionist movement to "spearhead a campaign to tell the American people the truth about the PLO."

Sternstein made these remarks last night before the AZF executive committee to hear briefings by Deputy Consul General Uri Bar-Ner and Yehuda Hellman, executive director of the Conference of Presidents of Major American Jewish Organizations, who had returned from meetings in Israel. Hellman accompanied Howard Squadron, chairman of the Conference in meetings with Premier Menachem Begin last weekend to discuss relations between Israel and the United States and between Israel and American Jewry.

Following the executive meeting the AZF approved the text of a letter to President Reagan which warned that "to view the PLO as a credible partner in the Middle East represents a most serious danger to American national interests." The letter expressed deep concern with the "decision to further suspend the delivery of F-16 aircraft contracted to Israel," noting that "this act has been wrongly construed as a 'punishment' of Israel's efforts to defend its citizens, and could only serve to encourage those committed to Israel's destruction." The letter called for the immediate delivery of the contracted F-16 aircraft to Israel.