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EVRON OPTIMISTIC ISRAEL WILL GET THE PLANES EMBARGOED BY THE U.S.

By David Friedman

WASHINGTON, Aug. 13 (JTA) -- Israeli Ambassador Ephraim Evron emerged from a meeting with Secretary of State Alexander Haig today declaring that he was "optimistic" that Israel would be getting the planes whose delivery has been held up by the United States.

"I leave him (Haig) feeling optimistic that the issue will be resolved early next week," Evron told reporters waiting for him in the State Department lobby.

The envoy would not say whether Haig had told him that the 10 F-16s and the two F-15s held up would be released. But Evron, who in recent weeks has been emerging from his State Department meetings looking dour, was smiling today.

He said the decision would be made by President Reagan Monday or Tuesday in California where the President is vacationing. This was reaffirmed earlier today by State Department deputy spokesman Alan Romberg who reiterated his earlier announcement that Reagan would make the decision next week.

Haig is expected to go to California although it is not certain whether it will just be to discuss the planes with Reagan or to deal with other issues at a meeting of the National Security Council.

No Assurances By Israel

Evron stressed that he did not provide the U.S. with any assurances on how Israel would use the planes. "I don't think anything was expected of us," he declared.

Four F-16s were held up for delivery to Israel after Israel destroyed the Iraqi nuclear reactor June 7 and six more were added to the embargo after Israel's July 17 raid on terrorist headquarters in Beirut.

This week, Romberg announced that no planes would be delivered to Israel until the President made his decision, including the first two of the 15 F-15s that were scheduled to be delivered to Israel this week. Also included were four more F-16s which were reportedly scheduled to leave the factory in Fort Worth, Texas tomorrow.

Evron said he had gone to see Haig today because of the additional embargoes announced this week. He said he repeated to the Secretary that Israel believes the suspensions are "unjust, unhelpful" and that the "planes should be released."

Meanwhile it was reported that during Egyptian President Anwar Sadat's visit to Washington last week, the Egyptians asked for 100 to 150 more F-16s. The Egyptians have already ordered 40 of the fighter-bomber jets.

The U.S. Air Force grounded the F-16s this week to correct a mechanical failure discovered after a pilot was killed when one of the planes crashed in Utah last week. The Pentagon reportedly expects the failure to be corrected by next week. Israel and several other countries which have bought F-16s have in the meantime "voluntarily" grounded the planes.

In other Mideast developments, Zbigniew Brzezinski, former President Carter's National Security advisor, told a group of reporters yesterday that the U.S. should end its boycott of the Palestine Liberation Organization and "talk" to the PLO. He said he was not advocating formal recognition or negotiations but "some form of dialogue with the PLO which encourages it to be more moderate and which leads to the engagement of the PLO in solving the West Bank and Gaza Strip issues." But he added: "When I say talk to the PLO, I don't say turn our backs on Israel."

Brzezinski, now a senior advisor at Georgetown University's Center for Strategic and International Studies, said the U.S.-Israeli agreement of 1975 which bans U.S. contacts with the PLO should not bar all contact with it. The agreement, concluded by the then Secretary of State Henry Kissinger, was offered to Israel as part of its disengagement agreement with Egypt. Commenting on that, Brzezinski said: "To elevate a personal pledge by a Secretary of State into a sacrosanct and eternally binding document is to reduce one's flexibility."

However, when Haig was asked about the U.S. position, after addressing the American Bar Association in New Orleans earlier this week, he said that the U.S. commitment not to deal with the PLO "is firm, it remains firm and I see no possibility of its being modified in the days ahead." He said that when this commitment was explained to Sadat, who urged the U.S. to drop its pledge to Israel not to meet with the PLO, Sadat understood that commitment "and I believe accepts it."

ADDING INSULT TO INJURY

By David Friedman

WASHINGTON, Aug. 13 (JTA) -- "This is adding insult to injury." Ambassador Ephraim Evron of Israel made this comment to reporters today after he learned that Israel would have to pay an estimated \$13,500 daily aircraft storage fees for the 10 F-16s whose delivery to Israel has been embargoed by the United States. The fees for the planes, which are being stored at the Pease Air Force base in New Hampshire until President Reagan gives a go-ahead for their delivery, reportedly comes to a total of about \$100,000 as of today. One Israeli noted that it seems unfair that Israel has to pay the fee since the planes belong to Israel but Israel has not been allowed to get them.

SHARON ANNOUNCES SOFT LINE POLICY TOWARD ARABS IN ADMINISTERED AREAS

By Gil Sedan

JERUSALEM, Aug. 13 (JTA) -- A week after assuming his duties as Israel's new Defense Minister, Ariel Sharon, generally regarded as Israel's most hawkish personality, startled Israelis and Arabs alike yesterday by announcing a new conciliatory policy toward Arabs living in the administered territories.

The changes were embodied in a series of directives issued by the Defense Ministry. Ministry sources said the purpose of the new policy was to speed re-

sumption of dialogue with local Palestinian leaders in the West Bank and Gaza Strip.

The directives stipulate that:

- * Terrorists and civilians will be treated differently.

- * Efforts will be made to prevent acts which might humiliate the Arab residents in daily contacts between them and the Military Government.

- * Soldiers will stop entering schools to disperse demonstrations.

- * Collective punishment of villages or neighborhoods for security violations within their areas will be halted.

- * Israeli soldiers will be instructed to show greater courtesy to Arab residents, particularly when holding them for road block checks.

- * The new policy will aim to create a joint framework of "common life" with the Arabs "in a spirit of mutual respect, to implement the policy of the government, as set up in the Camp David agreements," in the words of the Ministry sources.

- * There will be an "open door and a listening ear" to Arab leaders who are willing to cooperate with Israel in resolving the autonomy issue.

- * An effort will be made to create a situation in which such potential Arab partners to the negotiations will not remain silent out of fear of the Palestinian terrorist groups or of the Israeli Government.

- * With adherence to the policy of no negotiations with the Palestine Liberation Organization, there is to be a concerted effort to increase the influence of "moderates" in the territories, to include physical protection of such Arabs so that they will not fear to speak out.

Plan Catches Many Off Guard

The Sharon plan caught most Arab public figures off guard. Generally, they had expected the new Defense Minister to live up to his reputation as a hard-liner by further limiting their political freedom.

The response of those Arabs to what appeared to be a desire by Sharon to open a new page was to welcome the easing of the "iron-fisted" policy of the Military Government. They also welcomed Sharon's intention to start meetings with the moderates.

Mayor Elias Freij of Bethlehem welcomed the new policy, calling Sharon "courageous," adding he hoped to meet with Sharon soon. Freij also expressed the hope that the new policy plans would lead to greater understanding between the Arab residents and the Israeli government.

Gaza Mayor Rashad A-Shawa took a different view, declaring that the orders to the Israeli army to treat the Arab resident better was a side issue. He said the real question was the Palestinian right to self-determination, which he said Israel avoided.

Karim Khalaf, Ramallah's radical mayor, refused to comment on the plan, asserting that, every time he made a public statement, he was "called in for interrogation." Bassam Shaka, the Mayor of Nablus, who lost both legs in a bomb attack on June 2, 1980, commented, "it should be interesting to find out what Sharon's reaction will be when he meets me and finds out I oppose" the Jewish settlements on the West Bank.

Hanna Siniara, editor of the East Jerusalem daily, Al-Fajr, which is identified with the Arab radical nationalist line, said "Sharon's declared policy is to provide a homeland for the Palestinians in the East Bank of Jordan. This we vigorously oppose. If Mr. Sharon wants to start a dialogue, he

should start it on this main issue -- self-determination for the Palestinians."

Leaders of the Jewish settlements and representatives of the ultra-nationalist Tehiya movement in the Knesset welcomed the "human aspects" of the new plan, but they questioned its political aspects.

They said that while Sharon wanted to create a "proper atmosphere" for implementing the autonomy plan, they -- as foes of autonomy -- felt that a more humane treatment of the Arab residents would work only if operated within a framework of full Israeli sovereignty over the territories.

Observers commented that the new Sharon proposals are reminiscent of the declared policies of then Defense Minister Moshe Dayan soon after Israel took control of the territories following the 1967 Six-Day War. They noted that the more open policy subsequently was restricted several times, partly by Dayan himself, who was the first to use "collective punishment" as an anti-terrorist measure in the territories.

BEGIN, SADAT TO MEET

JERUSALEM, Aug. 13 (JTA) -- Premier Menachem Begin will meet with President Anwar Sadat of Egypt on Aug. 24 or 25, it was learned here today. An official announcement of the forthcoming visit was expected in Alexandria tomorrow where the two leaders are to meet.

It now seems that Begin will be accompanied by Foreign Minister Yitzhak Shamir and Defense Minister Ariel Sharon. If Sharon actually does accompany Begin, he will cancel his own 10-day official visit which was to have begun Aug. 19. Begin wants to meet with Sadat before he meets with President Reagan in Washington early next month.

The three Israeli officials will, in their meeting with Sadat, seek to reach a breakthrough in the autonomy talks which have been stalled for more than a year. The Israeli ministerial committee on the autonomy talks, headed by Interior Minister Yosef Burg, will meet shortly to prepare the Israeli position on the talks at the meetings with Sadat and Reagan.

REPORT SIX SYRIAN JEWS BEING TORTURED IN JAIL IN DAMASCUS

NEW YORK, Aug. 13 (JTA) -- Abraham Dwek, president of the Committee for the Rescue of Syrian Jewry, reported here today that six Syrian Jews are imprisoned and being tortured in a Damascus jail. According to Dwek, the five men and a woman, all members of the Saadia family, were abducted in Beirut, to which they had escaped, late last month by Syrian agents and were taken to Syria with their children.

Dwek also reported that four other Syrian Jews continue to be imprisoned in the city of Aleppo. He identified them as members of the Farhi, Marashli and Koss families who were arrested two months ago.

According to Dwek, a young Jewish woman, Badria Barakat, was shot and seriously wounded in the back when she attempted to cross the border with her family last year. She is currently in the United States for medical treatment of her broken spine, Dwek disclosed. He said that her husband and children were jailed for six months and tortured when they tried to flee Syria to join her.

In a telegram to President Reagan today, Dwek called on the President to appeal to Syrian President Hafez Assad to release the imprisoned Jews and let the 4,500 Syrian Jews emigrate.

JWV WILL BE URGED TO TAKE DEFINITIVE ACTION ON BEHALF OF TIMERMAN

NEW YORK, Aug. 13 (JTA) -- Charles Allen,

the noted author-journalist who has written extensively on racism, Nazism and anti-Semitism, said he will urge the Jewish War Veterans of America at their national convention in Hollywood, Fla. next week to take definitive action on behalf of Jacobo Timerman. Allen, who will address the convention, told the Jewish Telegraphic Agency that if the JWV does take action, it will be the first major Jewish organization to do so.

In his address, which will be based on an article he has written for the JWV's national convention journal, Allen notes that Timerman "insists on an uncategorical struggle against anti-Semitism, racism and oppression no matter what the source is" and that his principles are an "acute discomfort" to "certain circles in the United States and abroad."

In his article and speech, Allen calls on JWV members to "face the hard truths which Timerman offers us, close ranks and resolve that we will not relive the murderous follies of the recent past." Timerman, the former editor of *La Opinion* in Buenos Aires, spent 30 months in Argentinian prisons and was then stripped of his citizenship and deported to Israel. He recounts the torture and anti-Semitism he experienced at the hands of his Argentinian jailers in his book, "Prisoner Without a Name, Cell Without a Number."

Allen, a former senior editor of *The Nation* and a contributing editor of *The Churchman*, points out that Timerman reported the tortures he went through "with meticulous attention to detail." Non-Jewish survivors' of Argentinian tortures have corroborated that "the chambers are painted with swastikas, SS death heads, and photographs of Hitler," Allen says.

Attacks Led By Far Right, Conservatives

He notes that Timerman has been criticized for attacking only the more acceptable, benign 'authoritarians' who are needed to combat the 'totalitarians'." He describes efforts to discredit Timerman as "a well orchestrated campaign ... led by avowed (and influential) far right academics, neo-conservative publicists and some public figures." Disputing the criticism, Allen stresses that Timerman "hammers away at the theme that human rights are indivisible, universal and transcend all ideologies." Continuing, Allen notes:

"The Timerman affair goes well beyond his person. The assaults upon him are designed to discredit entirely the issues he raises and gives honest testimony about; he has just emerged from an experience in a country whose ruling circles have been officially infested with Nazism for more than 40 years."

Challenging anyone "who dares dispute" the charge of Nazism in Argentina, Allen says that Timerman "throws down the gauntlet to all of us, Jewish and non-Jewish alike; will we remain silent in the face of an historic, clear and present danger? Are we once again going to repeat the sin of silent complicity?"

BEHIND THE HEADLINES

BOMBING OF EL AL OFFICE IN ROME CAUSES WIDESPREAD ANGER

By Lisa Palmieri-Billig

ROME, Aug. 13 (JTA) -- Official government circles and the press are expressing anger at the bombing last Sunday of the El Al office at Rome Fiumicino Airport. The press emphasized during the week that Italy must not be the staging ground for a conflict not of its making. Typical of the press reaction was the commentary in *Il Tempo*:

"Again we must deplore the fact that political conflicts between different countries find their dramatic theater of violence in our country -- as if we ourselves didn't have enough violence, bombs and terrorism of our own."

All the newspapers which reported the bombing incident, for which the Palestinian "May 15th Organization" terrorists have claimed responsibility, referred to a statement to the press by the Israel Embassy in Rome. The Israeli diplomatic representatives reminded Italy that a Palestine Liberation Organization official stationed in Rome told a press conference last February that there was an agreement between the PLO and Italy exempting Italy from Palestinian terrorist actions against Israel.

Terrorist Division Of Labor

The fact that this agreement, which was reached after a terrorist attack in 1973 on an El Al plane at the airport, was broken last Sunday has angered official circles. While the Palestine Liberation Organization immediately denied any knowledge of or involvement in the terrorist act, the Italian press hammered home the point which it has been focusing on in the recent period: the various factions, splinters and split-offs from the PLO, which seem to act as rivals at various times, in reality provide a division of labor between the official and diplomatic segments of the PLO and its political and action squads.

In the past few days, the Italian media reemphasized that many Palestinian terrorists are trained and armed by the Soviet Union with the help of Libya.

The press also noted with dismay that the Sunday bombing here was apparently coordinated with similar bombings against Israeli installations in Athens and Vienna the following day. In Athens, two bombs exploded outside the Israel diplomatic mission which caused minor damage and no injuries. In Vienna, two bombs exploded in a garden adjacent to the Israel Embassy. One woman was slightly injured by flying glass. The incident in Vienna followed the arrest of two Palestinian gunmen there a week earlier.

Although no one was killed or injured in the bombing of the El Al office here, the incident nevertheless cast a pall on at least one Israeli-related event in Rome: the annual summer festival performance of the Israeli "Shalom" dance group. Last year some 6000 people attended the performance, but this year only some 1,500 attended. The Rome daily, *"Il Messaggero"* noted that this excellent group "merited a bigger audience," and added that "evidently, fear drastically reduced the attendance."

LIKUD GAINING SUPPORT

By Hugh Orgel

TEL AVIV, Aug. 13 (JTA) -- The incumbent Likud team heading the government has gained support among the public since the elections last month, according to a public opinion poll published in the *Jerusalem Post*.

Premier Menachem Begin's popularity was 45.3 percent just before the difficult coalition agreement was reached last week (up from 43.7 percent just before the elections), while his runner-up was Yitzhak Rabin (15.0 percent) followed by Shimon Peres (10.4 percent). Ariel Sharon received 39.5 percent as Defense Minister, followed by Rabin with 14.2 and Haim Barlev with 8.8 percent.

Yitzhak Shamir narrowly led Abba Eban by 27.3 to 23.3 percent, as choice for Foreign Minister, while Yoram Aridor received 35.9 percent as Finance Minister, against 16.8 percent for Labor's candidate Haim Ben-Shachar.

FEDERAL APPEALS COURT STRIKES DOWN A LOUISIANA SCHOOL PRAYER STATUTE

NEW ORLEANS, Aug. 13 (JTA) -- The American Jewish Congress has hailed a decision by the Fifth Circuit Court of Appeals declaring unconstitutional a Louisiana statute that authorized prayers in public schools. The AJCongress had filed a friend-of-the court brief in the case challenging the school-prayer law.

The court's 2-to-1 decision was handed down Wednesday in the case of Karen B. v Treen, according to Nathan Dershowitz, director of the AJCongress Commission on Law and Social Action. It involved Act 519 of the 1980 Louisiana Legislature, signed into law July 1980 by Governor David Treen and authorizing local school boards to allow teachers "to ask if a student wishes to volunteer to offer a prayer, and, in the event that no student does volunteer, to allow the teacher to offer a prayer."

Following the enactment of the law, the Jefferson Parish School Board passed a resolution establishing "a moment of prayer and/or silent meditation at the beginning of each school day ..."

Appeal To U.S. Supreme Court Expected

Several parents in the school district challenged the resolution in the U.S. District Court for the Eastern District of Louisiana. When the District Court ruled against them, the parents appealed the decision to the Court of Appeals, which has now upheld their appeal. The State of Louisiana is expected to appeal to the U.S. Supreme Court.

In its ruling, the Circuit Court declared: "Since prayer is a primary religious activity in itself, its observance in public school classrooms has, if anything, a more obviously religious purpose than merely displaying a copy of a religious text in the classroom. Even if the avowed objective of the Legislature and school board is not itself strictly religious, it is sought to be achieved through the observance of an intrinsically religious practice."

"The unmistakable message of the Supreme Court's teachings is that the state cannot employ a religious means to serve otherwise legitimate secular interests."

In its friend-of-the court brief, the AJCongress argued: "Nearly twenty years ago, the United States Supreme Court squarely held that a state sponsored program of prayer in the public schools, though voluntary, violates the Establishment clause of the United States Constitution ..."

"Holding Act 519 unconstitutional would not establish a 'religion of secularism hostile to religion.' The Supreme Court and the lower courts have clearly held that forbidding prayer programs in the public schools neither abridges students' freedom to pray nor exhibits government hostility to religion. Rather, invalidation of Act 519 is necessary to preserve the State's constitutionally mandated neutrality in religious matters."

L.I. CANDIDATE CALLED A 'BIGOT'

NEW YORK, Aug. 13 (JTA) -- The Republican Party leader of Nassau County, Long Island, has urged his party's voters to "repudiate" a Glen Cove mayoral hopeful labelled a "bigot" by the incumbent mayor and the Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rith.

According to an article in the latest issue of the Long Island Jewish World, written by con-

tributing editor Stewart Ain, the candidate, Michael Hansen, an official contender for the Republican nomination, has expressed outrage in recent weeks over "minority bloc voting" in Glen Cove city elections which, he said, keeps the "majority" of citizens out of the decision-making process.

In a letter to selected registered Republicans, Hansen said citizens of Mediterranean and Jewish decent are overrepresented in Glen Cove politics, while Nordic and Slavic Americans are barely represented. Hansen did not indicate which specific groups of Mediterranean decent he was referring to. He defined Nordics as British, German, Irish, Scandinavian, Dutch, and French. Slavics, he said, are Russians, Poles, and Czechs. The total population of Glen Cove is 27,616, of which 3,215 are Jews.

The bulk of Hansen's criticism seems directed against Jews. In written correspondence to the Glen Cove Record Pilot, a community newspaper, Hansen said "Zionism is analogous to Nazism" and that "We should pay" the plane fare of Jews wishing to move to Israel from America.

In a poll accompanying his voter letter, about half of Hansen's questions dealt with issues such as taxes and sanitation. The remainder asked such things as: "Are you sick and tired of seeing your people kept out of the decision-making process?" and "Do you believe that the priorities of Nordics are different from those of Mediterraneans?"

Situation Termed 'Deplorable'

Hansen, not given more than a slim chance to win the election, is trying to unseat Republican incumbent Alan Parente. "He is attempting to divide and polarize this community by raising the banner of bigotry and he is going to be repudiated," Parente said.

The ADL had urged Joseph Margiotta, chairman of the Naussau Republican Committee, to denounce Hansen to send "a warning to other bigots that they cannot use the party as an outlet for their bigotry." Margiotta issued a statement last week in which he said it is a "deplorable situation when a candidate would use race, creed or religion as their main issue to further their campaign. I urge Republicans to repudiate his candidacy by electing Parente."

Asked in an interview with the Long Island Jewish World if he is anti-Semitic, Hansen replied: "I am not anti-Semitic. I don't dislike Jews. I'm in the insurance business, and some of my clients are Jewish. I treat them as I do others."

COAL TO HADERA POWER STATION

By Hugh Orgel

TEL AVIV, Aug. 13 (JTA) -- The first load of coal for the new power station at Hadera arrived in Israel this week from Australia. The 60,000 tons will start off-loading next week when a ship with special cranes, also carrying coal from Britain, arrives off Hadera tomorrow.

The new power station, largest in the country and the first to be fired by coal, will start working within a couple of weeks, at first on heavy oil until enough coal has been piled up in its storage bins. During the first stage the coal will be off-loaded into barges for carriage ashore. But work is proceeding on the construction of landing stages some two miles off-shore which is to be linked with the shore by a conveyor belt.

Construction of the pier has been delayed by the destruction during a storm last winter of the building equipment. Plans to off-load the coal at Haifa port were stymied by the Haifa municipal council and residents who said the handling of coal in town would be an ecological and health hazard.