

SHARON DEFENDS U.S.-ISRAEL AGREEMENT AS 'A REAL CHANGE' IN ISRAEL'S INTERNATIONAL STANDING

By David Landau and Gil Sedan

JERUSALEM, Dec. 2 (JTA) -- Defense Minister Ariel Sharon asserted today that the U.S.-Israel memorandum of understanding on strategic cooperation meant "a real change" in Israel's international standing. In a tough Knesset speech in reply to four motions of no confidence, Sharon accused the opposition of deliberately "perverting" the accord in order to criticize it. He called on the nation not to listen to the opposition "doom-sayers."

The four no confidence motions were submitted to the Knesset today by the Labor Alignment, Communist Party, Shinui and Telem following the signing of the U.S.-Israel memorandum of understanding by Sharon and Secretary of Defense Caspar Weinberger in Washington Monday. The four Knesset factions contended that the government gave away more than it received by signing the memorandum; that Israel was now what amounted to a satellite of the U.S.; and that Israel was allied with the U.S. against the Soviet Union, making Israel a target of the USSR in any super-power confrontation.

The debate began at 5 pm today, instead of at 11 am when the Knesset usually convenes. Knesset Speaker Menachem Savidor decided to delay the opening of the debate to this evening in order to allow all Knesset members who wished to attend the debate to also attend earlier in the day the memorial services for David Ben Gurion at Kibbutz Sde Boker. Ben Gurion, Israel's first Premier, died eight years ago.

The Labor Alignment failed in an attempt to seek a court order nullifying Savidor's decision to begin the debate at 5 pm. The Knesset session, therefore, was expected to conclude in the wee hours tomorrow morning. But with all the absent Knesset members who had been abroad returning home for the debate, the government coalition was certain that it would defeat the no confidence motions by two votes, at least, according to Knesset observers.

Hints There Is A Secret Codicil

Sharon, in his address to the Knesset, said the memorandum of understanding was "not an accord for the newspapers" and hinted (despite official U.S. denials) that there was a secret part detailing concrete fields of cooperation. "No one would expect us to publish details of how many tanks or how much ammunition (is to be stored) or what sort of intelligence (is to be exchanged)," Sharon said.

He accused the opposition of "hypocrisy" in "pretending that Israel's defense is solely against the threat from the Arabs and not against the Soviet Union." Hurling invectives, especially at "past generals who pretend to be statesmen" (a reference to Labor Alignment Knesset members Yitzhak Rabin and Mordechai Gur), Sharon said the accord would pave the way for Israel's inclusion in a regional strategic framework led by

the U.S. "against threats we cannot face alone." The framework he added, might in time become an economic regional grouping, too.

Sharon contended that the accord could be invoked if the Soviets intervened directly on the side of the Arabs in a future war against Israel, or if they helped the Arabs in such a war. Labor Knesset members shouted from their seats that this was not so: the accord specifies threats "from outside the region" only.

Sharon shouted back that in 1956 Israel had withdrawn from Sinai under a Soviet threat, and in 1973 the Soviets had threatened to intervene if Israel went ahead to destroy the Egyptian Third Army.

"Whom are you trying to kid (that Israel is not faced by a Soviet military threat)?" Sharon taunted the Labor benches. "Whom are you pretending to ... I know it hurts to be in opposition ... to see someone else reaching an agreement ... but you will have to get used to this frustration for a long time to come"

Accord Ends Hopes Of Arab Enemies

The accord, he continued, would "put an end to the hopes of our Arab enemies" that with the help of the USSR they will eventually be able to annihilate Israel. It was also "a basis for ties with countries in Asia and Africa which fear Soviet expansionism ... and you'll be hearing much more on that in the future." (Sharon recently toured several African countries, according to foreign reports.)

There was no importance in the opposition argument that this accord, unlike any previous pact (even NATO, CENTO and SEATO) specifically mentioned the Soviet Union and was therefore a gratuitous and dangerous provocation. Other facts spoke of the threat of "Communism," which was the same thing, Sharon said.

He said the Taiwan-U.S. defense pact "uses plain language" -- which raised howls of protest from the opposition that he was reducing Israel to the level of Taiwan.

Sharon for his part said the accord meant that after years of often humiliating requests by Israel for U.S. military aid, the relationship had now been put on a footing of reciprocity "as between equals."

He "promised faithfully" that when the accord came to be filled out with practical content in future negotiations, or actually invoked, "only one guideline will steer us: the needs of the defense of Israel." The Israel Defense Force would not be put to use for non-Israeli interests, Sharon insisted.

Opposition Denounced The Agreement

In his motion of no confidence, on behalf of the Labor Alignment, Abba Eban termed the government's handling of the whole episode "hasty, unbalanced and purposeless." He mocked Sharon's claims (made in Washington) that there was a secret part to the pact. "It is so secret that even the Americans don't know about it," Eban said.

Sharon said yesterday in Washington that the memorandum of understanding was "unclassified" and presented to the press. He said that the working groups and coordinating councils which will work out the U.S.-Israel agreement may decide on details that

will be classified. Responding to reports on Israel Radio that there was a secret codicil to the agreement, Sharon stressed that the agreement was public and only some of the later arrangements might not be publicized.)

Both Eban and Amnon Rubinstein (Shinui) pointed out that by pledging to help Israel against forces "outside the region," the U.S. could be said to have actually weakened its commitment to help Israel against its Arab enemies ("the real enemy," said Eban) inside the area.

(The same point was made earlier in a press interview by Minister Without Portfolio Yitzhak Modai. He said it had "occurred to him" only after the accord was signed. The accord stated that it "is designed against the threat to peace and security of the region caused by the Soviet Union or Soviet-controlled forces from outside the region introduced into the region" and "is not directed against any states within the region.")

Argues Against Specifying The USSR

Eban hit at the specification of the USSR. The Americans, he said, would be negotiating with the Soviets on arms control and other tension-reducing measures. "We will be left only with the aggressive and provocative rhetoric" (of the accord), he said.

Meir Wilner (Communist Party) warned that Israel was needlessly baiting the Soviet Union which had never wavered in its basic support for the sovereignty and independence of the Jewish State but opposed only its occupation of Arab lands. "You will yet have need of the Soviet Union," Wilner warned. The accord, he said, made Israel a primary "American base" for attack against local Arab states.

Yuval Neeman (Tehiya) argued that the accord would necessarily constrict Israel's freedom of military action in the future. An action such as the raid on the Iraqi reactor or the "Litani Operation" would have to be approved first by Washington, he noted. But such approval would not be forthcoming, and if Israel went ahead without it -- there would be a confrontation with the U.S., Neeman warned.

Both Neeman and Rubinstein contended that by making an overt enemy of the Soviets, Israel's government had heedlessly endangered the fates and future of the Soviet Jewish community. Rubinstein asked whether this element was ever taken into consideration in the "hasty and faulty policymaking process."

Sharon, in his reply, did not refer to this point. But he insisted that the process had not been hasty. There had been "innumerable discussions" at various policymaking levels over many months, he said.

HAIG TO VISIT ISRAEL

By David Friedman

WASHINGTON, Dec. 2 (JTA) -- Secretary of State Alexander Haig will visit Israel and five other countries after attending the meeting of the North Atlantic Council next week, the State Department announced today.

Department spokesman Alan Romberg said that after attending the Brussels meeting Dec. 10-11 Haig will go to Israel, Turkey, Pakistan, India, Egypt and Morocco. He said the Secretary would meet with government leaders in each country which he visits.

Haig told reporters last week that he thought a visit to Israel would be "useful" although he did

not know at that time if he would be going there. Originally, only Pakistan and India had been announced as countries which he would visit after the Brussels's visit.

Romberg said that he could not give exact dates when Haig will visit each country except to say the Secretary will return to the U.S. Dec. 20. Department sources said that one of the reasons for not giving the dates is security. Libyan leader Muammar Qaddafi has reportedly sent out Libyan "hit teams" to assassinate President Reagan, Defense Secretary Caspar Weinberger, Haig and other top U.S. officials.

1,000 YEARS OF POLISH JEWISH HISTORY ON DISPLAY AT HARVARD

BOSTON, Nov. 2 (JTA) -- One thousand years of Polish Jewish history was put on view tonight at Harvard's Widener Library with the opening of "Jewish Art and Artifacts: Lost and Rediscovered," a loan exhibition sponsored by the Union of American Hebrew Congregations (UAHC) under the terms of an unusual cultural exchange agreement with the Polish Government.

At a dinner tonight, given by Harvard University president Derek Bok, Poland's Minister of Religious Affairs, Jerzy Kuberski, hailed the exhibition as "testifying to the creativity of Jews living in Poland" and expressing the hope that the exhibition would "mark further cooperation and serve the common need for friendship and peace."

Kuberski recalled the Statute of Kalisz, which he said was one of the world's first legal documents defining the rights and privileges of the Jewish community. The statute dates back to the year 1264.

Kuberski, who is also president of the International Association for Janusz Korczak, Polish Jewish author and educator who went with 200 children to the gas chambers at Treblinka, said the exhibition demonstrated "the contribution of Polish Jews -- scholars, artisans, writers, rabbis and zadikim -- to the repository of human achievement."

"The thousand year history of Polish Jewry depicted in this exhibition," he said, "is testimony to the existence of Jewish and Polish lives, so tragically broken and sanctified by the death of millions."

Praises Polish Government, Catholic Church

Rabbi Philip Hiat, assistant to Rabbi Alexander Schindler, UAHC president, praised the Polish government and Catholic church authorities in Poland for their cooperation in making available the rare examples of Jewish art for the loan exhibition. Among the items on view, which Hiat helped to choose during three visits to Poland this year, are: a silver and gilt Torah Crown inlaid with semi-precious stones; a Torah mantle of silk and metallic thread; a 13th century Codex; and a 14th Century holiday prayer-book.

The exhibition will travel across the United States, beginning with a private showing at the Knoedler gallery in New York and including the Skirball Museum in Los Angeles, and the Spertus Museum in Chicago. A public showing at the Jewish Museum in New York will be held next May.

In his remarks, Kuberski said also that a major exhibition of Jewish contributions to Polish thought, art, literature and history would be held in Cracow and Warsaw in April 1983 to mark the 40th anniversary of the Warsaw Ghetto uprising.

STATE DEP'T. ON U.S.-ISRAEL PACT

By David Friedman

WASHINGTON, Dec. 2 (JTA) -- The State Department strongly denied today that the memo-

random of understanding the United States signed with Israel this week bars the U.S. from being either a mediator or arbitrator in the Middle East peace process.

Syrian Foreign Minister Abdel Halim Khaddam reportedly made this charge yesterday to Philip Habib, President Reagan's special envoy, after the U.S. diplomat arrived in Damascus. "The United States no longer has the right to play any mediation or arbitration role in the Arab-Israeli conflict because you have become a direct party to this conflict," Khaddam reportedly told Habib.

State Department spokesman Alan Romberg said today he had no comment on the Habib mission which started in Lebanon last weekend. But he said the memorandum of understanding which implements the strategic cooperation between the United States and Israel does not "affect" the U.S. "ability to deal in the peace-making process." He noted that "we have a variety of relationships with a variety of countries in the region."

Romberg said it was "explicit" in the memorandum, signed by Defense Secretary Caspar Weinberger and Israeli Defense Minister Ariel Sharon Monday night that it was not aimed at "any state in the region." Both Sharon and U.S. officials stressed this week that the cooperation agreement is not against Israel's Arab enemies but only a threat to the "region" from the Soviet Union and "Soviet-supported forces outside the region."

Memo Refers To Cuba And East Germany

State Department spokesman Dean Fischer was vague yesterday about which countries fall into the latter category. But Pentagon spokesman Henry Catto said that Cuba and East Germany were among the countries Israel and the U.S. were referring to in the memorandum.

Romberg reiterated today that there are no secret annexes in the agreement. He said that Sharon made it clear before hastily returning to Israel yesterday to vote against no confidence motions that only some details which will be worked out by the working committee to implement the memorandum might be "classified."

Unaware Of Saudi Offer

Meanwhile, Romberg said he was "unaware of any such offer" by Saudi Arabia to Oman as reported today in The Washington Post in which the Saudis were said to have offered Oman \$1.2 billion in aid if the Sultanate cancelled an agreement allowing the U.S. access to its military facilities.

Romberg would not say that the Post story was wrong, only that "to our knowledge it is not happening." But he added that because of the "close nature" of U.S. and Saudi relations, the Saudis were kept informed of the agreement as it was being worked out between the U.S. and Oman and the Saudis "did not object."

Oman is the only Persian Gulf state to grant the U.S. use of its military facilities. Saudi Arabia has refused to do so despite the sale of five AWACS reconnaissance planes and enhancement equipment for 62 F-15 jet warplanes previously bought by Saudi Arabia from the U.S.

BLUM: CAMP DAVID FRAMEWORK HELPS SOLVE QUESTION OF PALESTINIAN ARABS By Yitzhak Rabi

UNITED NATIONS, Dec. 2 (JTA) -- Israeli Ambassador Yehuda Blum said, in remarks prepared for delivery to the General Assembly late

this afternoon, that the Camp David framework is "the only practical way to progress towards a comprehensive solution of the Arab-Israel conflict, in all its aspects, including the question of the Palestinian Arabs."

Blum, who was scheduled to address the Assembly which opened its debate on the "Question of Palestine" this morning, said the Camp David framework "invites the Palestinian Arab residents of Judaea, Samaria and the Gaza District to play an active role in shaping their future, by calling on them to participate not only in the current negotiations, but also in the negotiations which will determine the final status of the areas they live in, as well as in the eventual negotiations on a peace treaty between Israel and Jordan, in which the delimitation of boundaries between the two countries will be agreed."

The Israeli envoy claimed that the autonomy plan "is the first practical proposal to be advanced to provide a dignified solution for the needs of the Arab population of those areas."

Blum said that the Palestinians in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip who are prepared to live in peace with Israel "have been steadily terrorized and intimidated by the PLO which has been conducting, without letup, a campaign of political assassination against them." He called on the United Nations to encourage the Arab states "to come to terms with Israel and to negotiate with us directly, without preconditions, seriously and in mutual respect."

At the opening of the debate today, three draft resolutions were submitted to the Assembly. The resolutions call in various terms for the establishment of a Palestinian state and Palestine Liberation Organization participation in any peace negotiations. One of the draft resolutions calls on the Assembly to convene an international conference on the "Question of Palestine" not later than 1984.

Egypt's Ambassador to the UN, Esmet Abdel Meguid, said that the question of Palestine was at the core of the Middle East problem. He claimed that peace could not be attained without restoring the legitimate rights of Palestinian people. The envoy said that Egypt believes a solution to the Middle East conflict must include withdrawal of Israeli forces to the 1967 lines, Israel's evacuation of the settlements in those territories, equal footing for Palestinians and Israelis in negotiations for peace, and the right of the Palestinian people to a state of their own.

POLL SHOWS MOST ISRAELIS FAVOR STRATEGIC COOPERATION WITH THE U.S.

TEL AVIV, Dec. 2 (JTA) -- A public opinion poll published in today's Jerusalem Post says that some 70 percent of the public favors strategic cooperation with the U.S. and about 46 percent would be in favor of Israeli soldiers fighting alongside American soldiers to keep the Soviets out of the Middle East, even if it involved defending Saudi Arabia.

Answering if they were for or against strategic cooperation with the U.S., 70.6 percent said yes, 24.3 percent said no and 4.3 percent were undecided.

Those replying affirmatively were then asked whether they thought Israeli soldiers should fight alongside Americans, to defend Saudi Arabia against the USSR if necessary, and 64.4 percent said yes, with 32.9 percent saying no and 2.7 percent undecided. Support for strategic cooperation cut across all sections of the public, of both sexes, all ages and all ethnic backgrounds and economic and social strata.

**SPECIAL TO THE JTA
UNPRECEDENTED CUSTODY BATTLE:
COURT ORDERS THAT RELIGIOUS RIGHTS
OF CHILDREN INVOLVED BE PROTECTED**
By Ben Gallob

NEW YORK, Dec. 2 (JTA) -- A custody battle in Manhattan Supreme Court in which a court order has been issued which specifically requires that the religious rights of the affected children be protected in resolving the custody dispute was reported today by the National Jewish Commission on Law and Public Affairs (COLPA).

Howard Zuckerman, COLPA president, said this appeared to be the first time such a stipulation has been made in a custody hearing. He said Manhattan Supreme Court Justice Martin Stecher has ordered appointment of a special guardian for the two Jewish children, boys aged 12 and 13, with that stipulation.

He said COLPA had submitted a friend of the court brief in the case and that Dennis Rapps, COLPA executive director, argued Nov. 17 before Justice Stecher in support of the appointment.

Background Of The Court Order

The unique court order emerged in the re-opening of the issue of which parent should have custody of the children. After the parents were divorced in 1975, the mother, a resident of the Boro Park section of Brooklyn, agreed to a grant of custody to the father, a research chemist now living in East Orange, N. J.

Rapps said the names of the parents and the children were being withheld to protect their privacy pending the forthcoming re-hearing of the custody issue. He said the two boys ran away from their father to rejoin their mother. The father reclaimed the younger boy but the older one remained with the mother.

When the mother refused to surrender the older child, the father moved before Stecher to regain custody of the older child and to have the mother held in contempt of court for refusing to obey the original custody agreement.

The Issue Of Principle

The mother came to COLPA, declaring that the father had become non-observant since the divorce, and was not adequately providing for the religious rearing and education of the boys in accordance with the parental separation agreement.

Rapps said the mother, in contesting the father's effort to regain custody of the older boy, submitted a statement to the court from the boys in which they objected to their inability to practice their religion as observant Jews and asked the court to grant them status as parties to assert this right, independent of the wishes of their parents.

Rapps said COLPA entered the case, not in support of either the father or the mother, but in support of the principle that where there is a custody dispute, children of mature age are entitled to standing to assert this right in a litigation which will affect their education and upbringing, and ability to observe their religion.

Zuckerman said there have been a number of recent court decisions which have recognized and applied the principle that a child's interest in a custody proceeding may require individual child representation on the premise that the parents cannot be relied on to put aside their partisanship for the welfare of their children.

But, Zuckerman said, the Manhattan hearing appeared to be the first instance in which a guardian appointment has been ordered in which religious practice is the basic issue.

Under New York State Surpeme Court procedure, the appellate division with jurisdiction is sent the names of two or more volunteer attorneys from which to choose the special guardian. Rapps said Justice Stecher has sent to the Manhattan Appellate Division the names of two attorneys he recommends in this case.

U.S. TV FILM ON HOLOCAUST TO BE SHOWN IN ARGENTINA

NEW YORK, Dec. 2 (JTA) -- The NBC-TV series, "Holocaust," will be shown in Argentina Dec. 14-19 on a leading TV channel and during prime time, it was announced here by Rabbi Arthur Schneier, president of the Appeal of Conscience Foundation and spiritual leader of the Park East Synagogue. He said the decision was officially conveyed to him by the Argentine Charge d-Affaires, Minister Gustavo Figueroa.

Schneier headed an interfaith fact-finding mission of the Appeal of Conscience Foundation to Buenos Aires last August. At the time President Roberto Viola and Interior Minister Horacio Tomas Liendo assured the delegation that the TV series would be shown before Jan. 15, 1982.

"I am encouraged that 'Holocaust' will be shown one month earlier than anticipated," Schneier said. "It certainly shows good will on the part of the present Argentine government, and an attempt to resolve injustices and human rights violations during the years of anarchy and chaos known as the 'Dirty War'," which took place between 1975 and 1979.

Schneier, who is also chairman of the World Jewish Congress-American Section, said the Appeal of Conscience Foundation had also been advised by Figueroa that 11 men and women who had been held as prisoners by order of the National Executive Power (PEN) had been released Nov. 16. The Foundation delegation had, during their visit last August, requested an early resolution of the state of PEN prisoners and the fate of the thousands who had disappeared during 1975-1979. Viola assured the delegation of an ongoing review of all PEN cases, Schneier said.

EMIGRATION HITS BOTTOM

NEW YORK, Dec. 2 (JTA) -- "A devastatingly low number of Soviet Jews -- only 363 -- were permitted to leave the Soviet Union during the month of November," reported Charlotte Jacobson, chairman of the Soviet Jewry Research Bureau of the National Conference on Soviet Jewry.

"The drastic shrinking in the number of emigration visas granted," stated Jacobson, "further validates the sharp change in Soviet attitude toward Jews and leaves the Soviet minority virtually helpless against the authorities' campaign to virtually halt all emigration from the USSR. This would leave hundreds of thousands of Jews locked into a country which is increasingly hostile to them, as Jews."

The November figure fell below October's all-time low of 368, and is expected to decrease further by the year's end.

* * *

TORONTO (JTA) -- For the first time since 1965, Canadian postal authorities have banned anti-Semitic material from the mail.