

SHAMIR SAYS LIBYA IS BUYING ARMS FOR TERRORISTS IN SOUTH LEBANON

By David Landau

JERUSALEM, March 15 (JTA) — Foreign Minister Yitzhak Shamir cabled today that Libya is purchasing arms for Palestinian terrorists in southern Lebanon and therefore bears responsibility for the "explosive" situation there.

Shamir addressed a visiting group of West German Bundestag members, headed by Enders Wendelin of the ruling Social Democratic Party (SPD). They are members of the German-Israel Friendship Association on a study tour of Israel. He told them the reason for Israel's concern with south Lebanon was the presence of some 20,000 armed terrorists in close proximity to its border. But he stressed that Israel's basic policy remains, "We will not attack if we are not attacked."

Shamir warned, however, that build-up of Palestinian forces in Lebanon "makes the situation explosive and it could blow up at any time." Referring to Austrian media reports that Col. Muammar Qaddafi had indicated during his visit to Vienna last week that he is prepared to envisage a Middle East peace that would affirm Israel as a permanent entity in the region, Shamir cautioned the German visitors to judge the Libyan strongman by his deeds, not his words.

He noted that Qaddafi's public statements are abundant and often contradictory. What should matter is not what he says but rather his actions in financing and aiding terrorism around the world, Shamir said. He said Israel has positive knowledge of Libya's financial aid to the Palestine Liberation Organization in Lebanon.

EGYPTIAN FOREIGN MINISTER MEETING WITH SENIOR ISRAELI OFFICIALS

By Hugh Orgel

TEL AVIV, March 15 (JTA) — Egyptian Foreign Minister Kamal Hassan Ali arrived here today for high level discussions with senior Israeli officials on details of Israel's withdrawal from Sinai next month and the continuing normalization process between the two countries. The talks, which open in Jerusalem tomorrow, will constitute the fourth session of the Israeli-Egyptian Joint Commission on normalization.

Hassan Ali, who is also Deputy Premier, heads an Egyptian delegation that includes Minister of State for Foreign Affairs Boutros Ghali. They were greeted at the airport this morning by Defense Minister Ariel Sharon who said he was confident that the talks in Jerusalem will produce "further achievements and that this visit will contribute to the peace between our two countries."

Hassan Ali, addressing his hosts as "dear friends," stressed that "the primary basis of our relations is to fully respect and implement the obligations and commitments stipulated in the peace treaty, regardless of any issues or developments that may arise in the course of our hard won peaceful and friendly relations."

Observers believe the Egyptian diplomat was referring to the current dispute between Egypt and Israel over where the old international border is lo-

ated. Israeli officials have intimated that unless the issue is settled by the Sinai withdrawal deadline of April 25, Israel would delay its pull-out.

The Egyptian delegation will attend a dinner here tonight hosted by Sharon. They will drive to Jerusalem tomorrow. Hassan Ali is expected to meet with Premier Menachem Begin during his stay in Jerusalem.

BUSH: U.S. EFFORTS TO BROADEN ITS INFLUENCE AMONG ARAB STATES IS NOT AN ANTI-ISRAEL POLICY

By David Friedman

WASHINGTON, March 15 (JTA) — Vice President George Bush declared today that the Reagan Administration's efforts to broaden American influence among the Arab states and encourage moderate regimes was not "an anti-Israel policy."

"On the contrary, it's enormously advantageous to Israel," Bush told the more than 1,500 young Jewish leaders from across the country attending the third annual United Jewish Appeal Young Leadership Conference at the Washington Hilton.

Bush maintained that the U.S. interest in the Middle East "is in not allowing Soviet-backed radical states to threaten the stability of the region. It is in the interest of peace, in the interest of stability, that there be more Anwar Sadat's -- and fewer Qaddafis."

At the same time, Bush stressed that the U.S. and Israel are "strategic allies" and "permanent friends, joined by common values and aspirations." He said the Administration is committed to the security of Israel and to the "Camp David accords as the only way to wage peace" in the Mideast.

Mark Spiegel, of Los Angeles, in introducing Bush, noted that the Vice President was the highest ranking member of the Administration to speak to a Jewish group since President Reagan took office 14 months ago. He quipped that as a reward, he was presenting Bush with his own personal UJA pledge card.

Rejects Charge Of Dual Loyalty

Bush opened his speech by dealing directly with the charge of dual loyalty aimed at American Jews during last year's debate over the sale of AWACS to Saudi Arabia, a charge he called "scurrilous" and "outrageous." He said that those who made the charge "did a profound injustice to all Americans, whose birthright it is to dissent. And I reject as equally outrageous the notion that this charge came out of the White House."

Bush said he has discussed this issue "extensively" with Gordon Zacks of Columbus, a leading Jewish Republican, and with Jacob Stein, Reagan's former liaison to the Jewish community. "To say that someone is disloyal to America because he or she has an abiding affection for another country is an insult," Bush said. "It's offensive. And it's just basically un-American."

During the three-day conference, sponsored by the UJA Young Leadership Cabinet and the Young Women's Leadership Cabinet, which started yesterday, numerous speakers have expressed the outrage of the Jewish community at the disloyalty charges made

during the AWACS debate. In his other remarks today, Bush praised Premier Menachem Begin and other Israeli leaders for "their determination to move forward with the Sinai withdrawal," a step he acknowledged as being "painful and controversial."

The Vice President said the U.S. is firm in its position on the Palestine Liberation Organization. "Unless and until the PLO renounces terrorism and recognizes Israel's right to exist, we cannot and will not negotiate with the PLO," Bush said.

Raps Soviet Anti-Semitism

He called the Soviet Union's "mistreatment" of Jews "the most grievous form of anti-Semitism in the world today." But he noted that the most unfortunate victims of Soviet anti-Semitism are those like Anatoly Shcharansky who "continued to languish in the Gulag." He said both he and President Reagan have met with Shcharansky's wife, Avital, and promised to do "everything we can to alleviate her husband's plight."

Bush, a former U.S. Ambassador to the United Nations, said one of his "greatest frustrations" at the UN was the "utter inability of that body to address itself to the continuing persecution of the Jews. I wish the UN wouldn't waste time, talking about the expulsion of Israel, because the United States will never permit that," and instead address itself to "the real problems in the world."

At a banquet last night, the young Jewish leaders gave a standing ovation to Sens. John Heinz (R. Penn.) and Gary Hart (D. Col.) for their opposition last year to the sale of AWACS and other military equipment to Saudi Arabia. Herschel Blumberg, national chairman of the UJA, urged those attending the conference to "go back and be an advocate for Israel in your own community."

HONOR TOWNSPEOPLE OF ASSISI WHO SAVED JEWS DURING WORLD WAR II

By Lisa Palmieri-Billig

ROME, March 15 (JTA) — Two days of ceremonies opened in the mountain village of Assisi yesterday to honor the townspeople who saved the lives of 300 Jews during World War II when, following Italy's surrender, the occupying German forces deported about 20 percent of Italian Jewry to death camps in Eastern Europe.

Assisi is the birthplace of St. Francis, whose eighth centennial is also being celebrated this week. Representatives of Italian Jewry and surviving members of the Jewish families who received shelter in the village which had no Jewish population of its own, came there yesterday to pay tribute to the courage of the villagers. They were joined by many present day residents and by Catholic priests, monks and nuns in recalling the events of nearly 40 years ago.

The rescue of Jews who sought refuge in Assisi, beginning in the spring of 1943, was organized by Bishop Placido Nicolini, his brother Ruffino Niacci, and Father Aldo Brunacci. Only Father Brunacci is alive today and was on hand for the ceremony of thanks. But the entire population of the village collaborated in the rescue, including its fascist Mayor, Amalio Fortini.

Jews were hidden in homes, convents and monasteries. They were provided with false papers identifying them as Catholic parishioners. Some were given clerical disguises and were instructed in Catholic ritual to appear authentic. Jobs were found for the refugees, enabling them to blend into the community, unknown to the German oc-

cupying forces. The villagers protected the Jews at risk of their own lives until the town was liberated by Allied forces in June, 1944. Graziella Viterbi Carucci, one of the Jews who owed her life to the people of Assisi spoke at the ceremonies yesterday. So did Daniel Kropf of Trieste whose parents were among those rescued. Kropf is vice chairman of the European Foundation of the Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rith. Another speaker was Miriam Viterbi whose family was the only one of the 300 Jews that remained in Assisi after the war.

A silver plaque was presented to the Jews' benefactors, inscribed with the words, "The Jews of Italy, in gratitude, 1943-82." Today, an Italian translation of the "Assisi Underground," a fictionalized account of the period written by the Israeli author Alexander Ramati, was presented to the village. Bice Miglo, director of the Rome Jewish Cultural Center, presented documents on Nazi concentration camps to representatives of Assisi's schools.

Assisi has also been honored by the Yad Vashem in Jerusalem. An avenue of trees has been planted in the Garden of The Righteous.

SUITS INSTITUTED BY 2 RIGHTWINGERS

VIENNA, March 15 (JTA) — A rightwing politician who heads the National Democratic Party (NPD) in Austria is suing a local journalist who labeled him a neo-Nazi for libel. Norbert Burger, chairman of the NPD, who won about three percent of the vote in the last Presidential elections, objects to the term.

The journalist, who described Burger as one of the most agile neo-fascist activists, demonstrated parallels between the NPD and the old Nazi Party. He said he could prove his allegations. The trial was adjourned until May.

A similar libel trial is underway in the province of Carinthia where the Kaemtner Heimatdienst (KHD), a union of several ultra-nationalist groups, is suing the authors of a book, "The Extreme Right in Austria." The authors have offered to prove their charges against the KHD which claims to have more than 100,000 supporters. The targets of the KHD are Yugoslavs and Slovenes living in Austria rather than Jews.

PARIS (JTA) — Interior Minister Gaston Defferre Sunday night paid tribute to Israel's courage and determination and said that President Francois Mitterrand's recent trip to Israel is "a symbolic gesture which has linked the two countries together for all times." Defferre, who is also mayor of Marseille, addressed local community leaders after presenting the city's Chief Rabbi Joseph Sitruk with the National Medal of Merit.

TEL AVIV (JTA) — The cost of living index rose by 5.7 percent during February, the Central Bureau of Statistics announced Monday. An analysis of the present monthly rate indicates that, if the rate continues as so far in recent months, the annual inflation rate will be about 125 percent, well above the two-figure inflation forecast by the Ministry of Finance.

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BEHIND THE HEADLINES ISRAEL'S QUIET CULTURAL REVOLUTION

By James Rice

CHICAGO, March 15 (JTA) -- A veritable cultural revolution is taking place in development towns throughout Israel. In these areas, populated by families largely from North Africa, there was little or no knowledge of Western culture. But all this is changing, according to Yossi Frost, the director of Omanut La'am, a joint project of Israel's Ministry of Education, the American-Israel Cultural Foundation, and the Association of Community Centers which is sponsored by the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee.

Frost, who reported on this development at a recent meeting hosted by Israel's Consul General for the Midwest, Emanuel Zippori, said Omanut La'am has scheduled hundreds of visits to these communities by Israel's top performers, including the Israel and Jerusalem Symphony Orchestras, Habima Theater, and leading artists and sculptors. These world-class artists, who perform on a volunteer basis, also take the time to explain carefully to their audiences the background of the works they are presenting.

The result is that art galleries are being established in these remote areas, auditoriums are filled to capacity for productions of Moliere or Shakespeare, or for performances of Beethoven, Bach or Mozart, and most important of all, the adults, young people and children are learning music, drama and the plastic arts. Buses often take residents from the development areas to visit museums in Tel Aviv, Jerusalem and Haifa.

In a reverse process, Frost pointed out, the traditional music, dance and art of Jews from Islamic lands are now being demonstrated for the Ashkenazic population.

Remarkable Relationships

As an example of the remarkable relationship between the development towns and artists from major cities, four hours after the news came of a Palestine Liberation Organization bombing of Kiryat Shemona, a group of actors arrived to perform in the bomb shelters to demonstrate their solidarity and to boost the morale of the residents.

The Music Foundation of Chicago, sponsored by Robert and Marry Ann Asher of Chicago, have backed up all these programs through a summer youth camp where teenagers from the development towns have a concentrated 14-hour-a-day exposure to top drama, music and art instructors.

The enthusiastic response of the youngsters clearly demonstrates that the cultural gap which has so long separated what is sometimes known as the "two Israels" can be overcome.

MOYNIHAN CALLS ON U.S. TO QUIT UN IF ISRAEL IS SUSPENDED

NEW YORK, March 15 (JTA) -- Senator Daniel Moynihan (D. N.Y.) called upon the U.S. to declare its intention to "suspend participation in the General Assembly" and "to withhold its assessed contribution to the United Nations" if Israel is "expelled, suspended, denied credentials or in any other way or manner denied rights and privileges in the General Assembly."

Addressing over 1300 leaders of the Young Israel movement at its 70th Anniversary national dinner in Manhattan last night, Moynihan emphasized, "We must make it clear that the

U.S. will respond vigorously to any challenge of Israel's rights to membership in the United Nations."

Moynihan was the recipient of the "Freedom Award" of the National Council of Young Israel whose president, Harold Jacobs, lauded him as "the voice of truth in a tower of lies" when Moynihan served as the U.S. Ambassador to the UN.

Reagan Urged To Dismiss Weinberger

Jacobs called upon President Reagan to ask for Secretary of Defense Caspar Weinberger's resignation on the grounds of conflict of interest, as demonstrated by his consistently anti-Israel activities. The Young Israel leader supported the Begin government's decision to go through with Israel's withdrawal from Sinai next month because "our word is our bond." However, he also expressed some "second thoughts" growing out of Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak's reluctance to go to Jerusalem and doubts about Egypt's willingness to live up to its end of the Camp David agreements.

Senator Alfonse D'Amato, (R. N.Y.) was honored by the National Council of Young Israel with the "Humanitarian Award," and praised by Young Israel leaders for his courage and effectiveness in fighting for humanitarian causes and the interests of peace and democracy in the Middle East in the defense of Israel.

FORD OFFERS TO MEET WITH ARAFAT...

WASHINGTON, March 15 (JTA) -- Former President Gerald Ford has offered to meet Palestine Liberation Organization chief Yasir Arafat as a "private citizen" to further PLO participation in the Middle East peace process. Ford, on a business trip to Kuwait, reportedly made the offer at an impromptu press conference there yesterday. He said Arafat would have to "recognize that any such meeting would mean an admission on his part that Israel would be recognized by him and his people."

Ford made it clear that he was speaking for himself and that he would not be representing the U.S. government should he meet with Arafat. He reiterated his belief that the PLO "should participate in any future negotiations" for a comprehensive peace in the Middle East. Ford, and former President Jimmy Carter expressed the same view to reporters last October after attending the funeral of President Anwar Sadat of Egypt in Cairo.

... ISRAELI MK ALSO WOULD MEET ARAFAT

VIENNA, March 15 (JTA) -- Yossi Sarid, a Labor MK and one of the leading doves in Israel's parliament, reiterated here that he was prepared to meet with PLO chief Yasir Arafat if Arafat showed any signs that he was willing to participate in a dialogue. "Unfortunately, I have not received any sign from the PLO indicating they are willing to talk to me. If Arafat showed his readiness, I could not ignore such a sign," Sarid said in an interview published in the Socialist daily Arbeiterzeitung.

The Israeli Laborite, who was here last week to address the Socialist Party's Political Institute, first expressed his willingness to meet with Arafat after Issam Sartawi, the PLO representative in Europe, said last January that the Palestinians were willing to open talks with peace-loving Jews. Sartawi's statement, published in the Paris daily Le Monde, was fiercely criticized in the Arab world.

In his interview here, Sarid stressed that peace in the Middle East could be achieved only through direct talks between Israel and the PLO. He said former Defense Minister Ezer Weizman had made a similar statement recently.