

JTA daily news bulletin

Contents copyright: Republication only by previous arrangement.

Published by Jewish Telegraphic Agency / 165 West 46th Street / New York, N.Y. 10036-2574

Vol. LX - 65th Year

Wednesday, June 2, 1982

No. 104

SHARON REPORTEDLY TELLS CABINET THAT DESPITE REPORTS WASHINGTON TALKS HELD IN 'GOOD' ATMOSPHERE

By Gil Sedan and Hugh Orgel

JERUSALEM, June 1 (JTA) -- The Cabinet met in special session today to hear Defense Minister Ariel Sharon's report on his meetings with Reagan Administration officials in Washington last week. Cabinet Secretary Dan Meridor told reporters that Premier Menachem Begin expressed appreciation for the way Sharon carried out his mission. Begin also informed the Cabinet of recent messages he received from President Reagan and Secretary of State Alexander Haig and his replies to them. No details were released.

Sharon reportedly told the Cabinet that contrary to press reports here and abroad, his meetings in Washington were held in a "good" atmosphere. Nevertheless, it is believed here that Sharon's trip was aggravated by differences between Israel and the U.S. over Israel's support of Iran in its war with Iraq, the proposed sale of advanced American weaponry to Arab countries, particularly Jordan, and the situation in Lebanon. Sharon reportedly had an angry confrontation with U.S. Defense Secretary Caspar Weinberger.

Voice of Israel Radio claimed today that Weinberger had acted contrary to specific instructions from President Reagan by adopting a tough line toward Sharon "because of Sharon's style." Sharon, on his return to Israel Sunday, described his visit to the U.S. as an opportunity to "clarify and define both countries' positions on the various issues." He said there was nothing new in Israel's positions, namely that it would not agree to the continued threat from Palestinian terrorists in Lebanon and that it believed that American sanctions against Israel -- such as its suspension of the memorandum of understanding on strategic cooperation last December -- should not be an element in the relations between friendly nations.

U.S. Sanctions Not Ruled Out

But according to reports here today, Weinberger refused to rule out future sanctions "if Israel harmed vital American interests." Nor was Sharon's meeting with Haig any more encouraging, sources here said. The Secretary of State reportedly warned Israel against further complications in the Lebanon crisis.

Haig was said to have presented Sharon with a new formula by which the U.S. would judge Israeli actions against the Lebanon-based Palestinian terrorists in proportion to the severity of the terrorist act that elicited the response. This was interpreted here as a clear warning that the U.S. would no longer tolerate massive air strikes by Israel in retaliation for individual acts of terrorism, such as have occurred in recent weeks. That position is in direct conflict with Israel's insistence on the right to act as it sees fit.

In fact, Sharon told a group of disabled war veterans in Tel Aviv last night that "Israel will exercise its right to self defense whenever it finds it necessary" and "under no circumstances will Israel put up with any attempt to restrict its freedom of

action at this point." Sharon spoke shortly after a truck owned by Kibbutz Kfar Giladi in Galilee was blown up by a land mine in the salient of southern Lebanon controlled by the Israel-backed militia of Maj. Saad Haddad. There were no injuries.

On a more positive note, sources here said Sharon found more understanding of Israel's problems in the Senate and more Senators supporting Israel's views. Furthermore, it was reported here, the U.S. for the first time, will offer specific proposals to stabilize the Lebanon situation when President Reagan's special envoy, Philip Habib, returns to the region shortly.

Habib Mission To Go Beyond Ceasefire

Voice of Israel Radio said today that Habib's next mission, his sixth to the Middle East in the past 12 months, will go beyond preserving the ceasefire along the Lebanese border. According to the radio, the U.S. will propose that all parties in Lebanon, including the Syrians, the Palestinians and Haddad's militia, would withdraw from southern Lebanon and the region would be turned over to the Lebanese army.

Nevertheless, there appear to be undeniable strains between Jerusalem and Washington. In an apparent effort to ease the tension, U.S. Ambassador Samuel Lewis visited Begin last night to stress that the Reagan Administration is well aware of Israel's security and economic needs and that Begin would see this for himself when he visits Washington at Reagan's invitation in two weeks.

BELGIUM'S VISIT PLEASURES ISRAEL

By Gil Sedan

JERUSALEM, June 1 (JTA) -- The visit to Israel by Belgium's Foreign Minister Leo Tindemans, current chairman of the Council of Ministers of the European Economic Community (EEC), is regarded as a notable success by his Israeli hosts. Tindemans, who left today, stressed that European policy toward the Middle East should be re-evaluated in light of the changes that have occurred in the region since the EEC's June, 1980 Venice declaration.

Foreign Minister Yitzhak Shamir had high praise for his guest's "encouraging statements on autonomy and the Camp David peace process" when he briefed the Cabinet on Tindemans' visit during a special session today. During his meetings with Shamir and other Israeli officials, the Belgian diplomat said he would suggest to his European colleagues that they formulate a new declaration on the Middle East more sympathetic toward the Camp David process and toward autonomy as the first step in solving the Palestinian problem.

He intimated that such a step would replace the Venice declaration which supported self-determination for the Palestinian people and called for the "association" of the Palestine Liberation Organization in the peace process.

ALI BRINGING 'URGENT' MESSAGE

By Gil Sedan

JERUSALEM, June 1 (JTA) -- Israel may face an unexpected diplomatic demarche by Egypt

when Foreign Minister Kamal Hassan Ali comes here tomorrow on an unscheduled visit with "an urgent message" from President Hosni Mubarak to Premier Menachem Begin. It is expected to focus on the differences between Israel and Egypt over the Iraq-Iran war and on means for resuming the autonomy negotiations, Voice of Israel Radio reported today.

News of Hassan Ali's visit took official circles here by surprise, especially since a top level Egyptian diplomat, Minister of State for Foreign Affairs Butros Ghali, is already in Israel, though not in his official capacity. The Israeli Ambassador in Cairo, Moshe Sasson, was summoned to the Foreign Ministry there yesterday to be informed of Hassan Ali's mission. But he was, reportedly, given little information as to what prompted it.

Ghali is visiting at the head of a delegation representing Egypt's ruling National Democratic Party, invited here by Israel's Labor Party. He paid a "courtesy call" on Foreign Minister Yitzhak Shamir yesterday. Officials said today that the need to send Hassan Ali on a separate mission with Mubarak's message indicated the importance the Egyptians attach to it.

Egypt Concerned By Arms For Iran

The Egyptians apparently are concerned over Israel's open support for Iran in the Persian Gulf war and its admitted sale of "small quantities" of arms to that country. Egypt favors Iraq. A hint of what Mubarak's message may contain was seen in remarks made by former Egyptian Prime Minister Mustapha Khalil, a member of Ghali's delegation, who attended the meeting with Shamir yesterday. (See separate story.)

Khalil, deputy chairman of the National Democratic Party, said Israel and Egypt should consult each other on the Persian Gulf war and that, in general, a dialogue on regional issues should be part of the peace relations between the two countries.

Egypt is believed to be concerned that an Iranian victory over Iraq might engulf the Arab world in a wave of Islamic extremism propagated by the regime of the Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini, which could destabilize the moderate Arab governments. The Israelis hold that while Khomeini is as much their enemy as Saddam Hussein of Iraq, the Iraqis pose a greater danger to Israel at this time and are more likely to destabilize the region than the Teheran government.

Another issue expected to be raised in Mubarak's message is the proposal to hold a summit meeting in Washington later this month at which Israel, Egypt and the U.S. would try to reach agreement on a formula for resumption of the autonomy talks. Begin will be in the U.S. to address the United Nations disarmament conference on June 18. He has been invited by President Reagan to lunch at the White House on June 21. The U.S. reportedly would invite Mubarak to Washington at the same time for a meeting of the three leaders.

KHALIL SAYS EGYPT CANNOT STOP OTHERS FROM PRESENTING THEIR OWN PEACE PLANS By Hugh Orgel

TEL AVIV, June 1 (JTA) — Egypt's former Prime Minister, Mustapha Khalil, said today that while his country regards the Camp David accords as the basis of the Israeli-Egyptian peace process, it recognized that other countries were free to propose other approaches.

"I have to emphasize that we are bound by Camp David and we see that Camp David is a very valuable instrument that can achieve peace, and

that peace is a kind of popular demand in the area, by the nations of the area," Khalil said at a press conference here. He spoke after meeting with Labor Party chairman Shimon Peres who is hosting a delegation representing Egypt's ruling National Democratic Party. Khalil, deputy chairman of the party, and Egypt's Minister of State for Foreign Affairs, Butros Ghali, head the delegation which arrived in Israel yesterday for a three day visit as guests of the Labor Party.

Referring to the Camp David accords and autonomy for Palestinians on the West Bank and Gaza Strip, Khalil said, "We cannot, as Egyptians, say to the whole world or to any country in the region, 'do not come out with suggestions.' We do not say 'you have to accept Camp David, and you must accept it.' But we must make our position clear. We say to them, 'We believe Camp David is the right way to achieve peace.' But in the meantime, I do not think we have the right to pre-empt the right of others to come up with something else."

He added, "After signing the peace treaty, we are now concerned with full autonomy. Full autonomy according to Camp David would be very much enhanced if the Palestinians and the Jordanians would join in. I do sincerely hope that they will join the peace process, in their own interests and in the interests of peace in the area."

HALT IN SOVIET EMIGRATION DISCUSSED

By Gil Sedan

JERUSALEM, June 1 (JTA) — The virtual halt of Jewish emigration from the Soviet Union was the subject of urgent discussion at a meeting in the Prime Ministers' Office yesterday in preparation for the Brussels Conference on Soviet Jewry, scheduled to convene in Paris next October.

According to the latest figures, only 205 Jews left the USSR in May, the smallest number in 10 years, and of them, only 60 came to Israel.

A dispute has arisen meanwhile between Jewish Agency and World Zionist Organization chairman Leon Dulzin and the Bank of Israel over figures the bank released yesterday on emigration from Israel. According to the bank's annual report, the number of Jews leaving Israel in 1981 exceeded, for the first time, the number of immigrants arriving. There were 26,000 emigrants against 15,000 immigrants, the bank report said. The number of immigrants was the lowest since 1953.

The report attributed the fall-off in immigration to the growing number of Soviet Jewish emigres who chose to settle in countries other than Israel and the interruption of Jewish immigration from Iran after the overthrow of the Shah. The high emigration figure was blamed on the lack of job opportunities in Israel.

Dulzin charged today that the report was "irresponsible and without any foundation." He told a committee of the Zionist Council that it was impossible to make an accurate estimate of emigration because there were different definitions of the term. But Labor MK Uzi Baram, chairman of the Knesset's Immigration and Absorption Committee, said the reality was even worse than the Bank of Israel report indicated. He said 1981 was in fact the second year with a negative immigration balance.

JERUSALEM, June 1 (JTA) — Egypt is raising the price of oil it sells to Israel by 50-60 cents a barrel, it was reported here Tuesday. Light top grade oil will cost \$32.60. The increase follows a series of price reductions on the international petroleum market due to what has been described as a "glut" of crude oil supplied during the past six months.

HALF OF SENATE BACKS RESOLUTION OPPOSING ARMS SALES TO JORDAN.

By Helen Silver

WASHINGTON, June 1 (JTA) — Half the U.S. Senate now supports a resolution opposed to the sale of advanced U.S. weaponry to Jordan on grounds that it would threaten Israel's security and peace in the Middle East.

The resolution, which has 50 co-sponsors, was introduced last Thursday by Sens. Edward Kennedy (D. Mass.); John Heinz (R. Pa.); Gary Hart (D. Colo.); and Rudy Boschwitz (R. Minn.). It expands and updates Senate Resolution 332, co-sponsored by Kennedy and Heinz last March. At that time, 33 Senators signed a letter to President Reagan taking issue with reported plans by the Administration to sell Jordan F-16 jet fighter bombers and mobile Hawk anti-aircraft missile systems.

The strong opposition reportedly caused the Administration to scale down its offer of arms to Jordan. The new resolution would apply to F-5G fighter aircraft, "Stinger" shoulder-launched missiles and laser-guided missiles, items the Administration is now contemplating for sale to the Jordanian kingdom. No date has been set for a Senate vote on the measure.

At a press conference before introducing the resolution, Kennedy said, "Our message to the Administration in this resolution is clear beyond any doubt — the U.S. must not sell arms in the Middle East that jeopardize the security of Israel. The Administration's scheme to sell advanced weapons to Jordan violates that cardinal rule of responsible U.S. policy in the Middle East.

"I reject the incredible notion that Jordanian warplanes, missiles and bombs—supplied by the U.S. and stationed just minutes away from the Western Wall in Jerusalem, the factories of Tel Aviv and the kibbutzim in Galilee—will not constitute a real danger to the people of Israel," Kennedy added. "Our resolution is designed to encourage the Administration to halt its escalation of the arms race in the Middle East and to pursue a policy of peace."

PILOT'S REMAINS BURIED

By Gil Sedan

JERUSALEM, June 1 (JTA) — The remains of Maj. Jonathan Ophir, an Israel Air Force pilot missing in action 8 1/2 years after the Yam Kippur War, were laid to rest in the military cemetery on Mt. Herzl today. The remains were recently handed over to Israeli authorities by the Egyptians.

The pilot's mother, wife and his daughter, along with hundreds of other mourners, were at the graveside as the chief army chaplain, Rabbi Gad Navon, eulogized Ophir as "one of the true heroes of Israel" who made it possible for "the Jewish people to live in this country."

Ophir was born at Kibbutz Ein Harod but lived in Beersheba since the age of nine. He served as an officer in the parachute unit that captured Gaza in the 1967 Six-Day War and subsequently joined the Air Force where he excelled in the pilot training course. He disappeared during a mission over the Nile delta on October 11, 1973. It was hoped that he and his navigator, Eiran Cohen, bailed out safely. But they were not among the prisoners of war returned by Egypt. When Ophir died, his daughter was three years old.

RABIN WARNS AGAINST MILITARY ACTION

By Hugh Orgel

TEL AVIV, June 1 (JTA) — Former Premier Yitzhak Rabin has warned that Israel cannot solve the problem of Palestinian terrorists in southern Lebanon by military means and to attempt to do so would be a grave mistake likely to entangle Israel in international difficulties without achieving its objectives.

Rabin's address yesterday to students at the Hebrew University's agriculture school in Rehovot was an indirect reply to Chief of Staff Gen. Rafael Eitan who told high school students in Tiberias Sunday that only a military strike by Israel could put an end to terrorist harassment from Lebanon. Eitan has already been criticized by Knesset members for implicitly ruling out a political solution.

Rabin, himself a former Chief of Staff, said the terrorist threat from Lebanon could not be eliminated by military means because no nation in the world would agree to an Israeli occupation of Lebanon for any length of time. He did not refer to Eitan's remarks.

SENATORS WARN LACK OF EMIGRATION MAY BAR MFN RENEWAL FOR RUMANIA

WASHINGTON, June 1 (JTA) — Twenty two U.S. Senators have called on the Reagan Administration to engage in "serious and intensive discussions" with the Rumanian government on the decline in Rumanian Jewish emigration in recent years and reports of oppression suffered by Christian groups in Rumania before the Administration recommends to Congress renewal of Most Favored Nation (MFN) trade status to the East European nation.

"We would be sending the wrong signal, not only to Rumania, but to the countries of the free world if the U.S. government was to condone these actions and not ask for any improvements in Rumania's human rights policy in return," said Sen. Alphonse D'Amato (R. N.Y.) who initiated the letter to President Reagan. MFN status enables a nation to receive favorable treatment in areas such as trade restrictions and duty payments.

According to D'Amato, MFN was granted to Rumania in 1975 in an effort to encourage freer emigration. But he explained: "Since then, however, emigration has fallen off, from an annual rate of several thousand in the early 1970's to a monthly average of only 54 for the first three months of 1982."

"At this point we are unpersuaded that another extension of MFN for Rumania will have a positive effect on the nation's human rights course," D'Amato said. The Senator conveyed similar thoughts to Rumanian President Nicolae Ceausescu concerning the situation, writing that "we look forward with great hope to the correction of these violations."

STRIKE DISRUPTS ISRAELI COURTS

TEL AVIV, June 1 (JTA) — Israel's law courts were brought to an almost complete halt today by striking clerks who barricaded the entrances to the courts with chairs and tables.

The strike for higher wages began in Tel Aviv yesterday and spread to the courts in Haifa and Jerusalem, including the Supreme Court. The clerks only allowed people who could prove they had an urgent case to enter the courts.

PARIS (JTA) — French Foreign Minister Claude Cheysson reasserted last week his government's determination to continue pressing the Soviet authorities on behalf of Soviet Jews.

BEHIND THE HEADLINES BEGIN-REAGAN LUNCH AT WHITE HOUSE TO INCLUDE FULL MENU OF ISSUES

By David Friedman

WASHINGTON, June 1 (JTA) -- President Reagan's invitation to Israeli Premier Menachem Begin to have lunch at the White House June 21 may now turn out to be a threesome with Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak joining in an informal summit. But whether or not Mubarak accepts the invitation, the June 21 meeting and talks possibly in New York the weekend before will mark the start of the Reagan Administration's renewed effort to get the autonomy negotiations moving.

This "more active role" on autonomy, the Iraq-Iran war and the situation in Lebanon was the main stress of Secretary of State Alexander Haig's speech on the Middle East in Chicago last week. The address, the first major speech on the Mideast by a top Reagan Administration official, did not contain anything that Haig has not been saying for the past months. But it did show some sources of differences between Israel and the United States.

On autonomy, Haig reiterated that "The Camp David process, which is based firmly on United Nations (Security Council) Resolutions 242 and 338, remains the only practical route toward a more comprehensive Middle East peace between Israel and all of its neighbors including Jordan and Syria."

Haig made an appeal for Jordan and the Palestinian Arabs to join the peace process. He again declared that "we shall neither recognize nor negotiate with the Palestine Liberation Organization until it accepts United Nations Resolutions 242 and 338 and recognizes Israel's right to live in peace."

Opposes Settlement Policy

The Secretary also warned that "The failure to negotiate an autonomy agreement and to negotiate one soon, will squander the best chance to act in the best interests of all parties. Inevitably such a failure will invite more dangerous alternatives."

But Haig made it clear that the U.S. was opposed to Israel's policy of increasing settlements in Judea and Samaria saying it has "exacerbated" the "fears" of Palestinians that autonomy "is only a formula for an Israeli domination they resist and that they fear will lead to further radicalization of the entire region."

Of course, Israel's West Bank settlement policy and the various disputes between Egypt and Israel are not the only issues to be settled at the White House lunch. Before the autonomy negotiations can begin, the dispute over their site has to be settled. Israel is insisting that while the talks can be held in any number of places, they also must be held in Jerusalem. Egypt has refused to meet in Jerusalem. State Department officials have been saying that the problem will be solved when Begin and Reagan get together.

Differ On Iran-Iraq War

Meanwhile, the Iran-Iraq war has emerged as another major source of dispute between Israel and the U.S. as demonstrated by Defense Minister Ariel Sharon's recent visit to Washington. Sharon made it clear on numerous occasions that Israel feared a new coalition that was

emerging around Iraq. Sharon stressed that Iraq is implacably hostile to Israel and its victory in the war would endanger the Jewish State.

At the same time, Sharon believes Iran is "strategically ... more important" to the West and there is need to gain influence with whatever forces come to power after the Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini.

The U.S., on the other hand, is worried that an Iranian victory, which now seems likely, would endanger the security of the Persian Gulf states, particularly Saudi Arabia. In his Chicago address, Haig stressed U.S. "neutrality" in the war. "Neutrality, however, does not mean that we are indifferent to the outcome," he added. "We have friends and interests that are endangered by the continuation of hostilities. We are committed to defending our vital interests in the area. These interests, and the interests of the world are served by the territorial integrity and independence of all countries in the Persian Gulf."

The Secretary also made it clear that it rejects Israel's attempts to block the sale of arms to Saudi Arabia and Jordan. "Though we shall take full account of local sensitivities, no country can be given a veto over the pursuit of our best interests or necessary cooperation with others."

Lebanese Crisis

Haig also devoted a major part of his speech to Lebanon. Certainly Israel agrees with Haig's hopes for "concerted action in support of both Lebanon's territorial integrity within its internationally recognized borders and a strong central government capable of promoting a free, open, democratic and traditionally pluralistic society."

But Israel believes to do this both the Syrian army and the PLO, which together control some 60 percent of Lebanon, have to be removed from that embattled country. This is what Israel would like to see accomplished from the latest trip to the area of Philip Habib, Reagan's special envoy for the situation in Lebanon who is about to make his sixth trip to the area in little more than a year. Haig said in Chicago that Habib will discuss U.S. "ideas" for the restoration of Lebanon "with the cooperation of concerned states."

But Israel has been concerned that the Habib missions up to now have just sought to continue the ceasefire across the Israeli-Lebanese border that Habib helped establish last July without doing anything about either Syria or the Palestinian terrorists. Israel has maintained the ceasefire despite PLO violations, but there is a strong feeling it could have wiped out the terrorist forces if it had not been restrained by the U.S.

So there will be plenty to chew over at the White House lunch. But we will have to wait to see how it is digested.

* * *

AMSTERDAM, June 1 (JTA) -- The new Dutch Cabinet, sworn in last Saturday, has one Jewish member, as was the case in the outgoing Cabinet. He is Max Rood, a professor of law at Leyden University, who will serve as Minister of Interior.

Rood is Jewish on his mother's side and is linked thereby to a prominent Orthodox family of Amsterdam. But he has not been active in Jewish affairs. A member of the "Democrats 66" party, which is left of center, he served for several years as chairman of the Humanist League in Holland. The Jewish member of the last Cabinet was Eduard Van Thijn, a Laborite.