

# JTA daily news bulletin

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## BEGIN RECEIVES PERSONAL MESSAGE FROM MUBARAK; VARIOUS ISSUES-DISCUSSED BUT NO BREAKTHROUGHS ARE REPORTED

By Gil Sedan

JERUSALEM, June 3 (JTA) -- Egyptian Foreign Minister Kamal Hassan Ali delivered a personal message from President Hosni Mubarak to Premier Menachem Begin yesterday, reportedly proposing that the two of them meet in the near future. The message also dealt with resumption of the autonomy talks, it was reported today.

Begin told Ali he appreciated Mubarak's message which reportedly asserted that peace between their countries was "eternal." Begin and the Egyptian visitor both said they hoped the autonomy talks would be resumed quickly but neither indicated progress in resolving the venue issue. Begin insists that some of the sessions be held in Jerusalem. Mubarak refuses to send the Egyptian negotiating team to the Israeli capital.

Prospects of a three-way summit meeting between Begin, Mubarak and President Reagan in Washington later this month appeared to have dimmed. Hassan Ali told reporters after his meeting with Begin that the leaders of Israel and Egypt should hold a meeting of their own before attending a summit in Washington. But he did not suggest how such a meeting could come about, given Mubarak's refusal to go to Jerusalem.

The Egyptian President was scheduled to visit Israel last April but the trip was called off when the Israelis made it clear he would be welcomed only in Jerusalem. Ali's visit here yesterday had not been scheduled in advance and gave rise to speculation that Mubarak had something urgent to communicate to Begin. But the Egyptian Foreign Minister insisted that despite its hasty nature, his visit "constituted normal contact between two friendly countries." He said Israeli Foreign Minister Yitzhak Shamir would pay a return visit to Cairo next August.

### Burg Denies "Agreement"

Meanwhile, Interior Minister Yosef Burg expressed surprise today at a report in Maariv quoting the Egyptian Minister of State for Foreign Affairs, Butros Ghali, as saying a "gentlemen's agreement" existed between Egypt and Israel not to hold the autonomy talks in their respective capitals. Ghali, who heads a delegation of Egypt's ruling National Democratic Party visiting Israel, met with Maariv's editorial staff yesterday.

He suggested to Maariv that Burg, who heads Israel's autonomy negotiating team, would confirm the existence of such a gentlemen's agreement. But Burg said today that he knew of no such thing. He said it was unnatural to exclude Jerusalem as a venue for the talks, especially when the normalization process between Israel and Egypt was gaining momentum. According to Burg, Ghali himself suggested more than three months ago that Egypt might agree to hold the talks in Jerusalem after Israel completed its withdrawal from Sinai, which it did on April 25.

## REAGAN, MITTERRAND DISCUSS MIDEAST

By Edwin Eitan

PARIS, June 3 (JTA) -- President Reagan discussed the Middle East as an "area of tension" with French President Francois Mitterrand today. Reagan, in Paris for a two-day summit meeting of the world's seven industrialized nations, had a two-hour lunch and political discussion with Mitterrand. He later said that "areas of tension, Central America, the Falklands and the Middle East" were among the main subjects he discussed. French and American officials would reveal no details.

Just before he drove to the Elysee Palace, Reagan met Sharon Ray, the widow of the U.S. Assistant Military Attache Lt. Col. Charles Ray, who was shot dead last January outside his home. Reagan warmly embraced the widow and said he has posthumously promoted her husband to full colonel.

Ray was shot with a 7.65 mm pistol which ballistic experts say was also used to murder Israeli Embassy Second Secretary Yaakov Barsimantov last April. The same terrorist organization "Lebanese Revolutionary Armed Faction" claimed responsibility for both killings.

## REAGAN'S WARNING TO RUMANIA ON JEWISH EMIGRATION HAILED

NEW YORK, June 3 (JTA) -- President Reagan's stern warning to the Rumanian government that it must significantly improve its emigration procedures for Jews seeking to go to Israel or face the loss of most favored nation (MFN) trade status with the U.S., was hailed as a "breakthrough" by a Jewish emigration activist today.

But Dr. Jacob Birnbaum, national director of the Center for Russian and East European Jewry here, told the Jewish Telegraphic Agency that a major struggle is shaping up in Congress on this issue. He urged American Jews to support members of both houses who are seeking to block the extension of MFN to Rumania for another year because of the Bucharest government's treatment of ethnic and religious minorities which include Baptists, Pentacostals, Orthodox and other religious groups as well as Jews.

Letters of protest to President Nicolae Ceausescu of Rumania are currently being circulated in the Senate by Sens. Daniel Moynihan (D.N.Y.) and William Armstrong (R.Colo.) and in the House by Reps. Stephen Solarz (D.N.Y.) and Robert Dornan (R.Calif.).

### MFN Extension Recommended

Reagan, despite his strongly worded criticism of Rumania's emigration policies and procedures, has recommended to Congress that MFN status be extended to Rumania for another year. Under the 1974 Trade Reform Act which incorporates the Jackson/Vanik Amendment, Congress can vote preferred trade status for Communist bloc countries only after the President determines that they have open emigration policies. House hearings on the matter are expected to begin this month. The Senate will hold hearings in July.

Reagan, in his message to Congress yesterday, declared that he was "gravely concerned about the Rumanian government's failure to improve its repressive emigration procedures and the significant decrease in Rumanian Jewish emigration to Israel which is disturbing." Reagan's message noted that "This emigration has dropped from an annual rate of some 4000 prior to the 1975 extension of MFN to Rumania to the current (1981) low level of 952. Furthermore, contrary to the 1979 agreement with American Jewish leaders, Rumania continues to maintain a considerable backlog of long-standing emigration cases. This backlog at present involves at least 652 cases," Reagan said.

He added that "Also contrary to the 1979 agreement, the Rumanian government has not improved its emigration procedures. The process is cumbersome and plagued with obstacles for those who merely wish to obtain emigration application forms. All of these factors demonstrate Rumania's negative emigration policy which clearly contravenes the text and purpose of the Jackson/Vanik Amendment."

#### 'Strong Letter' Expected

Reagan noted that "In waiving the prohibition of MFN renewal for Rumania this year, I have weighed the above factors within the context of the satisfactory state of general U.S.-Rumanian relations. However, I intend to inform the Rumanian government that unless a noticeable improvement in its emigration procedures takes place and the rate of Jewish emigration to Israel increases significantly, Rumania's MFN renewal for 1983 will be in serious jeopardy."

Birnbaum told the JTA that a "high White House source" informed him that "The Administration will now be sending a very strong letter to the Rumanian government." He said the Center for Russian and European Jewry "heartily applauds" Reagan's message. He said however that the backlog of emigration applications in Rumania was "well over 1000" rather than the 652 figure cited by the President.

Birnbaum called on American Jewish leaders to "insist that the Rumanian government raise the flow of Jewish emigration to the rate current before Rumania obtained MFN in 1975, i.e. 3000-4000 per annum", and that it reduce to less than six months the application procedure for emigration.

#### SYRIAN INTERVENTION SEEN IF ISRAEL GOES INTO LEBANON

By Gil Sedan

TEL AVIV, June 3 (JTA) -- Gen. Yehoshua Saguy, chief of military intelligence, said today there was a strong possibility that Syria would intervene in the event of a major Israeli military operation against the Palestinian terrorists in Lebanon. On the other hand, according to Saguy, "a large scale Israeli operation could eliminate the extra-territorial entity of the terrorists along the Lebanese coast."

Saguy offered his assessment of the situation at a press conference which covered a broad range of subjects from the uneasy alliance between Syria and the Palestine Liberation Organization to the alarm among the Arab states on the Persian Gulf over a likely military victory by Iran over Iraq.

Saguy said the question of Syrian intervention against Israel in Lebanon depended entirely on whether President Hafeez Assad of Syria felt strong enough to control the situation. He noted that Syrian air force attempts to interfere with Israeli reconnaissance flights over Lebanon allowed the Syrians, at relatively small cost to themselves, to demonstrate that they are the only Arab state actively involved in a confrontation with Israel. But it also shows that the Syrians are prepared to intervene, he said.

#### Palestinians Prepared

According to Saguy, the Palestinians in Lebanon are now better prepared for an Israeli attack than they were a year ago. He said they have dug tunnels in the mountains to protect their personnel and weapons from air attack. They have stockpiled supplies in the hinterland and enlarged their arsenal to include long range artillery, more Katyusha rockets and 80 tanks.

But the terrorists have an interest in maintaining the cease-fire along the Lebanese border, the Israeli intelligence chief said. They want to maintain the delicate balance that prevents Israel from moving from static to offensive warfare.

"The problem of the terrorists is how to keep active, but at the same time be protected from Israel. If Israel applies force, they hope someone will get them out of the mess," Saguy said. But, he added, the terrorists have no great trust for the Syrians. "It is no honeymoon between Syria and the PLO."

#### Admits Being Wrong On Iraq

Saguy admitted that he had erred earlier in believing that Iraq would have the upper hand in its war with Iran. "I did not take into account elements of morale and motivation in Iran," he said. He said the question now is whether the Iranians would invade Iraq or attack Iraqi forces along their northern border. He said the Iranians are ready for a cease-fire if President Saddam Hussein of Iraq resigns. "This may not put Hussein under an immediate threat, but the actual demand means there is a price on his head," Saguy said.

He noted that Iran's reconquest of Khoramshahr has alarmed the Persian Gulf Arab states which had supported Iraq during the 20 months of war. They now fear that "the sword of (the Iranian) revolution will be aimed at them." Saguy said Egypt is taking advantage of this situation which it sees as an opportunity to re-join the Arab world, dispose of their outmoded Soviet equipment, get money from the oil producing states and appear to be making a gesture toward their Arab brethren.

Saguy ruled out the possibility that Egypt would send troops to Iraq, "although the mere talk of sending troops has had its own effect." He said that since Egypt signed its peace agreement with Israel, there has been no sign of any change in the attitude of other Arab countries toward Israel.

TEL AVIV, (JTA) -- A new 20-km (12 mile) road was officially opened in Galilee Thursday, by-passing a dangerous passage through the town of Tiberias on the shores of Lake Tiberias. The new road cuts some 20 minutes from travelling time from Tel Aviv to Upper Galilee and avoids all built-up urban areas. The new highway follows an almost level path and skirts round the previous 600 foot drop down to below sea level. Construction work was carried out by the public works department of the government and was said to be some of the most complicated earth moving and road construction work ever carried out.

## JWV COMMANDER PROTESTS STATE DEPARTMENT MEETING WITH 2 OUSTED WEST BANK MAYORS

By Helen Silver

WASHINGTON, June 3 (JTA) -- The national commander of the Jewish War Veterans, Robert Zweiman, has sent a telegram to Secretary of State Alexander Haig protesting and seeking clarification of a meeting Tuesday between two State Department officials and two West Bank Palestinian mayors, who Zweiman said had "ties" to the Palestinian Liberation Organization.

The two mayors--Fahd Kawasma of Hebron and Mohammed Milhem of Halhul -- met with two Assistant Secretaries of State; Nicholas Veliotis, who is in charge of the Near East and South Asian department; and Elliott Abrams, who heads the human rights division, according to a State Department spokesman.

Department spokesman Alan Romberg revealed yesterday that the two mayors called at the State Department for talks on the West Bank situation, U.S. policy and the prospect for Palestinian autonomy. The talks, Romberg pointed out, were initiated by the mayors and "took place in the context of our willingness to meet with a broad range of Palestinians other than members of the Palestine Liberation Organization."

The telegram Zweiman sent yesterday to Haig stated: "We are concerned that our government met with individuals having ties to the PLO. Please explain." U.S. policy toward the PLO, which was reiterated by Haig just last week, is that there will be no dialogue or negotiations with the terrorist organization until it recognizes Israel's right to exist and accepts United Nations Security Council Resolutions 242 and 338.

## BILL WOULD DELETE REPARATIONS FROM INCOME FOR SOCIAL SECURITY

By Judith Kohn

NEW YORK, June 3 (JTA) -- A bill is circulating in the U.S. House of Representatives that would exclude Holocaust reparations payments from countable income in determining eligibility for Supplemental Security Income (SSI).

Reparations to Holocaust survivors for personal injuries suffered during World War II are provided under the Federal Law on the Compensation of Victims of the National Socialist Persecution, enacted by West Germany in 1956.

The bill was introduced last month by Rep. Henry Waxman (D. Calif.) after the case of a constituent, Felicia Grunfeder, was brought to his attention. Grunfeder's SSI payments, provided to Social Security recipients on the basis of need, were terminated by the government after it declared her monthly reparations payments as unearned income, placing her total income over the eligibility limit for SSI.

Grunfeder, who lost her father to the Nazis at a young age, survived the Warsaw Ghetto uprising and was later smuggled out of the ghetto to the protection of a gentile couple. She was subsequently interned as a gentile at a work camp in Poland, where she was found by her mother at the war's end.

Still suffering from the psychological scars left by her experiences under Nazi Germany,

Grunfeder had been using her SSI payments for psychiatric counseling. When the payments were ended last summer, she filed suit against the government.

## Government Argues Against Exclusion

In a legal paper submitted to the court last year, the government argued that Grunfeder "obviously can use the funds received from the German Government to meet her basic needs... and thus obviate any need for the need-based SSI benefits." Consequently, the brief stated, "plaintiff is on equal footing with all others whose excludable income, from whatever source, exceeds the SSI standards."

Grunfeder's attorney, Josh Lazar, argued that the reparations were supposed to be punitive payments against the German government and in no way were they to be considered a welfare-type payment. He also pointed to exemptions granted American Indians who received reparations from the U.S. Government.

But a brief prepared by Assistant U.S. Attorney James Arnold concluded that the granting of exemptions to certain American Indian tribes "is based on the moral obligation of the United States to those tribes..." In contrast, the paper continued, "the United States has no corresponding moral obligation to victims of Nazi persecution."

## Court Ruling Due

U.S. Magistrate John Kronenberg issued a tentative ruling on the case last December, when he recommended that the courts not be involved in the Federal Health and Human Services decision process and suggested that Grunfeder seek relief from the Legislature. "I have a choice of frustrating the intent of Congress or frustrating the intent of German laws," Kronenberg said. "It's up to Congress to correct the matter."

Grunfeder's case has since been referred to Federal District Court Judge Cynthia Halcomb Hall in Los Angeles, who is scheduled to hear it later this month. A ruling is expected at the end of July or beginning of August.

Meanwhile, the bill introduced by Waxman would amend a provision of the Social Security Act which includes Holocaust reparations as countable income in determining SSI eligibility. Waxman's bill has 34 co-sponsors.

## WEINBERGER, JEWS IN SECRET MEETING

NEW YORK, June 3 (JTA) -- A source close to the Conference of Presidents of Major American Jewish Organizations confirmed to the Jewish Telegraphic Agency today a press report that Defense Secretary Caspar Weinberger held a secret meeting with American Jewish leaders in New York last month in an attempt to reconcile their sharp policy differences with the Reagan Administration in the Middle East.

According to the report, the meeting focused on Administration plans, strongly advocated by Weinberger, to sell advanced U.S. weaponry to Arab countries friendly to the U.S., notably Jordan. But the problem was not resolved, the report said. The meeting, at the Princeton Club, was arranged by Jacob Stein, President Reagan's former liaison to Jewish groups. The report of the closed meeting quoted Administration officials and Jewish leaders as saying there was basic agreement that U.S. interests come first and that it was in the U.S. interest to protect Israel's security. The differences stem from the Administration's view that it can influence Arab countries.

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