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OVERLAND EVACUATION OF PLO AGAIN POSTPONED, BUT OFFICIALS CONFIDENT EVACUATION WOULD END ON SCHEDULE

By Hugh Orgel

TEL AVIV, Aug. 26 (JTA) -- The evacuation of the PLO from west Beirut by road to Damascus was again postponed today, but officials expressed confidence that the overland movement would start tomorrow.

U.S. special envoy Philip Habib flew to Tel Aviv yesterday to assure Defense Minister Ariel Sharon, before Sharon's departure for the U.S., that the evacuation -- termed the expulsion of the PLO by Sharon himself -- was on schedule and would be completed by the beginning of September.

A convoy of 50 large Syrian trucks was allowed along the Beirut-Damascus highway today, to collect the equipment of the Syrian troops who are being returned to Damascus from Beirut together with the PLO forces and Palestine Liberation Army men.

The first contingent of 250 Italian crack troops arrived in Beirut port today with a second batch of 250 due later today, aboard a vessel which was delayed by engine trouble at sea. Another detachment of 450 French troops also arrived today, to join the 350 who came at the start of the evacuation program.

The French troops, who originally staffed the Beirut port area but have now handed it over to U.S. marines, will patrol the National Museum crossing point between east and west Beirut, while the Italian troops will guard the Galerie Sema, a crossing point at which PLO convoys will depart from west Beirut. The sea evacuation of the PLO terrorists continued today to Syria and North Yemen.

Many Killed, Wounded In Wild Shooting

Meanwhile, Lebanese police sources said that in the wild shooting Monday which accompanied the departure of the PLO -- the typical Arab "fantasiya" or shooting into the air as a sign of rejoicing at weddings and festive occasions -- nine persons were killed and 27 wounded by ricocheting bullets and shrapnel. Another five persons were killed and 19 were wounded by similar "fantasiya" shootings Monday, by Christian followers of Bashir Gemayal following his election as President.

The delay of the overland evacuation today reportedly was caused by PLO and Syrian fears of attacks by Christian Phalangist shooting at the road convoys.

One of the purposes of Habib's talk with Sharon last night is understood to have been to secure an undertaking by Israel that the Phalangists will be restrained from attacking the PLO as they pass through Christian-held segments of the Beirut-Damascus highway. Israel has reportedly agreed to pull its troops back from eyesight of the road while the PLO and Syrian convoys pass through, as a face-saving device to allow the PLO to claim a propaganda victory.

Sharon reportedly asked Habib to warn the Syrians that Israel's patience was not without end and that if Syrian or PLO attacks continued from Syrian-held territory, Israel would be forced to react along the eastern sector of the Lebanon front.

Sharon left last night for New York to address a meeting of the Conference of Presidents of Major American Jewish Organizations. From there he will fly to Washington to address the International Israel Bond Leadership Conference tonight.

Sharon is also expected to meet with Secretary of State George Shultz to brief him on the evacuation of the PLO forces from Beirut and Israel's future plans in Lebanon. No information was available whether Sharon would meet with other Administration leaders or if President Reagan will meet with him.

A report in Newsweek magazine last week said that Sharon had indicated he wanted to come to the U.S. to confer with Administration officials about the situation in Lebanon, but that he had been refused an invitation. The State Department said last week the reports about a "frosty" reaction to the possibility of a Sharon visit to Washington were inaccurate. Sharon's scheduled meetings, however, indicate that all misunderstandings concerning his visit were ironed out.

Begin Sees Autonomy Talks Resuming Soon

Meanwhile, Premier Menachem Begin said yesterday he expected the autonomy negotiations, largely deadlocked since their start in mid-1979, to resume in the near future. Egypt, Israel's partner in the talks, has said it would not agree to reopen the talks until the last Israeli soldier withdrew from Lebanon.

Israel had blamed the presence of the PLO for the failure of the autonomy talks, claiming that representatives of the 1.3 million West Bank and Gaza Strip residents were refusing to take part in the negotiations for fear of violent PLO retribution. Israeli officials say that with the expulsion of the PLO from Lebanon, the fear of reprisals has been removed. Israel has been pinning its hopes on the West Bank village leagues it established to by-pass the West Bank PLO-oriented leadership.

Before leaving for the U.S., Sharon met with the leaders of four village leagues to urge them to accept the autonomy plan. He reportedly told the leaders that the expulsion of the PLO from west Beirut "has provided a historic opportunity for peace in the Middle East." He also expressed the hope that, in view of the "new circumstances in the Middle East," Jordan might agree to join the autonomy talks.

SHARON: WITH THE PLO'S DEFEAT, THE MIDEAST IS ON THRESHOLD OF NEW ERA

By Yitzhak Rabi

NEW YORK, Aug. 26 (JTA) -- Defense Minister Ariel Sharon of Israel declared today that the Middle East is on the threshold of a new era, now that the PLO "was defeated" by Israel and is evacuating Lebanon.

"I believe the next country in the Mideast to sign a peace treaty with Israel is Lebanon," Sharon told an overflow audience at a meeting of the Conference of Presidents of Major American Jewish Organizations. He arrived here this morning on his way to Washington.

The Defense Minister said that a peace treaty between Israel and Lebanon will change the Mideast and would create "a peace triangle" comprising

Cairo, Jerusalem and Beirut. Furthermore, Sharon said, "after the expulsion of the PLO terrorists from Beirut is completed, our chances for peaceful co-existence with the Palestinian Arabs in Judaea and Samaria are greater than ever."

He reiterated Israel's claim that the PLO did not represent the Palestinian people. In fact, Sharon contended, the PLO was an obstacle for negotiations between Palestinian leaders and Israel because the PLO "killed and murdered" any Palestinians who were willing to negotiate with Israel.

But, Sharon stressed, Israel does not want to negotiate with "collaborators" among the Palestinians but with Palestinian leaders "who want to negotiate a peaceful co-existence with Israel."

The Defense Minister, who conceived and orchestrated the war in Lebanon and was praised for Israel's military success during the operation, was greeted by a standing ovation. His speech was also interrupted by applause several times.

Sharon said that Israel "managed to defeat the PLO terrorists not only militarily but also and mostly politically." He said the expulsion of the terrorists from Beirut, currently underway, would end the ability of the PLO to operate its activities around the world, activities which were partly the source of its political power.

Defends Israeli Bombardments

Sharon defended the heavy Israeli bombardment of PLO strongholds in Beirut on August 5, 11 and 12, claiming that without military pressure "the PLO terrorists would not have agreed" to leave Beirut. He contended that until August 1, the PLO did not intend to leave Beirut at all. "They wanted to freeze the situation. But on the 5th of August we increased (the military) pressure and by August 6 they decided to leave."

He said that the PLO could have left Beirut even three weeks ago had Israel not been pressured, apparently by the United States, against escalating its military offensive against the besieged terrorists. He said the "real change" was made on the night between August 12 and 13, when the PLO, under heavy Israeli bombardment, accepted the terms for withdrawal as presented by U.S. special envoy Philip Habib.

Sharon also defended his actions during the war, emphasizing that "from the first day to the last day of the war every action in the field was implemented as a result of (Israeli) Cabinet decisions." Sharon was accused by the media in Israel and some unidentified Cabinet ministers that he acted on his own and ordered the heavy shelling of Beirut, notably on August 11 and 12, without consulting first with the government.

As a result of the heavy 10-hour bombardment of west Beirut on those days President Reagan called Premier Menachem Begin to express outrage and to stress that Habib could not complete his negotiations unless there was a complete cease-fire. Israel called a cease-fire as the two chief executives were talking.

Says U.S., Israel Share Common Goals

The Defense Minister said that in the aftermath of the war in Lebanon, Israel and the United States share "clear common goals and targets." He listed them as "the expulsion of the

PLO from Beirut; the withdrawal of all foreign troops from Lebanon -- the terrorists, the Syrians and the Israelis; the need for security arrangements along Israel's northern border; and the need to create a central government in Lebanon."

Sharon also noted that as a result of the war, the influence of the Soviet Union has been reduced in the Mideast and, he added, "this is in the interest of all of us."

Sharon also pointed out that there was "never a collusion between the United States and Israel on the war in Lebanon." In fact, Sharon disclosed, the U.S. had urged restraint on the part of Israel when he met in Washington with U.S. officials just 10 days before the Israeli invasion of Lebanon and warned them that Israel would react strongly if the terrorists continued their provocations against Israel.

Sharon bitterly rejected charges that the Israeli army killed civilians in Lebanon indiscriminately. He said Israel lost some 350 soldiers, mostly "due to our efforts not to ham the civilian population, which was kept as a hostage (by the PLO). They (the terrorists) held women and children in windows and doors" to protect themselves, he charged.

"No one can preach to us about the value of human life," the Defense Minister said. He added that no army in the world, not even "the British and the Americans," behaves with as much consideration to avoid harming civilians as does the Israeli army.

Sharon said the war in Lebanon was "a very complicated war, a very hard war. Israel Defense Forces deserve every praise for their effort to win the war." Sharon, applauded by the audience, added; "They are the real cedars of Lebanon." He said that in addition to the some 350 soldiers killed, 2,000 Israeli soldiers were wounded.

While Sharon was speaking, a crowd of some 75 supporters of the PLO demonstrated outside the building where the meeting was taking place. The demonstrators carried slogans against Sharon and on behalf of the PLO. A small group of Israeli supporters demonstrated a few feet away carrying Israeli flags and placards against PLO terrorism. No incidents were reported.

JEWISH LEADERS MEETING WITH SHULTZ; U.S. WELCOMES ISRAEL'S EFFORTS TO RESUME THE AUTONOMY NEGOTIATIONS By Helen Silver

WASHINGTON, Aug. 26 (JTA) -- Thirteen Jewish leaders will meet with Secretary of State George Shultz this afternoon at the State Department, including Julius Berman, chairman of the Conference of Presidents of Major American Jewish Organizations, and four other previous chairmen of the Presidents Conference.

State Department spokesman John Hughes said at the briefing today that this meeting is part of the Secretary's on-going general consultation with members of Congress, community leaders and the private sector in the development of a future U.S. Middle East policy.

Hughes was asked to comment on Israeli Foreign Minister Yitzhak Shamir's article today in the Washington Post's op-ed page in which Shamir said that the expulsion of the PLO from Lebanon would have a positive effect on the Camp David peace process and that "now is the time to resume the autonomy negotiations and bring them to a quick and positive conclusion."

Hughes said he could not discuss the timetable for the resumption of the autonomy talks but added that "we saw the piece by Mr. Shamir and we are very pleased to see that the Palestinian problem is receiving priority attention from both Israeli and

Egyptian governments." Hughes stated "we welcome the reaffirmation by Mr. Shamir of Israel's desire to move ahead promptly in the peace process on the basis of Camp David. We will be consulting in particular with our Egyptian and Israeli partners in an effort to decide on how best to proceed in our common effort to resolve the Palestinian problem in all its aspects."

HISTADRUT MOVES TO PROTECT FUTURE OF EL AL AND ITS WORKERS

By Hugh Orgel

TEL AVIV, Aug. 26 (JTA) -- The Histadrut today decided to set up a special committee to plan future moves to protect what they term the future of both the El Al national airline and its employes, in the face of the government decision to halt Sabbath and Jewish holiday flights.

Both the labor federation's central committee and the El Al workers were in an angry mood today, following yesterday's action by the airline management in summoning a strong police detachment to oust workers from the management building at Ben Gurion Airport where they had kept Transport Minister Haim Corfu locked up in the office of B Al Board chairman Nahman Perl while they were meeting, pounding on the door to halt their conversation.

The workers have accused the management of not being firm enough in opposing the government decision, which they claim will damage the airline financially, merely to preserve the Begin coalition.

The workers' action followed the decision by the Knesset Finance Committee to approve the Cabinet's action to ban El Al Sabbath flights beginning September 1. Premier Menachem Begin agreed to the shutdown under intense pressure from Agudat-Israel, a member of his coalition. El Al representatives warned that the shutdown would cause the struggling airline to lose an estimated \$40 million annually, a loss that could mean the end of El Al.

El Al On Regular Schedule

The police, who brought up a large detachment of the tough border police and water cannons to disperse the angry El Al workers at the airport, arrested eight members of the airline's workers committee after the incident in the management office but released them later, to avoid a threatened general walkout of all airline workers.

The airline was working normally today. Management reported the "normal number for this time of the year" of cancellations of bookings. It had been feared that talk of industrial unrest following the Cabinet decision, strengthened by an 11-10 vote in favor of Sabbath shutdown by the Knesset Finance Committee yesterday, would scare passengers off reserving future flights with El Al.

Among the steps reportedly considered by Histadrut, at the urging of the El Al workers committee and the committee of representatives of the major industrial enterprises, are the enforced closing of the airport on Saturdays, and a possible general strike, especially of enterprises which normally have to work on Saturdays, such as the electric corporation and the telephone service.

BELGIAN AUTHORITIES TRACING SOURCE OF REPRINT OF HITLER'S MEIN KAMPF

BRUSSELS, Aug. 26 (JTA) -- Belgian authorities were reported today to be seeking

to learn the identity of the publisher of a reprint of Hitler's Mein Kampf to determine whether the republication is a violation of Belgian law.

Dries van Agt, the Dutch Foreign Minister, said in The Hague yesterday that he had asked the Dutch Embassy in Brussels to check reports the Hitler opus had been reprinted in Belgium and was on sale in supermarkets in Flanders in Belgium. A reprint was confiscated in The Netherlands in 1974 on grounds that material advocating racism and xenophobia was illegal.

Dutch authorities were reported to be afraid that the reprints, believed to be on sale in Flemish Belgium, might get into the Netherlands.

Anti-Semitic and racist materials are violations of Belgian law but Belgian Justice Ministry sources said the publisher could argue that Mein Kampf was of great historical value, and that he had issued the reprint for that reason.

The sources said that a decision on whether to prosecute the publisher would have to come from the prosecutor of the area where the book was on sale or where it was printed, the latter being the reason for the search for the publisher.

SOVIET REFUSENIK GETS OKAY TO LEAVE

SAN FRANCISCO, Aug. 26 (JTA) -- The Bay Area Council on Soviet Jewry reported today that it had learned that Leningrad refusenik Irina Jacobson has received permission to leave the Soviet Union. Jacobson, the widow of the famed choreographer Leonid Jacobson, worked with the Kirov Ballet Theater until her husband's death. Irina Jacobson, a refusenik since 1980, will be leaving the Soviet Union with her 28-year-old son Nikolai on September 10, the Bay Area Council reported. The Council is a member of the Union of Councils for Soviet Jews.

HADASSAH OPENS CONCLAVE IN JERUSALEM

JERUSALEM, Aug. 26 (JTA) -- Over 2,000 Hadassah delegates and guest filled the Binyanei HaOoma auditorium last night for the opening session of the 68th national convention meeting here till September 2. This was the first major national convention to be held in Israel since "Operation Peace for Galilee" began.

President Yitzhak Navon received a great ovation as past president Rose Matzkin presented him with the Henrietta Szold Award, Hadassah's highest honor. Before delivering the keynote address, Frieda Lewis, the national president of Hadassah, asked the audience to rise in a tribute to the soldiers of Israel who had fallen in "Operation Peace for Galilee." She said that they had fought "not only to free the northern border of Israel from terrorism, but to extirpate one of the most vicious centers of terrorism in the world for the benefit of all free men."

The Henrietta Szold Award citation to Navon describes him as a "poetic writer, Zionist leader and idealist, who exemplifies the best qualities of the Jewish people."

In accepting the award, Navon recalled that in 1913 his father had been employed by Hadassah to set up a soup kitchen in Jerusalem. After running it for 22 years, his father was compelled to close it down because Henrietta Szold, the founder and head of Hadassah, had no more funds for it.

"Tonight," he said, "I am accepting this award in memory of my father as compensation for 22 years of service -- and of sadness and happiness on the job." Mrs. Matzkin announced that Navon had declined the check which accompanies the award, asking instead that Hadassah plant a dunam forest of 200 trees. The Jewish National Fund presented him with a citation for the forest.

**SPECIAL TO THE JTA
U.S.-BORN BLACK BASKETBALL
PLAYER ON TEL AVIV MACCABI
TEAM CONVERTS TO JUDAISM
By Haskell Cohen**

NEW YORK, Aug. 26 (JTA) -- For the second time in three years, the Maccabi Tel Aviv basketball team has experienced the conversion of an American-born Black player. Earl Williams, formerly a member of the Detroit Pistons, arrived this week in Israel and told the press he had become a member of the Jewish faith and had taken as his Jewish name Eliézer Ben Abraham.

In 1978, Aulcie Perry, a player from New York, who had played for several years with the Maccabi team, became a convert after study with a Beth Din (rabbinical court) in Brooklyn, headed by a Rabbi Chaim Rabinowitz. Perry's conversion became a hot religious and athletic issue when the validity of that conversion was challenged by two major American Orthodox rabbinical organizations.

The dispute led to warnings from the Agudat Israel that it might leave Premier Menachem Begin's coalition if Perry's naturalization certification was not rescinded by the Interior Ministry, controlled by another coalition partner, the National Religious party.

Background Of The Issue

The athletic-related issue arose from a rule that each team in the Israeli National Basketball League (NBL) may bring in one non-Israeli player of Jewish birth and one of non-Jewish birth. When a non-Israeli player of non-Jewish birth, as in the case of Perry, became a convert, his action made room for acceptance by an NBL team of another non-Israeli player, in Perry's case, an opening on the Maccabi Tel Aviv team.

The Tel Aviv team thereupon imported Williams, who has since been a star player. Israeli sports experts said they had assumed that now that Williams has converted to Judaism, he leaves a spot on the team for a non-Jewish player. In fact, Williams' conversion left an opening which was filled by Jack Zimmerman, who was graduated from Dayton (Ohio) University and played international contests with the Maccabi Tel Aviv team last season.

Israeli cage teams also may, for international competition, add a player who need not be Jewish. But he can play only in international contests, not in local ones.

Williams has turned out surprisingly to be a highly aggressive player, whose tactics have offended many Israeli cage fans. Williams has a tendency to bait opposition players. Some of the more mild-mannered Tel Aviv fans find such tactics contrary to their ideas of "smart basketball."

In an international game last year, with a leading team in Greece, Williams struck an opposition player, touching off a riot that involved the whole Maccabi squad.

Aggressive Style Surprises Coaches

Williams' aggressive style, both on and off the court, has surprised former NBL coaches who have had the opportunity to work with the new convert and who are startled to learn about his conversion. "This can't be the Earl Williams I used to know when I was affiliated with the De-

troit Pistons during Williams' stay there," said one former assistant coach. "It just doesn't sit right with me."

Sports observers noted with interest that the Maccabi five not only lead the NBL every season but also have managed to lead the League in conversions of non-Jewish players. There is a third convert, Jim Boatwright, a former Mormon from Utah.

The Hapoel Tel Aviv team, the Tel Aviv Maccabi team's fiercest competitor, which initially blew the whistle on the question of Perry's conversion, also was disclosed this week to have a convert as a player. Lavon Mercer, the star pivot player of the Hapoel team, has undergone conversion and is now a Jew. Mercer has been an NBL star for the past three seasons.

SPAIN GRANTS NATURALIZATION PRIVILEGES TO SEPHARDIC JEWS

LONDON, Aug. 26 (JTA) -- A change in provisions regarding acquisition of citizenship in Spain, approved unanimously by the Congress of Deputies, grants special privileges to Sephardic Jews, it was reported here by the Institute of Jewish Affairs (IJA), the research arm of the World Jewish Congress. The bill now goes before Spain's Senate.

According to the IJA, the new legislation would significantly ease residence requirements of Sephardic Jews for naturalization. The IJA noted that "the proposed measure is regarded not only as a recognition of the connection of the Sephardic with Spain but also as an act of reparation for the wrongs of 1492," the year of Jewish expulsion from Spain.

At present, the Spanish civil code stipulates a 10-year residence requirement for naturalization. The proposed amendment, however, states: "Two years will suffice in the case of nationals of Latin American countries, Andorra, Philippines, Equatorial Guinea or in the case of Sephardim who are able to produce proof of their status." A certificate of the Federation of Jewish Communities in Spain, member community of the WJC, will be sufficient to prove Sephardic status.

Impact Of The Amendments

The actual impact of this amendment on the numbers of Sephardic Jews who would benefit will probably not be very great. Most Sephardic Jews residing in Spain, who came from French or Spanish Morocco, or Tangiers, have been residents in Spain for more than 10 years and mostly have already acquired Spanish citizenship.

However, the IJA observes that it is not the first time that Spain has shown her special attachment to the Sephardic Jews. During World War II, the Spanish government assisted them in several Nazi-occupied countries. A post-war official publication claimed that the government gave its diplomatic representatives abroad full power "to do anything, at any time, to help the descendants of these people (Jews) who had been expelled from Spain four hundred years ago."

In one instance, Spain even succeeded in obtaining the liberation from the Belsen concentration camp of 365 Sephardim deported there from Salonika, and permission for their emigration to Spain. Similar rescue efforts for Sephardic Jews were also made after the war in countries where they found themselves in distress.

TEL AVIV (JTA) -- Over 150 fashion buyers from countries throughout the world, but mainly from Britain and continental Europe, have gathered at the Tel Aviv Hilton Hotel for Israel's fashion week. On display are a variety of fashions for the summer season of 1983. Fashion Week organizers report that "satisfactory" sales were effected on opening day, Monday.