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ISRAELI AND LEBANESE OFFICIALS ARE PREPARING FOR DIPLOMATIC TALKS EXPECTED TO BEGIN NEXT WEEK

By Hugh Orgel

TEL AVIV, Dec. 23 (JTA) -- Israel and Lebanon will hold their negotiating sessions alternately at the Israeli border town of Kiryat Shmona and Khalde, a seashore suburb just south of Beirut airport. Officials of both countries were inspecting their respective sites today in preparation for the diplomatic talks expected to begin next week.

The talks will deal with the withdrawal of Israeli forces from Lebanon, security arrangements and normalization of relations between the two countries. The locales were agreed to after Israel dropped its demand that the negotiations be held alternately in Jerusalem and Beirut. Foreign Ministry and Defense Ministry officials examined rooms in the North Hotel in Kiryat Shmona where the Lebanese delegation and American diplomats will be staying.

The negotiations will be conducted in the ballet studio in the nearby community center. The mirrors and practice bars which occupy an entire wall will be curtained to give the chamber an atmosphere more conducive to diplomacy than dance.

When the teams meet in Khalde, they will hold their sessions at the Lebanon Beach Hotel overlooking the Mediterranean. Israeli forces moved into the area today to halt an outbreak of shooting between local Druze and Christians.

2 ISRAELI SOLDIERS AND 2 LEBANESE KILLED IN EXPLOSION IN LEBANON

TEL AVIV, Dec. 23 (JTA) -- Two Israeli soldiers and two Lebanese civilians were killed in an explosion near an Israeli army post adjacent to the Ein Hilwe refugee camp at Sidon in south Lebanon today. A third Israeli soldier was wounded, an army spokesman reported. The army launched an immediate search for the perpetrators.

The incident brought to four the number of fatalities sustained by Israeli forces in Lebanon this week. Two reserve lieutenant colonels were killed Tuesday when their jeep struck a mine in eastern Lebanon.

Meanwhile, fighting intensified today between Christians and Druze in the Shouf mountains of eastern Lebanon and in Khalde and other villages on the coast south of Beirut.

WALESA SAYS HE IS SORRY HE CAN'T ACCEPT INVITATION TO ATTEND CHRISTMAS MASS IN BETHLEHEM

By Hugh Orgel

TEL AVIV, Dec. 23 (JTA) -- Polish Solidarity trade union leader Lech Walesa has thanked former Knesset member Shmuel Flatto-Sharon for an invitation to attend Christmas mass in Bethlehem and stay with him at his Savoy home.

But the Polish leader, recently released from 11 months of internment, said he could not come this year but might take up the invitation at another time. "I sincerely believe that it will be possible one day, and with your permission I may be able to take advantage of your invitation at a later time. Unfortunately, the situation in Poland is not yet sufficiently clear and it is my duty to remain here.

But I can assure you that I will be attending the Bethlehem mass in spirit," he wrote.

Flatto-Sharon, a Polish Jew who lived for many years in Paris before fleeing to Israel to escape trial for economic crimes he was charged with, said he sent an emissary to Poland some time ago and received a verbal assent to his verbal invitation. But the letter declining the offer, dated November 21 from Gdansk, was received this week.

PLO FAILS IN BID TO RESERVE A 'PALESTINE' SEAT IN UN ASSEMBLY

By Yitzhak Rabi

UNITED NATIONS, Dec. 23 (JTA) -- The Palestine Liberation Organization failed to gain the support of the Arab countries for its proposal that the General Assembly will reserve a seat in the Assembly hall for "Palestine."

Israeli diplomats and observers here said that during the 37th session of the General Assembly, which was concluded this week, the PLO was unsuccessful in its bid after it ran into strong opposition to the proposal from moderate Arab states. Jordan, it was disclosed, was the major force lobbying against the PLO initiative.

In the view of diplomats here, the PLO failure demonstrates the organization's decline following its military and political defeat in Lebanon this summer. The PLO finally decided to drop its initiative after it was convinced that a vote in the Assembly on the issue would only further humiliate the PLO.

Israeli diplomats claimed that had the PLO been successful in its drive to gain a seat for "Palestine" in the Assembly, it would have represented a major propaganda victory. But, they noted, such a move would not have threatened Israel's status at the Assembly.

CANADIAN JEWISH LEADERS MEET WITH QUEEN ELIZABETH AND PRIME MINISTER

By Michael Solomon

MONTREAL, Dec. 23 (JTA) -- Affirmative responses to issues of Jewish concern by Queen Elizabeth II, her consort, the Duke of Edinburgh, and Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher of Britain, were reported here by Alan Rose, executive vice president of the Canadian Jewish Congress (CJC), who headed the CJC's delegation to the first conference of Jewish leaders from Commonwealth countries which convened in London recently.

The conference, a landmark gathering of its kind, was held under the auspices of the Board of Deputies of British Jews. The delegates represented Jewish communities in Australia, Canada, Gibraltar, Hong Kong, Jamaica, Kenya, Malta, New Zealand, Singapore, the United Kingdom, Northern Ireland, Zambia and Zimbabwe. They were warmly received at a reception at St. James Palace where the Queen stated that the conference was a welcome development.

Rose said Prince Philip, the Duke of Edinburgh appeared fully aware of the condition of Jews. He said he pointed out to the Duke that "anti-Zionism is now being used as a guise by anti-Semites in order to demean Jews in a socially acceptable manner."

Rose described the meeting the Commonwealth Jewish leaders had with Mrs. Thatcher at No. 10

Downing Street. He said she too welcomed the conclave and stated that in the Jewish tradition and the British tradition there is entrenched a respect for the rule of law and civilized behavior. She observed that in fact, Anglo-Saxon law stems in large measure from Jewish law, Rose said.

The CJC leader said he told the British Prime Minister that her decision to send a task force to deter aggression against the Falkland Islands exemplified British law. He also noted that the British public saw the consequences of terrorism on their television sets every night. It would be unthinkable, he said, that terrorists should have any voice in the forthcoming negotiations between the United Kingdom and the Irish Republic.

Therefore, Rose said, he told Thatcher he found it inexplicable that the British government should ask Israel to negotiate with the Palestine Liberation Organization. "It is also strange that the PLO should find any favor in the eyes of the British government since that organization has strong links with the IRA."

Rose said Thatcher replied affirmatively when he observed that "it is not possible for Israel to live under the threat of terrorist attacks and we hope that this will be reflected in the policies of Her Majesty's Government."

He said Thatcher, whose seat in the House of Commons represents the largest Jewish constituency in London, underscored the need to continue pressures on the Soviet government to alleviate the plight of Soviet Jews.

Francis Pym, the British Foreign Secretary, addressed the Commonwealth Jewish leaders. He reiterated Britain's support for Israel but asserted that the Palestinians must be recognized and made part of the peace process, Rose reported.

BRITISH OFFICIAL CLAIMS PARTIAL BRITISH AUTHORITY OF REAGAN PLAN By Maurice Samuelson

LONDON, Dec. 23 (JTA) — Foreign Secretary Francis Pym has claimed partial British authorship of President Reagan's Middle East peace plan which he termed "an opportunity not to be missed" and "a basis on which to build the peace process."

"Some of the thinking behind the Reagan plan originated in this building," he told the Jewish Telegraphic Agency, and other Jewish and Israeli journalists at a briefing in the Foreign Office to outline Britain's policies on the Middle East.

He was referring especially to the fact that Reagan's statement of September 1 "also acknowledged the existence of the Palestinians." The outstanding difference between the two countries, he added, was that the U.S. had not yet included the words "self-determination" in relation to the Palestinians, as required by Britain and her European Economic Community partners.

Strikes A Conciliatory Note

The Foreign Secretary struck a conciliatory note on Anglo-Israeli relations, describing them as "generally good," despite Britain's opposition to the Israeli invasion of Lebanon and Israel's rejection of the Reagan plan.

Britain, he said, was "absolutely committed" to Israel's security, but at the same time wanted to see "justice for the Palestinians." Asked about the twice-postponed visit to London by an Arab League delegation, headed by Morocco's King Hassan, Pym said he hoped the visit would still take place and that the matter could be settled in a few days.

The visit had not so far taken place because of the Arabs' insistence on including Farouk Kaddumi, the PLO's foreign affairs spokesman, despite an earlier "clear understanding: that it would not include a PLO representative.

Asked why Britain did not devote as much attention to the Persian Gulf war as to the Arab-Israeli conflict, Pym said this was because Britain had little influence over Iraq and Iran.

KIRYAT ARBA SETTLERS SAY THEY ACHIEVED A 'PEACE TREATY' WITH ARABS IN NEARBY REFUGEE CAMP By Gil Sedan

JERUSALEM, Dec. 23 (JTA) — Jewish settlers of Kiryat Arba, the Orthodox township adjacent to Hebron, claimed they achieved a "peace treaty" with Arab residents of the nearby Ein Aroub refugee camp after the Arabs allegedly stoned a Jewish bus on the Jerusalem-Hebron road.

The treaty, or "sulha," was ceremoniously signed by the Mukhtar (chief official) of the refugee camp who came to Kiryat Arba yesterday declaring he wanted to live in peace with his Jewish neighbors. He promised to try to find the stone-throwers and turn them over to the authorities.

It was the first time a refugee camp Mukhtar visited Kiryat Arba. He himself had been visited a day earlier by 30 armed settlers who made it clear they would not tolerate attacks on Jewish vehicles. The settlers said their visit was a "courtesy call." They denied threatening the Mukhtar with their weapons. A Kiryat Arba spokesman said later, "These incidents of rock throwing should be regarded as attempted murder and those responsible should be deported."

Crack Down On West Bank Continues

Meanwhile, Israeli authorities continued to crack down on West Bank Arabs allegedly responsible for recent disorders in the territory. A curfew, lifted earlier in the week on the Balata refugee camp near Nablus, was re-imposed yesterday.

A second local high school, Kardi Toukan, was ordered closed by the Israeli authorities after its pupils allegedly participated in a demonstration followed by rock throwing. The King Tallal school was shut down last Saturday in the aftermath of a violent demonstration in which Israeli border police fatally shot an Arab student.

Former Defense Minister Ezer Weizman paid a private visit to Jewish settlements on the West Bank yesterday, his first tour of the territory since he quit Premier Menachem Begin's government. Weizman, rumored to be planning a new centrist party to compete in the next Knesset elections, stressed his view that every Jew had the right to settle in "Eretz Israel." But he expressed concern over whether Jews and Arabs could live together peacefully in the future.

UNITED MIZRACHI BANK PREVENTED FROM BUYING INDEPENDENTLY-OWNED FIRST INTERNATIONAL BANK OF ISRAEL By Hugh Orgel

TEL AVIV, Dec. 23 (JTA) — The Finance Ministry and the Bank of Israel acted today to prevent the United Mizrahi Bank from buying the privately owned First International Bank of Israel (FIBI). The Mizrahi Bank, which is owned by the National Religious Party, promptly accused the Treasury of political motives.

The Mizrahi Bank planned to float a \$100 million stock issue to finance the \$150 million purchase price but, at the last minute, it was denied a license. Interior Minister Yosef Burg, an NRP leader, said he was "extremely angry" and threatened that "the forces who are pulling the strings against the Mizrahi Bank" will soon be exposed. The purchase would have made

the Mizrahi Bank the fourth largest in Israel. Finance Minister Yoram Aridor and Moshe Mandelbaum, Governor of the Bank of Israel, Israel's equivalent of the Federal Reserve Bank in the U.S., denied vehemently that politics were involved. They were joined by Deputy Premier Simcha Ehrlich, a former Finance Minister, who said it was unhealthy for a bank to float such a large stock issue to buy a competitor.

Financial leaders suggested that the purchase would concentrate Israel's banking business in too few hands. Burg replied that the Mizrahi Bank and the FIBI combined would not control more than 10 percent of the business compared to the Bank Leumi, the Israel Discount Bank and the Bank Hapoalim which each control more than 25 percent.

One of the main arguments against the purchase was that the Danot group of local industrialists who bought the FIBI for only \$25 million two years ago, stood to make a huge profit on the deal. Ehrlich, noting that "the industrialists are all good friends of mine," said they should stick to manufacturing for the economic and social good of the country, "not spend their time buying and selling banks to make quick profits."

A Mizrahi Bank spokesman said if the purchase went through, the FIBI would continue to operate as an independent bank and would even be allowed to keep its automatic tellers open on the Sabbath. The Orthodox-controlled Mizrahi Bank shuts down completely on the Sabbath.

2 INJURED IN EXPLOSION AT ISRAEL CONSULATE IN SYDNEY; BOMBS ALSO EXPLODE AT JEWISH SOCIAL CLUB

SYDNEY, Australia, Dec. 23 (JTA) -- An explosion in a stairwell of the building housing the Israel Consulate here injured two persons today, according to police. At the same time, two bombs exploded in a parking lot of a Jewish social club in the suburb of Bondi. No one was injured in the latter bombings.

A group calling itself the Organization for the Liberation of Lebanon from Foreigners, believed to be an extreme rightwing group, called a local news agency claiming responsibility and warned of similar attacks in Australia against Israel and Jewish installations unless Israel withdraws its forces from Lebanon. There are large Jewish and Lebanese communities living in separate parts of the city and there have been no previous reports of serious violence between them.

Officials said that an elite anti-terrorist squad has been mobilized to coordinate police action in finding the culprits responsible for the two bombings.

RESIDENT OF SLUM AREA FATALLY WOUNDED IN SHOOTOUT WITH COPS

By Hugh Orgel

TEL AVIV, Dec. 23 (JTA) -- A resident of the Salame quarter of Tel Aviv was fatally wounded in an exchange of fire with police trying to evict a family of squatters from an abandoned building in the slum neighborhood today.

The man, described only as a youth whose name was not immediately reported, allegedly fired three shots at police. The police returned the fire, hitting him in the shoulder. He died later at a hospital. Angered neighbors tried to storm the local police station and blocked a nearby road to Ben Gurion Airport. They were dispersed by police re-enforcements.

The police were originally summoned to Salame after the family of 15 hurled rocks at municipal workers sent to demolish the battered structure in which they had been living. Other residents of the quarter burned tires in the street. The building was slated for demolition as a danger to public safety because of gaping holes in its walls.

The family, which occupied its six rooms, plugged the holes with paper and corrugated iron. They claimed they had a permit to enlarge their residence.

NAVON LOOKING GOOD AS POSSIBLE LABOR CANDIDATE FOR PREMIER

By David Landau

JERUSALEM, Dec. 23 (JTA) -- Labor Party voters have shown a marked preference for President Yitzhak Navon over former Premier Yitzhak Rabin as their candidate for Prime Minister in the next Knesset elections, according to the results of a poll published yesterday. Shimon Peres, chairman of the Labor Party, ran a poor third.

But Rabin topped Navon in a poll of the general public. Both polls, conducted by the Pori organization, were based on a cross-section of 1,200 voters. Among Laborites, 35 percent favored Navon against 22 percent for Rabin. But among voters for all parties, Rabin was the choice of 34 percent to 31 percent for Navon.

The pollsters broke down the results among general voters according to social and ethnic groupings. They found that better educated voters in the higher social strata tended to favor Navon more than the less well educated and the less well-to-do.

REAGAN AND HUSSEIN CLAIM TO HAVE REACHED BETTER UNDERSTANDING OF EACH OTHERS VIEWS

By Helen Silver

WASHINGTON, Dec. 23 (JTA) -- President Reagan and King Hussein of Jordan emerged from a 30-minute meeting at the White House this afternoon which the President characterized as "productive." The Jordanian ruler, thanking Reagan for his warm reception, said "I believe we have an understanding of each others views better than at any other time."

The meeting was the second between Reagan and Hussein this week. They met for more than two hours on Tuesday and the King also had meetings with Secretary of State George Shultz, Defense Secretary Caspar Weinberger and with the Joint Chiefs of Staff.

His session with the President this afternoon marked the end of his official visit to Washington. Reagan told reporters, "I think we have made significant progress toward peace" in the Middle East. "We have initiated a dialogue from which we would not consider turning back. Much work remains to be done," Reagan said.

He added, "The road ahead is rough, but it's the right road and I remain optimistic that through negotiations for a just resolution of the Palestinian problem in this context, a real and enduring peace is within reach."

Turning to the King, he said, "Your visit has served as a reminder that the bonds of friendship that link Jordan and the United States are as strong as ever. I am very gratified as well by the warmth and good will which characterizes our relationship. I hope we can build on these bases in the weeks and months ahead to achieve the objective of enduring peace."

Reagan, meeting with reporters this morning to discuss mainly domestic matters, was asked what he considered to be his greatest accomplishment this year. He replied that it was the progress made in Middle East peace efforts. Elaborating, he said "When you stop to think how many years this trouble has been going on there, I think we are making progress in the first step which has to be the total removal of (foreign) forces from Lebanon."

DAY SCHOOL COSTS IN NYC AREA DOUBLED IN DECADE, BJE REPORTS

By Ben Gallob

NEW YORK, Dec. 23 (JTA) -- Day school costs in the New York area have doubled within the past decade, according to a study by the Board of Jewish Education (BJE) of Greater New York which it called the most comprehensive study to date on the topic.

Dr. Albert Hornbluss, BJE president, said the 1981-82 survey represented combined figures for a total of 146 schools -- 96 elementary and 50 high schools. The total enrollment of 41,646 students represents 75 percent of the total pupil population in Jewish day schools in Greater New York, he said.

In the elementary day schools, he reported, the range per pupil costs for the school year was \$1,158 to \$4,536. Official school year tuition fees ranged from \$300 to \$3,225. The average per-pupil cost was \$2,003, with an average official school year tuition fee of \$1,317. The range of per pupil tuition income was \$262 to \$1,917 and the average per pupil tuition income was \$1,232.

The BJE survey found that, in day high schools, there was a range of per pupil costs of \$1,609 to \$6,822, and official tuition fees ranged from \$600 for the school year to \$3,675. The average per high school pupil cost was \$3,440, with an average official tuition fee of \$1,579. The range of per pupil tuition income at the high school level was \$596 to \$2,006, with an average per pupil tuition income of \$1,498, the BJE found.

Hornbluss said that "comparisons with expenditures of a decade ago underscore the spiraling costs of education," adding that in 1972, the average per day school pupil cost was about \$900 for the elementary grades and \$1,500 for the high school level. Since then, he said, "average elementary costs have more than doubled, while high school costs have almost tripled."

A Critical Fiscal Challenge

Dr. Alvin Schiff, BJE's executive vice president who directed the study, declared that the findings represented "a critical fiscal challenge for the Jewish and the general community," adding that "insufficient funds make it difficult to recruit teachers and to provide adequate support for special needs, such as pupil scholarships, and programs for the gifted and learning disabled."

Noting that the overall average annual per pupil cost of \$2,600 is comparable for the Jewish day schools and the public schools in the New York area, Schiff declared that "in reality this is a commentary on the cost effectiveness of the Jewish day school."

He said "the school day in a yeshiva or all-day school is approximately two to four hours longer than the public school day." He also said that the dual program in a Jewish day school combines a full curriculum of Jewish and general studies every day, adding that the factors that make this possible are, essentially, a relatively small physical plant, low annual maintenance, low instructional costs and maximum use of school resources and personnel.

Schiff said that, despite the low per pupil expenditures, pupil achievement in the Jewish day school is significantly higher than in most schools in the United States. He added that "the logical conclusion is that tuition tax credits make sense for Jewish day schools. Each dollar spent on Jewish all-day education provides maximum returns." The BJE is a beneficiary of the United Jewish Appeal/Federation Campaign.

E X P O S E OF P L O BY ARGENTINE JEWISH COMMUNITY IS DISTRIBUTED TO SPANISH-LANGUAGE MEDIA IN THE U.S.

NEW YORK, Dec. 23 (JTA) -- An eight-page newspaper supplement in Spanish, titled "PLO: Victim or Executioner," has been sent to more than 800 Spanish-language newspapers and radio and television stations in the United States by the American Jewish Committee. It was announced today by Jacob Kovadloff, AJC's director of Latin American Affairs.

The supplement had been created and published in Argentina by the Center for Social Studies of the DAIA (the representative body of the Argentine Jewish community), and was distributed as a paid advertisement in the most important Argentinian daily newspapers.

"More than a million and a half copies were circulated throughout Argentina," Kovadloff stated, and added that it was "an occurrence without precedent in Argentinian Jewish life."

The purpose of the supplement was to counteract PLO propaganda in Argentina, and especially to answer criticisms of Israel's recent actions in Lebanon voiced by a small group of intellectual politicians and leaders who, Kovadloff said, "do not reflect the feelings of the majority of the population, but who are important because they are prominent people."

Report Publication Warmly Received

The publication "has been received warmly, both in Argentina and the United States," Kovadloff stated. He noted that each Argentinian newspaper permitted the use of its front-page logo on the first page of the supplements it carried, and declared that "this can be interpreted as implicit support for the contents." He added:

"One factor that probably contributed to the acceptance is Argentina's sensitivity to international public opinion concerning charges of human rights violations and to terrorist and guerrilla actions that have tended to destabilize the country."

On the other hand, he pointed out, "less than two weeks after publication of the supplement, Argentina gave 'diplomatic status' recognition to the Arab League." The League had had an office in Argentina for more than 30 years, but had never been granted this status. Kovadloff explained this by saying:

"This recognition took place on October 13, 1982, two weeks before the U.N. General Assembly voted on the Falkland Islands (Malvinas) issue, and was an obvious attempt to ensure the maximum Arab votes for Argentina."

The eight-page supplement contained a variety of articles and pictures illustrating the terrorist nature of the PLO, its close links with other terrorist movements around the world, its declared intent to destroy the State of Israel, and its attempt to inject its influence into the democratic countries of the world.

TEL AVIV (JTA) -- The official Olympic souvenir bag and other plastic bags in use at the Los Angeles Olympic Games in 1984 will be made in Israel. The Gal-Weissfeiler Industries of Holon signed an exclusive contract with the Los Angeles Olympic Organizing Committee after having won a world tender for the supply of plastic bags. The bags, bearing the official 1984 Olympics emblem, will be sold throughout the world as well as at the Olympic Games site.

TEL AVIV (JTA) -- Yair Kami, Israel's marathon champion runner, came in second in the 6th Annual Sea of Galilee International Marathon Race. His time was 2 hours 18 minutes and 32 seconds.