

ISRAEL'S DISPUTE WITH UNIFIL GROWS AS 4 MORE KATYUSHA ROCKET LAUNCHERS ARE FOUND IN LEBANON

By Hugh Orgel

TEL AVIV, Jan. 4 (JTA) -- The disclosure today that four more Katyusha rocket launchers have been discovered in south Lebanon, aimed at Israeli military installations, has aggravated Israel's angry dispute with the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL) and added to the political embarrassment of Premier Menachem Begin's government.

The army disclosed yesterday that five launchers were discovered last Friday, aimed at Kiryat Shmona, the Israeli border town serving as a site for negotiations between Israel, Lebanon and the United States. The launchers were destroyed but Israel promptly accused UNIFIL of laxity in permitting terrorists to enter the area under its control. The launchers were found near Magdal Saloum, a village in the zone patrolled by the Ghanaian contingent of UNIFIL.

The four additional launchers were found in the same region, aimed at an Israel army base on Lebanon's coastal plain. Although no rockets were fired and none was even found, the presence of the launchers indicated that Palestine Liberation Organization elements were still hiding in the area, were able to cache weapons there and had sufficient freedom of movement to set up the launchers. The possibility exists that they could have been fired.

This embarrassed Begin and Defense Minister Ariel Sharon, both of whom promised months ago that "not a single Katyusha will fall on Kiryat Shmona or northern Galilee."

Israel Might Oppose UNIFIL Mandate Extension

Israeli sources stressed that the rocket launchers were not newly introduced into the region but probably had been hidden there some time ago by small groups of PLO terrorists who managed to slip through Israeli army dragnets.

Nevertheless, Israel has come down hard on UNIFIL. Its mandate is up for renewal shortly and Israel is expected to oppose any extension on grounds that the international force is useless and unnecessary. Israeli forces and the Israel-backed militia of Maj. Saad Haddad are adequate to maintain order in the region, Israel contends.

UNIFIL spokesman Timor Goksell has in effect used Israel's argument to deflect blame from UNIFIL for the presence of rocket launchers in its zone. Goksell said that prior to Israel's advance into Lebanon last summer he might have been prepared to accept responsibility for allowing PLO activity in the area UNIFIL controls.

"But there has since been a reduction in UNIFIL capability to operate ... Israeli troops move through this area, they have their own bases here and maintain their own patrols and roadblocks. They check people in the villages and therefore to say that I am 100 percent responsible for what has been happening in my area is not correct," Goksell said.

He added, "The facts on the ground negate this because there is an occupation force in my area ... There is a free movement of Israeli or Israeli-related forces through my area." This was a reference to the Haddad militia.

Fighting Escalates In Tripoli

Meanwhile, fighting escalated in the north Lebanese port of Tripoli where 30 people were reported killed, the highest death toll for a single day in the 11-week battle for control of the city between rival leftists, rightists and Palestinian forces. Tripoli is nominally under control of Syria. But a Syrian peace-making delegation invited by the Lebanese government in Beirut was unable to reach the city today, ostensibly because of bad weather.

In another development, Israel claimed today that the Syrians are building two surface-to-air anti-aircraft missile bases inside Syria to accommodate Soviet-made long-range SAM-5 missiles, a weapon the Soviets have not supplied to any country outside the Warsaw Pact. The SAM-5 has a range of nearly 200 miles and has been operational in the Soviet air force since 1967.

COMMISSION TO STUDY ATTITUDES AND ACTIONS OF U.S. JEWS DURING THE HOLOCAUST IS DISSOLVED

By William Saphire

NEW YORK, Jan. 4 (JTA) -- The failure of promised financing to materialize forced a commission of distinguished American Jews to abandon its study of what the organized American Jewish community did or might have done to save European Jews from the Holocaust during the years 1939-1945, the Jewish Telegraphic Agency was informed by two leading members of the panel today.

Former U.S. Supreme Court Justice Arthur Goldberg, who headed the project, the American Jewish Commission on the Holocaust, which was privately undertaken in September, 1981 and Prof. Seymour Finger, of the City University of New York Graduate School, who was its research chief, confirmed that the sponsor, businessman and concentration camp survivor Jack Eisner, failed to meet his financial obligations. Eisner was not immediately available for comment.

Goldberg, reached by the JTA's Washington Bureau, and Finger, who spoke to the JTA by telephone in New York, were commenting on a report in The New York Times by Bernard Weinraub, that the project was aborted because of dissension among the various participants over the nature and content of the commission's report.

The Times quoted Eisner as saying he withheld funds because the Jewish establishment was exerting heavy pressure to protect the good name of many mainstream American Jewish organizations which had not acted as forcefully as they could have on behalf of European Jews in the years under review.

But Finger, a professor of political science and former deputy chief of the U.S. Mission to the United Nations, told the JTA, "The commission was dis-

solved for one simple, all-compelling reason. The sponsor did not come up with the money promised." He denied Eisner's remarks to the Times but would not speculate as to whether business reverses may have been responsible. According to the Times, Eisner had pledged \$138,000 but supplied only \$40,000.

Differences Had Been Expected

Finger conceded that "there had been some dissension" within the commission when it met last June to consider various drafts. He stressed, however, that differences had been expected from the outset and "not all criticisms were wrong." He himself edited and revised five separate draft reports.

"I had every expectation that we would come up with a (final) report," up to the time Goldberg informed the commission members, last August 17, that the project had to be abandoned for lack of funds, Finger told the JTA.

Goldberg told the JTA the sponsor "wouldn't put up the money to complete our work" and that he himself could not afford to finance it. He said he would however, pay for a research assistant so that he and Finger could complete a book on the subject by the end of this year.

Goldberg denied emphatically that he succumbed to pressure from establishment organizations. He recalled that when he undertook to head the project over two years ago, he said "let the chips fall where they may" and that determination will guide the book he intends to write. "I have not lost belief that the truth will out. At this stage of my life no one could scare me," the former Supreme Court Justice and former U.S. Ambassador to the UN told the JTA.

The Times reported that one draft singled out for criticism Rabbi Stephen Wise, a towering figure in American Jewish life at the time of the Holocaust, for allegedly rejecting a plan for saving European Jews because it failed to demand that the British open Palestine to them.

Areas To Have Been Explored

When the American Jewish Commission on the Holocaust was formed in New York it was announced that it would undertake a two-year study that would explore the following:

* When did the American Jewish leadership learn about the Nazi plan to exterminate all European Jews and when did they become alarmed about it?

* Which Jewish groups were active on the American scene and what did they do or fail to do?

* Why were so many American Jews passive or relatively unconcerned about the plight of European Jews? Regarding this point, the Commission will seek to explore whether it was the lack of information, interest, the inability to fathom the dimensions of the Holocaust or a preoccupation with other concerns.

* Did prominent Jews try to influence U.S. policy, and if so, what impact did they have?

* Was the Holocaust preordained by a cruel destiny so that nothing could have been done to prevent, stop, alleviate or limit it? Or, if the Jews in this country had shown greater concern and exerted their influence and power on the political body, could the tragedy have been prevented?

* In retrospect, with the abundance of documentary material at the Commission's disposal, what is the truth about the possibility of saving great numbers of Jews? Why were these opportunities not fully explored, or neglected?

Goldberg said at the time that the conclusions of the report might be "unpleasant" to some Jewish organizations, but added that whatever "good, solid research" is uncovered will in the end be published.

LOUISIANA JEWISH COMMUNITY ESCAPES RAVAGES OF FLOODS

By Ben Gallo

NEW YORK, Jan. 4 (JTA) -- The president of the United Jewish Charities (UJC) of Northeast Louisiana in Monroe, Morris Mintz, said today that the UJC had no information that any Jewish homes, factories or institutions in the area had been damaged by the floods which have ravaged the area the past week, causing estimated damages of \$100 million.

Mintz told the Jewish Telegraphic Agency, in a telephone interview, that the UJC had learned of one case in which a Jewish-owned home in the Monroe area had come close to being damaged by the rampaging flood waters but actually was not damaged.

Mintz said the UJC was planning a special meeting "within a few days" to assess the flood's possible effects on local area Jews but repeated that he was certain that if any Jewish family, institution or business had been hurt, the UJC would have learned about it and would have stepped in to provide help.

NAVON ARRIVES IN WASHINGTON

By David Friedman

WASHINGTON, Jan. 4 (JTA) -- Israeli President Yitzhak Navon arrived here this morning for a four-day visit to Washington which includes a meeting with President Reagan at the White House tomorrow.

Navon was greeted at Andrews Air Force base by Nicholas Veliotis, Assistant Secretary of State for Near Eastern and South Asian Affairs, and then flown by helicopter to the Washington Monument grounds where he was greeted by Secretary of State George Shultz. The two men had a 30-minute meeting in Navon's hotel room.

Navon's visit has caused a stir in the media in Israel and here because of speculation that it may be the beginning of a buildup for the Israeli President, a former Labor Party Member of Knesset, to challenge Premier Menachem Begin in the next Knesset elections. But the Reagan Administration has vigorously denied any complicity in this buildup.

State Department deputy spokesman Alan Romberg stressed today, as he did yesterday, that the United States is not getting involved in Israel's domestic politics. He said the welcome for Navon is "standard for this type of visit" which he said is that for an official of a foreign government, such as Navon, who is not here on a state visit but is a guest of the U.S. government while in Washington. Navon is head of state in Israel but his duties are largely ceremonial. Begin is head of government.

ADAM LOSS NAMED TO LEGION OF HONOR

PARIS, Jan. 4 (JTA) -- Adam Loss, editor and director of the French edition of the Jewish Telegraphic Agency Bulletin, was named to the French Legion of Honor. Loss, who is a member of the JTA Board of Directors, retired last spring as director of the United Jewish Welfare Fund (FSJU). He now also heads the French Jewish monthly, L'Arche.

Among others in the New Year's list of honors is the promotion of Armand Kaplan, former World Jewish Congress political director, to the rank of Officer in the Legion of Honor, and the nominations of Rabbi Samuel Fahmi, chief Jewish prison chaplain, and Jean Levy, a FSJU vice president, to the Legion.

BRITAIN IN ROW WITH SAUDI ARABIA

By Maurice Samuelson

LONDON, Jan. 4 (JTA) -- While the British Foreign Office is attempting to play down Britain's latest row with Saudi Arabia, leading London newspapers are just as intent on playing it up.

Editorials in The Times, Financial Times and Guardian unanimously blame Britain for the row following Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher's refusal to receive PLO representative Farouk Kaddoumi as part of an Arab League delegation. The Saudis have retaliated by cancelling a visit by British Foreign Secretary Francis Pym.

"What is required is not softness on principle but greater clarity, consistency and seriousness in applying our principles to the Palestinian issue," says The Times today.

The Financial Times, alleging confusion in Britain's attitude to the PLO, says that "quite apart from the possible damage to trade relations, it is regrettable that a cooling in relations (with Saudi Arabia) should take place just as Britain and the more moderate members of the Arab world appeared to be moving closer towards a common approach to a Middle East peace settlement."

The Guardian suggests that the Foreign Office and Downing Street "are even now constructing the form of words which will allow Mr. Kaddoumi or one of his colleagues both to be received and not deflect Britain from giving its full support to the Palestinian people, whether or not represented by the PLO, in what may be their last chance of securing a home ..."

Thatcher Praised By Jewish Leader

But Mrs. Thatcher's refusal to meet a PLO representative won warm praise from the Anglo-Jewish community's representative body. Arye Handler, chairman of the Board of Deputies of British Jews, urged the Prime Minister to remain firm in her resolve "and resist odious Arab threats."

Handler took issue with Denis Healy, foreign affairs spokesman of the opposition Labor Party, who had earlier criticized Mrs. Thatcher. Healy's criticism, Handler said, would not win the Labor Party any support from those, inside and outside the Jewish community, who wished to see a "balanced" British position on the Middle East.

The Foreign Office, meanwhile, is trying to lower tensions by suggesting that Pym's Saudi visit has not been cancelled but merely postponed. The question of the Arab League mission to London is still the subject of confidential talks between Britain and its leader, Morocco's King Hassan, the foreign Office says.

Arabs Angered By British Action

But this may not prevent the anti-British mood from spreading to other parts of the Arab world. Qatar has reportedly asked to be excluded from Pym's itinerary and Algeria has cancelled a trip to London by trade officials.

The strength of Saudi feeling was evident in an emotional letter to The Times by Prince Bandar bin Abdullah, the Saudi Assistant Deputy Minister of the Interior, advising fellow Arabs "to emulate the Saudi way, namely, hit the Westerners where it hurts, in their pockets, for they have no hearts."

Among the epithets which the Prince levelled at Britain were that it was "foolhardy in humiliating the Arabs" and that "the average full-blooded Arab" was "nauseated by British hypocrisy." He called Britain merely "an appendage" of the United

States and "almost irrelevant" in the Middle East. "The Arabs," he added, "are at a loss to explain the blind, pigheaded and destructive support that the Zionists receive from the Europeans and Americans except on the basis of race prejudice."

HISTADRUT RAPPED FOR ALLOWING ITS CONSTRUCTION FIRMS TO CONTINUE TO OPERATE WITHIN THE WEST BANK

By Hugh Orgel

TEL AVIV, Jan. 4 (JTA) -- Three leftwing components of the Histadrut -- Mapam, Sheli and the Communist Party -- have strongly protested at a Histadrut decision yesterday to allow the labor federation's construction companies to continue to operate within the West Bank.

The labor federation's holding company Hevrat Ovdim decided yesterday, after a lengthy debate, that the Histadrut had on this issue to be governed by economic considerations, and not by political philosophy.

It said the Histadrut construction companies would have to dismiss workers if it did not win tenders for occupied area housing. If the Histadrut's Solel Boneh and other companies did not build there, other private companies would do so.

The Hevrat Ovdim said that the decision to build should be taken on sensible economic grounds, and not to make a quick profit. Opponents of continued Judea and Samaria building said that by accepting housing in the occupied territories, the Histadrut and its majority Labor Party component were compromising their ideals.

TAYLOR MEETS WITH BEGIN

By David Landau

JERUSALEM, Jan. 4 (JTA) -- Movie superstar Elizabeth Taylor, dogged by accident and ill-health during her visit to Israel, met briefly today with Prime Minister Menachem Begin at his office in Jerusalem.

The session was part of Ms. Taylor's one-woman peace effort; she plans to fly to Beirut tomorrow to see president Amin Gemayel and Israeli officials say she may be in Kiryat Shmona Thursday when the Israeli and Lebanese negotiators resume their sessions there.

Ms. Taylor is still suffering the after-effects of a road accident Saturday in which she injured both ankles and sustained other knocks and bruises. She plainly found it difficult to walk today and one hand was bandaged. The car taking her to visit Defense Minister Ariel Sharon crashed into the car ahead of it, belonging to Sharon's spokesman Uri Dan, on a wet Negev road.

She also has a sore throat, a condition she has been unable to shake off throughout her week-long stay in Israel. Begin told her how pleased he was to have her here -- and how sorry to hear of her accident. After 15 minutes of conversation, Ms. Taylor departed, bearing a large bouquet of flowers from the Premier's staff.

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TEL AVIV (JTA) -- Former Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin said Tuesday that the Labor Party was firmly opposed to any withdrawal back to the 1948 "green line" which served as the Israeli border up to the 1967 Six-Day War. Touring the Etzion bloc of settlements south of Jerusalem, overrun by the Jordanians in 1949 and resettled only in 1967, Rabin said he would be very pleased if Jordan joined the peace talks on the basis of the Camp David accords. But he added that within that framework there was a need for frontier changes. The Jordan Valley, the Jerusalem area, the eastern slopes of the West Bank and the southern part of the Gaza Strip should always remain within Israel, for defense purposes, Rabin said.

SPECIAL INTERVIEW SOME DISQUIETING EXPERIENCES

By Arnold Ages

MIAMI BEACH, Fla., Jan. 4 (JTA) -- Eli Wiesel, probably the world's most widely read Jewish novelist, essayist and commentator, has had some disquieting experiences in recent months.

In an interview with this writer, Wiesel revealed that he had been in Israel when the invasion of Lebanon occurred. While he had some reservations about the implications of the war, Wiesel has been scandalized by some of the reactions to it, notably that of Jacobo Timerman, the former editor of a newspaper in Buenos Aires who was arrested by the Argentine authorities and who is now living in Israel.

"I was one of those people who went to Argentina to plead with the authorities there to release Timerman," Wiesel said. "It was because of the intervention of Israel and its offer to accept Timerman that he was finally able to leave his jail cell."

Wiesel feels that Timerman's new book on Israel, "The Longest War, Israel in Lebanon" (Knopf) -- intended as an expose of Israel's unwarranted invasion of Lebanon, published in advance of the findings of the judicial commission of inquiry -- and his recent appearances on American television -- notably CBS "60 Minutes" program where his unrelenting criticism of Israel prompted Mike Wallace to ask, "But is there nothing positive about Israel?" -- are quite unsavory; they display both a lack of gratefulness on Timerman's part and a certain "shallowness" in his thinking.

Exercised About Timerman's Assertions

Wiesel is exercised not only by Timerman's statements about the "wickedness" of Israel but about his assertions of longtime Zionist and Jewish commitment. "That's not the impression I got when I was in Argentina trying to secure Timerman's release," Wiesel stated. "Members of the Jewish community there asked me why I was wasting my time on a person who had never displayed any Jewish loyalties."

"When Timerman occupied his position as editor of one of Buenos Aires' best newspapers, he had no time for the Jewish people or for Israel, that's what I was told by Argentinian Jews." (Timerman does say in his book, "Prisoner Without a Name, Cell Without a Number," that he wrote about Israel in his paper; he does not provide details about the extent of his coverage.)

Response To The Beirut Massacres

If Wiesel has had second thoughts about Timerman he has gone through a similar process with regard to his own recent response to the Beirut massacres. In the wake of the Shatila and Sabra murders, Wiesel had rushed into print with some strong articles about the moral lapses of certain Jews.

"I went so far as to suggest that this calamitous event meant that we had failed as a people, that there was something wrong with our educational system. I said that the time had come for a 'Heshbon Ha-nefesh,' a reckoning with our souls. I could not understand how such a monstrous thing had transpired."

When the reaction of the world's press began to filter through Wiesel's consciousness he soon realized that he had been precipitous in his re-

action. The orgy of condemnation which was visited upon Israel was too much for Wiesel. "The condemnation was not inspired by a sincere search for truth but by a hidden agenda, to wipe clean the Holocaust slate. The world seemed to be saying to us: 'Now that you too have been involved in human brutality, however indirect, we can now close the chapter on the Holocaust.' The relish that accompanied the world condemnation of Israel was transparent."

While Wiesel was in Israel during the war he is not prepared to offer analysis of the political or military aspects of the conflict. "I am not a political person and am therefore unable to comment on whether the invasion was justifiable or not. When it comes to matters of security I do not presume to tell the people on the scene what is appropriate or not."

Some Observations On The War

Wiesel was, however, ready to make some observations on the war as he witnessed it from his perspective.

"The first inkling I had that something was wrong was when I heard a radio announcer say: 'Katavenu me Beirut moser, (our correspondent from Beirut reports ...)' The media coverage of the fighting was unprecedented. Hour after hour Israeli TV crews filled the screens not only with shots of the fighting but with programs featuring debates among soldiers about the morality of the war -- all this occurring while the fighting was going on!

"My general impression is that this was a war, the first one in Israel, that was waged without a general consensus. I felt a corporate sense of sadness. The people were split and you could feel it clearly."

The Moral Issue Of The War

While Wiesel is hesitant to comment on the moral issue of the war itself he is not reticent to speak to specific aspects of its conduct.

"I was horrified when, during the bombing of Beirut, organized 'missions' and tours went to the city to view the spectacle. Here was a city in the process of being mutilated; people were dying and tour buses were bringing people to gawk."

A Midrash from Exodus came to Wiesel's mind to emphasize the point: "When the Egyptians are drowning in the Red Sea and the Israelites begin to rejoice, God is made to say: 'The work of my hands is drowning in the Sea and you sing songs of rejoicing!'"

Wiesel's moral position is a simple one. "I do believe in the double standard when it comes to Israel. I am not embarrassed by it. I believe that the State of Israel should be better than other states. What is Israel's purpose if it is only to become another Levantine entity?"

That is the message Wiesel communicates to the students at Yale (where he recently received the Henry Luce Chair in Humanities) and Boston University, as well as to the thousands of peoples he lectures to annually.

ISRAELI WOMEN URGE SECURITY FOR PALESTINIANS IN LEBANON

JERUSALEM, Jan. 4 (JTA) -- A group of women has called on the government to demand that the multinational force in Lebanon guarantee the security of Palestinians in that country once the Israel Defense Force withdraws.

The women, members of the Israeli Women's Committee for Lebanese Refugees, said that unlike other ethnic communities in Lebanon, the Palestinians have no way of defending themselves because they have neither military equipment nor representation in the government. In letters sent to all members of the Knesset Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee, the women also criticized the Israeli government for not rehabilitating refugee camps in Lebanon before the winter season sets in.