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AIAPAC OFFICIAL CHARGES THAT WEINBERGER IS CONDUCTING A 'VENDETTA AGAINST ISRAEL'

AIAPAC Disowns The Official's Statement By David Friedman

WASHINGTON, March 20 (JTA) -- An official of the American Israel Public Affairs Committee (AIAPAC) has charged that Secretary of Defense Caspar Weinberger is conducting a "vendetta against Israel" which has resulted in what he termed "something just short of an arms embargo." But only hours after the charge was made, AIAPAC disassociated itself from any personal attacks made on Weinberger.

The official, Steven Rosen, AIAPAC director of research and information, told a press conference here for the Israeli and Jewish media last Thursday that while President Reagan is considered friendly toward Israel, Weinberger's close relations with the President has resulted in an Administration policy that has "tilted" toward the Arabs and against Israel.

Weinberger puts every act by Israel "in the worst light," not only in his mind but also in the President's mind, Rosen charged at the press conference which was called to discuss AIAPAC's new pamphlet, "Israel and the U.S. Air Force."

The pamphlet argues that Israel, not any of the Arab countries, is the best site for American air bases, particularly to provide refueling and maintenance of U.S. planes protecting the Middle East and the Persian Gulf. The pamphlet is a follow-up to one issued by AIAPAC last year called "The Strategic Value of Israel."

Rosen's press conference was held coincidentally at just about the time the Defense Department was releasing a letter from Gen. Robert Barrow, the Commandant of the U.S. Marine Corps, to Weinberger, charging that Israeli troops are deliberately threatening the lives of American military personnel in Lebanon for "political purposes" and urging that "firm and strong action" be taken by the U.S. to end the confrontations.

Bemoans Departure Of Haig And Allen

Rosen asserted that there is no official in the Administration at a high level with a sympathetic view toward Israel since the departures last year of Secretary of State Alexander Haig and National Security Advisor Richard Allen.

The AIAPAC official said the only "good things" that have emerged recently are such items as foreign aid which is directed by Congress. He claimed that even the Administration's opposition to attempts to expel Israel from the United Nations was due to the mandate by Congress.

Rosen said the only weapons shipped to Israel in recent months have been 11 F-15 jets and 200 Sidewinder missiles. He said the Administration has held up since last May official notification to Congress of the sale of 75 F-16 jets even though they, like the F-15s, were promised to Israel in 1978 as a result of the weapons the U.S. sold to Saudi Arabia, Egypt and Jordan.

As for Weinberger's policy toward the Arabs, it is "come pick what you want and it's yours," Rosen said. He said it was "not clear what the Arabs wanted that he (Weinberger) turned down."

Explains Why AIAPAC Is Speaking Out

Rosen said AIAPAC is speaking out because there has been an "obsession" over the last two years over what Israel has done to strain relations with the U.S., but little has been mentioned about what Weinberger has done to strain relations with Israel. He contended that Weinberger does not know the importance of Israel to U.S. security and has thus harmed American security.

In addition, Rosen warned, his anti-Israel policies may cause American Jews who, during the 1970s, supported increased spending for U.S. defense, to turn away from this support.

Rosen stressed that there was an ignorance of Israel's strategic value in the Defense Department because the Pentagon has not studied it. He said that before 1979, the Pentagon concentrated on Europe and the Far East. But with the fall of the Shah of Iran and the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan, large numbers of military men were sent to the Middle East to study the situation there.

He said this resulted in a "search for ways to cooperate closely with the Arabs" because there was a need to obtain "access arrangements" for bases in Arab countries. "A strategic concept evolved very sensitive to the strategic value of a number of Arab countries and surprisingly insensitive to the strategic value of Israel to the U.S.," Rosen said. He charged that Defense Department officials are even warned against studying the strategic value of Israel.

Charges Against Weinberger

Rosen noted that Weinberger had blocked the agreement upon which Israel would supply the U.S. with information that it learned about Soviet weapons as a result of the war in Lebanon as it had done after previous wars. He said the Secretary did not understand the complicated and long procedure needed to analyze these weapons.

The AIAPAC official also charged that Weinberger was responsible for the position being taken by some that Israel's destruction of Soviet-built Syrian missiles in Lebanon benefited the USSR because the Russians would now improve their missile defenses. He said the Israelis could now take out the SAM-5 missiles that the Soviets have installed in Syria. But the difficulty there is diplomatic since the missiles are manned by Soviet technicians, he said.

AIAPAC Disassociates Itself From 'Personal Remarks'

Several hours after the conference, AIAPAC issued a statement through its spokesperson, Lisa Behren, that "any personal remarks" about Weinberger were "solely" that of Rosen's.

She said that AIAPAC's well-known differences with the Administration are that it believes that "Israel is of strategic importance to the U.S. and current U.S. policy does not take advantage of that fact. It will be false to characterize this difference of opinion as personal criticism of the motives of the Secretary of

Defense. Our concern remains what it has always been -- policy, not personality."

ARENS OFFERS PLAN FOR LIAISON BETWEEN U.S., ISRAELI TROOPS IN BEIRUT TO AVOID FUTURE INCIDENTS

By Hugh Orgel

TEL AVIV, March 20 (JTA) -- Defense Minister Moshe Arens has urged the United States to agree to close liaison between Israeli and American forces in the Beirut area to avoid future misunderstandings and incidents.

Arens pressed that point in a telephone call to Defense Secretary Caspar Weinberger Friday in which he informed Weinberger that he has issued strict orders to Israeli troops to avoid confrontations with U.S. marines in the multinational peace-keeping force.

Arens made the call after visiting the Beirut area to investigate the situation which was the subject of a letter Marine Corps Commandant Gen. Robert Barrow sent to Weinberger recently and was released to the American press last Thursday.

Barrow complained that Israeli troops were deliberately threatening the lives of American military personnel in Lebanon for "political purposes" and urged "firm and strong action" to put an end to the incidents, several of which were cited in the letter and in accompanying documents.

Israel immediately blamed the U.S. for its alleged refusal to establish close liaison with Israeli forces in Lebanon. Arens said to be deeply concerned over the total lack of communications between the two forces and what could happen as a consequence, proposed several measures to ease the tension.

Nature Of The Liaison

He reportedly suggested that an American liaison officer be based at forward Israeli headquarters and that an Israeli officer be posted to U.S. marine headquarters. He called for the opening of direct communications between the two forces and a written agreement establishing the demarcation line between the areas patrolled by the Israelis and Americans and details of procedures to be followed for the line to be crossed by either party.

Israel had proposed much earlier the establishment of a liaison office and a "hot line" telephone between the local commanders. Those proposals were made following an incident last February 2 when a marine captain, brandishing a pistol, forced the retreat of three Israeli tanks that allegedly were attempting to cross into marine-patrolled territory. Israel claimed the tanks were operating on the Israeli side of the line and that the marine had overreacted.

Nevertheless, the Americans rejected the Israeli proposals and insisted that all contacts be maintained through diplomatic channels rather than between local commanders at the scene. It was not known how Weinberger received Arens' proposals but sources said the Defense Secretary was cordial in his conversation with Arens.

Timing Of Barrow's Letter

The newspaper Maariv claimed today that Barrow's letter was written six weeks ago and suggested that it was released to the press only last week by the Pentagon to "balance" incidents in which five marines were wounded last week in the Beirut area. According to Maariv, the marines were attacked by Palestinian terrorists.

American sources reported that Barrow's letter was written only a few days before it was released to the press. The Jerusalem Post claimed today that the letter was leaked "by an individual interested in exacerbating U.S.-Israel relations" and was not published officially by the Pentagon. The letter appeared in the Knight-Ridder newspaper chain last Wednesday and was given to the rest of the media Thursday.

HUSSEIN'S VISIT TO LONDON REVIVES THE FRIENDSHIP BETWEEN BRITAIN AND THE ARABS

By Maurice Samuelson

LONDON, March 20 (JTA) -- The one-day visit by King Hussein of Jordan and other Arab League leaders last Friday has revived the friendship between Britain and the Arabs.

Britain's Foreign Secretary Francis Pym used the visit to assert that the Arabs had "got their act together" and adopted a negotiating position for peace. At the same time, he said, Israel's refusal to get out of Lebanon and its continuing settlement building on the West Bank were delaying progress to peace.

However, it remains doubtful whether Hussein will himself make the vital step towards negotiations which the United States has been urging him to take.

Senior Jordanian officials, quoted here, say Hussein made it clear here that he will not be going to Washington, at least for the time being, because he does not want to incur headline Arab displeasure without being sure that the United States can extract sufficient concessions from Israel.

The Arab sources also claim that this was the advice which Hussein and his delegation received from the British. The Arab hard-line also reflects a reluctance not to antagonize the Soviet Union which has made an unprecedented commitment to defend Syria against any Israeli attack.

Hussein's First Priority

Instead of going quickly to Washington, Hussein's first priority this week is to seek the agreement of PLO chairman Yasir Arafat over which Palestinians could eventually be included in a joint Jordanian-Palestinian delegation.

Hussein has long aspired to represent the Palestinians, but has been barred from doing so since the 1974 Rabat summit meeting which awarded this role exclusively to the Palestine Liberation Organization.

The Palestinian representative in the Arab League team was Walid Khalidi, who although a member of the Palestine National Council is not an official of the PLO. Khalidi's presence had been a compromise between Premier Margaret Thatcher's embargo on the PLO and the Arabs' insistence on separate Palestinian representation.

Khalidi was included following close consultations between Hussein and Arafat and hence the King's keenness to report back directly to the PLO chairman on the success of this arrangement, and its usefulness as a precedent.

The Only Public Warning

The only public warning here against Hussein allying himself too closely to the PLO came from an Israeli and was published in The Times the morning of the Arab League team's arrival.

It was contained in an article by Gideon Rafael, the former Israeli Ambassador to London, and its appearance was one of the few public relations successes which Israel has recently scored in Britain.

Rafael urged Hussein to enter talks with Israel and warned him that "hitching his fortunes to Arafat's wobbly wagon will not advance him and his people one inch on the road to peace and the recovery of lands he lost when he joined the war against Israel in 1967."

Arabs Get Red Carpet Treatment

Apart from this, the Arab visitors have had the British media entirely to themselves, from the moment of their red carpet arrival at the British Foreign Office and at 10 Downing Street to their final tea party with a beaming Queen Elizabeth at Buckingham Palace.

Public interest in the visit had been enhanced by the fact that it had already been postponed at least three times since first mooted last summer in the wake of the Arab summit gathering at Fez. The idea was to acquaint the five permanent members of the UN Security Council with the Arabs' plans for a Palestinian state on the West Bank and Gaza with its capital in Jerusalem.

The ministerial visits to Washington, Paris, Moscow and Peking had all taken place with little attention by the international media. But the squabble with Britain over whether a PLO man should see Mrs. Thatcher and the Queen caused an uncharacteristic rift between Britain and the Arabs and ensured the widespread publicity once it was healed.

This was made possible by the inclusion of Khalidi, whom the British claimed was not a PLO man despite the PLO's adamant claims to the contrary. It also provided an unexpected publicity coup for Hussein who led the mission after Morocco's King Hassan, its original leader, lost patience and dropped out.

EEC SEEKS TO ENCOURAGE HUSSEIN TO JOIN MIDEAST PEACE PROCESS By David Kantor

BONN, March 20 (JTA) -- The European Economic Community (EEC) will issue a declaration on the Middle East this week expected to include elements aimed at encouraging King Hussein of Jordan to join the peace process in that area. Hussein ended two days of talks with West German political leaders here over the weekend.

The EEC, whose Council of Ministers is currently chaired by West German Foreign Minister Hans-Dietrich Genscher is expected to call for an immediate, total freeze on Jewish settlements on the West Bank and the full withdrawal of Israeli forces from Lebanon. Hussein is understood to have told German leaders that without a settlement freeze and the evacuation of Lebanon it was impossible for him to participate in peace talks.

He told Chancellor Helmut Kohl and Genscher that his future role in the peace process will depend to a large degree on getting a mandate from various bodies of the Palestine Liberation Organization to negotiate on behalf of the Palestinians.

Diplomats here say Bonn has demonstrated sympathy and understanding for Hussein's complicated situation and was willing to explore ways to help him create the necessary conditions for participation in the Middle East peace process. The EEC declaration on the Middle East will be issued in Brussels this Tuesday during a summit meeting of the heads of the 10 member states.

PRO-ISRAEL GROUP SUING LE MONDE FOR ALLEGED INCITEMENT TO RACIAL HATRED AND SPREADING ANTI-SEMITISM By Edwin Eytan

PARIS, March 20 (JTA) -- The International League Against Anti-Semitism and Racism (LICRA) has filed suit against the French daily *Le Monde* and its former editor, Jacques Fauvet, for alleged "incitement to racial hatred and spreading anti-Semitism."

LICRA, a civil rights organization known for its strong pro-Israel stand, charged that the paper had been guilty of these crimes when it accepted for publication last June 17, in the first weeks of the war in Lebanon, a paid advertisement which contained "anti-Semitic material" and which, according to LICRA, was likely to incite the readers to racial hatred.

The advertisement, which had clearly been marked as such, consisted of a quarter page vitriolic attack against the "Peace For Galilee" operation, Israel and Zionism. It was signed by a Catholic priest, Father Michel Lelong, a Protestant clergyman, the Rev. Etienne Mathiot, and Marxist philosopher Roger Garaudy, a recent convert to Islam. The three claimed that Israel "practices state terror" and that one of the aims of Zionism "is endless expansion."

The three compared Israel's legislation to the Nuremberg laws in their definition of Jewishness as "someone born of a Jewish mother." LICRA, which is headed by Jean Pierre-Bloch, claimed that by accepting the advertisement, *Le Monde* contributed to a hate campaign and had slandered Judaism and "even the Bible." The Defense counsel for the three signatories and those representing the paper stressed that all the defendants are known for their anti-racist views and that the text of the advertisement included a phrase stating "our condemnation of Zionism is part of our fight against anti-Semitism."

A LICRA witness, Rabbi Yosi Eisenberg, told the court that although it was legal to criticize the policy of a foreign state, "attacking Zionism implies a move towards anti-Semitism as there can be no conceivable Judaism without Zionism." LICRA is asking for a one-franc symbolic fine. The court will announce its verdict Wednesday.

SHAMIR TO MEET HABIB ON U.S. PROPOSALS FOR ACCORD ON LEBANON

JERUSALEM, March 20 (JTA) -- Foreign Minister Yitzhak Shamir was scheduled to meet with U.S. special envoy Philip Habib tonight following a Cabinet meeting today at which American proposals for an agreement on Lebanon were discussed. There was no word late today as to what decisions, if any, were taken at the Cabinet session or by the Ministerial Defense Committee which was to convene later. The committee's deliberations are classified.

The American proposals under discussion reportedly dealt chiefly with security arrangements in south Lebanon. They were conveyed to Shamir last Thursday by U.S. Ambassador Samuel Lewis and were said to contain details to fit the general outline of ideas discussed by Shamir and Secretary of State George Shultz in Washington earlier last week.

PARIS (JTA) -- A Christian organization, the International Christian Embassy, Jerusalem, has called for a mass demonstration this week in solidarity with the Soviet Union's oppressed Jews. The group plans to hold its meeting at the Soviet Embassy here.

BACKGROUND REPORT ISRAELI MILITARY SOURCES DENY THE IDF IS ISSUING ARMS TO PALESTINIANS IN SOUTH LEBANON By Hugh Orgel

TEL AVIV, March 20 (JTA) -- Recent reports that the Israel Defense Force has issued arms to Palestinians in southern Lebanon to enable them to protect themselves against a possible attack by Lebanese Christians are denied by Israeli military sources. The sources say that such weapons have neither been supplied nor even requested.

They admit, however, that many Palestinians, especially those living in the camps around Beirut and in Tyre and Sidon, are probably afraid of violence against them on the part of the Lebanese, particularly the rightwing Phalangists.

"For years, the Lebanese Christians had been attacked and mistreated by the Palestinians who had settled amongst them and finally, under the PLO, had slaughtered many of them, wiping out entire villages and towns such as Damour south of Beirut," the sources say. "The Christians were the underdogs for years. Now their position is reversed and it might be only natural that some of them might think of revenge."

The Palestinians' fears of retaliation are probably especially strong following the Sabra and Shatila camp massacres. But even in those camps, no requests for arms have come to the Israeli authorities.

There Is Little The IDF Can Do

The Israelis say there is little the IDF can do to protect all the Palestinians in the camps. This is a task for the Lebanese central government, with its army and police force.

But the Israelis are obviously doing more than they will admit openly to keep their eyes and ears open in and around the camps and to take action if required. They recognize that, whatever happens and whatever the legal limits of what Israel can do, Israel would be blamed if there were a Christian attack on Palestinians, such as happened in the camps.

Israel's moral responsibility -- though no direct responsibility was involved -- led to the establishment of the commission of inquiry and the implementation of its proposals.

The Palestinians are, in any case, probably not entirely defenseless. Despite what happened at Sabra and Shatila, and despite widespread IDF searches for hidden PLO arms caches, both Christians and Palestinians probably have more weapons than they are prepared to admit.

And this may be the reasons they have not formally asked the Israelis for arms -- even though the legal receipt and possession of weapons would be of more value than arms obtained and held illegally.

Military sources admit that a dozen or so bodies, mainly of Palestinians, were discovered near camps a month or so ago. But since those widely-published reports, no more murders have come to light. The sources say that it is still not clear whether those deaths were due to Lebanese revenge in an organized manner, or the result of individual acts of revenge, or even of a family vendetta.

Neither the Israeli forces nor the Lebanese authorities have so far come up with a clear solution to those murders and they have done little to calm any fears the Palestinians have of Lebanese

Christian retribution for the PLO actions of the past decade in Lebanon.

29 CONGRESSMEN URGE GEMAYEL TO COMPLETE LEBANON'S INVESTIGATION OF MASSACRES AT SABRA AND SHATILA By David Friedman

WASHINGTON, March 20 (JTA) -- Twenty-nine Congressmen have urged President Amin Gemayel of Lebanon to complete Lebanon's investigation into the massacres of Palestinians in the refugee camps of Sabra and Shatila near Beirut last September.

"We are profoundly disturbed by what appears to Americans to be a lack of diligence in determining responsibility for the attacks on the refugee camps and bringing the actual perpetrators to justice," the Congressmen said in a letter to Gemayel today. The letter was drafted by Reps. Henry Waxman (D. Cal.) and Mary Rose Oakar (D. Ohio).

"The government and people of Israel fulfilled their obligations through the exhaustive investigation by a commission of inquiry," Waxman said. "Israeli political and military leaders were identified and punished for their indirect responsibility." He added that, although the Lebanese government announced the investigation, "we have no signs of that inquiry."

In the letter, the Congressmen noted that "each of us is deeply committed to the establishment of a truly independent and sovereign Lebanon. We support America's role in the multinational peace-keeping force. We support Ambassador Philip Habib's efforts to rid Lebanon of all foreign troops and terrorist groups."

"We support American help in reconstructing Lebanon. We support -- and applaud -- your efforts to unite your country and to provide for the safety of its citizens."

But the Congressmen warned that they "are concerned that all these extraordinary efforts will be hindered as long as those responsible for the terror at Sabra and Shatila are unpunished and left free to strike at whomever they may choose." They added that "the new Lebanon should begin with answers to the terrible questions posed by the brutal murders of hundreds of innocent civilians."

BETHLEHEM MAYOR URGES ISRAELIS, PALESTINIANS TO START TALKING

JERUSALEM, March 20 (JTA) -- Mayor Elias Freij of Bethlehem warned that unless Israelis and Palestinians start talking, in another 12 months "there will be nothing to talk about."

Speaking in Jerusalem this weekend at the closing session of a three-day seminar organized by the International Center for Peace in the Middle East, Freij urged "the silent, peace-loving majority to no longer remain silent." He said the intensive pace of Jewish settlements on the West Bank is the main factor threatening a peace agreement.

The mayor urged Jordan's King Hussein and the Palestine Liberation Organization to make a move toward Israel. He expressed disappointment at the non-committal resolutions of the Arab summit in Fez, Morocco. The seminar was attended by 14 Knesset members from all parties and by Arab personalities from the West Bank and the Gaza Strip.

TEL AVIV (JTA) -- An Israeli soldier was slightly wounded and two others treated for scratches when Israeli troops south of Beirut were fired on in two separate incidents last Friday. The first incident, in which the soldiers were hurt, occurred when a jeep patrol was fired on near Bahamdoun some three miles southwest of Beirut. Two hours later small arms fire was directed at an IDF roadblock south of Damour, but nobody was hurt.