

# JTA daily news bulletin

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## U.S. WARNS ARAB WORLD TO SEIZE 'A UNIQUE MOMENT'

By David Friedman

WASHINGTON, April 5 (JTA) -- The Reagan Administration warned the Arab world today that it must seize "a unique moment" before it is lost and come to the negotiating table which, it stressed, was the only place where the Palestinian problem could be solved.

The warning came after Palestine Liberation Organization chief Yasir Arafat left Amman for Kuwait today without giving King Hussein of Jordan the green light the King says he needs to enter the negotiations for autonomy for the Palestinians on the West Bank and Gaza.

"What is needed is a prompt move to the negotiating table," State Department spokesman John Hughes said. "It is only there that a solution to the Palestinian problem in all its aspects can be found." He said that President Reagan's September 1 Middle East peace initiative, "based on UN Security Council Resolution 242, provides the best means for accomplishing that goal."

"King Hussein has taken the lead in recognizing the opportunity currently available for revitalizing the peace process," Hughes added. "We hope that others as well will recognize that this is a unique moment which must be seized before it is lost and that they will support the King in his desire to move forward toward peace."

### Aim Of The Statement

The statement seemed to be aimed at Arafat or beyond him to an Arab League Summit conference that is expected to be held in Morocco April 16-17. But Hughes refused to be specific. He noted that there already has been a great deal of talk, Hussein talking to people, Arafat talking to people and it was time to bring the talks to "conclusion."

But at the same time, Hughes denied that the U.S. was "disappointed" that the latest talks in Amman between Arafat and Hussein had not ended with Hussein announcing he would join the negotiations. Hughes said that since Arafat and Hussein planned other talks, the "round of discussions" was continuing and it was "too early" now to make any judgment.

Hughes made it clear that Reagan would not change his proposals to meet the demands made by Arafat. "The President is very clear about what he announced on September 1," the spokesman said. "His strict adherence to that position has not changed."

## FORMER CARTER AIDE URGES ISRAELIS TO RECOGNIZE THE 'RIGHT AND DUTY' OF U.S. JEWS TO SPEAK OUT WHEN THEY DISAGREE WITH ISRAEL'S POLICIES

By David Landau

JERUSALEM, April 5 (JTA) -- Stuart Eizenstat, a former aide to President Jimmy Carter, has urged Israelis to recognize that American Jewry has "the right and duty" to speak out when it disagrees with Israeli policies. He maintained that

this right derived from its acceptance of the Zionist credo of the centrality of Israel in Jewish life.

Eizenstat, who was the senior Jewish member of the White House staff during the Carter Administration, stressed this view in an article in the Labor Party affiliated newspaper Davar. It was an expansion of the address he delivered at the recent meeting of the Board of Governors of Ben Gurion University in Beersheba.

In the article, the former Presidential assistant enumerated some of the present Israeli policies and relationships which disturb American Jews. He also described the changed attitude toward Israel which has occurred within the Reagan Administration.

"We are one nation, linked by one fate, regardless of our dispersion. The focal point of our solar system is Israel" and "there can be no distinguishing between the land, the Jewish religion and our future survival," he wrote.

### Time To End The Bitterness

However, Eizenstat stressed that the diaspora is here to stay, at least for the foreseeable future, and it is "time to put an end to the bitterness over our decision to stay in America." The right and duty of American Jews to involve themselves in disputation with Israel cannot be dismissed by the argument that they do not live here and do not face the dangers and therefore should not speak out, he said.

Eizenstat observed that "Israel's actions determine whether the values of Judaism can be tenable in the geopolitical realities of the modern world... whether a modern state can be based on Jewish values."

Diaspora Jewry must make its voice heard both on issues cardinal to the Jewish people and on key Israeli policy issues, he asserted.

Among the issues which affect American Jewry, Eizenstat listed the "Who is a Jew" controversy, the government-imposed ban on Sabbath flights by the Israeli airline, El Al, and Premier Menachem Begin's "close relationship" with Jerry Falwell, leader of the Moral Majority.

"We must demand with all our insistence that there be religious pluralism in Israel." The proposed Orthodox amendment of the Law of Return would cause a "deep division" in diaspora Jewry, he warned.

Eizenstat contended that Begin should be urged to have greater sensitivity to Falwell's position on school prayer. The Moral Majority seeks to "Christianize America" and poses a threat to religious pluralism in the United States, he said. Begin, without rejecting Falwell's friendship for Israel, should be "more careful" in his approach to him.

Eizenstat was sharply critical of Begin's flat rejection of President Reagan's Middle East peace initiative, announced by the President last September 1. He observed that had President Carter launched such an initiative, "American Jewry would have arisen in outcry and would have excoriated him."

But now, despite its rejection by Israel, key American Jewish leaders were finding positive elements in the Reagan proposals and were "even recommending the plan," Eizenstat wrote. He added that since the Beirut refugee camps massacre, such expressions of dissent by American Jews were increasing.

The attitude of the United States has also undergone a basic change with the departure of Secretary of State Alexander Haig and his replacement by George Shultz, Eizenstat wrote.

He said Haig represented a marked divergence from the traditional State Department line of evenhandedness in the Middle East. "He believed that Israel was a faithful ally, a strategic asset, a vital link in a strategic alliance that he hoped to forge with pro-Western Arab states against Soviet penetration. This alliance took priority in Haig's eyes over resolving the Palestinian problem," Eizenstat wrote.

By contrast, the present Secretary of State, described by Eizenstat as an honest, able, fair and patient man, has a Middle East conception "closer to that of the Carter Administration -- including Carter himself -- and that traditionally espoused by the State Department. This approach regards the solution of the Palestinian problem as the central hinge around which all other Mideast matters are resolved. According to this conception, only if the Palestinian instability is alleviated and regional tensions eased, will the problem which the Soviets are seeking to exploit fade away."

Eizenstat said Reagan's initiative reflected his endorsement of Shultz's approach and with Shultz, Defense Secretary Caspar Weinberger and National Security Advisor William Clark at the helm of American policy, there is no one in the top echelon fighting for Israel's viewpoint.

Therefore, Eizenstat predicted there would be "no withdrawal" from Reagan's September 1 proposals because the President and his Secretary of State have invested too much in them to warrant their abandonment.

#### Changes in Israel Since Likud Took Office

Eizenstat also spoke of the basic change in Israel since the Begin government took office. "Simply put, Begin is implementing the Revisionist policy of trying, de facto, to absorb the West Bank into Israel and to hold it under Israeli sovereignty." The problem, however, is that this policy endangers the Jewish character of Israel if the West Bank Arabs are given political rights and endangers the democratic character of Israel if they are not, Eizenstat wrote.

He asserted that ever since Begin took office there has been discomfort in some American Jewish circles which recent developments have brought into the open. "Many American Jews do not support the de facto or de jure annexation of the West Bank because this would lead to a radical change in the democratic character of Israel," Eizenstat said.

American Jews are aware of this political argument within Israel itself and feel they have a right to state their views. He said many of them also fear privately that Israel's increasing isolation would cause a rise of anti-Semitism in the U.S. where, Eizenstat claimed, a recent poll showed that more than 50 percent of the people believe American Jews are more loyal to Israel than to the U.S.

Eizenstat stressed that this vocal dissent on the part of American Jewish organizations was "not going to be a passing phenomenon" but it need not be a bitter argument between them and the Israel government. If the dialogue proceeds properly, it could actually enhance American Jewry's ability to influence the Administration's policy, he said.

The former White House aide warned, however, that American Jewry must take care in voicing its views on Israeli national security issues. "We must find new methods of communication that will make it easier for us to hold a dialogue on the effect of Israeli policies upon Jews and upon public opinion in the

U.S. If American Jews are not prepared to support blindly every decision of the government of Israel -- just as they do not support every decision of the U.S. government -- they must beware lest they be used by the Administration as a stick with which to beat Israel," Eizenstat wrote.

Furthermore, he said, American Jews must not allow themselves to be browbeaten by insinuations regarding their patriotism. American Jews must carefully choose the issue upon which they involve themselves on the side of Israel and these must be only issues crucial to the defense of Israel, Eizenstat wrote. "Support for more settlements and for annexation of the West Bank is not one of those issues."

Finally, Eizenstat observed that no state in the modern world can live "according to supreme moral injunctions" and Israel ought not to be expected to act according to ideals no other state embraces. "Of course, we want Israel to maintain the high moral standards of our faith, but that is not always possible when her enemies refuse to live according to those rules. There is nothing in the Jewish faith that pre-scribes national suicide," Eizenstat wrote.

#### ANTI-ISRAEL SLURS SPARK PROTESTS

GENEVA, April 5 (JTA) -- A commission set up to consider a Jewish protest against a German-language Swiss Radio broadcast which said Premier Menachem Begin and former Defense Minister Ariel Sharon found justification for Israel's invasion of Lebanon in "Mein Kampf," ruled this week that the radio had no mandate to broadcast such a comment.

The same commission, however, rejected a complaint by Jews in Zurich that a French-language television film on the war in Lebanon was biased because it showed only the destruction caused by Israel's armed forces. The commission concluded in that case that the film only tried to show the reality in Lebanon.

The protest against the radio broadcast was filed by the Swiss Federation of Jewish Communities with the director general of Swiss radio and television. The program in question was a satirical radio "magazine" on world events.

#### CRIF LEADER SAYS ORGANIZATION WILL PLAY ACTIVE ROLE AGAINST RACISM

PARIS, April 5 (JTA) -- Theo Klein, who was elected last month president of the Representative Council of Major French Jewish Organizations (CRIF), said CRIF will lead the fight against racism in all its forms.

Klein, addressing a press conference here, said CRIF should play an active role against racism regardless of what form this scourge takes. "Often in the past we, the Jews, were the first on the list of victims, but we know from past experience that even if we are not the initial target, a racist campaign will practically invariably turn against the Jews as well at one point or another." Klein was referring to the campaign waged in France against North African workers during the recent municipal elections campaign.

Klein, a 63-year-old attorney and former resistance fighter, said he sees nothing contradictory in the fact that he held both French and Israeli citizenships.

"I was born French in an Alsatian family which opted over 100 years ago, when Alsatia was occupied by the Prussians, for French nationality. I also felt that I belong to Israel which is the original homeland of all Jews."

Klein said his dual nationality will, on the contrary, "enable me to better explain Israel's positions in France and France's in Israel. This, after all, is part of my new responsibilities."

# SPECIAL INTERVIEW THE LONG NIGHT

By Aviva Cantor

(Part One Of A Three-Part Series)

NEW YORK, April 5 (JTA) -- There has been a growing controversy in the American Jewish community over the role of American Jewry in the rescue of European Jews during the Holocaust. The behavior of American Jewry, however, cannot be evaluated in a vacuum. Information on and understanding of the circumstances in which they operated -- including the role of the American and British governments -- is essential to put their behavior in historical context.

In an effort to provide this framework and some answers to the question of whether American Jews "did enough" to rescue European Jews, the Jewish Telegraphic Agency recently interviewed Dr. Gerhart Riegner, currently Secretary-General of the World Jewish Congress. Riegner, an outstanding fighter against Nazism, served from 1936 to the end of the war as the WJC representative in Geneva.

There he established an effective network which enabled him to gather and transmit to American and British Jewry and their governments crucial information on the day-to-day developments in the Nazis' war against the Jews.

In this interview with JTA, Riegner provides insights on the role of the Allies and American Jewry with regard to rescue. What follows is a three-part condensed version of this interview.

The first part deals with the famous 1942 telegram Riegner, then 30 years old, sent to American and British Jews revealing the Nazi plan behind the deportations and massacres he had been reporting on to them and their initial response to this information.

## Issue Of Credibility

Q: The telegram you sent to the World Jewish Congress in London and New York on August 8, 1942, via American and British diplomats in Switzerland, that the Germans were discussing plans for a "final solution" was based on a report from a German industrialist. What made the report credible?

A: There were three major reasons why I believed that report, or convinced myself that it was credible. One, Hitler had threatened a number of times in his speeches that the one thing that was certain was that European Jews will not survive the war. Second, the message showed there was a plan (behind) the whole range of deportations from the West which started on one day, July 15 -- in Paris, Lyon, Marseilles, Amsterdam, Brussels, Antwerp -- which otherwise remained isolated actions.

We already knew about the deportations from Central Europe -- Germany, Austria and Czechoslovakia .... Third, I had seen the Nazis come to power in Germany. I knew their character, their ruthless fanaticism and brutality. We knew how they murdered political enemies, the places in Berlin where they tortured them -- it was the cellars of the (former) Communist Party newspaper ....

Q: What action did you expect from American Jews in reaction to the telegram?

A: I discussed this with one person only, Professor (Paul) Guggenheim, the legal advisor of the World Jewish Congress. He felt, and I accepted this, that the Jews in the free world had better judgement than we did, surrounded as we were by Nazis -- in Germany, France, Austria and Italy -- and that we should leave it to them to undertake action that was appropriate in the judgement of a Jewry that was completely free.

Q: Rabbi Stephen Wise, the president of the World and the American Jewish Congress, received your cable via London on August 28. According to Saul Friedman, in "No Haven for the Oppressed," the AJCongress Executive Board decided Wise should go to Washington to verify the information through the State Department. Apparently, they did not believe its contents, otherwise, why did they seek this confirmation?

A: They didn't ask (for confirmation), they sought help. Sumner Welles, the Undersecretary of State, who had the reputation of being friendly, told Wise not to go public (with the information), this was his condition ....

Q: Do you mean that Wise had no choice but to suppress the information?

A: That's my reading. They felt that they depended on the State Department, on Welles, for other news because whatever would come, would come through official channels. They wanted action from the government, (and) felt they should not act against their advice from the beginning ....

I believe Wise believed (the report). I've read his letters of those days -- the end of August, beginning of September -- to Justice Felix Frankfurter, and to Rev. John Haynes Holmes, a Protestant clergyman, a very moving letter saying, "What can we do? I don't know what we should do."

This was not the first report I sent. The "Final Solution," although we didn't yet call it that, started with the Russian campaign, in 1941. And they got all kinds of additional information. For example, the first message from the German industrialist was followed six to seven weeks later by a second one: "Now I am sure there is a 'final solution' policy."

From the moment I had this, I tried to get as much additional evidence (as possible). On October 22, Richard Lichtheim (The Jewish Agency representative in Geneva) and I were asked to see the American Minister, Leland Harrison, and submit all the information we had. That came to a document of 25 pages. We had a long discussion with him .... When (his report) arrived in America in November, Welles called in Wise and said, "I have terrible news for you, your worst fears are confirmed."

## Could Not Accept 'This Absolute Evil'

Q: Walter Laquer, in "The Terrible Secret," thinks the Jews did not really believe this or other reports ....

A: Knowing facts and accepting them are two quite different things. Nahum Goldman, head of the Zionist Emergency Committee during the war, in his speeches, for example, at the Biltmore Conference (May, 1942, where American Zionists officially advocated the establishment of a Jewish State), painted the most pessimistic picture of the fate of European Jewry -- that millions of Jews are dying. Nevertheless, he writes in his autobiography that "somewhere in my inner heart I couldn't believe it."

One of my colleagues in New York sent me in 1943 or 1944, on behalf of the Federation of Polish Jewry, the addresses of 30,000 Polish Jews to whom they wanted me to send packages. I couldn't do anything; I went mad when I saw the list. These were people who knew what was happening, they knew that most of the people (on the list) were no more. But they simply could not accept this absolute evil. This had never happened before; (this was) an enemy without precedent in history.

Q: Do you think American Jews did enough to try to rescue European Jews?

At Let me say, nobody did enough. In such a situation, nobody does enough. I didn't do enough, nobody did .... I have always insisted that we lost this war. It is very difficult to admit this, too, and nobody wants to. I don't believe that just because you fight you have to win. The reality is that we Jews lost the war against Hitler. We suffered a terrible defeat ....

The question is, what could have been done at this stage, when the real war was on? We have to examine this situation by situation .... We could have saved more .... The English could have been pressured to take in more Jews, they didn't take in many. There could certainly have been more immigration to North Africa, going through Spain. Palestine could have taken in more (if not for) the resistance of the British.

There could have been much greater pressure on the neutral countries -- Switzerland, Sweden, Spain, Portugal, Turkey -- with more guarantees. Switzerland finally saved about 25-30,000. I have no doubt this could have been even 60,000, perhaps 70 or 80,000. Sweden could have taken in more .... Transport was also a problem -- transporting tens or hundreds of thousands of Jews easily was not possible.

Q: What about the U.S. admitting Jewish refugees -- couldn't the immigration laws have been changed or bent?

A: The immigration laws were absolutely sacrosanct. It was considered absolutely impossible to change them. I don't think Roosevelt could have done it; the opposition was much stronger than we believe. Nobody wanted immigration. The best friends we had at the time, the trade unions, the labor people -- who had been the greatest supporters in the boycott against Germany -- were the first to oppose (any change in the laws). Nobody dared to raise the question of changing the immigration laws.

(Tomorrow: Part II)

#### UN COUNCIL REQUESTS INDEPENDENT INQUIRIES INTO THE CASE OF MASS 'POISONING' ON THE WEST BANK By Yitzhak Rabi

UNITED NATIONS, April 5 (JTA) -- The Security Council requested last night that Secretary General Javier Perez de Cuellar "conduct independent inquiries concerning the cause and effects of the serious problem of the reported case of poisoning (on the West Bank) and urgently report on the findings."

The request was included in a statement issued by Ambassador Jeane Kirkpatrick of the U.S., who is this month's president of the Security Council. The statement was the result of informal consultations among members of the Council last night after the Arab states called for an urgent meeting of the Council to discuss the "mass poisoning" of Palestinian schoolgirls on the West Bank. The Arabs requested a meeting yesterday in a letter to Kirkpatrick signed by Iraqi Ambassador Riyadh Al-Qaysi, who charged that the "mass poisoning" affected more than 1,000 schoolgirls and that Israel was responsible for it.

Yehuda Blum, Israel's Ambassador, said last night that the Arab charges were "irresponsible and unfounded." Blum also rejected the Council's statement, claiming that the reference in it to "poisoning" was "completely unfounded."

#### U.S. Favors Council's Statement

In Washington, meanwhile, State Department spokesman John Hughes said today that "we believe the Council's statement was a constructive action which should reinforce the international effort already underway to determine the nature of these reported

poisoning cases." Hughes noted that at Israel's request, the U.S. has sent a team from the Centers for Disease Control in Atlanta and the International Committee of the Red Cross and the World Health Organization are also looking into the problem which has been investigated already by Israeli medical authorities. "Thus, the (UN) Secretary General is in a position to build upon a series of careful inquiries done by competent specialists and to carry on in the same spirit," Hughes said.

#### NEW TENSION INJECTED INTO THE ISRAEL-LEBANON TALKS By David Landau

JERUSALEM, April 5 (JTA) -- Senior members of the Israeli, Lebanese and American negotiating teams met in Khalde, Lebanon today in an effort to make progress on unresolved issues. Israeli sources said the smaller format and informal nature of today's session was thought to be helpful.

But the meeting was held against the background of new tension between Washington and Jerusalem over President Reagan's statement last week that he will not authorize the delivery of 75 F-16 jet fighter-bombers to Israel as long as Israeli forces are in Lebanon.

Israeli officials see this as an application of pressure on Israel for concessions to break the impasse over security arrangements in south Lebanon. They resent particularly the President's characterization of Israel's presence in Lebanon as an occupying force. The matter is expected to top the agenda at tomorrow's Cabinet meeting. The regular weekly session, normally held on Sundays, was deferred because of the Passover holiday.

Israeli sources said Reagan was applying pressure because of the failure of his special Mideast envoy, Philip Habib, to achieve a breakthrough in the negotiations which began four months ago.

Reports reaching here today spoke of a "tough" meeting over the weekend between Deputy Secretary of State Kenneth Dam and the Israeli Charge d'Affaires in Washington, Binyamin Netanyahu. The Israeli diplomat had been instructed to express his government's concern over the President's remarks.

#### Deny Accord Is Near On Haddad

Israeli officials, meanwhile, denied emphatically a report on the Phalangist's Radio Free Lebanon in Beirut that an agreement was virtually reached with Israel over the future status of its ally, Maj. Saad Haddad. According to the report, Haddad, who commands the Israel-backed Christian militia in south Lebanon, would become the "liaison officer" between the Lebanese and Israeli armies after the latter withdraws from Lebanon.

Officials here insisted there had been no breakthrough and stressed that Israel has not abandoned its demand that Haddad be given command of security in south Lebanon following Israel's withdrawal. The Beirut government, backed by the U.S., refuses to assign him such a role.

Israeli sources confirmed however that there was some progress on the matter of joint patrols of the border area by the Israeli and Lebanese armies. But on that issue too a final agreement is not at hand, they said. According to press reports today, Habib, who returned to Washington a week ago, is due back in the Middle East by the end of this week.