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OPTIMISM EXPRESSED THAT AN ISRAEL-LEBANON ACCORD CAN BE CONCLUDED WITHIN TWO WEEKS

By David Landau (Jerusalem)
and David Friedman (Washington)

April 17 (JTA) -- The latest round of negotiations have produced an air of optimism in Jerusalem where official circles were predicting over the weekend that an agreement with Lebanon could be concluded within one or two weeks at the most if the last remaining obstacle, the future status of Israel's ally, Maj. Saad Haddad, is resolved.

A senior Israeli official in Washington also indicated that Israel and Lebanon are "not far from an agreement" on the withdrawal of Israeli troops from Lebanon. The official, who asked not to be identified, stressed that the agreement will have to provide for Haddad's presence in south Lebanon as leader of the security forces once Israeli troops have left. He said he believed the Lebanese government will understand that Haddad "has to stay."

Habib: 'I don't Set Deadlines'

But U.S. special Ambassador Philip Habib, who personally participated in the Israeli-Lebanese-U.S. negotiations last week, intimated in Cairo yesterday that he didn't expect an agreement in two weeks. Habib, who met for 90 minutes with President Hosni Mubarak of Egypt, was asked by reporters to comment on an earlier report from Beirut that an agreement was likely in two weeks.

"I don't set deadlines," he replied. "Negotiations will continue within the framework of the general principles laid down by President Reagan."

Another obstacle loomed, meanwhile, on the basis of a report in the Syrian government newspaper Tishrin yesterday that Syrian forces will not begin pulling out of Lebanon until all Israeli troops have left.

Habib returned to Jerusalem today for a meeting with David Kimche, head of the Israeli negotiating team. He is expected to fly to Beirut tomorrow and to return to Israel later this week to resume talks after Israel's Independence Day ceremonies. Habib met separately last Friday with Premier Menachem Begin and Foreign Minister Yitzhak Shamir.

Israel Insists On Role For Haddad

Israeli sources acknowledged today that the Lebanese government is still not prepared to accept Israel's demand that Haddad be named commander of a proposed "territorial brigade" consisting of his 2,000-man Christian militia and Lebanese army regulars which would be in charge of security in south Lebanon after Israeli forces withdraw.

According to these sources, the message Habib brought with him from Beirut last week was that Haddad could be named deputy commander of the force and act as liaison officer with the Israeli army.

But Begin and Shamir continue to insist that Haddad must be the supreme commander in the security zone. Begin reportedly said Israel would never soften that position. The Israeli official in Washington suggested that Lebanese President Amin Gemayel, who has compromised with various groups in Lebanon

could "find a way" to compromise with Haddad who heads his own group.

The official dismissed the idea that American or other foreign troops could be used to police south Lebanon. That must be avoided "at any cost" he said. He expressed concern that the presence of American troops along the Israel-Lebanon border could lead to incidents similar to those which occurred between Israeli soldiers and U.S. marines near Beirut recently.

Issue Of Syria's Withdrawal

The official said he could not predict whether the Syrians will withdraw once Israel and Lebanon have reached agreement. He said Israel has been receiving "indications in both directions" and a great deal depends on what the Soviet Union wants inasmuch as it is heavily arming the Syrians.

But according to the official, it will be up to President Gemayel to demand that the Syrians withdraw and once they do, the remaining Palestine Liberation Organization forces will also leave because they would be without Syrian protection in Lebanon.

Basin For Israel's Optimism

The optimism in Israel appears to stem in part from the good progress made last week at the tripartite talks held in Netanya and in Khalde, near Beirut. The three negotiating teams listed all points on which agreement has yet to be reached and legal experts continued to work on the formulation of a draft agreement on those points on which the parties are in accord.

If the Haddad matter can be resolved at the higher decision-making level, the remaining problems could be ironed out in a week or two of intensive work and an agreement could be signed within a month, Israeli sources said. They said there was no word in Jerusalem that Secretary of State George Shultz plans to visit the region but the assumption is that he will come once the Lebanese negotiations are successfully concluded, possibly to add his name to the final document.

The Israeli official in Washington said Shultz, who has never met Begin, would be welcome in Jerusalem and could raise any topic he wanted to discuss with Israeli leaders. But the official stressed that Shultz would not be able to extract any concessions from Israel that Habib was unable to get.

ISRAEL MOURNS ITS WAR DEAD

By David Landau

JERUSALEM, April 17 (JTA) -- Israel mourned its war dead today. But the annual day of remembrance of fallen soldiers and Independence Day which will be celebrated tomorrow, find the nation troubled in spirit and seriously divided over its government's policies for the first time since the Jewish State was founded 35 years ago.

The memorial ceremonies began at the Western Wall last night where President Yitzhak Navon kindled a flame that will burn throughout the day. Similar memorial flames were lighted at army camps all over the country. Navon received the torch from Mrs. Simcha Luria whose son was killed in the war in Lebanon last summer. Another bereaved parent of the Lebanon war, Aharon Mizrahi, recited Kaddish.

Sirens sounded at noon today halting all traffic as Israelis stopped wherever they were to observe a minute of silence for the nearly 500 soldiers who died in Lebanon and the thousands of others fallen in the four other major wars and countless skirmishes that marked Israel's first generation of Statehood. The weather, unseasonably cold and rainy today, corresponded with the general mood.

Fear Of Internecine Strife

But for the first time, Israelis were fearful that Independence Day, normally an occasion when partisan politics are cast aside, may witness internecine strife and possibly violence between Israelis. Those concerns are focussed on ceremonies scheduled for tomorrow officially transforming Beracha, a military (Nahal) outpost overlooking Nablus on the West Bank, into yet another civilian settlement. The ceremonies are to be a State event, organized by the government.

Nablus, with a population of about 100,000, is the largest Arab city in the territory and the ceremonies, symbolizing Israel's claim to sovereignty over the West Bank, are regarded as deliberately provocative by the Peace Now movement which has called for a massive counter-demonstration at the site.

The Gush Emunim, strongly backed by Premier Menachem Begin's government, is urging its followers and ranking officials to attend. The army's central command has assured the public that troops will be there in force to maintain order. But tension is building and fear of possible violence has been expressed in some quarters.

On Friday, Shimon Peres, chairman of the opposition Labor Party, urged Begin to cancel the ceremonies in the interests of national unity. He was backed by his erstwhile political rival, Yitzhak Rabin who appealed to Begin as "the only former Prime Minister still alive" to "have the courage to cancel the plans."

Independence Day has always centered around a national consensus, he said but dedication of a new settlement adjacent to Nablus can only create national unrest, he warned. Begin ignored these pleas. His press spokesman, Uri Porat, said last night that there would be no government response to the Laborites.

The Voice of Israel Radio reported today that Defense Minister Moshe Arens, a hardliner on settlement policy, would not attend the Beracha ceremony although his appearance there has been announced. The report said that Arens would instead attend the dedication of a soldier's welfare facility. In that case, Deputy Premier David Levy will be the only Cabinet minister present.

Site Is Sacred To Orthodox Jews

Beracha at the moment consists of a few small buildings. But the multi-lane highway leading to its approaches indicates that rapid expansion to a major township is intended. The site is sacred to Orthodox Jews.

The name Beracha, meaning blessing, stems from the Biblical account of how the 12 tribes of Israel stood on Mt. Gerizim and Mt. Eval, near Nablus which the Israelites called Shechem, to recite blessings for those who abided by divine ordinances and curses on those who defied them.

Beracha has become symbolic of the deep divisions over the Begin government's settlement policies. Peres warned over the weekend that the Likud government was making an historic error by ignoring

the Jordanian option and laying the groundwork for a multinational state by incorporating the West Bank and Gaza, with their 1.5 million Arabs into the Jewish State.

SOME 2,000 PEOPLE ATTEND MEMORIAL SERVICE FOR ISRAEL'S WAR DEAD By Yitzhak Rabi

NEW YORK, April 17 (JTA) -- About 2,000 Israelis and American Jews attended a memorial service for fallen Israeli soldiers at Hunter College tonight on the eve of Israel's 35th anniversary.

Naphtali Lavie, Israel's Consul General in New York, said that Israel's 35th anniversary of independence is "heavily charged with deep emotions of sorrow and grief" over the thousands of young men and women who lost their lives in Israel's wars.

"In commemorating our fallen soldiers of all wars and battles we were forced to fight, we pay tribute to their honor and express our gratitude to these heroic sons and daughters of Israel who served as the silver platter on which the independent State of Israel was given to the Jewish people," Lavie declared.

"It is their sacrifice which enabled our independence and granted the people of Israel a safe and secure life. Let their memory be cherished by all of us, the Jewish people in Israel and all over the world, and serve as a source of strength and confidence in our people."

The memorial service was one in a series of events here marking Israel's 35th anniversary. The American Zionist Federation held a public fair featuring Israeli merchandise and exhibits dealing with the nation's government, banking, industry and high technology. The fair was held at the Minskoff Cultural Center. Thousands of Israelis attended a gala party tonight at the Underground Club in Manhattan, featuring Israeli entertainers. The party was organized by a private Israeli promoter, Itzik Turel.

Yehuda Blum, Israel's Ambassador to the United Nations, and Lavie will hold a reception tomorrow night at the UN's delegates' dining room for diplomats, Jewish leaders, public officials and notables. More than 1,000 guests are expected to attend.

U.S. GIVES APPROVAL TO SEVERAL FIRMS TO HELP ISRAEL DEVELOP ITS SECOND GENERATION FIGHTER JET

JERUSALEM, April 17 (JTA) -- The U.S. has given its approval to several American manufacturers to help Israel produce three systems essential to the development of its second generation jet fighter plane, the Lavie.

U.S. Ambassador, Samuel Lewis, conveyed a message from Secretary of State George Shultz to Israeli Defense Minister Moshe Arens today that the Administration has lifted its earlier restrictions on American assistance in building the aircraft. This was apparently in response to a telephone call from Arens to Shultz last Friday urging approval of the transfer of technology because any further delay would be damaging.

The American help is expected to speed up the development and production of the Lavie which will replace the first Israel-made jet fighter, the Kfir. The three systems are related to materials needed to produce the aircraft's wings and flight control mechanisms.

ARENS SAYS U.S. MOVE ON ISRAELI JET INDICATES IMPROVEMENT IN THE RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN ISRAEL, U.S. By David Friedman

WASHINGTON, April 17 (JTA) -- Israeli Defense Minister Moshe Arens said today that the Reagan Administration's decision to lift restrictions on American com-

panies supplying Israel with assistance needed to develop its second generation jet fighter plane, the Lavie, hopefully is an "indication of improvement in the relationships" between the U.S. and Israel. He added that he hoped it might indicate that "whatever embargo there may be on the F-16s will be over."

Arens, appearing from Israel on the ABC-TV "This Week With David Brinkley" program, said he was "grateful" to President Reagan for lifting the restrictions on the Lavie and "particularly grateful to Secretary of State George Shultz who I know has worked hard and long to bring about this release."

But Arens said Israel would find it "very hard to live with" the Administration's earlier announcement that it would not officially notify Congress of the sale of 75 F-16 jet fighter-bombers to Israel, although they had been previously committed, unless Israel made "certain political concessions."

He said such a situation would make it necessary for Israel to re-evaluate its position and "increase its independence" or seek arms from "alternate sources." He noted that Israel has developed a tank, a missile system and a fighter aircraft that performed well and "if it needs to be done, we could do more."

Concerned About Soviet Personnel In Syria

Arens, who was formerly Israel's Ambassador to Washington, said Israel was watching with "great concern" the increased presence of Soviet personnel in Syria and the Soviet supply of weapons to Syria. He said this has put Israel in a "fairly high state of alert."

He said the concern is that the Syrians with the "umbrella" of new Soviet SAM-5 anti-aircraft missiles and other weapons might initiate hostile actions against Israel in Lebanon, perhaps with Soviet encouragement. He warned the Syrians that if they did, they would find the umbrella had some "holes."

Arens said he was not 100 percent certain that Syria would agree to leave Lebanon if Israel and Lebanon reach an agreement on Israel's withdrawal. He said Syria and the Soviets are now playing a "wait-and-see" game as to what is happening in the Israel-Lebanese negotiations. But he stressed that Israel was near an agreement with Lebanon and predicted that it would achieve a peace treaty with Lebanon in the not too distant future.

Ghorbal: Need A 'Gesture From Israel'

On the same program from Washington was the Egyptian Ambassador to the U.S., Ashraf Ghorbal, who said the Arabs and Palestinians needed a "gesture" from Israel in order to enter peace negotiations. He said that Israeli settlements on the West Bank and Gaza and Israel's continued presence in Lebanon do not encourage the Arabs to join in the peace talks.

But Ghorbal predicted that if there was an agreement on Israel's withdrawal from Lebanon, "I guarantee you there's going to be a new mood in the Arab world." He said it would show that "Israel sticks to her promise and the U.S. means what it says."

The Egyptian envoy said the Palestine Liberation Organization would support the participation of King Hussein of Jordan in talks if there was an Israeli freeze on settlements. He said this would

give the Palestinians hope because the continuation of settlement building "takes away their hope."

Ghorbal added that the PLO has assured the Arab countries it wants to continue seeking an agreement with Hussein. Ghorbal appeared on the ABC program as a substitute for the Jordanian Ambassador in Washington who bowed out of a scheduled appearance.

Settlements Not Obstacle To Peace

Arens, meanwhile, rejected the argument that the settlements are an "obstacle to peace." He said the Jewish settlers on the West Bank total less than 30,000 persons, or just three percent of the population on the territory. He stressed that the "pattern" for negotiations was set by Premier Menachem Begin and the late Egyptian President, Anwar Sadat.

"King Hussein is welcome to come to Jerusalem any time," Arens said. "If Hussein comes without preconditions, we'll come without preconditions and the negotiations will start," he said. "Unfortunately, we've been waiting for him now for the past 35 years and I'm sure that one of these days he's going to come."

JDL PROTESTS NEW JEWISH GROUP

NEW YORK, April 17 (JTA) -- Rabbi Meir Kahane, founder of the Jewish Defense League and leader of the ultra-nationalist Kach movement in Israel, was today joined by a group of JDL members and supporters in a demonstration outside the Stephen Wise Free Synagogue. The JDL said some 170 persons participated.

The demonstration was directed at the synagogue's spiritual leader, Rabbi Balfour Brickner, who is one of several persons involved with the recent establishment of "The Committee of Concerned American Jews." The JDL said today through a spokesman that the Committee can only lead Israel down the road "to disaster."

Shmuel Silver, a spokesman for the JDL, said the demonstration was organized to coincide with Israel's annual day of remembrance to its soldiers killed in wars. Silver said that the Committee's actions "will only lead to a further loss of Jewish life." It was not known whether Brickner was inside the sanctuary and attempts to reach him by telephone were unsuccessful.

Brickner is among the founding members of the newly organized group to be headed by Dr. Seymour Martin Lipset, former president of American Professors for Peace in the Middle East and now professor of political science and sociology at Stanford University. The group, which opposes certain policies of the government of Premier Menachem Begin, particularly on the West Bank, claims that it will act as a "new voice" among American Jewry.

Kahane today called on Brickner to publicly debate whether "Arabs have the democratic right to make Israel a non-Jewish state," the JDL spokesman said. He said Kahane has not yet received a reply for his challenge to debate. "Only through strength can Israel hope to defeat" its enemies, the spokesman said.

JERUSALEM (JTA) -- In the biggest heist in Jerusalem's -- and possibly Israel's -- history, \$5 million worth of rare and precious clocks and watches were stolen Friday night from an Islamic museum in West Jerusalem. Police said the gang of thieves had obviously known what they were looking for and removed the most valuable items from the display cases. The plundered museum is the L.A. Mayer Memorial Institute for Islamic Art, located in the residential area of Katamon, close to the official residence of the President. The museum is named after the late Leon Arya Mayer, Hebrew University Professor of Islamic Studies.

UAHC DELEGATION AND THE PRIMATE OF POLAND HOLD A ONE-HOUR 'FRIENDLY AND SATISFYING' MEETING

WARSAW, April 17 (JTA) — A delegation of rabbinical and lay leaders of the Union of American Hebrew Congregations (UAHC) had a "friendly and satisfying" one hour meeting last Friday with Joseph Cardinal Glemp, Primate of Poland.

"It was a meeting of brothers," said Rabbi Alexander Schindler, president of UAHC and leader of the delegation. "We discussed both domestic and international issues of mutual concern, including the nuclear arms race." The Reform movement has been in the forefront of efforts in the United States to stem the proliferation of nuclear armaments.

The UAHC leaders are in Poland to participate in ceremonies this week marking the 40th anniversary of the Warsaw Ghetto uprising. Members of the delegation who met with Cardinal Glemp included Donald Day of Buffalo, chairman of the UAHC's Board of Trustees; and Rabbi Philip Hiat, director of the Reform movement's Polish-Judaic project, a unique cultural exchange program between UAHC and various church and educational institutions in Poland.

Controversy Continues Unabated

Meanwhile, the controversy among Jewish organizations over participating in the Warsaw Ghetto uprising ceremonies continued unabated. The American Jewish Committee announced that it had cancelled plans to participate in the ceremonies. The Committee had planned to be represented by Nives Fox, director of its European office, whose headquarters are in Paris.

Maynard Wishner, AJCommittee president, who announced the cancellation, explained that the original decision to participate "was a difficult one, but we felt that the memory of the victims and the sanctity of the Warsaw Ghetto site outweighed our problems with the auspices under which the event is to be held.

"However, we have learned that the Polish government has chosen to politicize the event as manifested in a spate of vitriolic anti-Israel editorials, the presence in positions of prominence of people associated with the anti-Semitic campaign during the time of the Gomulka regime, and especially the recent news that a representative of the PLO will be present to lay a wreath at the memorial to the martyred victims.

"Given this flagrant insult to the dead as well as to the living, we have recalled our representative and cancelled all plans to participate."

In Israel, Education Minister Zevulun Hammer today ordered the Israeli delegation in Poland to return home if Polish authorities allowed the PLO to lay a wreath at the Warsaw Ghetto monument. He said the government of Poland had misled Jewish delegations by inviting them and then permitting the PLO to participate in the ceremonies.

Schindler said last week, before leaving for Warsaw, that he had received assurances that there was no truth to the news that a PLO representative would be allowed to officially participate in a wreath-laying ceremony at the Warsaw Ghetto monument.

At the same time, Gen. Mieczyslaw Moczar who led an anti-Semitic purge of the Communist Party during the Gomulka regime in 1968, was eased out of his post as head of the Polish veter-

ans organization where he would have played a major role in the ceremonies. Some 9,000 people lost their jobs in the 1968 purge after being accused of having Jewish origins and the majority of the some 30,000 Jews still in Poland were forced to flee.

Edelman under Police Surveillance

Meanwhile, Dr. Marek Edelman, a commander of the Warsaw Ghetto uprising, has been placed under police surveillance and ordered not to leave his home city of Lodz. The 62-year-old cardiologist had issued a statement in an underground Solidarity union newspaper saying that he would not participate in the committee organizing the ceremonies and called for a boycott of the event. He had written that observance "of our anniversary here, where social life in its entirety is overshadowed by degradation and oppression" is "a betrayal of our struggle It is an act of cynicism and contempt."

Today police dispersed some 1,000 people attending an unofficial ceremony organized by Solidarity supporters to honor heroes of the Warsaw Ghetto uprising. Janusz Onyszkiewicz, a former Solidarity spokesman, told the crowd, before he was led away by plainclothes police, that he believed the Ghetto fighters shared the same ideals as Solidarity. "If the heroes of the Ghetto were alive today we deeply believe they would join us in our struggle for freedom, truth and human dignity. May they rest in peace," he said.

SPIEGEL QUILTS AS ADVISOR TO REAGAN ON JEWISH AFFAIRS

By David Friedman

WASHINGTON, April 17 (JTA) — The White House has confirmed that Albert Spiegel, a Los Angeles businessman, and long-time supporter of President Reagan, had withdrawn as an unpaid volunteer advisor to the President on Jewish affairs.

The Presidential deputy press secretary, Larry Speakes, maintained this was not a sudden move by Spiegel. Speakes said that, according to Michael Deaver, the President's deputy chief of staff and the member of the Administration closest to Spiegel, Spiegel had indicated for months that he wanted to give up his advisory post and return to his personal business full-time.

The Jewish Telegraphic Agency could not immediately reach Spiegel for comment. But a published report Friday said that while Spiegel refused to give reasons for his departure, he acknowledged it was "in part" due to an article in last Thursday's Wall Street Journal. The article stated that Reagan reportedly told King Hussein of Jordan that "he knows he is going to lose the Jewish vote in 1984 by pressing a peace plan Israel opposes but he confidently predicts he can win reelection without that bloc."

Claims Statement Was 'Untrue'

Speakes said the statement attributed to Reagan was "untrue, false, absurd. It bears no relation to the President's thinking, either in public or private. Anybody who knows the President will just know that he does not think along those terms, or vocalize along those terms."

Spiegel, who is chairman of the National Republican Jewish Coalition, is considered one of Reagan's closest links to the Jewish community. Spiegel was reportedly offered the official position of the President's liaison to the Jewish community when Jacob Stein resigned early last year, but turned it down. It is believed that Michael Gale, who now holds that post, was recommended by Spiegel.