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ARENS: SYRIA WILL BE GIVEN A 'FEW WEEKS' TO DECIDE WHETHER TO WITHDRAW ITS FORCES FROM LEBANON

By David Friedman

WASHINGTON, May 8 (JTA) — Israeli Defense Minister Moshe Arens said today that Syria should be given a "few weeks" to decide whether to agree to withdraw its forces from Lebanon in the wake of the agreement announced Friday for the withdrawal of Israeli forces. (See separate story.)

"It would be wise for all of us, for the U.S., for Lebanon and Israel to give it a little time, see what happens, give them (the Syrians) a chance to make up their minds," Arens said in an interview from Israel on the CBS-TV "Face the Nation" program. "But if within a few weeks it becomes clear they have no intention of moving out, then, of course, we'll (the U.S., Israel and Lebanon) have to get together and discuss it," Arens said.

He stressed that Israel's withdrawal is "dependent" on the simultaneous departure of Syrian forces from Lebanon. He said that Secretary of State George Shultz is "hopeful" that the problem can be worked out. "My guess is that they (the Syrians) are thinking very hard about it," Arens said. But he added that he has "no grounds to be overly optimistic at the moment."

He said the Syrians, who now control 50 percent of Lebanon, have sought to "intimidate the Lebanese" and have been "posturing" before Israel and Lebanon reached an agreement. He said he believed they will continue to posture until the agreement is actually signed. Arens said, however, that he did not know what would happen then.

The Syrian-Soviet Factor

But Arens said he "would hope" that the Soviet Union does not have the type of "veto" over the Syrians that would prevent their withdrawal if they decided to do so. He noted that before Israel went into Lebanon 11 months ago, Syrian-controlled Lebanon had provided an "umbrella" for the Palestine Liberation Organization to carry out its terrorist activities against Israel and world-wide.

According to Arens, the Soviets were "not unhappy" with that situation since both Syria and the PLO are Soviet surrogates and if the Syrians leave Lebanon, the Soviets will "lose their influence in Lebanon."

Arens said that Syria is "getting ready" militarily for war with Israel and has demanded and received weapons from the Soviet Union to give it "parity" with the Israel Defense Force. He said Syria has received the best weapons the Soviets have, some of it "very good" and some of it not as good as the parallel American or Israeli equipment. But Arens said Israel does not know if the Syrians want war and if they do, whether they would have Soviet support.

The Israeli Defense Minister would not say whether the Israeli-Lebanese agreement worked out by Shultz last week included a U.S. promise to lift the suspension of the process for the sale of 75 F-16 jet fighter-bombers to Israel. He said that was a question that would have to be answered by Shultz or by President Reagan. Shultz indicated to reporters travelling with him that Israel would get the planes but the announcement would be made officially by Reagan.

Arens stressed that the agreement has put Israel and the U.S. "back in harmony." He noted that the differences of opinion over Lebanon between Israel and the U.S. "ruffled feathers" but the basic relationship between the two countries did not depend on whether they agreed or disagreed over various issues.

He said revival of the Memorandum of Understanding on Strategic Cooperation between Israel and the U.S. was not discussed during Shultz's current visit to the Middle East and said it was "premature" to deal with that issue now. Arens called the agreement with Lebanon a "great step ahead" in Israeli-Lebanese relations, declaring that it goes a "long way toward a peace agreement."

He said Israel and Lebanon now share a "common interest" in having Syria withdraw its troops and keeping the PLO terrorists from returning to Lebanon and this common ground is the basis for a "good relationship."

Arens said Israel was "pleased" that Lebanon is now willing to have Maj. Saad Haddad return to the Lebanese army as an officer. He said they would find that Israel's "high opinion" of his ability to fight terrorists is "not at all exaggerated."

1 ISRAELI SOLDIER KILLED, 16 WOUNDED IN LEBANON OVER WEEKEND; HEAVY FIGHTING BETWEEN CHRISTIAN, DRUZE MILITIA IN AN AROUND BEIRUT

By Hugh Orgel

TEL AVIV, May 8 (JTA) — Seven Israeli soldiers were wounded today when an explosive charge detonated close to their vehicle on the coastal road near Damour south of Beirut, a military spokesman reported. They were the latest casualties since last Thursday when one Israeli soldier was killed and nine were wounded as they were caught in cross-fire between warring Druze villagers and Christian Phalangists in the Shouf mountain region east of Beirut.

Lebanon, meanwhile, has become a battleground again. Heavy fighting, described as the worst since the height of the war last summer, broke out in Beirut and in the Shouf mountains to the east Thursday and continued almost without interruption today.

Christian radio stations in Beirut reported that shells and Soviet-made Grad missiles were falling on Christian east Beirut, mainly from areas in the surrounding hills held by Syrian forces. According to the reports, 24 persons were killed in Beirut yesterday and more than 100 were wounded. Moslem west Beirut was also hit by artillery and mortar shells.

The fighting in and around Beirut appeared to be between Moslem and Christian militias. The Lebanese government appealed to the United States Friday night to intercede to end the shelling. Government officials told U.S. special envoy Morris Draper who is in Beirut that the situation was "dangerous and critical." They said some of the shelling was indiscriminate but were unable to pin-point which groups were responsible.

Government sources quoted Draper as saying that efforts were being made to deal with the situation but did not elaborate. As was the pattern in previous outbreaks in the Lebanese capital, brief cease-fires were followed by renewed barrages.

Some sources suggested that the fighting was triggered by the accord reached between Israel and Lebanon. But the shooting started a day before the Israeli Cabinet agreed in principle to the plan drafted by U.S. Secretary of State George Shultz after nearly two weeks of shuttling between Jerusalem and Beirut.

Israel had expressed concern during the negotiations that the Lebanese army was not capable of maintaining peace for long between the private militias maintained by Christian and Moslem groups or between rival elements within each group.

Meanwhile, concern was expressed by Christian villagers in south Lebanon that the agreement worked out by Shultz reduced the power and authority of Maj. Saad Haddad and left them vulnerable to attack by Syrian-backed leftist militias. The latter were said to be eager to wreak vengeance on villagers who collaborated with Israel in recent months.

Israeli Chief of Staff Gen. Moshe Levi met with Haddad today for the second time since Friday. They reportedly discussed "routine and current matters." Two Israeli army officers later visited the Ansar POW camp in south Lebanon where some 5,000 prisoners, mainly Palestinians, are still held. Haddad inspected units of his 1,200-man Christian militia and stressed that training would proceed normally despite the uncertainty of his future position.

WEEKEND DEVELOPMENT:
ISRAEL-LEBANON AGREEMENT FACES
HURDLES THAT MUST BE OVERCOME
BEFORE PACT IS FINALLY IMPLEMENTED
 By David Landau (Jerusalem)
 and David Friedman (Washington)

May 8 (JTA) — The United States and Israel appeared pleased today that agreement was reached between Israel and Lebanon for the withdrawal of Israeli forces from Lebanon, security arrangements along Israel's northern border and bilateral matters. But both countries acknowledged, in light of Syria's rebuff, that serious obstacles must be overcome before the accord is finally implemented.

Under the agreement, Israel can pull its troops out of Lebanon within an 8-12 week timetable. But the Israeli withdrawal is contingent on simultaneous withdrawal of Syrian and Palestine Liberation Organization forces and President Hafez Assad made it clear to Secretary of State George Shultz in Damascus yesterday that this was not about to happen.

"It is fair to say they (the Syrians) are hardly enthusiastic about the agreement," Shultz told reporters. He indicated that the next step will involve talks between Lebanon and Syria and predicted that "those will be very difficult negotiations."

Israeli Defense Minister Moshe Arens proposed today that Syria be given a "few weeks" to decide whether to agree to pull out of Lebanon but he would not venture to predict what Damascus would decide.

Not Conditional On Clarifications

The Israeli Cabinet announced after seven hours of deliberation Friday that it accepts in principle the draft agreement with Lebanon worked out by Shultz in two weeks of arduous shuttle diplomacy between Jerusalem and Beirut. Israel will seek clarification of certain key points.

Officials made it clear, however, that acceptance of the agreement was not conditional on receipt of the clarifications.

Premier Menachem Begin telephoned Shultz at the King David Hotel to inform him of the Cabinet's decision. After receiving the news, Shultz told reporters, "We are really pleased that the Prime Minister and the Cabinet of Israel have decided to accept this agreement. We recognize there is a tremendous amount of work to be done. But this is a milestone. We are determined to keep on and do the initial things that are necessary to see that it works."

Shultz added that he was "grateful" for the "hard work and effort and splendid atmosphere" displayed by the negotiators on both sides. He said that most of the agreement had been completed before he arrived in the Middle East and praised U.S. special envoys Philip Habib and Morris Draper for their efforts. Shultz also told reporters that Begin has been invited to Washington to discuss bilateral relations. He did not say when the visit would take place.

Reagan Congratulates Begin

The White House reported Friday that President Reagan, who was in Phoenix on a western tour, personally congratulated Begin on the agreement in a telephone call to Jerusalem. White House Deputy Press Secretary Larry Speakes, who was travelling with the President, said Reagan also spoke to Shultz and to Arens. He said the White House did not expect any problems in providing the clarifications Israel requested.

According to Speakes, Reagan told Begin he wanted to "praise the constructive and positive spirit in which the negotiations were successfully concluded. It speaks well about the deep cooperation and understanding that exists between our two countries."

Shultz visited Amman before going to Damascus. He reported later that King Hussein of Jordan wholeheartedly accepted the Israeli-Lebanese agreement and viewed it as a first step toward reviving the Middle East peace process.

The Secretary of State spent today in Beirut and Jerusalem briefing officials on his discussion with Assad. He insisted that despite Syria's negative reaction, "The efforts for the carrying forward of this agreement and other arrangements will continue. They have not been derailed and will not be derailed."

Shultz noted also that Habib and Draper are remaining in Beirut to "continue work on matters that are still ahead of us in bringing this to a successful conclusion, that is, to get all foreign forces out of Lebanon."

Shultz said in reply to questions from reporters in Jerusalem that he didn't think the Israeli government would change its mind on the agreement if the Syrians continue to stall. "The Israelis have been in the Middle East a long time and they know you just don't snap your fingers at people," he said. He added, however, that Israel could not be expected to wait indefinitely for a Syrian agreement.

Principal Points Of The Agreement

The principal points of the agreement reached between Israel and Lebanon, but yet to be signed, are:

- * Simultaneous withdrawal from Lebanon of Israeli, Syrian and PLO forces;

- * Lebanon's agreement to end the formal state of war with Israel.

- * Establishment of eight joint supervisory teams in south Lebanon consisting of 11 Israeli and 11 Lebanese soldiers on each team.

- * Lebanon to be in charge of the teams which will patrol the region in Lebanese vehicles.

* Israel's ally, Maj. Saad Haddad, to be deputy commander in south Lebanon in charge of anti-terrorist intelligence.

* Establishment of a joint administrative committee of Americans, Israelis and Lebanese to handle any problems which might arise in the future.

* The guaranteed right of self-defense for Israeli soldiers if they are fired upon while participating in the joint teams in Lebanon.

* If Israel is attacked directly from Lebanese soil it may retaliate.

* Within six months of the signing of the agreement, Israel and Lebanon will commence negotiations for the normalization of relations between them.

Some Opposition To The Accord

The agreement falls short of Israel's demands on many points and there was some opposition within the Cabinet. Energy Minister Yitzhak Modai was quoted by Israel Radio as saying that he would not have been in favor of extending the war beyond the 45-kilometer security zone in Lebanon last summer had he known that this agreement would be the outcome.

But most ministers felt on the whole that the risks of rejecting the agreement outweighed its shortcomings in terms of the situation in Lebanon and, especially, Israel's future relations with the U.S. Begin personally drafted the text of the Cabinet's acceptance statement and it was apparent from the outset that most ministers would endorse whatever he approved.

The two negative votes were cast by former Defense Minister Ariel Sharon who now holds no portfolio, and Minister of Science Yuval Neeman of the ultra-nationalist Tehiya faction. Both insisted that the agreement does not protect Israel's security.

ARIDOR'S STANDING WITH ISRAELIS REACHES NEW LOW, WHILE ARENS' STAR IS RISING, POLL SHOWS

By Gil Sedan

JERUSALEM, May 8 (JTA) -- Finance Minister Yoram Aridor's standing with Israelis reached a new low, according to a public opinion poll published in Haaretz today. The poll showed Defense Minister Moshe Arens to be the Cabinet's new rising star while the popularity of Premier Menachem Begin slipped, but only slightly.

Aridor, who is apparently held responsible for the soaring inflation rate and reduced cost-of-living allowances, won approval from only 25.8 percent of the 1,200 persons polled compared to 42.2 percent in April, 1982 and 33.4 percent when he took office in April, 1981. In the latest poll, 44.7 percent of the respondents expressed dissatisfaction with his performance.

Arens, Israel's former Ambassador to Washington was the subject of a national poll for the first time since he became Defense Minister last January, replacing Ariel Sharon. The results showed that he has the support of 48.5 percent of the public. Only 5.7 percent expressed dissatisfaction and 37.1 percent was undecided.

Slight Drop In Begin's Popularity

Begin's popularity dropped from 55.3 percent two months ago to 54.5 percent. The most popular Likud minister is Deputy Premier and Housing Minister David Levy who enjoys the support of 60.9 percent of those polled. But the most popular Cabinet member of all its Education Minister Zevulun Hammer of the National Religious Party who is approved by 71.5 percent of the public.

Aridor defended his economic policies in a radio interview over the weekend. He said he would not submit to the demands of striking government-employed doctors or to criticism by manufacturers and teachers because his duty is to protect the public.

He claimed that university professors who recently blasted his economic policies were identified with the opposition parties. He rejected the Labor Alignment's demands for his resignation, saying "they wanted me to resign from the day I was appointed. It is their job to be against me."

JEWISH ORGANIZATIONS SCHEDULE AN ANTI-WEINBERGER RALLY

NEW YORK, May 8 (JTA) -- Several Jewish organizations have announced that they will hold a protest rally opposite the New York Hilton in Manhattan this Friday from noon to 1 pm, to protest Defense Secretary Caspar Weinberger's appearance at a luncheon sponsored by the American Jewish Committee as part of its 77th annual meeting.

Matthew Maryles, chairman of the National Council of Young Israel, which together with Americans for a Safe Israel (AFSI) and the Jewish Mobilization Committee is co-sponsoring the rally, said Weinberger "has been identified with many of the actions of the Reagan Administration against Israel."

The actions, Maryles said, included "the cancellations of the strategic cooperation agreement, the embargo on American-built arms ordered by Israel, the sale of AWACS and other sophisticated American weapons to Israel's enemies, and, most recently, obstruction of critical trade agreements needed for the development of Israel's next generation of military aircraft, the Lavie."

The Goal Of The Rally

The goal of the demonstration, Maryles noted, "is to reaffirm our conviction that Israel is America's most dependable and important ally in the Middle East, and that the Reagan Administration efforts to exert such pressures on Israel run counter to America's own foreign policy, strategic and security interests."

A joint statement by Herbert Zweibon, chairman of AFSI, and Rabbi Avraham Weiss of the Hebrew Institute of Riverdale, N.Y. and a member of AFSI's executive board, who is coordinating the rally, said that Weinberger "has become a symbol of America's betrayal of Israel."

The statement noted that Weinberger "has played a key role in cancelling strategic agreements with Israel, holding up the delivery of planes to Israel, promoting the Reagan plan, which Israel describes as a blueprint for suicide, and provoking U.S. marine confrontations with the Israel Defense Force."

PATINKIN HEADS HEBREW UNIVERSITY

JERUSALEM, May 8 (JTA) -- Prof. Dan Patinkin, one of Israel's top economists, has been elected president of Hebrew University. He succeeds Avraham Harman, who served in that post since 1968. Patinkin, 61, served as rector of the university since last October. He will now hold both titles. Harman will now serve as chancellor of the university.

Patinkin was born in Chicago and has been a member of the Hebrew University faculty since 1949. From 1956 to 1973 he was also director of research at the Maurice Falk Institute for Economic Research in Israel. Before immigrating to Israel, he was an associate professor of economics at University of Illinois. Patinkin is the author of numerous books and articles on monetary, employment and price theory.

HERZOG INAUGURATED AS ISRAELI SIXTH PRESIDENT

By David Landau and Gil Sedan

JERUSALEM, May 8 (JTA) -- Chaim Herzog was inaugurated as Israel's sixth President in colorful ceremonies at the Knesset last Thursday evening. In his inaugural speech, the new chief of state, who was born in Ireland and is a son of the late Chief Rabbi Isaac Halevi Herzog of Israel, warned repeatedly against intolerance. "The enemy within," he said, is more dangerous to Israel's survival than any external foe.

Herzog recalled the disasters of Jewish history which were caused by internal strife and urged the nation to foster a spirit of unity, tolerance and mutual understanding.

Outgoing President Yitzhak Navon sounded the same theme in his farewell address. He said Israel's various ethnic, religious and national groups lived "with each other but not among each other." They are ignorant of each other's ideas and thoughts and this ignorance breeds intolerance, Navon warned.

The incoming and outgoing Presidents, riding in separate limousines, were escorted to the Knesset by motorcycle police and mounted police on white chargers bearing blue pennants. Herzog reviewed an honor guard representing all of Israel's armed services before entering the Knesset chamber to the sound of a shofar.

Precisely at dusk he donned a large black yarmulka, placed his hand on a Bible and took the oath of office. Knesset Speaker Menachem Savidor, who swore in the new President, called out: "Long live the President of the State of Israel." The Knesset members responded "Yehi (live) yehi, yehi."

Herzog began his inaugural address by reciting the cantor's Yom Kippur prayer, "Hineni Heani Mimaas" (Behold, I, poor in deeds, stand frightened and awe-struck before the God of Israel...). He spoke at length of his early years in a home he said was steeped in Judaism and devoted to the ideals of service.

He recalled his late father, who had been Chief Rabbi of Ireland, his mother, the late Sarah Herzog, a personality in her own right, and his late brother, Yaacov, who had been one of the most brilliant of Israel's first generation of diplomats.

Herzog, who became Israel's leading military affairs commentators after his retirement from the army with the rank of general, also recalled that he was one of the founders of Israel's Defense Force. The IDF is the foundation and protector of Israel's strength, he said. But he stressed the advance of the peace process, which he said was gradual but inexorable.

Most Arab states no longer debate whether to negotiate with Israel but how to negotiate, Herzog declared, and this was the measure of the Jewish State's gradual acceptance into the region.

The hour-long inaugural ceremony was followed by a lavish reception for the new President and his predecessor. Knesset members, diplomats and hundreds of invited guests gathered in the Knesset's Chagall Hall. Among them were U.S. Secretary of State George Shultz and Jewish leaders from the U.S. and Europe who came here to attend the inauguration.

Herzog began his Presidential term Friday, meeting first with staff of the President's residence and later in the day with the Ambassador of Ireland, Sean Ronan. The envoy told the new President that his election had generated much excitement in Ireland, the country of Herzog's birth and early education. Herzog presented the Ambassador with a book on the Jews of Ireland.

Herzog was scheduled to meet this evening with Premier Menachem Begin. Originally, this was scheduled as a courtesy call by the Premier on the new President. But he is expected to brief Herzog on the agreement for Israel's withdrawal from Lebanon which the Cabinet accepted last Friday, the day after his inauguration.

LABOR ALIGNMENT LEADS LIKUD COALITION IN PUBLIC OPINION POLL

By David Landau

JERUSALEM, May 8 (JTA) -- For the first time since the June 1981 election, a leading public opinion poll gives the Labor Alignment a lead over the ruling Likud coalition. According to a poll by "Pori," published in Friday's Haaretz, 41.4 percent of those polled favored Labor, while 37.3 percent favored Likud. The poll was taken during the second half of April and covered 1,200 people nation-wide.

Compared to a Pori poll a month earlier, Labor leaped ahead by seven percentage points; Likud remained almost static. All the smaller parties showed losses. Compared to the 1981 election results, Likud did not show any gain, while Labor increased its lead by four-and-a-half percentage points. Rafael Gil, director of Pori, attributed the change to widespread concern over the economic situation and over the ongoing military involvement in Lebanon.

Political observers recalled that, in a recent speech, Labor Party chairman Shimon Peres called for early elections. They predicted that in light of this latest poll, Peres' call might be picked up by others in his party which up to now had been reluctant to join Likud's urging for early elections. (According to Israel law, a Knesset majority is required for the holding of early elections.)

The poll's dire predictions for the small parties will doubtless render them less inclined than ever to give their support to a move for early elections, political analysts noted. Premier Menachem Begin has said several times that he would not push for early elections against the wishes of his small coalition partners. Analysts also noted that if a settlement in Lebanon is achieved, Likud could quickly recoup its loss of popularity.

ISRAELI DANCE TROUPE A HIT IN KENYA

TEL AVIV, May 8 (JTA) -- The Israeli Bat Dor Dance Company has started what appears to be a highly successful series of performances in Kenya, despite efforts by the PLO and their supporters to have their appearance banned.

While still in Zaire, on their way to Nairobi, the company was told that there was firm opposition to their appearances in Kenya, ostensibly because publicity material referred to their visit to the "Dark Continent," which was said to be regarded as an insult to Africa and Africans.

But observers suggested the opposition arose from Libya, which feared that the Israeli dance company's appearances would take the limelight away from the Libyan soccer team playing in Kenya this week.

The Bat Dor company played to a full house at its first appearance in Nairobi last night, receiving a standing ovation. The company's management in Tel Aviv was informed today that all tickets have already been sold out to all seven performances to be given in Nairobi this week.