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BEGIN EULOGIZES EHRLICH AT CABINET MEMORIAL SERVICE; BURIAL TUESDAY IN GIVAT HAIM By Gil Sedan

JERUSALEM, June 20 (JTA) -- Funeral services will be held tomorrow for Deputy Premier Simcha Ehrlich, one of the founders of the Likud coalition and a leader of its Liberal Party wing, who died at Bikur Holim Hospital last night. Ehrlich, 67, was hospitalized June 14 after suffering a stroke. He will be buried at the Nahlat Yitzhak cemetery in Givat Haim.

Premier Menachem Begin eulogized Ehrlich, who was a close friend as well as political associate, at a special memorial session of the Cabinet this morning. He also paid condolences to Ehrlich's family and to the Liberal Party. The party's chairman, Energy Minister Yitzhak Modai, said the people and government of Israel have "lost one of their most outstanding and talented leaders." Another prominent Liberal, Leon Dulzin, called Ehrlich's death "a hard blow for the Zionist movement and the State of Israel."

Ehrlich led the Liberal Party for the past 10 years. He reached the peak of his political career when he became Finance Minister in the first Likud government elected in 1977. But his economic reforms failed in the fiercely inflationary climate and he was forced to resign in favor of Yigael Hurwitz. After Likud's second election victory in 1981, Ehrlich was elevated to the office of Deputy Prime Minister and was also named Minister of Agriculture, the offices he held at the time of his death.

Aliya In 1938

Simcha Ehrlich was born in Bychowa, Poland in 1915 and immigrated to Palestine in 1938, working for a time as a farm hand at Ness Ziona. Later he opened the first factory manufacturing optical equipment in the country. He entered politics in 1955 as a member of the Tel Aviv City Council representing the General Zionists, forerunner of the Liberal Party. He pushed hard for the merger of the Liberals with Begin's Herut faction to form the Gahal Alignment in 1965. Ehrlich was first elected to the Knesset in 1969 and served on its Finance Committee.

In 1973 he was a driving force in the creation of Likud which embraced the centrist Liberals along with Herut and other rightwing factions. Ehrlich was a bespectacled man with a warm smile and ready wit. But he lacked the charisma and oratorical skills needed to propel a politician to the highest office. He exercised his political leadership out of the public eye, utilizing his considerable talents as a negotiator and mediator. He was credited with exerting a moderating influence on Begin. Their warm personal relationship was a key element in maintaining cooperation between the Liberal and Herut blocs which often diverged sharply on political and ideological issues.

Ehrlich was one of the sharpest critics of former Defense Minister Ariel Sharon's conduct of the war in Lebanon. When the committee of inquiry into the

Sabra and Shatila refugee camps massacre, headed by Supreme Court chief justice Yitzhak Kahan, found Sharon and several other ministers and top military brass indirectly responsible, Ehrlich pressed hard for implementation of its recommendations regardless of the embarrassment caused the government. Although Sharon was forced to resign, the bitterness between the two men persisted. Earlier this month, Ehrlich accused Sharon of misleading the Cabinet and provoking Syria into battle in Lebanon. Sharon, now a Minister-Without-Portfolio, angrily denied the charges.

Ehrlich underwent open-heart surgery in the U.S. last January and returned to Israel apparently in good health. It is not known whether the stroke that felled him a week ago was connected to his earlier condition.

Liberal Leadership Struggle Expected

For the Liberal Party, Ehrlich's death came at the worst possible time. The faction is embroiled in bitter internal conflicts and faces possible defection by a group led by Modai. Political observers agree that Ehrlich's moderating influence will be sorely missed. They also believe that a divisive struggle for party leadership is unavoidable and could precipitate a coalition crisis leading to early elections.

Meanwhile, political pundits expect Ehrlich's deputy, Pessah Grupper to succeed him as Agriculture Minister. That would open the way for the appointment of a sixth Liberal minister to the Cabinet, probably Sara Doron whose succession to ministerial rank had been blocked by the Grupper-Modai faction in the party.

Weizman May Return

A more important question is who Begin will name Deputy Premier in Ehrlich's place. Dulzin, who is chairman of the World Zionist Organization and Jewish Agency Executives, has been mentioned for the post. He has not been involved in the intra-party struggles and enjoys the reputation of being "the last of the true Liberals." But Dulzin is considered by many, especially in Herut, to be too moderate on security and foreign affairs. His relationship with Begin soured when the latter failed to appoint him Foreign Minister, an office he had expected after the 1981 elections.

Political observers doubt therefore that the warring factions within the Liberal Party will turn to Dulzin as a compromise candidate for Deputy Premier. Another, more dramatic possibility, is former Defense Minister Ezer Weizman who resigned several years ago over policy differences with Begin. Weizman, once a Herut leader, has been out of the public eye for some time. Speculation has grown in recent days that he might return to the political scene as a member of the Liberal Party. Ehrlich was reported to have proposed this to Weizman shortly before his death. Weizman has had no comment up to now.

U.S. ZIONISTS MOURNS EHRLICH

NEW YORK, June 20 (JTA) -- Zionist organizations that maintained a close association with Israeli Deputy Premier Simcha Ehrlich today expressed regret over his death yesterday at the age of 67.

Jacques Torczyner, president of the World Union of General Zionists, mourned the "tragic loss" of Ehrlich and praised his "outstanding leadership" within the Liberal Party. "A true Liberal, he fought to imple-

ment the principles of General Zionism," said Torczyner, who is chairman of the Herzl Institute of the American section of the World Zionist Organization.

Alleck Resnick, president of the Zionist Organization of America, said "we shall miss the courageous leadership of a true Zionist pioneer, an eloquent spokesman and an inspiring Israeli statesman in his own right." Resnick said Ehrlich was "a fountain of knowledge, a true inspiration for General Zionists and a great friend of the ZOA."

Bernice Tannenbaum, acting chairman of the American section of the World Zionist Organization, said Ehrlich was "an example to all of us of unselfish devotion to liberal principles and love of Israel and the security of Jews everywhere. He leaves an imperishable legacy of selfless service to his party, his nation and his people."

In other statements Gerald Kraft, president of the B'nai B'rith International, said Ehrlich's death "will be felt throughout Israel." Kraft noted that Ehrlich stayed behind the scenes, "preferring to work as a moderating figure" in the Israeli government. His many years of public service, Kraft said, "will be long remembered" and "greatly missed."

NO IMMEDIATE PLANS TO SEND HABIB BACK TO MIDDLE EAST

WASHINGTON, June 20 (JTA) -- The Reagan Administration said today there were no immediate plans for special U.S. envoy Philip Habib to be sent back to the Middle East in an effort to persuade the Syrians to withdraw their troops from Lebanon.

State Department deputy spokesman Alan Romberg maintained however that Habib continues to remain engaged in Middle East developments. This was stressed after Habib's meeting today at the White House with President Reagan. Romberg would not provide details of the meeting but said later that Habib was also conferring with Secretary of State George Shultz.

With no high level presence by the Administration in the region, as in the form of Habib or Shultz, the U.S. appears undecided on its next steps to seek a Syrian troop withdrawal from Lebanon. The Israeli-Lebanese agreement signed May 17 for the withdrawal of Israeli troops remains operational on condition of a Syrian withdrawal.

Romberg meanwhile said that U.S. policy toward the Israeli settlement activity on the West Bank remains unchanged despite comments made by Reagan in a telephone question and answer session with the editors and publishers of the American Jewish Press Association last month as reported today by syndicated columnists Rowland Evans and Robert Novak.

Reagan was asked whether the settlements were an obstacle to peace and replied, "No I don't, I really don't." The syndicated columnists wrote today that this was an indication of a change in U.S. policy toward the Middle East in an effort to woo Jewish votes should Reagan seek to run for re-election.

Romberg referred reporters today to Reagan's September 1 Middle East peace initiative in which he called for a freeze on Israeli settlements on the West Bank. "That has been and remains U.S. policy," Romberg said.

ARENS CHARGES SYRIA TRYING TO TOPPLE GEMAYEL GOVERNMENT

By Hugh Orgel

JERUSALEM, June 20 (JTA) -- Defense Minister Moshe Arens accused Syria today of doing its utmost to topple the government of Lebanese President Amin Gemayel. He also rejected demands for the unilateral withdrawal of Israeli forces from Lebanon.

Appearing before the Knesset's Foreign Affairs and Security Committee, Arens confirmed however that the redeployment of Israeli troops in Lebanon is under consideration. He said this would not be the same as unilateral withdrawal, proposed by the Labor Alignment. A precondition for any redeployment would be guarantees that the areas evacuated by Israel will not be occupied by Syrian or Palestine Liberation Organization forces, Arens said.

Foreign Minister Yitzhak Shamir told Voice of Israel Radio today that Israel would have no choice but to redeploy in Lebanon if the Syrians persist in their refusal to pull their own troops out of the country. Israeli officials believe however that American diplomatic efforts may still succeed in convincing Syria to withdraw. American sources here said there have been no formal consultations on a possible Israeli redeployment although Shamir's remarks were considered "the strongest signal yet" that a redeployment is imminent.

Labor Party chairman Shimon Peres told the Knesset committee today that an Israeli pullback to the Awali river line, north of Sidon was necessary without delay. Arens responded that the situation in Lebanon was not as "black" as Peres painted it.

Israeli Troops In Mountains

Meanwhile, Israeli troops moved into the Shouf mountains east of Beirut today to try to end renewed fighting between Druze villagers and Christian Phalangists. Beirut radio reported heavy artillery exchanges between the two sides this morning. But the fighting appeared to subside by midday, except for occasional sniper activity.

Beirut radio also reported that three Syrian soldiers were killed today by anti-Syrian elements in the Tripoli area north of Beirut. Israel has suffered no casualties in Lebanon in recent days and attempted attacks on Israeli troops have slackened considerably. This has been attributed to the recent fighting between PLO dissidents and supporters of PLO chief Yasir Arafat.

BURG LETS ROCK-THROWERS GO

By Gil Sedan

JERUSALEM, June 20 (JTA) -- Interior Minister Yosef Burg, overriding the recommendations of the police, rescinded the 14-day prison sentences imposed on three rock-throwing religious zealots yesterday.

The police had urged vigorous punishment for the three who hurled rocks at passing vehicles on the Ramat road last Saturday and attacked police officers who tried to stop them. Burg, a leader of the National Religious Party, ordered the men released so that they can spend their nights at home rather than in jail cells. They will serve their sentences by working days at the local police precinct.

According to Burg, the ultra-Orthodox Jews who have been harassing non-observant motorists for years on the Ramat road which passes near an Orthodox neighborhood, had threatened worse violence if the arrested men were kept in jail. By surrendering to their demands, he prevented more rock-throwing incidents, Burg contended.

BONN (JTA) -- The West German army is embarrassed that former SS members participated in a shooting tournament organized by the army in Freiburg earlier this month and promised that it would not happen again. A Bundeswehr spokesman called the incident a "mishap."

The tournament, held to promote tradition and comradeship among reserve soldiers, was attended by 76 teams from various countries.

JEWISH AGENCY ASSEMBLY OPENS WITH APPEAL FOR UNITY BY HERZOG By Cindy Kaye

JERUSALEM, June 20 (JTA) -- The Jewish Agency's annual Assembly opened here last night with an impassioned appeal by President Chaim Herzog for Jewish unity despite divergent political and ideological views and a renewed commitment to Jewish education, "the focal point for Jewish survival, Jewish commitment and aliya."

His remarks were echoed by Leon Dulzin, chairman of the Jewish Agency and World Zionist Organization Executives, who warned that "hatred among brothers has the greatest potential to destroy us." Herzog and Dulzin addressed some 800 delegates representing world Jewry. The session was presided over by Max Fisher of Detroit, chairman of the Jewish Agency Board of Governors.

The Israeli President urged the delegates "to fight the tendency of allowing your work, which is vital for our future as a nation, to reflect the divisions within Israel." The divisions he alluded to, he said were those "which the Lebanese war have given rise to." He reminded his audience, "We are a strong enough and vibrant enough society to withstand the stresses and strains of the debate over the war in Lebanon."

Danger of Assimilation

Dulzin raised another issue, "the grave danger facing the Jewish people today" from assimilation. He asked whether anyone in the audience could be sure that their grandchildren and great grandchildren would be Jewish or even aware of their Jewish identity. "Today, in our free secular world, Jews can just disappear," he warned. "We've secured a Jewish State, the State of Israel, but we can't say we have secured the fate of the Jewish people."

Referring to Jews in distressed areas, particularly the Soviet Union, Dulzin contended that not only the Soviet authorities are responsible for the hardships endured by Soviet Jews, "We Jews too are responsible for having tolerated neshira (Soviet Jewish emigres who settle in countries other than Israel). God forbid if we have a direct hand in neshira and consequently jeopardize the freedom of other Soviet Jews," he said. Dulzin has long contended that the high rate of neshira is responsible for the Soviet authorities' crackdown on Jewish emigration and has blamed Jewish organizations which assist Soviet Jews to immigrate to Western countries.

Maintaining Jewish Majority In Jerusalem

Mayor Teddy Kollek of Jerusalem told the Assembly he was deeply concerned with maintaining a Jewish majority there "in order to guarantee the continuation of a united peaceful city." He noted that 5,000 young people have left Jerusalem to settle on the West Bank where the government offers housing much cheaper than in Israel. "There are thousands more in the city, particularly immigrants from Argentina, who would stay if they had housing," Kollek said.

He urged the government to offer immigrants in Jerusalem the same conditions available to immigrants who settle in the territories. "Aliya to Jerusalem is no less important," he said. In that connection, Kollek appealed to the Jewish Agency to ensure the continuation of Project Jerusalem, part of the Project Renewal slum rehabilitation program. He noted that Project Jerusalem, due to end in two years, covers six neighborhoods in the city.

BEGIN INTERVENES IN STRIKE By Hugh Orgel

TEL AVIV, June 20 (JTA) -- Premier Menachem

Begin intervened personally in the doctors strike today, for the first time since it began more than four months ago. He summoned Finance Minister Yoram Aridor and Health Minister Eliezer Shostak to the Prime Minister's Office for a three-way meeting.

Two hours later, Begin received a delegation of six doctors from Soroka Hospital in Beersheba who explained the strikers' position in the presence of the two ministers. Shostak told reporters later that the doctors had made a "very strong impression" on the Prime Minister. The fact that Aridor stayed behind to confer further with the doctors was considered significant inasmuch as he had refused face-to-face meetings with strikers up to now.

Begin had been urged for some time to exert his personal influence to end the strike. He apparently acted today because of the worsening situation in hospitals around the country where some 1,500 doctors have joined a hunger strike to press their demands for higher salaries. This has created havoc at 23 hospitals where physicians, weak from hunger, have been unable to perform even the limited medical functions that have been carried out during the strike.

Negotiations between the Medical Association and the government were broken off several weeks ago and a bitter feud developed between Aridor and Shostak. The Finance Minister has refused until now to consider more than a 30 percent salary increase for government-employed physicians in order to maintain the national average of 22 percent wage hikes, the ceiling agreed to between the Treasury and Histadrut.

Shostak supports the doctors' argument that they deserve much more considering that they work as much as a 100 hour week compared to the 35-40 hour work week of most other salaried employees. Aridor accused Shostak and his aides of acting as the "spokesmen for the irresponsible doctors." The two ministers exchanged personal insults at yesterday's Cabinet meeting, forcing Begin to crack down. Begin, Aridor and Shostak will resume their talks in the Knesset building later today.

ALEX SHLOMO DEKEL DEAD AT 51

NEW YORK, June 20 (JTA) -- Funeral services will be held here tomorrow for Alex Shlomo Dekel, a social worker with HIAS who helped to place immigrating Syrian and Soviet Jews in New York City. Dekel, who was 51, died at his home yesterday after suffering a heart attack.

An Auschwitz camp survivor, Dekel immigrated to Israel in 1949 to join his wife and stepchildren. He came to the United States in 1963, returned to Israel for several years and then returned to the U.S. in 1967 to work for the Israel Defense Mission and then for HIAS.

Dekel was a consultant on Israel and in the Holocaust to the major radio and television networks and for both Time and Life magazines. At the time of his death, he was completing a book, "The Valley of Dry Bones," on Josef Mengele, the Auschwitz doctor who was infamous for his experiments on inmates. Dekel himself was about to undergo surgery at Mengele's clinic when the death camps were liberated by allied forces.

TEL AVIV (JTA) -- The Yuval Ne'eman Chair in Theoretical Nuclear Physics was established at Tel Aviv University, named after the Minister of Science and Development, who is also a distinguished and outstanding nuclear physicist of world status and the university's former president.

NEW TEXAS LAW PROHIBITS PUBLIC SCHOOLS FROM PENALIZING STUDENTS ABSENT FOR RELIGIOUS HOLIDAYS

By Ben Gallob

NEW YORK, June 20 (JTA) -- Enactment of a state law in Texas which prohibits public schools from penalizing students who are absent because of religious holidays was lauded today by Daniel Chazan, general counsel of the National Jewish Commission on Law and Public Affairs (COLPA).

Help in drafting the new law was provided by Michael Kusin, a Houston COLPA member, in consultation with other COLPA attorneys. Kusin said the measure "will substantially aid Jewish students and members of other religious minorities who attend public schools in Texas," making it possible for Jewish students "who attend public schools to observe their religious holy days without fear of being penalized for their absence."

The bill was passed by the Texas Legislature on May 28 and signed into law last Friday by Gov. Mark White.

Christian Group Initiated Suit

Chazan said the new law is the outgrowth of a lawsuit filed on behalf of members of the Worldwide Church of God -- a Christian denomination whose members observe holy days which coincide with holy days observed by Orthodox Jews -- to bar school districts in Texas from penalizing students who absent themselves for religious observance for more than the two days then permitted as the limit for excused absences for that purpose.

Chazan said that, in March, 1982, the federal Court of Appeals for the Fifth Circuit, sitting in New Orleans, ruled that such penalties were unconstitutional. But, he added, several Texas school districts persisted in ignoring the court's ruling and continued to penalize students.

The case began when 12 students, citing religious reasons were absent from school for eight days and were penalized by the school board. A suit was filed in their behalf in federal district court.

The school boards contended that to permit some students to take more than the standard two excused days for religious observance permitted for all students would represent an unconstitutional preference for those students and would be tantamount to an impermissible official recognition of their faith.

Court Backs Students

Federal district court Judge Marylou Robinson ruled in April, 1981, in favor of the students' claim for excused absence for all their holy days. The school board appealed the ruling to the Circuit Court of Appeals.

Kusin, who acted as counsel to the church and who led the legislative effort to aid student members of the Worldwide Church of God, said the new law requires school districts to excuse students from school attendance for the purpose of observing holy days if written requests for the excused absences are submitted to school officials in advance.

He said students excused under this provision cannot be penalized for such absences and that they will be counted as attending school for purposes of calculation of the average daily attendance by which school districts are reimbursed by the state.

Kusin said the legislation further requires school districts to allow the students a "reasonable time" to make up missed school work. He said that if the missed work is made up in an academically satisfactory manner, the days of excused absence will be counted toward

satisfying the requirement of the number of days of compulsory education students are required to complete during the school year.

Chazan said the appeals court ruling was a reaffirmation of the principle that reasonable accommodation of religious practices by government is an aspect of religious freedom.

REFUSENIK TO GO ON TRIAL

NEW YORK, June 20 (JTA) -- Yuri Tamopolsky, a 47-year-old chemist, is scheduled to go on trial June 29 for "anti-Soviet slander," the Student Struggle for Soviet Jewry and the Union of Councils for Soviet Jews learned today. The Jewish activist from Kharkov was arrested on March 17. He had been seeking a visa to emigrate to Israel.

His daughter, Irina, wrote to Soviet leader Yuri Andropov on June 1, appealing for her father's release and permission for the family to emigrate. The letter, made public by the Tamopolsky family, reminded Andropov that he had responded sympathetically to a letter from a 10-year-old American girl, Samantha Smith, urging nuclear disarmament.

POLL FINDS PARTIES ALMOST EVEN

By Hugh Orgel

TEL AVIV, June 20 (JTA) -- Public opinion polls taken at the beginning of June show Likud and the Labor Alignment running neck and neck, if elections were held during the first week of the month.

A Modi'in Ezrachi poll, published in the Jerusalem Post and Maariv, gives Likud 47 seats in the 120-member Knesset as against 46 for Labor.

But another poll carried out during the same period by the Pori Public Opinion Institute of Israel gave Labor 38.6 percent of the vote, ahead of Likud's 35.8 percent.

DUTCH RETAIN ANTI-BOYCOTT LAW

AMSTERDAM, June 20 (JTA) -- The government, supported by the three major political parties, announced today that it will not withdraw an anti-boycott bill despite advice to the contrary by a special committee set up to review the matter.

The Cabinet's decision, announced this morning by Undersecretary for Foreign Trade Frits Bolkestein, apparently ensures the passage by Parliament of the measure that will require Dutch firms to report to the government any boycott demands made by countries with which they do business. The decision was backed by the Christian Democrats and Liberals and the opposition Labor Party.

But the new law will be considerably broader and less restrictive than the one originally debated in Parliament. The latter referred specifically to the Arab boycott of Israel, discrimination against Jews by Dutch firms operating in Arab countries, and the issuance of declarations by the firms that they are not Jewish-owned. The measure as it stands now omits reference to the Arab boycott. It is couched in general terms which could apply, for example, to the American boycott of firms supplying equipment for the Soviet natural gas pipeline to Western Europe.

The bill will be in effect for three years. It will apply only to firms domiciled in Holland and doing business in Holland. Firms legally registered in Holland but doing business outside Dutch territory, are exempt. Two weeks ago, an advisory panel headed by economist Jan Van der Grinten, recommended that the government drop the bill in accordance with its policy of deregularization.