

U.S. HOPES 'NO NATION' WILL INTERFERE WITH EVACUATION OF ARAFAT AND HIS MEN FROM TRIPOLI

By David Friedman

WASHINGTON, Dec. 13 (JTA) -- The United States reiterated today that it hopes that "no nation" will interfere with the evacuation of Yasir Arafat and some 4,000 of his Palestine Liberation Organization terrorists by ship from Tripoli in northern Lebanon.

"The time has come to bring this matter to a conclusion and move ahead with the evacuation," State Department deputy spokesman Alan Romberg said. But he did not know when the PLO's evacuation aboard Greek ships flying the United Nations flag would start.

Romberg stressed that the U.S. has "continued to be in touch with the appropriate parties. We support the evacuation both to spare the people of Tripoli further bloodshed and to see the withdrawal from Lebanon of a large number of PLO fighters. We believe that no nation should interfere with the evacuation," he said.

Romberg continued to refuse to say whether the U.S. has specifically asked Israel not to hamper the evacuation. All he would say was that the U.S. has "expressed" its views to Israel.

However, State Department sources indicated they do not expect the Israelis to fire on the ships that will carry the PLO contingent to safety in North Africa. They noted that while Israel has strongly objected to Arafat being evacuated under protection of the UN flag, the Israelis have never said they would attack the ships.

Israel Criticized For Blowing Up Houses

Meanwhile, Romberg criticized Israel's action Sunday in blowing up three houses and sealing three others in the West Bank belonging to persons who have confessed to terrorist acts. "We have firmly and consistently opposed the use of collective punishment which effects the innocent as well as the guilty," he said.

HUSSEIN SAYS ARAFAT WILL 'ALWAYS BE WELCOME IN JORDAN'

By Edwin Eytan

PARIS, Dec. 13 (JTA) -- King Hussein of Jordan today invited PLO Chief Yasir Arafat to Amman, saying he will "always be welcome in Jordan." Hussein, as if to stress his new relationship with the PLO spent his first day in Paris in close consultations with PLO representatives.

He lunched with the head of the foreign affairs commission of the Palestine National Council, Khaled el Hassan, and conferred with a number of other Palestinian leaders.

The monarch, who is to address the European Parliament in Strasbourg on Thursday, met today with President Francois Mitterrand with whom he discussed at length recent developments in the Middle East and especially in Lebanon.

He later said Jordan and other moderate Arab states hope France and Europe will launch a diplomatic initiative to help reach a settlement in the Middle East. Hussein said "in view of the current East-West relations, such a French initiative is now more necessary than ever before."

Khaled el Hassan is reportedly pressing the French to supply the naval protection demanded by the Greek government in order to go ahead and supply the ships needed for the evacuation of Arafat and his men from Tripoli. El Hassan met with Mitterrand's special adviser for diplomatic affairs, Hubert Verdine, as well as with various Quai d'Orsay officials.

He is reported to have urged the French to grant Greece the naval protection it demands without any further delay. He is reported as having said that "time is now a question of life and death." He also claimed Israel is about to launch a new attack on Tripoli where Arafat and 4,000 of his men are trapped.

BRITAIN, ISRAEL DISCUSSING WAYS TO INCREASE COOPERATION BETWEEN INDUSTRIAL FIRMS IN BOTH COUNTRIES

By Maurice Samuelson

LONDON, Dec. 13 (JTA) -- Israel and Britain began a week of talks here today on ways of increasing cooperation between industrial companies in both countries. The talks are being held under the auspices of the Anglo-Israel Joint Economic Commission, an inter-governmental panel which meets annually.

Moshe Semadar, head of the Israeli delegation, told the Jewish Telegraphic Agency that Israel wanted the creation of a special framework to foster joint research and development in industry, agriculture and in medical equipment. Areas of special interest to Israel, he said, were robotics, engineering, telemetry and computer hardware and software.

His proposal is understood to have been welcomed in principle by Kenneth Baker, Britain's Technology Minister, but it remains to be seen whether the British government would help to finance the joint program.

The talks coincide with growing trade between the two countries. Britain is now Israel's second most valuable export market after the U.S. and her third biggest supplier after the U.S. and West Germany. Britain's exports to Israel in the first 10 months of this year were 62 percent higher than in the same period last year.

The Issue Of Supplying Oil To Israel

The Israeli team, however, is expected to complain at Britain's long-standing refusal to supply North Sea oil. The British government's policy was laid down four years ago in the midst of an international oil shortage.

Even though Britain now has plenty of oil to spare, it still refuses to sell any to Israel, for what British officials privately admit are political reasons.

The Israelis for their part have no difficulty in meeting their oil requirements. An Israeli official told the JTA last night that Israel had recently been approached "two or three times a week" with offers of oil from Arab countries via spot market dealers.

But Israel would prefer to buy oil from Britain on the basis of a long-term supply contract and so reduce the amount of oil it currently purchases on the volatile spot market. (This currently accounts for 35 percent of Israel's imports -- the remaining oil coming from Mexico and Egypt.)

Hoping For Revision Of EEC Trade Accord

The Israeli delegates are hoping for a more sympathetic response to their request for a revision of the 1975 Israeli trade agreement with the European Economic Community (EEC) of which Britain is a leading member.

Last year, Israel had a deficit of \$1.3 billion in her trade with the EEC--importing \$3 billion worth of goods while selling the community only \$1.7 billion.

Israel wants the community to grant her fresh concessions on the tariffs for exports of fresh and processed agricultural produce, as well as an extension of the timetable for dropping Israel's own tariffs on imports from the EEC.

In order to secure such concessions, Israel first has to gain the EEC's agreement to revise the joint trade treaty and in this week's talks it is seeking British support for such a move.

TWO ISRAELI SOLDIERS WOUNDED

By Hugh Orgel

TEL AVIV, Dec. 13 (JTA) -- Two Israeli soldiers were slightly wounded today in south Lebanon when a roadside bomb exploded as they were passing in a patrol vehicle. The bomb, detonated by remote control from a nearby fruit orchard, destroyed the vehicle. Israeli forces searched the area for the attackers.

In another incident today, a hand-grenade exploded in Sidon as an IDF patrol car passed by. There were no injuries to the soldiers or damage to their car. Israeli troops briefly detained scores of passersby for questioning.

Meanwhile, Israeli naval gunboats shelled PLO positions along the Lebanon coast south of Tripoli today for the second consecutive day. Artillery fire was returned from the shore toward the Israeli vessels, but there were no casualties or damage to the gunboats.

A four-day cease-fire in Beirut was broken today as Druze and Christian Phalangist forces engaged in heavy clashes. American marine positions in Beirut came under fire and U.S. naval gunboats off-shore shelled the source of the shelling.

In a related incident, a French soldier was killed in west Beirut today when his patrol came under fire from the occupants of a car which sped past the patrol's position. His death brings the number of killed among the French contingent of the multinational force to 77.

STUDY CLAIMS 'PERSVASIVE' ISRAELI CENSORSHIP OF ARAB PUBLICATIONS

NEW YORK, Dec. 13 (JTA) -- A study just released here charges that "persvasive" Israeli censorship of Arab publications on the West Bank is not aimed only at breaches of security but primarily "to eradicate expressions that could foster Palestinian nationalist feelings" or deny "Israeli national legitimacy."

The study, sponsored by the New York-based Fund for Free Expression, was undertaken by Meron Benvenisti, a former Deputy Mayor of Jerusalem and

currently director of the West Bank Data Base Project. The Fund for Free Expression is a voluntary non-governmental body which also maintains the Helsinki Watch and the American Watch. It is not affiliated with the Washington-based Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe which monitors compliance with the human rights provisions of the Helsinki Final Act.

The 167-page study notes that Israeli censorship "mirrors the larger struggle between Palestinians and Israelis" in which "both sides view words and ideas as powerful weapons." According to Benvenisti, "Israeli censors attempt to prevent the publication not only of the supposed national security secrets and the ideological tracts that are the targets of censors everywhere; nor is such censorship the main point," the study observes.

"Rather, the primary concern is to eradicate expression that could foster Palestinian nationalist feelings, or that suggests that Palestinians are a nation with a national heritage. Concomitantly, expression denying Israeli national legitimacy, or imputing behavior to Israeli officials that suggest illegitimacy, is eliminated by the censor."

Examples Of Censorship

As examples of censorship aimed at denying Palestinian national expression, the study notes that Israeli censors prohibit such items as a death notice for a Palestinian which asserts that a family "in the homeland and the diaspora mourns" his passing. Also prohibited are items reporting that neighbors "distributed gifts to the mothers of martyrs" and helped rebuild "a home which was destroyed by Israeli authorities."

Benvenisti says censorship rules out even a line in an Arab newspaper reporting that "the Israeli authorities released the day before yesterday three residents from Arrabeh in the Jenin district." That line indicates that Israel maintains its control over the occupied territories by coercive measures and thereby could be thought to deny the legitimacy of the occupation, the study notes.

'A Game Of Cat And Mouse'

But, Benvenisti reports, Arab editors play what they themselves describe as "a game of cat and mouse with the censor." According to the study, "The Arab press attempts to assert that which the censors would prohibit." It is a "mobilized" press and "Arab editors, with no exceptions but with varied emphasis attempt to express Palestinian nationhood and to question Israeli legitimacy."

On the other hand, Israeli censorship "is pervasive". Arab editors must submit to the censor all material for publication including photographs, advertisements and crossword puzzles. Of 1,077 items in English submitted by one newspaper in 1982, 367 were prohibited entirely and another 214 were partially censored. The censor may close a newspaper at a moment's notice, as has been done frequently, Benvenisti asserts.

His study also deals with book censorship. While at present no well known work of literature is prohibited on the West Bank, the list of prohibited books "includes every work that expresses or that arouses Palestinian national feelings." This embraces more than 1,600 titles, the study reported. There was no immediate response from Israeli officials to this study.

BEHIND THE HEADLINES REMINDERS OF PAST HOSTILITIES

By Judith Kohn

CAIRO, Dec. 13 (JTA) -- Nearly a decade has passed since the cities of Egypt's Suez Canal zone saw fighting, but reminders of the six years of hostilities that once turned them into virtual ghost towns are still apparent.

Half-demolished buildings peering through the rows of beach-white villas that now line the waterway in Suez, tax the imagination with suggestions of a time when this resort area was a battle zone and the banks of its placid waters a mass of minefields.

Just a swim's distance across the canal are yet more poignant reminders of those years, and a collective monument to what has become one of the greatest sources of national pride in contemporary Egypt -- the surprise attack against Israeli forces on Yom Kippur in October, 1973.

Marking the battlefield today are the scattered remains of the Barlev Line -- a mammoth array of Israeli fortifications that lined the east bank of the canal from the Mediterranean Sea in the north, down to the canal's outlet at the Gulf of Suez.

Pausing At A Symbolic Linkage

It was at a spot on this site, where some of the old bunkers are still relatively intact, that a group of students from Cairo University's Commerce College recently paused after taking a detour on a one-day organized excursion to Suez.

The driver had swung off the main road, some 17 miles north of the canal town, into a tunnel built by the late President Anwar Sadat as a symbolic linkage between the Egyptian mainland and the territory restored to it by Israel in accordance with the peace treaty of 1979.

Climbing down from the bus, some five miles inland from the tunnel's exit, the students found themselves opposite a low but imposing fortress with a large gun barrel peering out the entrance. It carried the weight of thick concrete blocks and metal slabs that had fallen from the roof.

Layers of rock-filled net sacks covered what remained of the bunker, and a maze of trenches leading to and around a line of similar bunkers appeared from a distance to be part of a neat geometrical design that bordered the surface of the desert.

Prime Target Of The War Of Attrition

The fortifications -- erected by the Israelis in response to persistent shelling and commando raids by Egypt following the June 1967 Six-Day War and the resulting occupation of the Sinai -- were, together with the soldiers who manned them, the prime target of the late President Gamal Abdel Nasser's War of Attrition, launched in March 1969. Some half a million residents were evacuated from the canal towns of Port Said, Ismailia and Suez in preparation for the expected reprisals.

By May, Nasser claimed he had destroyed 60 percent of the Barlev Line. Casualties were heavy and the fortifications themselves did indeed take a beating. But the massive artillery bombardment of the Israeli positions across the waterway, and the repeated Egyptian raids into the east bank, succeeded more conspicuously in bringing the canal zone cities, as well as targets deep within Egyptian territory, some of the same and stronger.

By August 1970, when a U.S.-sponsored ceasefire temporarily ended the fighting, Israel had demonstrated its continued military superiority by hitting at strategic targets putatively protected by Soviet ground-to-air missiles, and the fortifications across the canal remained more or less intact. The expulsion of Soviet military personnel by the still novice President Sadat made the chances of an Egyptian attack appear yet slimmer.

Consequently, Egypt stunned the world, not least of all the Israel Defense Force, when, together with the Syrians on the Golan Heights, it launched the Yom Kippur War, with its surprise crossing of the canal and the penetration of what had come to be called "the impregnable Barlev Line."

Never Acknowledged Military Upset

Egypt has never acknowledged that by the war's end the military tables had almost entirely turned and its Third Army was completely surrounded by Israeli forces, cut off from its sources of supply. Many of those familiar with Western accounts of the war still maintain that Egypt nevertheless emerged victorious because it shattered the "myth of Israeli invincibility," creating an atmosphere in which it could negotiate with Israel from a position of strength.

Consequently, Sadat is honored on October 6th, the day of the canal crossing and of his assassination eight years later, as much for the crossing of the canal as for the peace which, Egyptians stress, the war was designed to achieve. As relations between the two countries continue to deteriorate, the October 6th achievement seems to play a far more prominent part in memorializing Sadat than does the peace with Israel.

The sentiment which the tone of this official panegyric to Sadat appears to be addressing, became unsettlingly clear before the remains of the Barlev fortifications. Hearing the Egyptian guide describe the engineering of the Israeli bunkers -- each of which had been replete with a large ammunition and supply store and wired up for electricity and air conditioning -- could force even the most cynical observer of Egyptian public relations tactics to concede that if Egypt was defeated in the war, she lost, to some extent, triumphantly.

A Feeling Of Deja Vu

The spectacle of students clamoring to be photographed at the entrance of the bunker or by the charred remains of an Israeli tank sitting not far from it, brought a strange feeling of deja vu to one whose travels in Israel have included the routine tours of Arab bunkers and trenches on the Golan Heights and other sites in the Jewish State where vestiges of war have become not only a source of awe, mourning and national pride, but a catchy setting for tourist snapshots as well.

Adding to the strangeness was the presence of two Egyptian Hebrew language students whose acquaintance with this writer made possible her participation in the excursion and the unexpected detour. They, too, hastened to be photographed, calling out their request in a competent Hebrew that made more than a few heads turn inquisitively at the foreigner with the camera who was being addressed. They had situated themselves directly beneath a sign painted over one of the metal slabs that bore a quotation attributed to the late General Moshe Dayan and translated into

English and Arabic. "The waters of the Suez," the inscription read, "will be turned into a lake of Egyptian blood if they consider launching an assault on the canal."

The inside walls of the bunkers offered testimony of another kind -- the graffiti of Egyptian soldiers who had taken the place. Looking at the clutter of names, most of which were identified as "fighter in October," a student could be heard commenting that Egypt would "never allow Sinai to be taken again."

One of the Hebrew students, who had grown up in Suez and been evacuated with his co-inhabitants after the 1967 war, remarked in Hebrew, "These bunkers caused us a lot of suffering, you know." There was little hostility in the tone of his comment, and the reactions of other students, who by this time had surmised that the incongruous foreigner among them was Jewish, indicated neither resentment nor the delight of a victor confronting the vanquished with his defeat.

UJA YOUNG LEADERS AND YOUNG ISRAELIS PLEDGE TO CONTINUE A CLOSE DIALOGUE

By David Landau

SDOM, Dec. 13 (JTA) -- Leaders of the United Jewish Appeal's Young Leadership Cabinet and prominent young Israeli men of affairs pledged themselves here yesterday to continue a process of close dialogue and cooperation begun Sunday at the first World Assembly of Young Jewish Leadership.

Carl Kaplan of Washington, D.C., incoming chairman of the Young Leadership Cabinet, told the 150 people gathered at this Dead Sea spa: "We are fully committed to continuing this process." He said he could speak for the present chairman, Steven Greenberg of New Jersey, for himself, and for subsequent Young Leadership Cabinet activists.

Kaplan and many other speakers from both the Israeli and the American groups participating in this gathering spoke of it in terms of a uniquely rewarding experience. A common utterance among the Americans was: "We have come to know more about Israelis in three days than we learned previously in umpteen visits."

Vexing And Sensitive Issues Aired

Participants on both sides praised the frankness and sincerity of the discussions, held long into the nights in plenary sessions and workshops.

Such vexing and sensitive issues as personal commitment to aliya were aired alongside harsh criticism of the existing Jewish Agency - World Zionist Organization structure and widely expressed determination to forge closer Israeli-diaspora links in the fields of economic enterprise, Jewish education and culture, and -- above all -- human contact on a profound and serious level.

"It is time to make changes in the missions' program," Kaplan asserted. There would be less of seeing Israel through bus windows, he pledged, and much more direct contact and open discussion with Israeli peers of the same generational outlook and interests as the younger UJA members.

Much heat was generated during a plenary session yesterday when Israeli Knesset members of the various parties when Likud's Ehud Olmert alleged politicization on the part of the organizers of the retreat -- both in selection of participants and in plans to set up a politically weighted ongoing caucus. This was strongly denied by the Labor Party and

National Religious Party participants. But there was a strong sense among the American participants and among non-party Israelis that if the ongoing caucus proposal is to give this retreat a practical machinery for perpetuating the ideas and concepts aired here, it must be politics-free and must include Israeli men of affairs who are not party politicians.

Assembly Seen As a Watershed

Israeli press comments in advance of the assembly were largely skeptical, and in some cases critical, with writers faulting the luxury surroundings (a five-star hotel) and large outlay paid for the gathering (\$30,000).

But Israeli and American participants were confident that they had succeeded in weaning themselves and each other of their own prior skepticism -- and that the broader communities here and in the U.S. would come to regard the meeting here as a watershed, beginning a new Israeli-diaspora relationship among the rising generation of publicly active persons.

MK SAYS RIGHTWING JEWISH UNDERGROUND MOVEMENT IS BENT ON TERRORIZING ARABS

By Gil Sedan

JERUSALEM, Dec. 13 (JTA) -- Labor MK Yossi Sarid demanded yesterday that the government acknowledge publicly the existence of a rightwing Jewish underground movement bent on terrorizing Arabs.

Sarid spoke after an Israel-made hand grenade exploded on the doorstep of an Arab home in Hussan village south of Bethlehem on the West Bank. A woman in the house narrowly escaped injury. Police who rushed to the scene ordered the villagers not to open their doors until a search of the area was made. The search yielded three other grenades hidden in a rock pile. All were defused by sappers.

The grenades were believed to have been planted by the same gang that attacked Arab and Christian religious sites in East Jerusalem last week. An anonymous telephone caller said a group calling itself "terror against terror" was responsible. The police are investigating but no arrests have been made.

Sarid charged that Interior Minister Yosef Burg, who is responsible for the police, and other government officials have tried until now to deny the existence of a Jewish terrorist underground. Such an organization cannot be fought unless its existence is recognized, Sarid said.

The newspaper Maariv received an anonymous call today from a person who said: "Last night we acted again, only a little, so that one can see what we can do. Our next targets are Yossi Sarid and Matti Peled." Gen. (Res.) Matityahu Peled is a Peace Now activist.

According to Maariv, today's caller sounded like the person who called the paper 10 months ago to identify himself as one of the group responsible for the murder of peace activist Emil Grunzweig by a hand grenade in Jerusalem last February.

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TEL AVIV (JTA) -- Education Minister Zevulun Hammer, who suffered a heart attack two weeks ago, has been discharged from the Sheba Hospital in Tel Hashomer. He is spending a week recuperating at the Kfar Hamaccabiah sports village guesthouse in Ramat Gan.