

BACKGROUND REPORT ILLUSION AND REALITY IN THE MIDEAST By David Friedman

WASHINGTON, Dec. 27 (JTA) -- The Reagan Administration appears to be pinning its hopes for reviving President Reagan's moribund Middle East peace initiative on the slim expectation that Yasir Arafat has been so chastened by his defeat in Lebanon that he is ready to give his blessings to the entry of King Hussein of Jordan into the peace talks.

It was this possibility that was given by at least one senior State Department official as one of the reasons for United States support of the unhampered departure of Arafat and some 4,000 of his Palestine Liberation Organization terrorists from Tripoli last week despite Israel's strong protest that it was disgraceful that the PLO was leaving under the aegis of the United Nations flag.

This hope was also seen in the declaration by the State Department that the meeting in Cairo last week between Arafat and Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak was an "encouraging development."

The meeting shocked the Israelis who said it contradicted the Camp David agreements. Ambassador Meir Rosenne went to the State Department late last Thursday to express the Israeli view and called Mubarak's meetings with Arafat "encouragement to terrorism."

Reagan Sees Progress

But Reagan, in an interview with reporters from the four major world news agencies, made it clear that he sees the meeting as perhaps leading to Arafat's endorsement of Hussein's participation in the peace talks on behalf of the Palestinians.

"I think that what President Mubarak is doing is talking to him (Arafat) about returning to where he was earlier, making contact with King Hussein and getting those peace negotiations, our peace proposal, under way again," Reagan said in the interview which took place last Friday.

Reagan added that he no longer believes that a settlement in Lebanon has to be reached before the peace negotiations can continue. "I think enough progress has been made there that we can go forward with the peace movement," he said.

The President disagreed with the Israelis that the Mubarak-Arafat meeting was a violation of Camp David. "I can understand their (the Israelis) feelings in view of the recent (bus bombing) tragedy in Jerusalem and the group taking credit for that claims to be a PLO group and all," he said.

"But at the same time, I think as they look at this a little more clearly, they will see that Mubarak, based on the experience of Egypt and its willingness to go forward for peace, is simply trying to persuade others to change their thinking."

Fragility Of The New Agreement

The differences between the U.S. and Israel were seen by some to reveal the fragility of the new agreement for close strategic cooperation between the two countries, announced during Premier Yitzhak Shamir's recent visit to Washington.

But State Department spokesman John Hughes pointed out several times last week that it was not unusual for close friends and allies to disagree. Shamir made the same point during his speech to the National Press Club here.

But not mentioned was that the U.S. disagreement with Israel over Arafat's departure from Tripoli and then his meeting with Mubarak helped the U.S. in its effort, to convince the Arabs that despite the new agreement with Israel the U.S. also sought closer relations with "moderate" Arab states.

Meaning Of Mubarak-Arafat Meeting Still Unclear

Meanwhile, it is still unclear what last week's meeting in Cairo meant. For Arafat, with a large part of the PLO coming under the domination of Syria, it was logical to seek support from Egypt, the most important Arab state. At this stage Arafat is also obviously willing to meet with any Arab leader who will receive him in an attempt to bolster his sinking prestige.

However, even some of his most loyal supporters in the PLO were outraged by the meeting. The PLO along with the other members of the Arab League broke relations with Egypt six years ago after the signing of the Camp David accords. The revolt against Arafat by PLO groups in Lebanon is directed against him giving the Jordanian monarch approval to represent the Palestinians in the negotiations with Israel, Egypt and the U.S.

Mubarak's motives are more worrisome. Israel is already concerned about what it calls the cold peace with Egypt and it had earlier expressed the fear that Mubarak is seeking to move back toward the rejectionist Arab camp.

At the same time, the Egyptians have always urged that the PLO be included in the negotiations. Egyptian Foreign Minister Kamal Hassan Ali, during his visit to Washington last week, said that Arafat continues to be the most popular Palestinian leader.

When Reagan was asked if he agreed with this assessment, he replied "Well this is what we need to find out. I can't believe the radical group under the influence of the Syrians -- I can't believe that the millions of Palestinians are going to choose that leadership."

U.S. Still Won't Deal With The PLO

The State Department made clear last week that the U.S. still sticks to its position that it will not deal with the PLO until it recognizes Israel's right to exist and accepts United Nations Security Council Resolutions 242 and 338. But it was obviously signalling to Arafat that the time was ripe for him to do so.

The State Department also made clear that it knows Israel will never sit down with members of the PLO. Under the Reagan initiative, Jordan is urged to join the peace talks with Palestinians in its delegation, especially from the West Bank and Gaza, who are not members of the PLO. Hussein has maintained he first needs the approval of the PLO and of Arab states.

But if Arafat could not give his approval last April when he was still the undisputed leader of the terrorist group, can he do it now when he has all he can do to stay in control of the few loyalists left?

It seems to many that the hope in Washington for Arafat's metamorphosis from a terrorist to a responsible leader is based more on wishful thinking and self-delusion in Washington than on reality in the Middle East.

EGYPTIAN OFFICIAL SAYS U.S. SHOULD OPEN TALKS WITH ARAFAT BECAUSE HE IS 'A VOICE OF REASON AND MODERATION'

WASHINGTON, Dec. 27 (JTA) -- Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak's foreign affairs adviser, Osama Baz, said today in Cairo that the United States should open talks with PLO leader Yasir Arafat.

According to reports reaching here from the Egyptian capital, Baz told reporters that Arafat "is a responsible leader of the Palestinian people" and that he has "established himself as a voice of reason and moderation within the Palestinian movement." For that reason, Baz said, "we are calling on the U.S. to establish a dialogue" with Arafat and with "Palestinian representatives to advance the cause of peace."

The Egyptian official spoke to reporters after a meeting between Mubarak and his senior advisers in which they assessed last Thursday's meeting between Arafat and Mubarak. Israel denounced the meeting as a blow to peace prospects in the Mideast while the Reagan Administration viewed it as "an encouraging development." Baz said today that Israel was wrong to believe that Arafat's meeting with Mubarak was a blow to peace and termed Israel's reaction "negative."

ATTACKS ON IDF HAVE INCREASED IN SOUTH LEBANON SINCE PRISONERS WERE RELEASED FROM THE ANSAR CAMP

By Hugh Orgel

TEL AVIV, Dec. 27 (JTA) -- Israeli paratroopers have been put in charge of security in Sidon, south Lebanon, where military sources report a sharp rise in the number of attacks on Israeli personnel and vehicles since the release of some 3,500 prisoners from the Ansar detention camp earlier this month. About 800 of them remained in Sidon.

Over the weekend, one Israeli soldier was killed, seven were injured, and three terrorists were killed.

A 29-year-old border police officer was killed and one of his men was injured last night when their patrol ran into a small group of terrorists preparing to lay an explosive charge in the eastern suburb of Sidon. In the ensuing fight between the Israeli patrol and the terrorist gang three of the terrorists were killed. Large quantities of explosives were found at the scene.

In another incident, three Israeli soldiers were injured when their jeep convoy came under light arms fire near the village of Karoun in the eastern sector facing the Syrian forces, an area which has been relatively quiet in recent months. In a third incident yesterday, a soldier was slightly wounded when two grenades were thrown at a patrol of armored personnel carriers near Nabatiya, just south of the Israeli border.

On Sunday, two Israeli soldiers were wounded while on patrol in Sidon. One was given first aid and resumed his duties but the other soldier was flown to a hospital in Israel for treatment. A local civilian was also wounded. An explosion rocked Sidon last Friday, but there were no reported injuries.

The release of detainees from the Ansar camp was part of a prisoner-of-war exchange involving a total of 4,600 Palestinians and Lebanese held by Israel in Lebanon and in Israeli jails, in return, the Palestine Liberation Organization released six Israeli soldiers they had held since September, 1982. Many of the Palestinians freed were serving sentences for terrorist acts.

REAGAN: MARINES TO STAY IN LEBANON 'WHILE THERE'S HOPE FOR PEACE'

By David Friedman

WASHINGTON, Dec. 27 (JTA) -- President Reagan stressed again today that the U.S. will remain in Lebanon "while there's hope for peace."

But the President, responding to questions at a brief news conference before he left for a vacation in California, added that the U.S. is "stepping up our diplomatic efforts" to bring about "not a military but a political solution" in Lebanon.

"There is reason to believe that the presence of the multinational force has made some progress," Reagan said. "We have now an agreement between Lebanon and Israel which has Israel's agreement to withdraw. I don't believe that it's impossible to have a similar kind of agreement with Syria, which would recognize some of Syria's interests."

He added that the various factions in Lebanon which met in Geneva recently achieved a "kind of tacit recognition" that the governments of President Amin Gemayel "was the government of Lebanon."

The President called the brief news conference to issue a statement in which he said the local marine commanders in Beirut should not be blamed for the terrorist bombing that killed some 240 American servicemen at the marine headquarters in Beirut. "If there is to be blame, it probably rests here, in this office and with this President," he said. "And I accept responsibility for the bad as well as the good."

Reagan stressed that terrorism today is not just a deed of fanatical individuals but is sponsored by various political groups and even some countries. "We have never before faced a situation in which others routinely sponsor and facilitate acts of violence while hiding behind proxies and surrogates which they claim they do not fully control," he said.

The President called for "civilized countries" to work together, to share intelligence, improve training and security, deny haven or legal protection to terrorist groups and "most important of all to hold increasingly accountable those countries which sponsor terrorism and terrorist activity around the world."

ISRAEL PLAGUED BY STRIKES, SLOWDOWNS

By Gil Sedan and Hugh Orgel

JERUSALEM, Dec. 27 (JTA) -- Strikes, slowdowns and protest meetings continued to plague the country today as government workers pressed for higher pay. The Cabinet is scheduled to convene a special session at the end of the week to discuss the growing economic crisis and to consider Finance Minister Yigal Cohen-Orgad's economic plans and the proposed trimmed budget for the new fiscal year.

Today, all postal services were paralyzed as 3,500 post office employees, including workers at the post office banks, stayed at home. Mail was not collected from post office boxes and delivery of mail was halted. The postal workers have not indicated how long they intend to continue their stoppage.

Labor and Welfare Ministry employees also continued their partial work stoppage which involves not dealing

with the public or making payments. Income tax and property tax workers also continued their strike. Administrative employees in government hospitals have threatened to stop work if they are not granted a 5,000 Shekel (\$50) allowance. They have also threatened to halt work on the 24th of each month in the future if cuts in overtime allowances are not restored.

Must Reduce Balance Of Payments Deficit

Orgad, addressing the Knesset Economic Committee today, warned that unless Israel reduces the deficit in its balance of payments by \$1 billion it will not be able to find additional sources of financing to repay loans. On the other hand, he said, if the gap in the balance of payments is narrowed by \$1 billion, the economy will be able to grow at an annual rate of 1.5 percent beginning in 1985.

Gad Yaacobi, chairman of the Economic Committee, said at the same session that the present economic hardships were a direct outcome of the "stupid economic policy of the government in the past few years." He predicted that in 1984 inflation will soar to 300 percent. Under such circumstances, he warned, the economy will become paralyzed.

Economic experts expressed doubts today that Cohen-Orgad will be able to achieve his economic objectives because of the growing unrest and turmoil in the economic sector of the country and because of internal difficulties in the Likud coalition.

Deputy Premier David Levy has already announced his opposition to a policy of "controlled unemployment," a predictable consequence of the government's economic policy, and a tough attitude toward the demands of the workers. The Tami Party, which represents the low income segment of Israel's population, primarily the Sephardim, is also opposed to further economic hardships which would intensify the poverty and misery of low income families.

In addition to the narrow majority of the coalition -- 64 members in the 120-member Knesset, including former Premier Menachem Begin who has not been a functioning Knesset member in the last few months -- the coalition is also beset by other difficulties. Foremost among them is the pressing demand of the Aguda Party to pass legislation on the issue of "Who is a Jew" and legislation banning all public transportation on Saturdays.

REPORT SHOWS THAT THE LOWEST NUMBER OF SOVIET JEWS IN 20 YEARS WILL HAVE EMIGRATED BY YEAR'S END

NEW YORK, Dec. 27 (JTA) -- The Greater New York Conference on Soviet Jewry (GNYSJ) today announced that 1,307 Jews will have emigrated from the Soviet Union by the end of 1983, the lowest number in 20 years.

At a press conference in the Roosevelt Hotel, Assistant Secretary of State for Human Rights and Humanitarian Affairs Elliott Abrams announced that as of December 22, only 1,284 Soviet Jews were granted emigration visas. Abrams pointed out that this represents a drop of 98 percent from 1979, when 51,320 Jews were allowed to emigrate. Herbert Kronish, GNYSJ chairman, projected the 1983 emigration total of 1,307 based on the numbers released by Abrams.

Abrams said that this "drastic decline in Jewish emigration is clearly the result of deliberate Soviet policy and not the consequence of a steep decline in applications. There are hundreds of thousands of Soviet Jews who would leave the USSR if they

were free to emigrate. Yet Soviet authorities now publicly proclaim that the Jewish emigration question has been solved, and that there are no longer any Jewish refuseniks in the Soviet Union."

'An Unmitigated Act Of Evil'

Abrams pointed to alarming reports of anti-Semitism in the Soviet Union, stating: "The Jewish community in the Soviet Union was targeted for annihilation by both the Nazis and Stalin. For it now to be subjected to renewed anti-Semitism, persecution and abuse is indeed an unmitigated act of evil and deserves to be condemned as such."

Kronish, in releasing the GNYSJ status report entitled "Soviet Jewry: The Realities in 1983," declared: "Not only have the Soviets virtually barred its doors preventing hundreds of thousands of Jews from emigrating, but under the leadership of Andropov, they have proceeded to deal even more harshly with the Soviet Jewish population. At the current rate, the last of the more than 400,000 Jews now in the process of seeking to leave the Soviet Union can expect to see freedom three centuries from now."

The Soviet Anti-Zionist Committee, formed in 1983, "has viciously mocked the hopes of more than 20,000 refuseniks by announcing that 'almost all of the Soviet Jews who wanted to leave have left.' I have met with many Soviet Jewish refuseniks, some who have been waiting to emigrate for 10 or 15 years. This claim of the Anti-Zionist Committee is a blatant lie," declared Kronish, as he held two thick computer lists containing the names of over 20,000 Jews who have been officially denied permission to leave the USSR.

Health Of POCs Deteriorating

According to the GNYSJ, the situation for Soviet Jewish Prisoners of Conscience, of whom there are currently 19, has seriously deteriorated. Anatoly Shcharansky, who began this year on a hunger strike in Chistopol Prison protesting his total isolation from family and friends, is suffering from a serious heart problem which requires urgent medical attention.

His mother in Moscow received a letter from him this month in which he described the chronic pain in his heart. He has been cruelly denied the medical attention he has requested and there is reason to fear for his life if he does not receive appropriate medical care immediately. Aleksandar Paritsky, Feliks Kochubievsky, and several other Prisoners of Conscience are also seriously ill. Paritsky, who has a heart condition, and Kochubievsky, who suffers from serious kidney problems, are both in almost constant pain.

TEL AVIV (JTA) -- Israeli police in the northern district have confiscated over two tons of hashish and 1.36 kilograms (about three pounds) of heroin so far this year in their efforts to foil the smuggling of drugs into Israel from Lebanon, police commander Yitzhak Eran of the northern district announced.

JERUSALEM (JTA) -- Yemima Tschernovitz-Avidar, a writer of children's stories, is the winner of this year's prize for literature, the Education Ministry announced. It will be presented on Israel Independence Day next spring. The writer, born in Vilna, Russia, came to Palestine at the age of 12 and taught kindergarten in Tel Aviv for many years.

MODEL UN PROGRAM IN A CALIFORNIA UNIVERSITY ASSAILED BECAUSE ISRAEL IS EXCLUDED FROM LIST OF NATIONS

LOS ANGELES, Dec. 27 (JTA) -- The Simon Wiesenthal Center at Yeshiva University has demanded the cancellation of the 17th annual model United Nations program to be held at the University of California in Riverside on January 23 because of its exclusion of Israel from the roster of nations.

In an extensive listing, which is part of the program catalogue, more than 154 nations are included on the "assigned countries," "unassigned countries," and "permanent observers" lists. Among the latter are the Palestine Liberation Organization, the South West Africa People's Organization (SWAPO), and North Korea, which is not a UN member-state.

Rabbi Marvin Hier, dean, Rabbi Abraham Cooper, associate dean, and Dr. Gerald Margolis, director of the Wiesenthal Center, pointed out that while the State of Israel is specifically omitted from all groupings, various issues specifically related to the Middle East situation, including a discussion entitled "Human Rights in Israeli Occupied Territories," are scheduled to be examined.

Acting on information of irate Jewish parents whose children were scheduled to take part in the program, the Wiesenthal Center officials wrote to the university chancellor, Thomas Rivera, stating, in part, that the program would "result in a point of view inimical and antagonistic to the very existence of the State of Israel." This program involves more than 100 students from more than 50 California high schools who will be representing some 150 nations.

UN Group Says It Is Not Their Policy

In a conversation with the New York-based United Nations Association, which provides technical expertise to the model UN programs across the country, the Simon Wiesenthal officials were informed that such an omission does not reflect the Association's policy or philosophy.

Association spokesmen further indicated that the program was totally under the jurisdiction of the respective sponsoring universities and their students. The University of California in Riverside is a public institution financed primarily by the state of California.

Through further independent investigation, the Center officials said they had learned that model UN programs are slated at major universities across the country, including Harvard, Princeton, Georgetown, and the University of California in Berkeley. Stephen Irlki, treasurer of the model UN program at the University of California in Berkeley, told the Wiesenthal Center that in their program, Israel is fully represented.

Anti-Israel, Anti-Semitic Sentiment Noted

Although it is not yet known why Israel has been excluded from the university in Riverside program, the Wiesenthal Center said it learned from Jewish students at the university that during the last few years there have been incidents on campus which reflect strong anti-Israel and anti-Semitic sentiment.

Last March, an open letter of protest signed by 26 Jewish faculty members and published in the Riverside university's newspaper charged that the primary source of ongoing anti-Jewish hostility originated from the university's organization of Arab students. The protest letter added that the organiza-

tion was responsible for "physical assaults" against Jewish students as well as other threats.

Says Israel Is Included In New List

The Wiesenthal Center reached University of California in Riverside public information officer, Ron Kolb, last Thursday night, who apologized on behalf of the university for the omission of Israel in the model UN program and told Center officials that in fact the Palos Verdes high school is being assigned to represent Israel in the UN program. The role of the PLO UN observer has been assigned to the Edison high school.

Kolb also indicated that the categorization of the "Arab states" which precluded the mention of Israel would be immediately changed. He added that the model UN program would list a new section entitled "Middle East states" with Israel included.

YALE GETS \$1.6 MILLION GIFT TO ESTABLISH TWO NEW PROFESSORSHIPS IN ITS JUDAIC STUDIES PROGRAM

NEW HAVEN, Dec. 27 (JTA) -- Yale University has received an "extra-ordinary" gift of \$1.6 million to establish two new endowed professorships in its Judaic studies program, according to the current issue of the Newsletter for that program.

The Newsletter, in reporting on the gift, said such endowed scholarships "enable Yale to attract and encourage the finest faculty members, at-work on the frontiers of knowledge and dedicated to the university's intellectual life."

The Newsletter reported that the gift would be used to create a senior professorship in Hebrew language and literature, and a visiting professor in the humanities.

The Newsletter reported that the donors indicated they wanted not to be named publicly.

The Newsletter declared that "the university's tradition of excellence in the study of language and literature, a vital part of undergraduate education, will be enhanced by the appointment of a distinguished senior teacher and scholar in Hebrew language and literature."

The Newsletter added that the appointment also "will do much to strengthen the Judaic studies program, for the comprehensive understanding of the subtleties and nuances of Jewish culture depends fundamentally on adequate knowledge of its language and literature."

The visiting professorship, whose incumbent will be appointed each year from various areas in the humanities, including philosophy, art and music, "will complement and enrich the teaching and scholarly activity of the university's permanent senior faculty in Judaic Studies," the Newsletter reported.

The Newsletter also reported a "generous gift," the size of which was not indicated, in memory of Jacob Perlow, an immigrant who settled in New York City and prospered in real estate, to create the Jacob Perlow Fellow in Judaic Studies and the Humanities. Perlow's niece, Toni Greenberg, a co-executor of the Perlow estate, was instrumental in the gift, the Newsletter reported.

The Newsletter said the Jacob Perlow Fellow will be appointed by the University from nominees proposed by the Hebrew University in Jerusalem to encourage "fruitful exchanges between Yale and Israeli scholars."

There will be no Bulletin dated January 2, a New Year's postal holiday.