

ISRAEL INSISTS IT WILL NOT WITHDRAW THE IDF FROM LEBANON BEFORE SYRIAN ARMY LEAVES (From the JTA Wire Services)

JERUSALEM, Jan. 8 (JTA) -- Israel made it clear today that it has no intention of withdrawing the Israeli Defense Force from Lebanon before the Syrians pull their army out of the country.

The position of Premier Yitzhak Shamir stated at today's Cabinet meeting and conveyed to reporters by Cabinet secretary Dan Meridor, refuted reports emanating from Washington and elsewhere over the weekend that the Israelis no longer linked their withdrawal to that of the Syrians. "There is no truth whatsoever to reports to the contrary," Meridor said.

At the same time, U.S. officials in Washington ruled out a change in the deployment of the marines now guarding Beirut airport or any extension of their role in Lebanon. Diplomatic sources had said over the weekend that the marines would take up new positions as the Lebanese army took over areas of the country not controlled by the Israelis or Syrians.

That was interpreted to include the airport which would be declared a neutral zone according to the sources, allowing the marines to move to different, presumably less vulnerable positions. A State Department spokesman insisted Friday that there was no change of U.S. policy on the role of the marines although their deployment within their existing mandate continued to be examined.

A marine was killed today when two U.S. helicopters came under fire when they attempted to land at Beirut airport to transport American personnel to ships of the Sixth Fleet lying offshore. The helicopters were not hit. The marine, who died on the way to a hospital, brought to 258 the number of fatalities suffered by American forces in Lebanon to date. Two marines and several Lebanese army soldiers were wounded in Beirut yesterday. They were apparently caught in a crossfire between the Lebanese army and Druze militia.

Meeting With Rumsfeld, Senators

Shamir presided at today's Cabinet meeting after meeting Friday with President Reagan's special representative to the Middle East, Donald Rumsfeld and two visiting Senators. The latter were Sen. John Tower (R. Tex.), who is chairman of the Senate Armed Services Committee and Sen. John Warner (R. Va.), both on a fact-finding mission to the region. None of the Americans had any comment after the meetings.

Tower is enroute to Damascus where he is expected to meet with President Hafez Assad of Syria. Shamir was reported to have raised the issue of a U.S. Syrian rapprochement in the wake of Syria's release last week of captured U.S. Navy flyer Lt. Robert Goodman. The release, effected through the intervention of Democratic Presidential aspirant Rev. Jesse Jackson with Assad, was praised by President Reagan who indicated he would be willing to meet with Assad.

The Cabinet was briefed today by Defense Minister Moshe Arens and senior military officers on the recent Israeli air raids on terrorist targets in the Syrian

controlled zone of Lebanon. Shamir described his talks with Rumsfeld, Tower and Warner but no details were released.

Meridor, who spoke to reporters after the Cabinet adjourned, reiterated that Israel's position continues to be based on its May 17 agreement with the Lebanese government of President Amin Gemayel which stipulates that Syria must withdraw from Lebanon if the Israeli troops are to be pulled out.

Denies Plans For IDF Redeployment

Meridor denied reports that Israel has prepared a plan for redeployment of the IDF from its present line on the Awali River to the Zaharani River farther south. He added, however, that "in various frameworks" there were deliberations on the situation in Lebanon and that he assumed "that various proposals are (being) considered ... but there is no change in Israel's position regarding its withdrawal from Lebanon."

According to Meridor, "Our prime interest in staying in Lebanon is to ensure such conditions which would allow us to leave Lebanon while guaranteeing the security of our northern border."

Last week a senior government source, not identified, stressed to reporters that Israel's primary objective in Lebanon was the security of Galilee and that all other elements, including the withdrawal of all foreign forces from that country, support for the Gemayel government and even the May 17 accord were subordinate to that objective and not ends in themselves.

U.S. OFFICIAL SAYS PRESENCE OF MARINES IN LEBANON 'ESSENTIAL' TO PROGRESS THAT HAS BEEN MADE THERE By David Friedman

WASHINGTON, Jan. 8 (JTA) -- Deputy Secretary of State Kenneth Dam stressed today that the presence of the U.S. marines in Lebanon has been "essential" to the progress that has been made there, including the security talks going on now between the various factions in that country.

"We wouldn't be this far if the marines weren't there," Dam said on the NBC-TV "Meet the Press" program. He said it is "not constructive to lay down markers when the marines will leave" Lebanon or even be redeployed. He said the U.S. is not publicly discussing any changes in the marine position while the security talks are going on.

But he noted that if the Lebanese factions agree to the security plan and it is implemented and a climate for the reconciliation talks is created, the situation would be "transformed" and it will be possible to take "a new look at the role of the marines in Lebanon."

The proposed security plan would basically have the Lebanese army and police force move in between the warring factions in Lebanon and place the Beirut airport, where the marines are now stationed, in a neutral zone. The plan reportedly has the support of both Israel and Syria.

Dam today continued to maintain the low U.S. profile on the security plan negotiations. He noted that the negotiations "have not involved the United States" but are between the various factions in Lebanon and the occasional participation of Syria and Saudi Arabia. He said it was "dangerous to be hopeful or unhelpful" about

the negotiations but noted that the talks were a "positive trend." The U.S. official seemed to give Syria some credit for this development. "The Syrians no longer seem intent on sabotaging the progress," he said. "In fact, up to now, they have acquiesced perhaps more than acquiesced in the security talks."

Dam said the reason appeared to be that "the Syrians have become more cautious. Perhaps that is because we have shown we are willing to defend our marines." He added another reason, maybe "the rest of the Arab world has become more and more concerned about Syrian aggressiveness."

Dam restated the Administration's position that the Rev. Jesse Jackson's trip to Damascus which resulted in the release of captured Naval pilot Lt. Robert Goodman, did not have any "implications" on Mideast diplomacy. He noted that it was a "humanitarian gesture" but said the gesture "can only improve relations between the United States and Syria."

The contention by Jackson, a candidate for the Democratic nomination for the Presidency, and others that Syria and the U.S. have not been talking, was denied by Dam. He said that prior to the May 17 Israel-Lebanon agreement, Syria did not want to take part in the negotiations.

But Dam said that since then the various U.S. Mideast negotiators have had a "full dialogue" with the Syrians and U.S. Ambassador Robert Raganelli has always had "full access" to the Syrian government.

ISRAEL DENIES ITS TANKS WENT ON A RAMPAGE IN SIDON By Hugh Orgel

TEL AVIV, Jan. 8 (JTA) -- The Israel Defense Force has denied reports from Sidon that IDF crews in Merkava tanks "went berserk" in the town yesterday and fired indiscriminately, wounding residents and damaging cars and other property.

The army spokesman pointed out that there were no Merkava tanks in Sidon yesterday nor any Israeli tanks in the possession of Maj. Saad Haddad's south Lebanon militia which might have been mistaken for Israeli tanks. The spokesman said that the news agencies which reported the incident had no resident correspondents there.

According to the army spokesman, Israeli forces in personnel carriers on patrol in the main street spotted a car parked in an area where parking is banned, to prevent booby-trapped cars from being left there. When the owner or the driver of the car could not be found, the IDF crews fired at the vehicle to detonate any possible bombs in it, in accordance with standing army regulations in such instances, of which the Lebanese residents were fully aware.

The Sidon area last week was the scene of three terrorist attacks within two days against IDF forces. There were no Israeli casualties in any of the attacks. Last night, a bomb exploded near a parked car in Sidon. Overnight, explosions damaged two Palestinian-owned shops.

Meanwhile, the IDF headquarters in Tel Aviv strenuously denied reports from Lebanon, including allegedly eye-witness reports, that its air raid last week on pro-Iranian terrorist bases near Baalbek had caused heavy civilian casualties. These reports claimed that 100 people had been killed and 400 wounded. The on-the-spot reports charged that Israeli planes had deliberately chosen civilian targets. But the IDF published aerial photographs taken with the aircraft's bomb-sight cameras before, during and after the raid showing pinpoint accuracy on military targets.

SOME 60,000 GOVERNMENT WORKERS ON STRIKE, ENGAGED IN 'JOB ACTIONS' OR THREATENING TO HALT WORK By David Landau and Hugh Orgel

JERUSALEM, Jan. 8 (JTA) -- About 60,000 government workers were on strike today, threatening to strike or engaged in various "job actions" that disrupted normal work. All are demanding higher pay or the reinstitution of overtime pay or travel allowances which were suspended as the government sought to reduce expenditures in face of the ongoing economic crisis.

Labor peace returned Friday to the Foreign Ministry where employees ended an escalating series of sanctions after receiving a written promise from Civil Service Commissioner Avraham Natan that their "special status" would be recognized now with commensurate remuneration to follow in due time.

But most of the rest of the bureaucracy is in turmoil. Defense Ministry workers are not paying suppliers' bills, not opening new bids and not clearing defense materials arriving at ports. The action has spread to New York where the Ministry maintains a procurement mission.

At the Welfare Ministry, some 5,000 employees are refusing to transfer payments to recipient institutions, are not answering correspondence and are threatening a full-scale strike. The Interior Ministry has stopped issuing passports and identity cards and has closed its doors to the public. The 3,500 clerks at the income tax bureau have refused to audit tax returns and have limited the number of taxpayers with problems that they receive daily.

Actions In Various Ministries

The country's 4,000 postal workers are awaiting the outcome of a meeting today before deciding whether to call a general strike that will stop mail deliveries and shut down post offices. The 3,000 employees at the Agriculture Ministry have frozen payments to farmers, suspended veterinary services and have stopped issuing import and export licences for agricultural products.

About 3,000 Transport Ministry workers are threatening to halt work tomorrow. That would mean suspension of the issuance of vehicle licenses and other services. At the Ministry of Commerce and Industry, 2,000 employees are threatening a job action on Tuesday.

The Engineers Association has given notice that its 28,000 members will go on strike January 22. Employees of the government-run Electric Corp. have refused to accept payment of bills and will not answer queries from the public.

The problems at the Foreign Ministry, which seem to be solved for the time being, stemmed from a long-standing demand by staff employees that their pay be equalized with the pay of Mossad, the intelligence service. The Ministry staff contends that they do much the same type of work, possess the same qualifications and face the same kind of hazards as Mossad agents, especially on overseas assignment.

Foreign Ministry Embarrassed

Their job action over the last week proved a severe embarrassment. Foreign diplomats were not granted admission to the Ministry. Premier Yitzhak Shamir who holds the Foreign Ministry portfolio and normally works out of that ministry on Thursdays, was forced to receive visitors at the Prime Minister's Office.

One of them was British MP Greville Janner, president of the Board of Deputies of British Jews, who

was told politely that he could not enter the Ministry for an appointment with Shamir. The Foreign Ministry staff had threatened to paralyze Israel's entire diplomatic establishment before the end of the month unless it received recognition, though the staffers are willing to hold their pay raise demands in abeyance due to the state of the economy.

The recognition was forthcoming in the letter from Natan last Friday to staff committee chairman Shmuel Moyal. Natan promised that once the national economy has been stabilized "serious negotiations" would begin to translate "recognition" into tangible compensation and improved work conditions. Moyal conceded that the Commissioner's letter was "not much" but it was still "something of a breakthrough" that warranted a return to normal.

ZIONIST COUNCIL EMBROILED IN CONTROVERSY OVER NOMINATION OF SHARON TO VACANT WZO-JEWISH AGENCY POST

By David Landau

JERUSALEM, Jan. 8 (JTA) -- The Zionist General Council opens its meeting here tonight embroiled in a major controversy over the nomination by the Herut Hatzohar movement of former Defense Minister Ariel Sharon for the vacant post of chairman of the World Zionist Organization-Jewish Agency Aliya Department.

Sharon, probably the most controversial figure in Israeli politics, has made it clear that he wants the post. But first the General Council must elect him a member of the WZO Executive. If he wins election, he must then be named by the Jewish Agency Board of Governors to the chairmanship of the Aliya Department.

While Premier Yitzhak Shamir supports his Herut party's choice, Sharon faces powerful opposition from Leon Dulzin, chairman of the WZO and Jewish Agency Executives and a leader of Likud's Liberal Party wing; and from Jerold Hoffberger of Baltimore, chairman of the Jewish Agency Board of Governors. The Liberal Party Executive nevertheless has endorsed Sharon.

Shamir Fails To Persuade Dulzin

Shamir tried and failed today to persuade Dulzin to change his mind. At a meeting between the two this afternoon, Dulzin maintained that Sharon, despite his many talents in other areas, was not suited for the aliya post.

Informed sources said Dulzin made it unequivocally clear to the Prime Minister that he would not support Sharon's candidacy although he agreed that chairmanship of the Aliya Department should go to a Herut person. But Herut will have to put up a candidate who will command widespread support in the Jewish world, both in Israel and abroad, Dulzin said.

Hoffberger, in an interview broadcast on the army radio station today, stated flatly that he could not support Sharon. While he praised the retired general as a military man, he asserted that he was not a person diaspora youth would follow.

The controversy surrounding Sharon stems from his hard-line policies while he served as Defense Minister in the government of former Premier Menachem Begin and especially his role in the Lebanon war. Sharon was forced to resign the defense portfolio last year on the recommendations of the Kahan Committee which investigated the Shatila and Sabra refugee camps massacre of September, 1982.

Although Sharon remains in the Cabinet as a Minister-Without-Portfolio, Hoffberger indicated that the shadow hanging over him compromised his acceptability for a position associated with the promotion of aliya.

Another problem faced by Sharon is the opinion of legal experts that he cannot serve as a member of the Jewish Agency Executive while a member of the Cabinet. Sharon for his part is not prepared to give up his Cabinet seat.

Dulzin predicted in an interview over the weekend that Sharon's candidacy will not be approved. Political sources said Herut Hatzohar seems to realize that it lacks the votes to assure his election to the Executive and has postponed debate on the issue, which was to begin tomorrow, to later in the week. Herut activists have warned, however, that if their man is rejected, the party might leave the WZO.

Lineup Of Major Parties

Political pundits said today that when the matter comes up for a vote, the World Confederation of General Zionists, which includes Hadassah, might hold the balance of power. Labor Zionists, vehemently opposed to Sharon, have called for a secret ballot which is not usual in elections to the Executive.

The Liberal Party is split. Two of its Cabinet members, Gideon Patt, Minister of Commerce and Industry, and Abraham Sharir, Minister of Tourism, do not share Dulzin's view. They were reportedly seeking to persuade their overseas allies, members of the World Union of General Zionists, to back Sharon. The World Union has allowed its members a free vote.

LENINGRAD HUNGER STRIKER PUT IN MENTAL HOSPITAL, RABBI ARRESTED

NEW YORK, Jan. 8 (JTA) -- A hunger-striking Leningrad refusenik has been put in a mental hospital and a Central Asian rabbi arrested, according to the Student Struggle for Soviet Jewry (SSSJ) and Union of Councils for Soviet Jews (UCSJ).

Nadezhda Fradkova, 36, of Leningrad, who for six years has sought to emigrate to Israel, began a protest hunger strike on December 23. On January 3, she was forcibly taken from her home to Psychiatric Hospital #9. Moscow activists appealed to the authorities to save her health by granting her emigration.

During her strike, she had difficulty breathing and felt very weak. Fradkova had also fasted for over 40 days beginning last March in an unsuccessful attempt to gain an exit visa. Then police ended her action with forced feeding.

The SSSJ and UCSJ also reported that Central Asian rabbi Moshe Abramov has been arrested for unauthorized teaching of religion and "malicious hooliganism". No other details are immediately available.

JERUSALEM (JTA) -- Finance Minister Yigal Cohen-Orgad has extended until Tuesday the deadline for each ministry to submit proposed budget cuts that will amount to a nine percent across-the-board reduction of government expenditures. The proposals were to have been in the hands of the Ministerial Economic Committee last Friday. The key issue is the defense budget. Treasury sources said Sunday that if the Defense Ministry makes meaningful cuts, the other ministries would have to follow through.

SYRIAN ENVOY SAYS HE IS LOOKING INTO REPORT OF THE BRUTAL SLAYING OF A JEWISH MOTHER AND HER TWO KIDS

LOS ANGELES, Jan. 8 (JTA) -- Ambassador Rafik Joujati of Syria assured officials of the Simon Wiesenthal Center at Yeshiva University of Los Angeles that "I am looking closely" into the report that a pregnant Jewish mother and her two children were brutally murdered in Aleppo on December 28. He wrote to the Center officials, in response to a telegram they had sent him, that "I did not have details and shall inform you" when he ascertains the facts.

Rabbi Marvin Hier, dean, and Rabbi Abraham Cooper, associate dean of the Wiesenthal Center, in their telegram to Joujati, dated January 4, wrote that "At the very hour that (U.S. Navy pilot) Lt. Robert Goodman reached the United States (after being released by the Syrian government last Tuesday) the Simon Wiesenthal Center was shocked and outraged to receive information of the brutal murders" of Lillian Abadi, 25, her six-year-old son and three-and-a-half year old daughter who "were shot and hacked to death in their homes in the Jewish quarter."

The telegram to the Ambassador added that "the American public and all decent people everywhere will be watching to see if the same Syrian authorities who spoke so glowingly of their country's 'humanitarian and compassionate' gesture in the Goodman case will not turn their backs on the perpetrators of the repugnant crime, and if Syria will take measures to reassure the physical safety of its Jewish minority."

Joujati, in his reply, dated January 6, stated: "While I am on record of appreciating your concern I wish you did not choose to speak sarcastically about the release of Goodman who, I understand, is of your own U.S. nationality. Also your humanitarianism and fair-mindedness would be tested when your position is made known about (the December 6) massacre by the U.S./Israeli clusterbombs of the children of Baalbek. Let us work for peace and justice for all without discrimination."

The envoy's reference to the "clusterbombs" was the first time any source had asserted that Israel, in its raid on terrorist centers in Baalbek in central Lebanon, used clusterbombs. None of the media reports on the raid made any reference to such weapons.

RABBI YISRAEL ABU-HATZEIRA DEAD AT 94

JERUSALEM, Jan. 8 (JTA) -- Rabbi Yisrael Abu-Hatzeira, spiritual leader of Moroccan Jews around the world and revered in all Orthodox circles, died today at the age of 94. He was buried in Netivot in the northern Negev, his hometown. Many thousands attended the funeral.

Called "the Baba Sali," he was a scion of the famous Moroccan rabbinical family of Abu-Hatzeira, a grandson of Rabbi Yaacov Abu-Hatzeira whose grave in Egypt is still a holy site revered by Jews and Moslems alike.

Rabbi Yisrael Abu-Hatzeira was widely held to be a mystic figure and a "miracle worker." Orthodox Jews in Israel and abroad, Sephardim and Ashkenazim alike, would consult him on medical problems and personal matters. Often waiting outside his modest home in Netivot, people would hang on his every word believing him to be a true "tzadik" (holy man).

His son, Rabbi Meir Abu-Hatzeira, also renowned and revered in Orthodox circles, died last week. Among his nephews is Aharon Abu-Hatzeira, the Tami leader and former Minister of Religion.

KAHANE ORDERED RELEASED ON 25,000 SHEKEL BAIL By Gil Sedan

JERUSALEM, Jan. 8 (JTA) -- A magistrate court judge today rejected a request by police authorities that Rabbi Meir Kahane be detained for three days and instead ordered that the leader of the ultra-nationalist Kach be released on 25,000 Shekel bail. The judge also ordered Kahane to surrender his passport to police authorities to prevent his fleeing the country.

Kahane was arrested last Thursday when he held a demonstration with a small group of his followers to express solidarity with an extremist Jewish group calling itself "Terror Against Terror" which has claimed responsibility for a recent series of attacks against Moslem and Christian sites.

However, Kahane managed to escape from the police and spent the weekend in hiding. He turned himself in to the authorities after having written a letter to Jerusalem's police chief, saying that under the circumstances he first had to contact the media.

While publicly claiming that he did not know who was responsible for the attacks on the religious sites, Kahane has supported the actions of "Terror Against Terror." He said today that just as anti-war groups had the right to demonstrate against the Lebanon war, he had the right to demonstrate for his beliefs.

Christian Chapel Torched

Shortly after Kahane escaped from police custody Thursday, a Christian chapel in Jerusalem was torched by unidentified arsonists. But police maintain that it was unlikely that Kahane or any Jewish terrorist group were involved. It is believed to have been carried out by some anti-missionary group which opposes the efforts of the organization which owns the chapel and which believes in attracting Jews to the church but without asking them to convert.

Mayor Teddy Kolek condemned the arson and expressed astonishment that rabbinical leaders did not see fit to join his condemnation. In Europe, he said, bishops would have condemned a similar attack on a synagogue. Kolek, who has publicly objected to missionary activity, said that even if the chapel did house a congregation of missionaries, that was no excuse for violence.

BONN (JTA) -- Non-Jewish youth volunteers from East Germany and several other European countries have done clean-up maintenance work at two East Berlin Jewish cemeteries recently, it was reported here. In one case, six Dutch and four East German youths volunteered several days' work at the cemetery in Schoenhauser Alle, an area where many Jews lived before World War II. In another, 10 East Germans were joined by two Slovakian youths and one from England to work at the central Jewish cemetery on Herbert Baum Street in the Weissensee section of East Berlin. The East Berlin Jewish community arranged an information program for the volunteers.

LONDON (JTA) -- Lord Marcus Sieff is to retire next July as chairman of Marks and Spencer, Britain's leading retail chain co-founded by his grandfather, Michael Marks, in Leeds 100 years ago. He will remain its president. Lord Rayner will succeed him as chairman.