

U.S. CONCEDES THAT HUSSEIN'S REJECTION OF TALKS WITH ISRAEL WILL MAKE IT HARDER TO PREVENT MOVE IN CONGRESS TO BLOCK ARMS SALE TO JORDAN By David Friedman

WASHINGTON, March 15 (JTA) -- The Reagan Administration conceded today that the rejection by King Hussein of Jordan of any negotiations with Israel at this time will make it harder to prevent the move in Congress to block the sale of Stinger anti-aircraft missiles to Jordan.

"It does make it more difficult," White House spokesman Larry Speakes said. "I wouldn't pronounce it dead yet." State Department spokesman John Hughes said the Administration intends to go ahead with the sale of the weapon which can be fired by a single person, as well as the joint rapid deployment force between the U.S. and Jordan.

Rep. Larry Smith (D. Fla.) introduced a bill in the House yesterday to block the sale of 1,600 Stinger missiles and launchers to Jordan and another 1,200 to Saudi Arabia. A similar bill is expected to be introduced in the Senate next week.

Hussein, in an interview published in The New York Times today, said that U.S. "credibility has suffered" because it has made a "choice" for Israel "and support of Israel. That being the case, there is no hope of achieving anything."

Timing Of Hussein's Statement Noted

Both Speakes and Hughes said the Administration was surprised by the King's statement, especially as it was made a day after President Reagan, in a speech to the National United Jewish Appeal Young Leadership Conference Tuesday, urged the need to support Jordan because that country is "crucial to the peace process." Hughes said that both Hussein and Israel had received advanced copies of the speech.

Hughes noted Reagan had made clear in his speech that he "continues to uphold the view outlined in his September 1, 1982 peace initiative, including that the status of Jerusalem must be settled by negotiations and that Israel's settlement policy on the West Bank and Gaza does not contribute to the peace process." Reagan reportedly made these same points in a cable sent to Hussein today asking for an explanation of the King's remarks.

Speakes stressed that the Administration is still committed to the Reagan peace initiative as "the only fair and workable outline for a peace settlement that is currently out."

Facing Some Serious Problems

"The King's remarks point to some serious problems we face," Hughes said. "The forces of extremism and terrorism are complicating the situation in the region, increasing the risk to moderates who contemplate joining the peace process. This bears out the President's concern that American consistency, American credibility are crucial to the hopes for peace."

"The Congress shares in this responsibility to make sure that the United States is a steadfast and reliable friend of all those who are interested in peaceful solutions," Hughes continued. "This applies to Jordan."

Smith said today that Congress has proven its support for Jordan by appropriating more than \$100 million in foreign military credits annually. The House Foreign Affairs Committee approved this appropriation today.

But Smith and Rep. Benjamin Gilman (R. N.Y.), one of the co-sponsors of the bill to block the Stinger sale, said at a press conference yesterday that providing the Stingers should not be used as a means to induce Jordan to join in the peace process.

"We have no reason to believe such arms sales ever encourage peace," Smith said. He said for too long the U.S. has been unsuccessfully using a "carrot and stick approach." "We give them all the carrots and they beat us over the head with it," he said.

Gilman noted that "neither Jordan or Saudi Arabia have shown any willingness to support the Camp David accords," or to "come to the conference table." Gilman added that "our refusal to sell advanced technology to Egypt" before the Israeli-Egyptian peace treaty "set a precedent that should be followed in this case -- no weapons without a sincere move toward peace."

The Congressmen also warned that the weapon could threaten Israel, by falling into the hands of the Soviet Union and because of its easy portability makes "an ideal terrorist weapon."

Cites Ebb And Flow Of Mideast Peace Process

Hughes noted today that there are always ups and downs in the Mideast peace process and while Hussein was pessimistic now, he has been less pessimistic before and could be so again. He stressed that for more than three decades, the U.S. has followed a "consistent and principled policy of promoting Arab-Israeli negotiations. Both sides must know that there is no possibility of progress toward peace in the absence of negotiations Backing away from negotiations, even temporarily, does nothing for the Palestinian cause."

Hughes added that "the United States had had, does have and will always have a strong friendship with Israel." But he said that the progress that has already been made "shows that friendship is fully compatible with successful Arab-Israeli negotiations."

JEWISH COMMUNITY RE-EMPHASIZES ITS OPPOSITION TO PRO-SCHOOL PRAYER AMENDMENT TO THE CONSTITUTION By Ben Gallob

NEW YORK, March 15 (JTA) -- The opposition of the American Jewish community to any pro-school prayer amendment to the Constitution was re-emphasized today in a letter signed by more than 250 experts in constitutional law and in a statement issued by the constituent agencies of the Leadership Conference of National Jewish Women's Organizations.

With President Reagan personally leading a fight for approval in Congress for some kind of constitutional amendment language, the issue is currently bogged down in the Senate over complexities of language and issues of governmental involvement. The Supreme Court has repeatedly affirmed that prayer in the nation's public schools, whatever the format, is unconstitutional.

A proposed amendment must be approved by a three-fourth's vote in both houses of Congress and subsequently by three-fourths of the legislatures of the 50 states. The battle has been started by Reagan's strategists in the Senate because it is currently controlled by the Republican Party.

The announcement of the letter from the law experts from around the country was made by Norman Redlich, New York University Law School dean and co-chairman of the Commission on Law and Social Action of the American Jewish Congress.

The letter, which has been circulated to members of the Senate by the AJCongress and People for the American Way, states that a constitutional amendment "would permit government officials to become directly and actively involved in sponsoring religious activities in public schools and other public buildings, even to the point of favoring one faith over others. Such an amendment would strike at the heart of the American tradition of religious liberty and separation of church and state."

Warns Against Undermining First Amendment

The statement by the Jewish women's leadership conference noted that "nothing presently in the Constitution prevents a child from praying in school, but a school prayer amendment would make it an organized activity which would seriously undermine" the church-state separation principle in the First Amendment.

The conference comprises representatives of the AJCongress, American Mizrahi Women, B'nai B'rith Women, Emunah Women of America, Hadassah, National Council of Jewish Women, National Federation of Temple Sisterhoods, National Ladies Auxiliary of the Jewish War Veterans, Pioneer Women/Naamat, Women's American ORT, Women's Branch of the Orthodox Union, and the Women's League for Conservative Judaism.

Hadassah and Pioneer Women/Naamat also issued separate statements opposing a constitutional amendment for "moments of silence" in public schools.

Attitude By Jewish Religious Groups

The Agudath Israel of America stated that "in principle" the Orthodox agency "favors the return of American society to religious beliefs and values, and we feel that prayer in public schools could indeed serve as a vehicle to elevate the tone of religion in this country."

"On the other hand, we oppose any constitutional amendment ... which is couched in terms that would leave the door open for the institution of sectarian prayer in public schools by parents or other groups with vested interests" or amendments "which would encourage classroom disputes and the unwarranted intrusion of any particular 'majority religion'."

The Rabbinical Assembly of America, the United Synagogue of America and the Women's League for Conservative Judaism issued a joint statement saying that the place for prayers is in the home and in the houses of worship.

It pointed out that "at the heart of American democracy is the principle of reverence for religious pluralism. This is best achieved by an official neutrality towards all religions." The introduction of prayers in public schools "through government fiat creates the danger of tearing apart the fabric of American society" based on religious pluralism.

SHARON: ISRAEL WILL BE THE ONLY TARGET OF THE ARMS THE U.S. INTENDS TO SELL JORDAN
By Yitzhak Rabi

NEW YORK, March 15 (JTA) -- Former Defense Minister Ariel Sharon warned last night that Israel will be the only target of the sophisticated arms that the United States intends to sell Jordan.

"I am here to warn against the Administration's intention to sell arms to Jordan, arms that will be used to fight Israel and not any other country in the Mideast," Sharon told an audience of more than 1,300 people at the annual fundraising dinner of Or Chadash Girls' Town in Galilee, held at the New York Hilton Hotel.

Sharon, who presently serves as a Minister-Without-Portfolio, said that the sophisticated missiles the U.S. wants to sell Jordan will eventually "fall in the hands of the PLO." He added: "The United States must stop immediately the dangerous arms race in the Mideast."

U.S. European Countries Criticized

Sharon also criticized the United States for not "stopping" the "lunatic Iraqi regime" from using chemical weapons in its on-going war with Iran. Recalling that on June 7, 1981 Israel destroyed the Iraqi nuclear plant near Baghdad, he underscored the fact that the "way the Iraqis now use their death chemical gas weapons" is the way they could have used the nuclear weapons "if we did not stop them."

Sharon accused unnamed European countries of aiding Iraq in the gas production and urged the Reagan Administration and the Europeans to pressure Iraq to stop the use of chemical weapons, which, he noted, is prohibited by the Geneva Convention and constitutes "a danger to the Mideast and the whole world."

Charges That Reagan Was Misled

Sharon, who was Defense Minister when Israel invaded Lebanon in June 1982, warned that the United States and the whole free world are in the process of losing Lebanon to Soviet domination. He said that Lebanon might turn now into a new base for international terrorism.

He also repeated charges he made recently, that a number of President Reagan's aides, such as Philip Habib, Morris Draper and Ambassador Samuel Lewis, "misled" the President of the United States and did not let us (the Israelis) finish our mission against the PLO in Lebanon.

Sharon said that Israel will never negotiate the future of Jerusalem, "the heart of the Jewish people." He declared: "Israel will not negotiate the future of Jerusalem with its neighbors and not with the United States, which suggested it," referring apparently to Reagan's speech this week in which he said that his September 1, 1982 Mideast peace initiative "remains the best option for all parties."

Last night's dinner was chaired by Joe Nakash, chairman of the Jordach Enterprises. Nakash and his brothers, Ralph and Avi, have been active with Or Chadash since 1979. They donated an Olympic-sized swimming pool and a six-acre campground for the school in 1982.

MOVE TO IMPROVE FRANCO-ISRAELI TIES

PARIS, March 15 (JTA) -- Laurent Fabius, the French Minister of Industry, has just returned from a

visit to Israel which he believes will improve relations between the two countries and reinforce bilateral cooperation in various fields, informed sources here said today.

Fabius met with the Israeli Minister of Commerce and Industry, Gideon Patt. They agreed to establish a Franco-Israeli association for the development of scientific and technical research, leading to joint projects. Fabius expressed the hope that this type of cooperation would benefit the industry and commerce of both countries, the sources said.

Describing his visit as "fruitful," he noted that there have been ups and downs in Franco-Israeli relations and they are presently on the upswing. There is, however, a substantial trade gap. French exports to Israel totalled \$2.5 billion over the past nine years while its imports from Israel amounted to \$1.7 billion.

RALLY MARKS INTERNATIONAL DAY OF SOLIDARITY WITH SOVIET JEWS By Yitzhak Rabi

NEW YORK, March 15 (JTA) — The International Day of Solidarity with Soviet Jews was marked today by a rally opposite to the Soviet Mission to the United Nations here. More than 300 people, most of them students from the Ramaz Jewish Day School, participated in the rally carrying placards and signs reading "Let Soviet Jews Emigrate," and "Let Soviet Jews Live Jewish Life."

The rally, which lasted more than an hour, was organized by the Leadership Development Division of the United Jewish Appeal—Federation Campaign in cooperation with the New York Conference on Soviet Jewry.

The protest rally also marked the seventh anniversary of the arrest of Soviet Jewish dissident Anatoly Shcharansky.

Says Efforts Must Continue

New York State Attorney General Robert Abrams, who is a former chairman of the New York Council on Soviet Jewry, said in a short speech to the demonstrators that the efforts on behalf of Soviet Jewry must continue. "Our message is that we shall not forget (Soviet Jews) and that we are dedicated to the struggle of free emigration" for those Russian Jews who want to leave.

Abrams pointed out the emigration of Soviet Jew in 1983 was "a trickle," with only 1,314 Jews receiving exit visas. He said that judging by the first two months of 1984, the emigration of Soviet Jews this year will be even lower than last year.

Abrams also charged that Jews who seek to emigrate are subject now to more "intimidation and oppression" than previously. He said that it is "imperative" that American Jews continue to be active on behalf of Soviet Jewry because past experience had shown that Jewish pressure in America was effective in helping many Soviet Jews gain their freedom and receive an exit visa.

The rally concluded with a public Minchah (afternoon) service conducted by students of the Ramaz school with a Torah scroll from which they recited the prayer. The Minchah service, Ta'anit Esther, (the fast of Esther), deals with Queen Esther's efforts to save her Jewish brethren in ancient Persia. The Minchah service commemorated it against the background of the plight of Soviet Jewry.

Meanwhile, earlier today five Hispanic organizations joined the Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rith to protest Soviet curtailment of Jewish emigration. At the end of their meeting at the Park East Synagogue, across the street from the Soviet Mission to the United Nations, representatives of the Hispanic organizations left a letter of protest at the steps of the Mission.

The letter was addressed to Oleg Troyanovsky, the Soviet Ambassador to the UN. It was signed by Nathan Nagler, chairman of the New York Regional Board of the ADL; Nestor Llamas, executive director of Governor Mario Cuomo's Advisory Committee for Hispanic Affairs; and Angelo Del Toro, New York State Assemblyman and chairman of the Black and Hispanic Caucus of the New York State legislature.

It said: "Only 1,314 Jews were permitted to leave (the Soviet Union) in 1983, the lowest number in 20 years ... The blatant denial of human rights for Jews who have expressed a desire to leave the Soviet Union is intolerable."

The letter called on the Soviet Union to live up to the "obligation which it assumed by committing itself to the Helsinki accords" and to allow unrestricted Jewish emigration and allow Jews in the USSR to freely practice their faith.

B'NAI B'RITH INTERNATIONAL ANNOUNCES THAT IT WILL 'ADOPT' ENTIRE SOVIET JEWISH COMMUNITIES

WASHINGTON, March 15 (JTA) — B'nai B'rith International, which has been "adopting" individual Soviet Jewish refuseniks over the last several years, announced yesterday that it will take that concept a giant step further by "adopting" entire Soviet Jewish communities.

In letters to B'nai B'rith leaders around the world, B'nai B'rith president Gerald Kraft and executive vice president Dr. Daniel Thursz said that the Jewish Service organization's local councils will be paired, beginning today, with cities in the Soviet Union in an ongoing program.

Several dozen cities have already been coupled, they said. Only those Soviet cities with known refuseniks and a significant Jewish population are being selected.

Kraft and Thursz noted that today has been designated by world Jewish organizations as the International Day of Concern for Soviet Jewry. That designation they explained, was inspired by B'nai B'rith's worldwide demonstration last year, on the eve of the Third World Conference on Soviet Jewry in Jerusalem. More than 100 B'nai B'rith communities proclaimed their solidarity with Soviet Jewry with rallies, demonstrations, teach-ins, and petitions.

B'nai B'rith International is providing its local groups with profiles of known refuseniks in their adopted community; instructions on communicating with Jews in that city; and a step-by-step guide on implementing the program.

Among the steps are: serving as the voice for a Soviet community that is denied the right to speak for itself; in effect, the local B'nai B'rith has been "appointed" special advocate for that Soviet Jewry community; carrying on correspondence with refuseniks; and informing the local media about the adopted Soviet Jewish community.

JEWISH NEWS OF DETROIT PURCHASED BY A BALTIMORE-BASED GROUP OF INVESTORS By Ben Gallab

NEW YORK, March 15 (JTA) -- The Jewish News of Detroit, for which Philip Slomovitz has served as editor and publisher for more than three decades, has been purchased by a Baltimore-based group of investors.

During the past two decades, there have been many changes in ownership of Jewish news media but the Detroit-Baltimore change marked the first time a privately-owned Jewish newspaper has been purchased by another privately-owned Jewish newspaper.

Buerger Is New Publisher; Rosenblatt Is New Editor

The new publisher and principal owner of the Detroit Jewish News is Charles Buerger, who is also publisher of the Baltimore Jewish Times, described as Maryland's largest weekly publication.

Buerger, 45, named Gary Rosenblatt, 37, editor of the Baltimore Jewish Times, to be editor of the Detroit Jewish weekly. Rosenblatt continues as editor of the Baltimore weekly, commuting regularly to Detroit to supervise editing and production of the Detroit publication. Financial terms of the transaction were not disclosed.

The first issue of the Detroit weekly under its new ownership and editorship appears tomorrow, dated March 16.

Slomovitz, who is 87 years old, is the acknowledged dean of American Jewish journalists. He has written a widely-read column, "Purely Commentary," uninterruptedly for 63 years. His weekly column appears in the March 16 issue as the first by him in his new capacity as Editor Emeritus.

Slomovitz said that his son, Carmi, now 50, will continue as business manager of the Detroit weekly, a post he has held for 28 years.

Buerger said "we are proud and excited to become a part of Detroit's vibrant Jewish community and plan to continue to build upon an already excellent and respected newspaper." He said plans had been made to provide more in-depth local coverage, features and news stories and enhance the graphics and the image of the Detroit weekly.

Slomovitz Recognized Internationally

Recognized internationally for his efforts on behalf of Jewry, Israel and his fellow-man, Slomovitz has received awards in the field of journalism from Jewish and non-Jewish associates and agencies. Born in Minsk, he completed the equivalent of a high school education at the age of 13 just before immigrating to the United States where his family settled in Bayonne, N.J.

His first articles in print, two years after he arrived in that city, were publicity pieces for the Jewish Relief Committee which appeared in the now defunct Bayonne Times. He subsequently entered the University of Michigan where he embarked on a life-long journalistic career, starting as a night editor of the Michigan Daily, the university student publication. He was a reporter for the Detroit News and an editor of the Detroit Jewish Chronicle which was incorporated with the Detroit Jewish News in 1951.

Slomovitz became associated with the Jewish Telegraphic Agency in 1920, "professionally and in friendship," as he put it, with Jacob Landau who founded the JTA. He has served as a vice president of JTA for many years.

His services on behalf of Jewry and his fellow man have brought Slomovitz many local and national awards. These have included the first Detroit chapter of Hadassah Myrtle Award; the St. Cyprian Journalistic Award for Communal Betterment; and the first Boris Smolar Award for Excellence in North American Jewish Journalism, which is presented annually by the Council of Jewish Federations.

Slomovitz also has received the American Association for Jewish Education Award; the American Jewish Tercentenary Award; and an award from the Detroit Round Table of the National Conference of Christians and Jews.

He has served as president of the American Jewish Press Association; the Zionist Organization of Detroit; the Detroit chapter of the American Jewish Congress; the Jewish National Fund Council of Detroit; and the University of Michigan Menorah Society.

He is a board member of the United Hebrew Schools of Detroit; a member of Congregation Shaarey Zedek; the Overseas Press Club; ORT, Sigma Delta Chi journalism fraternity; and the Detroit chapter of the American Society for Technion.

A special honor has conferred on him by the Technion in Haifa in 1977 with establishment of the Philip Slomovitz Chair in the Hebrew Language.

Buerger Is Active In The Jewish Community

Buerger is a publisher of Who's Who in World Jewry and active in the Baltimore Jewish community. He is a member of the board of the Associated Jewish Charities and Welfare Fund and of its campaign cabinet. He has served on the boards of the Baltimore Jewish Council, the ZOA, and the Johns Hopkins Children's Development Fund.

Rosenblatt Has Won Many Awards

Rosenblatt is a five-time winner of the Smolar Award and has twice won the Rockover Award given annually by the American Jewish Press Association.

Rosenblatt has been editor of the Baltimore Jewish Times for more than nine years and previously was assistant editor of the Jewish Week in New York and national programming sports editor of TV Guide. He also has written regularly for The New York Times and the Jewish Chronicle of London and has contributed to a number of national publications.

He said "it is an honor for me to be working with Phil Slomovitz, a mentor and an inspiration to anyone in the field of Jewish journalism."

He and Buerger pledged to remain true to the ideas of the credo of The Jewish News, set out in 1942 when Slomovitz founded the publication. These include the pursuit of truth, service to the Jewish community and to remain a patron of principle rather than a disciple of partisanship.

Under Buerger and Rosenblatt, the Baltimore Jewish Times has more than doubled its size during the past decade to a current average of 140 pages a week, and has won many national awards for its news and feature reporting, editorials and graphic design.

TEL AVIV (JTA) -- The cost-of-living index rose by 12 percent in February, the Central Bureau of Statistics reported Thursday. It was the highest increase ever registered for that month and double the rise in February, 1983.