

**HIGHLIGHTS OF THE YEAR 5744**

By Kevin Freeman

NEW YORK, Sept. 26 (JTA) — As the year 5744 came to a close, Israeli Premier Shimon Peres predicted that Israeli troops will leave Lebanon during 5745. President Reagan said his September, 1982, Mideast peace initiative "remains a realistic and workable approach, and I am committed to it as firmly as on the day I announced it."

Israeli Deputy Premier and Foreign Minister Yitzhak Shamir met with Soviet Foreign Minister Andrei Gromyko at the Soviet Mission to the United Nations, the first such meeting in three years. Their 90-minute meeting was described as "remarkably free of polemics." Shamir also met with Egyptian Foreign Minister Abdel Meguid in New York, the first Israeli-Egyptian contact on the foreign ministerial level since the Egyptians recalled their Ambassador from Tel Aviv in September, 1982, during the war in Lebanon.

And in south Lebanon, two Israelis were killed and 10 were wounded in seven incidents several days before Rosh Hashanah began, bringing the casualty toll since the war started in Lebanon to 597 dead and nearly 4,000 injured.

**THE MIDDLE EAST:  
SEPTEMBER 1983--**

A ceasefire goes into effect in Lebanon ending three weeks of fierce fighting that began with the IDF withdrawal from the Shouf region. President Reagan hails the ceasefire as the first step toward settlement of the Lebanese conflict.

**OCTOBER --**

With Israel in the role of observer and the U.S. and Syria as active participants, nine leaders of Lebanon's warring factions meet in Geneva for the first round of national reconciliation talks.

President Hosni Mubarak of Egypt meets with a delegation of American Jewish leaders and assures them of Egypt's continued commitment to the peace treaty with Israel, although he provides no clue as to when Egypt would return its Ambassador to Israel, recalled in September, 1982.

Yitzhak Shamir, in his first Knesset speech as Israel's Premier, calls for an end to "the mad arms race" in the Middle East and expresses his disappointment with the "cold peace" between Israel and Egypt.

Two suicide attacks with truckloads of high explosives demolish the U.S. and French military headquarters in Beirut, killing 241 American servicemen and 58 French soldiers.

**NOVEMBER --**

The Senate Appropriations Committee puts an end to a Reagan Administration plan to arm elite units of the Jordanian army as part of the U.S. rapid deployment force in the Mideast when it votes to delete from the 1984 military spending bill \$220 million previously authorized for the project.

A behind-the-scenes quarrel between Israel and the U.S. over America's failure to avail itself of Israel's offer of medical aid to marines wounded in the bombing in Beirut in October is resolved with Secretary of State George Shultz informing Premier Yitzhak Shamir that the U.S. decision was not motivated by political considerations.

A suicide truck bomb attack on Israel's military headquarters in Tyre, south Lebanon, destroys one building, severely damages two others and leave 29 Israeli soldiers and border policemen and 31 Lebanese dead and scores injured.

Six Israeli soldiers held as POWs by the Al Fatah arm of the PLO for 14 months are freed under a prisoner exchange agreement in return for 4,600 Palestinian and Lebanese prisoners held in Israel and in the Ansor POW camp in south Lebanon.

Shamir and Defense Minister Mashe Arens end two days of talks with Reagan and other top Administration officials in Washington with wide ranging agreements that commit Israel and the U.S. to closer cooperation than ever before in the Middle East.

**DECEMBER --**

PLO chief Yasir Arafat and some 4,000 of his loyalist forces safely evacuate Tripoli aboard Greek ships flying UN flags after weeks of fighting between Arafat loyalists and Syrian-backed PLO dissident forces who oppose Arafat's leadership.

Arafat meets in Cairo with Mubarak in what the United States describes as an "encouraging development," infuriating Israel which calls the meeting an "encouragement to terrorism."

**JANUARY 1984 --**

President Chaim Herzog of Israel visits Zaire and Liberia in the first visit to Africa by an Israeli President since the African nations severed diplomatic ties with the Jewish State after the Yom Kippur War.

West German Chancellor Helmut Kohl pays a five-day official visit to Israel, described as a success for both Germany and the Jewish State but yet overshadowed by Germany's past and serious differences between Israel and the Bonn government over how to achieve peace in the Mideast.

France and Saudi Arabia conclude a \$3 billion arms agreement providing for the sale of French-made highly sophisticated electronic equipment. While details of the agreement are kept secret, press reports say France will provide the desert kingdom with the latest French ground-to-air missiles, the Shahine.

**FEBRUARY --**

Reagan, in a complete reversal of stated U.S. policy, announces that the U.S. marines in Lebanon will pull out of Beirut in a phased withdrawal to ships of the U.S. Sixth Fleet offshore, in a move described as a "redeployment," not a "withdrawal."

With the situation in Lebanon deteriorating, Shamir makes it clear that should Lebanon back away from the May 17, 1983 Israel-Lebanon accord, Israel will "consider itself released from any commitment it undertook within the framework of that agreement" and "will ensure the security of its northern border with or without the agreement."

The New York Times reports that the Reagan Administration held talks with the PLO through an intermediary, John Mroz, a Middle East specialist, over a period of nine months and reportedly had 50 meetings with PLO chief Arafat.

The House Foreign Affairs subcommittee on Europe and the Middle East hands the Administration a setback when it adopts an amendment that would forbid the sale of advanced weaponry to Jordan unless the President certifies that Jordan is "publicly committed" to recognizing Israel.

Mubarak, joined by King Hussein of Jordan, meets with Reagan at the White House, and charges that the current crisis in Lebanon was caused by Israel's invasion of that country in June, 1982. He also urges a U.S.-PLO dialogue.

MARCH --

Lebanon formally abrogates its May 17, 1983 withdrawal and security agreement with Israel. Israel blames Syria for "forcing Lebanon to surrender to a diktat which means a death sentence for Lebanon's independence."

Reagan, while stressing the U.S. commitment to maintain strong, close ties with Israel, urges in a speech to 2,000 persons at the National United Jewish Appeal Young Leadership Conference in Washington that American Jewry support the sale of advanced U.S. military hardware to Jordan, a country still technically in a state of war with Israel.

The second round of Lebanese national reconciliation talks ends in Lausanne after nine days of fruitless deliberations failing to achieve even a semblance of unity between leaders of the warring Christian and Moslem factions.

APRIL --

El Salvador becomes the second country after Costa Rica to move its Embassy from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem. The move coincides with a ceremony in San Salvador marking the arrival of a new Israel Ambassador after the Israeli Embassy was closed there five years ago.

Signs of an improvement in Egyptian-Soviet relations, strained for more than a decade, emerge with the announcement that the two countries have agreed in principle to exchange Ambassadors.

MAY --

President Luis Alfaro of Costa Rica says in an address to Jewish leaders in Panama City that he will "not give into diplomatic terrorism" and move his nation's Embassy out of Jerusalem. Egypt severs diplomatic ties with Costa Rica and El Salvador for the recent Embassy moves.

With debate centering on a proposed Congressional resolution urging Reagan to move the U.S. Embassy in Israel from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem, the State Department asserts that its decision on the locale of the Embassy will not be influenced by threats from Arab countries, although the Administration objects to the call to move the Embassy.

Israel begins efforts through diplomatic channels to obtain the release of three members of the Israeli mission in Beirut captured by Syrian forces after their car apparently strays off into Syrian held territory north of the Lebanon capital.

The first national conference of Moroccan Jewish communities is held in Rabat drawing some 500 participants and observers from abroad, including prominent American and French Jews, and most significantly, a 35 member Israeli delegation, 11 of whom are Knesset members representing both the Likud government coalition and the opposition Labor alignment.

The Reagan Administration formally withdraws its request for Congressional approval of a \$220 million plan to arm and equip a Jordanian strike force, pending further review.

The Administration's deputy trade representative, Robert Lighthizer, tells a Congressional panel that the U.S. stands to benefit substantially from the establishment of an American-Israel Free Trade Area that would eliminate all duties and tariff barriers on trade between the two countries.

Reagan uses special Presidential authority under the Arms Export Control Act to bypass Congressional

review of arms sales and announces that the U.S. has sold Saudi Arabia 400 shoulder-fired Stinger anti-aircraft missiles and 200 launchers for the weapons to be used to protect Saudi oil fields and shipping in the Persian Gulf, threatened by stepped up fighting in the Iran-Iraq war.

JUNE --

Six Israeli prisoners held by the Syrians for up to two years are exchanged for 291 Syrian POWs and 20 others, mostly Golan Heights Druze, in the first prisoner of war exchange in 10 years between Israel and Syria, worked out under the auspices of the International Red Cross.

The Israel Defense Force and the U.S. armed forces hold their first joint exercise under an agreement by both countries to provide medical assistance to cases of accidents or natural disasters to the forces of either in the region.

JULY --

Former Israeli President Ephraim Katzir and his wife, Nina Katzir, are detained for nearly 90 minutes by KGB officials -- one of them Hebrew-speaking -- in Leningrad after they attempt to visit the home of a Jewish refusenik.

An Austrian diplomat arrives in Tel Aviv with evidence that an Israeli soldier, Hezi Shai, reported missing in Lebanon two years ago, is alive and well, a prisoner of the Palestinian group, the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine-General Command.

AUGUST --

The U.S. says it continues to believe that an Israeli withdrawal from Lebanon "must be" in tandem with provisions for security on Israel's northern border, and reiterates a call for the "removal of all foreign forces from Lebanon."

Some 200 Lebanese school children attend a camp in Ashkelon National Park, arranged for by the IDF liaison office in south Lebanon, the purpose of which is to strengthen ties between Lebanese school children and Israel.

SEPTEMBER --

The American Embassy annex in Christian-dominated east Beirut is devastated in a suicide car bombing attack. At least two Americans and a dozen Lebanese are killed. The Islamic Jihad (Holy War) claims responsibility.

Stepped up attacks on the Israel Defense Force in south Lebanon brings the total of Israelis killed in Lebanon since the war there started in June, 1982, to 597 with nearly 4,000 injured.

Israeli Premier Shimon Peres predicts that the IDF will be withdrawn from Lebanon in 5745 and Deputy Premier Yitzhak Shamir says that Israel has asked the U.S. to mediate a withdrawal of the IDF with the Syrian government.

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#### INSIDE ISRAEL

SEPTEMBER 1983 --

After six years as Israeli Premier, 70 year old Menachem Begin stuns the nation when at a weekly Cabinet meeting he suddenly announces he will resign his post, saying "I simply cannot bear the responsibility any longer."

OCTOBER --

Some 20,000 people protesting against the continued Israeli presence in Lebanon pack the Ahziv Park just south of the Lebanese border in a demonstration organized by the Yesh Gvul (There is a Limit) movement.

Foreign Minister Yitzhak Shamir survives challenges to his leadership of the Herut Party and forms a new coalition government, succeeding Begin as Israel's Premier.

Finance Minister Yoram Aridor makes waves in Israel as he unveils a plan to link Israel's currency exclusively to the U.S. dollar. The government survives a non-confidence motion on the deteriorating economic situation and Aridor is replaced by Yigal Cohen-Orgad who predicts Israel's economic morass will end "within the very near future."

## NOVEMBER --

The free sale of foreign currency is banned by the government in an effort to stem a new rush on the dollar, a move that reverses a six-year-old policy of the Likud government which liberalized foreign currency transactions when it first took office in 1977.

## DECEMBER --

The Shekel is now equal to the value of one U.S. cent and economists calculate that in the six years of Likud rule, Israel's currency has depreciated by 99 percent relative to the dollar.

In what is described as an almost clandestine operation, former Premier Begin quietly moves from his official residence to his new home after 102 days of self-imposed seclusion.

A powerful bomb explodes in a crowded Jerusalem bus, killing four persons and injuring 46 others in what is described as the worst terrorist attack in five years. Two of the wounded persons later die of their wounds.

## JANUARY 1984 --

Israel's population grew to 4.1 million in 1983 with the Jewish population growing by 1.7 percent last year compared to 1.6 percent in 1972, while the Arab population decreased 2.8 percent from 3.0, according to the Central Bureau of Statistics.

Shamir receives a 27-member delegation of Israeli Arab leaders -- 15 mayors of Arab towns, religious, education and social leaders -- in what is described as the first such meeting held by the leader of a Likud government.

Some 500,000 Israelis, 12 percent of the population or one in every eight Israelis, are now living below the poverty line defined in Israel as having a monthly income of less than 14,000 Shekels (about \$140) which is only 20 percent of the average salary in Israel.

A 28-year-old West Bank resident, Yona Avrushi, is arrested in connection with the grenade murder of Peace Now activist Emil Grunzweig in Jerusalem last year.

Israeli security forces prevent an attempt to blow up Islamic shrines on the Temple Mount in East Jerusalem, discovering 18 Israel Army issued grenades and more than five kilograms of high explosives in an area near the plaza which is the site of the El Aksa Mosque and the Dome of the Rock.

## FEBRUARY --

The first anniversary of the grenade murder of Peace Now activist Emil Grunzweig is marked by a mass demonstration and march by 40,000 people in the heart of Jerusalem.

The Karp Report, citing shortcomings in the maintenance of law and order in the administered territories, is published by the government, some 18 months after it was completed and two days after the Cabinet agrees to a series of "guidelines" aimed at correcting the deficiencies in law enforcement.

Two hand grenades explode outside a shop on Jaffa Road injuring 21 persons, one gravely, while two others are classified as seriously hurt. The Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine claims responsibility for the attack.

## MARCH --

Three people are killed and eight wounded when an explosion rips through an Egged bus in Ashdod, in the first terrorist attack carried out in that city. The

Abul Nidal terrorist group claims responsibility for the attack.

Likud and Labor agree that elections will be held on July 23.

## APRIL --

Forty persons suffer wounds as three terrorists stage a gun and grenade attack in downtown Jerusalem on King George Street near Jaffa Road, a busy intersection. One terrorist is killed and two others are captured.

An investigation is launched into the circumstances surrounding the killing of four terrorists who hijack a Tel Aviv to Ashkelon bus with the intention of taking its passengers hostage. Irit Portugez, 19, an Israeli woman soldier, is killed in the terrorist hijack attempt.

## MAY --

A report by a special investigating committee established by the Defense Ministry says that two terrorists captured in the bus hijacking were beaten to death by security personnel while undergoing interrogation. Two others were shot and killed when Israeli authorities stormed the bus to free the passengers.

Israel marks the 36th anniversary of the founding of the Jewish State. Its population increases by two percent over the past year, bringing the total to 4.170 million.

Twenty-five suspected members of a Jewish terrorist underground on the West Bank are formally charged with a wide range of criminal offenses against Arab civilians, including the gun and grenade attack last May on the Islamic College in Hebron in which three Arab students were killed and 33 others wounded, and the June 1980 car bombing that maimed two West Bank Arab mayors.

## JUNE --

Nearly 500,000 persons gather into a grassy area surrounding the orchestra shell in Tel Aviv's Hayarkon Park for an open air concert by the Israeli Philharmonic Orchestra to mark Tel Aviv's 75th birthday.

The Supreme Court reverses the Central Elections Committee's ban on the participation of two political parties -- the ultra nationalist Kach Party and the Progressive List for Peace, a coalition of Arabs and Israelis -- in the July 23 Knesset elections.

With the economy in dire straits and inflation running at an annual rate of nearly 300 percent, Israel's labor scene erupts into a wave of strikes and work stoppages as tens of thousands of public employees scramble for wage hikes and other benefits before the July 23 elections.

## JULY --

Israel appears to be facing a period of prolonged political instability following the conclusion of the Knesset elections which fail to give either major political party -- Likud or Labor -- a clear majority in order to form a government. Labor receives 44 seats in the Knesset while Likud wins 41.

## AUGUST --

Concern is voiced in Israel over the accession to the Knesset of militant extremist Rabbi Meir Kahane of the Kach Party along with his strident anti-Arab rhetoric and his threats to Arabs in Israel. He is later prevented by police from entering the Israeli Arab town of Umm El Fahm near Hadera where he plans to appeal to its 25,000 inhabitants to emigrate.

The newly elected 11th Knesset opens with a stem warning to the legislators from President Herzog to guard vigilantly against encroachments in Israel's democracy.

Herzog gives Peres the task of forming a new government, stressing repeatedly the nation's desire for a government of national unity.

Unemployment in Israel reaches a three-year record high as joblessness rises by 45 percent during the

past nine months, from 27,000 at the beginning of the year to 85,000 now.

SEPTEMBER --

Labour Party leader Shimon Peres presents his unity government to the Knesset -- after 40 days of arduous inter-party negotiations which lasted right up to the very moment of the presentation.

The trial of 20 suspected members of a Jewish terrorist underground resumes in district court in Jerusalem after a two and a half month recess. The suspects are charged with a variety of attacks against Arabs in the occupied territories.

Binyamin Netanyahu, the second ranking official at the Israeli Embassy in Washington, is named as Israel's new Ambassador to the United Nations, replacing Yehuda Blum, who stepped down after six years at the world organization.

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### THE AMERICAN SCENE

SEPTEMBER 1983 --

The cornerstone of the first Jewish chapel at the United States Military Academy is laid at West Point with some 400 people attending the official ceremonies.

Democratic Presidential candidate Walter Mondale tells a meeting of Jewish leaders that the U.S. should move its Embassy in Israel from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem because Jerusalem is Israel's "undivided capital."

OCTOBER --

The faculty of the Jewish Theological Seminary of America approves by a large majority the admission of women to the JTA Rabbinical school for ordination as Conservative rabbis.

NOVEMBER --

Israeli President Chaim Herzog, in a surprisingly blunt and intensely political address, tells some 3,000 delegates from the U.S. and Canada at the 52nd General Assembly of the Council of Jewish Federations, that the U.S. tough policy against Cuban and Soviet activities in Central America deserves the support of the Jewish community.

DECEMBER --

President Reagan lights one of five candles during Chanukah celebrations at the Jewish Community Center of Greater Washington and says that Chanukah is "symbolic of the Jewish struggle to resist submission to tyranny and to sustain its spiritual heritage."

The Georgia State Board of Pardons and Paroles denies a posthumous pardon to Leo Frank, the Jewish factory superintendent who was convicted of the murder of a 13-year-old girl, Mary Phagan, in Atlanta in 1913 and who was lynched two years later by a mob in one of the nation's worst outbursts of anti-Semitism.

JANUARY 1984 --

The U.S. announcement that full diplomatic ties have been re-established between the United States and the Vatican for the first time in 117 years is greeted with mixed reactions from national Jewish spokesmen who are involved in Vatican-Jewish relations.

Reagan tells a group of broadcast evangelists in Washington that Americans have no need to fear the future because "we have a promise from Jesus to soothe our sorrows, heal our hearts and drive away our fears."

Anti-Semitic vandalism and other attacks against Jewish institutions, businesses and homes declines substantially in 1983 for the second year in a row, according to the annual audit conducted by the Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rith.

FEBRUARY --

A furor erupts over the remarks attributed to the Rev. Jesse Jackson, the Democratic Presidential hopeful, who refers to Jews as "Hymies" and New York City as "Hymietown," in a private conversation with WashingtonPost reporter Milton Colaman.

Louis Farrakhan, leader of the Nation of Islam group based in Chicago, bursts into the political spotlight as Jackson's ally and supporter when he addresses a rally of some 10,000 people for Jackson, warning the American Jewish community not to harm Jackson during the political campaign.

MARCH --

The Supreme Court's 5-4 decision that a city may present a Nativity scene as part of an official Christian display without violating the Constitution is assailed by American Jewish organizations in some of the sharpest criticisms ever voiced by such agencies against the highest court in the land.

The Senate rejects by a vote of 56-11, 11 short of the two-thirds of the Senate needed for approval, the proposed constitutional amendment allowing prayer in public schools.

Five Holocaust survivors from Yugoslavia who are now American citizens, file a class action suit against Andrija Artukovic, the former Minister of Interior of the Nazi-puppet state of Croatia, where thousands of Jews were killed during the Holocaust. The five seek to recover compensatory and punitive damages for personal loss and injury sustained by them as a result of Artukovic's crimes.

APRIL --

Vice President George Bush denounces in an address to a meeting of the American Israel Public Affairs Committee what he terms the "intrusion of anti-Semitism" into the American political system, an apparent reference to the rhetoric of Louis Farrakhan.

MAY --

Reagan disassociates himself from the Ku Klux Klan, declaring that they and other hate groups have no place in American political life. But the Commission on Civil Rights calls on Reagan to directly repudiate the endorsement of his candidacy from the KKK and for Jackson to reject the support of Farrakhan.

The House rejects a bill, known as the Equal Access Act, which would allow high school students to meet voluntarily on their free time in public schools for religious purposes.

JUNE --

More than 300,000 spectators and 50,000 marchers brave unseasonably cold, rainy weather to attend and participate in the 20th annual Salute to Israel Parade on Fifth Avenue, marking the 36th anniversary of Israel's independence.

Jackson disavows the statements of his supporter, Louis Farrakhan, who is reported to tell a group of his followers in Chicago that Judaism is a "gutter religion" and describes Israel as an "outlaw nation" whose supporters in the international community of nations "are criminals in the sight of almighty God."

JULY --

A week before the beginning of the Democratic National Convention, Jackson in an interview with the Los Angeles Times, denounces the American Jewish community for seeking to make him a "pariah" and that Mondale's failure to consider him as a serious Vice Presidential running mate was due to the "threats" to Mondale from a "significant number of Jewish leaders."

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(The American Scene and a section on Around the World will continue next week.)