

A NEW EIGHT-MONTH ECONOMIC PACKAGE GOES INTO EFFECT

By Hugh Orgel

TEL AVIV, Feb. 5 (JTA) — An eight-month economic program to drastically reduce public and private spending, increase government revenues and raise foreign currency reserves, already at a dangerous low, took effect at midnight last night shortly after it was approved by the Cabinet meeting in special session.

The new program aimed at economic recovery, replaces the three-month wage-price freeze package instituted last November, which expired yesterday. Emmanuel Sharon, Director General of the Finance Ministry, said the new measures should save some \$200 million in foreign currency by reducing purchases of imported goods and curtailing travel abroad. The government also expects to realize some \$350-\$400 million from various new taxes and levies, Sharon said.

Key Measures Of The Package

A key measure of the eight-month package is doubling the travel tax for Israelis going abroad from \$100 to \$200 per person and a 15 percent tax on airline tickets sold in Israel.

A three percent tax has been imposed on cars, privately owned boats and aircraft. The deposit surcharge on imported consumer goods has been raised from 40 to 60 percent but will be reduced by three percent a month beginning in March. The import ban on 55 luxury items, imposed last year, will be lifted.

The government expects to realize substantial savings by the drastic reduction or elimination of its price support subsidies on many basic goods and services. Postal rates have gone up by 100 percent and the cost of electricity was raised 25 percent for domestic consumers and 54 percent for industry. But the prices of many other basics will be held down.

Dollar or other foreign currency-linked bank accounts which can be withdrawn only in Shekels will pay interest to depositors if they remain in the bank for one year. Previously, interest was paid on accounts closed after three months. The measure is intended to absorb excess cash in circulation.

Sharon said the new measures and taxes would discourage Israelis from taking Dollars out of the country and help stem the Treasury's fast dwindling foreign currency reserves.

The Bank of Israel announced last week that foreign currency reserves fell by 11 percent last month. They now stand at \$2.3 billion, well below the \$3 billion economists consider the minimum safe operating level.

Reactions To The Program

There was no immediate public reaction to the new measures. Shops and supermarkets reported no panic buying. But many economic commentators are criticizing the new economic program for its contents and for the way it was announced after many delays, leaks and denials of earlier announcements.

The most serious initial reaction came from the travel industry. Foreign airlines serving Israel and travel agents warned that the new taxes will result in serious losses for the local tourist industry. The airlines will reduce the frequency of their flights to and from Israel and will employ smaller aircraft.

Many of the increased service costs and new taxes require Knesset ratification, which is expected shortly. Sharon said that if the new \$23 billion budget is implemented as it stands, he saw no reason for further economic measures this year. "There will be no new taxes beyond those announced yesterday," he said.

**BACKGROUND REPORT
THE IDF HAS BECOME EXPERT
IN THE ART OF WITHDRAWAL**
By Hugh Orgel

TEL AVIV, Feb. 5 (JTA) — The Israel Defense Force has been a victorious army from its very inception. It has suffered setbacks. It has lost battles. But it has never lost a war. Its success has been predicated on offense, surprise, advance.

In view of that history, it may be surprising that the IDF has become pre-eminently expert in the art of withdrawal. Israeli soldiers have never been routed. Their withdrawals always have been the results of political decisions taken for political, not military ends. The experience gained is being put to good use in the current withdrawal of the IDF from south Lebanon.

The first political withdrawal took place 36 years ago when, in 1949, the newly formed IDF pulled out of the small parcels of Lebanese territory it had captured during Israel's war for independence. Israel and Lebanon signed an armistice agreement at that time which held more firmly than those signed with its other Arab foes.

Israel withdrew twice from Sinai: first after the 1956 Suez campaign and later, in 1973, in the series of coordinated pull-backs in the aftermath of the Yom Kippur War. Israel gave up the Syrian garrison town of Kuneitra on the Golan Heights as part of the disengagement of forces agreement.

The withdrawal from Sinai in 1973 consisted of two widely separated movements. The first was from Egyptian territory west of the Suez Canal where the IDF had pushed to within less than 100 miles from Cairo. That withdrawal was part of the disengagement of forces agreement with Egypt negotiated by Secretary of State Henry Kissinger.

It laid the groundwork for Israel's carefully planned later pullback across the Sinai peninsula to the international border in compliance with Camp David and the Israel-Egypt peace treaty. Whatever could be moved was returned to Israel; what could not was destroyed.

Past Experiences Help In Present Evacuation

The experience gained from those withdrawals accounts for the swiftness and efficiency with which the IDF is currently evacuating south Lebanon. Detailed planning for the Lebanon withdrawal was completed at General Headquarters in only three days. It was based on the earlier lessons how to dismantle and transport equipment.

The major difference between the Lebanese and Sinai withdrawals is that the latter was through largely uninhabited country where there was no risk of harassment by hostile elements. In south Lebanon, the IDF is pulling out of densely populated regions where hostile elements are launching lethal attacks to speed it on its way.

It is difficult for some to perceive the political gains for which the IDF is leaving Lebanon. Many academicians who specialize in Arab affairs suggest that the recently increased and bolder attacks on Israelis on the West Bank stem from the Arabs' belief that the IDF is being forced out of Lebanon by terrorist attacks.

That view has been seized upon by militant Jewish settlers and their supporters in the rightwing political factions to assail the unity coalition government for ordering the withdrawal from Lebanon.

Most Favor IDF Withdrawal

But an opinion poll, published February 3, showed that over 60 percent of the adult Jewish population favors withdrawal of the IDF. The poll was taken for Maariv by the Modi'in Ezrachi Research Institute.

According to the results, 33.7 percent support withdrawal accompanied by local security arrangements. Another 23.9 percent prefer a partial withdrawal with security arrangements, and 15.5 percent favor withdrawal to the border with no conditions. "Local security arrangements" were not defined.

Only 5.9 percent of the respondents think the IDF should remain in Lebanon for the "foreseeable future," and 17.1 percent would support withdrawal only if there are prior arrangements with Syria or the Lebanese government. Most of the respondents favoring withdrawal are women; persons of both sexes in the better educated, higher income brackets; and reserve soldiers serving in Lebanon.

Glad To Be Leaving Lebanon

Israeli soldiers, regulars and reservists alike, are glad to be leaving Lebanon. Their feelings were summed up by one reserve soldier nearing the end of his third tour of duty in Lebanon: "The first time I came here I thought it was a very beautiful country. Now I don't think I want to be here anymore."

He and his fellow troopers are busy removing military equipment, leaving only the barest necessities for the rearguard soldiers who will remain in the area between the Awali and Litani rivers until the final stage of the three-stage withdrawal process brings the IDF back behind the international border, probably sometime next summer.

The road from Sidon to the border is now jammed with tank transporters and trucks loaded with prefabricated barracks, water towers, field toilets and kitchens, telephone poles and all other manner of non-combat equipment that can be moved.

From now until the first stage of withdrawal is completed on February 18, soldiers will sleep in tents instead of barracks. They will have only makeshift toilets and cold water showers. But those are hardships they are prepared to endure in the knowledge that soon they will be home.

62 SOLONS SIGN LETTER TO REAGAN OPPOSING ARMS SALES TO SAUDI ARABIA By David Friedman

WASHINGTON, Feb. 5 (JTA) -- A letter to President Reagan signed by 62 Senators opposing imminent arms sales to Saudi Arabia was being credited by at least one of the Senators today for

the Administration's decision to defer any new arms sales to the Middle East. A spokesman for Sen. Alan Cranston (D. Calif.) who, along with Sens. Robert Packwood (R. Ore.), Alan Dixon (D. Ill.) and Alfonse D'Amato (R. N.Y.) initiated the letter, said the letter submitted on January 29 "led the Administration to announce it was delaying its proposed new arms sales to Saudi Arabia."

Richard Murphy, Assistant Secretary of State for Near Eastern and South Asian Affairs, told a House subcommittee January 30 that the Administration was deferring all new arms to the Middle East pending a study of their effect on U.S. security and strategic concerns.

Secretary of State George Shultz confirmed this the next day to the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, although he stressed that the Saudis will eventually receive U.S. arms.

Particular Concern Expressed

In a letter seeking signatures for the letter to the President from other Senators, the four Senators said they were "particularly concerned" that the Administration might announce arms sales to the Saudis "before undertaking full consultations with the Congress" when King Fahd of Saudi Arabia meets with President Reagan at the White House February 11.

The letter outlined a proposed multi-billion dollar package which would include 40 F-15 jet fighters, in addition to the 62 the Saudis already have; 3,000 Stinger shoulder-fired ground-to-air missiles, Maverick anti-tank missiles, multiple ejection bomb racks, range extending fuel tanks and possibly more AWAC reconnaissance planes.

The Senators noted that the Saudis already have enough weapons to "overwhelm" any threat from Iran and stressed the sale "would be certain to initiate a new cycle of costly and destabilizing arms purchases throughout the volatile Middle East, fueling a regional arms race which further erodes the technological edge and both the economic and military security of Israel."

The letter sent to Reagan by the 62 Congressmen said: "We are writing to express our deep concern about reports of an imminent Administration decision to sell Saudi Arabia additional military weaponry. We have serious reservations about the wisdom of such a sale at this time. Therefore, we respectfully request that prior to making any decision or commitment on such a sale, you undertake thorough consultations with the leadership of the appropriate committees of Congress."

It was Congressional opposition to any such sales last year that caused the Administration to withdraw plans to sell Sidewinder missiles to Saudi Arabia and Jordan.

TERRORIST GROUP SAYS IT KILLED ISRAELI RESERVE SOLDIER IN RAMALLAH

JERUSALEM, Feb. 5 (JTA) -- The Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine, a Damascus-based terrorist group headed by George Habash, claimed responsibility today for the murder yesterday of an Israeli soldier, Corp. Aharon Avidar, in the West Bank town of Ramallah.

A PFLP statement from Damascus said one of its units attacked a group of Israeli soldiers, killed one and wounded others. But Avidar was murdered by a lone gunman who fired a single shot at him as he stood guard at the gate to the government offices compound in downtown Ramallah. The killer escaped in the crowded streets.

JCC LEADERS MOUNT EFFORT TO ENSURE JEWISH IDENTITY AND CONTINUITY

By Murray Zuckoff

MIAMI BEACH, Feb. 5 (JTA) — When the Jewish Community Centers first began operating in the United States 130 years ago — the first one was in Baltimore, Md. — they helped Jews become good Americans. The success of that effort within the context of an open society began to haunt the Jewish community as more and more Jews found niches in the political, social, economic, artistic and scientific stratas of American society. Now there is an effort to help Americans become good Jews.

This was the basic theme of the luncheon session Saturday of the special convention of the JWB, the first such convention in its history. The pervasive concern of the 260 Jewish Community Center (JCC) leaders from 90 cities across the United States and Canada was articulated by Shoshana Cardin, president of the Council of Jewish Federations.

A Major National Thrust

"The greatest fear we share, other than the future of the State of Israel, is the continuity of the American Jewish community as a viable American Jewish community," she said. She pointed out that this concern was not limited to the leadership of the JCCs and the CJF. "Jewish identity and continuity is a worldwide concern now," Cardin said.

The task of maximizing Jewish education — the underlying theme of the convention — is the most critical issue on the agenda of the American Jewish community, she stated. "A major national thrust is to make Jewish identity an integral part of all Center planning, not an additional program," Cardin declared.

She pointed out that Jewish Federations are vitally concerned with the issue of Jewish education and have been placing this issue at the top of their agendas over the past 10 years.

"If we look at funding — and Federations do look at funding — as one indicator of what has happened nationally this past year, Federations allocated \$42.5 million to formal Jewish education," Cardin said. "This went to Jewish educational bureaus, day schools, supplemental schools, what we call formal Jewish education. That does not include the growth of Judaic studies on campuses."

More Involvement In Jewish Education Needed

She noted that "we went from approximately 20 campus sites in the middle and late '60s to over 300 today, many of which are subsidized by Federation programming, that is, by Federation monies. All of this is part of the awareness that we needed more involvement in what we call Jewish education, and, in fact, communities are beginning to look to various entities to supply that sense of Yiddishkeit that all of us felt was slipping away from us."

The Center, Cardin said, "is the institution which appeals best to the disaffected, uninvolved or uncommitted Jew at his point." But the Center is not alone in the effort to attract such Jews and not alone in the effort to maximize Jewish education. Centers and Federations have a shared responsibility in this task. "The CJF can offer its hand as a partner in the actual work that faces all of us," Cardin said.

She expressed exhilaration and excitement about the report of the Commission on Maximizing Jewish Educational Effectiveness of Jewish Community Centers — which formed the basis for the special convention — a two-year study by a blue-ribbon panel headed by Morton Mandel, a former CJF president

who is now chairman of the Jewish Education Committee of the Jewish Agency. Cardin was a member of that commission.

The report, and the convention whose task was to take steps to implement the recommendations of the report, "is the most exciting, positive action that has come forward in decades in Jewish communal life," Cardin declared. "For the first time it's not only money and programming. For the first time we are talking about a positive force: an entity that will help all of us come together recognizing that we share a common destiny, and that is a viable Jewish community."

Mandel, who is also a former JWB president, told the JCC leaders that there is a concern worldwide about Jewish continuity. "Will there be this kind of caring Jewish leadership 50 years from now or 100 years from now?" he asked.

Paradoxical Situation Of North American Jewry

There is a growing concern "that the Jewish world is in trouble," he said. Paradoxically, the North American Jewish community is in trouble because of its great success in beating down the doors in industry, commerce, medical schools, insurance companies and institutions of higher learning that were once closed to them, Mandel observed. In many instances Jews were able to achieve positions in the higher echelons of the corporate world.

"We've been so successful, that in our great success lies the seeds of our potential failure because it's now easy to function in the general society," he said. "You don't have to be Jewish; the doors are open. You can be active in a symphony (orchestra) instead of your Federation campaign. Why should young people choose to be Jewish?"

Jews worked very hard to become mainstream Americans, Mandel noted. This was an error; the objective should have been to become mainstream Jewish Americans, he said. He expressed concern that "unless we mount the kind of attack that will declare war on the horrendous statistics of assimilation, about not caring and indifference, about the fact that a growing number of young people are receiving no Jewish education — and that number is increasing worldwide — we are going to lose. But we will mount that attack."

The Title Of The War In North America

The "title of the war" in North America, Mandel said, "is how to live as Jews in an open society, how young people can live positively as Jews in an open society where there is for them freedom of choice, the kind of freedom of choice the older generation of Jews did not have."

The consensus among experts is that Jewish education "is in a state of disarray in the entire Jewish world, that we are losing," he said. "Jewish communities are disappearing literally, but also disappearing because Jews are not maintaining affiliation and identification."

To combat this disaster, the State of Israel and the Jewish Agency formed a Joint Program for Jewish Education in the Diaspora in 1979 in an effort to deal with "the despair in the Jewish world," Mandel said, and is making \$5 million a year available to be used to encourage innovative programs and efforts to ensure Jewish continuity, specifically with regard to Jewish education, formal and informal. It is also developing outreach programs and projects.

Mandel pointed out that for years since the founding of the Jewish State, the Jewish Agency had three major departments: aliya and absorption, getting rural settlements going in Israel, and youth aliya. Five years ago the Agency added Project Renewal and last June it added Jewish education out of a deep concern about the future of the Jewish people, he observed.

The agenda of Jewish organizations is changing, the priorities are changing, Mandel said. The focus is now beginning to shift to Jewish education. The JCCs have a unique opportunity to reach out affirmatively to inspire old and young alike "with the dream of a new and exciting future for the Jewish people," he said. Jewish leaders "must pick up the torch of Jewish education," Mandel declared, or the light of Jewish continuity will be extinguished.

HEBREW TEACHER SENTENCED TO 18 MONTHS IN SOVIET LABOR CAMP

NEW YORK, Feb. 5 (JTA) — Aleksandr Kholmiansky of Moscow, a 32-year-old computer scientist who taught Hebrew, a proscribed activity in the Soviet Union, was sentenced to 18 months in a labor camp by a court in Voru, Estonia last Friday on charges of "hooliganism."

According to organizations here which monitor the treatment of Jews in the USSR, Kholmiansky was also fined 100 Rubles for "trampling on flowers." Another source said the fine was for "tampering" with a mail box. When Kholmiansky was arrested in Tallin, Estonia, last July, he was charged with possession of a weapon and ammunition. But that charge was dropped, the sources said.

The sentence was considered "relatively mild" by Kholmiansky's family and friends, the sources said, indicating that the Soviet authorities recognized the weakness of their case against the Jewish activist and their awareness of the intense interest in his fate in Western countries.

Kholmiansky's arrest nearly eight months ago was mentioned in a report released by the State Department last week as marking the beginning of the latest "campaign of arrests and intimidation targeted at the activist Jewish community in the Soviet Union by Soviet authorities."

The sentencing in Voru took place several days after the State Department released its report. The time Kholmiansky spent in confinement since his arrest was deducted from the sentence, as allowed by Soviet law.

Sources in Moscow reported that Kholmiansky was highly regarded as a Hebrew teacher and had about 10 students from five cities at the time of arrest.

JOSEPH MEYERHOFF DEAD AT 85

BALTIMORE, Feb. 5 (JTA) — Funeral services were held here today for Joseph Meyerhoff, a real estate developer and philanthropist who contributed unselfishly to numerous Jewish charities and Israeli educational institutions. He died last Saturday of a heart attack at Johns Hopkins Hospital. He was 85 years old.

A former national general chairman of the United Jewish Appeal, he was until his death chairman of the Palestine Economic Corporation, which deals with private investment in Israel. He was president of the corporation from 1956 to 1963 when he became chairman.

Meyerhoff's family came to the United States from Russia and settled in Baltimore when he was 7 years old. He graduated in 1920 from the Law School at the University of Maryland.

In Israel he was a member of the board of Tel Aviv University, the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, the Weizmann Institute of Science and Technion-Israel Institute of Technology. He was also involved with the Israel Museum where he contributed for the construction of the Joseph and Rebecca Meyerhoff Ancient Glass Pavilion at the museum.

Among his numerous activities, Meyerhoff was involved at various times with the Israel Discount Bank, the Associated Jewish Charities and Welfare Fund of Baltimore, United Israel Appeal, the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee, the Israel Bond Organization and Yeshiva University in New York.

JEVISH LEADER URGES INDIA'S PRIME MINISTER TO CHANGE HIS COUNTRY'S POLICY AND ATTITUDE TOWARD ISRAEL

NEW YORK, Feb. 5 (JTA) — Kenneth Bialkin, chairman of the Conference of Presidents of Major American Jewish Organizations, has called on Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi of India to change his country's "policy and attitude" toward Israel.

"Indian hostility toward Israel and her people has caused the American Jewish community great consternation in recent years," Bialkin wrote in a letter to Gandhi last month and just released by the Presidents Conference to the Jewish Telegraphic Agency. "On numerous occasions the Indian government has discriminated against Israeli citizens — athletes, scientists, jurists and others — by denying them permission to enter India to participate in various international events.

This discrimination, Bialkin stated, "together with India's unceasing condemnations of Israel at the United Nations and within the nonaligned movement, and its one-sided identification with the Arab and PLO cause, have undermined ... India's ability to assume an honest and constructive role in Middle East peacemaking.

"India's hostility toward a vibrant sister democracy and a staunch American ally has affected the attitudes of many in this country who would like to identify more with Indian causes and concerns."

Bialkin urged that under its new Prime Minister, India "assume a fairer, more even-handed approach to the Middle East conflict — an approach that will allow India ... to play an active and effective part in encouraging the Arab world to negotiate directly with Israel and seek a peaceful solution for this troubled region."

Bialkin said he has not yet received a reply to his letter.

3 ISRAELI SOLDIERS WOUNDED

TEL AVIV, Feb. 5 (JTA) — Three Israeli soldiers were wounded in south Lebanon yesterday, one of them seriously, by explosive charges detonated at roadsides. The incidents occurred near Khubeida village, where two of the soldiers were hurt and near Joia village where the third was wounded.

Two attacks on the Israel Defense Force and the South Lebanon Army (SLA) Sunday caused no casualties. In one case, the IDF discovered and dismantled three roadside bombs planted southwest of Kamed Al-Lus in the eastern sector of the front. An SLA position north of Tyre came under small arms and rocket-propelled grenade fire but no one was hit.

WASHINGTON (JTA) — The State Department voiced concern Tuesday over the increased violence in the West Bank in which two Israelis have been killed in the past few days. "We have noted with concern the recent increase in violence in the West Bank, and we do regret the loss of life," said State Department spokesman Bernard Kalb. "We also note the Israeli government's expressed determination to provide security for both Arab and Israeli residents in the West Bank."