

IDF IS TARGET OF 11 ATTACKS IN 24 HOURS; NO CASUALTIES REPORTED

By Hugh Orgel

TEL AVIV, March 21 (JTA) — The Israel Defense Force in south Lebanon was the target of 11 attacks in the past 24 hours, none of which caused casualties. But an Israeli soldier was slightly wounded in a clash with terrorists during a search of Shiite villages today.

Another soldier died today of wounds sustained two weeks ago in an attack on the IDF. A military spokesman identified him as Sgt. Yariv Lahav, 21, of Mashav Tamerin.

Four attacks on IDF patrols and convoys today involved roadside explosives near the villages of Maaroub, Arab Selim and El Basourye, all east of Tyre. A patrol of the Israel-backed South Lebanon Army (SLA) was attacked with automatic weapons and rocket-propelled grenades near Jarjoura in the Nabatiya area, without casualties.

The IDF said it killed 20 terrorists in the course of searches of two villages in the Nabatiya area and seized large quantities of weapons and sabotage materiel in their possession.

Deny IDF Advancing On Sidon

Meanwhile, an IDF spokesman denied reports from Beirut and United Nations sources that an Israeli armored column was advancing on Sidon, the south Lebanon seaport evacuated by the IDF a month ago, where fighting is going on between rival groups of Christian Phalangists and Shiite Moslem militiamen. Army sources said the reports may have confused Sidon with Sidune village, some 15 kilometers to the east, which is still in IDF control.

The United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL) said that two villages, Jeneta and Serfiya, were searched by IDF units today in the presence of Finnish UNIFIL troops in the latter and French troops in the former. The villages, located between Tyre and Nabatiya, were the scenes of several attacks on IDF patrols in recent days.

SHULTZ TO VISIT ISRAEL IN MAY

By David Landau

JERUSALEM, March 21 (JTA) — Secretary of State George Shultz will visit Israel briefly in May to attend ceremonies marking the 40th anniversary of the defeat of Nazi Germany in World War II, officials here said today.

Although the visit apparently evolved from discussions in Washington of how the Reagan Administration would participate in international observances of the anniversary, Shultz will use the occasion for political talks with Premier Shimon Peres and Foreign Minister and Deputy Premier Yitzhak Shamir, the officials said.

Shultz's visit to Israel is also seen as a means of easing the disappointment expressed in Jewish circles in the U.S. and elsewhere over the Administration's rejection of proposals that President Reagan visit the site of the Dachau concentration camp when he is in West Germany in May.

Reagan and his spokesmen maintained that such a visit might injure the sensibilities of the Bonn government, although it was the government which originally proposed it.

It is not known whether Shultz plans to visit other countries in the region. His talks in Jerusalem are expected to focus on the diplomatic momentum stimulated by Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak's recent peace initiative.

In that connection, the Reagan Administration's top Middle East aide, Richard Murphy, the Assistant Secretary of State for Near Eastern and South Asian Affairs, is due to the region shortly to assess the extent of support for Mubarak's undertaking.

The Prime Minister's Office, meanwhile, has published a statement reaffirming Israel's opposition to Mubarak's proposal that the Reagan Administration meet with a joint Jordanian-Palestinian delegation for preliminary discussions. The statement stressed Israel's insistence that it be involved directly in such talks from the outset.

It affirmed Israel's willingness to negotiate with a Jordanian-Palestinian delegation but only if it contained no representatives of the Palestine Liberation Organization.

Shamir noted in an interview today that the U.S. remains firm in its opposition to negotiations which did not include Israel, media reports to the contrary notwithstanding. He observed in that connection that the recent visits to Washington by Mubarak and the Jordanian Foreign Minister, Taher Al-Masri were not negotiations but simply part of America's ongoing contacts with countries in the area.

SPAIN SETS MAIMONIDES COMMEMORATION

MADRID, March 21 (JTA) — Formal commemoration by the Spanish government of the 850th anniversary of the birth of Maimonides will be marked by a series of events which will include conferences by academic specialists, concerts of Sephardic music, performances by an Israeli dance group, and Jewish/Moslem philosophical encounters, the World Jewish Congress reported today.

According to Samuel Toledano, Secretary-General of the Federation of Jewish Communities, the central representative body of Spanish Jewry and the WJC affiliate here, the focus of activities related to the Maimonides commemoration will be centered in Cordoba — the birthplace of the medieval Jewish philosopher and physician.

The year-long commemorative program is being held under the patronage of the Spanish Ministry of Culture and of the regional government of the province of Andalusia. Toledano announced that highlights of the program scheduled by Spanish authorities in Cordoba, included:

- * March 26: "Israel Day," featuring lectures by Israeli scholars and performances by the Inbal Dance Group.
- * March 28: "Morocco Day," with lectures by Moroccan Jews and Moslems and a recital of Andalusian music and Jewish ritual songs.
- * June 1-15: A fortnight of Sephardic music, performed by various Spanish and foreign groups.
- * September 8-11: An international congress on Maimonides, bringing together specialists on the life and work of Maimonides from around the world.
- * October: A documentary and audio-visual exhibition on Maimonides in the Cordoba synagogues.

Traveling Exhibition On Spanish Jewry

In addition to these events, the Jewish Federation is preparing a traveling exhibition on Spanish Jewry which will be visiting cities in Europe throughout the year.

Toledano also reported that the official organizers offer any organized Jewish groups from abroad the possibility of scheduling their own events, including religious services at the restored Cordoba synagogue, cultural programs, and visits to the Jewish quarter.

Meanwhile, in Paris, WJC officials report that following their discussions with UNESCO authorities, a UNESCO symposium on Maimonides is to take place at the organization's headquarters on December 11-12. At its last session, UNESCO had adopted a resolution proposed by the WJC calling for commemoration of the Maimonides year.

For the symposium, UNESCO will be inviting scholars from around the world, including experts from Israel and various Arab countries. UNESCO is also preparing a poster to publicize the event.

STEPPED-UP EFFORTS URGED ON BEHALF OF SOVIET JEWRY

By Yitzhak Rabi

NEW YORK, March 21 (JTA) -- Governor Mario Cuomo and Mayor Edward Koch of New York City, the two main speakers at a press conference sponsored by the Greater New York Conference on Soviet Jewry (GNYCSJ), called today for stepped-up efforts on behalf of Soviet Jewry. They said that improved relations between Washington and Moscow should be linked to improvement in the situation of Soviet Jews.

"The freedom of Soviet Jews should be a precondition to any meaningful change in relations between our two countries," Cuomo said in a brief statement at the press conference at the Sheraton Centre Hotel.

Charging that the Soviet authorities try to "terrorize Soviet Jewry into silence," Cuomo said that the Jews are subject to "intimidation and repression," their basic human rights denied, including their right to emigrate. "Next year in Jerusalem is still a whisper cry" for Soviet Jews, the Governor said. He vowed to continue the struggle for the freedom of Soviet Jewry, declaring: "We promise not to forget them. Not today, not tomorrow, never again."

Koch said that the Soviet Union is sensitive to world public opinion and therefore the public struggle on behalf of Soviet Jews must be intensified. He declared: "In one voice we say to the Jews of the Soviet Union: 'Do not lose hope'." The message to the Soviet authorities, Koch continued, is "Let our people go."

New Initiatives Announced

The press conference today was called to announce major new initiatives to remove the barriers to Jewish emigration from the Soviet Union and to end the persecution and imprisonment of Jewish activists.

Herbert Kronish, chairman of the GNYCSJ, announced that his organization officially changed its name to the "Coalition to Free Soviet Jews." He said the new name better reflects the organization's "action-oriented mission and underscores its resolve to help achieve freedom for Soviet Jews." He said that 85 organizations in the metropolitan area are represented by the Coalition.

Kronish, contending that the "crisis of Soviet Jews has reached alarming proportions," outlined the new initiatives planned by the Coalition:

* A massive petition campaign with the goal of a half million signatures to be addressed to the Soviet leadership.

* The formation of "action teams" of Jewish and community leaders who will meet with foreign diplomats in New York and ask for their governments' intervention on behalf of Soviet Jews.

* Stepped up activity to involve businessmen and the corporate community to use their influence on behalf of Soviet Jewry.

* The 14th Annual Solidarity Sunday will be held on May 5 and will be sponsored by the Coalition. It is the largest yearly event of any kind on behalf of Soviet Jews.

"Our actions will send a clear message to Moscow that the American people are deeply concerned and distressed about the plight of Soviet Jews," Kronish said.

RABIN ASSURES JEWISH SETTLERS IN THE GAZA STRIP THAT THE TERRITORY WILL ALWAYS BE A PART OF ISRAEL

By Hugh Orgel

TEL AVIV, March 21 (JTA) -- Defense Minister Yitzhak Rabin, on his first visit to the Gaza Strip since taking office, assured Jewish settlers that the territory would always be a part of Israel. He also promised local Arab leaders that Israel would not block international financial aid for Arab residents.

Rabin spoke to Israeli farmers at Katif, near the Sinai border, who expressed fear that their ultimate fate might be similar to that of the settlers forced to evacuate Yamit and surrounding villages in 1982 when Sinai was returned in full to Egypt.

But the Gaza territory, Rabin said, "geographically has always been part of the Biblical Land of Israel" and "in any event, it must remain an inseparable part of the State of Israel." Rabin, however, would not give a direct answer to settlers who told him that talk of autonomy for the Palestinians in the area was "frightening" and asked for clarification.

"I'm not the one who invented autonomy so I don't see myself qualified to give you an answer now," he said. He was referring to the autonomy plan for Gaza and the West Bank agreed to in principle by Premier Menachem Begin, President Anwar Sadat of Egypt and U.S. President Jimmy Carter when they signed the Camp David accords in 1978. The plan was never implemented because of the vastly different interpretations of autonomy by the Israelis and Egyptians.

Will Seek Aid For Gaza Arabs

Rabin told reporters that Israel would seek international aid to help the Arabs in the city of Gaza and in the villages of the territory. But he added that governments and organizations which preach to Israel the necessity of improving the quality of life of Arabs in the occupied territories should provide some material assistance of their own.

This appeared to be an oblique thrust at the Egyptians and at the Reagan Administration which have been urging Israel to improve conditions for Palestinians in the territories.

Rabin told acting Mayor Mamzah Turkmah of Gaza that he would consider the mayor's request to allow the transfer of \$5 million provided by Saudi Arabia five years ago. The then Israeli Defense Minister Ariel Sharon had refused and the money has remained ever since in a bank in Amman, Jordan.

PROTEST SKIN BANKS IN ISRAELI HOSPITALS

By David Landau

JERUSALEM, March 21 (JTA) -- Ultra-Orthodox yeshiva students demonstrated outside the home of Ashkenazic Chief Rabbi Avraham Shapiro yesterday to protest the decision by Shapiro and Sephardic Chief

Rabbi Mordechai Eliahu to permit the storage of human skin for burn treatment at Israeli hospitals. Shapiro refused to meet with the demonstrators and police, summoned by neighbors, removed them from the premises.

Public opinion was outraged by reports that Israel's major hospitals did not have sufficient human skin urgently needed to treat 14 soldiers who suffered severe burns in a suicide truck-bomb attack on an Israel Defense Force convoy in south Lebanon on March 10. Twelve soldiers were killed in the attack.

The skin shortage was attributed to a law passed by the Knesset a year ago under intense pressure from the Orthodox political parties forbidding the storage of human skin in skin banks for future emergencies. Israeli doctors reportedly appealed to colleagues in Holland to fly in skin for emergency transplants.

Under the circumstances, the two Chief Rabbis ruled that skin banks were permissible when lives are at stake. But ultra-Orthodox circles denounced their ruling, claiming it would encourage doctors to perform autopsies without the consent of the deceased's next of kin.

REAGAN ADMINISTRATION PLANS TO RECOMMEND ADDITIONAL AID TO ISRAEL OVER A TWO-YEAR PERIOD

By David Friedman

WASHINGTON, March 21 (JTA) -- The Reagan Administration plans to recommend additional aid to Israel over a two-year period to help it carry out economic reforms, but still has not decided how much, a senior State Department official said today.

"Some transitional assistance will be required," Richard Murphy, Assistant Secretary of State for Near Eastern and South Asian Affairs, told the Senate Foreign Relations Committee's subcommittee on the Near East and South Asia. "The amount, the rate by which it will be dispersed, is the subject of our continuing discussion with the Israeli government."

Murphy's remarks came as he was pressed by Sen. Paul Sarbanes (D. Md.) on when the Administration will make the decision on the economic aid for Israel for the 1986 fiscal year.

The Administration has recommended that military aid to Israel be increased from the \$1.4 billion it is getting in 1985 to \$1.8 billion. But it has made no decision on Israel's request that economic aid be raised from \$1.2 billion to \$1.8 billion in 1986 and that Israel get an \$800 million supplementary appropriation this year.

Repeats Administration's Contention

At the outset of today's hearing, Murphy stressed that Israel will receive at least the same \$1.2 billion it is getting this year. But he repeated the Administration's contention that the Administration believes that Israel has not made enough economic reforms to justify additional aid from the U.S. He added that if Israel does not now make decisions that it considered "painful" it will in the future have to take "draconian measures."

But Murphy stressed that the U.S. is not in "an adversary" relationship with Israel but is consulting with it. He noted the recent meeting between the Administration and Israel's Finance Minister Yitzhak Modai, and that two American economists, Herbert Stein and Stanley Fisher who are consultants to Secretary of State George Shultz, have recently returned from a visit to Israel.

The House Foreign Affairs Committee's subcommittee on Europe and the Middle East approved the Administration's recommendations yesterday. But

Sarbanes said the Senate subcommittee will be acting on foreign aid to the Mideast and if it does not have a recommendation on economic aid to Israel from the Administration, it will have to act on its own. Murphy said he does not believe the Administration will be ready by then.

Sarbanes said that some in the Administration appear to be "captive to pure economic theory" and do not see the importance of helping Israel's unity government survive. He said without "strong leadership" it will be difficult for Israel to take advantage of opportunities that may arise in the overall peace process.

Murphy conceded that the unity government of Premier Shimon Peres and Deputy Premier and Foreign Minister Yitzhak Shamir is "essential" for the economic reforms Israel's must make and for its withdrawal from Lebanon. But he said while the Israeli government is looking for a way to advance the peace process, "when things become more tangible we may see a revival of the political byplay" between Labor and Likud.

Questions Raised About Egypt

Sen. Rudy Boschwitz (R. Minn.), the subcommittee chairman, and Sen. Christopher Dodd (D. Conn.) pointed to Congressional concern about Egypt's continued refusal to send its Ambassador back to Israel. They also noted that it will be difficult to justify the large amount of aid to Egypt when the government of President Hosni Mubarak appears unwilling to cooperate with the U.S.

Dodd said if the Egyptians turn down "something as small" as the request by the U.S. to station in Egypt a Voice of America transmitter what will happen when the U.S. asks for something important.

Murphy replied that despite problems Egypt has adhered to its peace treaty with Israel and is playing a major role in the overall peace process. Meanwhile, the House subcommittee on Europe and the Mideast voted yesterday to condition any sale of arms to Jordan on King Hussein's recognition of Israel and the beginnings of direct negotiations.

MKS WHO MET WITH ARAFAT WILL NOT FACE CRIMINAL PROCEEDINGS

JERUSALEM, March 21 (JTA) -- Attorney General Yitzhak Zamir, acting on the recommendation of police investigators, said today that he would not open criminal proceedings against two Knesset members who met with Palestine Liberation Organization chief Yasir Arafat in Tunis last month.

Zamir had asked for an investigation to determine whether MKs Matiyahu Peled and Mohammed Miari of the Progressive List for Peace, had jeopardized State security by meeting with Arafat. Zamir's decision, based on the findings, was in line with rulings in similar cases in the past that open meetings with Arafat or other PLO representatives could not be construed as "contact with the enemy" within the meaning of the criminal code.

Zamir said, in an official statement, that the two MKs had provided a "reasonable explanation" for their meeting with Arafat and that it had not been their intention to compromise State security. Rulings by the Supreme Court in earlier cases determined that intent is a prerequisite for proving guilt.

N. Y. STATE SUPREME COURT HEARING SLATED ON SUIT TO HAVE AN ERUV REMOVED FROM A QUEENS COMMUNITY

By Kevin Freeman

NEW YORK, March 21 (JTA) -- The State Supreme Court will hold a hearing early next month on a suit filed to have a newly constructed eruv removed from the residential seaside communities of Belle Harbor and Neponsit, on the western end of the Rockaway peninsula in Queens.

The suit was brought by a local resident, Joseph Smith, who charges that the eruv, a religious device consisting of a physical boundary enclosing an area, violates the constitutional requirement of church-state separation.

Smith contends that the city improperly gave permission for construction of the eruv because it placed the "prestige and power of the government in the service of a particular faith" and that the eruv would result "in the creation and establishment of the area as a designated religious area."

Animosities Toward The Orthodox Community

But what began as an attempt by four Orthodox area synagogues to seek what is described as an "accommodation" for their religious membership -- estimated to total 450 families -- has snowballed, creating animosity toward the Orthodox community and divisiveness among many long-time residents.

An eruv under Jewish law is a device which may be a natural boundary, monument or wires strung across utility polls that allows for an observant Jew to carry objects from their residence into a common street or courtyard which they would otherwise be banned from using for that purpose on the Sabbath.

In New York City, there are as many as 30 communities that have constructed eruvs and there are hundreds that have done so similarly in communities across the country. On the eastern end of the Rockaway peninsula and to the north of the peninsula, in Brooklyn, communities have constructed eruvs.

But unlike other neighborhoods, the Belle Harbor and Neponsit eruv includes a minor variation, the raising of the seawall to a height of at least 40 inches, as required by Jewish law to meet the requirements for an eruv. Many points on the seawall are already high enough, but others have been raised in recent weeks, some by as much as 10 to 12 inches.

Vandalism Against The Eruv

There have already been reports of vandalism against the eruv, whose construction is nearly completed. A moratorium on construction has been agreed to by both sides to the conflict.

At one point, vandals toppled a newly constructed section of the wall before the cement was able to solidify. The string atop utility polls along the northern end of the peninsula near Jacob Riis Park has been torn down. Police patrols have been increased in the area.

Area residents complain of not being informed of the community board's decision last year to grant approval to the eruv committee for construction. Methods used by the eruv committee to gain approval for eruv construction has come under criticism by some area residents, although these criticisms have been dismissed as unfounded. However, both sides acknowledge that the eruv committee obtained all the necessary permits and documents prior to construction.

Regarding the court challenge, Dennis Rapps, attorney for the eruv committee that was named as defendant in the suit, contends that the issue is not Church-state separation, but whether it is permissible for the state to enable private individuals to do things on public property to facilitate their religious practice.

"We think that accommodating religious practices does not involve the establishment of religion," said Rapps, executive director of the National Jewish Commission on Law and Public Affairs. He added that the raising of the seawall is "not identifiable" as a religious symbol.

Opponents, nonetheless, fear that construction of an eruv would change the character of the neighborhood, bringing more Orthodox families to the area. They cite the village of Lawrence in Nassau County as an example, where there has been a noticeable increase of Orthodox Jews in recent years following the emplacement of an eruv.

Rabbi Jacob Reiner of the Belle Harbor Jewish Center and honorary chairman of the eruv committee said he found it "really incomprehensible" what was causing such strong opposition to the eruv. According to Reiner, the purpose of the eruv is not to attract people to the neighborhood, "but to accommodate people to observe Sabbath with maximum comfort."

Smith contends in his suit, scheduled to be heard April 2 in Queens County Supreme Court, that he would be forced to accept "his religious device" as a condition of his right to use public property. He asserts that the eruv has "a religious aura and metaphysical impact."

IRISH GOVERNMENT TO BAR RETURN OF A NAZI WAR CRIMINAL

LONDON, March 21 (JTA) -- The Irish government announced today that it will bar Pieter Menten, a Nazi war criminal, from returning to the Irish Republic after his release tomorrow from a Dutch prison.

Menten, 85, was sentenced to a 10-year prison term by a Dutch court for massacring thousands of Polish Jews in Podhorazce, in what is now Soviet Ukraine. Menten owns a home in the Waterford village of Lembyrian and his Dutch attorneys have said he intends to leave Holland for Ireland immediately after his release.

An Irish official spokesman said the decision to bar Menten, a Dutch national, from returning was taken today by the Irish government which met under the Presidency of Premier Garrett FitzGerald in Dublin. The government was convened for a special session after spokesmen for the local Jewish community protested against Menten's possible return. Dr. Joseph Briscoe, a local Jewish leader, said not only Jews "but all the Irish people are opposed to Menten's return to Ireland."

LONDON (JTA) -- An international body to combat compliance with the Arab boycott by non-Arab companies was formed here Wednesday by pro-Israeli business groups and Israeli Chambers of Commerce from 17 countries. The new body, called the International Steering Committee on Freedom of Trade with Israel, hopes to exploit what it sees as the weakening of Arab economic power due to falling world oil prices. Its first chairman is lawyer Kenneth Bialkin, chairman of the Conference of Presidents of Major American Jewish Organizations.