

HERZOG SHARPLY CRITICAL OF CBS-TV NETWORK FOR BLAMING ISRAEL IN THE DEATHS OF TWO CBS NEWS CAMERAMEN
By Hugh Orgel

TEL AVIV, March 24 (JTA) -- President Chaim Herzog today sharply criticized the CBS television network for holding Israel to blame in the deaths of two CBS news cameramen during a battle in south Lebanon last Thursday. He accused the network of attacking Israel while remaining silent when the same terrorists Israel was fighting, attacked Americans.

But CBS appeared today to be backing away from its charge. Ernest Leiser, CBS vice president of news who flew to Israel to discuss the matter, said after a 90-minute meeting today with Premier Shimon Peres' media adviser, Uri Savir, that the deaths may have been the result of a "tragic mistake." Savir remarked to reporters later that it still was regrettable that CBS had been so hasty to condemn Israel.

The two CBS crewmen killed and a third who was wounded by Israeli tank fire in Milki village, about 13 kilometers southwest of Sidon, were Lebanese employees of the American network. CBS immediately cancelled a series of broadcasts from Israel during Passover-Easter week next month. The network's Jerusalem bureau chief, Warren Lewis, confirmed this over the weekend.

Leiser said today that the decision still stood. He insisted it was not meant as "punishment" of Israel but as a gesture of mourning for the two CBS employees who were killed.

Reporters Know the Danger

Herzog, speaking to reporters during a tour of Kiryat Motzkin in the Haifa Bay area today, observed that any journalist who entered a combat zone knew his life was in danger. He demanded to know why CBS never protested or halted its broadcasts from Lebanon after 250 U.S. marines were killed in a car-bomb attack in west Beirut in 1983 by the same terrorists now harassing the Israel Defense Force.

The government and the military are standing by their first account of the incident -- that the tank-fired rockets which killed the CBS cameramen were aimed at armed terrorists in civilian clothes from whom the television men were indistinguishable.

The IDF maintained that a preliminary investigation confirmed that the tank crew acted according to regulations governing military operations and decided not to establish a commission of inquiry into the incident.

Premier Shimon Peres, who supported the IDF's decision, expressed regrets for the deaths of the CBS employees but denied categorically that they were deliberately shot at, as CBS officials in New York have claimed.

(President Reagan, at a White House press conference Thursday night, called the deaths of the cameramen a "tragedy" but said he was "quite sure" that this was not "a deliberate killing.")

The IDF, meanwhile, has banned journalists from the north from entering the areas of south Lebanon still under Israeli control. Israeli Embassies in foreign capitals have been instructed to stress to

the heads of foreign news agencies that they would be placing their personnel in grave danger if they tried to contravene the ban.

Last Thursday's incident occurred in the course of an IDF search of Milki village for terrorists and weapons. A military spokesman said afterwards that the CBS television crew was stationed in the middle of a group of armed terrorists.

They were Lebanese citizens, replacing American employees of the network who have been pulled out of Lebanon because of death threats from terrorist groups. Western journalists presently file Beirut-dated dispatches from the safety of Cyprus.

IDF spokesmen stressed the difficulty of distinguishing terrorists dressed as civilians with automatic rifles and rocket-propelled grenade launchers on their shoulders from civilian journalists with cameras and sound equipment on their shoulders.

PERES: ISRAEL READY TO MEET WITH JOINT JORDANIAN-PALESTINIAN GROUP BUT PALESTINIANS CANNOT BE PLO MEMBERS
By Hugh Orgel

JERUSALEM, March 24 (JTA) -- Premier Shimon Peres told the Cabinet today that Israel is prepared to meet any time, anywhere with a joint Jordanian-Palestinian delegation, provided that the Palestinians were not members of the Palestine Liberation Organization.

He reiterated, however, Israel's opposition to any prior meeting between U.S. officials and such a joint delegation, as proposed by President Hosni Mubarak of Egypt. According to Peres, that would only serve to work out a common position inimical to Israel. He said the Americans were also opposed to talks with the Jordanians and Palestinians in advance of direct talks with Israel.

President Reagan said at his White House press conference last Thursday night that "We are willing to meet" with a joint delegation that does not include PLO members. A State Department spokesman said later that Reagan's remark indicated no change in U.S. policy. (See separate story.)

REAGAN DENIES U.S. IS DISENGAGING ITSELF FROM THE MIDEAST PROCESS

By David Friedman

WASHINGTON, March 24 (JTA) -- President Reagan has denied that the United States has been disengaging itself from the Middle East process, but stressed that it was up to the Arab states and Israel to agree toward direct negotiations.

"We are not getting into the direct negotiations," Reagan said at a nationally-televised press conference last Thursday night. "That's none of our business."

But the President said the U.S. has made it clear that "we'd do whatever we could to help bring the warring parties together; in effect, you might say, continue the Camp David process and continue to try to find more countries that would do as Egypt did and make peace."

Reagan added that because of the efforts of Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak and King Hussein of Jordan there was now a "reasonable chance" that negotiations would occur. He called Mubarak's efforts "great" and said he was complimented for them during

his visit to the White House earlier this month. The President denied Mubarak left Washington "disappointed" and indicated that the U.S. would be willing to meet with a joint Jordanian-Palestinian delegation as Mubarak has proposed. But the President said he made it clear that such a delegation could not include the Palestine Liberation Organization.

The U.S. will not meet with the PLO because of their refusal to accept United Nations Security Council Resolutions 242 and 338 and "they refuse to agree on or admit that Israel has the right to exist as a nation," Reagan said. He added that there are many Palestinians who do not feel they are represented by the PLO, "for example, many of those who are living and holding offices on the West Bank."

REAGAN ADMINISTRATION DISCOURAGING IMPRESSION THAT THE U.S. HAS CHANGED ITS POSITION ON MEETING WITH A JOINT JORDANIAN-PALESTINIAN DELEGATION

By Judith Kohn

WASHINGTON, March 24 (JTA) -- The Reagan Administration is discouraging the impression that the U.S. changed its position on meeting with a joint Jordanian-Palestinian delegation.

In a briefing, State Department spokesman Bernard Kalb said that President Reagan had not indicated a change of policy toward the proposed delegation in his remarks at a press conference Thursday night.

"If you take everything the President said in its totality you will note there is no change in U.S. policy," Kalb said on Friday. He said the U.S. remains open to the possibility of meeting with the Jordanian-Palestinian delegation. "If such a meeting contributes to the goal of direct negotiations between Israel and its Arab neighbors."

At the nationally televised press conference Thursday night, Reagan said that "We are willing to meet" with a joint delegation as long as it does not include members of the PLO.

Egypt and Jordan have been urging the U.S. to talk with such a delegation since the conclusion of an agreement between Jordan and the PLO last month. But both had maintained that participation by PLO members could not be avoided.

Kalb said that a meeting between Administration officials and the joint delegation "is one of a number of suggestions which have been made and no final decisions have been taken." He said that all suggestions would be explored during the visit by Assistant Secretary for Near Eastern and South Asian Affairs Richard Murphy to the Mideast next month.

REAGAN REAFFIRMS HE WILL NOT VISIT A CONCENTRATION CAMP SITE

By David Friedman

WASHINGTON, March 24 (JTA) -- President Reagan has reaffirmed that he will not visit a concentration camp site when he goes to West Germany in May because he believes the 40th anniversary of the end of World War II should be treated as a celebration and not used for "reawakening the memories" of the war.

Reagan, in answering a question at his nationally televised press conference last Thursday night, also said that the German people have "a guilt feeling that's been imposed upon them and I just think it's unnecessary."

Jewish organizations, and particularly groups of Holocaust survivors, have urged Reagan to visit

a death camp site after it became known that he has ruled out a trip to Dachau during his participation in V-E Day ceremonies following the Western economic summit in Bonn.

When Reagan was asked Thursday night why he would not visit a camp site, he replied:

"I feel very strongly that this time in commemorating the end of that great war that, instead of reawakening the memories and so forth and passions of the time that maybe we should observe this day as the day when 40 years ago peace began and friendship because we now find ourselves allied and friends of the countries that we once fought against."

Doesn't Think A Visit Is Necessary

Reagan said the anniversary should "be almost a celebration of the end of an era and the coming into what has now been some 40 years of peace for us, and I felt since the German people -- and few are alive that can remember even the war and certainly none of them who were adults and participating in any way -- and they do, they have a feeling and a guilt feeling that's been imposed upon them, and I just think it's unnecessary."

"I think they should be recognized for the democracy that they've created and the democratic principles they now espouse."

Reagan denied that West German Chancellor Helmut Kohl has asked him to take such a position. The West Germans had reportedly suggested the Dachau visit. "In talking just informally some time ago with Chancellor Kohl and others, we all felt the same way," Reagan added, "that if we could observe this as the beginning of peace and friendship between us."

Rabbinical Assembly Criticizes Reagan's Remarks

In New York, the Rabbinical Assembly criticized Reagan's remarks. Rabbi Alexander Shapiro, Assembly president, said that while the President "has done much to perpetuate the memory of the Holocaust," he nevertheless "created the impression that we can forget the past because today's generation of German citizens and leaders were not responsible for the actions of the Nazis."

Shapiro added: "The entire world must never be permitted to forget the dreaded actions of the Hitler era that destroyed many millions of people, including six million Jews the Holocaust must never be eliminated from the pages of German history The world must make certain that such acts are never repeated."

WASHINGTON (JTA) -- Several long-time refuseniks have been given permission to emigrate from the Soviet Union, the Union of Councils for Soviet Jewry reported. They are: Victor Gliner and Alexander Yampolovsky, from Leningrad; and Tatyana Levinson, Alexander Khazinov, Boris and Marina Shainus, Ala Abersomson and the Golkhberg and Rosenberg families, all of Moscow.

JERUSALEM (JTA) -- Shots fired by Israeli soldiers wounded an Arab youth during a stone-throwing incident at the Kalandiya refugee camp in the West Bank north of Jerusalem Sunday.

He was identified as Maray Salah Farhan, 17, a student at the Kalandiya vocational school. He was rushed to a Ramallah hospital where he underwent surgery for a knee wound.

BEHIND THE HEADLINES THE OTHER FACE OF ISRAEL

By Murray Zuckoff

(This reporter spent two weeks in Israel visiting over a dozen cities and interviewing dozens of Israeli — both inside and outside the government and senior Israeli military government officials and Arabs in the West Bank. What follows is the first in a series about every-day life in Israel.)

JERUSALEM, March 24 (JTA) — For everything there is a season. In Israel, it is the season for trying to find the answer to the painstaking questions: was the war in Lebanon worth the death of some 640 soldiers and the wounding of some 5,000, and did the almost three-year war achieve its original objective of "peace in the Galilee?"

These questions and the demand for their answers and for determining who is responsible for the nation's torment have taken on greater urgency in recent days as the fanatical, Khomeini-like Shiite terrorists stalk and kill soldiers of the Israeli Defense Force even as they proceed to withdraw.

No Cause For Rejoicing

For most Israelis there is no cause for rejoicing either about the war itself or about what they see as an unnecessarily protracted withdrawal. During the first 17 days of March, alone, 17 soldiers were killed. This included the 12 soldiers who were killed on March 10 less than a mile from the border town of Metullah by a Shiite car-bomber.

The war in Lebanon is viewed by most Israelis as at best a Pyrrhic victory and at worst a Vietnamization of Israel. Most Israelis, including many in the IDF, do not see the war as a war of defense, unlike the previous wars Israel was forced to fight.

This war is considered one of the darkest episodes in the life of the country. Unlike other wars in which Israel was involved, there are no songs to celebrate the action, no poems to mark Israeli heroism, no literature to chronicle feats and exploits, no epics to mark victories. Only obituaries and headlines which report the deaths of Israelis, and the anguished outcry of the families and friends of the IDF fallen, demanding a rapid, if not immediate, withdrawal from the bloodbath in Lebanon. The soul of Israel is in agony.

The Tragedy Of The Generation

The existential anguish of the Israeli people as a whole was perhaps best expressed by the father of IDF Staff Sgt. Ephraim Michael, 28, of Holon, who was one of the 12 soldiers killed near Metullah. In a quiet, almost hushed voice, the father said at the gravesite of his son: "This is the tragedy of our generation, that the fathers must say Kaddish for their sons."

This generational tragedy was also described in a subdued and forceful tone by Defense Minister Yitzhak Rabin. Talking to 80 participants in the United Jewish Appeal's Ambassadors' Mission, he said, regarding the war in Lebanon:

"There is no hope and no one should say that the goal is total elimination of terrorism. Its' unattainable. Whoever aspires to the unattainable, and whoever believes that by a long good war you can finish terrorism forever asks for disappointment, frustration, because whenever you try to reach the unattainable it must lead you to frustration."

Once the war in Lebanon "was extended beyond the peace in Galilee limited goals to the far-

reaching goals -- a new government in Lebanon, peace, no terrorists will remain in Lebanon, the Syrian army will be out -- whoever set these goals practically aspired to the unattainable," Rabin declared.

'No More To Be The Policeman Of Lebanon'

Then, in a voice filled with emotion, the Defense Minister stated that Israel's only goal in Lebanon is to achieve security along Israel's northern frontier "without the need for the IDF to be stationed permanently in Lebanon. This is the only goal of Israel in Lebanon: no more to be the policeman of Lebanon; no more to be the defenders of the Christians, of the Druzes and who knows what.

"No one has sent for us to be the policeman of this country. No one have given us the right to decide who will be President there. One should learn from history, that whoever set his foot in Lebanon sunk in the Lebanese mud ... We want to be out of Lebanon... and to end illusions about the capability of Israel by one good long war to finish terrorism." Rabin did not identify the architects of the illusions, but everyone in the audience knew.

Premier Shimon Peres, expounding on the same theme, said at the farewell dinner for 270 participants in the combined Ambassadors' Mission, the UJA Young Leadership and the Southeast Region: "We have never had in mind to remain in Lebanon, we have never looked for Lebanon land; never did we intend to play a role in Lebanese politics While the Shiites are doing the most to terrorize our withdrawal, the Shiites are not our enemies. Neither the Shiites nor the Sunnites, nor the Druze nor the Christians are our enemies. We don't have enemies as people. We don't have collective enemies and we are not going to appoint any enemies in our neighborhood or elsewhere. Our enemies were and remain a state of belligerency, a sentiment of hate, an approach of prejudice."

The Relentlessness Of The Shiites

For the average Israeli the Shiites seem even more relentless in their hatred of Israel than did the PLO whom many consider now to be pussycats by comparison. What is most alarming about the Shiites is their willingness to die for the sake of Allah and for the chance to meet him sooner than naturally necessary.

The Shiites are impervious to Israel's threats of reprisals and its "iron fist" policy. The Shiites say there is nothing Israel can do to them that hasn't already been done to them by the Christians and the PLO in Lebanon.

Beyond the fanaticism of the Shiite suicide teams, there is a practical consideration. The Shiites are in competition with other groups in Lebanon to achieve a leadership role as the foremost and staunchest defenders of their country against the Israeli "invaders." Their political stock increases each time they kill or maim an Israeli soldier. It helps them attain credibility and moral and political stature as Lebanon's real "freedom fighters."

Their daily forays against the IDF and the car-bombings of Israeli troops is generating anxiety among many in Israel that Shiite militancy, intransigence and fanaticism will set an example for West Bank extremists and inspire the development of an organized resistance movement against both the Israeli military and the Jewish settlers there.

Most Israelis have developed defense mechanisms to deal with the tragedy of the Lebanese war. In the almost three years since the war started, Israelis have

learned to accept death as a way of life. It isn't that they are developing ways to inure themselves against events which were thrust upon them and over which they have no control.

They sublimate their anger, bewilderment, anxiety and frustration by such activities as buying sprees — a psychological blanket against thoughts of death. Aside from the families involved, the average Israeli reads the daily newspapers and listens to the hourly Kol Israel radio broadcasts about events in Lebanon with almost stoical resignation. A day after the March 10 Metullah tragedy, throngs of Israelis walked leisurely through the streets of Jerusalem and Tev Aviv, stopping at their favorite cafes on Dizengoff or Ben Yehuda Street to sip coffee and engage in casual banter.

But the fear of the ongoing events in Lebanon and the anxiety of being called for "miluim" in Lebanon emerges almost in passing, but pervasively, in off-handed almost parenthetical remarks. Many are frightened of serving in Lebanon — probably the first time since the War of Independence that fear of fighting in a war is being expressed — because many do not see the war in Lebanon as a war of defense.

Many say they would gladly fight to defend Samaria and Judaea, even those who feel that Israel should return the territory. "But Lebanon is not our country. Why should we die for it?" many ask.

Reaching Out For Peace

The people of Israel want peace, not only so that lives can be saved but also so that they can return to a normal, constructive and productive existence. Talk of peace by the Egyptians, by the Jordanians by whomsoever generates euphoria.

Two days after the Metullah tragedy, some 150 members of the Japanese Christian pro-Zionist Makuya sect, on their 24th annual pilgrimage to Israel, marched through the streets of downtown Jerusalem, singing in perfect Hebrew songs such as Havaynu Shalom Aleichem, Hava Nagilah and chanting Am Yisrael Chai. They passed out little flags and lapel stickers with the inscription Shalom and a Magen David and the Japanese flag alongside each other.

Workers in offices above the street level threw confetti out of the windows while crowds of people on the street grabbed the flags and stickers and applauded the pilgrims. The Japanese and Israelis clasped outstretched hands and embraced each other. There were exchanges of Shalom and many passerbys joined in singing along with the pilgrims. Almost all the Israelis were moved emotionally; some cried.

On that cloudless, spring-like day in downtown Jerusalem, peace permeated the air and Israelis were savoring every minute of it.

(Next: The Economy)

ETHIOPIAN JEWS IN ISRAEL PROTEST INSULTING AND INSENSITIVE TREATMENT

By Gil Sedan

JERUSALEM, March 24 (JTA) — Several hundred Ethiopian Jews demonstrated outside the Knesset today protesting what they charged was insulting and insensitive treatment by the Chief Rabbinate and other religious institutions in Israel.

The demonstration was organized by the Association of Ethiopian Immigrants, one of three organizations representing the estimated 8,000 Jewish emigrants from Ethiopia who entered Israel last year by secret airlift from Sudan which had to be terminated when it became public knowledge.

The demonstrators marched from the Knesset to the Jewish Agency building and the Heichal Shlomo, the Chief Rabbinate headquarters in downtown Jerusalem. They objected vehemently to the fact that their absorption in Israel was placed exclusively in the hands of religious authorities, and that institutions claiming to represent them were headed by self-appointed outsiders who are unaware of the needs of the Ethiopians themselves.

A spokesman for the demonstrators said they were shocked by an incident at the Western Wall two weeks ago when Ethiopian Jews who came there to pray allegedly were chased away and told they were not Jewish. The Ethiopians are also objecting to the demand by the Chief Rabbinate Council that they undergo symbolic "conversion" rites, intimating that their authenticity as Jews is in question.

(Meanwhile, leading American newspapers reported today that U.S. Air Force pilots were involved in a top-secret rescue mission that brought some 700 Ethiopian Jews out of Sudan last Friday. Neither the White House, the Pentagon nor the State Department would confirm the reports. There was no confirmation in Israel.)

ALFONSON PLEDGES TO CONTINUE TO FIGHT INTOLERANCE AGAINST MINORITIES

By Yitzhak Rabi:

NEW YORK, March 24 (JTA) — President Raul Alfonsin of Argentina pledged here his continued commitment to human rights and religious freedom in Argentina and vowed to fight intolerance against Jews and other minorities in his country.

The Argentinian President made his pledge last Thursday at the Jewish Theological Seminary (JTS) of America where he received the JTS's first Centennial Medal for Religious Freedom for his contribution to human rights and religious pluralism in Argentina.

Dr. Gerson Cohen, chancellor of the JTS, said in presenting the medal to Alfonsin: "The Jewish community is giving public recognition to your role in restoring human rights to the people of Argentina." Cohen said that Alfonsin's leadership has brought Argentina out of the darkness of military dictatorship "and set it on the path toward justice, economic stability and true democracy."

Alfonsin warmly thanked the JTS for the award. He said in a short speech in Spanish that a new "international moral order" must be established to guide relations between men and people.

Attending the ceremony was Sen. Gary Hart (D. Col.) who also praised Alfonsin's leadership. "Today," Hart said in a short speech, "we applaud the Argentine people for their historic march toward freedom; and we applaud you Mr. President, for your unflinching leadership against anti-Semitism and repression."

The former Presidential candidate added: "In word and deed, President Alfonsin has made it clear that in Argentina's renewed democracy there will be no room for repression, and no room for religious persecution of any kind."

PARIS (JTA) — French writer Claude Lanzmann was awarded the French Jewish Foundation's 100,000 Franc prize for 1985 for his film "Holocaust" which portrays part of the World War II Jewish drama. The Foundation, presided over by David de Rothschild, aims at developing all forms of Jewish culture and of preserving the past.