

POSSIBLE PERES-MUBARAK SUMMIT IN MAY
By David Landau

JERUSALEM, April 17 (JTA) -- Premier Shimon Peres and President Hosni Mubarak might hold a summit meeting next month. It would be the first direct contact between the leaders of Israel and Egypt since the war in Lebanon began almost three years ago and the Israelis apparently are determined to press for a package deal which would resolve all outstanding issues between the two countries.

The summit meeting became a tentative probability following the visit to Cairo Monday and Tuesday by Minister-Without-Portfolio Ezer Weizman who has emerged as one of Peres' closest associates in the national unity Cabinet.

Weizman met with Mubarak as well as with Prime Minister Kamel Hassan Ali who invited him to Cairo, Foreign Minister Abdel Ismet Meguid and the Egyptian Defense Minister. He told reporters in the Egyptian capital yesterday that a summit meeting was "in the cards" but that a great deal of preparatory work had to be done beforehand. He noted pointedly that on the Israeli side, this work would be done exclusively by the Foreign Ministry.

Weizman's trip to Cairo had been vehemently opposed by Foreign Minister Yitzhak Shamir, the leader of Likud, partly on the grounds that all diplomatic contacts with Egypt must be conducted by the Foreign Ministry.

Elements In The Package Deal

Israeli reporters who accompanied Weizman to Cairo said the minister pressed the Egyptian defense chief to permit renewed searches for Israeli soldiers of the Yom Kippur war still posted missing in the Suez Canal zone, and for the bodies of Israelis in the sea off Alexandria.

The latter presumably would be the 69 crew members of the Israeli submarine *Dakar* which vanished in the Eastern Mediterranean, possibly in Egyptian waters, while on her delivery voyage from Britain on January 25, 1968.

Defense Minister Yitzhak Rabin today listed some of the issues he said Israel wants to include in its "package deal" approach to talks with Egypt.

In addition to the search for missing bodies, these include the unfulfilled portions of the Israel-Egyptian peace treaty calling for normalization of relations, the return of the Egyptian Ambassador to Israel -- recalled in 1982 -- and the dispute over Taba, a tiny strip of beach near the Sinai border on the Gulf of Aqaba which both Israel and Egypt claim.

Labor and Likud ministers are unanimous that all of these issues comprise a "package" for discussion. But there may be differences over the specific approaches taken to individual issues. Taba is an example of possible dissension within the unity government. The Egyptians insist the dispute be submitted to arbitration. Some Laborites are prepared to agree but Shamir and the Likud apparently are not.

CABINET TO DISCUSS FINAL STAGE OF IDF'S WITHDRAWAL FROM LEBANON
By Hugh Orgel

TEL AVIV, April 17 (JTA) -- The third and final stage of the Israel Defense Force withdrawal from Lebanon will be discussed at the Cabinet's weekly session this Sunday.

All indications are that the IDF will be out of Lebanon by the end of next month. The second stage of the withdrawal is all but completed. There has been no let-up, nevertheless, in attacks on IDF units in south Lebanon and Israeli strikes against terrorist bases.

Three IDF soldiers were wounded Wednesday when an explosive detonated on a roadside as their patrol passed near Kana village. Four soldiers were wounded Tuesday when their vehicle hit a landmine east of Tyre. Of the latter, one reportedly sustained moderate wounds and the others were only slightly hurt.

Terrorist Base Attacked

Israeli Air Force planes attacked a terrorist base near the Lebanese town of Bar-Elias in the Bekaa valley Wednesday and returned safely to their bases. The target was identified as a training area and base of the Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine headed by Naif Hawatmeh. The terrorist group is said to be pro-Soviet and close to Syria.

IDF forces also searched Shuhur village, south of the Litani River today. Finnish officers of the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL) said a cache of weapons was uncovered in the village and four residents were detained.

Timetable For Final Pullback

The final stage of the withdrawal will involve abandonment of the electronic surveillance post on Jebel Barouk and IDF positions in the eastern sector of the front facing Syrian forces in the Bekaa valley. The speed with which this will be accomplished will depend on Israel's assessment of Syrian intentions, informed sources said.

Defense Minister Yitzhak Rabin said Wednesday that he did not think the Syrians would seek a confrontation with Israel but that didn't mean they would discourage terrorist or guerrilla attacks on the IDF. "They will fight to the last Shiite or the last Druze," he said. He noted that all of the suicide attacks or attempted attacks on the IDF in recent weeks were by Shiite Moslems.

The timetable for completing the final stage of withdrawal will also depend on how soon the Israel-backed South Lebanon Army (SLA) is able to take over responsibility for the "security belt" just north of the Israel border. Rabin told reporters Wednesday that security in that zone will be maintained by local civil guards in their home villages and by the SLA.

He said the latter would be divided into "regional formations" with Druze soldiers in Druze villages and Christians and Shiite Moslems in their own respective areas. However, Rabin warned if there is unrest, hos-

tile activity or any kind of trouble inside Lebanon which endangers Israeli border towns and settlements "the IDF will go, if necessary, into the security zone and even beyond it." Otherwise, the IDF will remain inside the Israeli border.

The "security belt" corresponds to the strip of territory controlled by the late Maj. Saad Haddad's Israel-backed Christian militia before the IDF invaded Lebanon in June, 1982; plus the Hasbaya salient which includes Beaufort Castle, a 12th century ruin that was a Palestinian terrorist stronghold before June, 1982.

Mounting Criticism Over Role Of The SLA

But criticism is mounting in Israel over the projected security role of the SLA which is commanded by Gen. Antoine Lahad. The critics contend that Israel's reliance on this largely Christian mercenary force is much like the unsuccessful "Vietnamization" undertaken by the Nixon Administration in the final years of the Vietnam war.

Although it was intended to put the burden of the fighting on America's South Vietnamese allies, U.S. troops found themselves heavily involved in the fighting. Critics see the same thing happening to the IDF.

Dismantling Process Continues

Meanwhile, most heavy equipment has already been removed from the area along the Litani River still held by the IDF. The IDF has begun dismantling the Kasimiya bridge which it built over the Litani River during the war in Lebanon.

With the bridge removed, travel and trade between the IDF-controlled area and the north will be severely curtailed. The river crossing had been part of the main road between Sidon and Tyre. Rabin said the IDF would evacuate Tyre "shortly" but not before Israel Independence Day next Thursday.

There have been 15 attacks on the IDF in the Tyre area this month, which is half over, compared to 106 attacks in March. Roadside bomb explosions are listed as attacks. Reports from Beirut today said the IDF fired on reporters in the Kasimiya bridge area to prevent them from covering the dismantling operation.

The SLA carried out a search of the Shiite village of Ya'atir, eight kilometers north of the Israeli border yesterday. Up to now, most of these searches were conducted by the IDF. The SLA claimed the village harbored "Communists" and that some villagers recently stoned and burned SLA vehicles.

According to Irish soldiers serving with UNIFIL, the IDF surrounded the village while the SLA rounded up suspects and destroyed houses. Seven men were arrested and six houses were demolished.

U.S. AND ISRAEL AGREE ON JOINT PRODUCTION OF SHIPS AND MISSILES

By Hugh Orgel

TEL AVIV, April 17 (JTA) -- U.S. Secretary of the Navy John Lehman announced here Wednesday that Israel will build three diesel-powered submarines for its navy, with financial and technological assistance from the U.S.

He said that in addition to these arrangements, an agreement has been initiated for the joint design by Israel and the U.S. of a new naval missile and that the U.S. Navy will purchase another squadron of the Israel-manufactured Kfir jet fighter planes.

Lehman arrived in Israel Monday on a five-day visit as guest of the Israel Navy. His announcement means a new lease on life for the financially troubled Haifa Bay Shipyards which had faced complete shut-down or at least large scale dismissals for lack of orders.

Israel initially intended to purchase the submarines from the U.S. But apparently the American shipyards which specialize in undersea craft--notably General Dynamics and the Electric Boat Co. -- are geared exclusively to the production of nuclear submarines and can no longer build diesel boats. The latter are powered by diesel engines on the surface and by battery-powered electric motors under water.

Lehman said Wednesday "I am very pleased to announce that the (U.S.) Navy has been so pleased with the performance and effectiveness of the Kfir jet that I have requested, and we have agreed in principle, to proceed with another squadron of Kfirs for our naval training." The Israeli-designed Kfirs have been used by the U.S. Navy to simulate Soviet aircraft in training exercises.

Lehman, who took a short cruise on an Israeli missile boat and inspected the Haifa Bay shipyards, had lavish praise of Israel's navy, the smallest component of the Israel Defense Force. He said he was greatly impressed by its very high standards of preparedness, training and morale.

After meeting with Defense Minister Yitzhak Rabin Monday, he said the U.S. would continue to cooperate with Israel to seek joint solutions to problems raised by its defense needs. Rabin outlined the Israel Navy's needs and its ideas on how the U.S. can help meet them.

MURPHY MEETS WITH WEST BANK LEADERS

By Gil Sedan

JERUSALEM, April 17 (JTA) -- U.S. Assistant Secretary of State Richard Murphy met with about 25 West Bank Palestinian leaders at a reception in his honor at the U.S. Consulate in East Jerusalem last night. He said later that his talks with the Palestinians left him with the impression that they are anxious to see progress in the peace process.

Murphy was given a petition signed by 22 West Bank political personalities urging the U.S. to negotiate directly with the Palestine Liberation Organization and to recognize PLO chief Yasir Arafat as the sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian people.

(In Washington today, State Department spokesman Bernard Kalb declined to comment on the petition or on the substance of Murphy's meeting with the Palestinians. He stressed, however, that "There was no functionary, no official of the PLO invited to that gathering and no one attended in that sense." He reiterated that "Our policy on meeting the PLO is firm and we are adhering to it strictly.")

The Palestinians who met with Murphy at what was officially a social gathering, represented a broad spectrum of political views in the occupied territories. Representatives of the Palestinian rejection front were absent. No statements were made afterwards and the meeting did not go beyond an exchange of views.

JERUSALEM (JTA) -- David Ben-Shimol, an Israeli soldier, was sentenced to life imprisonment by a Jerusalem district court Wednesday for firing an anti-tank missile at an Arab bus here seven months ago in which one passenger was killed and several wounded.

BEHIND THE HEADLINES THE INTERPLAY BETWEEN PUBLIC OPINION AND THE GOVERNMENT IN EGYPT

By Judith Kohn

(Part One Of A Two-Part Series)

(Editor's note: Judith Kohn was the Jewish Telegraphic Agency's correspondent in Cairo for two years.)

WASHINGTON, April 17 (JTA) -- When Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak came to Washington last month, he defended the continued absence of Egypt's Ambassador from Israel with the same argument he has used consistently over two-and-a-half years -- public opinion at home.

Even a farmer in the smallest village owns a transistor radio, Mubarak said in an appearance at the National Press Club here, and knows perfectly well what Israel is doing in Lebanon, the West Bank and Taba. Taba, in particular, has been turned into a national issue in Egypt by Israel's refusal to return the disputed 800-square meter strip of land, or at least to send the issue to an arbitration panel, he argued.

"If you ask an Egyptian where Taba is, he won't know," Mubarak told the journalists. "But he will tell you it's very important."

It is easy to scoff at the Egyptian leader's claim. After all, does public opinion really matter in a country whose government is heir to a 30-year military dictatorship? And even if opposition is no longer suppressed in the same brutal fashion it once was, isn't it the ruling regime that continues to play the largest role in shaping the very public opinion Mubarak insists he must follow?

Environment Of Bolder Criticism

There is some truth to these observations, and to Mubarak's as well. In Egypt's gradual development toward a freer and more pluralistic society than it was under Mubarak's predecessors, Gamal Abdel-Nasser and Anwar Sadat, the country has witnessed a growing interplay between popular criticism and the tone -- if not the substance -- of government positions. The government -- through its monopoly of the "national press" and broadcast media -- shapes public opinion, but is increasingly compelled to anticipate and respond to it as well.

Although official tolerance of opposition parties reintroduced by Sadat and expanded under the present regime -- has been prevented from having any direct impact on what the leadership does, it has created an environment in which criticism of the regime and its policies is bolder than it has been since the revolution put an end to an old and active, but always tenuous, multiparty system some 30 years ago.

Relatively innocuous and insignificant government actions often make sensational headlines in the weekly opposition newspapers, which seldom forfeit an opportunity to show up the leadership as pandering to the United States and Israel.

The main opposition parties which challenged the government in parliamentary elections last May have made reversal of the normalization of relations with Israel a leading cause. The Wafd Party -- the only opposition group to earn the eight percent of the total vote required to gain seats in the People's Assembly -- is no exception.

Ridiculed by the late Sadat as a party of aristocratic pashas, the newly organized holdover from the pre-revolutionary period has struggled to present itself as a more progressive group than it appeared when the Free Officers of Nasser barred its leaders from political life and initiated single-party military rule.

Game Of One Upmanship

Like the leftist opposition parties, the more conservative Wafd has been involved in a constant game of one upmanship with the regime. The latter makes occasional gestures of protest when Israel does something perceived as objectionable. But in the field of propaganda, the cards are in a sense stacked in favor of the regime's critics.

Facing none of the constraints of governing, a relatively middle-of-the-road party like the Wafd can make a much bigger fuss, take a far stronger stand, and leave the policy makers fumbling for proofs that they're not as impotent as they appear.

Taba As A Case In Point

Taba is a case in point. Last August, the Wafd began a campaign to dramatize the issue, filling pages of its journal for several weeks with stories on alleged Israeli exploitation of its de facto administration in the area.

First, the Israelis had allowed nude bathers into the territory, the paper announced in typically splashy headlines. As if that weren't bad enough, the journal disclosed, the Jewish State then claimed an extra stretch of land between the original contested area and a barbed wire fence constructed by the Egyptian army some 100 meters into the Sinai to shield its soldiers from the corrupting sight.

Mubarak had raised the first noises about Taba, when Israel opened a hotel in the disputed territory in late 1982. Egypt then claimed the Israeli move violated an interim agreement concluded just before Israel withdrew from the Sinai in April of that year. Settlement of the dispute was subsequently included among Egypt's conditions for the return of its Ambassador to Israel.

After other opposition parties joined the Wafd in touting the alleged Taba incident of last summer into something of a national scandal, the government printed a denial of the entire affair in one of the leading newspapers. But by this time the issue of Taba in general had clearly become a national symbol and another group had taken it up more forcefully than the government could ever hope to do.

So was it official propaganda that raised the consciousness of that isolated peasant with the transistor to the point where Mubarak could make the issue a legitimate excuse for keeping relations with Israel cool? Or was it deference to popular sentiment that forced the leadership to turn it into a nationalist battlecry, even naming a recently-built ship after the disputed territory? In short, it appears to be a little of both.

But opposition wouldn't be opposition if they didn't criticize the government. Those parties and organizations most vocal in their objections to relations with Israel -- among them the Islamic fundamentalists -- have been voicing them more or less consistently since the conclusion of the Camp David accords in 1978 and the peace treaty that followed a year later. So has anything really changed?

Professor Shimon Shamir, former director of the Israeli Academic Center in Cairo, which opened just

a short while before the Israeli invasion of Lebanon, thinks a lot has changed. Writing from Cairo in the Israeli newspaper Haaretz some two months after the September 1982 massacres of Palestinians at Sabra and Shatilla in Lebanon and the subsequent withdrawal of Egypt's Ambassador from Israel, Shamir said the Egyptians have come full circle.

They had built up a foundation of rationalizations for the switch from war to peace, and then saw that foundation slip from under them. The argument that a separate peace would lead to a broad regional agreement that would satisfy the Palestinians and bring a long desired stability to the entire Middle East, seemed to have been discredited.

"The claims of the opposition and reservations about the peace were transformed during the summer (following the invasion of Lebanon) into a national consensus," Shamir wrote.

As television news showed graphic scenes of devastating Israeli bombing raids in Lebanon, journalists and political cartoonists of the semi-official and opposition periodicals alike appeared to be regularly drawing from an old wartime reservoir of anti-Semitic rhetoric for print and circulation.

Particularly after the Sabra and Shatilla massacres, the reemergence of the political cartoon portraying the sinister hook-nosed Jew clad in black overcoat and yarmulke and gleefully preoccupied with the slaughter of the world's innocents, brought protests from Israeli officials and others. Egypt, it seemed, was spewing out a venom more noxious than the familiar poison of Israel's avowed enemies.

That this reservoir of rhetoric was brimming after years of belligerence with Israel in which the most vicious anti-Semitic writings were disseminated by the state-owned publishing houses, is scarcely surprising. But the rapidity with which it flowed back into daily use raised questions about the stability of the Egyptian foundation for peace with Israel. Had anything changed at all?

(Tomorrow: Part Two)

CEAUSCESCU: MIDEAST FACES IMPORTANT MOMENT IN THE SEARCH FOR PEACE

OTTAWA, April 17 (JTA) -- President Nicolae Ceausescu of Rumania is convinced that the Middle East "now faces an important moment in the search for peace." He holds that view as a result of his recent meetings with various Arab leaders and with Israeli Premier Shimon Peres, according to Rabbi Arthur Schneier, president of the Appeal of Conscience Foundation of New York, who had a 40-minute private meeting with the visiting Rumanian leader at the Governor General's residence here Monday night.

Schneier, who is spiritual leader of the Park East synagogue in New York, told the Jewish Telegraphic Agency that Ceausescu believes that Middle East peace eventually will have to come about through an international conference and that the Soviet Union cannot be excluded from the process. Rumania is the only Communist bloc country that maintains diplomatic relations with Israel.

Ceausescu is on a state visit to Canada which began Sunday and ends today. Schneier told the JTA that their meeting was the latest in a series of periodic meetings he has had with the Rumanian President to exchange views on the international situation. Schneier also met yesterday with the Rumanian Foreign Minister, Stefan Andrei.

He said that at the moment, Jewish emigration from Rumania is not an issue. Rumania enjoys most favored nation (MFN) trade status with the U.S. largely on the basis of its emigration policies which are reviewed annually by Washington.

Sees No Basic Change In Soviet Policy

Ceausescu did not go into the matter of Soviet emigration policies. But, according to Schneier, he believes that the new young leadership in the Kremlin, in the person of Mikhail Gorbachev, may end the freeze in U.S.-Soviet relations though there will be no basic changes in Soviet policy generally.

Jewish emigration from the USSR has increased when detente prevailed between Moscow and Washington and has dwindled when relations between the two were frozen. Schneier said Ceausescu sensed the possibility of a "spring thaw" but stressed that the most important issue between the two superpowers is arms reduction, currently the subject of negotiations in Geneva. He thought there has to be positive responses from both sides, Schneier said.

UNIFIL MANDATE EXTENDED FOR 6 MONTHS

By Yitzhak Rabi

UNITED NATIONS, N.Y. April 17 (JTA) -- The Security Council extended today the mandate of the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL) for another six months, until October 19. The present mandate of the 7,000-troops force expires this Friday.

The vote was 13-0, with two countries -- the Soviet Union and the Ukraine -- abstaining. The resolution extending the mandate of UNIFIL also reiterated the Security Council's "strong support for the territorial integrity, sovereignty and independence of Lebanon within its internationally-recognized boundaries."

UNIFIL, which was created in 1978, is assigned to police and maintain the peace in south Lebanon. The resolution adopted today also requested Secretary General Javier Perez de Cuellar to continue his consultations with the Lebanese government, and other parties concerned, regarding the implementation of the resolution today and to report back to the Security Council.

With the withdrawal of the Israeli forces in south Lebanon, UNIFIL assumed an added role in maintaining the precarious situation in south Lebanon.

3 YOUTHS CHARGED IN VANDALISM OF A LONG ISLAND HEBREW ACADEMY

NEW YORK, April 17 (JTA) -- Three Long Island youths have been charged with burglary and criminal mischief in last week's vandalism of the North Shore Hebrew Academy in Kings Point. Police estimated the damage at more than \$100,000.

The three youths, who were not identified by police because they are minors, are allegedly responsible for the destruction of hundreds of books, computers, two pianos and audio visual equipment. Windows were also broken, desks were overturned and paint poured on the floors.

Some 300 parents and students joined together last Sunday to clean up the debris. The academy is a private school of 250 students up to the eighth grade. The school was closed for Passover when the vandalism occurred.