

**REAGAN BLAMES HIJACKING PARTLY
ON U.S. FRIENDSHIP WITH ISRAEL;
BUT OPPOSES CONCESSIONS TO TERRORISTS**
By Theo Stone

WASHINGTON, June 19 (JTA) — President Reagan said last night that the reason the United States is singled out as a target for terrorism is due in part to its strong ties with Israel.

"We seem to be a target also, I'm quite sure, because of our friendship and support of Israel," Reagan said in response to a question during a nationally televised news conference from the East Room of the White House.

"So it just seems to be that there is an anti-Americanism that is rampant there on the part of those who don't want peace with Israel and who have consistently over the years, committed terrorist acts against the Israelis," the President added.

No Pressure On Israel

Reagan, in a statement at the outset of the news conference, dominated by the current hostage crisis in Beirut, indicated that he would not pressure Israel into making concession with the hijackers who are demanding that Israel release some 700 Shiite Moslems it now holds in return for the release of some 40 Americans held in Beirut.

"Let me further make it plain to the assassins in Beirut and their accomplices wherever they may be that America will never make concessions to terrorists ... Nor will we ask nor pressure any other government to do so" the President said, in an obvious reference to Israel.

The President was asked why the U.S. does not "lean on Israel" in order that the Israelis expedite the release of the 700 Shiite detainees which Israel has already said it was intending to soon release.

Linkage Makes Freeing Shiites Difficult

According to Reagan, "the linkage has been created that makes it impossible for them and for us. There was no question" that Israel was going to release the Shiites it now holds, he said, adding that "it has now been tied to where such a movement would be in effect giving in to the terrorists. And then, as I say, who is safe?"

"That's all terrorists have to know is that they can succeed and get what they want. It's the same as the customs in single kidnapping crimes in our country here, in which we know that if possible you try to resolve the situation without paying the ransom," Reagan said.

Nevertheless, the President did say that he thought the Israelis were in violation of international law when they took the Shiite Moslems from Lebanon into Israel. "It's my understanding," the President said, "that taking them (the Shiites) across the border from their own country and into another country is a violation of the Geneva accords."

Reagan was also asked whether he had received "any assurances" from Israel that they would release the Shiite detainees if the hostages were released. The President said, "we have not dealt with them on

that. As I say, we have not interfered in any way with them in what they're doing." On efforts to revive Middle East peace efforts, the President praised King Hussein of Jordan in seeking a negotiating process, adding, "I have to commend him for his courage and willingness to do what he is doing in trying to bring about direct negotiations between the Arab states and Israel and the Palestinians to try and get a peace — a lasting peace — in the Middle East. So we are doing everything we can also to be of help to him."

RED CROSS REJECTS MEDIATOR ROLE

By Tamar Levy

GENEVA, June 19 (JTA) — The International Red Cross received today a formal request from the United States to ask Israel to release 766 Shiite Moslems currently in a prison camp in Israel in order to obtain the release of about 40 American airline passengers held hostage by Shiite hijackers in Beirut.

The immediate reaction of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) headquartered here was not to become involved. An ICRC spokesman said the role of the international humanitarian relief agency was not to act as a mediator between states that have diplomatic relations. His reference was to the United States and Israel.

President Reagan said at his White House press conference last night that the U.S. will not "ask nor pressure any other government" to make concessions to the hijackers of TWA Flight 847, a clear reference to Israel. When asked "has the International Red Cross been dealing with them (the Israelis) for us" he said that was an area "that I can't talk about."

President Reagan is scheduled to meet tomorrow with Alexander Hay, president of the ICRC. The Israeli Ambassador to the United Nations in Geneva, Efraim Dubeck, told the Jewish Telegraphic Agency today that Israel was not ready to accept ICRC mediation and expected the U.S. to apply directly to Israel on the matter.

Israel is not willing to negotiate via the Red Cross, Dubeck said. Neither he nor the ICRC seem to believe that a prisoners-for-hostages exchange, if and when effected, will be through the Red Cross.

**BARLEV REJECTS LINKING SHIITE
PRISONERS TO HIJACK OF U.S. PLANE**

By David Landau

JERUSALEM, June 19 (JTA) — Police Minister Haim Barlev, a member of the Inner Cabinet, said today that the Shiites held in jail in Israel were "a question in no way connected with" the hijacked TWA plane.

"This is not connected," he told an interviewer. "This plane is an American plane, and the passengers are American citizens. The plane did not originate in Israel, and it is not on the ground in Israel. It is not our affair. It is not related to this whole business of the 700 Shiite detainees."

Barlev's statement was the latest reaffirmation of the steady Israeli position on the hijack issue.

Some observers construed it, though, as hinting at the possibility that Israel, in due time, would go ahead with its prior plans to free all or most of the Shiite

detainees — explaining that their release had been pre-planned and was not connected to the hijack. There is speculation here, that a phased release of the Shiites may begin next week.

Israeli officials informed newsmen a fortnight ago to stand by for the release of 341 of the Shiites. But the release did not eventually take place — apparently because of the kidnap incident involving 11 South Lebanese army soldiers who ended up in the captivity of the Shiite Amal militia. Nabih Berri's demands at that time that the 700 be freed were said by Israel to be counterproductive and to actually set back their impending release.

HUMAN ERROR BLAMED FOR TRAGIC BUS-TRAIN CRASH By Hugh Orgel

TEL AVIV, June 19 (JTA) — A committee established by the Transport Ministry stated today that human error was responsible for the train-bus collision June 11 which took the lives of 18 school children and three adults on an outing to a nature preserve south of Haifa.

The committee's chairman, Prof. Moshe Livne of the Haifa Technion's Road Safety Department, also faulted the "incorrect geometry" of the unguarded railway crossing where the collision occurred as a factor in the tragedy. His report was submitted to Transport Minister Haim Corfu.

While Livne stressed that his panel's task was not to apportion blame, the report clearly assigned culpability to the bus driver, Ruth Davidoff, 39, a divorced mother of two, who died in the crash. The report stated that while the rearview mirrors on the bus were not aligned to give a clear view of the tracks, the driver would have had an unobstructed view had she moved her head slightly. The report also stated that the bus radio, playing at the time, may have masked the whistle of the oncoming train.

The locomotive engineer of the Tel Aviv-to-Haifa passenger train which slammed into the bus was held blameless. He was travelling at his authorized speed of 60 mph and sounded his whistle and applied his brakes as soon as the bus came into view, the report said. But there was insufficient distance to bring a train at that speed to a full stop. The locomotive and the bus were found both to be in good mechanical order.

The report found that the railway crossing, one of 300 on secondary roads in Israel which have neither gates nor warning signals, could be improved at a cost of a few thousand dollars. The road itself posed a hazard insofar as it made a sharp turn toward the railroad tracks.

ALIYA FROM WEST STRESSED BY ZIONIST GENERAL COUNCIL By Gil Sedan

JERUSALEM, June 19 (JTA) — Aliya from the Western countries is the main item on the agenda of a three-day meeting of the Zionist General Council which opened here today. It is attended by about 300 delegates and observers from Israel and abroad representing Zionist groups affiliated with the World Zionist Organization.

Haim Aharon, head of the Jewish Agency's immigration and absorption department declared at the opening session that Israel must create the proper conditions to attract Jewish immigrants from

the West. He questioned whether present-day Israel lives up to its role in that respect. Israel must decide if it is interested in aliya from the Western countries and if it is, "then first of all we must create the proper atmosphere in Israel." The Zionist movement and the government should make aliya the top national priority, he said.

Leon Dulzin, chairman of the Jewish Agency and WZO Executives, urged Zionist leaders in the U.S. to persuade the American Jewish community to pressure HIAS and other Jewish organizations not to assist Soviet Jewish emigres who opt to settle in the U.S. rather than in Israel.

PLO MEMBERS ON DELEGATION TO MEET WITH FRENCH OFFICIALS By Edwin Eytan

PARIS, June 19 (JTA) — A Jordanian-Palestinian delegation which includes two ranking officials of the Palestine Liberation Organization will arrive here next Wednesday for talks with Foreign Minister Roland Dumas and officials at the Elysee Palace, the Foreign Ministry announced today.

The delegation will be headed by Jordan's Deputy Prime Minister, Abdel Wahab el Majali. The senior PLO officials in the group are Joweid Ghassein, a member of the PLO's executive committee, and Khaled el Hassan who heads the Palestine National Council's (PNC) commission on foreign affairs.

The delegation will brief French officials on the peace proposals of King Hussein of Jordan. It was established on the basis of an agreement concluded between Hussein and PLO chief Yasir Arafat on February 11 for talks with the U.S.

But the Reagan Administration has still not clarified its position, insisting that the Palestinian component of the delegation must not include known members of the PLO. Israel is fiercely opposed to Hussein's initiative which calls for an international conference with the participation of the five permanent members of the United Nations Security Council and the PLO.

But Dumas informed the National Assembly last week that France is willing to receive the delegation. A joint Palestinian-Jordanian group led by Arafat visited Peking last month. PLO officials here said other delegations similar to the one due here next week will visit Italy and Britain during the summer.

DISPUTE OVER RESOLVING TABA CRISIS DEEPENS SPLIT BETWEEN LIKUD, LABOR By David Landau

JERUSALEM, June 19 (JTA) — The eight month-old Labor-Likud national unity coalition government may have moved a step closer to dissolution today after Premier Shimon Peres and Deputy Premier and Foreign Minister Yitzhak Shamir, the Likud leader, failed to agree on how Israel should resolve its border dispute with Egypt over the Taba region.

The two men met privately and agreed to meet again on the matter in a few days. The crux of their dispute is whether Israel should accede to Egypt's insistence that the Taba issue be settled by international arbitration — a course now favored by Peres — or whether conciliation should be tried first, as urged by Shamir.

Peres believes that by acquiescing to Egypt's wishes on Taba, the way will be cleared to resolving all outstanding bilateral issues between the two countries including normalization of relations and the return of Egypt's Ambassador to Tel Aviv.

Shamir and his Likud colleagues see Peres' approach as a retreat and "sellout" by Israel. Article 7 of the 1979 Israeli-Egyptian peace treaty provides for conciliation and arbitration to settle disputes that cannot be resolved by negotiations. Likud's view is that arbitration is a last resort if conciliation fails. Labor interprets Article 7 as allowing the parties to choose one or the other method.

Sources close to Peres said he had "not threatened" but had "made clear to Mr. Shamir the seriousness with which he viewed the matter." The sources said he stressed to Shamir that if there was no progress on Taba, the government would in effect be "paralyzed in terms of foreign policy" and that he (Peres) "would not countenance" a paralyzed government.

Labor No Longer Mutes Criticism

In Labor Party circles the crisis atmosphere was palpable after the Peres-Shamir meeting. Criticism of Likud, hitherto muted in the interests of preserving the unity coalition, was freely voiced. Labor sources recalled that Shamir had opposed the Camp David accords and the peace treaty with Egypt and charged that "those opposed to peace are now trying to destroy it."

The Labor sources rejected Shamir's contention that the unity government should concentrate on solving Israel's economic crisis. "Those who destroyed the economy ought not to lecture us about how to rebuild it," they said. Peres and other Labor leaders have in the past gone out of the way to avoid blaming Likud for the country's economic troubles although many economists and neutral observers have attributed them to the policies of the past Likud governments.

Taba is a tiny strip of beach on the Gulf of Aqaba, claimed by both Israel and Egypt. In itself it has neither strategic nor economic importance. But Labor and Likud politicians attach great significance to how the dispute is resolved. While Peres sees it leading to a general rapprochement with Egypt and a possible opening to broader peace with Israel's other Arab neighbors, Shamir fears Taba could open avenues towards diplomatic progress which his Likud Party may not necessarily wish to travel.

Labor Position Called 'Sell-Out'

At an angry meeting of the Likud Knesset faction last night, Deputy Foreign Minister Ronnie Milo, a close confidant of Shamir, denounced Labor's position on Taba as "the start of a total sell-out of national assets."

Peres met today with leaders of two small religious factions, the National Religious Party and Morasha. Although they have only six Knesset seats between them, they could be pivotal to the formation of a Labor-led government to replace the unity coalition.

Aides to Peres said he delivered an impassioned speech on Taba. The Premier was quoted as saying: "I will not sit in this office and wait around to hear if the others are about to veto anything I want to do. The entire government decided to go for a package deal with the Egyptians involving full normalization in return for Taba. If Taba is ours, let's prove it at arbitration. If it isn't, then why have they (the

the former Likud government) burdened us with it? I will not countenance a government that has no power of decision-making. If this becomes a government of national paralysis it will unify the entire Arab world against us. It is my duty as a Jew and as a man of conscience to do all I can to prevent war."

REAGAN AGAIN DEFENDS BITBURG VISIT AS 'MORALLY RIGHT THING'

WASHINGTON, July 19 (JTA) — President Reagan last night again defended his controversial visit to the German military cemetery in Bitburg, saying it was the "morally right thing to do."

"From the very first I felt it was the morally right thing to do and I'm pleased that I did it," Reagan said in response to a question during his nationally televised news conference from the East Room of the White House.

"And it was a worthwhile experience over there and I began to get my reward when I spoke to 10,000 young teen-age Germans and at the end of that heard 10,000 young Germans sing our national anthem in our language."

Reagan laid a wreath at the military cemetery at Bitburg last May with West German Chancellor Helmut Kohl. The cemetery contained at least 47 graves of soldiers who were members of the Waffen SS.

The President told reporters last night that his visit to the cemetery was never intended as a "forgive and forget thing. It's up to someone else to forgive, not us, if there is any forgiveness and certainly we must never forget." The President also said:

"I was amazed -- and its 40 years now of friendship that has followed all that hatred and the evil of the Holocaust and of Nazism -- to learn that the Germans, not only have they preserved the horrible camps and maintained the museum with the photos all blown up of the worst most despicable things that happened there, but they bring their school children every year and show them and say, 'This must never happen again.'"

LEBANON WAR COSTS CALLED HIGH

By Gil Sedan

JERUSALEM, June 19 (JTA) — A Hebrew University economist said today that the cost of the Lebanon war was two or two-and-a-half times higher than the official figures indicate.

The defense budget places the cost of the three year venture into Lebanon at \$1.6-\$1.8 billion. But according to Prof. Haim Barkai, \$4-\$4.5 billion is closer to the mark.

He said, at a symposium, that the cost included about \$700 million for military reservists called to duty and another \$100 million in lost tourism. He said the build-up of the Israel Defense Force cost tens of millions of Dollars and was due to a parallel build-up of the Syrian army because of the Lebanon war.

The war had other adverse effects on the economy. Israel's foreign debt rose from \$13 billion in 1981 to \$19.4 billion in 1984 while the growth of the gross national product (GNP) decreased by three percent, Barkai said.

JERUSALEM (JTA) — A new sports center, donated by the Jewish community of Indianapolis, was inaugurated June 15 at the development town of Beit Shemesh, near Jerusalem.

MONTREAL JEWS DENOUNCE NEW QUEBEC SCHOOL LAW AS DISCRIMINATORY By Michael Solomon

MONTREAL, June 19 (JTA) -- Jewish leaders strongly criticized today a new law which they claim discriminates against Jewish parents of children attending Protestant schools in Greater Montreal by denying those parents the right to vote on School Board decisions even when they are elected board members.

At a meeting here last Sunday, held under the chairmanship of Bernard Finestone, chairman of the Canadian Jewish Congress (CJC) Quebec region, the new legislation was sharply attacked by Claude Ryan, official education critic for the Liberal Party in the Quebec Assembly; Herbert Marx, Liberal Assembly member from Montreal; Mildred Kholodny, representing the CJC; and Jean Pierre Proul from the newspaper, *Le Devoir*.

Taxation Without Representation

Despite several CJC telegrams of protest, Bill 59 was enacted into law on June 4. Finestone said it was "particularly odious since it removes the basic democratic right of representation based on taxation."

He said the CJC had informed the Quebec government that the new law, "by discriminating on the basis of religion," was in direct contravention of its own charter of Human Rights and the Canadian Law of Rights and Freedoms, which explicitly ban such discrimination. He said that if the law is not amended, the CJC will consider filing a complaint with the Quebec Human Rights Commission.

Education Minister Francois Gendron, who had been invited to speak at the meeting, was unable to do so, but did not send a representative to explain the provincial government's position on the new law.

WORKMEN'S CIRCLE HEAD RAP DULZIN POSITION ON DROPOUTS

NEW YORK, June 19 (JTA) -- The Workmen's Circle called on Premier Shimon Peres of Israel today to reject an appeal by Leon Dulzin, chairman of the World Zionist Organization and Jewish Agency Executives, that he raise with President Reagan the issue of denying refugee status to Soviet Jews who leave the USSR with Israeli visas but do not settle in Israel.

Barnett Zumoff, president of the Workmen's Circle, said in a letter to Peres that "the Dulzin appeal is narrow and assaults the right of Jews to freely emigrate wherever they choose."

"We understand fully Dulzin's concern and even his reasons," Zumoff wrote. "At the same time, Soviet Jews who want to leave should be able to do so without moral or legal restraints. Those who choose to remain should be able to do so without harassment or curtailments of Jewish cultural or religious rights permitted to other citizens. This has been the historic and consistent desire of both Jews and non-Jews concerned with the problem."

He added that "The conscience of Jews dedicated to rescuing our less fortunate brothers and sisters must be united on one thought: freedom -- full freedom -- of choice to emigrate, to travel, to re-settle."

BUS SERVICE FOR PAROCHIAL SCHOOLS

NEW YORK, June 19 (JTA) -- A bill to provide school bus transportation for yeshiva and other non-public school students in New York City on days when public schools are closed was approved yesterday by the New York State Assembly Education Committee. An identical measure was approved by the State Senate earlier this month.

Shmuel Prager, general counsel for the Agudath Israel Commission on Legislation and Civic Action, said today the measure was drafted by attorneys for the commission and the New York State Catholic Conference.

Prager noted that the Assembly committee approval was a "major action" toward the enactment of the measure into law. The Legislature does not have a conference committee to iron out differences in versions passed by its two chambers. Senate and Assembly versions must be identical. Approval by the full Assembly and by Gov. Mario Cuomo would make the measure law.

Prager said the New York City Board of Education does not have private school bus transportation for non-public school students on days public schools are not in session. He said that policy "creates much confusion and anxiety for students, parents and school staff because alternate and often costly transportation plans must be arranged."

LAW TO BAN PORK MOVES IN KNESSET

By Gil Sedan

JERUSALEM, June 19 (JTA) -- A bill banning the raising, marketing and sale of pork in Israel passed its first reading in the Knesset today by a 57-23 vote and was referred to the Law and Constitution Committee.

The measure, pushed hard by the religious parties, was supported by many Knesset members who felt uncomfortable with it but had to discharge coalition obligations. Other MKs absented themselves during the vote.

The preliminary reading of the law sparked an angry debate between religious and non-religious MKs. Avraham Shapiro of the Aguda Israel delivered an emotional speech to the effect that Jews through the ages martyred themselves rather than violate the kashrut laws. Mapam MK Haika Grossman retorted sharply when Shapiro said Jews went to the gas chambers "rather than defy the name of the Lord by eating pork."

Grossman, a Holocaust survivor, said "the six million were killed because they were Jews, plain and simple." Shulamit Aloni of the Citizens Rights Movement (CRM) charged that the law infringed upon individual rights and, as Police Minister Haim Barlev has admitted, could not be enforced. She said it would lead to rabbi vigilantes raiding non-kosher restaurants and meat markets in a futile attempt to distinguish between veal and pork (both meats are light-colored) and succeed only in further aggravating tensions between the religious and secular elements of the population.

NEW YORK (JTA) -- Fifty-four percent of Americans oppose a reduction of ties with Israel, according to a recent telephone poll conducted by Chilton Research Services, Inc. of Radnor, Pa. and supervised by ABC News. In New York City the figure was 57 percent.