

ISRAEL RELEASES 300 SHIITE DETAINEES

By Hugh Orgel

TEL AVIV, July 4 (JTA) — Israel released 300 Shiite Muslims from the Atlit detention camp yesterday and insisted — as it has repeatedly over the past two weeks — that there was no linkage to the release Sunday of 39 Americans held hostage for 17 days by Shiites in Beirut.

Defense Minister Yitzhak Rabin said the release of the 300 was planned long before Lebanese Shiite extremists hijacked TWA Flight 847 on June 14 and took 39 of its passengers and officers hostage. He said they would have been freed much sooner were it not for the hijacking and an earlier incident in the south Lebanon security zone involving the Israel-backed South Lebanon Army (SLA) and Finnish soldiers of the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL).

There were originally 766 Moslem prisoners at Atlit, all transferred there last April 2 when the Ansar detention camp maintained by the Israel Defense Force in south Lebanon was shut down. Israel freed 31 two weeks ago, a move widely seen as a gesture toward the TWA hijackers who were demanding the release of all Shiite prisoners — though Israel denied that was the case.

World Media Converges On Atlit

After yesterday's mass release, between 400-450 Lebanese remain in Atlit, most of them Shiites. Rabin said they would be freed over the next few weeks, depending upon the security situation in south Lebanon.

The world news media converged at Atlit yesterday to witness the release. Although reporters and TV camera crews almost matched the prisoners in numbers, only a small pool of correspondents was allowed inside the camp.

Shiites Chant 'Allah Is Great'

The Shiites, dressed in track suits, sprinted from their tents to 10 waiting busses. First, however, they were individually checked by name by IDF officers and representatives of the International Red Cross. As they left the camp, the prisoners raised their bound hands and shouted to the reporters, "Allah is great, Allah will help Islam conquer."

The busses, their windows covered with makeshift blinds, formed a long convoy heavily guarded by IDF and police jeeps and escorted by Red Cross ambulances. The Lebanese border was crossed at the Rosh Hanikra checkpoint. The prisoners were handed over to the Red Cross at Ras Bayda, on the northern perimeter of the south Lebanon security zone.

Freed prisoners whose homes are in the security zone may apply for permission to return there. Those living elsewhere in south Lebanon made their own way to their home villages.

The 400-450 prisoners still at Atlit are said to include a few Palestinians and seven members of the Shiite extremist organization, Hezbollah (Party of God) which was responsible for the TWA hijacking.

This group, it is believed, holds seven Americans and possibly two French and one British nationals kidnapped in Beirut during the past 15 months. The Americans were not included in the hostage release. Observers here suggested that Israel would free the Hezbollah men only after the American and European kidnap victims are returned to their homes.

REAGAN PRAISES ISRAEL'S POSITION AGAINST SURRENDERING TO TERRORISM

By David Landau

JERUSALEM, July 4 (JTA) — President Reagan praised "the strong position taken by the government of Israel against surrendering to terrorism," and said, in a letter to Premier Shimon Peres, made public yesterday, that "the ties between Israel and the United States have been strengthened by the ordeal" of the 39 American hostages released in Beirut Sunday.

Reagan's letter thanked Peres "for the assistance and cooperation extended by you and your government during the TWA hostage crisis. The safe return of our innocent hostages ... is a signal to the nations of the world that refusing to give in to terrorism and to terrorists' demands is the best and indeed the only way to combat and ultimately eliminate this scourge." Reagan added, "The strong position taken by the government of Israel against surrendering to terrorism has earned the respect and admiration of all those ... who prize... freedom and justice."

POLITICAL LEADERS SEEKING TO EASE TURMOIL CREATED BY ECONOMIC PLAN

By David Landau and Gil Sedan

JERUSALEM, July 4 (JTA) — Israel's political leaders were seeking this week to end the turmoil generated by the government's emergency economic program. But Histadrut is still seething with anger over measures it says will harm wage-earners.

Apart from its most ardent champions, Premier Shimon Peres and Finance Minister Yitzhak Mordechai, the emergency program drew its only unstinted praise from Washington where Secretary of State George Shultz, himself an economist, congratulated the government yesterday, praised Peres for his "courage and foresight" and pledged continued U.S. aid to help Israel on the way to economic health.

The most immediate problem facing Peres is the militancy of Histadrut, the powerful trade union federation where the Labor Party commands an overwhelming majority. Histadrut demonstrated its clout with a 24 hour (Tuesday/Wednesday) general strike which was observed, according to its estimates, by 90 percent of the workforce. More labor strife is threatened.

Government, Histadrut Seek Truce

A truce seemed likely yesterday. The government, at the behest of Peres, agreed to postpone exercise of the emergency regulations — holdovers from the British Mandate regime — by which the economic program is to be implemented. Specifically, decrees freezing wages, reducing cost-of-living allowances and the dismissal of an undisclosed number of government employees would be delayed if Histadrut suspended all protest moves against the economic program.

At the same time, a Treasury team headed by the Director General of the Finance Ministry, Emanuel Sharon, met yesterday with a Histadrut delegation headed by Haim Habersfield, chairman of the trade union division. The purpose was to work out a compromise that would mollify labor and allow the government to proceed with its economic measures. But the two officials failed to reach an understanding and the situation deteriorated.

Histadrut, urged on by militant workers, threatened to resume labor sanctions starting next week unless the government satisfied demands for better compensation for wage-earners. Histadrut Secretary General Yisrael Kessar has threatened another general strike in 14 days if no agreement is reached.

Modai, Kessar Clash On Panel Program

The atmosphere was further soured today when Modai and Kessar, appearing live on a television panel show, "Moked", ignored the media interlocutors and engaged in an angry verbal clash. The TV confrontation added a dramatic personal dimension to the situation. But it served to sum up the substantial differences between the government and Histadrut.

The government insists the erosion of real wages—which it hopes will be temporary — is an essential element to rehabilitate the economy without triggering mass unemployment that could have severe social and political consequences. Histadrut charges that the wage-earners are being forced to bear the brunt of austerity while business suffers little in comparison.

The principle behind the economic program is an attempt to meet the demand often raised by the U.S. and by the International Monetary Fund (IMF) to end the linkage system. Hitherto, almost every component of the country's economy — wages, prices, taxes — are linked to the consumer price index. That system has made it almost impossible to control the inflationary spiral.

The new program also abolishes "Patam", an acronym for Dollar-linked saving accounts. The public may no longer deposit Shekels in Dollar-linked accounts for periods of less than one year. This will give the government its first opportunity to control bank accounts without being sucked into the inflationary spiral because of linkage commitments.

Inflation Expected To Ease By September

Modai expects inflation to soar in July and August — largely the result of ending government price support subsidies for basic commodities. He predicted that the cost-of-living index will go up by 25 percent this month and 13 percent next month. But by September, if all goes well, the inflation rate should be no more than three percent because of the three-month price freeze.

Modai sent a cable to Shultz today thanking him for American cooperation and updated him on the economic measures. He expressed hope that with the new plan in action, additional U.S. aid would be forthcoming.

Shultz was effusive in his congratulatory message to Peres yesterday for the "courage and foresight you have shown in moving boldly to address Israel's serious economic problems ... The new economic measures, if fully and vigorously implemented, represent an important step forward in Israel's continuing efforts to stabilize its economy and restore growth ... That is why we (the U.S.) stand

ready to support Israel in this important undertaking with supplemental economic assistance which we expect soon will be approved by Congress and will be available to be used in the way that will be most helpful to Israel," Shultz said.

Congress has before it an aid request from Israel of \$1.5 billion which is approximately the amount the government says it has cut from the \$23 billion national budget.

BOMB DAMAGES ISRAELI-STYLED EATERY IN FRENCH NORTHERN CITY OF LORIENT By Edwin Eytan

PARIS, July 4 (JTA) — A powerful bomb exploded this morning in the French northern city of Lorient, causing extensive damage to an Israeli-styled restaurant. Damage to the building and the neighborhood was extensive, but no one was injured in the blast.

The restaurant, The Kibbutz, serves Israeli food, is decorated with blue and white flags and has Stars of David inscribed on its walls. Its non-Jewish owner, Andre Hamonou, 43, is known as a fervent supporter of the Jewish State.

Nevertheless, despite the blast, Hamonou opened his restaurant "as usual" a few hours after the blast. "I follow Israel's example and will not let bombs and terrorists intimidate me," Hamonou said. Police say they have no clues as to who committed the attack, but believe the blast is linked to Hamonou's pro-Israeli views.

Lorient has only a small Jewish community and Hamonou said that most of his clients come from the French army base on the outskirts of town. "They just love the Israeli atmosphere," said Hamonou, who has visited Israel on several occasions.

LEONARD STEIN DEAD AT 63

WASHINGTON, July 4 (JTA) — Funeral services were held yesterday at Temple Israel for Leonard Stein of Silver Spring, a longtime leader in B'nai B'rith International, who died here Monday of a heart attack at the age of 63.

Stein became acquainted with BBI when, as a teenager, he joined and later became a leader in the B'nai B'rith Youth Organization. He joined the adult group in 1948, working his way up to the BBI Board of Governors, the BBI top policy-making body.

He was a major force in creation of B'nai B'rith housing projects for low income senior citizens. He led in the development of Homescrest House I and House II, for low-income elderly residents.

HERZOG, SHAMIR CABLE SOVIET LEADERS ON NEW APPOINTMENTS By David Landau and Gil Sedan

JERUSALEM, July 4 (JTA) — Israeli officials took two steps today clearly aimed at improving relations with the Soviet Union and eastern bloc countries, none of which, with the exception of Rumania, have diplomatic relations with Israel.

Foreign Minister Yitzhak Shamir sent a cable to Eduard Shevardnadze, congratulating him on his appointment as Soviet Foreign Minister. President Chaim Herzog sent a "warm message" to Andrei Gromyko, who has been promoted to be President of the Soviet Union, after setting a record of more than two decades as Soviet Foreign Minister.

Yediot Achronot reported today that contacts between Israeli and East European diplomats have intensified recently, with the latter indicating a possible

improvement in Soviet-Israeli relations. Shamir told the Knesset yesterday that Israel hopes that, under the leadership of Mikhail Gorbachev, the Soviet Union would change its policy toward Soviet Jews who want to emigrate. Shamir was commenting in reply to a motion from Mirium Glazer-Tasa, a Likud member who is chairman of the Knesset's Aliya committee. She noted that only 36 Jews — a new monthly low — left the Soviet Union in June and she urged the government to permit no easing of activity on behalf of Soviet Jews.

Shamir also recalled that the new Soviet President, then Foreign Minister Gromyko, voted at the United Nations in 1948 for the General Assembly recommendation to create a Jewish State and an Arab state. Shamir said Gromyko often recalls his vote with pride.

Herzog wrote Gromyko that his election as Soviet President "is one more step in a distinguished career, parts of which are enshrined in the hearts of the people of Israel." This was understood to be a reference to the Soviet Union's support for the UN recommendation and for the creation of Israel in 1948.

A number of Jewish intellectuals from Soviet Georgia reportedly have fond memories of the new Foreign Minister who had been Communist Party chief in Georgia. They recalled he had a sympathetic attitude toward the ideals of Jewish peoplehood and Jewish national aspirations.

SMOKE STARVED ISRAELIS LAY SIEGE TO DUBEK CIGARETTE FACTORY; POLICE CALLED IN TO QUELL NEAR RIOT

By Hugh Orgel

TEL AVIV, July 4 (JTA) — Grown men wept, fistfights broke out and police were forced to intervene to quell a near riot outside the Dubek cigarette factory in Ramat Gan which resumed production today after a shutting down a week ago because the ceiling on cigarette prices was too low.

Dubek has a monopoly of domestic tobacco products. The government's emergency economic program allows it to raise prices, but, according to Dubek executives, not enough to pay the higher commissions demanded by the distributors.

The distributors refuse to distribute, the tobacco shelves remain empty and hundreds of smoke-starved Israelis laid siege to the plant where the precious stuff is made. Veteran Dubek employees told reporters they had not seen such sights in more than 30 years working there.

The need for cigarettes was apparently so acute that frustrated smokers tried to climb the wire mesh fences surrounding the factory. Many cried bitterly as they begged for a pack or two, or even a single butt. Plant managers took pity. They tossed several cartons from the windows. They stopped after it became apparent that many in the eager crowd who snatched them were not desperate smokers but black market operatives who sold the free cigarettes immediately at many times their normal price.

Fistfights broke out because the distributors, holding out for higher commissions, tried to block the crowd from reaching the plant. Dubek said it could not meet the distributors' demands because the 40 percent price increase allowed would not begin to cover their inflated costs.

ISRAEL FAVORS AIDING STAR WARS PLAN

JERUSALEM, July 4 (JTA) — Israel will probably respond favorably to an invitation from the United

States to participate in the Reagan Administration's Strategic Defense Initiative, dubbed the Star Wars proposal, according to a Voice of Israel Radioreport today. Premier Shimon Peres's office was the scene of a meeting between Defense Minister Yitzhak Rabin and other officials on the U.S. invitation. The discussion evolved around recommendations by a defense establishment delegation which recently returned from a visit to the United States where it focused on the Star Wars issue.

According to the radio report, both Peres and Rabin hold the position that Israel should respond favorably to an American initiative. Israel is already in the process of preparing a formal reply, specifying the areas in which Israel would like to contribute.

DRAMATIC INCREASE IN CHILD ABUSE IN ISRAEL IS REPORTED

By Yitzhak Rabi

NEW YORK, July 4 (JTA) — The problem of child abuse has come to the surface in Israel in recent years with a dramatic increase in the number of reported cases.

Dr. Hanita Zimrin, a professor at Tel Aviv University's School of Social Work, asserted here that last year alone there were more than 600 reported child abuse cases. However, she said that the actual number of child abuse cases in Israel is much larger, in the neighborhood of some 3,000 a year.

Zimrin said that abused children in Israel are exposed to physical abuse such as cigarette burns on their bodies and other injuries inflicted upon them; neglect which includes starvation; sexual abuse and emotional abuse.

Zimrin: Children Abused By Both Parents

According to Zimrin, most of the abuse is done by the parents. "Our experience shows that about 95 percent of the abuse cases are committed by one or both parents of the child," she said.

Claiming that Israel has a "nice welfare system for children," in the form of child care clinics known as Tipat Halav, Zimrin charged however that the system "is not effective when children are abused." In Israel, she continued a person cannot be charged with a crime for failing to report a case of child abuse, and in many cases child abusers are not punished, or are punished lightly.

Noting that "more cases of child abuse are found in the lower classes," in Israel, therefore, more cases are found among Sephardic Jews who comprise the majority of the lower classes in Israel. But she suggested that the phenomenon of child abuse is a reality among the higher classes in Israel, the Ashkenazim, but that is not as easily found or reported since the higher classes are not exposed to social services as the lower ones.

Zimrin, currently on a lecture tour of the U.S., last week addressed a private luncheon arranged by the United Jewish Appeal in cooperation with Henry Everett, a UJA leader.

PARIS (JTA) — The Paris Archbishop, Cardinal Jean Marie Lustiger, was Thursday refused an entry visa to Czechoslovakia. Lustiger, who is of Jewish origin, intended to attend the celebration due to mark the 1100th anniversary of a noted Czech, Saint Method, described by many Catholics as the patron saint of Europe. Lustiger has asked in the past that East European countries lift travel barriers for Jews. Now, though a Catholic Cardinal and a Prince of the Church, he has personally suffered from these barriers to the free circulation of people.

D'AMATO OPPOSES EXPANSION OF PACTS WITH SOVIETS UNTIL KREMLIN ABIDES WITH HELSINKI AGREEMENT By Marlene Goldman

NEW YORK, July 4 (JTA) — Sen. Alfonse D'Amato (R. NY), chairman of the Helsinki Congressional Commission on Human Rights, called upon the United States government and its allies to freeze any expansion of trade and cultural agreements with the Soviet Union "unless the Kremlin abides to the spirit and letter of the human rights agreement it signed ten years ago, the Helsinki accords."

In honor of the tenth anniversary of the Helsinki Human Rights Accord, D'Amato expressed his conviction of the "arrogance by Soviets for basic fundamental human rights" at a news conference Tuesday at Federal Plaza, as Dr. Seymour Lachman, immediate past chairman of the Coalition to Free Soviet Jews, presented the Senator with a report "Decade of Promise and Despair." This document, prepared by the Coalition, "demonstrates clearly that the Soviet Union, in its treatment of Jews and in its policies with regard to emigration," according to Lachman, "has made a mockery of these provisions."

While the Soviet Constitution, blown-up and displayed as a backdrop for the new conference, claims that "the USSR's relations with other states are based on ... respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms; the equal rights of peoples and their right to decide their own destiny" and that "the citizens of the USSR are guaranteed freedom of conscience, that is, the right to profess or not to profess any religion and to conduct religious worship or aesthetic propaganda," D'Amato pointed to severe violations of their own laws.

Increase In Imprisonments Of Activists

D'Amato charged that the Soviets have "sowed the seeds of despair" as Jewish emigration, after its 1979 peak of 51,320, has taken a nosedive to 896 in 1984. The National Conference on Soviet Jewry reported Tuesday only 36 Jews trickled through in June. Out of the approximate 400,000 Soviet Jews to apply for emigration, 20,000 have met with a brick wall of continued refusal.

There has also been a sharp increase in the number of imprisonments of Jewish activists. "Within the last 30 days," D'Amato observed, "we have witnessed at least eight arrests of people who are leaders in monitoring human rights compliance in the Soviet Union." The Senator stressed that Georgian Catholics, Ukrainians, and Jews are all victims of Soviet persecution as he revealed that the four long standing Helsinki monitors that have recently been arrested include Jewish refusenik brothers Isai and Grigory Goldstein as well as Georgian Catholics Tengis and Edward Gudava.

In addition, over the past decade, the Soviet media has, according to Lachman, served as "the center of a worldwide network on publications espousing anti-Semitism" and has linked Zionism with Nazism. "The hopes and aspirations that were ascribed to ten years ago," that began to see some deliverance with the reunification of families, "have been smashed," D'Amato stated.

The Senator, in his quest for freer emigration and respect for human rights by the USSR, began his plan of action by being the first to sign a replica of a petition directed to Soviet leader Mikhail

Gorbachev, calling for Soviet adherence to the Helsinki Final Act. Lachman noted that the Act, signed by 35 nations, including the USSR, in 1975, provides that "the participating states will respect human rights and fundamental freedoms, including the freedom of thought, conscience, religion or belief."

Later this month, the petition, which the Coalition hopes will carry tens of thousands of signatures, will be submitted to the State Department requesting they be presented at a tenth anniversary of the Accords meeting in Helsinki.

"The petition in and of itself has no effect," declared D'Amato, who will be chairman of the U.S. Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe at the Helsinki conference. But the "moral force" backed by commitment will have an effect.

D'Amato: Soviet Record Is 'Dismal'

D'Amato will stress at the Helsinki meeting that the Soviet record on human rights "has been dismal" and will propose that the U.S. and nations of the free world oppose any expansion of trade with the Soviets, although he clearly stated that it should not necessarily effect any current trade agreements.

"I believe this Administration has before it a unique opportunity to create a new exodus for the tens of thousands of Soviet Jews who wish to taste freedom," D'Amato said. "We need to tell those who are systematically violating the Helsinki agreement on basic human rights, that unless they begin to adhere to the principles they agreed to, then we aren't going to bargain on other issues of importance to them."

"What was a promise has turned out to be despair," D'Amato asserted. "We cannot turn our backs on the tens of millions who suffer and endure ... We cannot forget our brethren."

CZECH JEWRY SENT 2,000 COPIES OF A ONE VOLUME EDITION OF THE TORAH

NEW YORK, July 4 (JTA) — With the approval of the government of Czechoslovakia, 2,000 copies of a one volume edition of the Torah — the first five books of the Jewish Bible — in Czech and Hebrew have been printed in New York and shipped to Prague as a gift to the Czech Jewish community by the Appeal of Conscience Foundation.

Foundation president Rabbi Arthur Schneier announced this week that the 356-page hardcover book is the first of its kind to be published since the 1930s and fills an important need for Czech Jewish community. He added that the project was carried out with the cooperation of Czechoslovakia's Council of Religious Affairs.

Schneier, spiritual leader of the Park East Synagogue in Manhattan, explained that the volume was produced photographically from individual copies of the five books that make up the Torah that he brought with him from Prague in 1983. "There were literally the last copies left in all of Czechoslovakia," Schneier said.

The new Czech-Hebrew edition will be used at religious services in the Altmue Synagogue in Prague and other Jewish houses of worship in that country, he said.

The one-volume edition reproduces the covers of the last editions of the five books of the Torah published in Czechoslovakia in the two languages: Genesis, published in Prague in 1932; Exodus, 1935; Leviticus, 1938; Number 1939; and Deuteronomy, 1950. Because the latter had been published only in Hebrew, a translation into Czech was prepared in Prague for the new edition.