

FOCUS ON ISSUES SPAIN TAKES LONG OVERDUE STEP TO RECOGNIZE ISRAEL

By Edwin Eytan

PARIS, Jan. 20 (JTA) — The Spanish government, by establishing formal diplomatic ties with Israel last Friday, took what it and apparently most of the Spanish people consider a long overdue and honorable step, at the risk of Arab economic sanctions and possible terrorist attacks against Spanish installations and citizens abroad and at home.

Spain sought to forestall diplomatic and economic repercussions in the Arab world by informing Arab leaders of its intention to recognize Israel well in advance. Spanish diplomats stressed that this will not alter Spain's traditional backing of the Palestinian cause.

At their meeting with Israeli diplomats at The Hague to sign the documents of mutual recognition, the Spaniards presented the Israelis with a paper calling for international recognition of Palestinian rights.

Stringent Security Precautions

Meanwhile, stringent security precautions have been in place since early last week at all Spanish Embassies and diplomatic missions abroad. These were especially evident at Spanish legations in Western Europe and the Middle East. Last Thursday, on the eve of recognition, hundreds of members of Spain's anti-terrorist squad, the crack GEO, were dispatched to European and Middle East capitals.

Despite these precautions, three Spanish officials, one a security guard, were kidnapped in Beirut Friday morning. They are being held by a Shiite Moslem militia, reportedly as hostages for release of several Lebanese gunmen sentenced to prison terms in Spain last year. It was not clear whether the kidnappings were connected with Spain's recognition of Israel or merely coincidental.

Despite threats of terrorist attack and economic retaliation, Spanish public opinion seems nearly unanimously in favor of Prime Minister Felipe Gonzalez's initiative to recognize Israel. Virtually all of the major dailies have congratulated him for taking the step, expressing regret only that it was not taken much sooner.

Searching For Historic Roots

Democratic government was restored in Spain in 1974 for the first time in 35 years, following the death of Gen. Francisco Franco. The Spanish people have since been searching for their cultural and historic roots. In the course of that search, they have welcomed the very notion of Sephardism, the concept of a Spanish Jewry, removed by the expulsion 500 years ago.

Dozens of books on the role played by Sephardic Jews in Spanish history are published every month. A regular monthly television program on the State-owned network is devoted to the Jewish contribution to Spain. Popular singers are performing songs based on Sephardic themes.

The recognition of Israel is viewed by many Spanish historians as closing the breach between Spain and Jews that opened in 1492. A special service celebrating the new relationship between Spain and Israel was held at Madrid's modern synagogue. Jewish congregants, most of them relative newcomers from North Africa, greeted each other with cheerful "Mazel Tovs."

Members of Jewish youth organizations filled Madrid's community center. They sang the Israeli national anthem, Hatikva.

There are believed to be about 15,000 Jews in Spain. The largest communities are in Madrid and Barcelona. At the time of the expulsion, an estimated quarter-million Jews lived in Spain, among them writers, jurists, rabbis, doctors and philosophers.

SHAMIR; SPANISH-ISRAELI DIPLOMATIC TIES WILL HELP STRENGTHEN ISRAEL'S STANDING IN THE WORLD COMMUNITY

By Gil Sedan

JERUSALEM, Jan. 20 (JTA) — Shmuel Hadass, who has been Israel's unofficial representative in Madrid until now, will become the Jewish State's first Ambassador to Spain, it was learned here Friday when the two countries announced the establishment of diplomatic relations.

Foreign Minister Yitzhak Shamir told the Jewish Telegraphic Agency in a special interview Friday, "I regard the establishment of relations between the two countries as a very important step in strengthening Israel's political standing in the world, particularly in Europe. This is, in effect, a correction which has been needed for many years."

He added, "We welcome this important step, and I hope we shall witness the development of significant relations in all spheres, the political, the economic and the social."

The announcements were made simultaneously in Jerusalem, Madrid and The Hague where the documents of mutual recognition were signed by Yeshayahu Anog, Deputy Director General of the Israeli Foreign Ministry, and Maximo de Kajal, director of the European Affairs Department of the Spanish Foreign Ministry. Premier Shimon Peres and Prime Minister Felipe Gonzalez of Spain met at The Hague Sunday. (Separate story, P. 3.)

Spain is the last Western European nation to establish full diplomatic ties with Israel. The joint communique issued by both countries Friday stated that the decision was made among other reasons because of the deep historic connections between the Spanish and Jewish people. The move had been sought by Israel for many years.

Arrangements were completed during a secret visit to Madrid early this month by Labor MK Micha Harish and Uri Savir, who was Peres' communications advisor in the Spanish capital.

Both countries made political statements Friday indicating that their new formal relationship will not affect their respective policies which differ sharply on the Middle East.

Foreign Minister Francisco Fernandez Ordonez of Spain stressed at a press conference his government's commitment to solve the Palestinian problem through negotiations that would include the Palestine Liberation Organization and that it was firmly opposed to any attempt by Israel to annex Arab territories it now occupies.

Ordonez's statement reflected Madrid's sensitivity to Arab pressure. In fact the latter is considered the main reason why Spain delayed recognition of Israel for 38 years after the founding of the Jewish State and more than 10 years after the restoration of democratic government in Spain following the death of Gen. Francisco Franco in 1974.

Recognition of Israel was in fact one of the conditions of Spain's admission to the European Economic Community (EEC) which it joined on January 1. All EEC member states, including Portugal which also joined the Common Market January 1, have diplomatic relations with Israel.

Shamir noted that Spain's admission to the EEC was a major factor because it would have been "unacceptable that one of the EEC countries would not have diplomatic relations with Israel." He acknowledged Israel's competition with Spain for European markets, notably in citrus and other agricultural products. He said the matter was the subject of ongoing negotiations "and I hope that soon we shall reach an agreement that will be acceptable to all parties."

MURPHY IS IN EUROPE IN ANOTHER ATTEMPT TO ADVANCE THE MIDEAST PEACE PROCESS
By David Friedman

WASHINGTON, Jan. 20 (JTA) — Richard Murphy, Assistant Secretary of State for Near Eastern and South Asian Affairs, was in Europe this weekend in another attempt to advance the Middle East peace process.

Murphy met with King Hussein of Jordan in London on Saturday and the next day conferred with Israeli Premier Shimon Peres at The Hague. There was no indication that any progress had been made although Peres reportedly commented after his talks that no breakthrough should be expected.

The State Department's point man on the Middle East, Murphy made six trips to the Middle East last year but apparently was not planning to go to the region this time. In announcing the trip last Friday, State Department spokesman Bernard Kalb stressed again the United States' "objective" which is to bring about direct negotiations between Israel and a Jordanian-Palestinian delegation.

"We will be working with the parties to achieve an international context that meets the political needs of those involved and leads to direct negotiations," Kalb said.

Last month, a senior Administration official, summing up the Reagan Administration's Mideast efforts in 1985, said that the U.S. would be concentrating on getting Israel and Jordan to agree on conditions for an international conference that would lead to direct negotiations. The official said that a large measure of agreement already exists and that the U.S. would try to help the parties "fill in the gaps."

Kalb also indicated Friday that the U.S. still sees no role for the Soviet Union in the Mideast peace process. He said if the USSR "wishes to play a larger role" then it must demonstrate by being "constructive."

Perhaps one reason for Murphy's hurried trip to Europe is the Administration's concern over its proposed \$1.9 billion arms sale to Jordan. With Congress returning tomorrow there is a strong likelihood that new resolutions will be introduced in both the Senate and the House to reject the sale. Last October, Congress passed a resolution delaying the sale until March 1 unless "direct and meaningful negotiations between Israel and Jordan are underway."

Meanwhile, the U.S. welcomed the decision by Spain to establish diplomatic relations with Israel. "We have long said that we favor full recognition of Israel by all members of the international community," Kalb said. "This makes Spain's practice consistent with those of the other members of the European Economic Community which Spain joined earlier this month."

BURNING CANDLE CAUSED BARRACKS TRAGEDY

TEL AVIV, Jan. 20 (JTA) — A fire which caused the deaths of eight soldiers and serious injuries to seven others in an artillery corps camp in the West Bank last month was caused by a lighted candle left unattended by one of the men sleeping in the barracks, according to an IDF military police investigation, whose findings have just been released.

The investigation found that one of the 45 soldiers housed in the prefabricated hut had placed a lighted candle on a shelf and had then left the building at about 1 a.m., when all the others were asleep.

The candle apparently set fire to a towel, and the flames spread almost instantly throughout the structure. Soldiers in the camp were not able to quench the fierce blaze and the hut burned to the ground. Some of the sleeping soldiers are believed to have been asphyxiated by fumes which prevented them from escaping through the doors at either end of the long building.

The soldier who used the candle against all regulations — apparently because there was a power failure at the time — is to be charged with negligence, disobeying orders and possibly with more serious offences, in a court martial to be held this week.

EL AL TICKET COUNTERS ARE RELOCATED AT TWO BRITISH AIRPORTS

TEL AVIV, Jan. 20 (JTA) — El Al ticket counters at two British airports — in Manchester and in London — have been relocated, apparently because other airlines are nervous about possible terrorist attacks. In the December 27 assault on El Al ticket counters at the Rome and Vienna airports, most of the 19 who died were passengers on line at adjacent counters.

Israel's national airline is not happy over the situation and is expected to cancel its weekly flights to Manchester. The airport management there moved El Al to an isolated part of the terminal, citing security considerations. El Al said it should rather have tried to improve airport security.

El Al reluctantly agreed to have its facilities removed from the international flights terminal at Heathrow, London's main airport, to a terminal handling British Airways flights only.

JERUSALEM (JTA) — A four-day television blackout last week ended after a labor court ordered striking employees to return to work and instructed the Broadcast Authority to re-instate union leader Hezi Koka, whose dismissal triggered the walkout.

PERES AND GONZALEZ SEAL THE NEW RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THEIR COUNTRIES

AMSTERDAM, Jan. 20 (JTA) — Premier Shimon Peres of Israel and Prime Minister Felipe Gonzalez of Spain met for four hours at The Hague yesterday to seal the new relationship between their countries.

Spain and Israel formally announced on Friday the establishment of full diplomatic ties. Officials of the two countries signed the documents of mutual recognition in The Netherlands capital.

Peres and Gonzalez were invited here by the Dutch government for a bilateral discussion and other meetings related to the Middle East peace process and the European Economic Community. Holland currently holds the rotating chairmanship of the EEC, which Spain joined on January 1. One of the conditions of its admission to the Common Market was recognition of Israel.

An Historic Event

This was an historic event for both Mediterranean nations, as Peres noted in remarks at Ben Gurion Airport before his departure yesterday morning. "This morning will begin with the meeting with the Prime Minister of Spain, Felipe Gonzalez," Peres said.

"This really is a very special occasion in the annals of diplomacy and the history of our people, since the Golden Age (of Jews in Spain) which goes back 500 years when the Jewish people participated so much in the culture of Spain, contributed to it and carried with them the essence of a very unique culture," Peres said.

He recalled the expulsion of Jews from Spain in 1492. "Now, meeting again... as peoples, countries and leaders is, I believe, for all of us, a moving experience," Peres added.

Cites Spain's Unique Position

Following his talk with Gonzalez here, the Israeli leader observed that Spain is in a unique position to help the Middle East peace process. "With the benefit of balanced and friendly ties with all parties in the conflict, it can serve as a bridge between us, thus contributing to the peace process in the Middle East," he said.

Gonzalez noted that Spain's recognition of the Jewish State — 38 years after its founding — was part of the process of ending his country's isolation from world affairs that characterized the regime of the late Gen. Francisco Franco. "I hope we can contribute now to the peaceful solution of Middle East problems," he said.

Peres Meets With Murphy

Peres met in The Hague today with Richard Murphy, U.S. Assistant Secretary of State for Near Eastern and South Asian Affairs, who flew to Europe over the weekend in what Reagan Administration sources described as a renewed effort to break the impasse in the Middle East peace process. Murphy met with King Hussein of Jordan in London on Saturday.

No details were released of his discussions with Peres today. A spokesman for the Israeli leader said the two men would probably meet again later this week. Peres is due to visit Britain and West Germany after talks with Dutch Premier Ruud Lubbers. He is scheduled to return to Israel January 30.

When he left Israel yesterday, Peres described his trip as "a mission to reinforce our friendship with Europe," although his meeting with Gonzalez was clearly the highlight. The U.S. Ambassador to Israel, Thomas Pickering, accompanied the Premier on his flight to Holland.

A Hectic Schedule

Peres will spend five days in Britain where he has a 90-minute private talk scheduled with Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher and a luncheon with the Prince and Princess of Wales. In West Germany he will meet with Chancellor Helmut Kohl, President Richard von Weizsaecker, Foreign Minister Hans-Dietrich Genscher, and Bavarian Prime Minister Franz-Joseph Strauss.

Peres will also visit West Berlin, the first Israeli Premier ever to do so, and is expected to pay a private visit to the site of the Bergen-Belsen concentration camp. In each of the three countries on his itinerary, Peres will also meet with leading businessmen in an effort to boost trade with Israel.

LEHAT TO HEAD LIST OF LIBERAL PARTY CENTER IN NEXT KNESSET ELECTIONS

JERUSALEM, Jan. 20 (JTA) — Mayor Shlomo Lehat of Tel Aviv will head the list of the new Liberal Center Party in the next Knesset elections. The party, founded by disaffected members of the Liberal Party wing of Likud, was officially launched at a press conference in Tel Aviv last week.

It described itself as the authentic successor to the mainstream General Zionist movement, which is traditionally bourgeois in domestic economic policy and moderate in foreign policy.

Leon Dulzin, chairman of the Jewish Agency and World Zionist Organization Executives, is president of the Liberal Center. The other founding members are former Knesset Speaker and Cabinet Minister Yitzhak Berman and Mayor Yehezkel Hamelech of Rehovot. They expressed concern over the Liberal Party's drift to merge with Herut, its rightwing partner in Likud.

U.S. VETOES ANTI-ISRAEL RESOLUTION

UNITED NATIONS, Jan. 20 (JTA) — The United States last Friday night vetoed in the Security Council a Lebanese-sponsored resolution "deploring" Israel for "violence" in south Lebanon and demanding that Israel withdraw its military forces "to the internationally recognized boundaries of Lebanon." Eleven members of the 15-member Council supported the resolution while three countries, Australia, Britain and Denmark, abstained. The U.S. was the only country that opposed the resolution. It traditionally vetoes anti-Israeli resolutions as unbalanced and one-sided.

JERUSALEM (JTA) — Finance Minister Yitzhak Modai presented a \$21.6 billion budget to the Knesset Monday for the next fiscal year. It is about \$550 million under the budget for the current fiscal year and is aimed at stabilizing the economy. There are no provisions for renewed economic growth. In presenting the proposed budget, Modai hailed the rapid decline of inflation which he said had no precedent anywhere in the world. The government intends to keep inflation at its present rate, a maximum of two percent per month, Modai said. He said this was the achievement of the entire people.

BACKGROUND REPORT LIBYA IS A CENTER FOR TRAINING TERRORISTS FROM ALL OVER THE WORLD

By Hugh Orgel

TEL AVIV, Jan. 20 (JTA) -- Libya has established more than 20 training camps for terrorists where more than 7,000 terrorists from all over the world are receiving training in terror, assassination, subversion and sabotage activities, according to a 43-page booklet on Libya's connection to international terror, just released by the Israel Defense Force spokesman's office.

It says that since Muammar Qaddafi seized power in 1969, Libya has given support to almost every terrorist group throughout the world. The booklet is based in part on surveys of media reports throughout the world and on statements by Qaddafi himself and by terrorist organizations.

It details Qaddafi's attempts to subvert governments and Arab opponents, his offer of money, weapons and training for what he calls national liberation movements around the globe.

The Libyan link goes through Africa and the Middle East to Europe and on to Latin America. It involves Libyan support and help not only for a variety of Palestinian terrorist organizations but also for others, such as the Japanese Red Army, the Italian Red Brigades and the West German Red Army Faction, the IRA in Ireland, the Basque ETA, and various groups in Latin America.

The book claims that Qaddafi also set up his own terrorist group, the Arab Nationalist Youth for the Liberation of Palestine, which carried out some major airline attacks soon after its establishment in the early 1970's. But little has been heard of this group of late.

Contacts Between Qaddafi And Abu Nidal

The IDF review lists a long record of contacts between Qaddafi and Abu Nidal, including talks between the two in Libya last September -- contradicting Qaddafi's own claim that he has not met Abu Nidal for more than a year. Qaddafi is said to have been distributing as much as \$100 million a year to terrorist and subversive groups around the world.

At camps in Libya, terrorists and liberation groups receive training for a variety of activities. According to a list in the IDF booklet, Tunisians, Moroccans and Sudanese train at three camps; Africans from Nigeria, Chad and Zaire, among other African countries, are located at two other camps; and Palestinians, Europeans and others are being trained at more than a dozen camps all over Libya.

NINE MORE SOVIET JEWISH ACTIVISTS FOUND GUILTY FOR ILLEGALLY DEMONSTRATING AT THE SOVIET EMBASSY

By Judith Kohn

WASHINGTON, Jan. 20 (JTA) -- Nine Soviet Jewry activists, including a Soviet Jewish emigre who became a naturalized U.S. citizen last fall, were found guilty of conducting an illegal demonstration in front of the Soviet Embassy here.

But for the first time since the District of Columbia court began trying the groups of activists arrested at seven Soviet Jewry demonstrations since last May, the judge admitted a lengthy written account of what the proposed witnesses would have said in their testimony about the persecution of Jews in the Soviet Union.

In an unprecedented move in the Soviet Jewry protest hearings, the judge also agreed to postpone the probation sentences of the defendants pending appeal.

Most of the nine convicted last Thursday were attending a conference of the Union of Councils for Soviet Jews when they were arrested at a rally in front of the Soviet Embassy last October. One hundred and thirty-two people have been arrested in Soviet Jewry demonstrations at the Embassy since last spring for violating a local statute that bans demonstrations within 500 feet of an Embassy.

Like all but one of over 50 activists convicted to date -- including primarily rabbis, but also a Lutheran minister, cantors and Jewish lay leaders -- Thursday's group was given a 15-day suspended sentence, six months unsupervised probation and a \$50 fine. Last month, five of the rabbis decided to go to jail rather than accept the probation sentence, as a way of dramatizing the Soviet Jewry issue. They were released after twelve days, three days short of their actual sentence.

Cites Severity Of Jewish Situation In The USSR

The attorney for the group, Seth Waxman, attempted, as did those representing the earlier groups, to plead the case by demonstrating that persecution of Jews in the Soviet Union is so severe and their situation consequently so critical that the demonstration was perceived by the activists as necessary to save Russian Jews from further harm. In a lengthy statement, he cited State Department reports on Soviet rights violations and anti-Semitism.

Although the Judge, Joseph Hannon, refused to hear the proposed defense and consequently ruled out testimony from witnesses about Soviet persecution of Jews, he accepted a written account of what the witnesses would have said had they been allowed to testify.

The proposed witnesses included recent Soviet emigre Sergey Broude, who was among those convicted.

His arrest last October occurred four days after he became a naturalized American citizen. Broude, a physicist, was a Hebrew teacher in the Soviet Union and principal of a secret Hebrew school. He has lived in Boston since he was allowed to emigrate five years ago.

One of those convicted Thursday, Rusty Frank, a Soviet Jewry activist in San Francisco, considered going to prison rather than accept the probation sentence. But in consultations with Waxman, Hannon urged her not to force him to hand down a jail sentence, which he said he would postpone in any case.

In deciding to postpone the probation sentence, Hannon said that although he could not prophesy what the outcome of the group's appeal would be, the statement submitted by Waxman was "indeed a remarkable record," and he suggested that the case might have sufficient merit to win on appeal.

JERUSALEM (JTA) -- Leon Dulzín acted personally over the weekend to cancel a decision by the Jewish Agency to rent the Binyanei Ha'ooma convention hall here to Rabbi Meir Kahane's extremist Kach Party for its convention next month. Dulzín, chairman of the Jewish Agency and World Zionist Organization Executives, was alerted to the deal by MK Yair Tzaban of Mapam. He expressed shock, declaring it was unthinkable to rent the Jewish Agency-owned hall to a "racist, un-Zionist movement" that was contrary to the essence of Zionism and democracy.