

**REAGAN PUSHES U.S. PEACE PLAN
AS ISRAEL, U.S. SIGN AGREEMENT**

By David Friedman

WASHINGTON, April 21 (JTA) -- President Reagan marked the 40th anniversary of Israel's independence Thursday by repeating his call on all leaders in the Middle East to accept the U.S. initiative for negotiations between Israel and her Arab neighbors.

"The president reiterates his appeals to the leaders in the region not to miss this opportunity to move ahead and get to productive peace negotiations," White House spokesman Marlin Fitzwater said in a written statement.

Fitzwater's statement was issued after Reagan signed a Memorandum of Agreement with Israel that "formalizes and perpetuates" the existing strategic cooperation between Israel and the United States.

In Jerusalem, Israeli Premier Yitzhak Shamir also signed the agreement Thursday, stressing that it will be the legacy of the Reagan administration to its successors and will ensure continued cooperation in all fields.

Shamir had sought the memorandum during his visit to Washington last month. He repeatedly stressed that while Reagan and Secretary of State George Shultz are "great friends of Israel," Israel wanted to be sure that the close cooperation developed during the Reagan administration would continue with its successors.

The memorandum "reiterates for the public record our longstanding relationship of strategic cooperation with Israel," the White House statement said. "Strategic cooperation can only succeed when there are shared interests, including the commitment to building peace and stability in the region."

'Strong Israel Is Necessary'

The White House stressed that the U.S. commitment to Israel's security and to peace "will never flag. The president knows that a strong Israel is necessary if peace is to be possible. He also knows that Israel can never be truly secure without peace."

To that end, Reagan has asked Shultz "to continue his peacemaking efforts, seeking a comprehensive settlement which will assure Israel's security and provide for the legitimate rights of the Palestinian people," the White House said.

"The president remains convinced that our peace initiative is balanced and offers the only realistic basis on which to make progress."

The State Department reiterated the White House remarks with Phyllis Oakley, a department spokeswoman, stressing that Shultz "will pursue this initiative both with Israel and her Arab neighbors." Shultz, who arrived in Moscow on Thursday, is expected to discuss his peace initiative with Soviet Foreign Minister Eduard Shevardnadze.

While the Israeli government has not yet given a formal reply to Shultz's proposals, the issue has deeply divided the national unity government, with Labor supporting it and Likud opposed. Shamir made clear his opposition during his visit to Washington.

Oakley said the memorandum "doesn't impose on either party new obligations or commitments." She said it does ensure the continuation of the three U.S.-Israeli groups that meet periodically to discuss military-political issues, economic development and security assistance.

The memorandum also ensures the continuation of regular meetings between the U.S. under-secretary of state for political affairs and the director-general of the Israeli Foreign Ministry "to review a wide range of international issues of mutual interest," Oakley said.

The agreement "recognizes that Israel . . . is considered a major non-NATO ally for purposes of research and development," she said.

**ISRAELIS CELEBRATE INDEPENDENCE DAY
WITH SPEECHES, PICNICS, SUNNY WEATHER**

By David Landau and Gil Sedan

JERUSALEM, April 21 (JTA) -- Israel celebrated the 40th anniversary of its independence Thursday. Fine weather brought hundreds of thousands to picnic areas and beaches. Thousands more turned out for the traditional Independence Day reception given by Jerusalem Mayor Teddy Kollek at the Citadel of David.

Christian leaders, diplomatic representatives, consuls general, Arab dignitaries and tourists were present in larger numbers than usual.

President Chaim Herzog held a reception for veteran commanders of Israel's 1948 War for Independence. It was attended by senior officials of the defense establishment and current commanders of the Israel Defense Force. Awards for exemplary services were presented to 120 soldiers.

The festive mood of Independence Day was in sharp contrast to Remembrance Day, Wednesday, when Israelis eulogized their war dead at military cemeteries and national monuments. Political leaders offered consolation to the families of the 16,450 men and women who fell in the wars Israel has fought to gain its independence and preserve it over the past 40 years.

Remembrance Day began Tuesday night with memorial services at the Western Wall. At 11 a.m. Wednesday, sirens wailed throughout the country, bringing all activity to a halt for two minutes of silence in honor of the war dead.

Thousands of families visited cemeteries to pray and place wreaths on the graves of loved ones. In high school classrooms, teachers read out the names of graduates of an earlier generation who died in battle.

A Time Of Soul-Searching

This Independence Day and Remembrance Day came at a time of soul-searching and a testing of national resolve. The IDF is engaged in battle, not with an external foe but against a Palestinian uprising in the West Bank and Gaza Strip, now well into its fifth month.

The issue of the territories has sharply divided Israel's polity and people. But the situation did not impinge directly on the Independence Day celebrations, because the territories have been effectively sealed off by the IDF for most of the week.

Many localities in the West Bank and Gaza Strip are under curfew. Arab residents of the

territories were forbidden from entering Israel proper.

In contrast, many Israelis crossed the "green line" into the territories to visit friends and relatives at Jewish settlements, notably in the Katif region of the Gaza Strip.

News media coverage of the territories was restricted by the IDF. But according to reports, the areas were generally quiet. However, one Palestinian was shot to death Wednesday and 11 were wounded in a clash with security forces at the Nuseirat refugee camp.

Inside Israel, meanwhile, politicians delivered patriotic speeches, filled with references to blood and sacrifice. Premier Yitzhak Shamir, addressing a Remembrance Day ceremony Wednesday on Mount Herzl in Jerusalem, extolled "the IDF, the people's army, and other security branches (which) ensure independence and freedom, (and) repulse the invaders and those who rise against us to destroy us. This is the path of blood," he declared.

Defense Minister Yitzhak Rabin, speaking at a military cemetery in Tel Aviv, said his first responsibility and consideration was to avoid, if at all possible, adding to the long line of tombstones in military cemeteries around the country.

He sought to assure the "families of bereavement" that this consideration is uppermost in his mind and in the minds of other ministers and generals "when we have to take decisions that could involve risk."

Calls For Immigration

As on every national occasion in Israel, calls went out to Jews overseas to immigrate. Simcha Dinitz, chairman of the World Zionist Organization-Jewish Agency Executive, urged diaspora Jews to come here and participate in the Zionist enterprise of nation-building.

His message, relayed through Zionist federations in most Western countries, took a troubled view of the condition of the Jewish people. Dinitz spoke of mixed marriages, a weakening of Jewish and Zionist identity, a slowdown in aliyah from both East and West.

He said Israel's goal was to build a high-quality society that would attract immigrants. He referred to new plans and procedures to simplify the absorption process, to provide housing and infrastructure for immigrants, and above all to "regard the absorption of the immigrant as a personal challenge of each and every one of us."

Dinitz also stressed the need to achieve peace. "The Jewish people cannot remain indifferent to the peace efforts of Israel, because the lack of peace does not only jeopardize the economic development momentum, but damages the delicate tissues of our society," he said.

ISRAEL BOYCOTTS SECURITY COUNCIL SESSION ON MURDER OF ABU JIHAD

By Yitzhak Rabi

UNITED NATIONS, April 21 (JTA) -- Israel boycotted a meeting of the Security Council Thursday morning, convened to hear charges by Tunisia that its territorial integrity was violated by Israel last week.

The Tunisians complained, in a letter to the Security Council, that an Israel "hit team" assassinated Khalil al-Wazir, second in command of the Palestine Liberation Organization, who was gunned down in a commando-style attack on his villa in a suburb of Tunis early on the morning of April 16.

Wazir was popularly known by his nom de guerre, Abu Jihad (father of holy war).

Tunisia's foreign minister, Mahmoud Mestiri, opened debate by charging Israel with "state terrorism" against his country.

The Israel Mission to the United Nations declared in a statement Thursday that the Tunisian complaint contains unsubstantiated and speculative accusations against Israel and, in particular, a false statement that Israel had admitted that it attacked Tunisia.

"To set the record straight, Israel has made no such admission or declared any such intention with regard to Tunisia," the Israel Mission's statement said. Therefore, according to the Israelis, the meeting of the Security Council is "inappropriate and without justification and merely serves to focus hostile attention on Israel."

The Security Council met on the subject for two hours and adjourned until Friday morning. The Jewish Telegraphic Agency, meanwhile, obtained a copy of a draft resolution that may be circulated among council members.

The draft asks the Security Council to condemn Israel vigorously for the alleged attack, demands that Israel refrain from any such acts in the future, urges member states to dissuade Israel from taking such actions and requests the secretary general to report back to the Security Council by May 20 on implementation of the resolution.

SPANISH-ISRAELI RELATIONS GROW COLDER By David Kantor

MADRID, April 21 (JTA) -- Spanish-Israeli relations, which had gotten off to a promising start when Spain recognized the Jewish state in 1987, have become more strained of late, owing to Spanish sympathy for the Palestinian uprising in the Israeli-administered territories.

Friction further escalated last week when a Spanish firm, Esperanza Y Cia, lost out to an Israeli weapons manufacturer in bidding for the sale of mortar shells to the U.S. army.

According to the newspaper El Pais, government officials here have complained bitterly that the job order went to Israel because "the Jews" pressured the Reagan administration. The Spanish reaction was conveyed to American officials, who came here for a meeting of the Joint Committee for Industrial Cooperation.

According to observers here, the reference to "Jews" was significant. "It says a lot about the Spanish official perception of the Jewish influence in America," one leading member of the Jewish community said.

Spain was one of the first European Community member states to condemn the assassination of Khalil al-Wazir, the Palestine Liberation Organization's second in command who headed Al Fatah, its military branch.

While making no allusion as to who may have been responsible, a spokesman for the Spanish Foreign Ministry issued a statement Monday deploring the killing and promising continued Spanish solidarity with the Palestinian people.

In a somewhat unusual move, Spanish Foreign Minister Ferdinandes Ordonez issued a separate statement from his hospital bed, where he is being treated for an illness.

Greece also deplored the assassination in a message Greek Prime Minister Andreas Papandreu sent Sunday to PLO chief Yasir Arafat.

POISONED ISRAELI GRAPEFRUIT SAID TO BE DISTRIBUTED IN ITALY

By Ruth E. Gruber

ROME, April 21 (JTA) -- Italian authorities are taking seriously anonymous warnings that grapefruit imported from Israel has been poisoned.

The Health Ministry's director-general for hygiene and nutrition has telegraphed advisories to local health authorities and customs officials, warning that poisoned grapefruit "may have been sent all over Italy in order to achieve a boycott of Israeli products."

Customs officials were alerted "to adopt specific and scrupulous measures of vigilance and control to be carried out in collaboration with the competent health authorities."

The text of the communique was published in the news media, thereby alerting the public. The newspaper La Repubblica reported Tuesday that it received an anonymous telephone call from a person who, in an agitated voice, claimed there were poisoned grapefruit on sale at a Rome supermarket.

"We are sabotaging Israel," the caller said, before slamming down the receiver, La Repubblica reported.

The same newspaper reported Wednesday that Israeli grapefruit were confiscated Monday at Civitavecchia, the port city of Rome. Health Ministry doctors, accompanied by police, visited fruit and vegetable stands and ordered suspension of the sale of grapefruit, La Repubblica said.

This was followed by a public warning broadcast on the local television and radio stations. Health authorities also checked out fruit stands in Bollate, near Milan in northern Italy.

There have been no reports to date that any of the Israeli fruit has been found to be tainted. During the late 1970s, Jaffa oranges reaching markets in northwestern Europe were found to contain mercury. But there have been no other reports of fruit sabotage until now.

POLAND PLEDGES TO END SANCTIONED ANTI-SEMITISM

By Milton Jacoby

WARSAW, April 21 (JTA) -- President Wojciech Jaruzelski of Poland said Tuesday that his country had tried to do everything possible to make the 45th anniversary of the Warsaw Ghetto uprising a success "because we feel we have an obligation to do it." He deplored the anti-Semitic acts in Poland during the late '60s, and pledged "it will not happen during this regime."

Jaruzelski met Tuesday with a delegation of Jews that included Kalman Sultanik, vice president of the World Jewish Congress, and Stefan Grayek, president of the World Federation of Jewish Fighters.

Referring to the discussion on Monday in which his minister of religion underlined Poland's agreement with Catholic church leaders to have the Carmelite convent removed from Auschwitz, the president observed that "the church seldom makes an agreement with us, but when they do, they keep it."

The closing session of the memorial took place Tuesday night in the vast Congress Hall of the Palace of Culture. Some 2,000 Jews and many Polish leaders heard addresses by Professor Henryk Jablonski, former president of Poland, Szymon Szurmiej, director of the Yiddish State Theatre, Grayek and Sultanik.

Sultanik noted that "In the record of righteous gentiles kept at Yad Vashem in Israel, there are some 7,000 names; of these, more than a third are Polish. We will never forget these righteous gentiles, who risked their lives."

Referring to the problems facing Jews in the time of former leader Wladislaw Gomulka, he said, "We view as positive recent statements from within official Polish circles condemning the anti-Semitic campaigns of '67-'68, which drove thousands of Jews out of Poland. These statements should be made definitive and authoritative. I believe that now, on this occasion when Jews from all over the world are gathered here, was an appropriate opportunity for the present Polish government to speak to this issue."

He urged that "Poles must make every effort to build new bridges with the reborn Jewish people, and out of the ashes, with the State of Israel. The Polish government must take active steps in restoring full diplomatic relations with Israel."

Grayek, an imposing yet modest figure, is a Warsaw Ghetto survivor who now lives in Tel Aviv. He appealed to all nations "not love us only after our death, do not be satisfied only with monuments. Help us live, too."

He pointed out that "tens of thousands of Jews fought in partisan units and in the resistance throughout all of Europe -- East and West -- that was conquered by the Third Reich."

Poles Charmed By Navon

The head of the large Israeli delegation, Education Minister Yitzhak Navon, won the respect and affection of his Polish hosts because of his unflinching charm and distinction.

In addition to attending almost all of the many events, he has met frequently with foreign dignitaries, past President Jablonski, the secretary of the Communist Party and the ministers of culture and education.

It was Navon's firm conviction before he returned to Israel midnight Tuesday that the 45th anniversary marked a positive step forward on the road to full diplomatic relations.

Navon made specific plans during his visit to forge closer ties between the two nations. He concluded agreements with both Polish ministers for strongly intensified cultural exchanges of theatre, music and dance productions, as well as an exchange of university students and professors.

He has also resolved to introduce a new curriculum on Holocaust studies with emphasis on Poland. Navon feels deeply that educating the youth of Israel in this significant field and bringing them to Poland can help them achieve a whole Jewish identity.

Foreign ministry officials informed him that full relations will take some time, and that Poland is waiting to see how Israel's current problems are resolved. Both he and Simcha Dinitz were privately told by responsible sources that Poland had made a mistake in breaking relations with Israel in 1967.

Discussions during the week of ceremonies with religious affairs officials in Warsaw, Lublin and Krakow reveal a concern to protect and enhance the remnants of Jewish life in Poland.

JTA has relocated its mailing operation to new headquarters. The normal mailing schedule of the Daily News Bulletin will resume shortly.

BEHIND THE HEADLINES: GREEK JEWS FACING NEW ANTI-SEMITISM

By Jean Cohen

ATHENS, April 21 (JTA) -- Greek Jews are experiencing a new wave of anti-Semitism, which they ascribe to their government's openly hostile attitude toward Israel and media distortions of events in the Israeli-administered territories that go unchallenged.

The situation has been escalating over the past five months, coincidental with the Palestinian uprising in the West Bank and Gaza Strip.

So far it has been confined to minor vandalism and anti-Semitic graffiti. Most recently, a monument dedicated to Jewish martyrs of the Nazi occupation in the town of Larisa, in central Greece, was daubed with red paint.

This occurred sometime during the night of March 15-16, four days before Larisa was to officially mark the 45th anniversary of the Nazi extermination of its Jewish population. A similar commemoration was held in Athens.

Earlier in Larisa, the Star of David on the gate of the local synagogue was bent twice in the course of three weeks. Three times the words "Jews, killers of nations, your turn will also come," have been scrawled on the synagogue walls. Each time congregants washed them off.

In Athens, unknown arsonists burned down a store selling men's trousers. An anonymous telephone caller said the store was torched because it was Jewish-owned. The owner's name is Naum, but he is not Jewish.

Threatening telephone calls have been made in recent months to Jewish schools and community centers. Individual Jews have received hate mail.

Jews here are not surprised. There were similar occurrences in 1982 when Israel invaded Lebanon and was denounced for it by the Greek government.

The government now is the same as it was six years ago -- headed by the Socialist Party of Premier Andreas Papandreu.

Support For Palestinians

Greece and Israel have only the lowest level diplomatic relations. Though they seemed this year to be moving slowly toward closer ties, the government unabashedly supports the Palestinian cause.

Thus at the time of Palestine Liberation Organization chief Yasir Arafat's visit to Athens in January, Papandreu referred to Israelis as fascists. The premier's American-born wife, Margaret, charged at a news conference here that Jewish organizations in Europe and the United States are aligned with the "imperialist" camp.

Both channels of Greek television are government-controlled. They have carried stories of Israeli atrocities against Palestinians. Some are patently untrue, such as the allegation that handcuffed Palestinians were thrown from Israeli army helicopters.

Jewish community members have warned that such reports can inflame anti-Semitism. But there has been no slackening of attacks on Israel. Some 30 retired high-ranking Greek army officers have publicly volunteered their expertise to the PLO. This is something Greeks have never done for their comrades in Cyprus when confronted by the Turkish invasion.

One Jewish community member said the government is aware it is fueling anti-Semitism, but has refused to do anything about it.

INTERNATIONAL RED CROSS PROTESTING ISRAEL'S EXPULSION OF EIGHT ARABS

By Tamar Levy

GENEVA, April 21 (JTA) -- The International Committee of the Red Cross will soon lodge a strong protest at the highest levels of the Israeli government over the expulsion of eight Palestinian activists from the West Bank and Gaza Strip, and the collective punishment of Palestinians in those territories.

Carlos Bovert, an ICRC spokesman here, told the Jewish Telegraphic Agency Wednesday night that one of the directors of the humanitarian agency will go to Israel soon to personally express its concern.

The ICRC "condemns strongly the expulsions and deportations which are in violation of Article 49 of the Fourth Geneva Convention (of 1949) forbidding forced transfer of individuals or groups," the spokesman said.

He said the other serious violation of the Fourth Geneva Convention by Israel was the demolition of homes in the West Bank and Gaza Strip. The Israel Defense Force blew up 14 homes in the West Bank Arab village of Beita after a clash there April 6 between villagers and teenage Jewish hikers. A 15-year-old Jewish girl, Tirza Porat, and two Palestinian youths were killed.

The ICRC strongly condemns the practice of collective punishment, the JTA was told. The spokesman also said ICRC delegates in the area have reported the use of "weapons of war" during the past 72 hours, resulting in the deaths of several Palestinians.

RED CROSS ASSOCIATIONS PRESSED TO RECOGNIZE MAGEN DAVID ADOM

By David Friedman

WASHINGTON, April 21 (JTA) -- Red Cross associations in Europe, Latin America and Asia are being asked to officially recognize the emblem of Israel's Magen David Adom, in an effort to bypass the International Red Cross's continued refusal to do so.

Rabbi Rubin Dobin, international president of Operation Recognition for Magen David Adom of Israel, told the Jewish Telegraphic Agency Thursday that the American Red Cross has already entered into what is known as "bilateral recognition," by placing the Magen David Adom emblem on its letterhead along with the Red Cross and Muslim Red Crescent.

The American Red Cross, with the support of President Reagan and Congress, has long taken the lead in pressing for international recognition.

Dobin, an orthodox rabbi in Miami Beach, met here Wednesday with Richard Schubert, president of the American Red Cross, and enlisted his support to gain bilateral recognition from other countries.

He said Arab "blackmail" has blocked the numerous efforts to gain recognition for the Israeli organization by the International League of the Red Cross. He noted the league acknowledges that Magen David Adom meets nine of the ten criteria for admission, the tenth being the emblem.

The international league recognizes only the Red Cross and the Red Crescent. But until 1980 it also recognized the Red Lion and Star of Iran. After the Shah of Iran was overthrown, Iran adopted the Red Crescent.