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## U.S. INDICATES IT'S READY TO SELL THE SAUDIS ADVANCED JET FIGHTERS

By Howard Rosenberg

WASHINGTON, Aug. 23 (JTA) -- Fears that the United States might reward Arab countries cooperating with its efforts to isolate Iraq were confirmed this week, when the Bush administration signaled its willingness to sell Saudi Arabia some of its most sophisticated weapons.

President Bush said Wednesday that he would not hesitate to send Congress such an arms sale proposal if the Saudis kingdom determined the weapons were needed for its defense.

Bush was asked about reports that the administration was considering selling Saudi Arabia the F-15E, the most sophisticated version of the advanced F-15 jet fighter.

"We should do all we can to help the Saudis arm themselves against aggression," the president responded in a conversation with reporters at his summer home in Kennebunkport, Maine.

"I want to do everything I can, and I hope that there would be no political problem, because the world clearly sees that the Saudis have been strongly threatened," he said.

Bush's mention of a potential "political problem" appeared to refer to those in Congress who would oppose such a sale, presumably staunch supporters of Israel.

Defense Secretary Dick Cheney, who spoke after Bush, was even more forceful on that point.

"I don't think this is a situation that presents any threat whatsoever to Israel, and I would not expect there to be any opposition in that quarter to our effort to help the Saudis and our friends in the region deal with what is a threat to their very existence," he said.

Cheney said any F-15Es would not be transferred in the short term, because the United States has yet to receive its full order from the St. Louis-based McDonnell Douglas Co. But he said such planes could be sold as part of a "longer-term package."

Cheney discussed a possible sale of F-15Es to the kingdom during his most recent visit there, which ended last weekend.

### Jewish Groups Not Taking Stand Yet

Arms sales to Saudi Arabia will likely be discussed Friday at a Pentagon meeting requested by Cheney with Jewish groups.

Malcolm Hoenlein, executive director of the Conference of Presidents of Major American Jewish Organizations, one of the groups participating, said, "We have not taken a position on the sale" of F-15Es.

"We have been supporting the president's actions" in the Persian Gulf crisis, and while "the Saudis remain at war with Israel," he said, "obviously the situation requires careful consideration by the (pro-Israel) community."

Hoenlein, who recently returned from meetings in Israel, said government officials there indicated the Jewish state "is in need of the wherewithal to defend itself. It doesn't want to have American soldiers coming in."

A knowledgeable source in the pro-Israel community said that while it would be concerned about any sale of the F-15E, it would be "a little

more concerned" about any sale of Stinger anti-aircraft missiles to the kingdom.

The source indicated that Jewish groups could be placated if any sale to the Saudis included some "offset" for Israel. In the case of an F-15E sale to the Saudis, that could mean additional F-15Es for the Israelis.

But the source said the Stingers are problematic, because they are "easily transportable" and could fall into the hands of enemy forces, unlike a fighter plane.

Congress blocked a proposed sales of F-15Es and Maverick anti-tank missiles to the Saudis in 1985. A year later, it blocked a sale of 200 Stinger launchers and missiles.

Any such sale of F-15Es or Stingers would be automatically reviewed by Congress, in contrast to emergency shipments to the kingdom of weaponry to be used by U.S. forces there.

In the three weeks since Iraq invaded Kuwait, the United States has shipped to Saudi Arabia 12 F-15s, but they are the "C" and "D" models, rather than the more advanced F-15Es.

The Saudis have previously bought and received a total of 50 F-15Cs and F-15Ds, with 12 more on order from McDonnell Douglas.

For the moment, pro-Israel groups are not taking a formal position on a sale of F-15Es, since it is still hypothetical. Before taking a stand, Jewish groups also would want to know what kind of U.S. controls would be imposed on the planes, where they would be based and what, if any, "offsets" to Israel would be offered.

## SENATOR SOUNDS A SOMBER WARNING ON IRAQI ATTACK'S THREAT TO ISRAEL

By Allison Kaplan

NEW YORK, Aug. 23 (JTA) -- The atmosphere was grim Wednesday as a leading congressional supporter of Israel warned more than 100 Jewish leaders here that the belligerence of Iraq's Saddam Hussein represents "one of the greatest threats in the history of the Jewish people."

Sen. Daniel Inouye (D-Hawaii), addressing the Conference of Presidents of Major American Jewish Organizations, said that the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait poses both a short-term threat and a long-term danger to the Jewish state.

As an immediate concern, Israel faces the threat of military attack from Iraq, Inouye said. He told reporters that "if this thing erupts and if I know Saddam Hussein, shells will be falling on Tel Aviv."

But Inouye said it should also be worrisome to supporters of Israel that the United States has found itself "cozying up" to Arab states opposing Iraq, while "distancing" itself from Israel.

The potential long-term effects of this alignment would "not be easy" for either Israel or its supporters in the United States, said Inouye, who chairs the Senate Appropriations subcommittee on defense.

"This will be a trying time for those who call themselves Jews, because it is a difficult time for Israel," he said.

Yet Inouye indicated there was little the pro-Israel community could or should do about the current U.S.-Saudi Arabian alliance.

When asked whether Israel and its supporters

should oppose the transfer of advanced weapons from the United States to the Saudi Arabian government, the senator replied, "I don't see how they can."

#### Anti-Missile System Sale Possible

He was echoed by Seymour Reich, chairman of the Conference of Presidents, who said that helping Saudi Arabia fight Hussein "would be difficult to oppose," though the United States "would have to consider making up the disparity" between Saudi and Israeli might.

Inouye told the Jewish leaders that he would talk to Defense Secretary Dick Cheney about solidifying America's long-term commitment to maintain Israeli strategic superiority in the region.

The Hawaiian senator focused specifically on the idea of selling or leasing Patriot anti-missile systems to Israel, in order to help it fend off the threat of missile attacks from Iraq.

"I have been working feverishly to get the Patriot for Israel," Inouye said.

Until now, Israeli Defense Minister Moshe Arens has not advocated purchasing the Patriot, both because the system is extremely expensive and because Israel and the United States are in the process developing their own anti-missile device, the Arrow.

But some members of the Israeli defense establishment have publicly expressed their hope that Arens will ask the United States to arrange purchase of the Patriot.

In Washington, Dov Zakheim, former deputy undersecretary of defense, said that "the ball is in Israel's court" as far as acquiring the Patriot is concerned.

He said that there had been "a positive response" from both the Pentagon and Raytheon, which manufactures the Patriot, about seeking "innovative ways of getting the costs worked out."

Inouye said in his speech that sophisticated defense systems aside, Israel's safety is now a point of serious concern.

"For the first time in 31 years, I see Israeli officials scared," the senator said. "I have never seen them so concerned, so frightened."

#### **SHAMIR CHARGES ELEMENTS IN REGION TRYING TO DRAW ISRAEL INTO FRAY**

By Gil Sedan

JERUSALEM, Aug. 23 (JTA) -- Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir charged Thursday that certain elements in the region are trying to draw Israel into armed conflict.

He did not identify them but insisted that Israel's major goal is to "prevent war or preempt it," or if it does occur "to win it quickly and decisively," he told a 70-member delegation of the United Jewish Appeal.

Asked by a reporter if his use of the term "pre-empt" meant that Israel was considering a pre-emptive strike against Iraq, Shamir said he was referring generally to Israel's broad strategy, not the current crisis in the Middle East.

With regard to the present situation, he insisted, "Our aim is to prevent any military involvement of our country."

Israel Radio explained later that Shamir's address to the American visitors was written by his English-language speech-writer, who may have used the word "pre-empt" without thought to its military connotations.

The UJA leaders are trying to raise \$420 million to help Israel absorb the influx of immigrants, mainly from the Soviet Union.

Shamir told them that immigrant absorption is the pre-eminent item on the national agenda.

This means providing jobs for the immigrants, because the specter of widespread unemployment might put a halt to aliyah, Shamir said.

#### King Hussein's Remarks Assailed

Meanwhile, Deputy Foreign Minister Binyamin Netanyahu reacted more with incredulity than anger to Jordanian King Hussein's charge this week that the "Zionists controlled the world media" and turned it against Iraq.

Netanyahu said that would be "merely laughable" were it not for the tragic consequences of similar past allegations.

Referring to the king's suggestion that the Gulf crisis arose from Zionist intrigues, Netanyahu asked if "he wants us to believe that Saddam Hussein invaded Kuwait on Zionist orders."

He expressed hope that this was just a "passing lapse" on the part of the Jordanian ruler, because it is in Israel's interest that Jordan remain stable.

#### **ARMY DENIES ADVISING JEWISH TROOPS IN SAUDI ARABIA TO CONCEAL DOG TAGS**

By Howard Rosenberg

WASHINGTON, Aug. 23 (JTA) -- Some American soldiers in Saudi Arabia may have been advised by superiors to hide dog tags identifying themselves as Jews, but the advice was not on orders from the Pentagon or the Saudi kingdom, Defense Secretary Dick Cheney said Thursday.

"Some uninformed individual down the chain of command in the organization may have told a soldier, based on speculation," Cheney said, "but the fact is the Saudis have not imposed any such restriction on us. And we obviously would not agree to that."

Cheney, appearing on ABC-TV's "Good Morning America" program, added that the Saudis have "accepted our forces as is, regardless of religion, regardless of whether they are male or female."

The issue arose after Sen. Daniel Patrick Moynihan (D-N.Y.) wrote Cheney about a Jewish family in his state who told him their son was "advised of the 'option' of receiving a 'non-Jewish' identity (including 'non-denominational' dog tags) prior to his departure to Saudi Arabia."

David Luchins, Moynihan's special assistant, welcomed Cheney's assurance and added, "We hope to see that formalized in a directive."

Two of the Jewish groups closest to the Pentagon expressed little concern about the incident. But the Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rith called on Cheney to issue a directive to U.S. personnel, "outlining available options if some attention to religious affiliation is necessary as a protective measure."

The Jewish War Veterans of America, on the other hand, said it had been assured that "persistent rumors that Jewish servicemen and women are being officially advised to cover or alter dog tags indicating Jewish faith are absolutely untrue."

The JWB's Jewish Chaplains Council believes that while unofficial advice was indeed given, "there was no issuing at any time of substitute dog tags for any Jew serving in the military," said Rabbi David Lapp, its director.

# **CATHOLIC AND JEWISH LEADERS TO MEET IN PRAGUE FOR TALKS ON ANTI-SEMITISM**

By Allison Kaplan

NEW YORK, Aug. 23 (JTA) -- Vatican representatives and world Jewish leaders will gather in Prague next month for a landmark four-day conference on Catholic-Jewish concerns, including the Holocaust and the re-emergence of popular anti-Semitism in Eastern Europe.

The conference, to be held Sept. 3 to 6, will be the first formal joint meeting since 1986 of the Vatican Secretariat on Religious Relations With the Jews and the International Jewish Committee on Interreligious Consultations.

Relations between the Vatican and the Jewish community during the past four years have been rocked by tensions over the Carmelite convent at Auschwitz and meetings that Pope John Paul II held with Palestine Liberation Organization Chairman Yasir Arafat and Austrian President Kurt Waldheim.

As a result of these controversies, IJCIC temporarily suspended formal meetings with the Vatican. But communication between Jewish leaders and the Vatican Secretariat was never completely broken off.

Presently, Jewish leaders involved in dialogue with the Vatican are particularly anxious to formally voice their growing concern that the death of Communist rule and the rebirth of democracy in Eastern Europe have seen a concurrent rise in popular anti-Semitism in that part of the world.

Jewish leaders believe the Catholic Church's stance can play an important role in combatting this trend. Therefore, they are encouraging efforts to educate and sensitize clergy in Eastern Europe to their role in fighting anti-Semitism.

"This was one of the reasons we picked Prague for the conference," said Seymour Reich, who currently chairs IJCIC.

## **Legacy Of Christian Anti-Semitism**

Rabbi Marc Tanenbaum, a former IJCIC chairman and pioneer in Jewish-Vatican relations, explained that many of the Eastern European Catholic clergy "have no awareness of the deep sources of anti-Semitism in Christian tradition."

He said that the conference would explore the roots of Christian anti-Semitism and examine how the church's early demonization of Jews was appropriated and expanded by Adolf Hitler.

"If we are ever going to contain or even uproot the fervent anti-Semitism in Eastern Europe, we have to help the key authorities in Poland, in Hungary, in Czechoslovakia that will be present at the conference to understand the magnitude of the hatred that was engendered by these teachings," Tanenbaum said. "Only then can they cope with contemporary anti-Semitism."

Before the controversies disrupted Catholic-Jewish dialogue, a Vatican document containing a full-scale examination of the history of anti-Semitism in the church and its behavior during the Holocaust had been in the preliminary stages.

"This conference in Prague, if all goes well, could contribute to putting this project back on the track," Tanenbaum said.

Sixty Catholic and Jewish representatives from around the world will be taking part in the conference, including representatives from Poland, Czechoslovakia, Hungary and Yugoslavia.

Catholic representatives from the United States will include Archbishop William Keeler of

Baltimore and Dr. Eugene Fisher, director of Catholic-Jewish relations for the National Conference of Catholic Bishops.

Representing the Vatican will be Archbishop Edward Cassidy, Bishop Pierre Duprey and Monsignor Francesco Fumagalli, respectively president, vice president and secretary of the Vatican Secretariat on Religious Relations With the Jews.

## **Convent Issue Not 'Behind Us Yet'**

Also participating will be representatives of Jewish groups belonging to IJCIC, including the Synagogue Council of America, the World Jewish Congress, B'nai B'rith International and the Israel Interfaith Committee.

Reich said that he was pleased that contacts with the Vatican were getting "back on track" after the tension surrounding the issue of the Auschwitz convent.

Though the Carmelite nuns have not yet moved from the grounds of the former death camp, the Vatican has publicly stated its support for their relocation. Construction has begun on an interreligious center, to be located away from the grounds of Auschwitz, that will house the nuns.

Reich said an update on the progress on moving the nuns from the present convent will likely take place during the conference. "I don't think the Auschwitz convent matter is behind us yet," he said.

## **MASSACRE IN ISTANBUL REMEMBERED**

By Gil Sedan

JERUSALEM, Aug. 23 (JTA) -- A memorial service was held Thursday at the Neve Shalom Synagogue in Istanbul to mark the fourth anniversary on the Jewish calendar of a terrorist attack that took the lives of 22 worshippers.

The suicide attack occurred during Shabbat morning services on Sept. 6, 1986. The two Arab gunmen responsible, believed to have belonged to the Abu Nidal terrorist group, died in the attack.

Strong security measures have since been taken at the synagogue, which was completely renovated, "but our main confidence is in God," the rabbi said.

"It was a blow we did not expect," he said of the bloody attack, which occurred in a Moslem country where the Jews have felt comfortable for nearly 500 years. "With God's help, may it never happen again," he added.

## **TECHNION STUDENTS LAUNCH ROCKET**

By Hugh Orgel

TEL AVIV, Aug. 23 (JTA) -- A two-stage solid-fuel rocket soared 13 miles into the atmosphere over Israel on Wednesday for no loftier purpose than getting good grades for 14 graduating students at Haifa's Technion-Israel Institute of Technology who designed and built it.

The rocket, dubbed "Technion 90," was in fact their final exam for bachelor of science degrees, awarded upon completion of the four-year course at Technion's School of Aviation and Space Engineering.

The 11-foot rocket, weighing 242 pounds, was designed as a meteorological research project and carried instruments in its nose capsule to measure atmospheric pressures and temperatures.

The capsule also contained a parachute, which brought the rocket gently back to Earth after a six-minute flight at three times the speed of sound. It was recovered at sea.

**THE 1990 ELECTIONS:  
INCUMBENTS FACING TOUGHEST RACES  
ARE AMONG MOST PRO-ISRAEL IN SENATE**  
[Part 1 Of A Series]  
By David Friedman

WASHINGTON, Aug. 23 (JTA) -- As fall approaches, many in the American Jewish community will be paying closer attention to coming elections for Congress, with an eye on the Senate in particular.

Although the Democrats control the Senate by a relatively wide 55-45 margin, Republicans see an opportunity to win control of the chamber, because never before have so many Democratic incumbents been vulnerable.

By happenstance, the Democratic incumbents facing the toughest re-election challenges are among the strongest supporters of Israel.

One Republican incumbent, Sen. Mitch McConnell of Kentucky, is also considered vulnerable, and he, too, is a strong supporter of Israel.

The vulnerable Democrats are Sens. Claiborne Pell of Rhode Island, chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee; Paul Simon of Illinois; Tom Harkin of Iowa; Daniel Akaka of Hawaii; and Carl Levin of Michigan.

Levin is one of two Jewish senators up for re-election this year. There are a total of eight Jews in the Senate, five Democrats and three Republicans.

Sen. Rudy Boschwitz (R-Minn.), the other Jewish senator whose term expires this year, is expected to have little trouble getting elected to a third term, even though his Democratic opponent will not be selected until the Sept. 11 Minnesota primary.

**Rhode Island Incumbent Vulnerable**

But Levin, a member of the Armed Services Committee who is also seeking a third term, is expected to be in a close race.

His Republican opponent, Rep. Bill Schuette, who has a good record on Israel, defeated a more conservative opponent in the GOP primary. Schuette is expected to make the liberal Levin's opposition to the death penalty a major issue in the campaign.

Pell of Rhode Island, who has served 30 years in the Senate, is believed to be the most vulnerable incumbent senator. His opponent is Rep. Claudine Schneider, who, like Pell, has a good record of support for Israel and close ties with the Rhode Island Jewish community.

Pell's chairmanship of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee may not be a point in his favor, since by tradition voters concerned with domestic issues have defeated long-term senators after they became chairmen of the committee.

Examples during Pell's Senate career include J. William Fulbright (D-Ark.), Frank Church (D-Idaho) and Charles Percy (R-Ill.).

Schneider is one of three Republican congresswomen whom the Republican National Committee is placing its hopes on in its uphill effort to win control of the Senate.

The other two are Rep. Lynn Martin, who is challenging Simon in Illinois, and Rep. Pat Saiki, who is running against Akaka in Hawaii.

Martin has a mixed record on Israel since, like many conservatives, she does not support foreign aid.

Simon has a 100 percent favorable record on Israel going back to his days in the House of Representatives. He won his Senate seat six years

ago by defeating Percy, who was the main target of pro-Israel supporters that year.

In Hawaii, both Akaka and Saiki are considered solid friends of Israel. Akaka, a member of the House since 1977, was named to the Senate earlier this year after the death of Sen. Spark Matsunaga, a pro-Israel Democrat.

Saiki, who represents Honolulu, is given a chance to defeat Akaka for the remaining four years of Matsunaga's term, because she is considered energetic and popular.

**Close Races In Iowa And Kentucky**

Harkin, a member of the Senate Appropriations subcommittee on foreign operations running for his second term, is another senator with a 100 percent favorable record on Israel. His Republican opponent, Rep. Thomas Tauke, has a poor record on Israel.

The race is a traditional contest between a liberal and a conservative, with Harkin favoring abortion and Tauke opposed.

McConnell of Kentucky has strongly supported Israel as a member of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee. But Kentucky is traditionally a Democratic state. When McConnell was elected to the Senate six years ago, it was the first time a Republican had won statewide office since 1968.

His Democratic opponent is Jefferson County Judge Harvey Sloane, who is well-financed and well-known in Kentucky.

The Jewish community is also particularly interested in two races in which the incumbents are expected to be re-elected to their fourth terms in the Senate.

One is in North Carolina, where Sen. Jesse Helms, the arch-conservative Republican, is being challenged for re-election to his fourth term by a black Democrat, Harvey Gantt. Six years ago, Jews were almost solidly in opposition to Helms, who had an anti-Israel reputation.

But after winning re-election, Helms, while still against foreign aid, began speaking out in support of Israel. He urged the U.S. Embassy be moved to Jerusalem and criticized the U.S. dialogue with the Palestine Liberation Organization.

**Concern About Louisiana Race**

The other race of special interest is in Louisiana, where a non-partisan primary will be held Oct. 6. Sen. J. Bennett Johnston, a Democrat who supports Israel, is expected to get the more than 50 percent of the vote needed to eliminate the need for a general election in November.

But there is some concern that if that does not happen, Johnston will be forced into a head-to-head race with the leading Republican candidate, state Rep. David Duke, a neo-Nazi populist and former grand wizard of the Ku Klux Klan.

Duke has been disowned by the Republican National Committee, which is supporting state Sen. Ben Bagert. But the polls say Bagert is far behind Duke. If Johnston is denied a clearcut victory in the primary, then no one is certain he can defeat Duke in the general election.

Three Republican senators who have mixed records on Israel are retiring: Bill Armstrong of Colorado, Gordon Humphrey of New Hampshire and James McClure of Idaho. None of their likely successors is considered much better on the issue.

Other Senate critics of Israel are expected to be easily re-elected, with the exception of Sen. James Exon (D-Neb.), who faces a tough race. But his Republican opponent, Rep. Hal Daub, has an even poorer record on Israel.