

A Sense of Isolation

The Jewish women who attended the recent world conference of the United Nations Decade for Women in Copenhagen returned to the United States shocked by the anti-Israeli sentiments they heard. One Jewish leader said she "felt threatened and isolated as a Jewish participant."

All these women knew beforehand of the isolation Israel has felt in international forums. But to experience it personally brought home to them the sense of aloneness Israeli representatives are made to feel almost every day.

Whether because of oil blackmail or Third World solidarity, Israel finds few friends at the United Nations General Assembly and Security Council or at any of the UN agencies. Israel is constantly abused and, as at Copenhagen, finds few defenders and is given little chance to respond.

Israel's only real ally is the Jewish people throughout the world, who, despite differences over some issues, stand united behind the Jewish State. Diaspora Jews, and especially American Jews, have the duty to defend and explain Israel's cause wherever they can get a hearing.

Jews must point out to the United States and the other industrial countries, particularly the spineless members of the European Economic Community, that they cannot ensure their own well-being by selling Israel out for oil. Jews must convince the Third World countries that by using Israel as a scapegoat they cannot solve their own vast problems, but only allow the world to further ignore them.

AGRICULTURE MINISTER APOLIGIZES TO BEGIN

TEL AVIV (WNS) -- after Sharon told Begin a dispute between Premier Menachem Begin and Agriculture Minister Ariel Sharon -- which at one point posed the threat of a Cabinet crisis --

opinions of some ministers are worth more than those of others.

An infuriated Begin told Sharon to remember that Israel is a democracy and not governed by the rules of Orwell's "Animal Farm," in which a bureaucrat declares "all animals are equal but some are more equal than others." An equally furious Sharon retorted "Don't you talk to me in that fashion." Then Sharon went on television to complain Begin was slandering ministers and making decisions in a "facile" way. Begin in turn threatened to resign.

The battle of words took place against the background of a Begin effort to reshuffle his Cabinet after Ezer Weizman quit as Defense Minister last May and Shmuel Tamir of the Democratic Movement left as Justice Minister. Begin had been Acting Defense Minister. After Weizman resigned, Sharon said he wanted the Defense Ministry. Ministers who felt Sharon was too hard-line on key issues, blocked the appointment.

Begin shared that anti-Sharon view. Begin was quoted as saying that Sharon said if he became Defense Minister, he would

put a ring of tanks around the Premier's office. When Sharon bitterly protested, Begin said he had made the comment in jest. Begin named Minister - Without - Portfolio Moshe Nissim of the Liberal party on Aug. 10 to be Justice Minister, in place of Shamir. Sharon was the only minister to vote against Nissim and was absent on Aug. 13 when the Knesset approved the appointment.

85-YEAR-OLD RUSSIAN GETS CIRCUMCISION

JERUSALEM (WNS) -- One of the unusual aspects of Ivan Alexandrovitz's ritual circumcision was that he asked doctors at Shaarei Zedek Hospital to perform the rite. He could do so, because he was not eight days old -- the ritually required time -- but 85 years old.

The unusual Brit Milah was performed by a veteran Jerusalem mohel, Rabbi Yosef Weissberg, surrounded by flabbergasted doctors. The mohel said the recent immigrant from the Soviet Union almost

certainly was the oldest Jew to undergo the rite, recalling the patriarch, Abraham, "who was circumcised at the ripe old age of 99."

He was released from the hospital on August 11 after four days of rest, described as "very pleased." Given only a local anesthetic, he was conscious throughout the brief surgery and heard Rabbi Weissberg recite the usual prayer for the soul of his late mother and father. He came to Israel only six weeks ago, having grown up uncircumcised. He later became an observant Jew but was unable to get circumcision because Soviet hospitals will not circumcise adults.

CANDIDATES TO ADDRESS B'NAI B'RITH CONVENTION

WASHINGTON -- Presidential candidates Ronald Reagan and John Anderson will address the biennial convention of B'nai B'rith International -- and President Carter is expected to join them when the world's

largest Jewish service organization convenes here Labor Day week.

Reagan will address the convention on Sept. 3 at 8 P.M. Anderson will go before the

delegates at 11:30 the following morning. The date and time of President Carter's appearance has not yet been determined.

Delegates from the United States and B'nai B'rith's overseas districts will attend the convention in the new Sheraton Washington Hotel Aug. 31 to Sept. 5. B'nai B'rith's half a million members reside in 42 countries, on every populated continent.

For President Carter, this would be his second appearance at a B'nai B'rith convention. In 1976, as challenger to then-President Ford, he pledged strong leadership in a fight for human rights. He voiced opposition to America's role as the world's top supplier of arms and urged a war against terrorism.

B'nai B'rith President Jack J. Spitzer called the convention "potentially the most exciting meeting in B'nai B'rith history."

He said, "Besides being in the focus of the American presidential campaign, B'nai B'rith delegates will debate and plan their 'Covenant With Tomorrow,' a program of action that will address the major issues and problems facing the world's Jews."

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