

Stimme followed with its own commentary:

The new plan by Dayan is nothing but an attempt to legitimize robbery of the Palestinian homeland. Pravda today criticized the plan for ignoring the Palestinian problem. Arafat also earlier rejected the so-called Vance plan of a demilitarized Palestinian state. The Vance

plan, because it rejects the creation of an independent national Palestinian state will not be accepted and not be realized. The Syrian press is commenting that it is the U.S. government which encourages the annexationist policy of Tel Aviv and that in fact the U.S. government is fully responsible for Israel's policy.

Israel, Final Obstacle To Lebanon Peace Accord

A new round of fierce Israeli military attacks on southern Lebanon threatens to undermine the final implementation of the Chtaura Accords — a formula worked out several months ago between Lebanon, Syria, and the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) to end fighting in Lebanon. Over the past several days, Israel has stepped up overflights into Lebanese territory and shelling across the border, a risky flirtation with a direct showdown with the 30,000 Syrian occupying troops in Lebanon. Several sources agree that the Dayan faction in Israel is primarily responsible for this problem.

The Israeli escalation came just as the Chtaura Accords were endorsed by the leader of the right-wing Christian Falange, Pierre Gemayel, after weeks of delicate negotiations.

Previously the Falange and Camille Chamoun's National Liberal Party have allied with the Israeli military to keep the Lebanese civil war alive in the south. Now, after the acceptance of the accords by the right, factions in Israel stand alone as the last serious obstacle to the accords' implementation, the third phase of which calls for a newly reconstituted Lebanese Army to replace warring Lebanese right wing and Palestinian factions.

The target date for the implementation of the third stage of the accord is Sept. 23.

Israeli Ultimatum

Both Palestinians and Christians fear a full-scale Israeli attack on Lebanon, according to *Le Monde*. To minimize the pretext for such an Israeli action, the Palestinians have withdrawn from certain positions in the south, such as the border town of Hasbiye and from Fort Arnoun, overlooking the strategic Christian-held town of Marjayoun.

Despite this Palestinian pull-back, Israeli Defense Minister Ezer Weizman issued two provocative ultimatums to the PLO to withdraw from southern Lebanon as far as the Litani River. According to the Cuban wire service *Prensa Latina*, the ultimatums are supported by Secretary of State Vance and "certain Arab leaders."

Prensa Latina links Weizman's ultimatums to the PLO with Foreign Minister Dayan's new "peace plan."

According to the London *Guardian*, the deterioration of the situation in southern Lebanon has resulted from Israel's opposition to the Chtaura Accords, which evolved "without the participation of Israel." Notes the *Guardian*: "All the signs are that Israel is using its strong bargaining position to dictate a revision of the peace terms, with the underlying threat that if its conditions are not accepted, the conflict will continue or even escalate."

In response to the Weizman ultimatums, PLO leader Yasser Arafat stated: "We cannot tolerate these threats. The only order that I have given my troops is to stay and fight."

Israeli Intransigence

A detailed report of the terms of the Chtaura Accords was delivered last week for approval by the Israeli Cabinet. This is the fifth such peace plan for southern Lebanon submitted to the Israeli government in the last nine months, each one rejected.

Israeli approval would signal the final go-ahead for the accord's implementation. Lebanese President Elias Sarkis has been given diplomatic assurances from Washington that an Israeli nod of approval will be sufficient security to begin to deploy the Lebanese peace-keeping troops into the south without Israeli interference.

The Lebanese government is currently in the process of reconstituting the Lebanese Army that during the civil war split into several warring factions along sectarian lines. Approximately 1000 new soldiers have been recruited, while 70 percent of the officers of the old army have been reintegrated. According to *Le Monde*, cooperation between Moslems and Christians has been reestablished on the command level. However, for the rank and file, "the problem is to find sufficient loyal elements, especially in Moslem circles," according to *Le Figaro*.

Consolidation of progressive and nationalist forces in Lebanon is also taking place. Walid Jumblatt, leader of the Progressive Socialist Party, has reached an agreement with Lebanon's pro-Syrian Ba'ath Party to form a "National Front" open to all parties. Nationalist leader Raymond Edde, a Christian, is expected to return to Lebanon soon and to involve himself closely in the moves toward national unity. Jumblatt recently visited Paris, where Edde has been living in exile.

The communiqué calling for the formation of the National Front defines as the front's objectives an end to political "confessionalism" in the institutions and services of the state, the creation of a Lebanese army capable of restoring security, and the application of the Chtaura Accords.

According to Falangist official Karim Pakradouni, the response of Israel to the accords is a "crucial test, an indexation for the future" regarding Israel's intentions in reaching an overall peace with the Arabs. "If the Israelis accept it, it will be the first yes under Prime Minister Begin...If not, then all the Arabs will be certain of Israel's motives and of the American inability to influence the Begin government."