

WEIZMAN, LABOR SIGN AGREEMENT

By David Landau

JERUSALEM, Aug. 22 (JTA) -- The Labor Alignment and the Yahad Party led by Ezer Weizman signed an agreement today in which Weizman committed his three-seat party to support a government headed by Labor Party leader Shimon Peres and in which Weizman was given the option of three safe seats on Labor's ticket in the next election.

The signing was the final stroke of Weizman's dramatic move this week which has radically altered the post-election deadlock and substantially improved Labor's chances of leading a government. Earlier, Weizman met privately with Premier Yitzhak Shamir and explained to him his reasons for tilting towards Labor.

Weizman, once regarded as Likud's heir apparent to former Premier Menachem Begin but who quit the Cabinet in protest against Begin's headline toward Palestinian autonomy, said today after his meeting with Shamir that he had urged the Premier to bring his Likud bloc into a unity government under Labor.

However, if Shamir did not do so, Weizman said he would indeed favor a narrow-based government under Labor.

Moves By Other Small Parties

Yigael Hurvitz, leader of the one-man Knesset faction, Courage to Cure the Economy, who has coordinated his moves with Weizman's, said in a TV interview last night that he was deeply convinced that the nation needed a unity government. But he, too, made it clear that he would be prepared to join a narrow-based Labor-led government "if Likud illogically rejects Shimon Peres' (unity) offer."

Political sources close to Labor said a third pivotal party, Tami, with one Knesset seat, was also coordinating its move with Weizman and Hurvitz and would adopt a similar stand at the meeting of its secretariat in Tel Aviv tomorrow. Tami's leader, MK Aharon Abu Hatzzeira, is abroad and is scheduled to return home tonight.

Despondency In Likud

The Weizman-Hurvitz move has caused despondency in Likud where Shamir and other leaders accuse Weizman of reducing the chances of a unity government. Likud sources did not deny that the Weizman-Hurvitz move was a severe setback for their party's chances of leading a government -- particularly if Tami joins the two.

In the short-term the Weizman-Hurvitz and likely Tami move is expected to ensure that President Chaim Herzog will give Peres an additional 21 days on Sunday if he has not put together a government by then. Peres' first 21-day period expires Sunday.

Labor sources said today that Mapam, the partner in the Alignment, believed that now with Weizman's swinging over to Labor there was no further need to talk about a unity government; that Labor should set up a narrow-based government -- even a minority government -- as a first stage, if need be, resting on the passive support of Hadash

with its four Knesset seats and the Progressive List for Peace with its two Knesset seats. In the agreement signed today, offering Weizman three safe seats on Labor's ticket in the next election, Mapam allocated one of its six seats in the future Alignment list to a Yahad member -- if Weizman takes up the option -- and Labor allocated two of its seats.

But Labor sources insisted that Mapam's sacrifice did not guarantee there would be no unity government. These sources said Peres made no such commitment to Mapam, that Peres still ardently desired a unity government, and that a narrow-based government would still be very hard to put together. There is plainly no enthusiasm in Labor circles, nor in Yahad, for the idea of a minority government resting on passive Communist votes.

Positions Of The NRP and Aguda

The immediate outlook, in the days ahead, is for Labor, having received an additional 21 days, to assiduously woo the two key religious parties -- the National Religious Party and Agudat Israel -- to support a government (wide or narrow) under Labor leadership.

The NRP has already emitted some signals that it might reconsider an alliance with Labor once it becomes perfectly clear that Likud has no more hope of setting up a government of its own. Aguda signals, however, are conflicting. Last night, its two MKs spoke on TV of "reconsidering" leaving the Likud bloc in favor of Labor, but today they backed off, in radio interviews, explaining that the party's mentor, Rabbi Eliezer Schachy, has instructed them to remain allied with Likud for the time being.

Observers believe Weizman had the religious parties in mind when he warned today that failure to form a government -- unity or narrow -- would result in early elections, "perhaps as early as 1985."

His implication was that while Yahad, with three safe seats on the Alignment list, could not lose from an early election, the NRP and Aguda could continue their downward plunge in the number of their Knesset seats and ought, therefore to take action to prevent the need for an early election. The NRP, which had six seats in the previous Knesset, now has four; Aguda, which had four seats, now has two.

Weizman Seeking Broader Base

Weizman is clearly seeking to broaden his standing as the leader of a centrist-liberal group loosely attached to the Labor Alignment. The agreement today constituted the formation of a parliamentary bloc between Labor and Yahad. But the agreement contains an option for a full merger if Weizman so chooses.

The Yahad leader spoke today of "the start of a process of changing the Israeli political scene." He seemed to be hinting at his longer-range plans of establishing himself as the leader of a centrist-moderate bloc, perhaps embracing Shinui, some members of the Liberal Party, and Yahad itself.

At The Republican Party Convention:
SUPPORT FOR ISRAEL IS NOT A
CENTRAL THEME IN THE SPEECHES
By David Friedman

DALLAS, Aug. 22 (JTA)--Support for Israel has not been a central theme in the speeches to the Republican National Convention, although the platform

adopted yesterday carries a strong statement that the U.S. and Israel are strategic allies in the Middle East. The same was true at the Democratic National Convention in San Francisco last month. Both parties do not expect the Mideast to be a major issue in the fall campaign.

This is a good thing, according to an Israeli who is attending the GOP convention here and was in San Francisco for the Democratic affair. He said that it is a sign that United States support for Israel is accepted throughout the country and has become as much a part of the American scene as "mom and apple pie."

The Israeli marveled that in a period of austerity, no one has challenged the large amount of aid going to Israel. In fact, it is the support for aid to Israel that has been used by the Reagan Administration as well as its predecessors, to get through Congress aid to other foreign countries.

At a reception given by the American Israel Public Affairs Committee last night, one conservative Republican Congressman was overheard saying that at least Israel is one country that is willing to spend for its military defense.

U.S. Stand On Israel, Soviet Jewry Cited

Israel was of course mentioned in speeches during the first two days of the convention. Jeane Kirkpatrick, the U.S. Ambassador to the United Nations, in a speech Monday night, stressed that U.S. strength is "essential to the independence and freedom of our allies and of our friends." She listed several examples, including, "what would become of Israel, if surrounded by Soviet client states?"

Kirkpatrick also noted that "the Reagan Administration has prevented the expulsion of Israel from the United Nations." She said the deterioration in U.S.-Soviet relations was the fault of the Kremlin and not of President Reagan, and stressed that the American people know that Reagan and the U.S. are not the cause of "the denial of Jewish emigration, or the brutal imprisonment of Anatoly Shcharansky and Ida Nudel or the obscene treatment of Andrei Sakharov and Yelena Bonner, or the re-Stalinization of the Soviet Union," among other offenses of the USSR.

Rep. Jack Kemp of New York, who headed the foreign policy subcommittee of the Platform Committee, stressed last night, "we will strengthen our strategic alliance with our sister democracy, Israel."

He also noted that "whether we're upholding the human rights of the steel worker in Poland, the South African Black or the Soviet Jew, the voice of America must be heard throughout the world."

There was a huge demonstration on the floor for Kemp by delegates promoting him as the Republican Presidential candidate for 1988. Kemp is a favorite among many Jews here, for his strong support of Israel and Soviet Jewry, and some were talking about a 1988 ticket of Kemp and Kirkpatrick.

Reagan's Peace Initiative Still Valid

Vice President George Bush, in a press conference devoted to foreign policy yesterday, stressed that Reagan's September 1, 1982 peace initiative remains the "underpinning of our Mideast policy."

"We've made clear that the regional people, the countries, must want peace, truly want it in order to achieve it," Bush said. "We and our allies will try to help."

Asked whether it was not a "shame" that so many Americans lost their lives as part of the multinational force in Lebanon, Bush replied it was not a

"shame" but a "tragedy" that "Palestinian terrorists resorted to that kind of cowardness to kill young Americans." Bush was referring to the bombing last year of the American marine headquarters in Beirut.

Bush said the U.S. went into Lebanon along with the British, French, and Italian forces in an effort to bring democracy to that country. "There are 10,000 fewer leftwing Palestinian guerrillas, the really extremes, moving around Beirut as a result of that force," Bush said.

Bigotry, Anti-Semitism Condemned

In other issues, Sen. Paula Hawkins of Florida, co-chairperson of the Platform Committee, noted last night that "whatever others may do, the Republican Party condemns racism, bigotry and anti-Semitism." She was referring to the failure by the Democrats to introduce a similar statement in their platform.

Rabbi Fabian Schonfeld of Kew Gardens Hills, in Queens, New York, also spoke of this in his invocation Monday night. "We pray that the evils of bigotry, prejudice, racial hatred and anti-Semitism so strongly condemned by this convention will be eradicated from the hearts and minds of all mankind," Rabbi Saul Besser of Temple Shalom in Dallas gave the benediction.

Meanwhile, while Israeli officials are studiously trying not to inject themselves into the election -- after all they are having enough election problems of their own--the Republicans are bringing them into the campaign.

Bush, speaking to the National Jewish Coalition on Monday, blasted the Democrats for charging that the Administration does not have good relations with Israel. He quoted Premier Yitzhak Shamir as saying that relations were never better.

A pamphlet issued at the Dallas Convention Center on the Administration's foreign and defense policy quotes Defense Minister Moshe Arens as saying in Washington last May that the relationship between the U.S. and Israel is "probably better than it has ever been before."

SYRIA ENDORSES INTERNATIONAL PEACE CONFERENCE ON MIDEAST

UNITED NATIONS, Aug. 22 (JTA) -- An international peace conference on the Middle East was endorsed by Syria today. Ambassador Dia-Allah el-Fattal said, in response to a letter on this subject from Secretary General Javier Perez de Cuellar, that "events that have occurred in the Middle East region have demonstrated that partial and piecemeal solutions cannot lead to the establishment of a comprehensive, just and durable peace in the region."

The Syrian envoy added that the main obstacle to lasting peace was the "policy of force and the fait accompli which Israel has been pursuing with the unlimited support of the United States."

The call for an international peace conference on the Mideast was issued at the International Conference on the Question of Palestine that was held from August 29 to September 7 last year in Geneva under the auspices of the UN. It called for the participation of all parties to the Arab-Israeli conflict, including the PLO, the United States and the Soviet Union "on an equal footing."

Recently, the Soviet Union renewed the call for an international peace conference, which Israel, the U.S. and Britain promptly rejected, saying it would become a sterile propaganda exercise.

SPECIAL TO THE JTA A TIME TO REMEMBER

By Jean Gerber

VANCOUVER, B.C., Aug. 22 (JTA) -- Leon Bass was 19 years old, a Black soldier in a segregated white U.S. Army, when he stood in the barracks at Buchenwald in April 1945. "I thought, my God, what is this, what am I seeing -- the stench, the bodies, the living mixed with the dead, was overwhelming."

Bass was part of the liberating army that opened the death camp at Buchenwald. He had been serving in a segregated army and wondering why he was fighting for a country that had treated him so badly. Nothing had prepared him for what he saw at Buchenwald.

There was another observer that day -- a 14-year-old camp inmate -- Robbie Waisman. He was in those barracks at Buchenwald, barely alive. When he saw the Black soldiers, it was the first time in his life he had ever seen a Black man. "To me they looked like angels -- they had come to set us free."

At a recent symposium held here to educate high school students and teachers about the Holocaust, these two men met for the first time in 40 years and embraced.

Teaching The Lessons Of The Holocaust

They were participants in the 9th Annual Symposium on the Holocaust. Both were retelling their stories to 500 high school students. Ten years ago a group of volunteers came together to begin teaching the lessons of the Holocaust to public school students and teachers.

The symposium began with 250 high school students being invited to hear a day of lectures and survivor's eyewitness accounts of the Holocaust. Now 1,500 students attend, 500 at a time over three days.

The committee which organized the symposiums is composed of professors, theologians, high school teachers, and survivors -- all men and women dedicated to teaching the lessons of the Holocaust. This annual event which brings over 1,500 students and teachers together to hear survivor's accounts and view films on the Holocaust, is comprised not only of large plenary sessions but also of small group discussions centering on how the Holocaust happened and what present day responsibilities derive from knowledge about that event.

In addition, many high school teachers in the Vancouver area now request survivors and films for their classroom teaching. The Canadian Jewish Congress, Pacific Region, staffs this committee and its co-chairmen Dr. Robert Krell and Prof. Graham Forst co-ordinate many events in the general community relating to the Holocaust.

"This symposium" says Krell "is the only one we know of its kind and size in North America. It is geared to teaching the lessons of the Holocaust to all high school students and to their teachers, and the response has been overwhelming. We have encouraged other communities to set up similar events and prepared a short guide book to help them to do so. In Toronto, a similar symposium has been started on our model."

A National Documentation Project

The Vancouver committee also generated a proposal which grew into a National Documentation Project. It has video-taped over 70 eye-witness ac-

counts of the Holocaust and these video tapes are being used to prepare educational packages for high school teachers.

In Vancouver, as a second phase of the Documentation Project, over 60 tapes are now in a video-bank, two-hour video interviews with eyewitnesses to the Holocaust -- survivors, partisans and liberators.

"It is our special responsibility" says Forst, "as members of the Canadian community to teach the lessons the Holocaust had for us to the next generation. We do this not as Jews or non-Jews but as members of Canada's caring community. The Holocaust is the greatest tragedy of our century and involved many nations and religions. All of us need to better understand how such an event could happen."

For Robbie Waisman and Leon Bass the recent symposium was a unique moment in their lives. They were reunited to recount to a whole new generation of students what happened to them both 40 years ago in Buchenwald.

Further information about the Holocaust Symposium can now be obtained from the Canadian Jewish Congress office at 950 West 41st Avenue, Vancouver, B.C. V5Z 2N7.

COALITION OF JEWISH GROUPS PLANNING PROTEST AGAINST NUCLEAR ARMS RACE IN WASHINGTON DURING SUCCOT HOLIDAY By Ben Gallob

NEW YORK, Aug. 22 (JTA) -- A coalition of national Jewish organizations plans a protest in Washington against the nuclear arms race which will feature the first Succah built in Lafayette Park to dramatize Jewish opposition to the nuclear weapons buildup.

The event is being organized under auspices of Succah Shalom (Shelter of Peace), an ad hoc group. Robin Miller, chairperson of Succah Shalom, told the Jewish Telegraphic Agency in a telephone interview from Washington. She said that the Washington Jewish Community Council, which has been sponsoring a vigil for Soviet Jews in Washington for many years, built a Succah last year in the park, which is directly across from the White House.

Miller said the anti-nuclear protest will be held from October 10 to October 14 and that thousands of Jewish demonstrators from the United States and Canada are expected to assemble in Lafayette Park to call on the United States, the Soviet Union and all other governments "to end the funding, development and deployment of nuclear weapons." She said the event will coincide with the National Freeze Weekend.

"We are calling upon the nations of the world to begin dismantling the systems that will bring nuclear Holocaust," Miller said. "As Jews we have suffered the horrors of one Holocaust. It is time for us to act, to assure that such atrocities will never happen again."

The event will begin at 3 p.m. on October 10, which is Succot eve this year, when the Succah will be built and decorated in the park. The organizers said the holiday symbol will have new significance for Jews this year, as one of a series of such events being arranged in several states.

They said the Succahs will tell the world that "in the shadow of nuclear weapons, we are all of us refugees who can be deprived in an instant of food, shelter, healing and comfort. The open Succah reminds us that there is no shelter anywhere on this planet to protect us from the fire, the blast or the poison of nuclear rain."

Miller said a special feature will be held in the Succah that evening and the public will be invited to a multi-cultural "Peace Sabbath" on Friday night. The four-day event will also include leafletting, delegations to members of Congress, vigils, distribution of food to the hungry, and a special educational program for children.

Miller said the protest will culminate on Sunday, October 14 with a massive afternoon rally in the park. She reported that similar Succah-based anti-nuclear weapons protests are being arranged by local Succah Shalom groups throughout the United States, listing Chicago, Boston and Philadelphia to date as reporting plans for participation.

Endorsing organizations were listed by Succah Shalom as B'nai B'rith Hillel Foundations; the Federation of Reconstructionist Congregations and Havurot; Jewish People Fellowships; New Jewish Agenda; National Federation of Temple Youth; the (Conservative) Rabbinical Assembly; the Reconstructionist Rabbinical Association; the Shalom Center at the Reconstructionist Rabbinical College; and the Social Action Commission of the (Reform) Union of American Hebrew Congregations.

MONDALE MEETS WITH JEWISH LEADERS

NEW YORK, Aug. 22 (JTA) -- Walter Mondale, the Democratic Party Presidential candidate, told four prominent Jewish leaders that he would "rather lose the election with you (the Jewish community) than win it without you," according to a report in this week's Long Island Jewish World. The meeting, described as a private get-together, was held in Mondale's home in Minnesota.

Mondale reportedly told the Jewish leaders: "I have been around a long time and I have always had an excellent relationship and a strong bond with the Jewish community, one that I have valued very much." He noted that Jews "bring a philosophical fairness and attitude to politics that I share. I have always had Jewish supporters and I am confident that their attitude is in the best tradition of American politics."

Attending the meeting were Larry Weinberg, chairman of the board of the American Israel Public Affairs Committee (AIPAC); Tom Dine, AIPAC's executive director; Theodore Mann, president of the American Jewish Congress; and Kenneth Bialkin, chairman of the Conference of Presidents of Major American Jewish Organizations and president of the Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rith.

Both Mann and Bialkin recalled the subject matter discussed, but neither would indicate Mondale's responses. "It was a private meeting," said Bialkin. Mondale reportedly told the Jewish leaders that he knows the Jewish community is uncomfortable with the Rev. Jesse Jackson and that his campaign has not adequately dealt with the community's concerns.

Mondale Will Address Jewish Concerns

Mondale is reported to have sought to assure the Jewish community that he is aware of their concerns and that he will address them. The meeting was slated for only 30 minutes but lasted for three hours, and although a host of issues were discussed, most of the discussion was confined to the anti-Semitic outbursts that occurred during the Democratic primary campaign, the Jewish World reported.

Mann said that "Mondale was interested in getting a better feel for what he had heard might be

some concerns of the Jewish community, particularly the anti-Semitism issue with (Black Muslim leader Louis) Farrakhan and Jackson. He wanted a first-hand evaluation of the Jewish people from those who are close to the Jewish community."

The four Jewish leaders, according to Mann, "gave him our personal analysis of how the Jews have reacted in the last six months and our concerns about the extremely vulgar anti-Semitic comments of Farrakhan. We told him of our frustration as Jews of being unable to do anything about it (the anti-Semitic barrage). By a peculiar psychological mechanism, Mondale could be hurt by its very existence and I don't know if anyone gave him any suggestions on how to handle that in the campaign."

According to Bialkin, the four Jewish leaders reviewed a number of issues, including Jackson's public pronouncements debasing American Jews, church-state matters, quotas and preferences, the Middle East, Israel, and foreign policy.

The Democratic Party's plank calling for "goals and timetables and other verifiable measurements" with respect to affirmative action was another topic of concern that was discussed, Bialkin said. He said that, speaking as president of the ADL, he could say that his organization found that plank "problematic." Noting the ADL's opposition to quotas, he said, "We would be seeking answers from the candidate about the plank."

Bialkin declined to spell out Mondale's promises, except to say that he was against having a third party force a peace settlement on the parties in the region, the Jewish World reported. In addition, he said, "Israel should not be pushed into making an agreement which it doesn't reach by negotiations with its neighbors."

ISRAELI-MADE SPECIAL LIGHTS USED IN RECOVERY OF CURRENCY ON SUNKEN SHIP

TEL AVIV, Aug. 22 (JTA) -- Soggy dollar bills and Italian currency recovered from the 25-year-old wreck of the Italian luxury liner Andrea Doria off the U.S. Atlantic coast last week were found with the help of special lights made in Jerusalem.

According to expedition leader Peter Gimbel, he used 15 high-intensity specially-built underwater lights made by Bims Oceanographics (Israel) Ltd. at their factory in Jerusalem's Givat Shaul quarter.

Similar Bims underwater lights have been used in many major film productions, including "Raise the Titanic," "An Officer and a Gentleman" and James Bond movies. The Bims parent company is in Los Angeles.

FORMER VILLAGE LEAGUE LEADER JAILED

JERUSALEM (JTA) -- A military court in Judea has sentenced a former head of the Bethlehem Village Leagues to two years in jail. Bishara Kumsiyye was convicted Monday on charges of attempts against political adversaries, among them Elias Freij, the Mayor of Bethlehem. Kumsiyye was at the time one of the more influential leaders of the Leagues, which, prior to the Lebanon war, were encouraged by then Defense Minister Ariel Sharon as a pro-Israeli Arab organization in the territories. Following the war, the new administrators at the Defense Ministry tended to downplay the importance of the Leagues.