

ISRAEL HAS UNITY GOVERNMENT HEADED BY PERES; HE AND SHAMIR TO ROTATE AS PREMIER AFTER 25 MONTHS

By David Landau

JERUSALEM, Sept. 13 (JTA) — Israel had a new government today — a unity government. Premier Shimon Peres, leader of the Labor Party, presented his unity government to the Knesset this afternoon — after 40 days of arduous inter-party negotiations which lasted right up to the very moment of the presentation.

He termed the seven-party coalition, which embraces 97 members of the 120-member Knesset, "a bold and novel experiment" and said it bore with it "the genuine hopes of the nation" for unity that could transcend political differences.

Peres praised his Deputy Premier, Yitzhak Shamir (Likud-Herut) for "his capability for dialogue and his desire for genuine cooperation towards a unity government."

Under the coalition agreement, Shamir will replace Peres as Premier, and Peres will replace Shamir as Deputy Premier and Foreign Minister, 25 months into the Knesset term.

Lists Two Top Priority Items

In a brief and businesslike presentation speech, Peres listed the economy and Lebanon as the two top priority items on the new government's agenda. What was needed on the former, he declared, was "immediate and energetic action." And he predicted that with steady effort, Israel could take its place in the forefront of the world's nations in the fields of science, technology, agriculture and industry.

Peres pledged the government would ensure the security of the northern border villages in its quest to end the Lebanon involvement. And he stressed the constant need to preserve and expand the strength of the Israeli Defense Force as Israel's prime guarantee of peace and security.

His next target, Peres said, was to expand the peace process. He called on all Israel's neighbors to enter peace negotiations, and addressed a special call to King Hussein of Jordan, "at this special moment," to join in talks with Israel.

Carefully rehearsing the delicate wording of the government's policy-platform (the wording was subject to intense negotiation), Peres called on Jordan to come to the negotiating table where, he said, it could put forward any proposals — and the new government would consider them carefully. By the same token, he added, Jordan would be asked to listen to and consider proposals put forward by Israel.

Peres did not refer to the Camp David process in this context. He did, however, mention Camp David in the context of Egypt, calling on that country to return its long-absent Ambassador and help develop the peace treaty with Israel into "a step towards" much broader and deeper regional cooperation.

In a reference to the Soviet Union, Peres read out a moving cable received today by President Chaim Herzog and the Knesset from a group of Jews in Moscow, Leningrad, Riga and Odessa urging Israel to act in their behalf and help

them realize their goal of aliya. "Our answer is: your destiny is our destiny we shall never forget," Peres declared.

He urged Moscow to reestablish diplomatic ties with Israel, "ties severed at a time of anger." He added that Israel would "continue knocking on the closed door of China."

But the main focus of the country's preoccupations and the new government's efforts, Peres said, was the home front. He dwelt on the need to shore up democracy and the rule of law, and spoke of tolerance as a social value that it was vital to enhance. The Arab and Druze citizens particularly, he said, must not only be equal — but feel they are equal.

As his wife Sonia, sitting alongside Shulamit Shamir, looked down from the VIP gallery, Peres spoke of his sense of excitement and of deep responsibility at this moment.

List Of Ministers Presented

He allowed a smile to cross his face when he read out the list of Cabinet ministers:

LABOR: Shimon Peres; Yitzhak Rabin, Defense; Mordechai Gur, Health; Moshe Shahal, Energy; Haim Barlev, Police; Yitzhak Navon, Deputy Premier and Education; Arye Nehamkin, Agriculture; Yaakov Tsur, Absorption; and Gad Yaacobi, Economics and Planning.

Other ministers on the Labor side of the Knesset announced are: Amnon Rubinstein (Shinui), Communications; Yigael Hurvitz (Courage to Cure the Economy), Without Portfolio; Ezer Weizman (Yahad), Minister in the Prime Minister's Office.

LIKUD: Yitzhak Shamir; Moshe Arens, Without Portfolio; David Levy, Deputy Premier and Housing; Ariel Sharon, Trade and Industry; Yitzhak Modai, Finance; Moshe Nissim, Justice; Gideon Patt, Without Portfolio; Avraham Sharir, Tourism; Haim Corfu, Transportation; Moshe Katzav, Labor and Welfare.

Also on the Likud side of the Knesset: Rabbi Yitzhak Peretz (Shas), Without Portfolio; Yosef Shapira (Morasha), Without Portfolio; Yosef Burg (National Religious Party), Without Portfolio.

Peres did not announce the ministers who would hold the Interior and Religious Affairs portfolios as a result of an 11th-hour compromise with the NRP. Peres will hold these portfolios for the time being. (See separate story.)

A NIGHT OF FRENETIC DEALS

By David Landau

JERUSALEM, Sept. 13 (JTA) — "Split it between you," a bleary-eyed cameraman told Shimon Peres, Yitzhak Navon and Haim Barlev at four a.m. this morning as he plunked down in front of them a can of Coca-Cola.

The three Labor leaders, gratefully and without overmuch attention to protocol requirements, eagerly swilled back the beverage, lubricating their parched throats and keeping them conscious for yet another gruelling hour of pre-dawn negotiations.

The cameraman's mate offered them a hunk of bagel, still warm from an Old City baker's van. Greedily they gobbled it up.

After all, the Knesset restaurants had all closed long hours ago. But they and their aides were still buried in the bowels of the house, beaver away towards the so-elusive goal: wrapping up the coalition accord.

On the floor above, unattended by media people, Yitzhak Shamir and his aides were no doubt in similarly hungry and thirsty condition -- and similarly teetering on the verge of physical exhaustion.

Wheeling And Dealing To The Very End

The wheeling and dealing and horse-trading was at last coming to an end: the final, unchangeable deadline had been set -- Thursday afternoon. Labor had given notice, with the National Religious Party support, that if it could not announce a unity government by then -- it would present to the Knesset a narrow-based one and squeak home with the votes of the Communists.

Peres and his aides were awaiting Shamir's visit to them, from the fourth floor to the fifth, in order to hand him a copy of the formal letter Peres proposed sending President Chaim Herzog informing the President that a government had been formed. Once Shamir took formal note of that letter -- it would be all over.

"Where is he?" Peres asked, too tired, and too schooled in delays and disappointments to be impatient. "He's still stuck with the Shas guys," someone answered. "They've gone to say selichot" (predawn prayers), someone else volunteered.

And indeed, the Shas rabbi-politicians had taken over a committee room and were offering penitence prayers in between drafting sessions with their Likud patrons over complex compromise formulae in the matter of the Religious Affairs portfolio.

Threat By The NRP

Earlier in the evening, the NRP Executive met in the Knesset and decided to accept a Labor proposal whereby both Religions and Interior -- NRP's two "traditional" portfolios -- be "deposited" with the Premier for the time being, "until a solution is worked out."

If Likud and Shas rejected that, the NRP warned, there would be a Labor-led narrow government -- with NRP participation -- the next day.

Faced with that kind of threat, Shamir had little choice but to climb down. He met with Peres -- and the two of them called in Shas' Yitzhak Peretz (by now it was well past one a.m.) to cajole him into swallowing the medicine, too.

The Shas politicians were mortified. "We are being made fools of," they roiled. The two ministries were run by NRP-affiliated directors-general, and, deposited with Peres, they would continue in effect, therefore, to be controlled by the NRP.

But Shamir was adamant. Likud and Labor were going ahead, he made it clear, with or without Shas. "He's (Shamir) not the whole of the Likud," a Shas MK noted forcefully to reporters -- a clear reference to Shas' particular patron, Ariel Sharon.

And indeed, this morning, in a last-minute turnabout engineered by Sharon, Shas decided to join the government after all and accept the "deposit" scheme. Peretz told reporters Sharon had specifically undertaken that Shas would eventually receive one or other of the two disputed ministries.

Be that as it may, the unity Cabinet has 25 members -- Shas' entry was followed by that of Morasha -- an unwieldy number even in an optimal situation of political homogeneity which this certainly is not.

Peres and Shamir are aware of the problem, however, and have built into their agreement a scheme that could, if it works, be a solution.

It calls for an inner Cabinet of 10 members -- five Labor and five Likud -- where key issues will be brought for decision. These decisions will "bind Labor and Likud" -- thus ensuring their endorsement in the Cabinet plenary.

But observers believe that even the 10-member forum, which will also serve as the Ministerial Defense Committee, may prove unwieldy. They expect, therefore -- if the unity government indeed takes hold -- the informal evolution of a still smaller forum, comprising Peres and Shamir and just a very few others, reminiscent of Golda Meir's Kitchen Cabinet.

Presumably, Sharon would not be part of such a body. The question is, however, whether he would be prepared to countenance its existence without his participation in it -- and whether Shamir is strong enough to resist Sharon's efforts to undermine it.

No doubt, as the unity government is launched on its way, the problem of Sharon's open challenge to Shamir is one of the most salient shadows threatening its longevity and efficiency. Sharon's challenge to Shamir was dramatically in evidence Tuesday night when he opposed Shamir's recommended slate of Herut ministers in the unity government during a stormy meeting of the Herut Central Committee. The slate was approved nevertheless.

NEO-NAZI LEADER DENIES INVOLVEMENT IN MURDER OF JEWISH PUBLISHER

BONN, Sept. 13 (JTA) -- Prominent neo-Nazi leader Karl-Heinz Hoffmann today denied that he was involved in the murder of Jewish publisher Shlomo Levin and his female companion Frida Poeschke on December 19, 1980. He also said he would soon make a statement on his views about the Jewish people, which he said, would provide evidence that he is not a "Jew-hater."

Hoffmann, the head of an extremist neo-Nazi para-military group that paraded about as a sports organization until it was outlawed by the authorities in 1980, is on trial for having plotted the murders of Levin and Poeschke, killed in Levin's home in Erlangen, southern Germany.

The prosecution yesterday, on the opening day of the trial in Nuremberg, claimed that the actual killing was carried out by 29-year-old Uwe Behrendt, a member of the Hoffmann group who committed suicide in September, 1981 while in a military training camp run by the Palestine Liberation Organization in Lebanon.

Hoffmann today admitted that he provided Behrendt with a plane ticket for his escape from West Germany. But he added that the ticket was not purchased prior to the killing and that it was not prearranged. Hoffmann's female companion, Franziska Birkmann, is accused of aiding and abetting in the murders.

At the opening day of the trial, state prosecutor Otto Horn asserted that Hoffmann and more than a dozen of his supporters fled to Lebanon to a PLO-run training camp where they were taught to use military hardware.

The camp was the Bir Hassan PLO camp near Beirut, Horn claimed. He said that while at the camp, Hoffmann planned a series of attacks in West Germany and that he also wanted to "impress the PLO leadership." The PLO denies it has any links to the Hoffmann or his neo-Nazi group.

CORRECTION: A story in the Sept. 12 Bulletin misidentified the agency involved with settlements. It is not the Jewish Agency, which does not operate in the administered areas. The agency involved should have been identified as the World Zionist Organization.

BEHIND THE HEADLINES RENEWING NEIGHBORHOODS AND LIVES

By Gerald Regan

ASHKELON, Sept. 13 (JTA) -- A program here is involving hundreds of volunteers from the diaspora in a darker side of Israeli life by moving them into neighborhoods plagued by chronic unemployment, wife-beating, drug and alcohol abuse and other social ills.

The volunteers, mostly from Britain, are helping staff many of Project Renewal's programs here in an effort to bring social and physical rehabilitation to Israel's poverty areas. Far from being repulsed by the problems they seek to ameliorate, many are deciding to make Israel their home.

Overseeing and nurturing this source of new immigrants is the British Olim Society, which has since 1948 helped British and Irish olim find their niche in Israeli society.

Last year, noticing that Project Renewal volunteers began to see Israel in a new appealing light, the Society assumed the direction of the Joint Israel Appeal (JIA) Project Renewal United Kingdom Volunteer Program, which staffs much of Project Renewal here.

Project Renewal represents a partnership between diaspora Jewish communities, the government of Israel and the residents of the country's poverty neighborhoods. Ever since its creation in 1978 shortly after Premier Menachem Begin proposed a massive housing renovation plan, Project Renewal has furnished badly-needed rehabilitation to the development areas into which Sephardic immigrants flocked in the years since 1948.

Ashkelon's Need Is Great

The need in Ashkelon is great. Its most densely populated, poorest neighborhood contains half of its population. In the largely Moroccan neighborhood of Givat Zion, a typical family numbers six persons, residing in a flat offering each person only slightly more than 100 square feet of living space. In the upper middle class neighborhood of Afridar, established by South African Jews, a typical family has four members living in an apartment twice that size.

Project Renewal has taken many diaspora communities' desire to play a more direct role in aiding Israel with their large financial and human resources and "twinned" these with needy development communities in Israel. Ashkelon became linked with the Joint Israel Appeal, the fund-raising body for the Jewish communities of Great Britain and Ireland.

Up to 600 volunteers a year from Britain and Ireland come to staff many of Project Renewal's programs in Ashkelon. According to Marty Davis, the Brooklyn-born director of the British Olim Society's Ashkelon office, many of the JIA volunteers, seeing how Israel can utilize their talents and energy, are deciding to remain.

Multivaried Backgrounds Of The Volunteers

The volunteers come from all walks of life, according to Davis, whose beard and heavy build recall "Wolfman Jack" of the 1950's radio fame in the United States. Davis made aliyah four years ago at the age of 27 after four visits. Addressing one of the many groups which come to Ashkelon to see the fruit of Project Renewal's labor, Davis mentioned that about 20 to 40 volunteers came annually in the Project's first few years. The Society furnishes the volunteers with an orientation, room, board, and pocket money, said Davis, who also heads the volunteer program.

They toil in this Mediterranean town located some 40 miles south of Tel Aviv at the doorstep of the Negev desert, where some 60,000 Jews have settled since 1948, coming from 74 countries. Many of the settlers were unskilled and uneducated, and brought with them little more than they could carry in an often hurried and harried exodus from Arab and Asian countries.

More than two-thirds of Ashkelon's population is Sephardic, many from Morocco. These new settlers often moved into makeshift quarters, while many of Israel's Ashkenazic Jewish immigrants after 1948 had the freedom to plan and save for their immigration and so populated more affluent neighborhoods. The Ashkenazim, usually far more educated, also had access to better jobs.

Ashkelon, which 2,000 years ago was the site of one of Herod's summer palaces, rose again atop the Arab village of Magdal, abandoned after the 1948 War of Independence. Today, Magdal is Migdal, the commercial center of the town, and its former mosque is a popular restaurant.

Some Of The Town's Problems

A good number of Ashkelon's residents are not working, Davis said. Unemployment is high and it contributes to many of the social ills and family problems found in the town's depressed areas. Ashkelon's location six miles from the Gaza Strip's nearly half a million Arabs has flooded the area with cheap labor. Davis said that Ashkelon's jobless find it as rewarding to collect welfare benefits as to work at what they consider to be menial jobs, low pay and onerous hours accepted by many Arabs.

Wife and child abuse and family abandonment are serious problems in the town's poverty areas but, Davis said, Project Renewal, with its emphasis on "bringing social work and community work together with physical renewal" has made these problems less pervasive. Even drug abuse, which along with alcohol abuse, is an additional problem here, "is not as serious as it was five years ago," he said.

Ashkelon's residents may not have the time to feel sorry for themselves. Davis said that 45,000 residents participate in Project Renewal here. The Project provides them with a key role in the process of renewing their neighborhood. "People of the community are made part of the planning and implementing process," in effect, forming a "spirit of cooperation" between the community and the government, Davis said.

Getting this level of participation in the numerous committees set up by Project Renewal to steer its activities here has taken "an enormous amount of effort," Davis said, as the residents had come to expect government to do things to them or for them, but not with them.

Contributions By Project Renewal

Project Renewal planning for a town like Ashkelon requires approval by the "twinned" diaspora community, in this case, the Jews of Great Britain and Ireland, and the Israeli government. But the neighborhood committees have an equal say in setting and acting on priorities. Nothing moves through the Project Renewal pipeline without the input of a neighborhood's residents.

Project Renewal has brought to Ashkelon a new, progressive look. Davis is frequently called upon to give tours of the town, which was shown off to the diaspora leaders attending the Jewish Agency's annual assembly last June.

The volunteer program buses in 700 children a week to Ashkelon's handsome new tennis center, funded by Project Renewal. The development at the center of more first-rate young tennis stars like Ashkelon's Shlomo Glickstein should be a source of further pride to the town's residents.

Project Renewal contributed to the development of a nearby beach, raised funding for a beautiful modern swimming pool and helps run a town-wide art center.

New drug and alcohol rehabilitation centers, a health clinic, 64 new or rebuilt kindergartens, a center for mentally handicapped adults, and Israel's first dental clinic which assures that each child in Ashkelon receives a yearly check-up, are additional testimonies to the success here of the diaspora-Israel partnership forged by Project Renewal.

Playing a vital role in bringing about a new brighter Israel for the more than 350,000 Israelis reached by Project Renewal are the volunteers like those headed by Davis. With already 120 olim from the ranks of its volunteers over the past four years, the British Olim Society is making Israel a more Jewish and a more hospitable homeland.

UJA OPENS CAMPAIGN IN ISRAEL By Gil Sedan

JERUSALEM, Sept. 13 (JTA) -- The United Jewish Appeal began its annual campaign this week in Israel -- for the first time in its 45-year history. More than 800 leaders from Jewish communities across the United States are scheduled to gather in Jerusalem for the campaign's opening conference tomorrow through Sunday.

The 1985 campaign is expected to realize close to \$700 million, more money than has ever been raised during a single year. Some \$660 million was raised during the Yom Kippur War campaign 11 years ago.

This year's campaign theme is "Partners to Life," representing people-to-people as well as the financial commitment to Jews worldwide by American Jewish communities.

"This setting of our campaign opening in Jerusalem is a graphic demonstration of our partnership with the people of Israel and our united commitment to helping meet Jewish needs in Israel and worldwide," said UJA national chairman Alex Grass of Harrisburg, Pa.

Warmly Welcomed By Israelis

Participants in the campaign, who began arriving here early this week, were warmly welcomed by Israelis. Tourism Minister Avraham Sharir stressed "the enormous contribution" which UJA missions make to Israel's tourist industry. "Less than 10 percent of American Jews have ever visited Israel," he said, "and your initiative is a much-needed injection."

Jerusalem Mayor Teddy Kollek lauded the UJA's decision to launch its national campaign in Israel. "We are partners for life in a partnership which is vital to the existence of each of us," he told them. "It is not only the financial support which is so important to us -- and it is very important. But it is also your moral support, your friendship, the visits you all make at every opportunity, which are such a central source of encouragement for us."

Leon Dulzin, chairman of the World Zionist Organization and Jewish Agency Executives, thanked the UJA on behalf of the Executives and stressed the importance of the UJA's contribution to Israel in these difficult economic times. He expressed his hope that the UJA's initiative in opening its campaign in Israel will be an example to other Jewish organizations worldwide.

The mission program is designed to expose UJA leaders to all facets of their partnership with Israel

and for the more energetic, the day begins with jogging around Jerusalem's Old City, led by Israeli Olympic marathon runner, Zehava Shmueli.

SENATE UNIT TO APPROVE GENOCIDE CONVENTION BY NEXT WEDNESDAY By David Friedman

WASHINGTON, Sept. 13 (JTA) -- The Senate Foreign Relations Committee will approve the United Nations convention against genocide no later than its regular meeting next Wednesday, Alan Safran, a committee staff member, said today.

But there was some question whether the Senate will be able to ratify the treaty before Congress adjourns October 5. Sen. Jesse Helms (R. N.C.), who used his prerogative to delay the vote yesterday, might threaten a filibuster if the convention is brought to the floor.

Elliott Abrams, Assistant Secretary of State for Human Rights and Humanitarian Affairs, who urged the committee to approve the Convention, said that the Reagan Administration would not insist that the treaty be brought to the floor if it faced a filibuster that "might make it impossible to do other important business."

When Sen. Charles Percy (R. Ill.) the committee's chairman, sought to get a vote yesterday, Helms accused him of trying to "railroad" the treaty through without considering two riders that Helms offered. Percy angrily replied that 35 years of hearings "cannot be called railroading."

Constitutional Issues Invoked

Helms, who like many other conservatives opposes the treaty, said his riders were aimed at preventing the Convention from superceding the Constitution and to reserve the right of the United States not to submit certain matters covered by the Convention to the International Court of Justice.

But Abrams, in his testimony, stressed that after a comprehensive legal review by both the State and Justice Departments, "we are firm in our conviction that all constitutional questions have been answered." He noted that the American Bar Association, which has long opposed ratification, since 1976 has supported it and "its legal explanation and defense of the present proposal should satisfy all of the prior constitutional objections to the Convention."

Abrams stressed that the United States, "one of the chief recipients of the survivors of the Holocaust, has found itself in the embarrassing position in the international forum of having failed to ratify the Convention, thereby not expressing formally through an international treaty our staunch opposition to the heinous crime of genocide."

The Convention of the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide was signed by President Truman on December 11, 1948. Although approved by 96 other countries, and endorsed by every President since Truman, except for Eisenhower, the Senate has failed to ratify the convention, largely because of conservative opposition.

It was this opposition that was apparently the reason for President Reagan's long silence on the Convention. But on the eve of Reagan's address to the B'nai B'rith International convention here last week, the Administration announced for ratification. Reagan reiterated the endorsement to B'nai B'rith which, like other American Jewish groups, has long advocated ratification.