

**PERES: THERE IS 'BROAD AGREEMENT'
BETWEEN ISRAEL AND THE U.S. ON
REVIVING THE MIDEAST PEACE PROCESS**
By David Landau

JERUSALEM, May 12 (JTA) — Premier Shimon Peres told the Cabinet today that there was "broad agreement" between Israel and the United States on reviving the Middle East peace process and that Secretary of State George Shultz recognized Israel's position that it is now up to the Arabs to decide on the future of the process.

Peres briefed the Cabinet only hours after his final breakfast meeting with Shultz at the Prime Minister's home. The Secretary of State flew to Cairo this morning to confer with President Hosni Mubarak of Egypt. This evening he will fly to the Jordanian port city of Aqaba for dinner with King Hussein.

Israeli officials expect that he will send his top Middle East aide, Assistant Secretary of State Richard Murphy, back to Jerusalem tomorrow to brief them on his talks with the two Arab leaders.

Shultz's political — and economic — talks with Israeli leaders were an addenda to the primary purpose of his visit, which was to take part in Israel's observance of the 40th anniversary of the defeat of Nazi Germany at the Yad Vashem Holocaust Memorial. (See separate story.)

But in the political talks, which Shultz held with Peres and Foreign Minister and Deputy Premier Yitzhak Shamir, the status of the long stalled peace process was reviewed and brought up to date.

Three Main Obstacles

Shultz and the Israelis are in agreement that the Arabs must put together a joint Jordanian-Palestinian delegation before any new round of negotiations can begin. Peres told the Cabinet that no list of delegates had been presented to him by Shultz.

The outstanding problem, one which is not expected to be resolved quickly, is the composition of the joint delegation. Its members must be acceptable to Israel and — as Shultz pointed out to American reporters later aboard his plane bound for Cairo — also acceptable to the Palestinians.

According to Peres, the composition of the delegation was one of the three main obstacles listed by Shultz to the resumption of the peace process. The others were: the demand by the Arab side that initial talks be held by the delegation with Reagan Administration officials in Washington, before Israel is brought into the picture; and Jordan's demand that the process be conducted within the framework of an international peace conference that would include the five permanent members of the United Nations Security Council.

Israel has the strongest reservations against both of those demands. Peres and Shamir were categorical in their rejection of an international peace conference as the forum for negotiating with the Arabs and their position was made clear in the official Cabinet communique issued after today's session.

But the most serious immediate problem which could have repercussions for the Labor-Likud unity coalition government, is the nature of the joint Jordanian-Palestinian delegation. Shultz said, according to Peres' report to the Cabinet, that in appraising the delegation, Israel must look at "persons", not "categories."

This appeared to be an oblique reference to whether members of the Palestine National Council (PNC) would be acceptable. The State Department seemed to indicate last week that they would be acceptable to the U.S. provided they were not members of the Palestine Liberation Organization.

But the PNC is widely seen as the PLO's "parliament-in-exile" and as far as Israel is concerned is undifferentiated from the PLO.

Foreign Minister Shamir, the Likud leader, took a categorically negative position with respect to the PNC at his meeting with Shultz on Friday. At a subsequent question-and-answer session with reporters he flatly ruled out PNC members as possible negotiating partners. Peres was more equivocal on the subject.

Israel's Position Explained

He told the Cabinet today that Israel's position is that "We will reject anyone who belongs to an organization which is committed to the Palestinian Covenant." The Covenant, drawn up by the PLO in the 1960s and subsequently amended, denies Israel's right to exist as a sovereign state and pledges the PLO to an armed struggle to eradicate it. The document was adopted by the PNC and re-affirmed at successive PNC assemblies.

Peres appears reluctant to take a clear-cut position on the issue as long as the joint Jordanian-Palestinian delegation remains hypothetical. It is unclear, for example, whether the PNC is an "organization" within the meaning of the Premier's statement; or if a person who was a member at its last session can be described as "belonging to" the PNC, inasmuch as delegates are freshly elected for each session.

The statements by Peres and Shamir reflect the fundamental political and ideological differences between the Labor and Likud leaders and the divisions between the two major components of the unity government. Should the matter come to a head, the government might not survive.

Deputy Foreign Minister Ronnie Milo, a Likud MK, said Friday that if a proposal evolved for Israeli talks with a delegation that included members of the PNC, the government inevitably would fall.

Israel's Troubled Economy Discussed

Shultz devoted an important part of his two-day visit to discussions of Israel's severely troubled economy. On Saturday night he dined with Finance Minister Yitzhak Modai at the home of the U.S. Ambassador Samuel Lewis and he also discussed economics in depth with Peres.

The latter told the Cabinet today that Shultz stated explicitly that American supplemental economic aid to Israel "would not be linked to any conditions, political or economic." Peres added, however, that Shultz made it clear that the U.S. expects Israel to "take the necessary measures" to cure its economy.

The Cabinet, in fact, demonstrated its determination and resolve to attack painful economic problems by devoting nearly two hours today for discussion of how to levy the education tax, decided upon several months ago but still not implemented.

Peres also disclosed that in his talks with Shultz he had suggested that the Secretary of State take up with Soviet leaders the idea of direct flights from Moscow to Tel Aviv for Soviet-Jewish emigres. He said he raised the question of Jewish activists imprisoned in the Soviet Union. Shultz met here briefly with Avital Shcharansky, wife of Anatoly Shcharansky, and Ilana Friedman, sister of Ida Nudel.

SHULTZ RENEWS AMERICA'S PLEDGE TO ALWAYS STAND BY AND SUPPORT ISRAEL

By David Landau

JERUSALEM, May 12 (JTA) -- Secretary of State George Shultz solemnly renewed America's pledge to always stand by and support Israel, in a moving speech at the Yad Vashem Holocaust Memorial here Friday during ceremonies marking the 40th anniversary of the defeat of Nazi Germany.

The American people will never again appease tyranny or let the Jewish people stand alone against persecution, Shultz said. America's support for Israel was its way of ensuring that a Holocaust can never recur.

"The very fact that this memorial to the Holocaust victims stands here in Israel is a symbol of hope. It reminds us that from the abyss of Jewish suffering at the Nazis' hands, there re-emerged the Jewish State, a haven, finally, after centuries of anti-Semitic persecution. The birth of Israel was a re-birth of hope, and not only for Jews, but for all people everywhere," Shultz said.

The Secretary of State arrived here Friday for a two-day visit, the chief purpose of which was to participate in Israel's observance of the destruction of the Third Reich four decades ago by the United States and its allies. His visit also had a political dimension and was an occasion for discussions of Israel's economic situation. (See separate story)

But the Yad Vashem ceremonies with which it began was clearly the highlight. It assumed special significance in that Shultz's obviously deeply felt remarks were delivered only five days after President Reagan placed a wreath at the military cemetery in Bitburg West Germany where members of the notorious Waffen SS are buried along with other German war dead.

That act by Reagan outraged, angered and anguished Israelis and Jews the world over for its symbolic if unintended honor to the worst Nazi killers and the President's apparent misreading of the meaning of the Holocaust.

Shultz made no reference to the Bitburg episode. But Yad Vashem director Yitzhak Arad, in his address, spoke frankly of the "pain" it caused Israel. "We believe there can never be a reconciliation with the criminal acts of the SS, the murderers of millions of innocent people, Jews and non-Jews," Arad declared.

Shultz acknowledged that for people living far from Israel, the memory of the Holocaust may perhaps be growing dim. The Yad Vashem memorial, he said, was the true witness to the Holocaust and the symbol of the victory of the human spirit over evil.

"That is why Israel must endure," the Secretary of State said, "and that is why the American people are committed to Israel's security. After the Holocaust, the American people, and decent men and women around the world, made a solemn pledge: Never again. Never again would we fail to confront evil. Never again would we appease the aggressor. Never again would we let the Jewish people stand alone to face persecution and aggression."

He continued: "Today we honor that pledge when we, with the people of Israel, reach out to help save Ethiopian Jewry. We honor that pledge when we work tirelessly to help Soviet Jewry -- and other minorities -- against the Soviet regime's systematic persecution. We honor that pledge when we pursue and prosecute Nazi war criminals -- no matter how long it takes."

Shultz added: "Above all, we honor our pledge by remembering, by teaching our children the story of the six million Jews, by establishing the Holocaust Memorial Commission in the United States, by coming here to the Yad Vashem."

PARAGUAY PEOPLE WILL BE ASKED TO HELP LOCATE MENGELE

PARIS, May 12 (JTA) -- Nazi-hunter Serge Klarsfeld announced here that his wife Beate will appeal directly to the people of Paraguay to obtain information on the whereabouts of Josef Mengele, the notorious Auschwitz death camp doctor.

Klarsfeld said his wife will go to Asuncion, the capital of Paraguay, next weekend for a television appearance during which she will present a two-and-a-half minute film showing atrocities committed by Mengele and a description of him. Mengele, if alive, is 74 years old. He became a Paraguayan citizen in 1949 but was stripped of his citizenship in 1979 under international pressure. Paraguayan officials claim that they have no knowledge of his whereabouts.

Serge Klarsfeld accused the Paraguayan authorities of "doing their best to try to avoid finding Mengele." He said they agreed to air the film in order to show that "they are not protecting him."

Three Countries Coordinating Efforts

In a related development, representatives of the Attorney Generals of Israel, the United States and West Germany met for two days in Frankfurt last week to coordinate their activities in the worldwide search for Mengele.

Dennis Goldman, of the international affairs division of Israel's Attorney General's office, disclosed that the three countries had reached an agreement on opening direct communications between them for exchange of information both on the legal and the investigatory levels with the goal of bringing Mengele to trial for "crimes against humanity."

Last week, Israeli Justice Minister Moshe Nissim announced that the government of Israel and the World Zionist Organization are jointly offering a \$1 million reward for information that would lead to the capture, arrest and trial in Israel of Mengele. Israel has also asked Interpol, the international police organization, to locate, arrest and extradite to Israel the mass murderer.

BEHIND THE HEADLINES A TALE OF 3 CENTRAL EUROPEAN CITIES By Aviva Cantor

(Part Four Of A Five-Part Series)

PRAGUE, May 12 (JTA) — Czech Jewry is a community for which the options of ending a long and proud history either through mass aliyah or through the attrition of assimilation are both unthinkable. The leadership is committed to continuing "an active intellectual community in the tradition of Czech Jewry," said Dr. Desider Galsky, president of the Council of Jewish Religious Communities in the Czech Socialist Republic.

"We are a small community, mostly of survivors," he said. Only five percent of the pre-war Jewish population of 350,000 remained alive in 1945. "But, as long as we are here," he told the World Jewish Congress delegation on a recent visit to Prague, "we aim to maintain this community on an active level, and not be just a community of old, ill and helpless Jews."

There are an estimated 15-18,000 Jews in Czechoslovakia today. For the past 15 years since the last rabbi died and until 1984, the community had no rabbi. But, as Council member Arthur Radvansky told the Jewish Telegraphic Agency, "a community cannot be a community without a rabbi." Daniel Meyer was sent to study seven years in Budapest at the Rabbinical Seminary, directed by Dr. Sander Scheiber until his death in March. The government paid the tuition.

There are 16 communities in the country. The Council maintains social services — such as the attractive restaurant located in the Council building — for which the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee allocates \$165,000 annually. It also publishes a monthly paper, four bulletins in German with English summaries, and a yearbook with articles on Judaism and occasional literary pieces, such as stories by Agnon and essays by Buber.

Active Synagogues And 'Synagogal Groups'

Two of the active synagogues in the country are located in Prague and one each in five other cities. There are also 10 "synagogal groups" in Bohemia and Moravia, and 11 in Slovakia.

The famous Altneuschul in Prague, established in 1270, is part of the State Jewish Museum complex in the beautiful and well-preserved old Jewish Quarter of Prague. The synagogue is gothic in both architecture and practice — so strictly Orthodox that there is no women's section in the sanctuary.

In 1870, an additional room for women worshippers was added behind the walls of the sanctuary. Women can peek into the sanctuary through a recessed opening in the wall about the size of an average loaf of bread. They are allowed to enter the sanctuary and stand in the corner on Shabbat but not on the High Holy Days.

Unlike the Altneuschul, whose Cantor Feuerlicht was a student at a Satmer yeshiva before the war, the Jerusalem Synagogue is "Neolog" (semi-Conservative). Established in 1906 and located near the Western train station, its congregation is larger than the Altneuschul's, and the men and women sit separately but in the same room.

The services, with Ladislav Blum as cantor, are shorter, and the synagogue has a choir of 10 to 15 pro-

fessional singers (only one of them a Jew) who sing on the High Holy Days. As for alternatives to these two forms of worship, said Meyer, "It is impossible to have Reform Judaism where the Maharal lived." The Maharal, an acronym for Rabbi Judah Loew (d. 1609) — according to the Jewish legend that has become part of the folklore of Prague — created a golem (android) out of clay to protect the community, and later laid it to eternal rest in the locked attic of the Altneuschul. An impressionistic statue of the Maharal stands in front of the new town hall.

A total of about 35 to 40 people attend Shabbat services at the two synagogues combined; this swells to over 700 on Yam Kippur. On Succot, there is a succah at the Jerusalem Synagogue and in the courtyard of the Council, located in the Old Town Hall. There are also Purim and Chanukah celebrations in the Council building, attended by 70 to 100 young people.

Almost No Second Generation

With 75 percent of the 6,000 registered members of the community being between the ages of 65 to 70, and with no second generation to speak of, the community makes much of the four weddings, four circumcisions, and three Bar Mitzvahs that have taken place in the past four years, all at the Altneuschul. Calling attention to the increase of children at the Chanukah celebration from 18 in 1974 to 75 in 1984, Meyer told the JTA, "This is the future."

It is also a source of pride and joy in the community that it has become a "tradition" that the second of the two communal seders — held in Prague with an attendance of about 120 each — is specially for the youth.

There are eight young adults in the community who, Galsky said, "are more religious than our generation" and define being a Jew as being strictly observant. Of these, four to five worship on Shabbat the Altneuschul and three to four at the Jerusalem Synagogue.

Six of the eight are new converts to Judaism, mostly professionals in the 20-35 age group with families. They are "more religious than those born Jewish," Meyer told JTA. In a country where many people do not register with the community out of concern that it will impede their careers, the existence of converts to Judaism points, again, to the fact that many young people are actively searching for religious content and expressions in their lives.

'We Have To Be Pioneers'

Meyer told JTA he went to study in Budapest "to help our community. We have to be pioneers." He hopes to be able to start a Talmud Torah in September, starting with six to seven pupils. He would also like to begin a program of lectures on Jewish history for adults two afternoons a week. Both projects require and await final approval by the Ministry of Culture and cannot proceed without it.

Though young — in his late 20's — and eager to press forward with these plans, Meyer also seems to have the patience and perseverance necessary to pilot them through the bureaucratic shoals. In an interview with the JTA conducted in Hebrew, Meyer described himself as "an optimist but not a prophet."

"It's a small community and a large museum," he said. "Ten years from now, I don't want to see our community be only a museum."

In a community acutely conscious of the Holocaust, a community whose center, Prague, is just an hour-and-

a-halfway from Terezin (Theresienstadt), many Jews feel the need to tell visitors about their experiences in this concentration camp out of anxiety that they not be forgotten.

One such story was told to me by Prof. Irma Louscherova, a short, totally gray-haired woman in her late 70's who was a teacher at Terezin. Only 94 of the 15,000 children imprisoned there survived. The story she told is about those children she loved so well:

"One day in 1943 someone, somehow, brought in a little sapling. The children planted it between blocks of the fortress. They took responsibility for caring for the frail little tree. In the winter, they covered the tree with pieces of straw from their mattresses.

"As children were taken away to Auschwitz, new ones would replace them in caring for their tree.

"The children did not survive. But the tree did. After the war, it was replanted in the Terezin cemetery. It grew and grew. It came up to my shoulder, then grew some more until it towered over my head. Now the tree is so tall, I can walk under it like a canopy."

(Next: A Reporter's Notebook)

RA TO BAN FROM CONSERVATIVE SYNAGOGUES 51 ISRAELI MKS WHO VOTED TO AMEND THE LAW OF RETURN

NEW YORK, May 12 (JTA) — The Rabbinical Assembly, the international organization of Conservative rabbis, has declared 51 members of Israel's Knesset, including Yitzhak Shamir, Ariel Sharon and former Israeli Ambassador to the United States, Moshe Arens, as "not welcome as speakers or honorees in the 850 Conservative synagogues, which they have sought to discredit."

The Conservative rabbinic action was in response to these members of the Knesset, belonging mainly to the Likud and National Religious Parties, who voted in support of changes in the Israel Law of Return which would have discredited the validity of Conservative and Reform conversions.

"The time has come when we must let those Israelis who do not feel a responsibility for the Jewish people know that they are not welcome to lecture American Jews on American Jewish responsibility to Israel" asserted Rabbi Kassel Abelson, vice president of the Rabbinical Assembly (RA).

Abelson explained that until now the 1.5 million members of Conservative synagogues had exercised "patience because of our devotion to Israel and its desire not to undermine fundraising efforts on behalf of Israel." He stressed that in no way should this action be interpreted by anyone not to continue to support "to the utmost of our ability" the United Jewish Appeal, Israel Bonds and other institutions that provide programs and services for Israel and her people.

Abelson pointed out that Conservative conversions are performed strictly according to halacha (Jewish law), sometimes even according to more rigid standards than those demanded by Orthodox Judaism.

In the resolution adopted at the RA's 85th annual convention in Miami Beach in March, the RA called upon its member rabbis to communicate with local officers of the UJA, State of Israel Bonds, Federations, the Jewish National Fund, Zionist groups and others that they consider not utilizing these individual speakers.

Abelson stressed that the RA could continue to conduct private dialogue both here and in Israel to keep open avenues of communication with those members of the Knesset who have voted for a change in the Law of Return and those who voted against it.

ZAIRE PRESIDENT VISITING ISRAEL

By Hugh Orgel

TEL AVIV, May 12 (JTA) — President Mobutu Sese Seko of Zaire arrived in Israel on an official visit today, getting as lavish a reception as the country's strained budget would allow. He was greeted at Ben Gurion Airport by President Chaim Herzog who observed that the entire Israeli people welcomed him because, unlike so much of the "cynical world", he had renewed diplomatic ties with Israel "on grounds of morality."

The African leader is returning the visit Herzog made to Zaire a year ago. He will be here for six days, the first three at the government's invitation and the remainder in a private capacity as the guest of the Anglo-Jewish financier Leon Tamman who has business interests in Israel and Zaire.

Mobutu arrived in a Zaire Air Line plane, escorted by four Israel Air Force jet fighters which met it at the boundaries of Israeli air space. He came with a huge entourage — 110 people — and because there were not enough official limousines to accommodate them all, the government hired a fleet of taxis for the drive to Jerusalem. The official party was greeted at the outskirts of the capital by Mayor Teddy Kollek who offered them the traditional bread and salt.

After the boom of a 21-gun salute at the airport and marches played by a military band, Herzog escorted his visitor to the reception line which included, in addition to Premier Shimon Peres, the President of the Supreme Court, the Speaker of the Knesset, Cabinet Ministers, the Chief of Staff and senior Israel Defense Force officers.

Herzog and Mobutu exchanged warm greetings in French. Both expressed the certainty that this visit would further strengthen the relations between Zaire and Israel in the cause of peace. Herzog noted that the President of Zaire wears the badge of the IDF paratroop corps. He earned it as a trainee in Israel years ago.

5,000 PEOPLE PROTEST SS REUNIONS

BONN, May 12 (JTA) — About 5,000 persons took part in an anti-fascist rally in the Bavarian town of Nesselwang yesterday to protest the reunion of several hundred former members of the Nazi SS taking place there.

Although the rally, organized by trade unions, was confined to the local ski stadium, the demonstrators spilled out into the streets to battle police outside the heavily guarded Krone Hotel where the SS veterans of the "Hitler Jugend" and "Leibstandarte Adolf Hitler" divisions were meeting. The hotel is owned by a former SS man, now a neo-Nazi activist.

Its walls were pelted with stones, eggs, tomatoes and bottles filled with paint. When some of the protestors tried to storm the building, the heavily armed police dispersed them with water cannons and tear gas. Ten youthful demonstrators were injured and 24 were taken into temporary custody.

The SS men told the few reporters admitted to their meeting in Nesselwang that they admired President Reagan and Chancellor Helmut Kohl for their visit last Sunday to the military cemetery at Bitburg.