

SHAMIR TO TRY TO DISSUADE THE U.S. FROM SUPPORTING AN INTERNATIONAL MIDEAST PEACE CONFERENCE WHEN HE VISITS WASHINGTON NEXT WEEK

By David Landau

JERUSALEM, Feb. 11 (JTA) -- Premier Yitzhak Shamir said Wednesday that when he is in Washington next week, he will do everything he can to dissuade the American Administration and Congress from supporting an international conference for Middle East peace.

Shamir's remarks, at a briefing for diplomatic reporters, was seen by observers as his second direct rebuke to Vice Premier and Foreign Minister Shimon Peres in less than 24 hours on this issue which could provoke a serious coalition crisis, on top of the ongoing bitter dispute between Labor and Likud over the national budget. (See separate story.)

Shamir told the Knesset Tuesday night that Peres' advocacy of an international peace conference "does not represent the government" and that the Foreign Minister should have made that clear when he addressed foreign countries on the subject. The Labor Party's Knesset faction promptly blasted Shamir.

He was apparently referring to remarks by Peres in London and Paris last month that Israel would accept an international conference under certain conditions. Peres insisted on his return to Israel that everything he said represented government policy and had the support of the Knesset.

Might Put Peres On The Spot

Political analysts said Wednesday that if Shamir publicly disputes with Peres during his American trip, the Labor Party leader would be hard put to maintain even the facade of unity that holds the coalition government together.

Shamir said at his briefing that the idea of the international conference was "stupid" from the standpoint of Israel's interests. He called it an "Arab-Soviet idea" which, if implemented, would result in Israel's total isolation.

The participants in an international conference would be the parties directly concerned and the five permanent members of the United Nations Security Council which include the Soviet Union and the Peoples Republic of China, neither of which has diplomatic relations with Israel.

Peres made clear that Israel would agree to Soviet participation only if Moscow moved to restore diplomatic relations with Israel and allowed Soviet Jews freedom to emigrate. He also said Israel would agree to Palestinian representatives as part of a Jordanian delegation only if they had no ties to the Palestine Liberation Organization.

Another condition set by Peres was that the international conference could serve only as a framework for direct negotiations between Israel and its Arab adversaries and could not impose a solution to the Middle East conflict.

Differences Between Likud And Labor

Shamir, for his part, is convinced that the Soviet Union, The People's Republic of China, France or another permanent member of the Security Council would demand Israel's return to

its 1967 borders. He has said even the U.S. might go along with such a demand, supporting only minor border changes. In that case, he warned, Israel would be totally isolated.

But the Labor Party's view is that an international conference is the only means to bring Jordan to the negotiating table. King Hussein has made clear on many occasions that he could not safely negotiate with Israel outside such a framework.

BUDGET COMPROMISE DEAL FALLS APART
By David Landau

JERUSALEM, Feb. 11 (JTA) -- A compromise deal between Labor and Likud which set the stage for a vote on the 33 billion Shekel (\$23.8 billion) national budget Wednesday afternoon, broke down at the last minute in a turmoil of bitter recriminations between the two coalition partners. The budget debate was deferred until next week.

The compromise was put together at a late night meeting Tuesday by Labor MK Rafi Edri and Likud Finance Minister Moshe Nissim. The latter agreed that Likud would support the Treasury's loan rescheduling plan to help the debt-ridden United Kibbutz Movement which is affiliated with the Labor Party.

Labor agreed for its part not to filibuster in the Knesset plenum or in the Finance Committee against proposals by Nissim to allocate funds to Jewish settlements in the West Bank and to development towns, which were to be introduced immediately.

An Infuriating Interpretation

Labor Party Ministers and Knesset members caucused Wednesday and announced their endorsement of the deal. But they added an interpretation which infuriated Likud. The Laborites said they were obliged not to seriously delay consideration of funding for the settlements and development towns. However, as MK Haim Ramon, the Labor Party leader in the Finance Committee, explained, that did not mean that Labor was obligated to support funding for the settlements when it came up for a vote. Likud held its own caucus at noon and decided to reject the deal forthwith.

While political observers predicted that the budget dispute would yet be settled by compromise behind-the-scenes, they warned that the dual crisis over economics and foreign policy between the coalition partners could lead to dissolution of the unity government.

They were referring to the open conflict between Premier Yitzhak Shamir and Vice Premier and Foreign Minister Shimon Peres, the leaders of Likud and Labor respectively, over how to revive the peace process. Shamir and other Likud spokesmen have publicly accused Peres of misrepresenting the government on the issue of an international peace conference.

An Army Radio commentator observed Wednesday that "There have been many crises before, but this time the circle around Peres is indicating that they have had enough . . . they are tired of it."

SHAMIR SEEKS PROBE OF ISRAELIS WHO GAVE INTERVIEWS TO JORDAN TELEVISION

By Hugh Orgel

TEL AVIV, Feb. 11 (JTA) -- Premier Yitzhak Shamir said Wednesday that he would order an investigation into interviews given this week by four Israelis to Jordan Television. Two are Knesset members, Abba Eban and Yossi Sarid.

Shamir told a meeting of Cabinet Ministers that the investigation would find out whether Jordan Television has a representative in Israel and if Israelis who appear on Jordan Television are contravening the law.

Eban, a former Labor Foreign Minister and currently chairman of the Knesset's Foreign Affairs and Security Committee, has been accused by rightwing and nationalist activists of "consorting with the enemy." He was interviewed Monday for the Hebrew-language news service of Amman Television by an Arab journalist from Haifa. The interview will be broadcast next week.

It was conducted at the King David Hotel in Jerusalem because the journalist was not allowed in the Knesset building. Eban told Israel Radio Wednesday that he thought it was important for Jordanian viewers to learn of Israel's official viewpoint on current issues as well as those of the opposition. Sarid, of the Citizens Rights Movement (CRM), is an opposition MK.

Eban Rejects Accusation

Eban flatly rejected Gush Emunim lawyer Elyakim Haetzni's accusation that he violated the ban on contacts with the enemy. Haetzni and others have demanded the arrest of Ziad Darwish, a free lance Arab journalist from Acre who has been conducting the interviews with prominent Israelis.

Darwish employs the camera crews of an international news service for his reports from Israel. They are sent to Jordan via Cyprus after passing through Israeli military censorship.

Amman Television's Hebrew service program is widely viewed in Israel. Eban offered to be interviewed in Arabic, which he speaks fluently, to get his message across to the Jordanians. But the interviewer preferred Hebrew.

Eban responded to questions about an international conference for Middle East peace. He said Israel did not perceive such a conference as an end in itself but was prepared to go along if that was the only framework for peace negotiations acceptable to the Arabs.

JEWISH AND HUMAN RIGHTS GROUPS TO PROTEST AMERICAN BAR ASSOCIATION'S TIES TO ASSOCIATION OF SOVIET LAWYERS

By Margie Olster

NEW YORK, Feb. 11 (JTA) -- Human rights and Jewish groups plan to converge on the American Bar Association's mid-year meeting this weekend in New Orleans to protest the ABA's ties to the Association of Soviet Lawyers (ASL) which protesters called an anti-Semitic arm of the KGB.

The Task Force on ABA-Soviet Relations, Inc., a Phoenix-based group formed specifically to oppose the ties, has fought to dissolve a 1985 Declaration of Cooperation between the ASL and the ABA. The Task Force, some of whose members are attorneys, branded the ASL a puppet of the KGB whose attorneys were handpicked by the Soviet authorities.

Members of the Jewish community of Baton Rouge, LA, Ukrainian American groups and the Task Force members are among those expected to be represented at the demonstrations in New Orleans.

The Task Force will sponsor a forum on ABA-Soviet Relations simultaneous with the ABA convention and in the same hotel, the New Orleans Marriott.

The Union of Councils for Soviet Jews, the Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rith, Natan Sharansky and other Soviet Jewry activists have all opposed the ABA-ASL pact and have called on the ABA to abrogate the agreement.

Statement By Jewish Federation

The Jewish Federation of Greater Baton Rouge issued a statement saying "The Association of Soviet Lawyers (ASL) is one of the more virulent arms of the Soviet regime and an instrument of repression of Soviet Jews and other activists. The American Bar Association's agreement with the ASL gives that organization a legitimacy it does not deserve and does nothing to promote the welfare of Soviet Jews or true U.S. Soviet understanding."

Richard Collins, ABA spokesperson, said the ABA debated the agreement extensively at an August meeting with critics in New York. In that meeting, Collins said, ABA members overwhelmingly supported continuing the agreement to keep a dialogue open. The members agreed there was a greater risk in not talking than in talking, Collins said.

Morris Abram, chairman of the Conference of Presidents of Major American Jewish Organizations, who is an attorney, addressed the debate in New York saying he favored continuation of a revised form of the agreement on condition that human rights be high on the agenda of all contacts and that the agreement should only be maintained if there was some progress on human rights, Collins said.

With the exception of a few organizations, the "principle Jewish groups did not oppose the continuation of the declaration," Collins said.

The Task Force claimed that in a meeting with the President of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR, Andrei Gromyko, in Moscow, former ABA president William Falsgraf and president-elect Eugene Thomas presented the issue of Jewish emigration as a "minority concern of Jewish groups" in the U.S. and of "Jewish members of the American Bar Association." A Task Force letter to the press said this was revealed in an ABA internal memo on the meeting.

Falsgraf has denied this report numerous times. Although there is no formal transcript of the meeting, Collins said the situation was never characterized in those words.

Task Force's Claim

The Task Force also claimed that ABA has failed to fulfill a commitment to put human rights high on the agenda of all contacts with the ASL.

But this, too, was denied by the ABA. Collins said human rights enters into the exchanges on many topics, including the right to earlier counsel and the laws on anti-State activities or "what Americans call freedom of speech," Collins said.

Collins also noted that the changes recently instituted in the Soviet Union seem to address those charged with anti-State crimes and the right to earlier counsel.

Also in the August debate, the Task Force letter said the ABA leadership acknowledged that the ASL is "similar to or maybe worse than the Goebbels Propaganda Ministry" of Hitler's Third Reich. Collins said a former member of the ABA Board of Governors, Federal Judge Frank Kaufmann, who was not considered a member of ABA leadership, did indeed make that comment. Collins added that Kaufmann favored continuation of the agreement.

A spokeswoman for the Task Force, Patience Huntwork, said the Soviets pressured the ABA into signing the agreement to use as propaganda.

PHIL DONAHUE AND SOVIET REFUSENIKS By David Friedman

WASHINGTON, Feb. 11 (JTA) -- The 30-minute segment on Soviet Jewry shown Wednesday on Phil Donahue's syndicated television show demonstrated why it is difficult to carry out in the Soviet Union his normal format in which a controversial issue is debated by the audience.

Jewish refuseniks, with whom he met in a Moscow apartment, rejected an opportunity to explain their plight to the large audience of Americans that watch the "Phil Donahue Show," apparently because they did not trust Donahue since his week-long broadcasts from the USSR were in cooperation with Soviet television.

Other Jews, who, as Donahue pointed out, were selected by the Soviet government to appear on the program, refused to answer his questions about refuseniks and instead denounced conditions in the United States.

Donahue pointed out that he had gotten an agreement from the Soviets to have 50 official Jews and 50 refuseniks debate the issue of Jewish life in the Soviet Union. But the day after Donahue got the agreement of the refuseniks to this, the Soviets cut the number to 25 on each side. The refuseniks then declined to appear.

Donahue then met with the refuseniks in an apartment of one of them, stressing that he was using his own camera crew, rather than the Soviet television crew he used for all his other segments during the week he spent in the USSR at the end of January.

Fears And Anxieties

One refusenik said they had rejected the cut in the number of refuseniks because the "group should be representative." He said it had to include 11 wives of prisoners, five former prisoners, 12 Jews from cities throughout the Soviet Union, and longtime refuseniks.

One woman said she feared the Soviets would use the film against them on Soviet TV. She said the Jews "desire to live in Israel," but when Donahue asked her how long she had been waiting to emigrate, she refused to say. The group had agreed not to answer any personal questions.

Donahue said they were being preoccupied with the Soviet breaking of the agreement "at the expense of sharing important information about your situation with the American people."

He noted that some wives of prisoners had wanted to speak but went along with the decision of the group not to be interviewed.

Donahue stressed that before going to the USSR he had contacted them through the National Conference on Soviet Jewry (NCSJ).

"With whom are you cavorting?" one of the refuseniks asked. Donahue said he did not understand this at the time, but later realized that this was a reference to his "partnership" with the Soviets during his week in the USSR. "It is clear for some of these refuseniks I cannot be trusted," he said.

Met With 25 'Contented Jews'

In his segment in the television study, Donahue met with 25 Jews who he called "contented Jews," who are "the Jews the Russians want the West to see." They were apparently members of the official Anti-Zionist Committee.

When Donahue noted that the NCSJ reports that 380,000 Jews want to emigrate, one of these Jews called the figure "absolute fantasy."

Another said he had no objection to those who wanted to leave to emigrate, but said "I don't feel there is any kind of problem" for Jews. Another declared that emigration is "not the major problem" for Soviet Jews.

When a writer suggested that Donahue ask about the life of the Jews present, the television host replied "I don't tell you how to write your books so you won't tell me what questions to ask."

Samuil Zivs, deputy director of the Anti-Zionist Committee of the Soviet Republic the only Jew to be identified, claimed that 500 Jews had been given permission to leave in January. Less than 1,000 emigrated in all of 1986.

Arguments Turned Against the U.S.

Donahue was challenged by a Jewish military officer, who asked why he was not concerned about the Palestinians. "We are all internationalist; we all must be equal, the Americans, the Jew, the Palestinians."

Another said that instead of worrying about Soviet Jews "why are you not concerned about the fate of the poor Blacks" in the U.S. He charged that many of the Soviet Jews living in New York's Brighton Beach section "are suffering, they are hungry."

When another suggested that only 20 percent of the Jewish emigrants have gone to Israel with most living in New York and Canada, Donahue replied "why do you care?"

He said he was willing to concede that the Jews in the audience were "happy," free to pursue their careers and free of prejudice, but asked why they were angry when he raised the real plight of the Jews who wanted to leave and were being persecuted for that.

While Wednesday's broadcast may have revealed to some the Soviet Union's desire to hide the real situation of Soviet Jewry, whatever opportunity there was to demonstrate the real situation for thousands of Jews was lost. Perhaps there was never a chance since it is impossible to bring the give-and-take of the Donahue show to a totalitarian society.

BRUSSELS (JTA) -- President Kurt Waldheim of Austria probably will not be on hand to inaugurate the Austrian cultural exhibition, "Europalia Austria," when it opens here next September. He "discreetly and unofficially" sought an invitation from the organizers last year, but has since been "discreetly" informed that the Belgian authorities would not welcome his presence, the Flemish daily De Morgen reported this week.

U.S. URGES USSR TO RELEASE BEGUN

By David Friedman

WASHINGTON, Feb. 11 (JTA) -- The Reagan Administration urged the Soviet Union Tuesday to release longtime Jewish refusenik Iosif Begun from prison without him having to sign a statement agreeing not to continue teaching Hebrew.

"We are disturbed at the news that imprisoned Hebrew teacher Iosif Begun is not being released because he has refused to sign such a statement," State Department spokesman Charles Redman said.

"We call upon the Soviet government to release Iosif Begun and all other Prisoners of Conscience" and allow them "to resume the legitimate activities for which they were unjustly prosecuted," Redman added.

His statement was made as he expressed the Administration's "welcome" of the announcement that the Soviet government is releasing 140 political prisoners. But he noted that this was only 20 percent of the 750 political prisoners being held in the USSR.

Repeating a statement he made on Monday, Redman declared, "We hope that the Soviet government will now move to free all remaining political prisoners without requiring them to sign statements recanting their previous activities or agreeing to limit their future activities on behalf of human rights."

Begun, who has been seeking to emigrate to Israel since 1971, is in the Chistopol prison since being sentenced in 1983 to seven years in a labor camp and five years internal exile for "anti-Soviet agitation and propaganda" for teaching Hebrew.

In a telephone conversation from Moscow to the National Conference on Soviet Jewry which was meeting on Capitol Hill last Thursday, Begun's wife, Inna said she did not believe her husband would be released because he would never sign the statement.

"I am very afraid for my husband's life," she said, since she believed he was continuing a hunger strike started three months ago. Inna Begun and Iosif Begun's son, Boris, joined by other refuseniks, have begun picketing in Moscow on Begun's behalf.

Inna Meiman's Death Mourned

Meanwhile, Redman expressed the State Department's regret at the death of Inna Meiman, 54, who died Monday at Georgetown University Hospital where she had been treated for cancer since coming here from Moscow last month. She was the wife of Naum Meiman, a founding member of the Helsinki Watch Committee in Moscow who had been refused permission to accompany his wife to Washington.

"Her passing is mourned by many Department employees who came to know her through her valiant struggle against the ultimately incurable illness that gripped her body and through her equally courageous effort on behalf of human rights in the USSR," Redman said.

He called on the USSR to allow her husband to attend her funeral and "to rejoin his only daughter (Olga Plum) who has long lived in the United States (in Boulder, Colo.) and is an American citizen." Redman also urged that Meiman's son and his family also be allowed to come to the U.S.

ISRAEL NAMES ARAB LAWYER AS ITS NEW CONSUL GENERAL IN ATLANTA
By Yitzhak Rabi

NEW YORK, Feb. 11 (JTA) -- In an unprecedented move, the government of Israel decided to appoint a Moslem Arab lawyer from the village of Kafr Kara near Haifa, as Israel's new Consul General in Atlanta.

The decision to appoint Muhammad Masarwa as Israel's first Arab diplomat was confirmed Wednesday in Jerusalem by Ehud Gol, the spokesman for the Foreign Ministry, and in New York by Baruch Bina, a spokesman for the Israel Consulate.

Bina told the Jewish Telegraphic Agency that the 46-year-old Masarwa is expected to assume his new post this summer after being confirmed by the Israel Cabinet. He said that the young Arab lawyer, who was at one time the mayor of his village, will replace the present Israel Consul General in Atlanta, Yissaschar Katzir. Deputy Consul General Arthur Kol will continue his service under Masarwa, Bina said.

The new appointment was made by Foreign Minister Shimon Peres at the behest of Masarwa's mentor, Minister-Without-Portfolio Ezer Weizman.

Peres and his advisors have been seeking for some time a qualified Arab Israeli, to join the Israeli foreign service, as part of Israel's efforts to accord the Arab minority more rights and privileges and to improve Israel's image abroad in regard to the treatment of its Arab citizens. There are about 750,000 Arabs living in Israel today.

INDIA WON'T LET ISRAELIS PARTICIPATE IN WORLD TABLE TENNIS TOURNAMENT
By Hugh Orgel

TEL AVIV, Feb. 11 (JTA) -- After weeks of conflicting messages, the Indian government advised Israel Tuesday that it would not grant visas to Israeli players to participate in the world table tennis championship tournament in New Delhi next week.

The message was conveyed by the Table Tennis Federation of India (TIFI) to the Israel Table Tennis Association. For the past several weeks, TIFI has been informing Israel that its team would be allowed to participate and then that it would not be. India refused to allow the Israelis to come to the Ninth Asian Games in New Delhi in 1982 or to compete in the world table tennis championships in Calcutta in 1975.

Now, as in the past, the Indians were acting under Arab pressure. Teams representing six Arab countries and the Palestine Liberation Organization said last month they would boycott the games if an Israeli team was admitted. They were backed at a meeting of 17 Arab Ambassadors and Consular officials at the Arab League office in New Delhi.

TEL AVIV (JTA) -- A Gush Emunim leader has been censured for insulting members of the United Kibbutz Movement in the course of a debate over budgetary allocations. The reprimand to Gush Secretary Daniella Wiess came from Amana, the Gush Emunim settlement department.