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SHAMIR, PERES EXPRESS SUPPORT FOR NEW U.S. PEACE INITIATIVE

By David Landau

JERUSALEM, Feb. 1 (JTA) -- Leaders of Israel's two major political parties expressed enthusiasm Monday for a new American peace proposal that would speedily come to grips with the unrest in the administered territories.

Details of the plan were disclosed by Foreign Minister Shimon Peres of the Labor Party, who said he was pleased by the "tight scheduling and burning belief" in the initiative demonstrated by the American policymakers.

Premier Yitzhak Shamir, leader of the Likud bloc, expressed more cautious support for the American plan, which envisages some form of autonomy -- referred to as "interim arrangements" -- for the territories "within a few weeks."

According to Shamir, the plan is the best way to "protect" Israel's presence in the West Bank and Gaza Strip and to ensure the future of Jewish settlements there.

But all indications are that Shamir will have a tough time selling the plan to militant settlers, already at a high pitch of anger over events in the territories and the latest terrorist act -- a firebombing Sunday night that severely burned a settler from Beit-El, Dov Kalmanovich.

Shamir's task will not be made easier by the fiercely negative reaction the plan already has received from two Likud hardliners, Commerce and Industry Minister Ariel Sharon and Housing Minister David Levy, both potential rivals of Shamir for leadership of the bloc's Herut wing.

Nor have key Arab players shown much support for the U.S. effort. Several elements already have been flatly rejected by Jordan and the Palestine Liberation Organization.

Shorter Interim Period

The American initiative, as described by Peres, seems to be an amalgam of past proposals, but with a new timetable. The plan envisages a shortened interim period -- four years of autonomy instead of five set by the 1978 Camp David formula -- and an earlier start to negotiations to determine the final status of the territories.

Camp David provided that the negotiations begin no later than the third year after the autonomy program is in place. The Americans are now speaking of "two to three months."

There are signs the American plan was cobbled together to accommodate the differing points of view within Israel and the Arab camp.

Coming as it does after a long period of dormancy in Washington with respect to the Arab-Israeli conflict, it appears to reflect a sudden alarm in the United States over the continued deterioration of the situation in the administered territories.

According to Peres, the interim autonomy arrangements in the territories would be put in place "within a few weeks," to be followed by convening of an "international conference or opening within two or three months." Negotiations would follow to work out a permanent arrangement for the administered territories.

Peres has long been advocating an interna-

tional conference as a lead-in for direct negotiations between Israel and a Jordanian-Palestinian delegation, with the possible participation of other Arab countries.

This has been fiercely opposed by Shamir, who insists on the Camp David formula of negotiations for Palestinian autonomy between Israel and Egypt, with Jordan entering the talks at some later stage.

Call For Syrian Role

In Paris, Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak reiterated his opposition Monday to a peace conference limited to Israel, Egypt and Jordan. "It is very important that Syria would participate in such a conference," he said.

Peres said in an army radio interview Monday that he is "not doctrinaire" about an international conference. "I want to see progress toward peace," he said. The foreign minister said he welcomes the Americans diplomatic agenda, even if it involves a compressed timetable.

Peres said the United States would "enunciate its own position," both on the interim arrangements and a permanent settlement. He predicted the position on a permanent settlement would be along the lines of "the Reagan plan-plus or minus."

The Reagan plan, the first and so far only diplomatic initiative by President Reagan on the Arab-Israeli conflict, was announced on Sept. 1, 1982. It calls for the West Bank and Gaza Strip to be run by the Palestinians but linked with Jordan. It is predicated on Israel's withdrawal from the territories, but rules out the establishment of a Palestinian state there.

The Reagan initiative was rejected by Israel at the time and was rarely referred to again by the administration.

The latest version got an immediate cold shoulder from Jordan. This was particularly embarrassing to Washington, because veteran Middle East troubleshooter Philip Habib had been called out of retirement to go to Amman to sell the plan.

He met over the weekend with King Hussein and Jordanian Prime Minister Zaid Al-Rifai, apparently with little success. Hussein promptly took off for a tour of Western European capitals to continue lobbying for an international peace conference, which he says is the only forum for Arab-Israeli negotiations.

In Washington, White House spokesman Marlin Fitzwater said Habib also met Sunday in Paris with Egyptian Foreign Minister Esmat Abdel Meguid and aides to Mubarak. The American envoy was scheduled to return to Washington on Monday to brief Shultz on the meeting.

Shamir Lobbies Settlers

Shamir did some lobbying of his own Monday for the new peace initiative. At an emotional meeting with settlement leaders from the West Bank, he extolled the autonomy provisions of the American plan. He said Israel was engaged in a historic struggle to retain its presence and control in the administered territories and that the autonomy scheme was the way to achieve this.

But Shevach Stern, a spokesman for the settlement leaders, said he and his colleagues

were less than convinced. He said they were not pleased by Shamir's vaguely supportive reply when the settlers urged the immediate establishment of new settlements.

The premier "said the timing was wrong," Stern told reporters as the settlers left the Prime Minister's Office. They had gone there to discuss improving security for the settlers.

Sharon, who many believe hopes to replace Shamir as leader of Likud's Herut wing and as prime minister, toured Jewish settlements in the Gaza Strip on Monday. He stressed the dangers of deviating from the original autonomy proposals formulated by Israel after the Camp David accords.

The Israel Defense Force and other security forces must be able to continue their operations untrammelled throughout the territories during the interim autonomy period and beyond, Sharon said.

"There must be no Jordanian police, no Jordanian soldiers, no Jordanian officials. The Reagan plan is not the same as our autonomy plan," Sharon declared.

He urged a "massive and speedy" drive to expand existing settlements and put up new ones "in place where we planned for settlement but have not yet actually settled." Sharon made similar remarks Sunday night at a Herut party meeting in Rishon le-Zion.

At Sunday's Cabinet meeting, Sharon and Levy stressed the dangers, in their view, of any deviation whatsoever from the Camp David accords.

U.S. VETOES LATEST U.N. RESOLUTION ON TERRITORIES By Yitzhak Rabi

UNITED NATIONS, Feb. 1 (JTA) -- The United States vetoed a Security Council resolution Monday night calling on Israel to abide by the Fourth Geneva Convention of August 1949, which relates to the protection of civilian persons in time of war.

The United States was the only country to vote against the resolution. The other 14 members of the council all voted in favor.

The resolution, sponsored by the Security Council's non-aligned members, would have specifically required Israel "to accept the de jure applicability of the convention to the Palestinians and other Arab territories occupied by Israel since 1967, including Jerusalem, and fully comply with its obligations under that convention."

The council has been meeting since last week to consider Secretary General Javier Perez de Cuellar's report on the situation in the West Bank and Gaza Strip. The report is based on the findings of Undersecretary General Marrack Goulding, who went on a fact-finding mission to the territories and Israel last month.

The United States had indicated from the beginning of the debate that it would veto any resolution that went beyond endorsing the secretary general's report.

The resolution also would have called on the secretary general to continue to monitor the situation in the territories and to make regular and timely reports to the council.

In another development, two prominent Palestinians, Hanna Seniora, editor of the East Jerusalem Arabic daily Al Fajr, and Fayez Abu Rahme, a Gaza lawyer, met with the secretary general Monday to discuss the situation of the Palestinians in the territories.

EGYPTIAN CHIEF, FOREIGN MINISTER SEEK PERMANENT PEACE, ABRAM SAYS By Susan Birnbaum

NEW YORK, Feb. 1 (JTA) -- The visiting Egyptian president and foreign minister apparently made a good impression last week on a delegation of the Conference of Presidents of Major American Jewish Organizations.

Conference chairman Morris Abram said on Monday that the Jewish leaders found in meetings that the Egyptian officials were sincerely interested in peace in the Middle East and in maintaining Egypt's relationship with Israel.

The delegation -- including Thomas Dine, executive director of the American Israel Public Affairs Committee; Seymour Reich, president of B'nai B'rith International; and Malcolm Hoenlein, executive director of the conference, which coordinates Arab-Israeli positions of 40 Jewish organizations -- met privately with Egyptian Foreign Minister Esmat Abdel Meguid on Friday at the Willard Hotel in Washington.

Abram said he "had the feeling from Meguid's mode, manner and mien that he was desirous of peace -- the establishment of a permanent peace between all of the parties."

The chairman, who met briefly with Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak during a state luncheon given in his honor by Secretary of State George Shultz, said "that Mubarak and Meguid are men who want peace."

At the Meguid meeting, which Abram described as "helpful," the American Jewish leader said he stressed "the importance that Egypt keep its covenant with Israel."

The two nations signed a peace treaty in 1979, the only one between Israel and an Arab state.

'Extend The Peace'

In return, said Abram, "I got from Meguid the fact that Egypt was very much hopeful to extend the peace" and that it wanted Jordan's King Hussein to be included in the peace process.

Abram described the meeting as "a cordial relationship between quite civilized people. It may be that we have vast gulfs and differences between us, but on a human level I have great respect for his intelligence."

The conference chairman said he pointed out to Meguid "the need for total normalization of relations between Israel and Egypt, that Egypt was a cornerstone in the peace process."

Meguid, said Abram, spoke of the unrest in the Israeli-administered territories as a problem. The foreign minister raised what he called "an unfortunate incident" on the Temple Mount in Jerusalem some three weeks ago, in which Israeli soldiers used tear gas to control a crowd of Moslem demonstrators.

Meguid offered no challenge, Abram said, to his assertion that the Camp David accords are "a building block for peace, the original cornerstone in the peace process."

During a public television interview last week, Mubarak more than once rejected the use of the term "Camp David accords" as a "psychological problem" for the other Arab states.

Abram said Meguid invited him to visit Egypt, which he is very seriously considering "next time I am in the Middle East."

Abram will travel to the Middle East later this month for the conference's annual meeting in Jerusalem.

SITUATION WORSENS IN WEST BANK WITH KILLING OF TWO MORE ARABS

By Gil Sedan

JERUSALEM, Feb. 1 (JTA) -- The situation in the West Bank deteriorated rapidly Monday as Israel Defense Force units fought pitched battles with Arab rioters and curfews were clamped on Nablus and on eight Palestinian refugee camps in the territory.

Two Arabs were shot to death and three were wounded in a clash at Anabta, where the IDF encountered roadblocks on the Jenin-Nablus road. Three IDF soldiers were injured in several rock-throwing incidents.

Army vehicles and Egged buses were pelted with rocks in the Jerusalem's Old City and on Saladin Street, the main thoroughfare of East Jerusalem. The strike by merchants and shopkeepers there entered its fourth week.

Nablus, the largest Arab city in the West Bank, with a population of 100,000, was under total curfew Monday, after IDF troops, using bulldozers to break through barriers of rubble, battled Palestinian youths, armed with rocks and bottles, for the third consecutive night in the narrow streets and winding alleys of the Nablus casbah.

Defense Minister Yitzhak Rabin conceded Monday that conditions in the West Bank have worsened. He told reporters after appearing at a meeting of the Knesset's Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee, that security forces are determined to restore order to the area, however long it takes.

Fury Over Firebombing

But Rabin acknowledged a new, dangerous element -- the seething fury of Jewish settlers in the territory over a firebombing Sunday night that hospitalized a settler, Dov Kalmanovich from Beit-El, with severe burns all over his body.

Rabin met with the mayors of Jewish settlements later Monday. They told him if Jewish residents of the territory continue to be targets of attack, it would be impossible to control settlers bent on vengeance.

The defense minister responded with a warning that he would not tolerate anyone who took the law into his own hands.

Kalmanovich was burned when his car was hit by a gasoline bomb on a road near Ramallah, north of Jerusalem. The vehicle was gutted.

Gasoline bombs were thrown in the Arab town of Kalkilya and at Egged buses in East Jerusalem, but caused no injuries.

Helicopter Surveillance

Defiance of curfews has posed another problem for Israeli security forces. They are using helicopter surveillance of areas under curfew to spot curfew violators.

These include the El-Amari refugee camp near Ramallah; the Dahaishe camp near Bethlehem; the Askar, Ein Beit, Ilma and Balata camps in the Nablus area; and the Jalazoon camp near Ramallah.

On Sunday, police forcibly broke up a protest march by Christian Arabs in Jerusalem after church services. It was the first time Christian Arabs as a group have engaged in demonstrations.

Six people were arrested as tear gas wafted through the streets of the Christian Quarter of the Old City. Tourists visiting East Jerusalem swiftly returned to the western part of the city.

PERES ANGRILY DENIES BEING OFFERED BRIBE ON PIPELINE

By David Landau

JERUSALEM, Feb. 1 (JTA) -- Foreign Minister Shimon Peres, choking with rage, fiercely denied Monday that any attempt had been made to offer him a bribe in connection with a proposed Iraqi oil pipeline to the Jordanian port of Aqaba.

"Israel agreed not to harm the pipeline. Both parties in the unity government agreed -- so there was no need to bribe anyone," Peres told an army radio interviewer.

He accused Israeli reporters of "inaccuracy," noting that allegations from the United States do not claim a bribe was offered or even discussed with him to ensure that Israel would not sabotage the pipeline when it was projected in 1985.

A special prosecutor in Washington, James McKay, is investigating allegations that U.S. Attorney General Edwin Meese was closely involved in the pipeline in which his close friend E. Robert Wallach had a financial interest.

According to the allegations, Meese had knowledge of plans to offer a bribe to Israel's Labor Party, headed by Peres, who was then premier, to ensure that Israel would not interfere in the \$1.1 billion oil conduit, which would have passed close to its territory.

The matter supposedly was discussed with Bruce Rappaport, described as a Swiss businessman and longtime friend of Peres. Rappaport was enlisted by the San Francisco-based Bechtel Corp., reputed contractor for the pipeline, ostensibly to act as a go-between with the Israelis.

"What have I got to be questioned about?" Peres asked, coughing with rage, when pressed about reports from Washington that certain foreign parties might be questioned in the investigation of Meese's alleged role. If Meese was aware that bribes were to be offered, his duty would have been to initiate proceedings under U.S. laws that forbid bribing foreign officials.

Peres said Israel's decision not to interfere with the proposed pipeline did not signify a switch of support from Iran to Iraq in the Persian Gulf war. He denied, however, that Israel supported Iran. He said the Israel government believed the pipeline could have been a "factor contributing to strategic calm and stability." In any event, it was never built.

WHITE HOUSE MAY BE CONSIDERING NEW, SMALLER ARMS SALE TO JORDAN

By Howard Rosenberg

WASHINGTON, Feb. 1 (JTA) -- The Reagan administration is considering a possible \$14-million sale of Sidewinder missiles to Jordan, a well-placed Capitol Hill source said Friday.

A Pentagon spokesman declined to comment on the prospect, except to confirm that Congress has not been notified officially of such plans.

The missiles, which the source termed the "most-advanced" air-to-air missiles to date that the United States has made available for foreign governments to buy, would be deployed from eight Tornado fighter bombers that Jordan is in the process of buying from Great Britain.

A congressional source confirmed that the Reagan administration has begun consulting Congress on the issue. The source expressed concern that the sale could reduce the qualitative superiority of Israel's air force over Arab states.

INTERIOR MINISTRY TO REGISTER 3 NON-ORTHODOX CONVERTS AS JEWS

By Gil Sedan

JERUSALEM, Feb. 1 (JTA) -- The Interior Ministry changed its mind Sunday and agreed during a Supreme Court session to register three non-Orthodox converts to Judaism as Jews within 14 days.

As a result, the high court cancelled the appeals of Gail Moscovitch, an American, and Claudia and Julia Varella, both of Brazil, who had contested the ministry's refusal to register them.

At the same time, the Reform movement in Israel announced its intention to submit for registration the names of 20 more non-Orthodox converts.

The turn-about occurred after Attorney General Yosef Harish, who was to have defended the Interior Ministry before the high court, stated Friday that he could see no reason to object to the registration of non-Orthodox converts.

He pointed out that the precedent was established when the ministry was forced by court order to register an American non-Orthodox convert, Shoshana Miller, in 1986.

The Interior Ministry initially expressed "grave doubts" about registering people who have undergone non-Orthodox conversions. But at the Sunday court session, the director of the ministry's population registry, Yehoshua Kahana, said he would comply in view of the attorney general's opinion.

The legal battle is not over, however. The Supreme Court, acting on an appeal by the ultra-Orthodox Shas Party, gave the Interior Ministry 60 days to show cause why it would not refuse to register non-Orthodox converts as Jewish.

Justice Menahem Elon explained that in his view the court should not have allowed the registration of the three appellants "before we have heard the arguments of the Shas movement."

OUTLOOK FOR SOVIET JEWS WORSENS, AS EMIGRATION DIPS

By Susan Birnbaum

NEW YORK, Feb. 1 (JTA) -- Soviet Jewish emigration in January dropped almost 20 percent from the December figures, and Soviet Jewry officials are worried that the decline and other indicators augur more difficult times for refuseniks.

According to the National Conference on Soviet Jewry, 722 Jews left the Soviet Union in January, compared to 899 Jews who emigrated in December. The January figures indicate the third consecutive monthly drop in emigration since November.

"It is obvious that there has been a post-summit tightening of emigration restrictions," the NCSJ said in a statement on the decline. "We are especially concerned that those lacking first-degree relatives in Israel are now increasingly being refused permission to emigrate. We reiterate our demand that the Soviet Union amend its emigration policy if it is to be counted among the civilized nations of the world."

Last week, the NCSJ released a letter to its chairman, Morris Abram, from President Reagan, in which the president pledged to "continue to press the human rights question," acknowledging that "there has not yet been a meeting of minds on the crucial issue of human rights."

Jerry Strober, NCSJ spokesman, said, "We

have been witnessing since January, in some specific instances, that Soviet OVIR emigration authorities in Moscow and Leningrad have been applying the first-degree relative clause, which, if it continues, indicates that Jewish emigration will be effectively shut down. We have indications that the Soviets are going to apply the rules."

Several prominent, long-term Moscow refuseniks have written to government leaders in the West to express their concern that human rights "may have been bargained away for the major issues of disarmament and East-West trade" in the wake of the Reagan-Mikhail Gorbachev summit meeting in early December.

Yuli Kosharovsky, now the longest-waiting refusenik in the Soviet Union, wrote that, based on reports from refusenik-activists in several Soviet cities, "authorities have deliberately decided to turn the screw" in insisting on adherence to the first-degree relative clause.

Moreover, some prominent refuseniks who had been told they would be receiving visas, or at least reconsideration of their cases, find their hopes have been dashed.

'Catch 22' For Abramovich

The family of prominent refusenik Pavel Abramovich, waiting to emigrate for 16 years, now claims to find itself in a "Catch 22" situation. On the eve of the summit conference, while Abramovich's son, Felix, spoke on Capitol Hill and addressed the Freedom Sunday rally, Soviet emigration authorities told Pavel and Marta Abramovich that they would be permitted to join their son in Israel.

However, in early January, when Pavel Abramovich went to OVIR to confirm the exit visas for the couple and his mother, he was told that no visas had been granted then because his mother's documents were "missing." Pavel Abramovich claims his mother's papers have been regularly submitted along with those of the rest of the family.

Pavel Abramovich's brother, Grigory, a six-year refusenik, was told that his invitation from Israel was no longer valid and he would have to reapply with an invitation from his brother, who is not yet in Israel to issue one. Pavel Abramovich has reportedly held two protest demonstrations since then.

In addition, Vladimir (Ze'ev) Dashevsky, a religious activist refusenik who also was told to reapply while his daughter was speaking in Washington during the time of the summit, has been again refused permission to emigrate, because his wife's parents have refused to sign the waiver of obligation.

WINDBLOWN ROOF HURTS SIX CHILDREN

By Hugh Orgel

TEL AVIV, Feb. 1 (JTA) -- Six children in Rishon le-Zion were injured Monday, four of them seriously, by a piece of fiberglass roof that blew off a sixth-floor penthouse on a nearby building and landed on them.

The children were playing football in their schoolyard during recess. The fiberglass was part of an open roof erected without license several years ago.

The entire country was battered throughout the morning by fierce windstorms, reaching 60 m.p.h. in some places. The storm had been forecast by the meteorological services following weeks of mild weather.