



PLO REFUSES TO CLOSE MISSION; U.S. SEEKING COURT INJUNCTION

By Andrew Silow Carroll

NEW YORK, March 21 (JTA) -- The Palestine Liberation Organization refused to comply with a United States order to close its United Nations observer mission in New York on Monday.

Anticipating the PLO's decision to ignore the March 21 deadline, Justice Department officials began filing a federal suit to force the closure. Notification of the suit was expected to be mailed to the mission by the U.S. attorney in New York on Tuesday.

Meanwhile, the U.N. General Assembly continued to debate in special session a resolution to condemn the United States for ordering the closure of the mission. A vote on the proposal was not expected until Wednesday, according to officials at the U.S. and Israeli missions to the United Nations.

According to a Justice Department spokesperson in Washington, the department had "no reason to believe" the PLO would respond to Attorney General Edwin Meese's March 11 letter ordering the mission closed. The letter was aimed at enforcing the Anti-Terrorism Act of 1987, which Congress passed in December.

Upon receiving notification of the suit seeking an injunction to close the mission, the PLO will have 20 days to respond. A mechanism exists for the Justice Department to seek an expedited hearing on the case, although the spokesperson was not aware that such a step had been requested.

A spokesperson at the U.S. mission to the United Nations said that the United States could resort to making the PLO office "unserviceable" by withholding water or electricity, although such a suggestion was still hypothetical.

The General Assembly's special session marks the second time this month the body has met to discuss the closing of the PLO mission. Member nations voted 143-1 on March 2 to adopt a resolution calling on the United States to allow the mission to remain open. Israel cast the only negative vote and the United States did not vote.

Neither U.S. nor Israeli delegates are participating in the current General Assembly debate.

LEADERS CHALLENGE SHAMIR DURING FEDERATION SATELLITE BROADCAST

By Andrew Silow Carroll

NEW YORK, March 21 (JTA) -- North American Jewish leaders politely challenged Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir on Monday to clarify his position on the peace process, to outline his future plans and to explain how differences within Israel's divided unity government would be resolved.

The Jewish leaders pressed the Israeli premier repeatedly on these subjects during a closed telecast of the Jewish Satellite Network operated by the Council of Jewish Federations.

Appearing on a call-in program broadcast from New York to 27 Jewish federations in the United States and Canada, Shamir reiterated his reasons for rejecting U.S. Secretary of Shultz's proposal for an international Mideast peace con-

ference in favor of his own call for direct negotiations between Israel and Arab belligerents.

He also repeated his criticism of American Jewish leaders who have spoken out against his government's policies, saying it is "inconceivable some personalities will ask their government to do anything or to make steps against the government of Israel."

Callers from 15 cities were able to reach Shamir during the 45-minute program, and all asked questions relating to the peace process and the nearly 4-month-old unrest in the administered territories.

Shamir continued to stand by his interpretation of the Camp David accords, fashioned by Israel, Egypt and the United States nine years ago, as his reason for rejecting the Shultz proposals.

'Negotiate Without Preconditions'

Asked by a caller from the United Jewish Federation of MetroWest, N.J., whether his commitment to the proposals would include trading land in the West Bank and Gaza Strip for peace, Shamir said "we will negotiate without any preconditions. Any party is entitled to bring any proposal to the table, and we will consider it and discuss it."

But in response to a suggestion from a caller in Cleveland that an international conference would serve as a "cover" for Jordan's King Hussein, thereby allowing him to begin face-to-face negotiations with Israel, Shamir replied, "The international conference is the opposite of direct negotiations."

He said the international conference would be "a tool of pressure against Israel."

Shamir was then asked what developments, either within the Arab world or presented unilaterally by Israel, would compel Hussein to change his mind about holding direct negotiations.

'Let Them Prove' They Want Peace

"If they are for peace, let them prove it by coming to the table for direct negotiations," the premier said. "We cannot compel anybody to come to the table."

Asked by a Philadelphia caller about his proposed alternatives to the Shultz plan, Shamir was reluctant to go beyond his comments Sunday on the CBS television program "Face the Nation" in which he hinted that he had further plans for advancing the peace process.

"I have my ideas. . . but it is very vital and useful not to reveal now this position I have in mind," said Shamir. He said he had not even presented the position to Foreign Minister Shimon Peres.

Asked how to resolve differences on the peace process between his party and Labor, Shamir said national unity would be achieved during upcoming elections in Israel. Whether they are to be held in November or earlier, he said, "will not make any big difference."

Shamir opened his remarks by saluting Canada's Jewish community "for their courageous stand in these days," possibly a reference to Jewish outrage there at remarks critical of Israel made two weeks ago by External Affairs Minister Joe Clark.

SHAMIR IS CONFIDENT JEWS, ARABS WILL REACH A PEACE SETTLEMENT

By David Friedman

WASHINGTON, March 21 (JTA) -- Israeli Premier Yitzhak Shamir said Sunday he believes that a settlement can be found that will "satisfy" both Israel and the Palestinians.

"It is destiny" that Jews and Arabs will "live together" in peace, Shamir said in an interview on CBS-TV's "Face the Nation."

"They will not remove us and we will not expel them," he stressed. "And therefore we have to find a formula that will enable us to live together. And we will find it; if not we, then our children."

Shamir said that Israel is "committed to negotiate about the status" of the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, but it would be unwise to state its positions before talks start.

The Israeli leader repeated his opposition to an international conference. He said that Secretary of State George Shultz, who had been opposed to such a conference, included it in his Middle East peace proposals as a "surrender" to the Arabs who demand such a conference before negotiations are held.

Shamir said that Israel trusts President Reagan and Shultz. "Both of them are good friends of Israel" and will not lead Israel into a trap, he said. But he added, "I don't know who will be the president and the secretary."

Shultz, in an appearance on NBC-TV's "Meet the Press" Sunday, said that those who oppose the international conference appear to be talking about the type of conference sought by the Soviet Union in the United Nations Security Council, which the United States vetoed.

"We proposed a conference that is not able to impose solutions on the parties, not able to veto any agreements that are made by the parties, but is a vehicle for getting negotiations started," he said.

Shultz also said he understood why Israel was barring television crews from covering the rioting on the West Bank and Gaza Strip. He said that while he favors leaving the areas "open to the press," the television cameras may result in incitement.

"A person sees a camera, so (he) runs out and throws a rock so that person can get beat on," he explained.

SHULTZ AND SHEVARDNAZDE TO CONFER ON MIDEAST PEACE PLAN, HUMAN RIGHTS

By Howard Rosenberg

WASHINGTON, March 21 (JTA) -- The differing U.S. and Soviet views toward an international peace conference on the Middle East will be on the agenda during the meetings here this week between Secretary of State George Shultz and Soviet Foreign Minister Eduard Shevardnadze, a senior State Department official said Monday.

The Soviet view is "quite different from ours," Rozanne Ridgway, assistant secretary of state for European and Canadian affairs, said Monday, as the three days of meetings began. She said the Soviets see it as a "plenary conference," where the five United Nations Security Council members could impose a solution.

The United States and Israel, however, view the conference as a ceremonial meeting that would not have the power to dictate a resolution. It would occur two weeks prior to the first round

of Arab-Israeli negotiations on instituting additional autonomy measures on the West Bank and Gaza Strip.

"We proposed a conference that is not able to impose solutions on the parties, not able to veto any agreements that are made by the parties, but is a vehicle for getting negotiations started," Shultz said on NBC-TV's "Meet the Press" Sunday. He noted that the United States vetoed the Soviet concept when Moscow offered it as a United Nations Security Council resolution.

Shultz and Shevardnadze were scheduled to begin their talks late Monday and continue with sessions through Wednesday. Shevardnadze also will meet with President Reagan Wednesday.

They may also discuss whether an international conference could be held under joint U.S.-Soviet auspices without involving the other three Security Council members: the People's Republic of China, Britain and France.

Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir noted last week in Washington that while he opposes an international conference, he had consented to negotiations under superpower sponsorship when proposed by Shultz before the Washington summit last December. But King Hussein of Jordan rejected it.

Ridgway said that U.S. officials will bring Shevardnadze "up-to-date" on the status of the peace initiative, noting he was briefed in Moscow two weeks ago by Richard Murphy, assistant secretary of state for Near Eastern and South Asian affairs, after Shultz returned from the Middle East.

During the Shevardnadze visit, a working group on human rights will meet, chaired on the U.S. side by Richard Schifter, assistant secretary of state for human rights and humanitarian affairs. Ridgway said such a gathering "always takes place during these meetings."

STREETS OF BETHLEHEM ARE QUIET AS ARAB UNDERGROUND ORDERS STRIKE

By Gil Sedan

BETHLEHEM, March 21 (JTA) -- For years, the busy streets of commercial Bethlehem have been a lively example that when money talks, Jews and Arabs forget their differences and listen.

But on Monday, a day after the murder of Israel Defense Force Sgt. Moshe Katz, at a spot where hundreds of Israelis normally pass daily, the city seemed deserted.

All shops were closed except bakeries, the only ones permitted to operate by orders of the underground command of the Arab "uprising." The streets were empty of people. It was difficult to tell whether there was a total strike or whether the city was under curfew.

The conflicting orders by Arab nationalist circles and the Israeli authorities regarding the opening hours of shops are enough to make any sensible person stay at home indefinitely.

The Palestine Liberation Organization issued orders for shops to open between 9 a.m. and noon. After that, a general strike was to go into effect.

The authorities gave reverse orders. Confusion reigned Monday when the clandestine command of the Arab uprising distributed leaflet No. 11, which called for a general strike to commemorate the 20th anniversary of the IDF operation against PLO terrorists in Karame, across the river in Jordan.

One perplexed merchant tried to open his shop Monday morning, opposite the scene of Sunday's murder, only to have its doors welded shut a few minutes later by IDF soldiers.

Leaflets distributed Monday called on the population to increase violent attacks against soldiers and Israeli civilians. They also called for continued sanctions against the civil administration and for complete commercial strikes.

Military sources said Monday the attempt of the PLO to turn the Karamé anniversary into a day of mass violence failed.

But in the Gaza Strip town of Rafah, a 19-year-old youth was killed Monday morning. A curfew was imposed on the town.

Jerusalem police, meanwhile, are investigating an attempt Sunday night on the life of an editor of a pro-PLO newspaper. Jacques Hazmo, editor of Al-Biader A-Siassi, was not hurt when some 20 shots were fired at his home in the A-Ram neighborhood in northern Jerusalem. An attempt also was made to burn his car.

ISRAELIS, ARABS AT BELGIAN FORUM AGREE ON NEED FOR PEACE CONFERENCE

By Yossi Lempkowitz

BRUSSELS, March 21 (JTA) -- A three-day dialogue between Israelis and Palestinians ended here Sunday with the participants in general agreement over the need for an international conference to facilitate peace negotiations in the Middle East. The role of the Palestine Liberation Organization, however, remained problematic.

The dialogue on the theme "Give Peace a Chance" was organized by David Susskind, honorary president of the Jewish Secular Community Center here. Held in the building that houses European Community headquarters, the forum drew about 20 Israelis and Palestinians, all considered moderates and, as Susskind pointed out, "willing to speak to each other without any prejudice."

The most prominent of the Israelis was Abba Eban, a Labor Party member of the Knesset and chairman of its Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee. The best known of the Palestinians was Hanna Siniora, editor of the East Jerusalem Arabic daily Al-Fajr, who is close to the PLO.

Eban, who was in the United States unofficially last week while Premier Yitzhak Shamir was meeting with Reagan administration officials, argued forcefully for an international conference, which Shamir vigorously opposes.

Eban Leery On PLO Role

But contrary to several other Israelis who called on Israel to negotiate with the PLO, Eban noted that Yasir Arafat's organization has a serious credibility problem.

He recalled that on March 7, while Israel was debating the new American peace plan, PLO terrorists hijacked a bus in the Negev, resulting in the death of one Israeli and the wounding of 10.

Nevertheless, Eban said he discerned an evolution in the PLO's position and suggested that Israel rescind its law barring contacts between Israelis and PLO officials.

Siniora claimed the PLO represents 5 million Palestinians in the Israeli-administered territories and abroad. "I am certainly willing to speak about the security needs of Israel, but the Israelis have to speak about a national identity for the Palestinians," he said.

According to Siniora, both sides must pay a

price for peace. The Israelis must withdraw from the territories and the Palestinians must accept the existence of the Israeli state, he said.

He proposed an international conference that would include the PLO, mutual recognition, a Palestinian state to exist alongside Israel and a moratorium on violence to be declared by both parties on the day the international conference begins.

Susskind stressed that the participants came here in their personal capacities, not as representatives of Israel or the PLO. It was assumed, however, that the Palestinians had prior approval from the PLO to take part in the dialogue.

The meeting divided the Belgian Jewish community. Many Jews who support Shamir's opposition to an international conference called the dialogue meaningless, because, they argued, peace can be achieved only by direct negotiations between Israeli and Arab leaders.

About 40 Jewish youths demonstrated briefly outside the meeting hall Saturday. They carried placards reading "Give peace a real chance. Let Israel say no to terror."

WJC SAYS AUSTRIAN OFFICIAL INCITED ANTI-JEWISH SENTIMENT

LONDON, March 21 (JTA) -- The World Jewish Congress has accused a ranking Austrian government official of "a shocking attempt to incite anti-Jewish hatred in an Arab country."

The WJC made that charge last Friday against Thomas Klestil, director general of the Austrian Foreign Ministry, who was quoted by the Kuwait News Agency as saying that Austria "will not succumb to Zionist threats and pressures to remove President Kurt Waldheim from his office."

There was no immediate reaction to the charges from the Austrian government.

Klestil, who visited Kuwait on a tour of Persian Gulf states, is a former Austrian ambassador to the United States, which has barred entry to Waldheim because of his Nazi past.

The WJC, in a statement issued here, also accused Klestil of "trying to draw attention away from the fact that Austria's own commission concluded that Waldheim had continuously lied about his wartime activities and had personally facilitated Nazi war crimes."

The commission was an international panel of historians the Austrian government asked to examine Waldheim's record while serving as a German army intelligence officer in the Balkans during World War II. It was asked to determine the veracity of charges that Waldheim was involved in the deportation of Greek Jews and in other atrocities. The commission submitted its report Feb. 8.

Klestil said Sheik Jabir al-Ahmad a-Sabah, the Kuwaiti leader, has invited Waldheim to visit his country, the news agency reported.

Since taking office in 1986, Waldheim has been diplomatically isolated by most of the world. His only official visit abroad was to the Vatican for a meeting with Pope John Paul II in June 1987. The only chief of state to visit him in Vienna was King Hussein of Jordan.

ISRAEL SENDS GREETINGS TO IRANIANS

JERUSALEM, March 21 (JTA) -- President Chaim Herzog broadcast a message of new year greetings this week to millions of Iranians who tune into Israel Radio's Persian-language program.

SKINHEADS EXPANDING IN NUMBER, COMMITTING MORE VIOLENCE, ADL FINDS

By Susan Birnbaum

NEW YORK, March 21 (JTA) -- Skinhead youth gangs are continuing to expand their membership, attack members of minority groups and vandalize synagogues, according to a recent survey conducted by the Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rith.

"The Skinheads -- An Update on 'Shaved for Battle'" is a follow-up to an ADL report of last October about the racist youths, primarily boys, who shave their heads, wear Nazi insignia and harass and attack members of racial and religious minorities.

Gangs are composed overwhelmingly of teenagers, including children as young as 13 and 14, according to the report.

However, the ADL and others note not all youth who have adopted Skinhead haircut or garb are racist or neo-Nazi, instead wishing only to show defiance of their elders.

The survey details the criminal activities in which the Skinheads have been involved in the past four months, including synagogue vandalism, anti-Semitic graffiti and terrorizing or attacking individuals.

The revised report claims that 20-25 Skinhead groups operate in 12 states, with a combined membership of between 1,000-1,500. The report also indicates inactivity in some places where Skinhead activity was previously reported.

Incidents In California

Irwin Suall, director of ADL's Fact-Finding Department, said that some of the most serious incidents reported of Skinhead violence took place in California.

Other Skinhead violence was reported in Arizona, Colorado, Florida, Illinois, Michigan, Ohio, Oklahoma, Oregon, Pennsylvania, Texas and Washington. Arizona, Pennsylvania and Washington were not locales for such violence four months ago.

The Los Angeles area is the site for a variety of such incidents. Skinhead Philip Rowe is in jail there awaiting trial for attempted murder. He is accused of slitting the throat of a young Hispanic woman.

Michael Martin, 18, who leads a group in Los Angeles called "Reich Skins," is also awaiting trial along with a juvenile gang member on charges of terrorizing an Hispanic family and flashing an automatic pistol at them.

The Reich Skins operate in tandem with the White Aryan Resistance, the white separatist group based in Fallbrook, Calif., formed and led by white supremacist Tom Metzger.

WAR maintains a telephone hotline on which young people across the United States are interviewed about campus demonstrations of "white pride."

In the Chicago area, Clark Martell, 28-year-old leader of the local gang "Romantic Violence," and five other Skinheads were arrested January 25 and charged with home invasion, aggravated battery and robbery in connection with an assault on a 20-year-old female gang member who tried to leave the group.

Martell recently told an assembly of white supremacist leaders that his group "stands for war. . . I am a violent person. I love the white race, and if you love something, you're the most vicious person on earth."

In Oklahoma City, the slogans "Die, Jews," "White Race Rules" and "OKC Skins Rule" were scrawled with swastikas on the walls of two synagogues last December.

Charges have been brought against five Skinheads or associates of Skinheads, including juveniles, for malicious harassment.

In Portland, Ore., a group of white youths thought to have been Skinheads terrorized a black woman in her car last November. The woman suffered eye lacerations and her auto was damaged.

Interviewed On TV

Skinheads have recently appeared on television programs, such as the "Morton Downey Jr. Show" in New York and the "Oprah Winfrey Show" on ABC. In each case, the youths behaved uncontrollably.

After her telecast, Winfrey acknowledged that she "should have listened to advice" that she could not control them on the air, according to Leonard Zeskind, research director of the Center for Democratic Renewal, an Atlanta-based group that monitors racist hate movements in America.

At a recent conference here examining prejudice and violence, Zeskind and Suall agreed that Skinhead gangs have the potential to attract disaffected youth, chiefly of the working class, who feel malice toward minorities.

Harold Applebaum, now retired from the American Jewish Committee, has cited historical precedence for the Skinhead philosophy in the Nazi movement in Germany in the 1920s.

Brothers Otto and Hugo Strasser counseled Hitler to develop the socialism aspect of national socialism to appeal to a working-class base.

"A lot of neo-Nazis today have discovered Nazism, and they are consciously trying to work to reach the young, white, working-class people," Applebaum said recently, adding that the Strassers' works have been republished.

In the latest ADL report, Suall said it was too early to gauge whether the Skinheads will continue to grow or gradually decline. But he added that ADL is concerned that Skinheads are graduating into the network of adult white supremacist groups.

Skinheads In Europe

The problem extends beyond American borders.

Eight Skinheads have been sentenced in East Berlin court to jail terms of up to four years for attacking people with blows and kicks while yelling "Jews out of German churches," "Jewish pigs" and "Heil Hitler" at a concert at the Church of Zion last October.

The Skinheads seemed to surface suddenly in Europe with the death of Rudolph Hess in August. Within two weeks, three major European news magazines reported in simultaneous issues on the same phenomenon.

American and European Skinheads are united through the medium of punk rock music, much of which originated in Britain. Some punk rock songs have racist lyrics that appear to incite to violence.

The ADL report concluded that community leaders must "develop educational programs geared toward youngsters who may be vulnerable to the appeals of Skinheads. There is a role to be played here by family, church, schools and the music industry" as well as by vigilant law enforcement.