

**SHULTZ MEETING WITH PALESTINIANS
TRIGGERS FORMAL PROTEST FROM ISRAEL**
By Hugh Orgel

TEL AVIV, March 27 (JTA) -- Premier Yitzhak Shamir has lodged a strong official protest with the United States against Secretary of State George Shultz's meeting in Washington Saturday with two prominent members of the Palestine National Council.

The PNC, sometimes referred to as the Palestinian parliament in exile, is a legislative body purporting to represent the Palestinian nationalist movement. It sets overall policy for the Palestine Liberation Organization, and therefore Israel regards the council as an adjunct of the PLO.

Shamir voiced his protest in a formal note presented to U.S. Ambassador Thomas Pickering Friday, after he learned the meeting would take place. In Washington, Israeli Ambassador Moshe Arad conveyed a similar protest Friday to the U.S. State Department.

Shultz met with two Palestinian-born American academicians, Professors Edward Said of Columbia University and Ibrahim Abu-Lughod of Northwestern University.

Simultaneously with that meeting, the State Department announced that Shultz will visit the Middle East again, beginning April 3, to continue the diplomatic approach for peace that the United States has pursued without substantial results in the last two months.

In his protest, Shamir stressed that Israel views the meeting as a violation of a 1975 memorandum of understanding in which Washington pledged to have no contact whatever with the PLO until it meets specific conditions, including recognition of Israel's right to exist.

The 1975 memorandum of understanding was given Israel by then Secretary of State Henry Kissinger during negotiations for armistice agreements between Israel and Egypt and Israel and Syria in the aftermath of the 1973 Yom Kippur War. It was considered binding on all future administrations.

Pickering reportedly told Shamir that the American government makes a distinction between the PLO and the PNC.

'No Change In U.S. Policy'

In Washington, State Department spokeswoman Phyllis Oakley affirmed Friday, in a statement to the news media, that "there is no change in U.S. policy on negotiations with or recognizing the PLO. That policy remains as it has since 1975."

The statement apparently satisfied the concerns of one American Jewish leader. As long as the State Department reaffirms its ban on negotiations with the PLO, "it's hard to fault (Shultz) for making a judgment of this kind," said Hyman Bookbinder, American Jewish Committee's special representative in Washington.

But in New York, B'nai B'rith International issued a statement Sunday deploring the meeting, noting that the PNC is "the legislative body of the PLO long known to the world as an outlaw terrorist organization."

The group's international president, Seymour

Reich, called the meeting "a retreat from previous policy."

"We hope that whatever Secretary Shultz has in mind does not include giving legitimacy to murderous terrorists," he said.

(Washington correspondent Howard Rosenberg contributed to this story.)

**PROPOSED SHULTZ RETURN TO MIDEAST
GREETED WITH AMBIVALENCE IN ISRAEL**
By David Landau

JERUSALEM, March 27 (JTA) -- Cabinet sources seemed at a loss Sunday to explain what U.S. Secretary of State George Shultz hopes to achieve on his upcoming return visit to the Middle East, having failed on his two previous visits this month to sell his peace package to the Israeli and Arab leadership.

Shultz's trip was announced by the U.S. State Department Saturday, to begin April 3.

After hearing a report by Premier Yitzhak Shamir at the weekly Cabinet meeting, some top Israeli policy-makers said they could not understand the purpose of the visit, unless Shultz has new ideas or facts he has not yet shared.

Barring that, his intention may be nothing more than to demonstrate the American administration's determination to maintain the momentum of its peace initiative, they said.

The sources said they have no indication that Shultz made progress in his talks in Washington last week with Soviet Foreign Minister Eduard Shevardnadze. The superpowers remain at odds over the proposed international conference.

Moscow wants a conference that would be the centerpiece of Middle East peace negotiations. Shultz's idea is for an international umbrella for direct Arab-Israeli talks, with no power to impose solutions or veto agreements.

Shultz so far has received no response to his peace plan from the Arab states, except Egypt, which supports it. The Israeli government is divided between the Labor Party, headed by a foreign minister who backs the American initiative, and Shamir and his Likud bloc, which vehemently oppose it.

The cool response to the news that Shultz was returning to the region next week was not shared by the Laborites, who welcomed his trip. Shamir, however, reiterated his objections to Shultz's ideas.

He not only rejects the international conference scenario, but objects to the idea advanced by Shultz that the United States would state its position on interim arrangements for Palestinian self-government in the administered territories as soon as negotiations on that aspect began.

Shamir also opposes the American insistence that negotiations begin on the final status of the territories before agreement is reached on the interim phase, and before that phase is tested.

But Foreign Minister Shimon Peres has repeatedly blasted Shamir's strictures as a deliberate effort to frighten Israelis. Education Minister Yitzhak Navon, a Laborite, warned Sunday that failure to accept the Shultz initiative could lead to a deterioration of the situation in the territories that might jeopardize the peace treaty with Egypt.

**U.S. WON'T USE AID AS LEVERAGE
FOR PEACE PLAN, OFFICIAL SAYS**
By Howard Rosenberg

WASHINGTON, March 27 (JTA) -- Richard Murphy, assistant secretary of state for Near Eastern and South Asian affairs, Thursday ruled out any cut in U.S. aid to Israel as a prod to cease its "iron fist" policy in the West Bank and Gaza Strip.

Testifying before the House Appropriations Subcommittee on Foreign Operations, Murphy defended the State Department's proposed foreign aid levels for 1989, more than a third of which would go to Egypt and Israel. He said it was important not to "drive a wedge" between Israel and the United States while the United States' Mideast peace initiative is pending.

He also said that objections to an international peace conference "expressed in some Israeli circles are exaggerated," apparently referring to Premier Yitzhak Shamir's public criticism of that provision in the initiative. Murphy reiterated that an international peace conference could not impose a solution.

On the other sticky point in the initiative, getting Palestinian representatives to talk with Israel, Murphy said that "is not going to prove all that difficult to work out."

He said there is a large pool of potential Palestinian negotiators, some of whom would be acceptable to Israel.

**AMERICANS WARNED NOT TO TRAVEL
TO WEST BANK AND GAZA STRIP**
By Howard Rosenberg

WASHINGTON, March 27 (JTA) -- The State Department Friday issued a strong travel advisory warning U.S. citizens against visiting the West Bank and Gaza Strip "due to continuing disturbances."

"If travel to the West Bank is unavoidable, travelers should consult with the consul general in Jerusalem and in the case of travel to Gaza, should consult with the U.S. Embassy in Tel Aviv," the State Department said in a formal statement.

The advisory also warned U.S. citizens traveling in the territories to carry their passports at all times, and that "under all circumstances Americans should avoid demonstrations and other situations that have the potential to lead to violence."

Donna Sherman, spokeswoman for the department's Bureau of Consular Affairs, said that a more mild travel advisory had been in effect for the West Bank and Gaza Strip, but was upgraded because the situation is now clearly "ongoing."

State Department spokeswoman Phyllis Oakley said "American travellers should avoid going to these areas." She said there was no particular event that triggered the action.

A previous travel advisory for East Jerusalem, including the Old City, has been in effect since 1982. It urges U.S. citizens to check with the Jerusalem Consulate before going to East Jerusalem.

The advisory was issued on the eve of Palm Sunday and Easter observances, when many American Christians visit religious sites on the West Bank.

Oakley stressed, though, that "we are not issuing a travel advisory for Israel itself. Israel is safe for American travel."

**IN WEST BANK VILLAGE, TWO STORIES,
THREE DEAD AND MANY DROPS OF BLOOD**
By Gil Sedan

MAITHALOOON, West Bank, March 27 (JTA) -- Two Palestinian flags hanging at half-mast, a car with smashed windows and scattered drops of blood were evidence of the events that took place in this remote West Bank village early Sunday morning.

It was yet another clash between the Israel Defense Force and Palestinian villagers, leaving three dead: Fakhim Mahmoud Neirat, 26; Ghassan Kassem Neirat, 17; and Ommar Mahmoud Rabaya, 21.

An Israeli driving into this village in northern Samaria felt a strange sensation. The Palestinian flags sent a clear message to Israeli journalists: As far as the local population is concerned, this is Palestine, and the three who were killed were the martyrs of the Palestinian revolution.

Perhaps this is the reason for the strange quiet that ruled the village, indicating an acceptance of the fact that youths must die to get rid of the Israeli rule.

The car with the smashed windows was the key to the story. Here is the official army version of what happened at 4 a.m. Sunday:

An IDF force entered Maithaloon to make arrests. According to the army, after the arrests were made, the soldiers were confronted by a group of youths who attacked them with rocks and axes.

The soldiers overcame some youths by force. As they pulled out of the village, they encountered another group of youths, who threw rocks and bottles. Two local vehicles tried to run over soldiers. The soldiers fired at the vehicles, killing three people and wounding one.

Chants Of 'Allah Akbar'

The villagers had a different story. Ahmad Abdul Rahman, the village head, said that while the arrests were going on, people took to the streets chanting "Allah akbar" (God is great). There was no violence, he said. The soldiers fired at the villagers in cold blood.

The funerals were held at noon Sunday in the village. Afterward, groups of villagers stood in clusters to consider the situation.

Few people left the village Sunday. But few have left in the past several weeks. The ongoing strike, as well as continued army barriers, keep the people at home, nourishing the uprising.

This village of 5,000, rarely mentioned in the news, wrote its own chapter in the uprising.

"I doubt that any solution is in sight," said the village head. "Personally I am very pessimistic."

An Israeli journalist remarked that this "seems to be the only thing Israelis and Arabs agree on nowadays -- the feeling of despair."

Two villagers were hospitalized at the Ittihad hospital in Nablus.

Farther south, Sunday afternoon, in the village of Salfit, another Arab was killed in a clash with security forces. The soldiers went there to rescue a tourist bus that entered the village by mistake.

According to military sources, the soldiers were surrounded by youths who attacked them with rocks and iron bars. The soldiers fired at the youths, killing one of them. A curfew was imposed on the village.

AUSTRIAN JEWS UPSET AT MOVE TO PAY VICTIMS 'GIFT OF HONOR'

By Reinhard Engel

VIENNA, March 27 (JTA) -- Austrian Jews have expressed serious misgivings about a decision by Parliament to have the government pay token sums to victims of persecution and former resistance fighters in Austria.

Unlike West Germany, Austria has never paid reparations to Nazi victims for their suffering or loss of property. But Parliament, after a stormy session last Wednesday night, adopted a bill to appropriate \$4.2 million as an "Ehrengabe" (gift of honor).

It calls for the one-time payment of amounts ranging from \$210 to \$420 to persons who hold either official documents that they were Nazi victims or orders of merit in connection with the liberation of Austria from Nazi rule. It is admittedly a symbolic gesture.

Of the 5,000 to 10,000 persons who would be eligible, only a few hundred are Jews. Paul Grosz, president of the Jewish community of Austria, said he was repeatedly approached by members of the community who said they would not accept the ridiculously low sum in order to ease the conscience of the state.

Grosz also expressed concern that the payments, however small, to even a negligible number of Jews, would feed popular anti-Jewish feelings, coming at a time of severe budgetary constraints that have forced cuts in many social programs.

The measure was backed by the governing coalition of the Socialist Party and the conservative People's Party.

It also gained support of the opposition Green Party, though the leader of the Green's parliamentary faction, Freda Meissner-Blau, said she could only "blush with shame" at the beggarly sums.

The "Ehrengabe" originally had been demanded by several organizations for former concentration camp inmates, some of whose members live in poverty. The bill was offered by two government ministers, Alfred Dallinger, who is responsible for social affairs, and Ferdinand Lacina, the finance minister.

The Jewish community and the Greens suggested that money be put into a fund to help the needy, who would welcome even the small sums. Some former resistance fighters and several prominent Jews indicated they would accept the money and turn it over to charity. It is also possible that a private fund will be established to compensate Nazi victims.

In New York, the Committee for Jewish Claims on Austria issued a statement declaring that the decision "demeans the memory of those who perished and woefully ignores the needs of the aged Jewish Nazi victims from Austria."

Rabbi Israel Miller, the group's president, said, "The Austrian Parliament should be fully aware of the fate which has befallen the 180,000 Jews who resided in Austria on the day of the Anschluss. Tens of thousands perished. Those who emigrated were stripped of their possessions."

Parliament enacted the measure during the week of the 50th anniversary of the Anschluss, the annexation of Austria to the Third Reich.

In an almost bizarre turn, Joerg Haider of the center-right Freedom Party offered an amendment to include victims of "retaliation" by partisans. It would have meant paying money to former Nazis. The amendment was defeated.

VANUNU SENTENCED TO 18 YEARS FOR TREASON, ESPIONAGE

By Gil Sedan

JERUSALEM, March 27 (JTA) -- Mordechai Vanunu was sentenced to 18 years in prison Sunday by a Jerusalem district court that found him guilty last Thursday of espionage and treason.

The panel of three judges who presided at the year-long trial of the former nuclear technician said their sentence took into account extenuating circumstances. These included the accused's complete cooperation and the fact he had been held in solitary confinement before and during the trial, and will probably be subject to such treatment in the future.

Considering that each of the counts on which Vanunu was convicted carries a maximum penalty of life imprisonment, the sentence was considered lenient.

Vanunu, 34, who once worked at the Dimona nuclear facility and later left Israel and converted to the Anglican faith, was found guilty of providing a British newspaper, the Sunday Times of London, with information and photographs that seriously compromised Israel's security.

The court rejected appeals by the defense to reduce the sentence because Vanunu acted out of ideological motivations, rather than financial gain. The judges replied that ideological motives do not sanctify criminality. They observed that, in fact, ideologically motivated criminals are more dangerous than others.

Vanunu's sentence will be calculated from Oct. 7, 1986, when he was formally arrested. He was reported missing from London on Sept. 30, 1986. He claims he was lured to Rome, then drugged and kidnapped by Israeli agents who brought him to Israel against his will.

SOLDIER SENTENCED TO 18 MONTHS FOR FLEEING HANG-GLIDER ATTACK

By David Landau

JERUSALEM, March 27 (JTA) -- A 19-year-old soldier was sentenced by a Jaffa military court Sunday to 18 months in prison for fleeing his guard post without resisting a terrorist. The terrorist entered an army camp in upper Galilee nearly five months ago, killing six soldiers and wounding seven before he was shot to death.

Pvt. Ron Almog received an additional 18-month sentence, which was suspended.

The court told him his actions had been "shameful by any standards of military conduct." But the three-judge tribunal opted for leniency, because the young soldier's abandonment of his post was judged in the context of general negligence and inefficiency revealed at the camp.

The incident occurred during the night of Nov. 25, 1987, when a lone terrorist attacked the camp after scaling the Israeli-Lebanese border on a motorized hang glider. Many Israelis believe the success of the daring raid triggered the Palestinian uprising in the administered territories, which began two weeks later, on Dec. 9.

The prosecutor, Capt. Zvi Garfunkel, noted that the soldier had not even loaded his gun, much less shot at the intruder, who approached the camp gate firing an automatic weapon.

Almog and his mother broke down in court when they heard the sentence. His father told reporters that the teen-age soldier was being saddled with sole responsibility for the failure by senior officers to maintain security at the camp.

CABINET APPOINTS SHIN BET CHIEF; AMIRAM NIR RESIGNS ADVISER POST

By David Landau

JERUSALEM, March 27 (JTA) -- The Cabinet on Sunday approved the appointment of a new director for the Shin Bet, Israel's internal secret service agency. His identity, by law, is not disclosed to the public.

In another development at the meeting, the resignation of Amiram Nir, the prime minister's adviser on terrorism, was announced. He is leaving his post voluntarily after nearly four years of service.

Originally appointed by Shimon Peres when he was prime minister, Nir's name was closely linked to Lt. Col. Oliver North, a member of President Reagan's national security staff, in connection with the Iran-contra arms sales scandal in 1986.

Premier Yitzhak Shamir said Nir's deputy would take over his duties, pending the appointment of a new adviser.

The new Shin Bet chief will take office April 1, replacing Yosef Harmelin, who was called out of retirement in September 1986 after the director at the time, Avraham Shalom, and other senior operatives were forced to resign under the cloud of scandal.

He retook the reins of the Shin Bet following allegations that Shalom and his subordinates attempted to cover up the murder of two Palestinian bus-hijackers who were turned over to Shin Bet agents after Israel Defense Force soldiers captured them alive.

U.S. TO SELL ISRAEL 75 FIGHTER PLANES

By Howard Rosenberg

WASHINGTON, March 27 (JTA) -- The Reagan administration informally notified Congress earlier this month that it intends to sell 75 F-16 fighter planes to Israel, worth \$2 billion, a Capitol Hill source said Friday.

The sale originated last year as a way to help offset Israel's cancellation of the Lavi fighter plane project.

The administration must formally notify Congress of the sale by April 4. Congress then has 30 days to vote to block the sale. If it does not vote on the matter, the sale will go through automatically.

The source said that the planes, which will be built by General Dynamics, will be delivered in 1990, which marks a speeding up of the procurement process from the usual three to four years required to build the planes.

SENATOR URGES REFUSENIKS' RELEASE

By David Friedman

WASHINGTON, March 27 (JTA) -- Sen. John Heinz (R-Pa.) met with the second ranking official of the Soviet Embassy here Friday to press for an exit visa for Yuli Kosharovskiy.

The refusenik has been fasting in Moscow since March 10, the 17th anniversary of his application for an exit visa to leave the Soviet Union.

Heinz presented the official, Sergey Chetverikov, with a letter urging that Kosharovskiy, his wife Inna and his three children be allowed to emigrate. The letter was initiated by Heinz and Sen. Frank Lautenberg (R-N.J.) and signed by 63 other senators.

CALL FOR ORTHODOX MODERATION EARNS PRAISE FROM REFORM LEADER

By Andrew Silow Carroll

NEW YORK, March 27 (JTA) -- The leader of the Reform movement's congregational body has hailed an Orthodox leader's statements calling for moderation among Orthodox Jews.

"This is the kind of voice that I and many others have been longing to hear. You express the kind of Orthodoxy that I was taught to revere," wrote Rabbi Alexander Schindler, president of the Union of American Hebrew Congregations, in a letter to Dr. Norman Lamm, president of New York's Yeshiva University.

The letter, written last Thursday, is in reference to a speech by Lamm in which he outlined the agenda for adherents to what he called Orthodoxy's "centrist camp."

His speech, delivered Tuesday night at the Fifth Avenue Synagogue and reported in The New York Times, sought to differentiate centrist Orthodoxy -- defined by Lamm as Zionist, open to secular culture and tolerant of different opinions -- from more extreme ultra-Orthodox elements.

According to the newspaper, Lamm criticized "certain Hasidic elements" for continuing to press for "who is a Jew" legislation in Israel that would recognize only Orthodox conversions for those wishing to enter the country as Jews.

The legislation, which has been defeated in the Knesset, would serve to further delegitimize Reform and Conservative rabbis and their movements in Israel.

In referring to those movements, Lamm said, "Centrist Orthodoxy holds that one must indeed disagree with the non-Orthodox, but we must do so respectfully."

Still, said Lamm, "I've never experienced such open hostility toward the Orthodox" from the non-Orthodox groups as now.

Schindler made no reference to that statement in his short letter, which he concluded by writing, "If ever there was a time when the center of our community must hold, it is now."

CHILDREN CONVENE ZIONIST CONGRESS

JERUSALEM, March 27 (JTA) -- For the first time in history, an Arab served as co-chairman of a Zionist Congress.

His name is Toufik Boulus, and he is 11 years old and lives in Jaffa. The chairman who appointed him is Yisrael Niv of Kibbutz Sarid, also 11.

The event was the third Zionist Congress organized by Children for Zionism, held at the Weizmann School in Jaffa last Thursday.

Participants discussed the administered territories, immigration and the army. As at adult conclaves of this kind, no consensus was reached on some issues.

But one decision was reached. Each participant would begin writing to a child in the diaspora whose parents are yordim -- Israelis who emigrated to live abroad.

Boulus, who presided at the afternoon session, said, "I am participating so I can tell people what Arabs are. A lot of Jews hate Arabs, but they don't understand. They think we all throw rocks."

Niv said at the close of the congress, "It's not so important what we decide. Simply that we meet is a big enough accomplishment."