

VOL. 66 - 71st YEAR

MONDAY, NOVEMBER 7, 1988

NO. 202

ALTERNATIVES TO LIKUD GOVERNMENT EMERGE ON EVE OF CONSULTATIONS

By Gil Sedan

JERUSALEM, Nov. 6 (JTA) -- The probability of a Likud-led government, in partnership with the ultra-Orthodox and extreme right-wing parties, seemed uncertain over the weekend, as President Chaim Herzog prepared for consultations Monday with political leaders aimed at forming a governing coalition.

In fact, what had appeared crystal clear after the unexpectedly strong showing by the religious parties in the Nov. 1 Knesset elections has become increasingly murky.

There has been serious talk in the past two days of a Labor-led coalition with the religious bloc, or parts of it.

And there are some in both the Likud and Labor camps who seem ready to endure a new national unity coalition, despite the ideological and political conflicts that paralyzed the outgoing one.

Herzog is required by law to assign the task of forming a new government to the political leader he considers most likely to succeed.

This does not necessarily mean the leader of the largest faction. Likud edged out Labor by the barest margin -- 40 to 39 Knesset seats.

The four religious parties won 18 seats among them, becoming the third largest political force in the parliament and potential "king-makers."

Given their restrictive social agenda and hard-line policies, they were considered natural

LABOR, LIKUD PICK UP A SEAT IN FINAL COUNT OF BALLOTS

By David Landau

JERUSALEM, Nov. 6 (JTA) -- The Labor Party and the Likud each appear to have gained a Knesset seat in the final tally of votes cast Nov. 1 in Israel's nationwide parliamentary elections. The losers appear to be the two non-Zionist parties supported chiefly by Israel's Arab community.

An unofficial breakdown of the final results was announced over the weekend, after ballots cast by soldiers and by Israeli merchant seamen abroad were counted. Here are the results:

Party	Seats	Votes
Likud	40	709,305
Labor	39	685,363
Shas	6	107,709
Agudat Yisrael	5	102,714
Citizens Rights Movement	5	97,513
National Religious Party	5	89,720
Hadash Communists	4	84,032
Tehiya	3	70,730
Mapam	3	56,345
Tsomet	2	45,489
Moledet	2	44,174
Center-Shinui Movement	2	39,538
Degel HaTorah	2	34,279
Progressive List for Peace	1	33,695
Arab Democratic Party	1	27,012

partners of the rightist, conservative Likud bloc. But public statements by some Orthodox leaders Sunday indicated they would be equally amenable to a deal with Labor.

Rabbi Eliezer Schach, the venerable sage who influences both the Shas and Degel HaTorah parties, issued a directive to representatives of both to hold talks with Labor Party leader Shimon Peres. The two parties together account for eight Knesset seats.

Ultra-Orthodox Rivalry

The immediate reaction of the Laborites was wariness. They understand the religious parties are likely to play them against Likud to win their maximum demands.

Another twist to the coalition talks is the bitter rivalry in the ultra-Orthodox camp.

Leaders of the Agudat Yisrael party spent most of Sunday weighing their options before they met with Likud representatives.

Reportedly, they reached only one decision -- that they would shun any coalition of which the rival Shas and Degel HaTorah parties were members.

This means the Agudah might give its five Knesset seats to a Labor-led coalition if its rivals aligned with Likud, or vice versa.

According to an unconfirmed report, veteran Agudah Knesset member Menahem Porush already has urged the party to join only a Labor-led coalition.

Degel HaTorah's leader, Rabbi Avraham Ravitz, said that despite his pro-Likud sympathies, the party has not and should not commit itself to either of the major blocs.

He estimated at 50-50 its chances of aligning with either Likud or Labor.

Calls For Unity Government

As Likud realized it was not certain Herzog would summon Premier Yitzhak Shamir to form the next government, calls were heard within the party for renewal of the national unity government.

Speculation had it that Shamir would feel comfortable negotiating with Defense Minister Yitzhak Rabin, now Labor's No. 2 man, if Peres were to be eliminated as Labor Party leader.

There is personal as well as political antipathy between Shamir and Peres. There is also a movement in some Labor circles to oust Peres because of the party's poor showing.

So, the two ideological foes seem to be sending out feelers toward each other.

Shamir is said to prefer keeping Rabin as defense minister to appointing either of his own party's candidates, Moshe Arens or Ariel Sharon, both former defense ministers.

Sharon and Rabin were embroiled in a verbal battle during the Cabinet's weekly session Sunday.

Sharon accused Rabin of suppressing films taken shortly after a bus was firebombed outside Jericho on Oct. 30. A woman and her three small children were killed in the blast.

Rabin stood firm, saying he wanted to avoid provocation. The flare-up took a personal turn when Rabin reminded Sharon that he was the only defense minister forced to resign on the recommendation of a government commission that

investigated the conduct of the Lebanon war in 1982.

Sharon retorted that Rabin was unqualified for his office because of his failure after a year to suppress the Palestinian uprising.

To which Rabin replied, "Your comments do not touch the tip of my ankle," a euphemism for another portion of his anatomy.

Meanwhile, the two leftist parties without which no Labor-led coalition would survive, kept mum over the weekend.

The Citizens Rights Movement and Mapam, with a combined total of eight Knesset seats, indicated they would not object to Labor negotiating with the religious parties if a government could be formed without Likud.

On the other hand, they were advising Labor to avoid any "humiliating" negotiations with the religious parties. The Citizens Rights Movement has been a leading opponent of "religious coercion" imposed by the Orthodox parties.

ANALYSTS PREDICT FEW BIG CHANGES IF SHAMIR HEADS NEW GOVERNMENT

By David Friedman

WASHINGTON, Nov. 6 (JTA) -- There was initially some hand-wringing within the Reagan administration and certain quarters of the American Jewish community last week when Premier Yitzhak Shamir emerged from last Tuesday's elections in Israel as the likely head of the next government, with the support of the right-wing and ultra-Orthodox parties.

Administration officials privately expressed concern that this would derail the Middle East peace process. American Jews worried about being alienated from Israel, fearing Shamir would give in to the demands of the religious parties for the adoption of the "Who Is A Jew" amendment, which would not recognize conversions by Reform and Conservative rabbis.

But a consensus now appears to be emerging that Shamir will not depart radically from Israel's stance on the peace process, although the idea of an international conference is dead for now.

Nor is Shamir expected to give in to all the demands of the religious parties. He does not want a major rift with American Jewry, nor does he want to alienate the secular majority of the Israeli public by further restrictions on such Shabbat activities as soccer games.

Shamir went out of his way to try to allay these concerns in an interview published Friday in the Washington Post. That this was a special effort is seen in that he took time for the interview out of his busy schedule of negotiations with the small parties he is seeking to include in his coalition.

'Mandate' For Peace

"We will be the main factor in this coalition and we have made it clear to all potential partners that we are committed to the Camp David accords, and we will not change our position in this regard," Shamir said.

Denying that the elections were "a setback to peace," Shamir stressed that "we have a mandate from our people to get peace and we consider this mandate very seriously."

Shamir also said Likud would continue to allow its members to vote their conscience on religious legislation, rather than making advance commitments enforced by party discipline.

"We know the moods and the worries of the

Jewish community in the United States, and we don't think now to change in this regard the existing status quo," he told the Post.

At a seminar on the Israeli elections Friday at the Brookings Institution, Professor Bernard Reich noted that similar dire predictions of rifts with the U.S. government and the Jewish community were made when Likud first gained power in 1977.

Reich, who is chairman of the political science department at George Washington University, said it was that Likud government, led by Premier Menachem Begin, that negotiated the peace treaty with Egypt.

He predicted that the new government would be no radical departure from traditional Israeli policy.

"The paralysis of the national unity government has been broken," Reich said. He said a new government under Shamir may make decisions "we may not like, but at least we will see clear-cut decisions."

But Wolf Blitzer, Washington bureau chief of the Jerusalem Post, cast doubt on whether Shamir would head a narrow-majority government.

He flatly predicted that in the end, Shamir would enter into another national unity government with the Labor Party. But he said it would be one in which there would be no rotation of the premiership with Labor leader Shimon Peres.

A 'Blood Bath' In Labor

Blitzer said his rationale was that the major success of the national unity government has been in the economy, where inflation has been reduced dramatically, and this would be threatened with Labor and the Histadrut, dominated by Labor, in opposition.

He added that to prevent breaks with the U.S. government and American Jewry, Shamir does not want to have to depend on the extremist parties.

However, Samuel Lewis, former U.S. ambassador to Israel, said that while another national unity government is possible, he believes Labor will prefer to sit it out in opposition.

He predicted a "blood bath" within Labor over the leadership of Peres, who has failed to achieve a victory for his party in the last four elections.

Blitzer predicted that no matter whether who is elected U.S. president, there will be a major disagreement between Israel and the United States in 1989. He said this has been true for the first year of every president's term since the 1970s.

Lewis suggested that if Shamir becomes prime minister, his Cabinet choices may decide whether major problems between the two countries are contained. "The sensitivity of leaders is important to containing damage," he said.

Lewis noted that President Reagan, Secretary of State George Shultz, Shamir, Peres and Moshe Arens, former Israeli ambassador to the United States, have shown this sensitivity. However, he said, some members of Likud and the right-wing parties "love to throw gasoline on the fires of U.S.-Israeli relations."

The former ambassador predicted that a new Shamir government would keep the Likud promises of building new settlements in the West Bank and imposing a harsher crackdown on the Arab uprising in the West Bank and Gaza Strip. "The impact in the United States will be quite unsettling," he said.

SOVIETS PROMISE CULTURAL CENTER AND TO ALLOW HEBREW TEACHING

By Susan Birnbaum

NEW YORK, Nov. 6 (JTA) -- A promise to legalize the teaching of Hebrew in the Soviet Union and the establishment of a Jewish cultural center in Moscow appear to be the prime fruits of talks held last week in Moscow between Soviet Foreign Minister Eduard Shevardnadze and Jewish leaders.

Participants in the extraordinary two-hour discussion, which reportedly covered all substantive issues of concern to Soviet Jewry, included Edgar Bronfman and Israel Singer, president and secretary-general respectively of the World Jewish Congress; Simcha Dinitz, chairman of the World Zionist Organization-Jewish Agency Executive; and Mendel Kaplan, chairman of the Jewish Agency Board of Governors.

Elan Steinberg, WJC executive director, described the talks as taking place "in an atmosphere of warmth and openness." He said the discussion covered "general international relations, the Mideast and the Soviet Jewry question in all its aspects."

"By their actions, they are indicating that they are eager to get the question of Jewish rights and emigration off the bargaining table. And it's actions, rather than simply words, that count," said Steinberg.

A participant to the talks who asked not to be named said the discussion included a "lengthy review of emigration statistics and procedures. We were advised that the recent favorable trend in terms of numbers would continue."

The Jewish delegation also raised the issue of government anti-Semitism.

To Open In February

Of central importance to the talks was the establishment of a Jewish cultural center, which is expected to open in February. Agreement for the center was inked Oct. 21 in Moscow between Isi Leibler, head of the Australian Jewish community and vice president of the WJC, and Mikhail Gluz, director of the small, official Moscow Jewish Musical Theater.

The center is expected to feature a Jewish library, including books in Russian, Hebrew, Yiddish and English. The Jewish delegation brought to Moscow the largest shipment ever of books on Jewish subjects in those languages.

The center will be named the Solomon Mikhoels Cultural Center, after the famed Russian Yiddish actor who was murdered by Stalin in 1949. Mikhoels' relatives, who live in Israel, will be invited to the February opening of the center.

The center is expected to be directed by refuseniks, Hebrew teachers and Jewish activists, including Yuli Kosharovsky, Mikhail Chlenov and Velvel Chernin.

Kosharovsky, one of the most critical voices among Soviet Jews, hailed the center as "the most important breakthrough on Jewish culture in the Soviet Union over the last half century and an important demonstration that perestroika (restructuring) can work even for the Jews."

The delegation was given assurances that the de facto legalization of the private teaching of Hebrew had taken place, and that the law prohibiting that activity would be deleted from the revised Soviet penal code, possibly by spring.

In addition, the contract for the cultural center provides in its second phase for a facility

for the teaching of Hebrew and Yiddish.

In New York, the National Conference on Soviet Jewry issued a statement Friday saying it could not "accept the WJC/Soviet Ministry of Culture agreement at face value."

Shoshana Cardin, the conference's new chairwoman, said, "We will not accept token gestures; we urge a fully functioning Jewish resource center, in which Soviet Jews will be informed about their history, tradition and modern homeland in Israel."

The normally hard-line Student Struggle for Soviet Jewry, however, said last week it welcomed the establishment of the cultural center.

REFUSENIK GETS PERMISSION TO ACCOMPANY SAKHAROV TO U.S.

NEW YORK, Nov. 6 (JTA) -- Refusenik Boris Chernobilsky apparently has been given permission to visit the United States to attend an international conclave with Soviet dissident Andrei Sakharov.

According to Lynn Singer, executive director of the Long Island Committee for Soviet Jewry, Chernobilsky has received permission and will leave the Soviet Union Nov. 11 to accompany Sakharov, who recently was granted authorization to travel abroad for several scientific meetings.

The two will attend a meeting of the International Foundation for the Survival of Humanity, which Sakharov heads. The conclave will be held in Cambridge, Mass.

Sakharov, the Soviet dissident physicist, human rights advocate and Nobel Prize winner, had threatened not to leave for his scheduled trip to the United States unless Chernobilsky received a travel visa, according to the Union of Councils for Soviet Jews.

Sakharov received a passport to travel abroad in a new expression of Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev's policy of "glasnost" (openness). Sakharov was pardoned by Gorbachev, after spending seven years of exile in the closed city of Gorky.

Chernobilsky will be allowed to travel and return to the Soviet Union, said Singer, who spoke to the longtime refusenik by phone Saturday night. His visa is good until Nov. 16.

(JTA correspondent David Friedman in Washington contributed to this report.)

U.S. WILL CONTINUE TO SELL ARMS TO 'MODERATE' ARABS, SAYS CARLUCCI

By Hugh Orgel

TEL AVIV, Nov. 6 (JTA) -- U.S. Defense Secretary Frank Carlucci made it clear at the end of his three-day visit to Israel that the United States intends to continue weapons sales to "moderate" Arab countries.

"It's important for peace that the United States maintain relations with moderate Arab countries" and those relations involve security issues, which means arms sales, the American defense chief told reporters Friday at Ben-Gurion Airport.

He stressed at the same time that United States support of Israel and binational military cooperation signals to Israel's adversaries "that there is no military option . . . peace must be achieved through negotiations."

Defense Minister Yitzhak Rabin briefed the Cabinet Sunday on his talks with Carlucci, who arrived here after visiting Jordan and Egypt.

REAGAN SIGNS ANTI-GENOCIDE ACT INTO LAW AT CHICAGO CEREMONY

By Jeff Weintraub

CHICAGO, Nov. 6 (JTA) -- In a brief ceremony here Friday, President Reagan signed legislation implementing a 40-year-old international treaty that bans acts of genocide, making the United States the 98th country to support the pact.

The Genocide Convention Implementation Act amends the federal criminal code to make genocide a federal offense. It defines genocide as "the specific intent to destroy, in whole or in substantial part, a national, ethnic, racial or religious group."

Roughly two dozen politicians and representatives of the Jewish and Armenian communities looked on as Reagan signed the act at a military facility near Chicago's O'Hare Airport.

"We gather today to bear witness to the past and learn from its awful example, and to make sure that we're not condemned to relive its crimes," Reagan said in his brief remarks.

"I remember what the Holocaust meant to me as I watched the films of the death camps after the Nazi defeat in World War II," the president said. "Slavs, Gypsies and others died in the fires as well. And we've seen other horrors this century -- in the Ukraine, in Cambodia, in Ethiopia."

In 1948, the United Nations drafted and approved the International Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide, in response to the systematic killing of 6 million Jews by the Nazis.

Though President Harry Truman submitted the bill ratifying the accord to the Senate in June 1949, it did not pass that house until February 1986. The legislation implementing the treaty cleared Congress last month.

Fulfilling Truman's Promise

A small number of conservatives had stalled the bill in the Senate since 1949, arguing that the law would undermine the constitutional rights of Americans and would infringe on U.S. sovereignty.

"I am delighted to fulfill a promise made by Harry Truman and to all the peoples of the world -- and especially the Jewish people," Reagan told those attending the signing ceremony.

The new law specifies several acts committed against members of a specific group that would fall under the definition of genocide.

They include: killing; inflicting bodily injury; permanently impairing mental faculties through use of drugs, torture or other techniques; creating conditions of life intended to cause physical destruction; attempting to prevent births; using force to transfer children of one group to another group.

The act provides that persons convicted of committing genocide face a maximum penalty of \$1 million in fines and life imprisonment. Anyone who directly or publicly incites another to commit genocide is subject to as much as \$500,000 in fines and five years in prison.

In his remarks, President Reagan said that while he "would have preferred that Congress had adopted the administration's proposal to permit the death penalty for those convicted of genocidal murders, this legislation still represents a strong and clear statement by the United States that it will punish acts of genocide with the force of law and the righteousness of justice."

JEWS ENDORSE BUSH, DUKAKIS AS ELECTION DAY APPROACHES

By Andrew Silow Carroll

NEW YORK, Nov. 6 (JTA) -- Two groups of prominent American Jews have weighed in with separate endorsements of George Bush and Michael Dukakis for president.

The two endorsements distill months of debate within the Jewish community over which candidate, the Republican vice president or the Democratic governor of Massachusetts, will be better able to serve the interests of American Jews and Israel.

The pro-Bush endorsement, released in a statement late last week, was signed by 20 prominent Jewish leaders, including former U.S. Sen. Richard Stone (D-Fla.) and five former chairmen of the Conference of Presidents of Major American Jewish Organizations.

The group claims Bush will continue the Reagan administration's "proven policies" toward Israel on security, peace and economic matters.

The leaders, several of them Democrats, said they were "pained" by events at the Democratic National Convention and by aspects of the "new agenda" of the Democratic Party. The statement is code for concerns over the Rev. Jesse Jackson's influence in the party, which Jewish Republicans say is pervasive, pro-Arab and possibly anti-Semitic.

Signers of the pro-Bush statement include Julius Berman, Kenneth Bialkin and Jack Stein, all former chairmen of the Conference of Presidents; Brown University Professor Jacob Neusner; and neo-conservative writer Midge Decter.

Doesn't Have 'Same Gut Feelings'

The endorsement of Dukakis by a new group called the National Jewish Leadership Council appeared as a full-page newspaper advertisement in The New York Times on Oct. 31.

The ad attacks Bush's record on Israel, saying he has supported every major American arms deal to Arab countries. It quotes a Bush adviser who said the vice president "does not have the same gut feelings toward Israel" as President Reagan.

Defending Dukakis' record, the ad cites his pledge to "never let Israel down." In addition, the endorsement compares Dukakis' record on church-state separation issues and opposition to anti-Semitism with claims that Bush supports evangelists Jerry Falwell and Pat Robertson, as well as other members of the "Radical Right."

Among the 42 signers of the ad are another two former chairmen of the Conference of Presidents, Howard Squadron and Theodore Mann; and Philip Klutznick, former international president of B'nai B'rith and secretary of commerce under President Jimmy Carter.

B'NAI B'RITH HONORS SHULTZ

WASHINGTON, Nov. 6 (JTA) -- Secretary of State George Shultz accepted the Philip Klutznick Distinguished Service Award from B'nai B'rith International on Friday and said he appreciates the support he receives from such private groups.

Seymour Reich, international president of B'nai B'rith, said the award "symbolizes for us all you have done as secretary of state on behalf of human rights everywhere, on behalf of seeking peace, not only in the Middle East but throughout the world."