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**ISRAEL STRIKING CONCILIATORY NOTE
ON TABA AND MIDEAST PEACE TALKS**

By David Landau

JERUSALEM, Jan. 11 (JTA) -- Israel is seeking a swift, amicable agreement with Egypt to settle outstanding issues over Taba, the strip of beach on the Red Sea awarded to Egypt by international arbitration last year.

The Inner Cabinet met Wednesday to map strategy for the final talks between the two countries on the matter.

Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir and Foreign Minister Moshe Arens are clearly reconciled to the arbitration decision and hope that its full implementation will improve relations with Egypt and the political climate generally.

Israel in fact seems to be enjoying a rare-- and possibly short-lived -- period of goodwill on the international scene.

Arens, who just completed an intensive round of diplomatic talks in Paris, found a readiness among European diplomats attending an international conference there to reserve criticism of Israel and hear him out.

That was coupled with firmly articulated expectations of new ideas from Israel to match the Palestine Liberation Organization's perceived new moderation.

Arens, for his part, urged the world community to give Israel time to formulate its peace ideas, without pressure and without taking sides. He reiterated that call on his return from Paris Tuesday night.

Not Opposed To U.N. Auspices

Shamir and his aides, meanwhile, continued to foster an image of moderation.

The prime minister and his Likud coalition have been adamantly opposed to the idea of an international peace conference under U.N. auspices, which is favored by the Labor Party and by many of Israel's friends and allies abroad.

Now Shamir is saying the framework of peace talks does not really matter.

He told a group of visiting members of the European Parliament on Tuesday that big power or U.N. auspices were possible for direct talks between Israel and its neighbors.

Yosef Ben-Aharon, director general of the Prime Minister's Office, said the question of auspices was "marginal," as long as the talks themselves are direct.

The Jerusalem Post quoted him Wednesday as citing the U.N. role in bringing about a cease-fire in the Iran-Iraq war.

Government sources are stressing, however, that Israel will make no concessions toward the PLO or to the idea of withdrawal from the West Bank and Gaza Strip.

They indicated that Shamir and Arens will eventually produce a revamped, more generous version of Israel's longstanding autonomy plan.

There is also renewed talk in government circles of holding elections in the administered territories and an explicit readiness of Israel to talk to the elected Palestinian representatives.

Defense Minister Yitzhak Rabin was reported this week to have resumed his own discreet meetings with non-PLO Palestinian figures from

the territories.

Meanwhile, the Israeli-Egyptian talks over Taba are expected to focus on tourism. Parallel talks will be held between Egyptian authorities and the Israeli owners of the Sonesta Hotel, a resort built at Taba some years ago.

The Israelis would like to retain a share of the ownership of the luxury hotel and also would like to continue to manage it.

Arens, who had two meetings with Egyptian Foreign Minister Esmat Abdel Meguid in Paris, told a news conference here that they both wanted to finish the Taba affair "quickly and elegantly."

**ARAFAT SNUBS DUTCH DELEGATION
BY FAILING TO SHOW FOR MEETING**

By Henrietta Boas

AMSTERDAM, Jan. 11 (JTA) -- A Dutch Foreign Ministry delegation returned from a highly publicized visit to Palestine Liberation Organization headquarters in Tunisia late Tuesday, after failing to meet with PLO leader Yasir Arafat.

The meeting was to have been the climax of their two-day, fact-finding trip, and, in fact, the main reason for it.

But Arafat never showed up.

He was in Amman, Jordan, when the delegation arrived Sunday in Tunis. He was still away Monday afternoon, when he was supposed to have received the Dutch diplomats.

He had not returned by 4:30 p.m. Tuesday, at which time the visitors returned to the Netherlands.

The delegation from The Hague consisted of Henri Weynants, director general of political affairs at the Foreign Ministry, and Robert Sery, director of its Middle East division.

They were joined on arrival by Peter Houben, the Dutch ambassador to Tunisia, and his first secretary, Robert Akkerman.

Their instructions from Foreign Minister Hans van den Broek was to seek clarification from the PLO chief on a number of issues related to his current diplomatic offensive, for example, just what is the PLO's definition of terrorism.

The Foreign Ministry was irked by the intense publicity for what was supposed to be a low-key mission. The PLO, on the other hand, wanted maximum publicity to show that Holland, always pro-Israel, is now veering toward the Palestinian cause.

But Arafat's apparent snub must surely have backfired. Sources here are saying he failed to show up because he did not consider the Dutch delegation of high enough level to warrant his personal attention.

Instead of returning to Tunisia from Jordan, Arafat flew to North Yemen, then to South Yemen and finally to Cairo, where he met a delegation representing the Parliament of Europe, the European Community's legislative body.

After that, he flew to Athens to meet Greek Prime Minister Andreas Papandreu, who has long been sympathetic to the Palestinian cause.

The Dutch diplomats met with Farouk Kadoumi, the PLO's foreign affairs director, and Abu Alapa, the PLO's director of economic affairs.

KNESSETERS MEET WITH EGYPTIAN; ENCOUNTER WITH PLO SET FOR FRIDAY

By Edwin Eytan

PARIS, Jan. 11 (JTA) -- Four Kneset members, here for an encounter Friday with representatives of the Palestine Liberation Organization, met Wednesday with Egyptian Foreign Minister Esmet Abdel Meguid.

The Egyptian official, who attended a conference on chemical weapons here this week, said he would do everything possible to encourage an Israeli-Palestinian dialogue.

The encounter with the PLO members will take place during a public session of an international symposium organized by a French peace committee.

The Kneset members participating are Ora Namir and Arich Eliav of the Labor Party, Yair Tsaban of Mapam and Shulamit Aloni of the Citizens Rights Movement.

About 30 right-wing Kneset members, who tried to prevent their colleagues' departure for the Paris meeting, are demanding the four be prosecuted when they return to Israel.

Israelis are forbidden by law to have any contact with the PLO. But the law has rarely been invoked against Kneset members, who enjoy immunity when acting within the framework of their duties.

Reports from Jerusalem indicated that the Kneset narrowly rejected a bill Wednesday to allow such prosecution.

The symposium the Israelis and PLO representatives are attending will be addressed by prominent French political figures and the head of the French Jewish community.

They include Simone Veil, former president of the Parliament of Europe, who is Jewish; Marie-Claire Mendes-France, widow of the late French-Jewish Premier Pierre Mendes-France; Claude Cheysson, outgoing European Community commissioner for Mediterranean affairs; and Theo Klein, president of CRIF, the umbrella organization of the French Jewry.

Another speaker will be Gerald Kaufmann, the British Labor Party's shadow foreign secretary.

The Israeli lawmakers were received at the Elysee Palace Tuesday night by President Francois Mitterrand's chief of staff, Jean-Louis Bianco.

IDF KILLED 8 HEZBOLLAH GUERRILLAS

By Hugh Orgel

TEL AVIV, Jan. 11 (JTA) - An Israel Defense Force patrol killed eight guerrillas in a clash just outside the southern Lebanon security zone, a military spokesman announced Wednesday.

They were later identified as members of Hezbollah, the extremist Shiite fundamentalist militia, backed by Iran, whose name means Party of God. There were no Israeli casualties.

The incident occurred last Saturday night and Sunday morning. The IDF did not explain why it was not announced earlier.

According to the spokesman, "An IDF force encountered a terrorist squad moving in the eastern sector beyond the security zone, west of the village of Armata, located along the border of the security zone.

"The force opened fire at the terrorists, killing all eight of them," the spokesman said.

Reports from Lebanon said the slain men were Hezbollah guerrillas.

FRUSTRATED WEST BANK SETTLERS TO STAGE A STRIKE ON THURSDAY

By Gil Sedan

JERUSALEM, Jan. 11 (JTA) -- Jewish settlers in Samaria plan to stage a general strike Thursday to vent their anger and frustration against the government, which they blame for the deteriorating security situation in the territory.

All 32 settlements in the northern West Bank region are to shut down. No one will go to work and classes will be suspended at schools.

The strike will coincide with the end of the 30-day mourning period for Yaacov Parag, a settler killed near Bracha last month.

It will also mark the end of shiva for Shimon Edri, an Israeli taxi driver whose murder near Yakir settlement a week ago the police say was politically motivated.

The settlers plan a mass protest rally near the Yakir road junction where Edri's bullet-riddled body was found. The Defense Ministry said no permit was requested for the rally and none was granted.

In striking, the settlers acknowledge they are borrowing a tactic of the Palestinian uprising. But they say they have come to the end of their patience.

"The readiness of Jews in Judea and Samaria to exercise restraint has reached the zero point," said Benny Katzover, head of the militant Samaria Regional Council.

The settlers say they are fed up with the defense establishment's failure "to put an end to the intifada and to increase the safety of the settlers."

Will Take Law Into Own Hands

They are threatening to take the law into their own hands. "We, as heads of settlement, will not sit and watch the developing activism, but will encourage large-scale actions," Katzover said.

A settler from Efrat, near Bethlehem, was quoted by Yediot Achronot Wednesday as threatening to "punish" the neighboring Dehaishe refugee camp by "breaking everything in sight."

The IDF chief of staff, Lt. Gen. Dan Shomron, has been assailed by the settlers in recent weeks for expressing his belief that the Palestinian uprising cannot be quelled by military means.

Shomron made that point to the Kneset Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee on Tuesday.

"There is no such thing as eradicating the intifada, because in its essence it expresses the struggle of nationalism," Shomron said.

The violence is continuing. At least 10 Palestinians were wounded in clashes with security forces Tuesday, and an Arab was murdered, apparently for alleged collaboration with the Israeli authorities.

Kaid Tmeiza, 27, was shot to death Tuesday standing outside his home in Idna village, near Hebron. An IDF spokeswoman said he was killed "probably as a result of a dispute between Arabs in the village."

It was the second attack this week on a suspected Arab collaborator. On Sunday, a 35-year-old Arab woman, Shuhurat Abu Diyab, was stabbed by masked attackers inside her home in Habla village.

Diyab, a schoolteacher, was taken to Al-Itihad Hospital, in Nablus, with moderate head wounds.

SHARANSKY RECEIVES U.S. MEDAL, OPPOSES CONCESSIONS TO SOVIETS

By David Friedman

WASHINGTON, Jan. 11 (JTA) -- Natan Sharansky, the former Soviet prisoner of conscience, warned Wednesday that the Reagan administration's decision to attend a human rights conference in Moscow in 1991 could result in a major public relations coup for the Soviet Union.

"With all those nice changes that are taking place, the Soviet Union is still very far from those norms of civilized societies," Sharansky told reporters at the White House, after a meeting with President Reagan.

He said that during the next two years, the West must press the Soviet Union for increased improvements in human rights and to ensure that the Moscow conference is open to human rights groups.

At the brief Oval Office meeting, attended by President-elect George Bush and Secretary of State George Shultz, Reagan presented Sharansky with identical congressional gold medals for himself and his wife, Avital.

Sharansky said his wife remained home in Jerusalem to take care of their two daughters, 1-month-old Chana and 2-year-old Rachel. He said he was returning to Israel Thursday, because he always spends Shabbat with his wife.

He was accompanied to the White House by his mother, Ida Milgrom, and his brother, Leonid, now an engineer in Des Moines, Iowa.

The medals, which contain the words "Let My People Go," in Hebrew and English, and feature a picture of the Western Wall, were authorized by Congress on May 13, 1986, three months after Sharansky was allowed to leave the USSR in an East-West prisoner exchange. He had served nearly nine years in Soviet prisons and labor camps.

Sharansky said that Reagan told him that his struggle for human rights and Avital Sharansky's effort to free him were "important as a symbol of the struggle of the people of the world for human rights."

On other issues, Sharansky said he did not think now was the appropriate time for the United States to consider a waiver of the 1974 Jackson-Vanik amendment, which denies the Soviet Union most-favored-nation trade privileges until it makes substantial progress on increasing Jewish emigration.

But he added, "I think we can start talking about changing the Stevenson amendment as the first step." That amendment requires increased emigration in order for the Soviets to get trade credits.

UNION OF COUNCILS IS RELUCTANT TO GIVE SOVIETS A QUID PRO QUO

By Susan Birnbaum

NEW YORK, Jan. 11 (JTA) -- Two major Soviet Jewry groups have taken somewhat different positions on the issue of future American trade relations with the Soviet Union.

Pamela Cohen, national president of the Union of Councils for Soviet Jews, said Tuesday night that her organization did not feel the United States owed the Soviets a quid pro quo for their release of more refuseniks.

Cohen spoke to the Jewish Telegraphic Agency only hours after the National Conference on Soviet Jewry announced it has agreed to re-

examine its stance against improving U.S.-Soviet trade relations, in light of recent positive changes in the way the Soviets treat their Jewish population.

Cohen said she and Micah Naftalin, national executive director of the Union of Councils, were consulted by U.S. Commerce Secretary C. William Verity on the subject of U.S.-Soviet trade and Soviet Jewish emigration.

She said they told Verity they believed the Soviets had already "received two major concessions."

They cited the agreement by Western nations to sign the concluding document of the human rights conference now concluding in Vienna, as well as the agreement that Moscow will host an international human rights conference in 1991.

Cohen pointed out that the Soviets wanted to host the conference "very badly."

Need To 'Wait And See'

"It's important now for us to wait and see, to observe and critically assess Soviet promises on future reform," she said.

Cohen told JTA she and Naftalin were attending the closing session of the Vienna conference when they were summoned to a meeting by the outgoing commerce secretary.

She said Verity "was interested in knowing our reactions to some of the recent concessions that Moscow had made in terms of the higher numbers and release of some of the permissions for long-term refuseniks."

He "wanted to find out how favorable were these moves, to take the temperature of the (Soviet Jewry) movement. He wanted to know what should come next in order to encourage the Soviets," Cohen said.

Cohen said she and Naftalin also met Tuesday with Rozanne Ridgway, assistant secretary of state for European and Canadian affairs.

She said Ridgway "assured us she would make no recommendation to make further concessions, that this was a period of great instability, that we would need to classify and measure Soviet performance on this new ground."

SWITCH ON FANS' VISAS COMES TOO LATE

By Hugh Orgel

TEL AVIV, Jan. 11 (JTA) -- The Soviets have done another flip-flop on the matter of visas for Israeli fans who wanted to accompany the Maccabi Tel Aviv basketball team to Moscow, for its match Thursday against the CSKA Red Army team.

After reneging last week on a promise to issue up to 400 visas, the Soviet authorities announced Tuesday afternoon they were reversing the reversal.

But it was too late. The Dicsenhaus travel agency, which handled the arrangements, said it was informed by Soviet officials in Vienna at 2:30 p.m. that up to 400 visas would be granted.

By then, the last plane from Israel able to connect with a Vienna flight to Moscow had departed. Subsequent flights would arrive in Moscow too late for the game, Dicsenhaus said.

Meanwhile, it appears no Israeli flag will be displayed during the historic game at Moscow's sports stadium. That news was flashed from Moscow by sports commentator Yoav Tocker Wednesday in what was probably the first satellite broadcast by Israel Television from the Soviet capital.

SHABBAT SERVICES INCLUDED IN BUSH'S INAUGURAL PROGRAM

By Howard Rosenberg

WASHINGTON, Jan. 11 (JTA) -- Shabbat services will be conducted at two Washington synagogues for the inauguration of George Bush as president, the first time Jewish services have been part of the official inaugural program.

The services will take place on Jan. 21--the day after Bush and Vice President-elect Dan Quayle are inaugurated -- at Washington's Conservative Adas Israel Congregation and Orthodox Beth Shalom Congregation.

As of Wednesday, no decision had been made on which rabbi would offer a prayer at the swearing-in ceremony of Bush and Quayle, said Howard Mortman, director of the 1989 Jewish Inaugural Advisory Committee. He said several rabbis are being considered.

Max Fisher, of Detroit, is the honorary chairman of the 84-member advisory committee, and Gordon Zacks, of Columbus, Ohio, is the national chairman.

Committee members include four former chairmen of the Conference of Presidents of Major American Jewish Organizations -- Morris Abram, Julius Berman, Kenneth Bialkin and Jacob Stein.

Seven rabbis are on the committee, including Marvin Hier, dean of the Simon Wiesenthal Center; Wolfe Kelman, executive vice president of the Rabbinical Assembly of America; and Arthur Schneier, of Park East Synagogue in New York.

NAZI SOUGHT IN ARGENTINA REPORTED DEAD IN SWITZERLAND 15 YEARS AGO

By Susan Birnbaum

NEW YORK, Jan. 11 (JTA) -- A Dutchman currently being sought in Argentina for Nazi war crimes is now reported by Interpol to have died in Switzerland 15 years ago.

Interpol, the international police force, has said that Bernardus Andries Riphagen died in Geneva in 1973.

Interpol's report was made to Dutch authorities, which had requested the extradition of Riphagen in order to stand trial for his wartime deeds.

Riphagen was accused of the arrest of more than 2,000 Jews and the death of some of them, according to Rabbi Morton Rosenthal, director of Latin American Affairs for the Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rith.

Riphagen was one of three Dutchmen being sought in Argentina for Nazi war crimes. Rosenthal went to Argentina in November with a list of these men and was assured by Argentine authorities they were actively searching for them.

One of the others on Rosenthal's list, Jan Olij, was arrested Dec. 7 in Buenos Aires and told police that Riphagen had left Argentina many years before and was believed to be in West Germany.

Argentine authorities appear to have been unaware of this information. Rosenthal spoke to Argentine Interior Secretary Ricardo Gil Lavedra Wednesday on the matter of the three Nazis, and Lavedra did not seem to know of Olij's report.

Riphagen, who was born Sept. 7, 1909, in Amsterdam, obtained Argentine citizenship on Aug. 25, 1953.

(JTA correspondent Henrietta Boas in Amsterdam contributed to this report.)

FRANCE FORMALLY ASKS SYRIA TO EXTRADITE NAZI BRUNNER

By Edwin Eytan

PARIS, Jan. 11 (JTA) -- France has asked Syria for the extradition of Alois Brunner, one of the last major Nazi war criminals known to be alive.

The French ambassador to Syria, Alain Grenier, presented the formal request to the Syrian authorities in Damascus on Dec. 27, Nazi-hunter Serge Klarsfeld disclosed here Wednesday.

Syria has stubbornly denied for years any knowledge of Brunner's whereabouts, contrary to all evidence, including an interview Brunner gave to a Chicago Tribune reporter in Damascus last year.

Now France is exerting the full force of its diplomatic weight to bring him to justice, Klarsfeld said.

The French extradition request is based on new documents Klarsfeld filed with the Ministry of Justice in 1987.

The new file charges Brunner with crimes against humanity, which according to French law, are not covered by the statute of limitations, as are war crimes.

Klarsfeld used a similar complaint to obtain the trial and 1986 conviction of Klaus Barbie, the "Butcher of Lyon" who is now serving a life sentence in Lyon's Saint Joseph prison.

Brunner, 76, one of Adolf Eichmann's top aides, has been hiding out in Syria since the early 1950s.

A French court convicted him in absentia of war crimes in 1954 and sentenced him to death.

Brunner is held responsible for deporting over 100,000 Jews from Austria, Berlin, France and Greece to death camps in Eastern Europe.

West Germany asked Syria for Brunner's extradition in 1984.

The Syrians claim that they know of no such person living in Syria.

But only last year, Brunner freely admitted to the Tribune reporter that he is the wanted Nazi.

Klarsfeld said that if Brunner is extradited, he could be tried in either France, West Germany or Greece, since he is wanted in all of those countries.

Klarsfeld said that the three countries, with Israel's participation, could also set up an international court to try him.

PRICES SHOOT UP 11 PERCENT, TRIGGERING FEARS OF INFLATION

By Gil Sedan

JERUSALEM, Jan. 11 (JTA) -- The prices of some 200 commodities shot up between 2 percent and 11 percent Wednesday, triggering new fears of runaway inflation.

The Treasury rushed to assure the public that it was the last price hike for at least three months.

The Ministry of Industry and Trade reimposed some price controls that had been lifted.

The order affects certain kinds of bread, parking lots and barber shops, as well as coffee, tea, flour, chocolate, beer, cigarettes and salt.

Histadrut declared war on the price increases and on the Treasury's austerity economic program approved by the Cabinet last week.

The price rises were the third since Shimon Peres took office as finance minister last month.