

U.S. WARNS IT WILL WITHHOLD FUNDS TO ANY U.N. BODY THAT ADMITS PLO

By Howard Rosenberg

WASHINGTON, May 1 (JTA) -- The American Jewish leadership welcomed Secretary of State James Baker's warning Monday that the United States would withhold funds for any United Nations body that gives the Palestine Liberation Organization full membership.

In a statement read by State Department spokeswoman Margaret Tutwiler, Baker said he would recommend to President Bush "that the United States make no further contribution, voluntary or assessed, to any international organization which makes any change in the PLO's present status as an observer organization."

Baker's warning comes one week before the World Health Organization is scheduled to convene for its annual assembly in Geneva. On the agenda is a proposal to grant the PLO's declared state of Palestine full membership in the U.N. body.

The United States contributes about 25 percent of the agency's budget, with its 1990 fiscal year contribution set at \$73.8 million, Tutwiler said.

On Sunday, the Conference of Presidents of Major American Jewish Organizations issued a statement calling on the Bush administration to formally notify the WHO that the United States would cut off all funds if it votes to admit the PLO.

On Monday, even as the statement was being delivered to news organizations, the conference's wish appeared to be granted.

Seymour Reich, who chairs the conference of 46 national Jewish groups, said in a telephone interview Monday that he was "gratified" by Baker's opposition to any "back door admission" of the PLO to the United Nations.

WHO Chief En Route To U.S.

In Geneva, meanwhile, the director general of the WHO, Hiroshi Nakajima, departed Monday for Washington, where he is expected to discuss the subject with administration and congressional officials.

Nakajima is said to be concerned that there is no way to stop the motion to admit the PLO, which is expected to receive the votes needed to pass from Third World nations. He reportedly fears that a U.S. decision to cut off funds would seriously impair the agency's work in combating disease around the world.

Reports from Geneva said Nakajima would meet Wednesday with Baker. But in Washington, Tutwiler said Monday that no meeting was planned. She indicated that the WHO director general might meet with others in the State Department.

Nakajima is to confer Tuesday with various members of Congress, including Reps. Gus Yatron (D-Pa.), chairman of the House Foreign Affairs subcommittee with jurisdiction over the United Nations, and Benjamin Gilman (R-N.Y.), one of the senior Republicans on the overall committee, Capitol Hill sources said.

The proposal to admit the PLO to the world health body also came up Monday at a new round of talks in Tunis between the United States and

the PLO. Tutwiler provided few details of the session, saying only that it was a "real meeting" and not a "telephone call" or "contact."

The United States "vigorously opposes" admission of the PLO as a full member to any U.N. body, Tutwiler said. She said that the secretary of state feels "very strongly" that PLO admission would harm the Middle East peace process as well as the "U.N. system."

Congressional Action

Western European allies support the U.S. decision, Tutwiler said. When asked if that included France, which PLO leader Yasir Arafat is due to visit Tuesday, Tutwiler responded, "My understanding was that it was with all of our allies."

On Capitol Hill, Sens. Patrick Leahy (D-Vt.) and Robert Kasten (R-Wis.) are circulating a letter to Bush urging that "the United States government at the highest level immediately and strenuously emphasize to all parties" the "implications of according the PLO the status of member state."

The senators say in the letter, which may be sent by the end of the week, that they cannot "overemphasize the gravity" of the U.S. sanctions against U.N. agencies should they recognize such a state.

Leahy, Kasten and 36 colleagues had written to Baker on April 13, threatening that Congress might take "punitive" actions against U.N. agencies that recognize the Palestinian state the PLO has proclaimed.

In the House, Rep. Tom Lantos (D-Calif.) introduced a bill last week that would withhold U.S. funds to U.N. bodies that grant full membership to a Palestinian state.

Baker also raised the subject with Clovis Maksoud, the Arab League's permanent representative to the United Nations, at a meeting April 27.

The secretary told Maksoud "how strongly we feel about this and that we were prepared to take this step that I have announced today," Tutwiler said.

ARAFAT WILL USE PARIS VISIT TO BOOST PLO'S IMAGE IN EUROPE

By Edwin Eytan

PARIS, May 1 (JTA) -- Yasir Arafat apparently will use his official visit to France this week to launch a propaganda offensive to improve the Palestine Liberation Organization's image in Western Europe.

The PLO leader, who is due here Tuesday, also will try to strengthen the PLO's relations with the 12-nation European Community. France assumes the rotating chairmanship of the E.C. Council of Ministers on July 1.

Although most Western diplomats predict his visit will be "more form than substance," Arafat already has made his first bid for public opinion.

In an interview published Saturday in the mass-circulation daily *Le Figaro*, he asked the French Jewish community "to convince Israel that 40 years of war is enough" and that it is time to start an Israeli-Palestinian dialogue.

"I come to France not to seek arms but

peace, both for my people and for the Jews," he told the newspaper.

The PLO leader decried the vigorous opposition to his visit displayed by the French Jewish community. "The protests and uproar now heard are an attempt to muffle our voice to prevent French public opinion from knowing the real reasons for the (Middle East) conflict," he said.

Arafat will be greeted at Orly Airport Tuesday morning by Deputy Foreign Minister Thierry de Beauce and will be driven directly to the Elysee Palace for a scheduled 90-minute meeting with President Francois Mitterrand.

It will be the first time the PLO chief is received by the leader of a major Western nation, and it is a milestone in the PLO's quest for international recognition and respectability.

Staying In Official Housing

Western diplomats say Arafat hopes that Mitterrand will plead the cause of PLO recognition when he meets in Washington with U.S. Secretary of State James Baker on May 18 and 19.

Mitterrand, for his part, is said to hope his meeting with Arafat will pave the way for a substantive French role in future Middle East negotiations.

During his two-day stay in Paris, Arafat and his 50-member entourage will be housed by the French government at the same hotel where Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir stayed on his recent visit to Paris.

He will meet with many of the same French officials who welcomed Shamir.

Arafat is due to confer Wednesday with Premier Michel Rocard, who will also give a banquet in his honor. He will meet with the secretary-general of the French Socialist Party, Pierre Mauroy, the mayor of Lille and a former premier.

Mauroy has visited Israel on several occasions and is considered one of the Jewish community's best friends in France's political establishment.

Arafat will meet with Foreign Minister Roland Dumas at the Quai d'Orsay Tuesday afternoon. Later, he will receive three former French foreign ministers with whom he has conferred in the past in Tunis, Beirut or Cairo. They are Michel Jobert, Jean Sauvagnargues and Claude Cheysson.

Some Politicians Avoiding Him

Several Jewish intellectuals reportedly had plans to meet with Arafat. Two of those mentioned, conductor Daniel Barenboim and Professor Leon Schwartzberg, France's best known cancer researcher, denied they had such plans.

But other prominent Jews will either call on Arafat or attend a dinner to be given in his honor by the local PLO office.

These include Marie-Claire Mendes-France, widow of the former French-Jewish Premier Pierre Mendes-France; philosopher Pierre Vidal-Naquet; and Dr. Joelle Kaufmann, a physician and wife of a former French news correspondent held hostage in Beirut.

Some leading French politicians have begged off meeting with Arafat, claiming previous engagements abroad.

Former Premier Jacques Chirac is leaving for the United States on the eve of his arrival. Laurent Fabius, another former prime minister and a Socialist contender for the next presidential race, has left to attend a symposium in Spain.

NETANYAHU PAINTS PICTURE OF ISRAEL POISED ON BRINK OF PROMISE, DANGER

By Susan Birnbaum

NEW YORK, May 1 (JTA) -- Israeli Deputy Foreign Minister Binyamin Netanyahu presented a vision Sunday night of an Israel poised on the verge of both greatness and destruction, whose potential for growth or annihilation is so awesome that the description "apocalyptic" does not seem inappropriate.

In a three-pronged speech here to the Zionist Organization of America, Netanyahu suggested first that Israel is about to be infused with the greatest influx of immigrants from the Soviet Union ever.

Then, acknowledging Israel's dire financial straits, which could scarcely support the vast needs of these new immigrants, the Likud official said that Israel is about to revolutionize its economy. He urged his audience to "buy, invest."

Netanyahu then presented a portrait of an Israel now riding a very thin line between continuation and total annihilation. Its fate, he seemed to imply, hangs on the legitimacy the world gives the Palestine Liberation Organization.

Netanyahu cited an April 4 address given in Arabic by Farouk Kaddoumi, the PLO's so-called "foreign minister," who said that although the PLO's methods have changed, the West Bank and Gaza are still the launching pads to liberate Haifa and Jaffa.

"Jewish history is going to be determined right now," Netanyahu said, his voice becoming more intense.

Another Czechoslovakia?

He drew pointed comparison between the Israel of today, which is being asked to give up its administered territories, and the Czechoslovakia of 1938, which was entreated by Adolf Hitler to deliver up the Sudetenland as "a last territorial claim."

He recalled that the Times of London editorialized at the time that "Czechoslovakia must choose now which way it must go on ruling an alien people." The paper urged the Czech government to "choose peace," he said, drawing an analogy to words often used by Israel's critics.

"Those who say that a Palestinian state will lead to peace are fatal. It's a prescription for catastrophic war, not just regular war," he said.

Instead of choosing annihilation, Israel has offered the Palestinians "another idea," said Netanyahu. "You can have maximum control of your daily life and we (will) be in charge of security," he said, giving a broad outline of Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir's plan for Palestinian autonomy.

But his speech was as full of optimistic predictions as it was grave warnings. He spoke passionately of the changes going on in Eastern Europe, citing his recent trip to Poland and the "glacial change" taking place in Hungary.

"Something is about to happen," he said. "I think the Soviet Union is radically going to alter its emigration policies very soon, and you will be able to go to any embassy in Moscow" for an emigration visa.

He said the numbers of Jews leaving the Soviet Union today already outstrip the benchmark Soviet emigration figures of 1979.

"History is judging every one of us," he concluded. "And it is not going to give the Jewish people another chance. This is it."

SETTLER SUSPECTED OF SHOOTING IS RELEASED ON BAIL BY COURT By Gil Sedan

JERUSALEM, May 1 (JTA) — West Bank settlers scored a victory Monday, when the Jerusalem District Court released on bail a Hebron settler suspected of having killed a 14-year-old Palestinian in response to a rock-throwing attack last week.

Judge Dalia Koval decided to release Haim Ben-Lulu, 50, on bail, since "there was no concern that he would run away, there was no fear that he would try to obstruct legal procedures and he was unlikely to endanger the public's safety."

Ben-Lulu left the courtroom to the cheers of his fellow settlers, after friends deposited the 25,000 shekel (\$14,000) bail.

Ben-Lulu, a building contractor who resides in Kiryat Arba, was arrested Saturday night on suspicion of having shot Nader Da'ane to death in downtown Hebron on Friday after Palestinians began throwing rocks at his car.

In court Monday, Ben-Lulu convinced the judge that he was acting in self-defense. He told the court that he was forced to use his rifle only after he had been surrounded by dozens of Arab youths who threatened his life by throwing rocks at his car.

Riot In East Jerusalem

Moreover, it turned out that the Arab youth was not hit directly by bullets from Ben-Lulu's rifle, but rather by shrapnel from shots fired at a slightly different direction.

The court released Ben-Lulu a day after Defense Minister Yitzhak Rabin rejected demands by right-wing Cabinet ministers to give settlers more leeway to use firearms when attacked with rocks.

While the court was in session, Jerusalem police used tear gas and rubber bullets to disperse a demonstration of Palestinian youths on Saladin Street, where the courthouse is located.

Three Palestinians were slightly wounded and 15 were arrested in the confrontation.

The riot began as a May Day rally at the Hakawati Theater in East Jerusalem, a few yards away from the courthouse.

After the rally, dozens of Arab youths began marching down the street in the direction of the American Consulate, with the intention of demonstrating there. The protesters chanted nationalist slogans and songs.

Another Collaborator Murdered

As they passed the courthouse, near the Justice Ministry, police ordered the demonstrators to disperse and began firing tear-gas canisters and rubber bullets.

Violence also broke out Monday in Tulkarm, where a local resident was murdered — apparently by fellow Palestinians to punish him for collaborating with the authorities.

According to security sources, the upsurge in murders of alleged collaborators is partly due to the fact that the army has decreased its presence in the territories and is no longer deployed in remote areas.

This, the sources explained, enables nationalist elements in the territories to operate almost freely in some areas, making it possible for them to carry out political assassinations in broad daylight, without fear of being caught.

FOREIGN PRESS GROUP DEFENDS USE OF PALESTINIAN PRESS CARDS By Gil Sedan

JERUSALEM, May 1 (JTA) — The Foreign Press Association on Sunday rejected the Israeli government's criticism of reporters accepting press cards issued by the Palestinian Press Office. The cards have been issued to journalists covering events in the administered territories.

Right-wing Knesset members last week sharply criticized foreign correspondents who use the cards, saying they should be thrown out of the country. Police Minister Haim Bar-Lev said he would investigate possible illegalities connected with the issuing of the cards.

The FPA responded to the government Sunday, saying that reporters had accepted the cards for their own safety. Israeli police posing as journalists and using counterfeit press credentials in the West Bank and Gaza Strip had put them in danger, the association said.

The Palestinian Press Office reportedly has issued 100 ID cards to foreign journalists.

In unrelated media news, the American owner of the East Jerusalem daily Al-Fajr is threatening to close the newspaper down.

Owner Paul Ajlouny said the paper, which is sympathetic to the Palestine Liberation Organization, is having "financial difficulties." Ajlouny has given workers a week to come up with a rehabilitation plan before ordering the closing.

BEIRUT REFUGEES HEAD SOUTH, SWELLING SECURITY ZONE BY 20,000 By Hugh Orgel

TEL AVIV, May 1 (JTA) — The number of refugees from the civil war in Beirut who have retreated to the southern Lebanon security zone reached 20,000 this weekend, the Israeli authorities reported.

Only two weeks ago they numbered 12,000.

About 95 percent are Shiite and Sunni Moslems, with the other 5 percent Lebanese Christians.

The influx proves "that the security zone is the best and safest place to live today in Lebanon," Gen. Yossi Peled, commander of the northern sector, said in an interview last week with the Israel-sponsored "Voice of the South" radio.

Few Christian refugees arrive in the security zone because the Christian enclave in Beirut is cut off from the roads leading south from the city.

Christians looking for escape travel to Cyprus, which is accessible by ferry from the Christian-held northern Lebanese port of Jounieh.

But Syrian guns have shelled the ferries, causing wealthy Christians to sail to Cyprus in their yachts.

While there, many of the Beirut Christians met with the hundreds of Israeli yachtsmen who visited Cyprus during the Passover holidays, to exchange gossip and information.

Upon returning home, the Israelis reported that a boatload of refugees was sunk by Syrian forces recently.

The Israeli yachtsmen reported that they, too, were harassed near Cyprus. One fast boat, flying the Syrian flag, repeatedly cut across their bows at close range.

The Israelis said that in response to a radio telephone call for help, a British army helicopter appeared and warned the Syrian vessel away.

ISRAELIS SUPPORT GREATER FORCE IN SUPPRESSING ARAB UPRISING

By Hugh Orgel

TEL AVIV, May 1 (JTA) -- A recent poll shows that more than half of Israelis support the use of greater military force in the administered territories, and they believe that the 16-month-old Palestinian uprising can be suppressed by force.

This was revealed by a Pori poll conducted last week among 1,200 Jewish men and women over 18. The results were published in Ha'aretz on Friday.

In response to the question, "Are you for or against the use of greater military force to suppress the uprising in the territories," 54.6 percent replied in the affirmative, 36.6 percent were opposed and 8.8 percent had no opinion.

Asked, "Do you think it possible or impossible to suppress the uprising in the territories by military force," 53 percent thought it was possible, 38.1 percent said impossible and 8.9 percent had no opinion.

A plurality of Israelis back territorial compromise to resolve the problem of the territories, according to a Dahaf poll reported in Yediot Achronot.

Taken on the eve of Passover among 656 adults, the poll revealed that 33 percent favored territorial compromise, 27 percent favored autonomy and 22 percent opted for annexation.

The status quo was preferred by 9 percent, and 5 percent supported a Palestinian state.

The same poll showed that 17 percent support negotiations now with the Palestine Liberation Organization, 41 percent would support negotiations under certain conditions and 39 percent oppose talks with the PLO under any circumstances.

A Modi'in Ezrachi poll published in Hadashot on Friday contained bad news for the Labor Party.

If elections were held now, Labor would win just 29 Knesset seats, down from the 39 it won in the November 1988 elections, the poll showed.

Likud would hold firm at 40 seats, while the religious parties would do about the same in new elections as they did in the last one.

But parties on the left and right of the political spectrum would enlarge their Knesset representation, with significant gains for the left.

The Citizens Rights Movement would increase from five to nine Knesset seats, Mapam would go from three to five and the Center-Shinui party from two to three seats.

On the right, Moledet and Tsomet would each increase its Knesset delegation from two to three seats, while Tehiya would go from three to four seats.

A MUTED MAY DAY IN ISRAEL

By David Landau

JERUSALEM, May 1 (JTA) -- May Day celebrations in Israel were markedly lower-key Monday than in the past -- a fact which the Likud faction of the Histadrut labor federation trumpeted in huge media ads as a success for its party.

Most newspapers published, and many factories and offices stayed open as usual, after the Histadrut leadership let it be known that it would not insist on observance of the international workers holiday.

Unlike previous years, there was no major parade through Tel Aviv, although modest public gatherings were organized separately by the Mapam (the United Workers Party of Israel), the Citizens Rights Movement and the Hadash Communists.

Political observers said Histadrut Secretary-General Yisrael Kessar, who is standing for reelection in November, had realized that observance of the day was becoming less and less popular among the people, including workers.

An additional reason for the low-key observance was that May Day this year fell on the eve of Yom Hashoah, which is a national day of remembrance and mourning in Israel.

SHUL BUILT BY GERMANS DEDICATED

By Gili Sedan

JERUSALEM, May 1 (JTA) -- On the eve of Yom Hashoah, Holocaust Remembrance Day, a new synagogue was inaugurated in Ma'aleh Adumim, just outside Jerusalem.

It was built with the contributions of hundreds of German Christians as a token compensation for the arson of hundreds of synagogues on Kristallnacht 50 years ago.

The new synagogue, Mitzpe Nevo, was built at the initiative of the International Christian Embassy in Jerusalem.

A spokesman for the embassy said that Israel's Christian friends throughout the world wish to demonstrate their participation in the renaissance of religious and social activities in Israel through this synagogue.

The inauguration ceremony at Ma'aleh Adumim -- located east of Jerusalem in the West Bank -- was attended by hundreds of German guests. The three-story building includes the synagogue, a community center and a child day care center.

Avner Shaki, a National Religious Party minister without portfolio, said at the ceremony that peace in the area is necessary to prevent a second Kristallnacht and that the existence of the State of Israel is the best guarantee for the continued existence of the Jewish people.

ISRAEL PROFILES U.S. TOURISTS

By David Landau

JERUSALEM, May 1 (JTA) -- Statistics recently published by the Ministry of Tourism revealed that three-quarters of the Americans who come to Israel as tourists are Jewish.

A profile of American tourists who come to Israel shows that 51 percent come alone, 34 percent arrive as couples and 15 percent come in families of three or more.

Two-thirds of them make their own travel arrangements rather than join an inclusive tour.

Some of the findings include:

- 74 percent of the American tourists are Jewish;
- 36 percent come on package tours;
- 41 percent make their decisions six months or more before their trip;
- 99 percent arrive on scheduled flights, only 1 percent on charters;
- 42 percent give the desire to visit relatives or friends as one of their reasons for traveling;
- 61 percent stay in hotels and their average expenditure is \$1,300, or \$62 per day;
- 90 percent say they have had a good time.