

VOL. 67 - 72nd YEAR

FRIDAY, MAY 19, 1989

NO. 94

**ISRAEL NEEDS FULL U.S. SUPPORT
FOR PEACE PLAN, ARENS MAINTAINS**

By David Friedman

WASHINGTON, May 18 (JTA) -- Israel is receiving from the United States the "large measure" of understanding and support it needs for its peace initiative to succeed, Israeli Foreign Minister Moshe Arens said Thursday.

"I think what is needed now is wholehearted and unreserved American support for this peace initiative," Arens told reporters at the State Department after a 30-minute meeting with Secretary of State James Baker.

The foreign minister said full U.S. backing is the only way to win support from other countries and a positive reaction from the Arab countries.

Arens refused to go into any specifics of his meeting. But he said that he was not "pushed at all" by Baker on the details of the plan, which would have Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza Strip elect representatives to negotiate a five-year autonomy arrangement with Israel.

The Bush administration reportedly has been asking Israel whether Arabs in East Jerusalem would be allowed to take part in the elections and whether Israel would accept international supervision of them.

Premier Yitzhak Shamir has ruled out both proposals.

"I don't think we can be sidetracked at this time by this or that detail," Arens said.

He said the important thing to focus on is the peace initiative, which he stressed is not just elections, but a four-part proposal.

Meets With U.S. Officials

It also includes the reaffirmation by the United States, Israel and Egypt of the Camp David accords, peace negotiations with other Arab countries and a multinational effort to solve the problems of Palestinians in refugee camps.

"There is only one peace initiative around at this time and that's Israel's peace initiative," Arens said. "It's the only game in town."

Emerging from a meeting earlier in the day with National Security Adviser Brent Scowcroft, Arens expressed confidence that the peace plan would win full backing from the Bush administration.

"I think there's a fair chance that President (Hosni) Mubarak of Egypt will also be interested," he told reporters.

Arens also met Thursday with Defense Secretary Dick Cheney and Health and Human Services Secretary Jack Kemp. He was scheduled to meet with Vice President Dan Quayle on Friday.

Reporters were told by the State Department that Arens would not be leaving from the diplomatic entrance, the usual point of arrival and departure for visiting foreign dignitaries, because a group supporting the Palestine Liberation Organization was demonstrating across the street.

But just before Arens was scheduled to depart, his car and the security cars accompanying it started driving away.

The PLO supporters thought Arens had left, and so they departed. The cars then returned and Arens came out and spoke with reporters.

**SHAMIR AND PERES AT ODDS
OVER TERRITORIAL COMPROMISE**

By David Landau

JERUSALEM, May 18 (JTA) -- Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir continued to push his plan for Palestinian elections and self-rule in the territories against strong opposition in his own Likud party.

Apparently hoping to appease hard-liners, Shamir ruled out any territorial concessions by Israel, even in the context of a permanent settlement.

In a television interview, Shamir said Israel need not give up land in order to conclude a peace treaty with Jordan.

His adamant position drew sharp criticism from Shimon Peres, the vice premier and Labor Party leader.

Peres, who also serves as finance minister, said Shamir's remarks were "not helpful to the cause of peace nor to the country."

The Israeli peace plan is a joint undertaking of Likud and Labor. But the Labor Party leader thinks Shamir's articulation of maximalist positions at this time is counterproductive.

Addressing Labor's Leadership Bureau on Thursday, Peres warned that if Israel "wants to remain a Jewish state," it must divest itself of the administered territories, especially the heavily Arab-populated areas.

**ARENS WILL ATTEMPT TO CONVINCE
EUROPEANS TO BACK PEACE PLAN**

By Yossi Lempkowitz

BRUSSELS, May 18 (JTA) -- Israeli Foreign Minister Moshe Arens, presently in Washington, is due here Monday to try to convince the foreign ministers of the 12 European Community nations that Israel's plan for Palestinian elections in the West Bank and Gaza Strip deserves their support.

Arens presented his arguments in some detail in an interview with the Belgian daily La Libre Belgique, published Thursday.

His ideas are already familiar, as is his total rejection of any role for the Palestine Liberation Organization.

According to Spanish diplomatic sources here, the European Community might be willing to back the Israeli elections idea if it is a step toward a comprehensive solution of the Middle East conflict.

This seems to be in line with the American position.

The European Community, currently chaired by Spain, has consistently supported the idea of an international peace conference under U.N. auspices, in which all parties would participate, including the PLO.

But E.C. sources said nevertheless that "cautious diplomatic backing" could be given to Arens next week if Israel agrees to add two stipulations to its plan.

These are that Israel would allow international supervision of the elections and that it would permit Arab residents of East Jerusalem to vote and run in the elections.

According to one diplomat, the Europeans will ask for this "in order to present proposals

more acceptable for the PLO." He explained that "Americans and Europeans could not risk supporting the Israeli plan without reservations."

The diplomat added, "Arens is playing a difficult game here."

Rejects Outside Supervision

But the Israeli foreign minister seemed optimistic, in the newspaper interview, that his arguments will prevail.

He insisted it would be "easy" to persuade the West European countries to support Israel's plan, because they are "all democracies," and "the right way to designate representatives for talks is by democratic elections."

The purpose of the elections is for Palestinians to choose delegates with whom Israel would negotiate a five-year period of self-rule in the territories, to be followed, no later than the third year, by negotiations on the final status of the territories.

The foreign minister brushed off demands for international supervision, saying that Israel "has proven its faithfulness in democratic processes."

"Everyone knows that if there is any fear over the freedom of elections, it would come from terrorism by the PLO against the Palestinian population," he said.

Arens chided the Europeans for "legitimizing" the PLO and giving "royal treatment" to its leader, Yasir Arafat. Doing so, he said, "only reinforces terrorism."

"Europe is making a mistake," Arens said. "The change of tone by the PLO is a deception."

During his two-day stay here next week, Arens will co-chair the annual meeting of the E.C.-Israel Cooperation Council, along with Foreign Minister Francisco Fernandez Ordenez of Spain, who holds the rotating chairmanship of the E.C. Council of Ministers.

The Cooperation Council reviews economic and trade relations between Europe and Israel.

Arens is scheduled to meet Tuesday with the Belgian prime minister, Wilfried Martens, and with the president of the European Commission, Jacques Delors.

PLO OFFICIAL BLASTS ELECTIONS PLAN

By Cathrine Gerson

JERUSALEM, May 18 (JTA) -- Salah Khalaf, the Palestine Liberation Organization's second in command, claimed this week that Israel's proposal for elections in the West Bank and Gaza Strip is "a deception of world public opinion" and a ruse to crush the Palestinian uprising.

Khalaf, popularly known as Abu Iyad, made the remark in a television interview in the United Arab Emirates.

Khalaf was quoted as saying that "elections cannot be held under the shadow of occupation." He vowed that the intifada, as the Palestinians call their uprising, would continue until the Israeli "occupation" ends.

NO BLOODSHED IN NEW RAID ON NAHALIN

By Cathrine Gerson

JERUSALEM, May 18 (JTA) -- The Israel Defense Force conducted its second pre-emptive raid Thursday morning on the West Bank Arab village of Nahalin, near Bethlehem.

This time, there was no bloodshed.

The purpose was to seize security suspects. An IDF spokesman said a number of arrests were

made. He said there was no resistance and no disturbances.

Troops entered at dawn Thursday, after surrounding the hamlet Wednesday night to prevent anyone from leaving.

Nahalin was the target of a surprise raid by the IDF and border police on April 13. After encountering fierce resistance, they killed five Palestinians and wounded 20.

CONSTRUCTION INDUSTRY IN TURMOIL OVER OUSTER OF GAZA STRIP LABORERS

By Hugh Orgel

TEL AVIV, May 18 (JTA) -- Israel's construction industry has been thrown into turmoil by the ouster from Israel of Arab laborers in the Gaza Strip, which has been sealed off and placed under indefinite curfew.

The Israel Defense Force ordered the workers Tuesday to return immediately to their homes or face arrest. The measure, apparently taken for security reasons, eliminated a work force of 40,000 to 50,000 that had been the backbone of the construction industry.

As a result, many firms may suspend operations and furlough their Israeli employees.

Leaders of the construction industry, at an emergency meeting Thursday, demanded that the government import thousands of trained construction workers from abroad to replace the Arabs.

Agriculture is also suffering. The director general of the Farmers Association said Wednesday night that the Gaza blockade has resulted in the absence of some 8,000 farm workers from their jobs.

The Education Ministry said it is willing to recruit 10th- and 11th-grade students for seasonal fruit-picking.

For more than 20 years, since they took control of the West Bank and Gaza Strip, Israelis have benefited from a large supply of cheap Arab labor.

Arabs from the territories perform physically difficult or menial tasks, filling jobs many Israelis refuse to take.

But the labor situation has become erratic since the Palestinian uprising erupted more than 17 months ago.

With general strikes one of the weapons of the intifada, the absentee rate for Arab workers has soared. This has caused slowdowns in construction and other fields.

But now, the situation has become "absolutely impossible," a construction industry spokesman told Israel Radio on Thursday.

ONE DEAD AS GAZA REMAINS SEALED

By David Landau

JERUSALEM, May 18 (JTA) -- A 20-year-old Arab was shot to death and at least three Palestinian youngsters were wounded by gunfire Thursday in clashes with the Israel Defense Force in the West Bank.

IDF sources identified the dead man as Najib el-Omari. He was killed when he allegedly tried to grab a soldier's weapon in an encounter on the trans-Samaria highway, the IDF said.

The other shootings occurred during violent demonstrations elsewhere in the West Bank. The IDF clamped curfews on several refugee camps.

The Gaza Strip remained sealed off for the second full day, its inhabitants forbidden to enter Israel. But the curfew was lifted in some towns.

**FRENCH PRESIDENT VENTS ANGER
AT CRITICS OF ARAFAT MEETING**

By Edwin Eytan

PARIS, May 18 (JTA) -- President Francois Mitterrand vented his indignation Thursday over the attacks on him by French Jews and Israeli leaders before and after his May 2 meeting with Palestine Liberation Organization leader Yasir Arafat.

His long-simmering irritation was expressed at a major news conference, Mitterrand's first in three years.

In icy tones, he declared, "France's foreign policy is decided in Paris, and France will not let anyone dictate to her what to do."

He added that France and Israel have friendly relations, "but not relations of submissiveness."

The message was that France would brook no interference from Israeli diplomats or French Jews on the way it handles its relations with the PLO.

The official Jewish community initiated a testy exchange of letters with Mitterrand after the invitation to Arafat was announced last month.

Jews demonstrated in the streets when the PLO chief arrived, and many branded Mitterrand a "traitor" for receiving him.

But the French president maintained Thursday that the invitation to Arafat was overdue. He said he should have invited the PLO leader long before, but kept postponing a decision until the PLO recognized Israel's right to exist.

Mitterrand also indicated he was skeptical of Israel's plan to hold Palestinian elections in the West Bank and Gaza Strip.

"I expressed to (Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak) Shamir my doubts during his recent trip to Paris. I told him then already that it is difficult to hold free elections in the presence of an armed occupation force.

"I also mentioned the difficulty of holding free elections without the presence of effective international control," Mitterrand said.

But, he added, "I hope the plan will work, for Israel's sake and for the sake of the Palestinian people."

Could Impact CRIF Elections

Mitterrand left Thursday night for Canada and will meet with President Bush on Saturday in Kennebunkport, Maine. He is expected to brief Bush on his talks with Arafat.

Meanwhile, French Jewry's soured relations with Mitterrand could influence the outcome of the elections this Sunday of the next president of CRIF, the Representative Council of Jewish Institutions in France.

The leading candidates to succeed Theo Klein, who is not eligible for a third term, range from moderate to confrontational.

The choice may indicate just how deep Jewish indignation still runs against Mitterrand for receiving Arafat. Jewish leaders believe the elections will establish the community's political policy for years to come.

Mitterrand was once a favorite of French Jews and regarded as a staunch friend of Israel. But now many of these Jews -- especially the younger generation, which tends to back Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir's hard-line policies to the hilt -- express doubts about the French president's commitment to Israel.

**TRIAL OF VANUNU'S APPEAL ENDS;
JUDGES STILL TO RENDER VERDICT**

By David Landau

JERUSALEM, May 18 (JTA) -- The High Court of Justice ended four days of hearings Thursday on the appeal of convicted atomic spy Mordechai Vanunu. It will render a decision at a later date.

A panel of three judges was presided over by Meir Shamgar, president of the High Court. The judges heard arguments by Vanunu's lawyers.

The former technician at the nuclear facility at Dimona is serving an 18-year prison sentence for giving a British newspaper detailed information, including photographs, of Israel's alleged nuclear weapons capability.

The trial has been held in camera, meaning press and public are barred from attending.

In an unrelated judicial development, an Israeli newspaper editor convicted of membership in a Palestinian terrorist group was denied parole at Neveh Tirza women's prison Thursday.

Michal Schwartz, one of four editors of the outlawed left-wing periodical Derech Hanitzotz, is serving an 18-month prison term. She asked that it be reduced by a third for good behavior.

At the trial of the four journalists last year, Schwartz admitted to membership in the Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine, a Marxist group headed by Nayef Hawatmeh.

Although the parole application noted that Schwartz is the mother of two children, the prison parole board accepted the state attorney's contention that she remains a danger to national security.

**LEBANESE HIJACKER TO APPEAL
CONVICTION AND LIFE SENTENCE**

By David Kantor

BONN, May 18 (JTA) -- Lawyers for Mohammed Hamadei said Thursday they would appeal the life sentence a Frankfurt court imposed on the Lebanese hijacker Wednesday.

The penalty is the most severe possible under German law, which does not permit capital punishment. But Hamadei seemed unmoved and smiled when it was pronounced.

He was taken immediately to a maximum-security prison.

Hamadei was convicted of the June 1985 hijacking of a TWA airliner bound from Athens to Rome and the murder of a passenger, U.S. Navy diver Robert Stethem.

Legal authorities here stressed that the case was a test of West Germany's resolve to combat international terrorism. Repeated extradition requests from the United States were rejected on a variety of legal and political grounds.

Had Hamadei been tried in the United States, he could have faced the death penalty.

The West German Foreign Ministry admitted, meanwhile, that it was very much concerned over the kidnapping this week of two German nationals near Sidon, in southern Lebanon.

Observers here said it was very likely the abductors might seek a deal for Hamadei's release.

His brother, Abbas Hamadei, was sentenced last year in Dusseldorf to 12 years in prison for hostage-taking in Lebanon.

The Dusseldorf court found that Abbas kidnapped two West Germans in Lebanon to hold hostage for the release of Mohammed Hamadei. The two were subsequently freed unharmed.

FIRST ISRAELI WOMAN ORDAINED BY JTS AS CONSERVATIVE RABBI

By Susan Birnbaum

NEW YORK, May 18 (JTA) -- Einat Ramon of Jerusalem stepped up to the podium Thursday to receive her diploma from the Jewish Theological Seminary of America and, in doing so, became the first Israeli woman ordained as a Conservative rabbi.

In tribute, the seminary granted Ramon, one of eight women and 15 men ordained Thursday, the "kavod" of delivering its commencement address. It was her chance to expound on the responsibility of Jews for each other.

In her speech, Ramon commented on the difficulties that "those of us who believe in tolerance" have with the proverb "Kol Yisrael arevim zeh bazeh" (All the people of Israel are held responsible for one another).

"Jewish fundamentalists," she said, "made 'Kol Yisrael arevim' a weapon of religious compulsion. By contrast, we tolerant Jews feel uncomfortable with the obligation to rebuke and criticize."

There was another notable rabbi ordained Thursday. Marion Shulevitz, 56, mother of three grown children, became the oldest person the seminary has ordained as rabbi.

She is a pioneer. There are now several middle-aged women enrolled in JTS rabbinical studies.

JOBS AND BETTER HOUSING NEEDED TO INCREASE SOVIET JEWISH ALIYAH

By David Friedman

WASHINGTON, May 18 (JTA) -- The only way to increase the number of Soviet Jews going to Israel is to be sure that they have good jobs waiting for them, a senior State Department official said Thursday.

Richard Schifter, assistant secretary of state for human rights and humanitarian affairs, said this was stressed to him by refuseniks whom he met in Moscow during Secretary of State James Baker's visit there last week.

Schifter spoke at a session on Soviet Jewish emigration at the 83rd annual meeting of the American Jewish Committee, which opened here Wednesday night.

Elmer Winter, a former AJCommittee president and chairman of the Committee for Economic Growth of Israel, said it was not only jobs, but adequate housing.

"If we want to raise the number of those who want to go Israel, No. 1, there has to be jobs, and No. 2, there has to be housing."

Winter said Americans Jews can help this situation by increasing imports from Israel and investments in Israel, which would raise the number of job opportunities.

Schifter noted that between Jan. 1 and April 30, more than 14,000 Jews left the Soviet Union, which is three times the number for the same period last year. About 10 percent of them went to Israel.

He said the total could reach a record 54,000 by the end of the year.

Soviet Jews have been admitted to the United States as refugees, even though they hold visas for Israel, Schifter pointed out. He said this is an exception from the rule that those who have guarantees of admission to another country are not allowed in the United States as refugees.

"It isn't likely that this is something that will be sustained by Congress in terms of cost for an indefinite period," he warned.

The increasing cost of Soviet Jewish immigration was also raised by Michael Schneider, executive vice president of the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee.

Beyond 'Capacity Of Philanthropy'

"The numbers have become so high that it may be beyond the capacity of philanthropy to cope with the situation," Schneider said. He said the U.S. government is also feeling the pinch because of budgetary restrictions.

The cost of feeding and housing Soviet Jews in Europe for both the government and Jewish organizations is \$150,000 a day or \$4.5 million a month, he said.

The JDC is reimbursed by the government for those admitted as refugees, but since many Soviet Jews are now refused refugee status, the Jewish community will have to pick up between \$7.5 million and \$10 million of the cost this year.

Schneider said the Jewish community is looking for ways "without coercion, without bullying" to get more emigrants to go to Israel.

Maynard Wishner, AJCommittee's honorary president, said the American Jewish community would also like to see more Soviet Jews go to Israel, but feels it has an obligation to hold the doors open for those who want to come to the United States.

But he said if this happens, it will not save the American Jewish community any money, since the cost of absorbing the Soviet Jews in Israel is more than it is in the United States.

Schneider said the cost to the Jewish community for Soviet Jews in Rome and Vienna is essentially to cover the waiting period for them. He said the cost might be less if they waited in the Soviet Union.

Schifter said that Soviet officials indicated to him they might change the law so that instead of needing a letter from a relative in Israel for an exit visa, Soviet Jews could get invitation letters from anyone in any country.

Schneider said a greater effort must also be made to rebuild Jewish institutions in the Soviet Union, since most Jews are "appallingly ignorant" of Jewish culture and religion.

RABBIS URGE ROLE FOR CLERGY IN SETTING ETHICAL STANDARDS

NEW YORK, May 18 (JTA) -- The Rabbinical Assembly has called on President Bush to convene a national commission of religious leaders to offer ethical guidelines applicable to setting the standards of behavior for legislators and government officials.

The 1,300-member assembly of Conservative rabbis also called for "significant" pay raises for members of Congress and an end to honorariums.

A resolution to that effect claimed it was one of the only ways to prevent conflicts of interest by members of the Senate and House of Representatives, as well as government officials.

Rabbi Albert Lewis, president of the R.A., expressed surprise that President Bush appointed a panel to develop ethical recommendations without including any member of the clergy.

"It seems to me that rabbis, priests and ministers, who deal with such problems on a regular basis, could be called upon for the counsel," he said.