

# **SPAIN GIVES SHAMIR WARM WELCOME, BUT IS AMBIVALENT ABOUT PEACE PLAN**

By Edwin Eytan

MADRID, May 24 (JTA) -- Yitzhak Shamir, who is the first prime minister of Israel to pay an official visit to Spain, received a warm, personal welcome upon his arrival here Wednesday.

But the prime minister faces a tough challenge in his effort to win Spanish support for the new Israeli peace initiative, whose main elements Shamir drafted.

It is not that Spain, which currently holds the rotating chairmanship of the European Community, has rejected Shamir's ideas. The Madrid government, indeed, considers them a "positive development."

The plan calls for Palestinian elections in the West Bank and Gaza Strip to choose delegates with whom Israel would negotiate a five-year interim period of self-rule in the territories, with discussions beginning in the third year on the final status of those areas.

Spain, however, stands by its long-held belief that any successful peace process in the Middle East will have to include the Palestine Liberation Organization. Doing so is anathema to Israel.

Moreover, Spain wants Israel to furnish details of its plan and make various commitments that Shamir is not ready to provide.

Spanish officials said Wednesday that Israel will have to clarify its position on whether Arab residents of East Jerusalem will be allowed to participate in the voting.

Spain is also seeking Israel's agreement to international supervision of the elections and details about the second phase of the plan, the interim period of self-rule.

## **Praise For Baker Speech**

Meanwhile, Spanish Foreign Minister Francisco Fernandez Ordenez warmly praised the speech U.S. Secretary of State James Baker made Monday urging Israel to "forswear annexation," abandon its "unrealistic vision" of a Greater Israel, and cease settlement activity in the West Bank and Gaza Strip.

Baker made the remarks in a speech to the American Israel Public Affairs Committee, the pro-Israel lobby in Washington.

While Shamir dismissed his speech Tuesday as "useless," Ordenez called it "an important development" and "something which America needed to say."

Ordenez saw the speech as one of several positive developments, others being the Soviet Union's recent stance, the pragmatism shown by Arab states and the expected outcome of the Arab League summit meeting in Casablanca, Morocco, where the Palestinians are lobbying for support.

Shamir, for his part, had a busy agenda. He met twice Wednesday with Prime Minister Felipe Gonzalez Marquez. And King Juan Carlos II gave a lunch in his honor at the Royal Palace.

The high-level talks were especially notable, since the two countries established full diplomatic relations only three years ago.

Before returning home, Shamir will visit Toledo, once the seat of Jewish culture in Spain.

# **BUSH PROMISES RABIN HE'LL SEEK ARAB BACKING FOR PEACE INITIATIVE**

By David Friedman

WASHINGTON, May 24 (JTA) -- Israeli Defense Minister Yitzhak Rabin ended his three-day visit to Washington on Wednesday with a promise from President Bush to help win Palestinian support for Israel's peace initiative.

"My impression is that the United States will like to assist Israel in finding a partner among the Palestinians in the territories to move ahead along the outline of the peace process," Rabin said after a White House meeting with Bush.

But he would not reveal what the Bush administration would do to get Palestinians to support the Israeli proposal. It calls for the Palestinians to elect representatives to negotiate with Israel for self-rule in the West Bank and Gaza Strip.

The Israeli proposal received its highest endorsement yet from the administration in a statement read Wednesday by State Department spokeswoman Margaret Tutwiler.

"We are wholeheartedly supportive" of the election proposal, Tutwiler said. "We want to work with the Israelis and the Palestinians to move the peace process forward."

Israeli Foreign Minister Moshe Arens called for full U.S. support of the Israeli initiative during his visit to Washington last week. But until Wednesday, the State Department stopped short of using the word "wholeheartedly" to characterize its support for the plan.

The meeting with Bush had not been scheduled when Rabin began his meetings with administration officials Monday. It appeared to have been arranged after Secretary of State James Baker made a hard-hitting speech Monday to the annual policy conference of the American Israel Public Affairs Committee.

## **Baker Speech Not Discussed**

Rabin said he did not discuss Baker's remarks with the president. But he noted that he has been arguing for the last two days that Israelis, Americans and Arabs who want to move the peace process forward should not focus on the elements of a final settlement, since all sides are too deeply divided.

"If we can reach an agreement today on them, there would be no need to move gradually toward peace," he said. But he noted "even the peace with Egypt was not achieved by one act."

Rabin also refused to be drawn into criticism of Baker's speech when he was asked about it earlier in the day, after addressing a luncheon sponsored by the Washington Institute for Near East Policy.

"I don't believe that I have to refer to any specific statement, even if it is made by the secretary of state," he said. "I prefer not to argue with anyone about issues that refer to the permanent solution."

Rabin told the Washington Institute that Israel did not propose the elections as a way of postponing a final settlement.

"Israel doesn't intend just to hold the first step and to wait," Rabin said.

## ARENS CHARGES BAKER SPEECH HURTING DRIVE TO PROMOTE PEACE INITIATIVE

By David Landau

JERUSALEM, May 24 (JTA) -- Foreign Minister Moshe Arens claimed Wednesday that U.S. Secretary of State James Baker may have made "it more difficult" for Israel to win European support for its peace initiative.

He said a speech delivered by Baker in Washington on Monday could also encourage Arab extremism and rejectionism.

Arens spoke to reporters upon his return from Brussels, where he explained Israel's ideas to the foreign ministers of the 12 European Community nations.

He said he had found a good deal of support for the Israeli plan among the E.C. ministers. "I hope it is not going to change in the wake of Baker's speech," the Israeli foreign minister said.

Baker's remarks, which stunned and infuriated Israelis and some of their supporters abroad, was essentially a reiteration of positions taken by all U.S. administrations over the past 20 years.

But it has rarely been stated so bluntly.

The secretary of state advised Israel to abandon its "vision of Greater Israel," eschew annexation of the West Bank and Gaza Strip, cease settlement activity in those areas and be more accommodating toward Palestinian political rights.

Baker also made tough demands on the Palestinians, essentially to drop the notion of destroying Israel and to give more convincing evidence of their peaceful intentions.

### Remarks 'Offensive' To Israel

But according to Arens, Baker's words were "offensive to the State of Israel."

The foreign minister, who conferred with Baker in Washington last week, said, nevertheless, that the secretary of state had voiced "the full support of the United States" for the Israeli initiative.

It calls for Palestinian elections in the territories to choose representatives with whom Israel would negotiate an interim self-rule arrangement and, eventually, the final status of the territories.

Arens charged that Baker's speech undercut the plan, because it referred to terms for a final settlement.

"It was contrary to the views of the Israeli government, and the secretary is fully aware of that," Arens said.

He also faulted Baker for violating an understanding that Israel and the United States would deal with their differences in private discussions.

Baker's speech was delivered in the glare of worldwide media coverage to the American Israel Public Affairs Committee, the pre-eminent pro-Israel lobby in Washington.

"It does not strengthen the alliance between our two countries," Arens said, adding that Baker's remarks seemed to mean that the "political situation is more difficult" than had been thought.

Asked how he and Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir -- now visiting Spain -- intend to win support for their plan within their own Likud bloc, Arens said Baker's speech made "maximal unity" in Israel more vital than ever.

"I am sure all members of the Likud, and especially of our Central Committee, will readily

understand that," he said.

The Central Committee is expected to be convened early next month by its chairman, Industry and Trade Minister Ariel Sharon, the most outspoken opponent of the Shamir plan.

Sharon's views are shared by Yitzhak Moda'i, leader of Likud's Liberal Party wing, and Housing Minister David Levy, another powerful figure in Likud, who holds the rank of deputy premier.

They hope to muster a grass-roots revolt in the Central Committee to kill the plan.

## PALESTINIANS FOLLOWING SUMMIT IN CASABLANCA WITH SKEPTICISM

By Gil Sedan

JERUSALEM, May 24 (JTA) -- Palestinians, suffering the self-imposed hardships of their uprising and increasingly tough countermeasures by Israeli security forces, did not react with much enthusiasm this week to the encouraging words reaching them from Western capitals and the Arab summit in Casablanca.

There was U.S. Secretary of State James Baker's speech Monday in Washington urging Israel to give up its "unrealistic vision" of a Greater Israel and to cease settlement activity in the territories.

In London, British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher, after hosting Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir, said the Israeli peace initiative was insufficiently forthcoming.

Those remarks by Western leaders might have been expected to spark new hope among the Palestinians. But reactions in Gaza, the West Bank and East Jerusalem were surprisingly low-key.

The Palestinian attitude is wait-and-see. Too often, words have proven meaningless and their hopes for change have been dashed.

This has been especially true of emanations from the Arab world. The Arab League summit deliberations now taking place in Casablanca are being followed closely in the territories, but with a large degree of skepticism.

President Hosni Mubarak, who regained Egypt's membership in the Arab League without renouncing its 1979 peace treaty with Israel, called for revival of the Arab peace plan worked out nearly seven years ago at the summit in Fez, Morocco.

### Challenge From Rejectionists

In essence, the 1982 Fez plan called for full Israeli withdrawal from the administered territories and the establishment of a Palestinian state with East Jerusalem as its capital.

Mubarak warned, however, that the indirect recognition of Israel implied in the Fez plan was not sufficient and that a broader formula was needed.

That is the line widely accepted in the administered territories. Arab League endorsement of it would give new impetus to the peace offensive launched last fall by Palestine Liberation Organization leader Yasir Arafat.

But as the Palestinians well know, Mubarak, King Hussein of Jordan and Arafat are not the only influences at the Casablanca meeting.

They face tough opposition from President Hafez Assad of Syria and Libyan leader Moammar Gadhafi, both die-hard rejectionists, though Assad is the more rational of the two.

Gadhafi has threatened to walk out of the summit at the first hint of willingness to recognize Israel.

## FRENCH APPREHEND WAR CRIMINAL WHO WORKED WITH KLAUS BARBIE

PARIS, May 24 (JTA) -- Paul Touvier, France's most wanted wartime collaborator and a close aide to convicted war criminal Klaus Barbie, was arrested Wednesday in Nice and flown to Paris. He faces trial for crimes against humanity.

Touvier, 74, was twice sentenced to death in absentia for war crimes. But he was granted an official pardon by the late President Georges Pompidou in 1972 and was able to recover his personal possessions.

The statute of limitations on war crimes had come into effect by then, and the French judicial system had yet to recognize crimes against humanity, the statute under which Barbie, the so-called "Butcher of Lyon," was tried and convicted in 1987.

Touvier, who was known as "the French Barbie" for his brutality toward Jews and resistance fighters, was sheltered for many years by traditionalist Catholics.

After families of his victims got his pardon rescinded because of his involvement in crimes against humanity, Touvier found haven at a monastery in Nice, where he was finally arrested.

The Priory of St. Francois belongs to excommunicated Roman Catholic Archbishop Marcel Lefebvre, a die-hard opponent of the Catholic-Jewish rapprochement mandated by the second Vatican Council.

Touvier, who was police chief in Lyon during the Vichy regime, was responsible for rounding up Jews for deportation on orders of the Gestapo.

He personally handed over seven Jews from Rillieux-le-Pape, near Lyon, who were shot in reprisal for the assassination of a Vichy minister.

## TERRORIST SENTENCED IN ABSENTIA TO LIFE FOR 1982 SYNAGOGUE ATTACK

By Ruth E. Gruber

ROME, May 24 (JTA) -- A Palestinian terrorist who carried out an attack seven years ago on Rome's main synagogue was sentenced in absentia here Tuesday to life imprisonment.

Osama Abdel al-Zomar, 28, was convicted by a Rome court of organizing the Oct. 9, 1982, attack, in which a 3-year-old Jewish boy was killed and 37 others wounded.

Last year, Greece refused Italy's request to extradite Zomar, who was serving a jail term in Greece on charges of smuggling weapons into the country. Zomar was quietly deported from Greece to Libya in December by the Greek justice minister at the time, Vassilis Rotis, who called him a "freedom fighter."

The Italian government was furious and summoned the Greek ambassador here to ask for an explanation. Rotis was subsequently removed from the justice position, for reasons that remain unclear.

The Italians then asked Libya to extradite Zomar. After determining that Libya would not deport him, Italy proceeded with a trial in absentia.

Most of the evidence in the trial came from Zomar's former Italian girlfriend, whom he reportedly told he was going to organize the synagogue attack.

Two men who were thought to have acted with him have never been identified. The mastermind of the attack is believed to have been the shadowy Palestinian terrorist Abu Nidal.

## FIVE FROM VILLAGE OF BEITA SENTENCED FOR 1988 TRAGEDY

By Cathrine Gerson

JERUSALEM, May 24 (JTA) -- A Jaffa military court imposed stiff sentences Wednesday on five Palestinians suspected of stoning Jewish hikers last year in the West Bank village of Beita, where a teen-age Israeli girl was killed.

But the sentences were reduced in view of confessions and time already spent in custody.

The suspect convicted of the most serious crime got an eight-year sentence, of which he will serve four years. Two others sentenced to five-year terms will serve 21 months, one will serve 18 months and another will serve two years.

Eleven more suspects from Beita are awaiting trial.

The tragedy occurred April 6, 1988, during the Passover week. A group of young hikers from Eilon Moreh, a Jewish settlement in the Samaria district, were allegedly assaulted with stones as they passed near Beita.

Their armed bodyguard, Romam Aldubi, opened fire, killing two Arab youths.

According to the charges, the hikers were forced to run a gauntlet of stones in the village. Aldubi, struck in the head, accidentally fired his weapon, which inflicted a fatal wound on 15-year-old Tirza Porat.

## POLICE TRYING TO CURB VIOLENCE BY JEWS AGAINST ARABS FROM GAZA

By Gil Sedan

JERUSALEM, May 24 (JTA) -- Unusual quiet prevailed in the West Bank and Gaza Strip on Wednesday. But the police were out in force in southern Israel to prevent further violence by Jews against Arabs.

They are patrolling the roads leading from the Gaza Strip into Israel proper, especially those passing near Kiryat Gat and the coastal cities of Ashdod and Ashkelon.

Local Jews have already killed one Arab by stoning. He was identified as Abdul Aziz a-Zabdi, 42, from the West Bank village of Dura, near Hebron.

Zabdi was fatally injured Monday, when a rock was hurled into his car from a passing vehicle near Ashkelon.

No arrests have been made, but police said they know the rock was thrown from a white GMC pick-up truck with Israeli license plates.

Another Arab vehicle was reported stoned on Tuesday. Apparently there were no injuries.

Attacks by Jews on passing Arab cars began over a week ago. They followed the discovery of the body of Avi Sasportas of Ashdod, an Israeli soldier missing since February, who is believed to have been murdered by Arab abductors.

In Gaza, authorities on Wednesday opened the first military appeals court in the territory since Israel took control of it 22 years ago.

The new court will give residents of the territory recourse to appeal the judgments of lower military courts, a legal avenue they did not have until now.

Meanwhile, the West Bank town of Anabta, which has been under continuous curfew for the past 20 days, is appealing for world support.

Local leaders released a statement Tuesday calling on international organizations to provide assistance. The townspeople are suffering from shortages of fresh food and cooking gas.

## EVANGELICAL CALL FOR CONVERSION OF JEWS CONCERNS JEWISH LEADERS

By Susan Birnbaum

NEW YORK, May 24 (JTA) -- American Jewish leaders have expressed deep concern about a statement issued by an international evangelical Christian group last month that places priority on the conversion of the Jewish people.

Rabbi Alexander Schindler, president of the Reform movement's Union of American Hebrew Congregations, called the evangelical statement "a desperate attempt to stop the clock of progress in interreligious relations."

And Rabbi A. James Rudin, director of interreligious affairs of the American Jewish Committee, said the statement was "the worst kind of Christian religious imperialism."

Both called on Christians to repudiate the statement, and they expressed gratification that many had already done so.

They were reacting to a policy declaration issued by 15 members of the World Evangelical Fellowship, who met in Bermuda from April 26 to 29. It called for "the evangelization of the Jewish people."

The statement, in particular, endorses the religious duality practiced by Hebrew Christians, known more commonly as "Jews for Jesus."

It rebuffs those who characterize as "deceptive" the practice of converting Jews to Christianity while encouraging continued observance of Jewish customs.

The declaration, while rejecting "coercive or deceptive proselytizing," says, "We deny that any inconsistency or deception is involved when Jewish Christians represent themselves as Messianic, completed or fulfilled Jews."

### Against 'Two-Covenant' Theology

At the same time, the declaration repudiates anti-Semitism and persecution of Jews.

"Ours is a call to action," Dr. James Packer said in the prepared news release accompanying the statement. Packer, a theology professor and author, teaches at Regent College in Vancouver, British Columbia.

Besides enjoining Christians to pursue with heightened vigor the conversion of Jews, the international evangelical body sharply criticizes those Christian churches that have abandoned the goal of Jewish conversion for that of interfaith dialogue based on equality and mutual respect.

Packer voiced particular concern over churches that espouse the "two-covenant" theology, saying it is "galloping" through the larger churches.

In the past few years, statements rejecting a conversion policy in favor of the belief that Jews also have a covenant with God have been released by the Episcopal Church, the Presbyterian Church (USA) and the United Church of Christ.

Pope John Paul II has referred to Jews as "our dear elder brothers," and American Catholic bishops have underlined respect between Judaism and Christianity.

Dr. Vernon Grounds, president emeritus of Denver Seminary, who convened the conference, cited "a New Testament mandate to carry the gospel to all people, including Jews."

In a telephone interview, Grounds said the declaration was a response to statements issued by a number of Protestant denominations that say "the Jewish people need not be evangelized."

"Our purpose was to discuss the whole issue

and to express our concern with the hope that some of these denominational groups will recognize that we have a continuing obligation to preach the Gospel to everyone, but, as the New Testament says, to the Jew first," he said.

### 'Mandate To Share The Gospel'

"We have a mandate to share the Gospel with all peoples, and certainly with the Jewish people," he added.

But one evangelical leader who did not attend the Bermuda conference criticized the declaration, calling it "too simplistically worded and certainly far too harshly expressed."

Dr. Marvin Wilson, a teacher of theology at Gordon College in Wenham, Mass., said in a telephone interview that the statement "fails to address sufficiently some of the larger questions that both evangelicals and Jews are faced with today."

He cited common social action agendas and a study program between evangelicals and Jews in Jerusalem.

Wilson, who has a Ph.D. in Semitic studies from Brandeis University and has co-edited three books on evangelical-Jewish ties, described evangelicals as "people who believe the Gospel message."

He said evangelicals were to be found in all Christian denominations, including those that have released statements repudiating proselytism.

Asked point-blank if he endorsed the conversion of Jews, Wilson fell silent, then answered cautiously, avoiding a direct response.

"I don't like to answer questions like that, because answers tend to get misconstrued," he said. "God is the ultimate judge, and there are scriptures that say we are accountable."

He cited the responsibility to spread the Gospel "to all people," including Jews, adding: "Any Christian would be less than honest if he or she did not say that Jesus is the fullest expression of God's grace."

## WARSAW SYNAGOGUE INSTALLS FIRST RABBI IN THREE DECADES

By Susan Birnbaum

NEW YORK, May 24 (JTA) -- Warsaw's sole functioning synagogue installed a new rabbi Tuesday in what is believed to be the first ceremony of its kind in some 35 years.

Menachem Joskowicz will officiate at the Nozyk Synagogue, according to Rabbi Chaskel Besser, who is chairman of activities in Poland for the Lauder Foundation.

Joskowicz, who is about 60 years old, is from Jerusalem, but was originally from Lodz, Poland.

The synagogue, located at No. 4 Ulica Twarda, was renovated about two years ago by the Polish government, said Besser. Since then, it has been seeing a renaissance with large attendances at monthly concerts of recorded hazzanut -- the songs of the famed cantors.

Besser, who regularly visits Poland, says that as many as 300 people now attend Shabbat services in the synagogue, and that at least 700 people attend the concerts. The synagogue sits 1,000 persons, he said.

Besser said there have been times when the synagogue has hosted standing-room-only crowds for the concerts, which are organized by the Lauder Foundation, together with the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee.