

ARAB STATES WITHDRAW PROPOSAL TO OUST ISRAEL FROM U.N. AGENCY

By Edwin Eytan

PARIS, June 5 (JTA) -- The Arab states, bowing to American pressure, have withdrawn a demand that Israel be expelled from the International Telecommunications Union.

The 179-nation body, a United Nations agency, is meeting in Nice, France.

The resolution, submitted by Saudi Arabia, Syria and Qatar last week, was the first in the organization's history seeking the ouster of a member state. But it was withdrawn before it could even be discussed.

The Arab bloc, led by the Saudis, backed down Saturday after the United States requested it not to politicize a technical organization.

The ITU lays down rules for international cooperation in the fields of cable and telephone exchanges, radio broadcasts, television channels and satellite communications.

The American delegate, Sonia Landau, said the United States regrets that the resolution was submitted but is pleased it was withdrawn without a general debate.

"The universal character of the union bars the exclusion of any of its member states," Landau said.

Diplomatic sources in Nice told the Jewish Telegraphic Agency that it was very unlikely the Arab resolution would have garnered the required two-thirds majority needed to expel a member, had the matter come to a vote.

Nevertheless, several major delegations were trying as late as last Friday to work out a compromise to avoid debate.

Some proposed that the resolution be withdrawn in exchange for an Israeli commitment to restore full telephone and cable communications between the administered territories and the outside world.

But apparently no deals had to be made.

It was the second time in little more than a month that American intervention prevented a U.N. agency from taking action opposed by Israel.

A U.S. threat to suspend both its assessed and voluntary contributions to the budget of the World Health Organization in Geneva effectively killed a bid by the Palestine Liberation Organization for full membership in the WHO.

WEST GERMAN OPPOSITION PARTY INVITES PLO TO ITS CONVENTION

By David Kantor

BONN, June 5 (JTA) -- The opposition Social Democratic Party has invited the Palestine Liberation Organization to attend the party convention, to be held this October in West Berlin.

The invitation was extended personally by the SPD chairman, Hans-Jochen Vogel. It was not addressed to any individual, but party officials would not be surprised if PLO leader Yasir Arafat attended as the head of a Palestinian delegation.

Vogel, who was minister of justice until 1982, is the SPD's probable candidate for chancellor in the next national elections. He has always been regarded as a good friend of Israel.

According to political observers, the invita-

tion to the PLO was intended to define the SPD's foreign policy positions and differentiate them from Chancellor Helmut Kohl's conservative government.

The invitation was opposed by Anne-Marie Renger, co-chair of the SPD's parliamentary faction.

She is said to have tried to block it. But Vogel reportedly insisted that the international situation required the PLO to be involved in talks aimed at resolving the Arab-Israeli conflict.

Another ranking member of the SPD, Hans-Juergen Wischniewsky, is considered responsible for inviting the PLO to attend the next meeting of the Socialist International in Stockholm this month.

Israel's Labor Party, a member of the International, will boycott the session to protest the invitation.

ISRAEL HOPES KHOMEINI'S DEATH WILL SPUR BETTER TIES WITH IRAN

By Hugh Orgel

TEL AVIV, June 5 (JTA) -- Israel's official reaction to the death of Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini was an expression of hope that relations between Israel and Iran will improve.

Khomeini, Iran's spiritual leader and main political force since the overthrow of the Shah 10 years ago, died Saturday at the age of 89.

A Shiite Moslem religious extremist, he was a bitter foe of the Western world and all its ways, but his most savage hatred seemed to be reserved for Israel.

The Foreign Ministry issued a statement Sunday saying that "Israel can only hope that the future leadership of Iran will adopt a more positive position on the issue of human rights and its attitudes toward the Western world and Israel."

Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir's media adviser, Avi Pazner, said he hoped that Khomeini's successor would adopt "a more moderate line, more in keeping with the friendship that existed between the Iranian and Jewish people."

Education Minister Yitzhak Navon said that he believes the death of the ayatollah was a gift from heaven. "I think that the element that is vehemently anti-Jewish, anti-Israel, anti-Zionist, anti-everything was taken up from us to heaven. This may introduce a chance of changes. I am afraid it can't be worse than it was."

Uri Lubrani, Israel's former ambassador to Teheran, and now Israel's coordinator for Lebanon, said in a radio interview that Israel must look for ways to talk with the post-Khomeini leadership.

Doubt About Successor

There is speculation among Israeli political analysts and commentators over just who that leadership will be. The president of Iran, Ali Khamenei, was chosen as successor by the ayatollah, who was seriously ill for some time before his death.

But experts here doubt he will last very long. They believe Iran eventually may be ruled by a junta of three or four leaders.

"I don't buy the notion that Khamenei will succeed Khomeini," said David Menashri of Tel

Aviv University's Dayan Center, a frequent commentator on Iranian affairs.

"Khamenei is the compromise figure," he said on Israel Television.

In Washington, State Department spokeswoman Margaret Tutwiler said Monday that if Iran wants to improve its relations with the United States, it must use its influence over the hostage-takers in Lebanon to free the hostages, as well as end its support of global terrorism.

SENATE APPROVES \$75 MILLION EXTRA FOR 18,500 MORE SOVIET REFUGEES

By Howard Rosenberg

WASHINGTON, June 5 (JTA) -- The Senate has approved a \$75 million appropriation to help bring an additional 18,500 Soviet refugees to the United States this fiscal year.

The sum of money, adopted by the full Senate Thursday as part of a package approved by the Senate Appropriations Committee, is identical to a supplemental appropriation approved May 24 by the House of Representatives.

The \$75 million is expected to clear the next stage of the legislative process, a House-Senate conference committee, assuming the Senate approves the 1989 fiscal year emergency supplemental appropriations bill, which it may do this week. The House already has approved the bill.

Most of the \$75 million would go to the Hebrew Immigrant Aid Society and the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee for processing, transportation and initial resettlement of Soviet Jews.

The additional funds were needed because Soviet Jewish emigration in the 1989 fiscal year, which began Oct. 1, has greatly exceeded administration projections.

Last year, the administration set the 1989 fiscal year Soviet refugee quota around 20,000, a figure Congress accepted. Congress then appropriated enough funds to cover the costs of processing just that number.

Jewish groups have been battling all year to win additional funds for Soviet refugees, as well as for an increase in the refugee quota.

\$22 Million For Resettlement

The increase in the refugee quota could come within a few days, a Justice Department official said Monday. The official said that all of the key lawmakers have accepted an administration plan to raise the quota for the Soviet Union by 18,500 slots.

Attorney General Dick Thornburgh, in a May 17 meeting with key lawmakers on the House and Senate Judiciary subcommittees on immigration, had proposed such an increase in a "formal consultation."

The Refugee Act of 1980 requires the administration to consult with Congress before it adjusts the refugee quota. Thornburgh and the State Department's coordinator of refugee affairs must now certify that there is no congressional opposition to such a move.

The increase would bring the 1989 fiscal year refugee quota for the Soviet Union to 43,500. Close to 40,000 of the slots are expected to be used by Soviet Jews, enough to meet the expected flow through the end of the fiscal year.

On yet another front, several senators have expressed concern that the United States has not appropriated sufficient funds to help resettle the refugees once they enter this country.

Sens. Joseph Biden (D-Del.), Tom Harkin (D-Iowa), Edward Kennedy (D-Mass.) and Arlen Specter (R-Pa.) have written to President Bush urging that new funds be made available this fiscal year for domestic resettlement of refugees.

An additional \$22 million needs to be approved for the domestic costs of resettling refugees, primarily cash and medical assistance provided by state governments to newly arrived refugees, according to Mark Talisman, Washington representative of the Council of Jewish Federations. About \$19 million of that amount would go to resettling Soviet refugees.

The \$22 million is expected to be included in the Health and Human Services Department's appropriations bill for the 1990 fiscal year, Talisman said.

That would put to rest various other refugee bills that Jewish groups have been supporting, including one by Rep. Howard Berman (D-Calif.).

LADISPOLI RESIDENTS SEEK LIMITS TO RESORT'S REFUGEE POPULATION

By Ruth E. Gruber

ROME, June 5 (JTA) -- Italian residents of Ladispoli are calling for a limit on the number of Soviet Jews and other foreign refugees allowed temporary housing in the seaside town.

So far about 3,000 signatures, representing about one-fifth of Ladispoli's Italian population, have been gathered on a petition circulated by a group called "For Ladispoli."

The group organized a protest demonstration Sunday.

"We are an opinion movement, without any political manipulation," said shopkeeper Franco Pierotti, 42, one of the promoters of the initiative, in an interview with the Rome newspaper *Il Messaggero*. "Our sole aim is to get a regulation of the (flow of) foreigners. The collection of signatures is just the first step."

However, the deputy mayor of the town, Crescenzo Paliotta, told the newspaper *La Repubblica* that he was worried that activists of the neo-fascist party MSI were involved in "For Ladispoli."

Thousands of foreign refugees are housed in Ladispoli, taking advantage of Italy's open-door policy while they await immigration visas for elsewhere. The town has thousands of small, empty apartments ordinarily used as vacation homes or summer rentals.

Currently refugees make up as much as one-third of the town's population. By far the largest group in Ladispoli are the 4,000 Soviet Jews. But there are also hundreds of Poles, Egyptians, Afghans, Iranians, Ethiopians, Tamils and Soviet Pentacostals.

"For Ladispoli" wants to limit the number of refugees to 1,500.

Local officials for months have complained that the influx of refugees has strained the town's public services to the breaking point. Town authorities earlier this year appealed to the Interior and Foreign ministries and also to the Jewish relief organizations that help the refugees to settle them in other towns as well as Ladispoli.

Officials of the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee responded on Jan. 1 by directing Jewish refugees to other Italian cities.

According to a JDC spokesman in New York, the majority of the 11,000 Soviet Jews in Italy are in fact being housed in cities other than Ladispoli.

ISRAELI SOLDIER KILLED SUNDAY WAS A BEDOUIN VOLUNTEER SCOUT By Gil Sedan

JERUSALEM, June 5 (JTA) -- The Israel Defense Force soldier killed Sunday near the border with Lebanon was a Bedouin scout who volunteered for the army at the age of 18. Being an Arab, he was exempt from compulsory military service.

Sgt. Maj. Hassin Dib Maktaren, 33, was killed early Sunday in a gun battle with terrorists attempting to infiltrate into Israel from southern Lebanon. Maktaren killed two of them before he was fatally shot by a third terrorist, who had been concealed.

His death demonstrated a side to Arab-Jewish relations in Israel that has been obscured by the Palestinian uprising and its daily dose of hatred and violence.

Maktaren belonged to the Shibli tribe of Bedouins, who live on the slopes of Mount Tabor in Galilee, not far from such veteran Jewish settlements as Kfar Tavor and the Kaduri agricultural school.

He was married, without children. News of his death was brought first to his mother, Diba Maktaren.

A Bedouin officer of the IDF, assigned the unhappy task, came to the village at about noon Sunday to seek out the elderly mother. He said nothing -- just looked into her eyes and nodded.

"My son is gone," the woman said, kissing the officer's hand.

Maktaren's brother, Awad, sighed and said, "Everything is from God."

About 2,300 people live in Shibli. Most earn their living working in the fields of neighboring Jewish villages. Their own quaint town has become a tourist attraction.

Had Been Off Duty

But the Bedouin way of life has changed since they became citizens of Israel. No longer nomads, they have exchanged their tents for brick houses. Instead of tending sheep or goats, they cultivate crops.

The young men also join the army. Because they are instinctively excellent trackers, they often volunteer to be scouts, a dangerous assignment, as demonstrated by Maktaren's fate.

Maktaren was ahead of his patrol, examining a breach in the border fence, just before his fatal encounter with the terrorists.

He need not have been there. Maktaren was off duty over the weekend. He was at home on Saturday when an army friend mentioned that another Bedouin tracker was ill. Maktaren put on his uniform and volunteered as a replacement.

"It was written somewhere that Hassin had to die," said Ali Shibli, mayor of the town. "His death was not caused because he was on a risky mission. He is yet another victim of the lack of peace in our area," the mayor said.

LIKUD BEGS RESTRAINT FROM SETTLERS By Gil Sedan

JERUSALEM, June 5 (JTA) -- The Likud bloc initiated a joint Knesset statement this week urging Jewish settlers in the West Bank and Gaza Strip to exercise restraint and allow the security forces to deal with the Palestinian uprising.

The communique was issued amid growing alarm over vigilante tactics by some settlers and

their abusive treatment of the Israel Defense Force for allegedly lax security measures.

Likud is generally supportive of the settlers. Sara Doron, chairwoman of its Knesset faction, denounced what she called the "slandorous drive" against all of the settlers in the territories when only "a marginal minority" has violated the law.

Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir reiterated Monday that he has confidence in the IDF's ability to handle the unrest in the territories.

MORE WOUNDED AS PALESTINIANS MARK ANNIVERSARY OF SIX-DAY WAR By Cathrine Gerson

JERUSALEM, June 5 (JTA) -- A 14-year-old Arab boy was seriously wounded by security forces during a disturbance at the Nuseirat refugee camp in the Gaza Strip.

A blanket curfew imposed Sunday over the territory's 700,000 Arab residents was extended for a second day.

Two other Palestinians were wounded in a punitive raid on the West Bank village of Beit.

The Israel Defense Force confirmed these incidents Monday as the territories were paralyzed by a general strike marking the 22nd anniversary of the Six-Day War.

Streets were deserted and shops were shuttered in West Bank villages and towns. In Bethlehem, activists stoned several Arab-owned cars carrying workers to their jobs.

The strike was the second in two days to commemorate the "defeat of the Arab governments and their armies and the occupation of our Palestinian land, the Sinai and the Golan Heights."

About 150 residents of the West Bank village of Habla, led by 30 masked youths, held a mourning procession Monday for Omar Kassem, a member of a Palestinian terrorist organization whose family roots are in the village.

Kassem, 48, was a senior figure in the Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine, a pro-Syrian group led by Nayef Hawatmeh.

He had spent the past 21 years in Israeli jails and died, apparently of intestinal cancer, as the authorities were considering exchanging him for the remains of an Israeli soldier who died after being captured in Lebanon in 1983.

MITZNA ASKS TO BE RELIEVED OF POST By Hugh Orgel

TEL AVIV, June 5 (JTA) -- The Israel Defense Force general in command of the West Bank has asked to be relieved of his post, effective this summer.

Maj. Gen. Amram Mitzna, commander of the central sector, made the request to Defense Minister Yitzhak Rabin. Rabin has not yet responded, but is expected to accede to the request.

Mitzna has been responsible for dealing with the Palestinian uprising in the West Bank since it began nearly 18 months ago.

Lately he has been confronted by the anti-Arab vigilante tactics of militant Jewish settlers in the territory, who have harassed and abused IDF personnel trying to restrain them.

The general told Rabin and IDF Chief of Staff Dan Shomron that he would like to take off a year for study and travel abroad.

Mitzna, a soft-spoken man who is widely respected, reportedly turned down an offer of a senior post on the IDF general staff.

**NEWS ANALYSIS:
BAKER SPEECH WAS NO POLICY SHIFT,
ISRAELI AND JEWISH LEADERS AGREE**
By Mark Joffe

SAN FRANCISCO, June 5 (JTA) -- Israeli and American Jewish leaders appear to have decided that Secretary of State James Baker's tough speech on the Middle East two weeks ago was not so bad after all.

Seymour Reich, chairman of the Conference of Presidents of Major American Jewish Organizations, last week described the secretary of state's May 22 address to the American Israel Public Affairs Committee as "basically a good speech."

And Moshe Arad, Israel's ambassador to Washington, said the speech "signals there is no significant change in American policy toward Israel. There is no change in our relationship."

Arad and Reich spoke at separate sessions of the American Jewish Press Association's annual convention, which ended here on Friday.

Their appraisal of Baker's address to AIPAC's annual policy conference contrasted sharply with the reactions of top Israeli officials in the days immediately following the speech.

Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir used the word "useless" to describe the address, and Foreign Minister Moshe Arens said Baker's remarks had undermined Israel's international campaign to promote a new peace initiative.

But Arad urged a roomful of Jewish journalists last Thursday night not to "focus on the 30-second sound bites" used by the mainstream media to characterize the Baker policy statement.

He noted that the speech contained a number of positive elements, including an affirmation of the U.S.-Israeli strategic relationship, a reiteration of the U.S. government's opposition to an independent Palestinian state and initial praise for the new Israeli peace plan.

The 'Greater Israel' Plea

Nevertheless, Arad said, there are "important elements in Mr. Baker's speech that we differ with."

Chief among these appears to be the secretary's plea that Israelis give up their dream of a "Greater Israel" -- a term that generally refers to the West Bank and Gaza Strip.

"The fact is that no Israeli government since 1967, be it Labor or Likud, has moved unilaterally to annex these territories," Arad said.

He said it was "historically inaccurate and thus unfair" to suggest that Israel had taken control of the West Bank and Gaza Strip with some "grandiose, imperialist" design of expanding the boundaries of modern Israel.

Arad also made a point of saying that when differences arise between Israel and the United States, "they are best treated in discreet diplomacy, rather than in public debate."

It is, in fact, the public articulation of U.S. policy in the Middle East, rather than the policy itself, that seems to have caught Israeli and American Jewish leaders off guard.

Reich observed in his remarks to the press group that in the weeks prior to Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir's visit to Washington, the Bush movement "was engaging in a pincer movement" to pressure Israel.

First, the administration demanded that Shamir bring "new ideas" to Washington. Then, during Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak's visit that immediately preceded Shamir's, Bush made a

point of saying that the United States opposed Israel's "occupation" of the West Bank and Gaza Strip -- a word that "caused discomfort to some of us," Reich said.

Shamir's plan was warmly welcomed by the administration -- and the American Jewish leadership -- as something that was not just "Camp David warmed over."

Then, a few weeks later, came the Baker speech, which Reich described as "balanced," but also "cold" and sometimes "out of context."

Only Tactical Differences

In the end, however, both Israeli and American Jewish leaders point out that Washington and Jerusalem are in virtual agreement on the peace process:

Both favor an end to the violence in the territories and elections there to bring about an interim period of Palestinian self-rule. Neither wants to see the creation of an independent state run by the Palestine Liberation Organization.

There are some differences, but these are mainly tactical: The United States favors some sort of international supervision of the Palestinian elections, while Israel is prepared only to guarantee, in Arad's words, that they will be "free, uninhibited, unhindered."

The Bush administration also believes that a dialogue with the PLO may help advance the peace process, while Israeli leaders see such contacts as destructive.

The only potential substantive difference is the question of the final status of the territories -- an issue Israel maintains should not be discussed until a later date.

Reich noted that the last Israeli government spoke with two voices on this matter: one offering "land for peace" and the other vowing to return "not one inch."

The current Israeli government has prided itself on speaking with one voice. But on this subject, there has been no consensus.

ISRAELIS RETURN TO MOSCOW EMBASSY

By Hugh Orgel

TEL AVIV, June 5 (JTA) -- The Israeli consular delegation in Moscow moved Monday into the old Israel Embassy building, which has been vacant for 22 years.

The building remained Israeli property after the Soviet government severed diplomatic ties with Israel following the Six-Day War of 1967.

Since then, Israeli interests have been handled by the Dutch Embassy in Moscow and the Dutch flag flies over the Israel-owned building for diplomatic reasons.

The Israeli consular delegation, which has been in Moscow since last summer, has been seeking Soviet permission to issue Israeli visas to emigrating Soviet Jews. They are presently obtainable only at the Dutch Embassy.

ISRAELI VIOLINIST MAKES MARK

By Yossi Lempkowitz

BRUSSELS, June 5 (JTA) -- Erez Ofer, 24, from Tel Aviv, placed fourth among 12 finalists in the prestigious Queen Elisabeth of Belgium violin competition here.

The final results were announced late Saturday night in the presence of the Belgian queen. Soviet musicians won the gold and silver medals, and a Japanese violinist won the bronze.