

**SHAMIR'S PEACE POLICIES FACE
SHOWDOWN IN LIKUD COMMITTEE**

By David Landau

JERUSALEM, Jan. 11 (JTA) -- Likud's Central Committee will convene on Feb. 7 for what may or may not turn out to be a showdown over Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir's peace policies.

The date was set at a brief meeting this week between Shamir and one of his most outspoken critics in Likud, Industry and Trade Minister Ariel Sharon.

Disagreements over procedure remain to be settled, however. Shamir wants a single vote of confidence in his leadership, expressing support for the way he has been conducting diplomacy with the United States over the proposed Israeli-Palestinian dialogue.

The internal opposition, led by Sharon, David Levy and Yitzhak Moda'i, is urging a series of votes in hope of winning a substantial number of delegates, perhaps a majority, to its point of view.

The three Likud ministers take a sharply negative view of the American peace efforts and Shamir's partly positive response to them.

Although it was Shamir who launched the peace initiative last spring by proposing Palestinian elections in the West Bank and Gaza Strip, his plan was sparse on details.

The United States has tried to flesh it out by arranging an Israeli-Palestinian dialogue, which would be held under Egyptian auspices. The dialogue would establish ground rules for the elections.

Shamir accepted U.S. Secretary of State James Baker's five-point proposal for the dialogue, but is still seeking American assurances on a number of matters. Among them is a guarantee that the Palestine Liberation Organization will have no role, direct or indirect, in the process.

The Sharon-Levy-Moda'i camp has been leading a rear-guard action against Shamir's election plan from its outset. Last summer, the trio won the Central Committee's endorsement of a series of constraints, which Shamir was bound to observe.

Levy, who is minister of construction and housing and holds the rank of deputy premier, charged Thursday that Shamir was circumventing the will of the Likud rank and file, as expressed by the 2,000-plus-member Central Committee.

He said there was need for "machinery enabling it to monitor its own decisions."

Shamir's supporters have warned that a standoff in the Central Committee could split the party, resulting in Likud's loss of national power.

But Moda'i, who is minister of economics and planning, declared Thursday, "We won't be threatened."

**STATE DEPARTMENT TO SOVIET UNION:
FIRST RESTORE RELATIONS WITH ISRAEL**

By David Friedman

WASHINGTON, Jan. 11 (JTA) -- The State Department urged the Soviet Union on Thursday to restore diplomatic relations with Israel before considering upgrading the Palestine Liberation Organization's status in Moscow.

"Any unilateral act to enhance the status of the so-called 'state of Palestine' can only have a detrimental effect on current peace efforts," State Department spokeswoman Margaret Tutwiler said.

Tutwiler was reacting to an announcement by the Soviet Foreign Ministry on Wednesday that the PLO was being allowed to "reorganize" its mission in Moscow to the status of embassy.

This also means that the Soviet representative to the PLO headquarters in Tunis would be ranked as an ambassador.

"We have said from the beginning of this (peace) process that what is required is a practical approach to solve problems," Tutwiler said. "A measure of Soviet seriousness would be their willingness to take and support practical steps."

Tutwiler said that every time Secretary of State James Baker has discussed the Middle East with Soviet Foreign Minister Eduard Shevardnadze, he has urged the Soviets "to restore full diplomatic relations with Israel."

Criticized Palestinian State

The United States criticized the Nov. 15, 1988, decision by the Palestine National Council to create a state of Palestine in exile.

The official U.S. position is that the status of the West Bank and the Gaza Strip must be decided through negotiations and not through unilateral acts such as declaring a state or annexation.

But the Soviet Union and some 110 other countries have recognized the PNC decision.

The Kremlin announced its intentions just hours after Shevardnadze met with Israeli Science and Development Minister Ezer Weizman, the first such high-level meeting between the two countries in Moscow since the Soviets broke diplomatic relations in 1967.

Weizman reported that the Soviet Union plans to upgrade its relations with Israel just short of the ambassadorial level. This would give Israel legation status with a delegation headed by a minister.

Israel now has a consular mission in Moscow which works under the auspices of the Dutch Embassy, but uses the old Israeli Embassy.

Weizman, meanwhile, is considered to have slighted the head of the Israeli consular mission, Arye Levin, by agreeing to the Soviet insistence that Levin not accompany him to the meeting with Shevardnadze.

"I did my best," Weizman told Israel Radio. But he said he decided to meet Shevardnadze without Levin rather than have the meeting canceled.

**EL AL, AEROFLOT UNOFFICIALLY
START MOSCOW-ISRAEL FLIGHTS**

By Hugh Orgel

TEL AVIV, Jan. 11 (JTA) -- El Al and the Soviet airline, Aeroflot, seem to have launched their joint service between Moscow and Tel Aviv, though without official blessings.

The two national air carriers agreed more than a month ago to operate the service, but the Soviet authorities so far have not ratified it.

Nevertheless, an El Al flight arrived at Ben-

Gurion Airport directly from Moscow on Thursday, the second such flight by an Israeli airliner in as many days.

It landed 100 new immigrants as well as the cast and stagehands of Habimah, Israel's national theater troupe, which just concluded a series of performances in Moscow.

On Wednesday, an Aeroflot Tupolev-134 plane on a direct flight from Moscow arrived here with 50 immigrants and 100 Soviet Jewish tourists aboard.

The plane returned to Moscow with 50 teenage victims of the 1987 Chernobyl nuclear disaster, who had received medical treatment in Israel.

Another group of Chernobyl victims is expected here for treatment shortly.

Neither El Al nor Aeroflot have advertised these flights as the start of their new service. They are, in fact, listed as "special flights."

A few Aeroflot planes have landed in Israel earlier, but all stopped in Cyprus first.

Wednesday's flight, though announced via Cyprus, was in fact non-stop from Moscow.

PANAMANIAN LEADER MEETS WITH JEWS, PLEDGES TO PREVENT A PLO PRESENCE

By Howard Rosenberg

WASHINGTON, Jan. 11 (JTA) -- President Guillermo Endara of Panama pledged to 1,500 Panamanian Jews on Wednesday that he will not allow the Palestine Liberation Organization to open an office there.

News of the meeting was reported by David Bassan, chairman of the Panamanian Jewish community, through Seymour Reich, president of B'nai B'rith International. Reich returned Thursday from a three-day visit to Panama.

B'nai B'rith has been spearheading Jewish relief efforts in Panama and initially forwarded more than \$1,000 to the community, said a B'nai B'rith official here.

At the meeting with Endara, the Panamanian Jews cheered the new government.

For his part, the Panamanian president praised the community for its contributions to Panama, whose estimated 5,000 Jews are said to own more than half of the South American country's businesses.

Also taking part in the meeting was Vice President Guillermo Ford, who fondly recalled memories of his Jewish great-grandmother.

Vice President Ricardo Arias Calderon spoke of Panama's deliverance from the Noriega dictatorship by referring to the Passover prayer, "Next year in Jerusalem."

"For Panama," he said, "it is this year in Jerusalem."

Urgent Need For Economic Aid

Bassan reported that the government leaders hugged and kissed some of the Jews, who had responded to their statements with standing ovations.

During his visit, Reich met with Endara and the two vice presidents; U.S. Ambassador Dean Hinton; Israeli Ambassador Reuven Ben-Eliezer; Gen. Mark Cisneros, commander of the U.S. Army forces in Panama; and Col. Hassan Herrera, new commander of the Panama Public Force.

He also paid a courtesy call on the Vatican's ambassador to Panama and the Panamanian archbishop.

Accompanying him on the trip were Daniel Mariaschin, B'nai B'rith director of international

and public affairs, and Isaac Hochman of Caracas, Venezuela, president of B'nai B'rith District 23, which encompasses Central America.

Reich said that with unemployment potentially reaching as high as 40 percent as the result of recent looting, Panama needs economic assistance urgently.

In addition, "there is a need for reconciliation among all classes in Panamanian society," he said.

"The Jewish community has received reassurances from the new government and has declared that it feels a responsibility to help rebuild Panama for the benefit of all citizens," he reported.

SHAMIR PLAN FOR IMMIGRATION AGENCY RUFFLES ABSORPTION MINISTER PERETZ
By David Landau

JERUSALEM, Jan. 11 (JTA) -- Plans to establish a super agency within the Prime Minister's Office to cope with the rising tide of immigration from the Soviet Union drew a protest Thursday from Absorption Minister Yitzhak Peretz, who complained that he was being bypassed.

Peretz, who heads the ultra-Orthodox Shas party, did not rule out the need for such an agency, but said he thinks he should be put in charge.

Otherwise, he told an Israel Radio interviewer, "it would be a vote of non-confidence in me by the prime minister."

The Prime Minister's Office announced Thursday that it intended to create an agency with overriding authority over immigration and absorption matters.

It said Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir would submit the plan to the Cabinet for approval this Sunday and that he wanted to name a well-respected national figure to head the new department.

But according to Peretz, "Shamir told me an entirely different story only last night."

He said he was given to understand that only "a small bureau" would be set up in the Prime Minister's Office and that its activities would be confined to Jews who have not yet left the Soviet Union.

It is generally agreed that Peretz's ministry is doing a credible job handling the recent surge of immigration from the Soviet Union.

Peretz noted that the arrival rate is now 2,000 a week and that on any given night as many as 500 olim land at Ben-Gurion Airport for immediate processing by the Absorption Ministry.

But if Peretz feels he no longer has the confidence of the prime minister, he would have no option but to resign, he said.

Observers promptly noted that his departure would make it difficult for Shas to stay in the unity coalition government.

The ultimate decision would rest with the party's Council of Sages, headed by the former Sephardic chief rabbi, Ovadia Yosef.

Meanwhile, the name of dovish Labor Party Knesset member Arieh (Lova) Eliav was mentioned as a possible choice to head Shamir's super agency. But sources at the Prime Minister's Office said Likud would resist his appointment.

REMINDER: JTA will not publish a Daily News Bulletin on Monday, Jan. 15.

CBS RECORDS ISSUES INTERNAL MEMO DENOUNCING BIGOTRY IN MUSIC INDUSTRY

By Elena Neuman

NEW YORK, Jan. 11 (JTA) -- The controversy surrounding the anti-Semitic lyrics of CBS-sponsored rap music group Public Enemy took another turn Wednesday with CBS Records' issuance of a company memo denouncing bigotry in the music industry.

"A number of recordings have recently been released," wrote Walter Yetnikoff, chief executive officer of CBS Records, "which have stirred strong reactions outside and within the industry suggesting that these songs validate and promote bigotry and intolerance.

"When the issue is bigotry, there is a fine line of acceptable standards which no piece of music should cross. Our company is committed to making sure that none of our recordings promote bigotry."

The Simon Wiesenthal Center and the Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rith, which have sought in recent months to restrain Public Enemy from recording anti-Semitic rap songs, applauded the CBS memo. It followed letters of concern from both organizations and a meeting last week between Yetnikoff and Rabbi Abraham Cooper, associate dean of the Wiesenthal Center.

The most recent issue of concern was CBS' distribution of Public Enemy's new recording, "Welcome to the Terrordome."

The song's lyrics revive the ancient accusation of Jewish responsibility for the crucifixion of Jesus, and imply that the Jews have done the same to the song's narrator, Richard Griffin, more popularly known as "Professor Griff."

Classic Anti-Semite

Griffin received notoriety following a May 9 interview with The Washington Times, in which he said that Jews were "responsible for the majority of wickedness across the globe," and backed up his assertions about Jews with references to classic anti-Semitic texts, including Henry Ford's "The International Jew."

According to Cooper, "although CBS says 'Terrordome' doesn't cross the line, the song as it appears to the public is clearly anti-Semitic."

No where in the CBS memo is there any specific reference to Public Enemy or "Terrordome," or to CBS' intention to discontinue the distribution of the album.

According to Robert Altshuler, senior vice president at CBS, "this was only a general statement of our commitment to standards. We're not talking about any album in particular."

"We're going to agree to disagree on this particular song," said Cooper. "But this memo is an important first step from someone high up in the industry. It puts everyone in the company on notice. Now we're going to move laterally to other executives in the industry."

Abraham Foxman, ADL's national director, agreed. "This is a position for the future," he said. "I don't expect them to go through the catalogues and purge themselves. I would rather they begin with criticism and then move on to the next step. Let's start with Jan. 10 and see."

"Clearly," says Cooper, "Griffin and lyrics like his are not going to go away. But if I can't stop him, I want to make sure that his type of music doesn't get this type of exposure or make this kind of money. I would like to put them on the 'lunatic fringe,' which is where they belong."

THE THREAT OF SKINHEADS PROMPTS TV SHOW AND AJCOMMITTEE REPORT

By Susan Birnbaum

NEW YORK, Jan. 11 (JTA) -- Skinheads, considered the most violence-prone of extreme right-wing racist groups in the United States, seem to have finally burst into public awareness.

A fictionalized portrayal of actual events involving the shaven-headed, neo-Nazi youths will be broadcast by CBS on Jan. 23 as a television docudrama, "So Proudly We Heal."

At the same time, the American Jewish Committee will release a booklet which details the history of racist Skinheads, and advises tactics to rout them. (Some youth affect Skinhead dress but not Nazi ideology.)

"Skinheads: Who They Are & What to Do When They Come to Town," will be distributed nationwide in tandem with the television special.

The booklet, edited by Kenneth Stern, AJCommittee program specialist on anti-Semitism and extremism, tells of the Skinheads' origins in Britain in 1967 and provides a profile of the Skinheads, whose numbers have increased 17-fold in this country since 1986.

The television-booklet package was conceived by Stern, who spoke of the increasing danger the Skinheads pose.

"There have been six deaths in the last two years," he said in a telephone interview. "Between Jan. 1, 1988, and the end of October 1989, there were 187 bias-related arrests associated with Skinheads."

In a preface to the booklet, Lionel Chetwynd, producer of the CBS program, asks a daunting question: "How can it be that American soil can, in our time, prove so fertile a ground for something as loathsome as Nazism?"

Domestic Terrorists

The increasing attention given Skinheads seems to justify the description of them offered just a month ago by the Southern Poverty Law Center of Montgomery, Ala., as the "domestic terrorists of the 1990s," whose violent acts have surpassed those of all other right-wing, racist groups.

It confirms a forecast in 1987 by Leonard Zeskind, research director of the Atlanta-based Center for Democratic Renewal, which monitors right-wing activity.

Zeskind, addressing a conference on malicious harassment following racist bombings in Idaho, said at the time that "nothing frightens me more than the Skinheads."

In the booklet, Zeskind explains that "they're the first generation of white kids who don't expect to live better than their parents."

The Skinheads, as a group, provide alienated youth "with a sense of community, excited by a shared perception of living under siege," the booklet says.

AJCommittee slams talk-show hosts like Morton Downey Jr. and Geraldo Rivera for giving Skinheads "free publicity," which "undoubtedly helped the Skinheads grow."

Under "What Can We Do?" AJCommittee advises people to report bias-related crimes and to propose to legislators a uniform, nationwide system for reporting hate crimes.

AJCommittee also urges people to contact its local offices to find out if their police departments have bias units and, if not, what can be done to help create them.

JERUSALEM POST PRESIDENT TELLS STAFF HE WON'T INTERFERE WITH INDEPENDENCE

By Hugh Orgel

TEL AVIV, Jan. 11 (JTA) -- A skeptical staff has been assured by Yehuda Levy, publisher and president of The Jerusalem Post, that he will respect the editorial independence of Israel's only English-language daily.

Levy, who fired 28 senior staff members on Jan. 2 after they complained he was interfering in editorial matters, informed readers in a front-page article Thursday that the dispute at the Post has been resolved.

A staff committee representing all editorial employees was authorized to negotiate a written commitment from Levy to respect their editorial integrity and to reinstate any of the 28 dismissed staffers who wanted to return.

Levy's statement did not mention them, however, and it was unclear whether they were offered their jobs back. One member of the staff committee said it was unlikely that any of the dismissed staff would want to return. According to one report, reinstatement was offered and flatly rejected.

The feeling at the Post on Thursday seemed to be a mixture of wariness and a willingness to give Levy time to make good on his promises.

"We hope we are making a fresh start, but this is also a trial period in which we and our readers will be watching very closely what happens to the paper," a staff committee representative said.

But bitterness prevails among the dissidents, who had submitted notice of their resignation to the Post's new owners, the Canadian-based Hollinger newspaper chain, before Levy fired them and gave them a half-hour to clear the premises.

Similar Promises Before

Menachem Shalev, one of the 28 staffers dismissed, told the Jewish Telegraphic Agency on Thursday that it was hard to take seriously Levy's pledge of non-interference.

The publisher made the same promise when he took over last April, Shalev said, but it was soon violated when an editorial critical of Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir was pulled from the Post's widely read international edition on grounds that it harmed Israel's image abroad.

Former editor Erwin Frankel promptly resigned, precipitating a revolt by most of the senior editorial staff members, led by Managing Editor David Landau.

Landau told the BBC in an interview broadcast Thursday that the Post had been irreparably damaged in the six months since Levy became publisher.

"Until a few months ago, the Post was part of a lively liberal press in this country, and its voice resonated around the world," Landau said.

"Mr. Levy sought to castrate the Post," he added.

Levy, who was also interviewed by the BBC, said his appointment as publisher and president was challenging and he has learned a lot.

In his letter to the staff committee, Levy said he would inform them before publicly announcing his appointment of a new editor.

He said the editor would have "sole and full responsibility for the contents of articles, news items and editorials, as well as the wording of advertisements."

Levy reserved the right "to discuss with the

editor every matter relating to the working of the editorial staff, freely and without coercion from either side."

He promised that every journalist would be free to write and publish according to his or her beliefs and conscience, and that they could reject a specific assignment for reasons of professional judgment or conscience, without fear of reprisals.

But Landau is unconvinced.

"Journalism is an act of the spirit, and that spirit has to be free," Landau said.

ISRAEL TENNIS ASSOCIATION BACKS MANSDORF ON REMARKS ABOUT NAZIS

By Hugh Orgel

TEL AVIV Jan. 11 (JTA) -- The Israel Tennis Association has decided not to take disciplinary action against Amos Mansdorf, a top-seeded Israeli professional who was accused of telling reporters in Auckland, New Zealand, on Monday that he would have played in Nazi Germany had he been around at the time.

Mansdorf was condemned by the Israeli Embassy in New Zealand for the alleged remark.

But the ITA said it was satisfied with an account of the incident submitted by the Association of Tennis Professionals in Auckland.

The Israeli sportsman's reference to Nazi Germany reportedly was made at a news conference following a match at which Mansdorf was constantly heckled by anti-apartheid demonstrators for having played in South Africa.

Lauren Goldenberg, the ATP's press liaison officer in Auckland, described the circumstances in a letter to the ITP.

"The post-match press conference began with questions related to the demonstration," the letter said. "Amos answered them eloquently.

"He was discussing the fact that, in his mind, politics and sports don't mix."

A correspondent for Reuters news agency asked if he would have played in Nazi Germany.

"Amos, in relation to the context of the Olympic Games in Berlin in 1936, brought up Jesse Owens as an example of someone who had not given in to the Nazi propaganda by participating in the games and emerging victorious."

The four gold medals won by Owens, a black track star, were a blow to Nazi racial myths.

According to Goldenberg, Mansdorf used that event "as a positive rather than a negative statement, trying to show that athletics and politics do not mix."

BUCHAREST RECEIVES AIRLIFTED AID

London Jewish Chronicle

LONDON, Jan. 11 (JTA) -- A Boeing 707 took off for Bucharest from London's Stansted airport Tuesday with 25 tons of medicine and food for victims of the recent fighting in Romania, donated by the Central British Fund for World Jewish Relief.

Kenneth Rubens, president of the Central British Fund, said the cargo included penicillin and other antibiotics, large amounts of powdered milk and baby food, and special donations of kosher food for the Jewish community.

"By flying supplies in directly, we should avoid the distribution problems which the Red Cross has found with its truckloads sent overland from Budapest," Rubens said.

The Jewish community will supervise the distribution operation.