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JEWISH LEADERS CALL FOR REASSESSMENT OF DIALOGUE BETWEEN U.S. AND PLO

NEW YORK, May 31 (JTA) -- American Jewish organizations, strongly supporting Israel's contention that no further proof is needed of the Palestine Liberation Organization's continuing terrorist nature, sought to persuade Washington on Thursday that the PLO is not a fit partner for a dialogue with the United States.

But while President Bush denounced as an "outrage" Wednesday's attempted attacks by heavily armed seaborne terrorists on two Israeli beaches, the administration was unwilling to concede immediately that the PLO was in fact involved.

White House spokesman Marlin Fitzwater, who read the president's statement at a news briefing Thursday, said the United States would have to complete its investigation of who is responsible before considering whether it should change its policy of talking to the PLO.

American Jewish leaders by contrast were unanimously behind Israel in holding the PLO entirely culpable.

They cited the attack on the Shavuot holiday to vindicate their criticism of a recent State Department report to Congress, which concluded that the PLO is essentially living up to its December 1988 renunciation of terrorism, which was a condition of the U.S.-PLO dialogue that began at that time.

Carried Out By PLE

The attack, in which four terrorists were killed and 12 captured but no Israelis hurt, was carried out by the Palestine Liberation Front, whose leader, Mohammed (Abul) Abbas, is a member of the 15-man PLO Executive Committee.

But PLO leader Yasir Arafat disavowed any link with the incident.

"We are not responsible, as the PLO, for this operation and we have no connection with it," Arafat told a news conference in Baghdad on Thursday.

In Israel, Avi Pazner, adviser to acting Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir, said of Arafat's statement: "This is an outrageous lie. That's one more lie of Arafat. It's not his first nor his last."

In Washington, the State Department said it was still in the "investigative phase" of determining what impact the attack would have on the 16-month-old U.S. dialogue with the PLO.

Because of the seriousness of the issue, Secretary of State James Baker will personally be in charge of whatever action the United States decides to take, the State Department announced.

The statements issued by American Jewish leaders indicated they would be satisfied by only one course of action, although not all demanded instant abandonment of U.S. dialogue with the PLO.

Seymour Reich, chairman of the Conference of Presidents of Major American Jewish Organizations, was sharply critical of the State Department's report that Arafat has adhered to his promise to forgo terrorism. "That whitewash stands exposed as a sham," he said.

Abraham Foxman, national director of the Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rith, demanded

the "immediate suspension" of the U.S.-PLO talks.

Sholom Comay, president of the American Jewish Committee, said the beach attack was "only the latest in a series of PLO-linked terrorist attacks against Israeli civilian targets."

Albert Chernin, executive vice chairman of the National Jewish Community Relations Advisory Council, said, "We are encouraged that the administration is taking a hard look at the continuing efficacy of its dialogue with the PLO in light of this latest episode."

Foreign Minister Moshe Arens said on an Israel Radio interview that Israel has always maintained that the PLO, its various factions included, continues to engage in terror in spite of various comments made by Arafat here and there.

"But one cannot fool all of the people all of the time," he added.

Israel's deputy foreign minister, Binyamin Netanyahu, said "if yesterday's event didn't teach us what the PLO is, it'll be hard to persuade others."

Abbas' Palestine Liberation Front is notorious for masterminding the hijack of the Italian cruise ship Achille Lauro in 1985, during which a disabled American, Leon Klinghoffer, was murdered.

Abbas' continued activity after Arafat renounced terrorism in 1988 has led to calls on the PLO chief to drum Abbas out of the PLO's Executive Committee.

"Abul Abbas was elected, not by me but by the PNC. The PNC has to decide on Abul Abbas, not me. It is a matter of our democracy," he said.

At Thursday's news conference in Washington, following the first summit session between President Bush and Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev, Fitzwater said "the president commends the action of the Israel Defense Force" in stopping the attack.

Tutwiler said Wednesday that if the PLO is found responsible for the attack, "we would view this as a very serious matter." She added that the administration wants "to get all the facts. We will not rule anything in or out."

The first step toward getting the facts was a meeting Thursday with the PLO by Robert Pelletreau, the U.S. Ambassador in Tunisia, who has conducted all the previous dialogue with the PLO.

(JTA correspondents David Friedman in Washington and David Landau in Jerusalem contributed to this report.)

GOOD FORTUNE PREVENTED TERRORISTS FROM DOING ANY BEACHHEAD DAMAGE**By Hugh Orgel**

TEL AVIV, May 31 (JTA) -- Good luck as much as any other factor helped foil a potentially disastrous attack by heavily armed seaborne terrorists on Israeli civilians Wednesday.

Air, ground and naval forces engaged the intruders, killing four and capturing 12 before they could cause casualties or damage.

Meanwhile, a full-scale inquiry has been opened at Israel Defense Force General Headquarters, in order to seek answers to many questions

being asked by officers, politicians and the public at large over the defensive operation conducted by the IDF.

Chief of Staff Gen. Dan Shomron and his senior officers admitted they took a calculated risk by not clearing the beaches as soon as the attackers were detected. An important consideration was not to create panic, they said.

They also withheld fire until it was certain the approaching boatloads of men were enemies.

Two apparently well-planned and coordinated assaults were attempted by Palestinian terrorists traveling in fast fiberglass motorboats from a "mother ship" cruising more than 100 miles off the Israeli coast.

In addition, more numerous landing attempts were aborted by mechanical difficulties.

Responsibility for the operation, believed to have been launched from Libya, is being claimed by the Palestine Liberation Front. The PLF, headed by Mohammed (Abul) Abbas, is the group responsible for the 1985 attack on the Italian cruise ship Achille Lauro and the subsequent killing of Leon Klinghoffer.

Initial targets were beaches north and south of Tel Aviv, where the assailants knew thousands of Israelis would be spending the Shavuot holiday sunbathing and swimming.

Maps and documents found on the terrorists made clear their targets also included hotels and the center of Tel Aviv, which could be expected to be crowded with civilians.

The armaments carried by the terrorists included cannons, heavy machine guns, assault rifles, side arms, grenades and explosives.

Planned Weeks Ago

The attempted landings were at Ga'ash, a beach north of Tel Aviv, and Nitzanim, a beach between Ashkelon and Ashdod to the south. More than three hours separated the two assaults.

Military and civilian leaders agreed that the timing of the Shavuot attack had nothing to do with the slaying of seven Palestinians by a reputedly deranged Israeli gunman near Rishon le-Zion on May 20, though the PLF claimed it was in revenge.

Experts pointed out that the attack, which included a mother ship and 16 armed men riding six speedboats, must have been planned weeks or months in advance.

Israelis also admit the element of chance did much to prevent a massacre. The engine of one boat would not start when it was put into the water.

Three others, including one used as a refueling tanker, broke down shortly afterwards.

If all six assault boats had reached beaches or deserted areas on the coast, the outcome might have been different.

In addition to the Ga'ash and Nitzanim beaches, targets circles on the terrorists' maps included Tel Aviv's beachfront hotels; the Migdal Shalom Tower, Israel's tallest office building; and Malchei Yisrael Square outside Tel Aviv City Hall.

A mystery surrounds the mother ship, which was 124 miles off the Israeli coast when it dropped the speedboats.

According to the IDF, it sailed from Benghazi, Libya, on Sunday and headed for Port Said, Egypt, after the attack. The Egyptian authorities were alerted but the vessel has not been found.

Acting Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir, who is also defense minister in the caretaker government, congratulated the security forces on their

"tremendous success" in preventing the attempted mass murder of innocent civilians.

The police anti-terrorist unit, under IDF command, took an active part in the operation, but despite official praise for IDF-police cooperation, Police Commissioner Ya'acov Ternier stated publicly that he learned of the Nitzanim landing from a private citizen who telephoned him.

According to news reports, the first warning of trouble was received at 6:45 a.m. local time when navy radar picked up the blips of speedboats about 26 miles off shore heading toward Ga'ash.

A Dabour-class gunboat on routine patrol off Tel Aviv was sent to investigate. It intercepted the speedboat and ordered its five occupants to jump into the sea without their weapons. They were promptly captured and taken ashore.

Air force spotter planes, attack helicopters and other naval vessels were immediately put on alert.

But it was not until 10 a.m. local time that a second suspicious-looking speedboat was seen making for shore near Nitzanim.

A Dabour gunboat gave chase but was out-run. Seven gunmen were put ashore and took cover under bushes on the sand dunes.

Cobra attack helicopters rushed to the scene but had to make sure the invaders were indeed terrorists and not IDF soldiers or civilians before they opened fire.

In the event, four terrorists were fatally shot by helicopter gunners or soldiers of the Givati Brigade sent to the scene.

Details of the interrogation of the others was passed on to the United States.

Former Defense Minister Yitzhak Rabin told Israel Radio that intelligence reports received about five months ago indicated that Abbas was in Libya planning a seaborne assault on Israel. It was not known, however, when or where it would occur.

U.N. SET TO VOTE ON RESOLUTION SENDING DELEGATION TO TERRITORIES

UNITED NATIONS, May 31 (JTA) -- The Arab bloc here was expected Thursday to introduce a Security Council resolution to send a three-member U.N. delegation to investigate the "deteriorating situation" in the Israeli-administered territories and East Jerusalem.

The Security Council was scheduled to begin informal consultations on the resolution late Thursday afternoon, and sources here said a vote could take place as early as that evening.

There were early indications that the United States might veto the resolution, which calls for a delegation of three members of the Security Council to investigate the "policy and practices of Israel, the occupying power" and to report back to the council by June 20.

Ambassador Jochanan Bein, Israel's acting representative here, said his country expected the United States to veto the resolution.

A spokesperson at the U.S. Mission here declined to say how the United States would vote on the resolution, but the spokesperson pointed to remarks made Sunday by Secretary of State James Baker.

Baker told the CBS-TV news program "Face the Nation" that the United States would prefer "an investigative mission sent by the secretary-general of the United Nations to go check on the situation in the territories and report back."

**TUTU DISCUSSES HIS VIEWS ON ISRAEL
WITH JEWISH LEADERS IN CINCINNATI**
By Phyllis Singer and Don Canaan
The American Israelite

CINCINNATI, May 31 (JTA) -- Although he disagrees strongly with policies of the Israeli government, South African Anglican Archbishop Desmond Tutu told Jewish leaders here this week that he is not an anti-Semite.

And those who met with him Monday during the South African archbishop's four-day visit to Cincinnati agreed.

It's important, Tutu said at a news conference following the private meeting, that the world knows "that the archbishop of Cape Town is not anti-Semitic."

"I do not believe he's anti-Semitic, not one bit," Dr. Alfred Gottschalk, president of Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion, said at the news conference.

Gottschalk served as spokesman for the group of 18 Jewish community leaders whose private meeting with the Anglican cleric had been arranged at the request of Michael Rapp, executive director of the Jewish Community Relations Council here.

Although those who participated in the one-hour meeting characterized it as "fruitful" and "worthwhile," it was apparent that strong differences remain between the Anglican archbishop and the Jewish community.

Those differences center primarily on Tutu's support for a Palestinian homeland and his comparison of Israel's treatment of the Palestinians with the South African government system of apartheid, in which the white minority population rules over the vast black majority.

Criticized The Government

Tutu used that analogy during a Christmas week visit to Israel last December, in which he harshly criticizing the government's handling of the intifada and its unwillingness to support the creation of a Palestinian state.

He also suggested it was time for Jews to forgive the Nazis for perpetrating the Holocaust.

Tutu's visit to the United States presented an opportunity to confront the archbishop about his views directly.

But although Tutu is visiting several other U.S. cities, including Los Angeles, New York and Washington, the only scheduled meeting with Jewish community leaders was the dialogue Monday in Cincinnati.

Because Monday's meeting was limited to one hour, Jewish leaders here decided to focus primarily on Tutu's comparison of Israel's treatment of the Palestinians with the South African system of apartheid, Rapp told The American Israelite.

A joint statement issued after the meeting reported that the "Jewish community leaders and Archbishop Tutu differed on whether comparisons could be drawn between the policies of the South African and Israeli governments."

It also said that while Tutu reaffirmed "the right of Israel to exist within secure borders," he also "restated his belief in the right of the Palestinian people to a homeland."

According to Gottschalk, Tutu "walked away from" the analogy between Israel and South Africa and "spoke with great passion" of things he saw in the refugee camps he visited in the Israeli-administered territories.

But he reiterated the position of the Angli-

can Church, Gottschalk said, in condemning the Arabs' protracted enmity against Israel, in supporting Israel's right to exist with clear and defensible borders, and in supporting the Palestinians' right to a homeland of their own.

Diana Aviv, associate director of the National Jewish Community Relations Advisory Council, who flew to Cincinnati for the Monday meeting, said that although the participants did not have time for all the issues, "it was a good start."

**RESIGNATION OF FAR-RIGHT POLITICIAN
REVEALS DEEPENING CRISES IN PARTY**

By David Kantor

BONN, May 31 (JTA) -- The surprise resignation this week of Franz Schoenhuber as chairman of the Republican Party signifies a deepening crisis in the extreme right-wing party of German politics.

But the Jewish community warned nevertheless that Schoenhuber and the leadership that succeeds him still represent a danger to the democratic system in this country.

The 67-year-old former Waffen SS officer, who led the Republicans to a series of unexpected electoral successes in recent years, said on quitting that the party had been infiltrated by old-line Nazis and neo-Nazis.

He said he would work to purge it of such elements.

That was a significant admission, inasmuch as Schoenhuber has vigorously denied that the Republicans harbor Nazis of any vintage.

The party's new leadership in Munich charged Thursday that Schoenhuber spoke out of deep personal frustration over not being able to impose "dictatorial measures" on the party.

Because of his critical remarks, he faces expulsion from the party he himself established four years ago, which was, from its inception, a haven for right-wing activists whose former groups were outlawed for neo-Nazi activities.

But the Republicans were easily the most successful of the far-right political parties.

They scored well in municipal elections, including the West Berlin legislature. Last year, they won 10 percent of the popular vote in nationwide balloting for delegates to the Strasbourg-based Parliament of Europe.

But the Republicans suffered a series of setbacks in the recent local elections in North Rhine-Westphalia and Lower Saxony, the most populous German states. It received less than 2 percent of the vote, thereby failing to win seats in the state legislatures or town councils.

ISRAEL, S. KOREA REACH ACCORD

By Hugh Orgel

TEL AVIV, May 31 (JTA) -- A scientific cooperation agreement has been signed between the Israel Academy of Sciences and its South Korean counterpart, the first of its kind between Israel and a Southeast Asian country, according to a report in Davar on Tuesday.

The agreement was reached following consultations between the president of the Korean Academy of Sciences, who is currently on an official visit to Israel, and the Council of the Israeli Academy of Sciences.

South Korea has no embassy in Israel, and estimates are that this agreement will be an important step in strengthening the technological and scientific ties between the two countries.

NEWS ANALYSIS:
JEWISH LEADERS DEEPLY TROUBLED
BY RECENT U.S.-ISRAELI TENSIONS
 By David Friedman

WASHINGTON, May 31 (JTA) -- There is growing concern in the American Jewish community that increasing tension between the United States and Israel could damage the special relationship between the two countries and derail the Middle East peace process.

There is also consensus that as bad as the situation is now, it could get worse.

Nevertheless, there is hope among Jewish leaders that the tensions are temporary and will be ironed out over time.

The U.S.-Israeli relationship is "fundamentally solid," and will "remain intact" Malcolm Hoenlein, executive director of the Conference of Presidents of Major American Jewish Organizations, maintained.

"The blame is not one-sided," he said. "Israel has made mistakes, and the United States has made mistakes. Both sides have to put it back on track, and I think both want to."

The current tension between the United States and Israel can be attributed to several factors:

- * Israel's unwillingness so far to endorse U.S. proposals for advancing the Jewish state's own peace plan.
- * The Bush administration's impatience with the long time it is taking for Israel to form a government capable of making major decisions on such issues as the peace process.
- * Mistrust and poor personal chemistry between President Bush and Yitzhak Shamir, who heads Israel's caretaker government and is expected to be prime minister again in the new government.
- * Bush's personal feelings of sympathy for Palestinian youths being injured or killed as they engage in anti-Israel violence.

Bush Felt Misled By Shamir

The current tension goes back to March, when Bush said he was against Jewish "settlements" in East Jerusalem. It was the first time East Jerusalem, which Israel annexed after the 1967 war, had been mentioned in such a context.

Although Bush tried to soothe Israel by stressing that Jerusalem should not again be divided, many in Jerusalem and Washington blamed his remarks for the collapse of Israel's unity government.

From the Bush administration's perspective, the president was merely expressing his longtime opposition to Jewish settlements in the West Bank, of which the United States considers East Jerusalem to be part.

Administration officials said the president felt he had been misled by Shamir when Israel asserted that only 1 percent of Soviet Jewish immigrants settled in the West Bank, a figure that did not include East Jerusalem.

There is general agreement that the strong criticism of Israel in recent weeks is a result of Bush's sympathy for the Palestinians he sees nightly on television being shot at by Israeli troops.

"This is a president that watches a great deal of TV news," said one source in the pro-Israel community. He said Bush reacts emotionally to the pictures he sees from the West Bank and Gaza Strip.

"There is no Israeli government, no political initiative, nothing to divert people's attention from the television image of soldiers dealing with stone-throwing children," observed Martin Indyk, executive director of the Washington Institute for Near East Policy, a think tank that consistently reflects a pro-Israel viewpoint.

Jess Hordes, Washington representative of the Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rith, said he believes that the recent tension is a result of the administration's increased pressure on Israel.

He said the administration has to give more thought to where the current policy is leading. "Israel really needs the sense of confidence to move ahead" in the peace process, he said.

On this point, one Jewish official maintained that it is not important that Bush and Shamir like each other, but that they trust each other.

Reason To Be Impatient

Hoenlein said that while the Bush administration has been impatient, Israel also has reason to be impatient over some of the administration's acts in recent weeks. He said there were some people inside and outside the administration who are seeking to exploit the current tension to undermine the U.S.-Israeli relationship.

One such action was the administration's willingness to discuss an Arab-sponsored resolution in the U.N. Security Council condemning the settlement of Soviet Jews in the West Bank and Gaza Strip.

Hordes of ADL reported that when he discussed the resolution with senior administration officials, they were "openly impatient" with Israel. He said they probably reflected the views of their bosses.

Many Jewish officials believe that the current tension also partly reflects the personal views of top administration officials. Bush and Secretary of State James Baker are considered to have a less emotional attachment to Israel than did President Reagan and his secretary of state, George Shultz.

Vice President Dan Quayle is considered to be staunchly supportive of Israel. But he is thought to have much less clout over major policy decisions than White House Chief of Staff John Sununu, a longtime supporter of the Arab cause.

But Indyk pointed out that under Reagan, the United States sold AWACS surveillance planes to Saudi Arabia, causing one of the most bitter fights between Israel and the United States in history.

Less Of An Emotional Attachment

He said Reagan also suspended the sale of F-16 fighters to Israel after the start of the war in Lebanon, and the war itself resulted in numerous disputes between the two countries.

Hoenlein expressed confidence that once the current crisis is over, the U.S.-Israeli relationship will return to normal.

He and others stressed that despite the current tension, the strategic cooperation continues between the two countries. Israel will still receive its \$3 billion in economic and foreign aid this year, and a \$400 million loan guarantee to build housing for Soviet immigrants in Israel is proceeding with little opposition.

Israel receives most of what it needs from the United States, said an official in the pro-Israel community. "If a perfect relationship is 100, then the U.S.-Israeli relationship is now at 75 percent," he said.