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**GERMAN CABINET AGREES TO SEND MILITARY EQUIPMENT TO ISRAEL**

By David Kantor

BONN, Jan. 29 (JTA) -- The German Cabinet agreed unanimously Tuesday to supply Israel with anti-aircraft missiles and an advanced system that instantly warns of a poison gas attack.

The move came on the heels of a decision last week by the Bonn government to provide Israel with \$165 million in humanitarian aid.

In Vienna, the Austrian leadership endorsed the idea of giving humanitarian aid to Israel in view of its status as a non-combatant that has come under attack in the Persian Gulf war.

The Bonn government's decision was promptly endorsed by the opposition Social Democratic Party, which said the shipments were justified on practical and moral grounds.

It was adopted after Chancellor Helmut Kohl delivered a brief report of his talk Monday evening with the Israeli ambassador to Germany, Benjamin Navon. Their meeting also was attended by Foreign Minister Hans-Dietrich Genscher, who just returned from a visit to Israel, and Defense Minister Gerhard Stoltenberg.

The "shopping list" Navon presented to Kohl includes an unspecified number of Hawk surface-to-air missiles.

Perhaps most important, given Israel's fears of a chemical attack from Iraq, are the Nuclear Biological Chemical reconnaissance systems it will receive from Germany.

The system, mounted on an armored vehicle, is a sophisticated instrument to detect and warn of attacks with non-conventional arms -- nuclear, biological or chemical. It is said to be the most advanced device of its kind in the world.

The mobile NBC system can tell in seconds whether a specific installation or area has been subjected to attack by chemical weapons and which type of poison gas was used.

**Austrian Aid Endorsed**

The information is immensely useful in emergency situations. The authorities can use it to tell the public what kind of chemical or biological agent has been used and how to protect against it.

Other types of military equipment Germany will supply to Israel were not specified. They are believed to consist of a wide variety of tools and materials to protect the civilian population against non-conventional weapons.

Israel reportedly dropped Patriot missiles from its list because those Germany can supply are only effective against aircraft, not missiles.

Meanwhile, a delegation of B'nai B'rith International, headed by its president, Kent Schiner, helped secure a promise of Austrian aid for Israel.

Schiner, fresh from opening a new B'nai B'rith lodge in Prague, met Tuesday with Chancellor Franz Vranitzky in Vienna after a meeting Monday night with Vice Chancellor Josef Riegler.

The delegation urged the Austrian leaders to support Israel as one of the "front-line" nations allied with the forces arrayed against Iraq.

Riegler endorsed humanitarian aid for Israel at a meeting of the Austrian Cabinet.

**PLO OFFICIALS CLAIM CREDIT FOR KATYUSHA ATTACK IN LEBANON**

By Hugh Orgel

TEL AVIV, Jan. 29 (JTA) -- Palestine Liberation Organization sources in southern Lebanon have said an intense hail of Katyusha rockets on the Israeli-patrolled security zone Monday night was fired on orders of PLO chief Yasir Arafat and was part of a "second front" in support of Saddam Hussein.

But the PLO leadership in Tunis later denied that Arafat personally ordered the assault as a response to allied attacks on Iraq.

The attack, described by the Israel Defense Force as the most intense bombardment in recent years, was apparently aimed at settlements in northern Israel. The rockets fell far short of their targets and exploded harmlessly, causing neither casualties nor damage, the IDF said.

Witnesses in Lebanon reportedly saw Palestinians put up rocket launchers just north of the southern Lebanon zone patrolled by IDF troops and the allied South Lebanon Army.

PLO officials in the southern Lebanese port city of Sidon took credit for the attack, in what may be the first such acknowledgment since Arafat publicly renounced terrorism in November 1988 and said he recognized Israel's right to exist.

Arafat has been supportive of Iraqi leader Saddam Hussein in the Persian Gulf war and supports linking the Gulf crisis and the Palestinian-Israeli problem.

PLO officials said the rockets were fired on Arafat's personal orders to demonstrate solidarity with Hussein.

In the Ain-Hilweh refugee camp in southern Lebanon, a man who called himself "commander of the PLO aerial defense force" said Monday night's barrage was preliminary to opening a "second front" in support of Hussein.

He said Palestinian pilots underwent special training in Lebanon for this "second front."

Israeli artillery responded to the salvo of dozens of rockets while Palestinian and Hezbollah centers in southern Lebanon declared a state of emergency in expectation of retaliatory attacks.

The Hezbollah, or Party of God, is an extremist Islamic group active in southern Lebanon.

**BEHIND THE HEADLINES:**

**FOR SOME PALESTINIANS, SCUD STRIKE COMES TOO CLOSE TO HOME FOR COMFORT**  
By Gil Sedan

DEIR BALUT, West Bank, Jan. 29 (JTA) -- The Scud missile launched from Iraq on Monday night was targeted at Tel Aviv, but it exploded instead on the outskirts of this Arab village.

Saddam Hussein may still be a hero to the Palestinians. But it is doubtful that many here still regard him as their savior. They know too well he might have been the agent of their destruction had the range of his missile been a few hundred yards longer.

It left its crater in an olive orchard at the end of town, near the front door of Taleb Ali Abdullah, who lives with his family in the southernmost house in Deir Balut.

"We were lucky," 30-year-old Abdullah

admitted to a visitor Tuesday morning. "We feel the pain of those who are victims of such attacks."

One wonders. The young man's attire was traditional. He sported a short beard that is a trademark of Hamas, the fundamentalist Islamic Resistance Movement, whose followers are generally the most zealous of the intifada activists.

But he sounded genuine. After all, God and Saddam Hussein's erratic missile launchers had allowed him and his family to continue to live.

"We heard a loud shriek, then an explosion, and the entire building was shaking," Abdullah recounted. "We did not dare leave the sealed rooms until the radio assured us that it was not a chemical missile. Then we looked outside and we saw smoke coming from the direction of the fields."

On Tuesday morning there was nothing more than a huge trench between the orchard and a wheat field. The missile fragments were gone, probably scooped up by Israeli army experts who reached the site long before the news media.

#### No More Rejoicing Here

The fields surrounding Abdullah's house were deserted, as were the streets. But it was not fear of a missile attack that kept residents of Deir Balut and every other West Bank village indoors.

They are confined to their homes by the curfew that has been in effect in the administered territories since Jan. 17, the day war began in the Persian Gulf. The army is enforcing the curfew strictly because the local population supports Iraq.

For nights on end, Palestinians have climbed to their rooftops at the first sound of the air-raid sirens. They have chanted and rejoiced at the knowledge that missiles were landing in the heart of the Jewish state.

After their close call Monday night, some here may be having second thoughts.

That does not mean Saddam Hussein has become any less popular. People are not quick to argue with the Palestinian consensus.

But they now have a respectable fear of death raining from the sky and some idea of how their neighbors to the west must feel.

Deir Balut is only a few miles east of the large Jewish towns of Petach Tikva and Rosh Ha'ayin. Missiles aimed at them could easily fall here, and the residents have not yet received their gas masks.

They sit in their gas-sealed rooms praying that the next missile does not strike here and that it does not carry a chemical warhead.

Nor does it seem likely they still wait in happy anticipation of another missile attack on Tel Aviv. It is too close to home, and after Monday night, they know better.

#### **JUNIOR HIGH TO RESUME THURSDAY**

By Gil Sedan

JERUSALEM, Jan. 29 (JTA) -- Israel's Education Ministry announced Tuesday that junior high school classes throughout the country would resume Thursday morning unless there was a worsening of the security situation.

The order does not apply to the Greater Tel Aviv and Greater Haifa areas, where most Iraqi Scud missiles have hit.

Elementary school classes throughout the country will remain suspended until the security situation stabilizes, the ministry said.

#### **U.S. JEWISH LEADERS GET A TASTE OF LIFE UNDER IRAQI MISSILE THREAT** By Charles Hoffman

JERUSALEM, Jan. 29 (JTA) -- Members of the Conference of Presidents of Major American Jewish Organizations got a taste this week of what Israelis have endured under repeated Iraqi missile attacks.

As the 51 members of the visiting delegation were listening Monday night to a speech by Deputy Foreign Minister Binyamin Netanyahu at the Hyatt Hotel in Jerusalem, air raid sirens began to wail. The delegates immediately filed into sealed rooms and put on their gas masks.

"Carrying gas masks became natural for us," Conference of Presidents Chairman Shoshana Cardin said, summing up the three-day fact-finding and solidarity mission to Israel.

"But I was not prepared for the sealed room," she added. "To see small children put in their (plastic gas-proof) tents was very moving and devastating. This unreal situation has become all too real for Israel."

Cardin said that leaders of the conference plan to meet with Secretary of State James Baker soon after they return Tuesday evening to the United States. She said they would urge the administration to do more to eliminate the Iraqi Scud missile threat, because the worst for Israel may be yet to come.

"I am leaving with a sense of optimism that Israel will prevail in the current crisis," Cardin said. "But I recognize that the situation is serious -- more serious than we anticipated prior to our coming. Saddam Hussein won't hesitate to use any weapon in his arsenal if he is up against the wall and has nothing more to lose."

#### U.S. Jews Have Not Done Enough

Members of the visiting delegation met Tuesday with Prime Minister Shamir, who stressed that for Israel there is no policy of either retaliation or of restraint.

The principle involved, Cardin quoted Shamir as saying, is the defense of Israel's citizens and its borders. It is up to the government to determine what measures are needed for defense.

Cardin said when the leaders returned to the United States, their role would be threefold:

"First there is education. What people see on television about what is happening here is superficial. We have to tell Israel's story in depth.

"Then there are the added financial burdens on Israel from the war, in addition to what is being done for the Soviet immigrants. Whatever we have done (until now), it is not enough. We recognize that additional financial assistance from philanthropy, government and private investment is necessary. These sectors have to assume a stronger position in addressing the needs."

On the political plane, she said, "it is our responsibility to remind (American) political leaders of the role of Israel as an ally."

Cardin sought to dispel the perception held by some Israelis that American Jewry has abandoned them because so many tours and other visits have been canceled.

"We will come back again, and we will encourage people to visit here. I will tell my son to volunteer here if he wants," she said. "I have been impressed by the spirit here and by people's ability to lead a normal life under conditions that are not normal."

## FRENCH DEFENSE CHIEF'S DEPARTURE IS WELCOMED BY JEWISH COMMUNITY

PARIS, Jan. 29 (JTA) -- The French Jewish leadership noted with satisfaction Tuesday the resignation of Defense Minister Jean-Pierre Chevenement, a pro-Iraqi member of government who had thrown in his personal lot with the anti-war movement.

"His decision can only help clarify the French position," said a spokesman for CRIF, the umbrella body of French Jewish organizations.

Chevenement, who opposed French participation in the U.S.-led war against Iraq, was promptly replaced by Pierre Joxe, the former interior minister, who is a strong supporter of President Francois Mitterrand.

The leader of a small group within the left wing of the French Socialist Party, Chevenement was always known for his anti-American, pro-Arab positions.

His associates in the National Assembly either voted against or abstained on the issue of involving French forces in the Persian Gulf crisis.

Chevenement himself was convinced that French participation in the U.S.-led coalition would cost France its "traditional friendship" with the Arab countries of North Africa and its many contracts in the rest of the Arab world.

The official Iraqi radio monitored in Nicosia, Cyprus, reported his resignation only minutes after it was confirmed in Paris.

The departed defense minister was a founding member of the France-Iraq Friendship Association established in 1985.

In February 1990, he made an official visit to Baghdad to deliver a message to Saddam Hussein containing expressions of his personal support and of French friendship for Iraq.

## U.S. HINTS AT OUSTING IRAQ FROM U.N. RIGHTS COMMISSION

By Tamar Levy

GENEVA, Jan. 29 (JTA) -- The United States hinted strongly at Monday's opening of the U.N. Human Rights Commission meeting here that Iraq, one of 43 member states, should be ousted from the group.

"It is appalling that Iraq should sit on this body. Our government cannot in good conscience let this awful anomaly go unmentioned," the U.S. ambassador to the United Nations in Geneva, Morris Abram, declared in his opening speech.

But even in light of the war in the Persian Gulf, "the question of violation of human rights in the territories" tops the U.N. body's agenda, just as it has in recent years.

Rafael Walden, the Israeli representative, told the Jewish Telegraphic Agency that as in past years, Israel will keep a low profile while answering the "usual defamations."

Jan Martenson, undersecretary-general of the Center for Human Rights, situated here, could not say at what point in its six-week meeting the commission will discuss human rights in Iraq and in Kuwait, which Iraq invaded on Aug. 2.

Ambassador Kenneth Blackwell, who heads the U.S. delegation to the commission, said, "In relation to the Middle East as a whole, the U.S. delegation will once again stress the importance and urgency of resuming a process of direct negotiations aimed at a comprehensive solution and true peace between Israel and all its neighbors."

## BUSH SAYS HE BACKS SCHOOL PRAYER AND WILL OPPOSE ABORTION FUNDING

By Howard Rosenberg

WASHINGTON, Jan. 29 (JTA) -- President Bush this week reaffirmed his support for school prayer and his opposition to abortion, positions that make many American Jewish groups uncomfortable.

Bush said Monday he had not lessened his "commitment to restoring voluntary prayer in our schools," an initiative many Jewish groups have fought on Capitol Hill and in the courts.

"Students who go to school to nourish their minds should also be allowed to nourish their souls," he told the 48th annual convention of National Religious Broadcasters.

Despite Bush's support of proposed legislation that would require public schools to allow such prayer, only a few dozen members of the House of Representatives are pushing for it.

The president expressed opposition to bills that would allow government funds to be used to pay for abortions. Current law bars federal funds from going to birth-control clinics that provide abortions.

"Like me, you endorse adoption, not abortion," Bush told the 2,500 convention delegates, suggesting that women with unwanted pregnancies bear children and put them up for adoption.

Bush thanked the group representing more than 1,000 radio and television stations for helping last year to "ensure that the options of religious-based child care will not be restricted or eliminated by the federal government."

That was a reference to a landmark law that allows federal aid to be used at child-care facilities that operate sectarian programs. Most Jewish groups were upset with that arrangement, although they did not oppose the use of federal funds at religiously sponsored child-care centers with non-sectarian programs.

## 'Not A Jewish War'

Noticeably absent from Bush's speech, which did not leave time for questions and answers, was any mention of allowing parents to use government-funded vouchers to send their children to private schools, an idea opposed by most Jewish groups, who fear it would result in public funds being used to support parochial schools.

The administration is considering providing grants to pay the administrative costs of state and local voucher programs. One proposal would provide up to \$30 million in direct vouchers to certain localities as demonstration programs.

The bulk of Bush's speech to the broadcasters focused on the allied war against Iraq.

Observing that Iraqi President Saddam Hussein "has tried to cast this conflict as a religious war," Bush said, "The war in the Gulf is not a Christian war, a Jewish war, or a Moslem war. It is a just war."

But the president did try to cast the allied effort as a moral one. He said the goal of liberating Kuwait from Iraq was a battle for "freedom versus tyranny and oppression."

Bush also quoted a verse from the Book of Ecclesiastes that there is a "time for peace and a time for war."

"America has always been a religious nation, perhaps never more than now," Bush said. "Just look at the last several weeks" with "churches, synagogues and mosques reporting record attendance at services."

# **BEHIND THE HEADLINES: SOVIET INCURSION IN BALTICS IMPINGES ON VAAD GATHERING** By Aliza Marcus

NEW YORK, Jan. 29 (JTA) -- At the recent national conference in Moscow of the Vaad, the federation of Soviet Jewish organizations, delegates expected to deal with the almost routine matters of organizational structure after last year's historic first conference.

But as Soviet troops threatened to open fire again in the Baltic states and Iraqi missiles fell on Israel, those attending the Jan. 21-25 conference found themselves vainly trying to predict their future as Jewish citizens of the Soviet Union.

Some of the delegates from the three Baltic states -- where almost 30,000 Jews live -- did not attend the conference, fearing further military action in Riga and Vilnius.

Other delegates left the conference early to change their large-denomination ruble notes before the new Soviet policy banning the currency took effect.

According to reports from American Jewish observers attending the conference, along with those monitoring the Vaad from the United States, the Soviet Union's apparent fall from its much-touted democratic reforms reaffirmed for many the belief that the Soviet Union is no place for Jews.

"We have no way of predicting even what will happen in the next seven minutes," said Pamela Cohen, national president of the Union of Councils for Soviet Jews, who received reports from delegates.

"I think it would be pretentious for any organization to ignore the possibility of a sweeping catastrophe," she said.

## **Long Lines At Consulate**

This view, reflected by some of the delegates to the loosely organized Vaad, was borne out by the still-long lines of hopeful emigrants snaking around the newly opened Israeli Consulate in Moscow, despite the missiles landing in Tel Aviv almost nightly, said Kalman Sultanik, who attended the conference as vice president of the World Jewish Congress.

But despite the tension of local and world events, the conference's more than 1,000 delegates, representing close to 400 organizations from 78 different cities across the Soviet Union's vast territory, tried to hammer out the vision and the structure of the Vaad in the best loud and lively Jewish tradition.

"It was chaos," remarked one person monitoring the conference from New York, who asked not to be identified. "But it showed that Jewish politics are going on alive and well in the Soviet Union."

One reason for the friendly chaos was the conference's attempt to draw out a single Vaad vision from the varying views reflected by the group's three co-presidents: Michael Chlenov from Moscow, Samuel Zilberg from Riga and Yosef Zissels, from Chernovtsy (Chernovitz) in the Ukraine.

All agreed on one thing: that the most important issue facing the Jewish community is the facilitation and continuation of the massive exodus now under way, and the need to preserve the freedom of emigration.

But from that point they diverged on the

issue of what future, if any, the Soviet Union holds for Jews and thus, what role, if any, the Vaad should play in maintaining and developing Jewish communal life.

The ongoing events around them only added to the uncertainty, observers said.

At the conference's end a decision was made to keep the Vaad as it was, a sort of federation ceding autonomy to local communities and retaining control over issues affecting the whole Jewish community.

## **A Split Over The Future**

Still, this did not eradicate one of the central issues of disagreement among the three co-presidents: the Soviet Union's ability to provide a safe and free haven for Jews, where they can develop as free Soviet citizens and Jews, observers said.

Sultanik and others said Chlenov's view-- that a Jewish community will always remain and that therefore an organized Jewish structure is needed for maintenance and development -- was at gentle odds with the thinking of Zilberg and Zissels.

Both these men believe there is no future for a Jewish community in the Soviet Union and that all efforts must be oriented toward emigration, although Zissels thinks Jewish educational programs should be organized to help decrease assimilation.

"The camps are split," said Martin Wenick, national director of the National Conference on Soviet Jewry.

"But regardless of your rate of emigration, with the number of Jews in the Soviet Union, there will be Jews there for the next 15 to 20 years," he said.

Estimates of the Jewish population run between 3 million and 7 million, while at least 1 million have already applied to emigrate, and 200,000 arrived in Israel last year.

"On the other hand, it's a very unstable period in the Soviet Union, and in the face of the potential for all sorts of problems, including interethnic conflicts, one would feel the Jewish community in the Soviet Union continues to be one that remains at risk," Wenick said.

Still, there were some positive signs amid the resurgent hard-line attitude of Soviet authorities, observers said.

## **'Will The Doors Close?'**

The Vaad is yet to be officially recognized, but an exchange of letters between the co-presidents and Soviet officials is thought to amount to tacit recognition, said Sultanik.

New York state Attorney General Robert Abrams, who attended the conference and gave the Raoul Wallenberg Address, said he was overwhelmed by the "flowering of Jewish cultural life, the Hebrew day schools, cultural centers, the Israeli flag proudly lofted (at the Israeli Consulate) and blowing in the wind."

But Abrams, who spent nine days in the Soviet Union, added that "hovering over this is uncertainty. Will the doors close? Will this all suddenly come to an end?"

These questions "leave the continued mission of Jews around the world to continue to be vigilant and to be supportive of Soviet Jewry, and to keep the maximum amount of pressure on the Soviet government to ensure that all that has been done in the last couple of years will continue in the future," he added.