

**JEWISH LEADERS EXPRESS DISMAY  
AT 'UNFORTUNATE' REBUKE OF ENVOY**

By David Friedman and Howard Rosenberg

WASHINGTON, Feb. 18 (JTA) -- Jewish leaders have criticized the Bush administration for what they see as an "unfortunate" and "unnecessary" public rebuke of Israeli Ambassador Zalman Shoval for his criticisms of the administration.

There is also suspicion the administration's pique over Israeli foreign aid requests may be the real reason for the flap over Shoval's remarks.

Shoval has apologized for criticizing the Bush administration, in an interview with the Reuters news agency, for its delay in providing \$400 million in promised guarantees for loans Israel would use to build housing for Soviet Jewish immigrants.

"I did say some things which diplomats are supposed not to say, and I am sorry for that," Shoval told reporters in Miami, after addressing the 1991 plenum of the National Jewish Community Relations Advisory Council.

Comparing the relationship between Israel and the United States to a family, he said that "certain squabbles and mistakes on my part can be overcome."

The apology came after President Bush, in a rare public rebuke of an ambassador, called Shoval's criticism "outrageous."

"Public statements made yesterday by Israeli Ambassador Zalman Shoval are outrageous and outside the bounds of acceptable behavior by the ambassador of any friendly country," the White House said in a statement issued late Friday.

"The secretary of state made this clear to the ambassador yesterday, and the president protested to Prime Minister (Yitzhak) Shamir by cable this morning," the statement said, adding, "We deserve better from Israel's ambassador."

**'Came Down Unnecessarily Hard'**

The statement, issued after Bush had left for a weekend at his vacation home in Kennebunkport, Maine, was even more surprising since it had appeared the flap had ended when Shoval met with Secretary of State James Baker last Thursday, after his interview with Reuters appeared.

Malcolm Hoenlein, executive director of the Conference of Presidents of Major American Jewish Organizations, said Monday that it was "unfortunate" that the White House issued the public rebuke after Shoval had met with Baker.

"I hope that this chapter is over, and I hope that there are no broader implications in terms of policy," he said.

Seymour Reich, immediate past chairman of the Conference of Presidents, called the White House rebuke of Shoval "outrageous." The current chairman of the conference, Shoshana Cardin, was in Israel and could not immediately be reached.

"The administration came down unnecessarily hard on Shoval," Reich said. "It was as if they were trying to put Israel in its place for having achieved sympathy and understanding from the American people and Congress."

Shoval's complaint about the slow pace of the promised U.S. aid, approved by Congress last spring, was a reflection of Israeli frustration at continuing requests from the Bush administration

for technical documents on how the loan money will be spent.

"We sometimes feel we are being giving the runaround, although, to the best of my understanding, Israel has fully complied with the requests that were raised in this connection by the United States government," Shoval told Reuters.

**Israeli 'Bewilderment' At Delay**

The Israeli Embassy said in a statement Friday that while Shoval's words were partially taken out of context, they "reflect a sense of bewilderment in Israel" regarding the repeated delays in receiving the guarantees."

U.S. officials have recently told Israel that "all we needed to release were one or two other pieces of clarification" on how the money would be spent, an embassy official said. "Strangely enough, every time we clarified, there was another chain of requests" that left "some sour taste in our mouths."

The embassy was upset, when after submitting information on plans for new roads and a "few budgetary aspects of the settlement activity" in the West Bank and Gaza Strip, additional questions were submitted, the official said.

Reich said there is concern in the American Jewish community that "the housing guarantees have not been implemented after one year of enactment by the Congress."

He charged that the administration is trying to get "more details than has ever been requested by a prior administration."

The latest U.S. request for information was made after two Israeli opposition Knesset members, Dedi Zucker of the Citizens Rights Movement and Haim Oron of Mapam, released a report showing that the Israeli Housing Ministry was continuing to channel funds into settlements in the administered territories.

Baker reportedly was infuriated by the report and asked Dennis Ross, director of the State Department's policy planning staff, to seek clarifications from Shoval.

William Burns, principal deputy director of the policy planning staff, said in an address to the NJCRAC gathering Sunday that it was "unfortunate" there had been a delay in releasing the loan funds.

But he said Israel would get the money in one lump sum, rather than in three installments, as has been previously reported.

On Monday, the 500 NJCRAC delegates adopted a statement calling on the administration to "implement expeditiously" the promised loan guarantees.

**'Not Received One Cent'**

Shoval also complained to Reuters that Israel "had not received one cent in aid" to compensate Israel for losses due to Iraqi Scud missile attacks on the Jewish state.

When Arens visited Washington on Feb. 11, he told Baker that Israel will have spent \$910 million in military costs by April 1 directly as a result of the Persian Gulf crisis, according to a pro-Israeli lobbyist.

An Israeli Embassy official confirmed that Arens provided Baker with the Israeli military's "service-by-service" and "transaction-by-trans-

action" operational costs, "to prove that we are only talking about those activities that are Desert Storm-related."

Israel has also mentioned a figure of \$2.2 billion in indirect war costs, such as damages to homes hit by the Scud missiles and reduced trade and tourism.

Some administration sources have complained that Israel is asking for more money even though the United States is essentially fighting Israel's war for it by destroying Iraq's military power.

This view was echoed by Zbigniew Brzezinski, President Jimmy Carter's national security adviser. "Geopolitically, Israel is a major beneficiary of the war," Brzezinski said Sunday on the NBC News television program "Meet the Press."

The war "destroys the principal Arab military power in the region, it weakens the Arabs, it discredits the PLO because of the position it took," he said.

But White House spokesman Marlin Fitzwater indicated last Thursday that the administration may still ask Congress for supplemental foreign aid for countries such as Egypt, Turkey and Israel. Such a bill would only cover items directly related to the war.

A Capitol Hill source said it is Israel will likely hold off making a formal request for emergency aid until it is clear whether there will be a supplemental aid bill.

Israeli sources said Israel is not expected to ask for the \$2.2 billion in indirect costs, since that would count against other contenders for a slice of the \$20 billion U.S. foreign aid budget pie for 1991, of which Israel already receives the largest portion.

"We are not dummies," an Israeli Embassy official said. "We know exactly the state of the U.S. budget."

But the \$1 billion in direct aid for war losses and the \$400 million in loan guarantees skim the surface of Israel's hoped-for special foreign aid allotments over the next years.

Israel wants \$10 billion more in loan guarantees to assist the absorption of Soviet immigrants, to be provided in \$2 billion-a-year installments over five years, Israeli officials said.

*(Contributing to this report were JTA staff writer Debra Nussbaum Cohen in Miami and JTA correspondent Gil Sedan in Jerusalem.)*

#### ISRAEL WILLING TO DISCUSS PEACE, BUT ONLY AFTER WAR, SHAMIR SAYS By Charles Hoffman

JERUSALEM, Feb. 18 (JTA) -- Israel is willing to discuss peace initiatives for the postwar period, but not until the fighting in the Persian Gulf has ended, Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir indicated Sunday.

In an address to the Board of Governors of the Jewish Agency for Israel, which is meeting in Jerusalem, the premier said, "We are ready -- even anxious -- to engage in peace talks at the appropriate time. But who can tell what the Middle East and the Gulf region will look like after the war?"

"What kind of Iraq will there be? What will be the fate of Jordan? What will be Syria's role in this war? What will be the fate of Arab governments that are experiencing the trauma of war between Arab countries?" he asked.

Given these uncertainties, he said, "I submit that we should concentrate first on achieving the objectives of the Gulf war. Then, hopefully, we

will be able to embark on the road to negotiations and peace, in a better climate."

Shamir stressed, however, that the international community should have learned some lessons from the war that could be applied to the Middle East peace process. Among them, he said, are that the Palestine Liberation Organization, "Saddam Hussein's staunchest ally, has been totally discredited as a factor for peace."

Shamir assailed the "proliferation of non-conventional and conventional weapons in this region," saying they are "a disastrous consequence of the unscrupulous policies of many industrial states."

"We hope that the international community will, at the earliest opportunity, revise their policy regarding the supply of sophisticated military equipment to non-democratic regimes in the Middle East, such as Iraq," he said.

#### Urges A New Fund-raising Campaign

The prime minister described Israel's domestic priorities, which he said should be addressed right away. He spoke of "the reconstruction of the areas damaged by the Scud missiles" and revival of the suffering tourist industry.

But above all, he said, "we must apply ourselves to the absorption of the biggest aliyah in our history. Before the war, it looked like a million Soviet olim would arrive within three or four years." Now, he said, it may take "another year or two."

Shamir expressed appreciation for "the special efforts of the fund-raising organizations in the Operation Exodus campaign" to resettle Soviet Jews in Israel.

"But these are extraordinary times," he said. "I am sure that you will use this occasion to plan for an Operation Exodus II to be launched as soon as possible."

"I appeal to you to double and treble your efforts -- even more -- for this great common cause," he said.

#### SHAMIR AND LEVY APPARENTLY FAIL TO PATCH UP THEIR DIFFERENCES By Gil Sedan

JERUSALEM, Feb. 18 (JTA) -- Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir and Foreign Minister David Levy apparently have not succeeded in patching up their differences.

Levy declined even to put a cosmetic gloss over the matter when he emerged from a meeting Monday with the prime minister.

According to reports, they had met specifically to ease their personal relations. But when Levy was questioned by reporters afterward, he replied, "We held a working meeting -- period."

Neither the Prime Minister's Office nor the Foreign Ministry were more forthcoming. Sources at both described the meeting as routine, saying "current political matters were discussed."

Tension surfaced between Levy and Shamir on Feb. 12, when the foreign minister suddenly postponed a Feb. 15 meeting in Washington with U.S. Secretary of State James Baker.

Levy made clear he was furious over Defense Minister Moshe Arens' surprise junket to Washington the day before. Levy considered Arens to be encroaching on his foreign policy domain.

But the episode and Shamir's tepid effort to mollify Levy were seen here as an attempt to isolate the foreign minister, who may have become too independent for Shamir's taste.

**ISRAEL REFUTES IRAQI CLAIM  
SCUDS FIRED AT DIMONA PLANT**

By Hugh Orgel

TEL AVIV, Feb. 18 (JTA) -- The Israel Defense Force has so far failed to find evidence of Scud missiles the Iraqi military authorities claimed to have fired at Israel's nuclear facility at Dimona in the Negev.

Army units were reported Monday to still be searching for the impact point or debris where Jewish and Bedouin eyewitnesses reported seeing a bright flash in the sky followed by a loud roar Saturday night.

Baghdad claimed three advanced-type Scud missiles were fired at Dimona and a fourth at Haifa port. But the Israelis say they know nothing of a missile fired toward Haifa, either.

Two missiles were reported earlier to have hit Israel's southern region Saturday, causing neither injuries nor damage. The IDF, for security reasons, does not say where the missiles landed.

Both reportedly carried conventional warheads. There was no official report of Patriot anti-missile batteries being fired to intercept them.

The all-clear sounded within minutes, except in the southern region, which civil defense authorities designate Zone 6. Residents there were ordered to stay in their gas-proof rooms with their gas masks on for additional time.

Zone 6 extends from Ashkelon on the Mediterranean coast to Ein Gedi on the Dead Sea and includes all of the Negev south to Eilat. It had been considered a safe haven from missile attacks by many Tel Aviv area residents, who left the city after the first Scuds struck on Jan. 18.

Senior security officials told the Cabinet at its meeting Sunday that while Iraq's ability to manufacture chemical weapons may have been severely impaired by allied bombings, the danger of a chemical attack on Israel is not over.

It may, in fact, have increased.

Israeli officials say they have no reason to change their assessment that the closer Saddam Hussein comes to defeat, the greater his incentive to "settle accounts" with Israel.

**DESPITE CURFEWS, NORMAL LIFE  
RETURNS TO WEST BANK, GAZA STRIP**

By Gil Sedan

JERUSALEM, Feb. 18 (JTA) -- Although a general curfew remains in effect at night and a partial curfew during the day, life is gradually resuming a more normal pace in the West Bank and Gaza Strip.

The Israeli authorities announced that schools in the territories would be reopened in stages, starting Tuesday.

Bridges that span the Jordan River, closed when the war started, have been reopened. But only dignitaries or media people were allowed to cross with special permits Monday, with several dozen such people making the trip.

Palestinian workers are being allowed into Israel proper, and some 1,200 Gaza fishermen were permitted to go out to sea Monday for the first time since the Persian Gulf war began 35 days ago.

The curfew in effect since then is the longest ever imposed on the 1.5 million Palestinian who inhabit the territories.

They were sequestered because of concern that their support for Saddam Hussein would lead

to turbulent clashes with Israeli authorities and further inflame the 3-year-old uprising.

Last week, the authorities lifted the curfew for several hours to allow people to shop for household goods and go to work near their homes.

On Monday, about 11,500 Palestinians reported to jobs in Israel. That was 10 times the number permitted early last week but a far cry from the more than 100,000 Arab laborers from the territories who worked in Israel daily before the Gulf war.

Schools in the territories have been closed almost without interruption since December, when students left for their two-week midyear vacation.

Classes resumed on Jan. 13 but were closed two days later when the U.N. ultimatum for Iraq to withdraw from Kuwait expired, making war inevitable.

The Israeli authorities said Monday that classes would be resumed first in the elementary grades and then the higher grades. They stressed that it was conditional on order being maintained. If the schools become scenes of unrest or intifada activists attempt to stir trouble, they will be closed again.

**SKINHEADS STAGE ANTI-ISRAEL RALLY**

By Ruth E. Gruber

ROME, Feb. 18 (JTA) -- About 200 Skinheads and other right-wing extremists demonstrating here Saturday evening mixed anti-Semitic with anti-Israel and anti-American slogans in a demonstration of support for Saddam Hussein of Iraq.

Wearing black shirts reminiscent of Mussolini's fascist brigades, they marched down the Appian Way in the center of Rome chanting, "Another Scud on Tel Aviv," and waved banners reading, "Israel will not win."

"Only the fascists have not forgotten that the Americans bombed Italy" during World War II, a newspaper quoted one marcher as saying.

Fliers announcing the pro-Iraq rally showed a U.S. Marine being kicked in the rear by a shaven-headed youth while another ripped an Israeli flag.

The leaflets exhorted against "the imperialist and Zionist war."

**ISRAEL PHILHARMONIC TO PLAY AGAIN**

By Hugh Orgel

TEL AVIV, Feb. 18 (JTA) -- The Israel Philharmonic Orchestra will resume its concert series Wednesday, suspended over a month ago by the start of the Persian Gulf war.

Zubin Mehta, the IPO's lifetime musical director, who came to Israel at the war's start to show his solidarity with Israel, will conduct.

The concert marks a resumption of events banned since the first Scud missile attack on Tel Aviv on Jan. 18.

But the IPO has still not returned to its home base, the Mann Auditorium in Tel Aviv. This week's performances, one featuring Dvorak's Symphony No. 7 and the other the Brahms Violin Concerto, will be given at the smaller Noga Auditorium in Jaffa and Beit Hahayal, the Soldiers Welfare Organization, in Tel Aviv.

Ticket-holders for what are usually evening performances have been notified that concerts will be held at noon and in early afternoon. Tel Aviv becomes a deserted city after dark because of the threat of Iraqi missile attacks, which for the most part have occurred at night.

## E.C. SPLIT OVER AID TO SYRIA, AFTER FOUR-YEAR ECONOMIC FREEZE

By Yossi Lempkowicz

BRUSSELS, Feb. 18 (JTA) -- Opposition has developed within the European Parliament to rewarding Syria financially for its participation in the U.S.-led coalition of Western and Arab countries now fighting Iraq.

The parliament, the European Community's legislative body based in Strasbourg, France, is divided over a decision by the 12 E.C. foreign ministers to release some \$200 million in withheld grants and loans to Syria. The parliament must give formal approval when it convenes next week.

Some of the 518 deputies have expressed concern that Syria is a country where "human rights are still violated on a large scale."

Others insist that Syria's participation in the coalition is an "important political development" and say Damascus will have an important role to play in the postwar diplomatic process.

The ministers' decision in Brussels earlier this month ended a four-year economic freeze of Syria. The E.C. suspended financial and economic cooperation with that country in 1986 because of the alleged association of the Syrian authorities with terrorists who tried to blow up an El Al plane at Heathrow airport near London.

The new financial protocol, which the European Parliament will be asked to endorse, provides for loans and grants from the E.C. budget through the European Investment Bank and funding for venture capital initiatives.

The E.C. has separately approved a five-year protocol for Israel of about \$120 million in the form of European Investment Bank loans.

## JOURNAL RESTATES REASONS WHY VATICAN CAN'T RECOGNIZE ISRAEL

By Ruth E. Gruber

ROME, Feb. 18 (JTA) -- The Vatican cannot formally recognize Israel because it would compromise the pope's impartiality in the Persian Gulf war and might endanger Christians in Arab countries, the authoritative Jesuit journal *Civiltà Cattolica* stated in an editorial Thursday.

The journal, whose texts must be approved for publication by the Vatican Secretariat of State, cited other obstacles in the way of diplomatic ties between Israel and the Holy See.

The editorial largely repeated a four-page statement issued by the Vatican last month explaining why it did not formally recognize Israel.

The first problem, it said, was the Palestinians. "The Holy See feels that this is a situation of international injustice which continues to hit the weakest people and cannot be accepted," the Jesuit journal said.

The second difficulty is the status of Jerusalem, which "must have a special internationally guaranteed status as a city holy for Jews, Christians and Moslems."

The third problem, according to *Civiltà Cattolica*, was the condition of the Catholic and Christian communities and institutions in Israel and the territories it administers.

"It is evident that the Holy See desires that these difficulties be eliminated as soon as possible, or that at least on Israel's part there be a clear readiness and concrete will to initiate the process of solution, as is happening in other countries with which until now the Holy See did not have diplomatic relations," the editorial said.

## CZECHOSLOVAKIA DENIES PLANS FOR A PALESTINIAN CONSULATE

By Josef Klansky

PRAGUE, Feb. 18 (JTA) -- The Czechoslovak Foreign Ministry has denied knowledge of plans to open a Palestinian consulate in Bratislava, capital of the Slovak republic.

Ministry spokesman Egon Lansky told the official news agency CTK that he knew nothing of such preparations. He stressed that consular relations lie exclusively in the province of the federal Foreign Ministry.

Nevertheless, speculation has been rife since CTK reported the visit to Bratislava last month by a representative of the Palestine Liberation Organization, Sameh Abdullah Fattah.

His host was the chairman of the Slovak National Council, Frantisek Miklosko, who apparently received Fattah as an "ambassador."

The PLO man was recognized as such by the former Communist regime, which entered diplomatic relations with the Palestinian state proclaimed by the Palestine National Council in 1988.

According to the CTK report, Miklosko and his guest "expressed hope that a consulate of the state of Palestine will be opened at an early date in Bratislava and that conditions will be created for cooperation between the Slovak National Council and the Palestine National Council."

The Prague weekly *Respekt* quoted Miklosko as telling it that "the Palestinian ambassador informed me that in Bratislava a consulate will be established. About relations between the Slovak and Palestinian national councils we did not speak at all."

The Slovak deputy minister of foreign relations, Roman Zelenay, said the PLO representative told him that "Palestine" considered opening a consulate in Bratislava "necessary and useful."

## JEWISH CONDUCTOR APOLOGIZES FOR USING ANTI-SEMITIC POEM

By Jenni Frazer

London Jewish Chronicle

LONDON, Feb. 18 (JTA) -- A well-known conductor has apologized for including an English translation of a 19th-century Russian poem offensive to Jews in the program of a children's concert, held Feb. 10 at the Barbican Concert Hall.

It was one of Tchaikovsky's "Songs for Children" which comprised the second half of a concert by the London Symphony Orchestra, conducted by Michael Tilson Thomas, to which a number of primary schools had been invited.

Tilson Thomas, grandson of famed Yiddish actor Boris Thomashevsky and a self-described "extremely aware Jew," wrote to the headmasters of all the schools, saying, "I regret very much that this should have happened."

Tilson Thomas, who often conducts youth concerts, explained that the translation was of a poem, "Legend," by Alexei Pleshcheyev, which Tchaikovsky set to music. The poem tells about Jesus' rose garden, which Jewish children despoiled, leaving Jesus with only his crown of thorns.

"This song was one of Tchaikovsky's most famous pieces in his own lifetime, the only one he chose to orchestrate," the conductor wrote.

Joe Shub walked out of the concert with his two children and sent an angry complaint to the orchestra. He said he was "not satisfied" with the conductor's letter, which he described as a "defense of Tchaikovsky."