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ON EVE OF BAKER VISIT, SHAMIR TRYING TO TONE DOWN CONFRONTATION WITH U.S.

By David Landau

JERUSALEM, Sept. 15 (JTA) -- Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir is trying to de-escalate Israel's confrontation with the Bush administration over the guarantees it is seeking for \$10 billion in loans needed for immigrant resettlement.

With Secretary of State James Baker due here Monday on his seventh visit since the Persian Gulf War ended last March, Shamir urged his Cabinet ministers to avoid public utterances that could further exacerbate tension with Washington.

But he failed to muzzle Rehavam Ze'evi, head of the extreme right-wing Moledet party, whom Shamir named to his Cabinet earlier this year as a minister without portfolio.

Ze'evi, a retired Israel Defense Force general, called Bush a "liar" and "anti-Semite" for his angry criticism of Israel at a news conference last week. The right-wing minister made the charge at the weekly Cabinet meeting and repeated it in radio and television interviews.

Defense Minister Moshe Arens used a brief appearance Sunday on the ABC television program "This Week With David Brinkley" to repudiate his colleague's invective.

He said Ze'evi's expressions were "not the opinion" of the Israeli government. Asked if he repudiated them, Arens replied, "I certainly do."

Shamir, describing himself as being "under personal attack in the American media," said he would not respond in kind for fear of worsening the situation.

He urged equal restraint on his colleagues. Nevertheless, the prime minister said he saw no reason for Israel to back away from its position regarding the loan guarantees.

Shamir Urged To Seek Compromise

Foreign Minister David Levy delivered an impassioned plea for moderation and caution on the part of his ministerial colleagues. The United States is not Israel's enemy but its best and strongest friend, he reminded them.

In an interview with the German weekly *Der Spiegel*, Levy stressed that Israel was seeking peace with or without American loan guarantees.

Shamir's government found itself locked in political battle with the White House after defying Bush's urging that it hold off formally requesting the loan guarantees for 120 days, so as not to interfere with the Middle East peace process.

Bush, at a news conference last Thursday, threatened to veto any legislation authorizing the guarantees at this time. He said he would do so to "avoid a contentious debate" that could upset the Middle East peace conference he hopes will convene next month under joint U.S.-Soviet sponsorship.

This week's visit by Baker was originally intended to tie up loose ends in advance of the conference. Instead, it is expected to focus on ways to end the bruising public dispute between Shamir and Bush.

Reports from Washington said key American Jewish leaders and friends of Israel in Congress were seriously urging the Israeli government to seek a compromise. They warned Shamir that

there were not enough votes to override a presidential veto.

Israel needs the guarantees so that it can borrow \$10 billion from banks on advantageous terms. The money is to be used to help absorb 1 million Soviet olim expected to arrive here over the next few years.

Arens told the American TV panel, "If the government of the United States finds that it cannot or will not provide the guarantees, then we will simply have to pay the higher interest rates on these loans."

Commitment From Bush Wanted

Israeli officials hoped Baker would bring a compromise proposal that would allow both sides to resolve their altercation with dignity intact.

But the tone set by the prime minister indicated he would not make the first gesture. On Friday, Shamir said in Paris that Israel would be "waiting to hear whether there is a desire to compromise on the U.S. side."

Nevertheless, Yosef Ben-Aharon, director general of the Prime Minister's Office, hinted Sunday at what might be acceptable to Israel.

Ben-Aharon emphasized that the Bush administration has never made a commitment to act favorably on the loan guarantee request, even if it is delayed until January, as the president wants.

He seemed to imply that a firm undertaking by Bush to back the guarantees could form the basis of a compromise which Israel would accept, albeit reluctantly.

Brent Scowcroft, Bush's national security adviser, who also appeared on the ABC-TV program, denied that the president is angry about Israel's rejection of his demand.

Bush made the proposal because he believes it is in the best interest of peace, Scowcroft maintained.

He repeated the U.S. position that East Jerusalem is part of the disputed territory whose sovereignty should be decided at a peace conference, without "prior action on either side."

Israel regards East Jerusalem, which it annexed in 1967, as an inseparable part of its capital.

No \$10 Billion For Sharon

The loan guarantee issue came up Sunday on several other American television talk shows.

Sen. Sam Nunn (D-Ga.), appearing on NBC's "Meet the Press," said the loan guarantees should not be connected with the peace process. "But I think we have every right to say to Israel, 'If we put down this much money, what are you going to do with it?'"

Nunn said the United States should not use the loan guarantees to press Israel to give up territory but can demand that the money not be used "directly or indirectly" for settlements.

"I don't think Americans ought to put up \$10 billion for Mr. Sharon's housing policy," he said. He was referring to Israeli Housing Minister Ariel Sharon, who has announced a program to expand Jewish settlements in the West Bank.

Sen. Warren Rudman (R-N.H.), speaking on CBS-TV's "Face the Nation," said, "This is a matter which should be worked out between two

friendly allies. If Congress tries to cram this down his (Bush's) throat, in the long run, everybody would lose."

Also on the CBS program, Sen. Bill Bradley (D-N.J.) said, "This is the largest exodus of Jews since the creation of Israel. That's why the State of Israel was created. For us to try to get into making it part of negotiations violates a fundamental moral principle."

But Rudman interjected that Bush "feels it might hurt the peace process, which in the long run is most important to all parties. I sincerely hope that it can be worked out, because that's in everybody's interest."

(Contributing to this report were JTA correspondents David Friedman in Washington, Michel Di Paz in Paris and David Kantor in Bonn.)

TWO UNIFIL SOLDIERS KILLED IN TWO ENCOUNTERS IN LEBANON

By Hugh Orgel

TEL AVIV, Sept. 15 (JTA) -- Two members of the U.N. peacekeeping force in southern Lebanon were killed and six were wounded in separate encounters with heavily armed Palestinian terrorists over the weekend.

The most serious incident occurred Friday in Israel's so-called security zone in southern Lebanon. The fatalities were a Swedish soldier of the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon and one of six seaborne terrorist raiders.

Five Swedish and French UNIFIL troops and one terrorist were wounded and four terrorists were captured in a gun battle UNIFIL seems to blame on Israel Defense Force soldiers or their South Lebanon Army allies, who were nearby.

In the second incident, Saturday, one Nepalese soldier of UNIFIL was killed and another wounded when their patrol was fired on by two terrorists near Yatar village, just north of the security zone.

One of the gunmen was killed by return fire while the other escaped. No identification papers were found on the body.

But the terrorists involved in the earlier events belonged to the mainstream Al Fatah wing of the Palestine Liberation Organization, according to one of them, who was captured by the SLA and handed over to the IDF for questioning.

The other three, captured by UNIFIL, were turned over to the Lebanese army in Beirut.

Their mission was to attack the Israeli coastal city of Nahariya from the sea, "to kill citizens," the man held by the IDF said at a news conference Saturday in Tel Aviv.

But because of a "navigational error," they landed at Nakoura, on the southern Lebanon coast just north of the Israeli border, he said. He denied a UNIFIL report that the raiding party was driven off by Israeli gunboats.

The six marauders came in two motorized dinghies. The first three men to land were captured without a fight by French UNIFIL troops.

The second boatload, which came ashore about 1,600 feet from the Israeli border, surprised unarmed French soldiers on an early morning jog and Swedish soldiers taking a driving lesson. The Swedes had arrived in the region the day before.

A French colonel came to negotiate for the release of the UNIFIL men, who were taken hostage. At that point, versions of events differ.

A UNIFIL spokesman said IDF and SLA forces nearby had been asked not to intervene for the safety of the hostages. Nevertheless, fire was

opened leading to a general shooting match in which the casualties occurred, according to the UNIFIL officer.

He said the initial shot was fired "probably by an SLA man."

The SLA and IDF have denied they fired any shots.

Ordered To Deny Fatah Link

The terrorist questioned by the IDF identified himself as Rabia Salman Awad Abu Shebab, 21. He said he was a Palestinian born in Jordan to parents from Bethlehem who originally lived in Beersheba.

Abu Shebab -- "shebab" means "guy" or "youth" and is the sobriquet used commonly among intifada activists -- said he joined the PLO in Jordan in 1989 and was sent to Libya the following year for five months' training in the use of boats and personal weapons.

He said his trainers were Libyan soldiers, who wore no insignia of rank, and a Fatah officer named Sheik Akram Harawi. He said it was Harawi who gave final instructions to the leader of his mission, Abu Imad.

He said they were ordered to deny membership in Al Fatah if captured and say they belonged to a newly formed group called the Salaam (peace) Organization.

"The Fatah movement didn't want to be identified with the operation if it failed," said Abu Shebab.

BODY OF ISRAELI SOLDIER RETURNED FROM LEBANON ALONG WITH DEPORTEE

By Hugh Orgel and Cathrine Gerson

TEL AVIV, Sept. 15 (JTA) -- The remains of an Israel Defense Force soldier captured in the Lebanon war nine years ago were returned to Israel and given a military funeral Friday at his home village of Beit Jann in Upper Galilee.

Samir Assad, a Druse, was kidnapped near Sidon in southern Lebanon in 1983 by members of Nayef Hawatmeh's Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine.

His remains were flown to Tel Aviv by way of Vienna last Thursday under the auspices of the International Red Cross.

They were exchanged for Israel's agreement to permit a living member of the same outlawed terrorist group to return to his West Bank village, from where he was deported to Jordan for terrorist activities five years ago.

Exactly how and when Assad died is a mystery. Pathologists who examined the remains and definitively identified the soldier ruled out claims by his captors that he was killed by an Israeli air force raid on the base where he was being held.

The skeleton showed no evidence of blast damage, the doctors reported.

Thousands of Israelis, Jews and Druse, mingled in Beit Jann waiting for Assad's flag-draped coffin. The crowd was entirely of men. The women spent the long hours of mourning waiting and praying at Hiluwa, a nearby Druse holy site.

Ali Abu Hilal, the former deportee, arrived on the same plane that brought Assad's body. At a hastily arranged news conference after a triumphal return to his home village, he freely admitted membership in the terrorist group and denied he had agreed to refrain from political activity as a condition of his return.

SOLDIER'S MURDER RAISES CONCERN ABOUT INTIFADA'S USE OF FIREARMS

By David Landau

JERUSALEM, Sept. 15 (JTA) -- The murder of an Israel Defense Force soldier Saturday night by armed Palestinians has heightened concern that the intifada is increasingly resorting to firearms, something its leadership avoided in the past in order to gain and retain sympathy abroad.

Sgt. Yoram Cohen, 20, whose home was a moshav in the Ta'anach region, near Afula, was the 11th IDF soldier killed in the administered territories since the Palestinian uprising began in December 1987.

Cohen was buried Sunday. His flag-draped coffin was followed by hundreds of local farm families as it was borne to the cemetery near his home. The young soldier was eulogized by the commander of the Givati Brigade.

According to an IDF announcement, Cohen was one of several soldiers in patrol cars attacked by two gunmen firing an Uzi submachine gun and a Soviet-made Kalachnikov assault rifle from concealed positions at a range of about 100 feet. He was killed instantly, the IDF said.

The fire was returned. IDF troops confined the residents of Jenin and six neighboring villages to their homes while they combed the area for the assailants. The entire region was placed under nighttime curfew for one week.

Military sources said members of terrorist cells have recently been roaming the Jenin region, searching for targets to shoot at.

Firearms are readily available in the territories, most of them stolen from IDF camps or bought on the black market.

In other violence, two Arab youths were fatally shot by Israeli soldiers Saturday during a rock-throwing incident in Nablus.

At least 827 Palestinians and 68 Israelis have died in the intifada to date. Another 397 Palestinians have been killed by fellow Arabs.

E.C. URGES SYRIA TO EXTRADITE BRUNNER, ASKS ITS MIDEAST PANEL TO RAISE ISSUE

By Yossi Lempkowitz

STRASBOURG, France, Sept. 15 (JTA) -- The European Parliament has urged the Syrian government to extradite Nazi war criminal Alois Brunner to stand trial in Germany.

It is believed that Brunner, now 79, was given protection by Syrian authorities in 1954 to live comfortably in Damascus.

The parliament, the European Community's legislative body, expressed its "deep concern" that Syria participates in the Middle East peace process while harboring the most notorious Nazi war criminal known to be alive.

Brunner, who was Adolf Eichmann's right-hand man, is held personally responsible for the deaths of more than 120,000 Jews in Germany, Austria, Slovakia and Greece.

In France, he was in charge of arresting Jews on the Riviera, commanded the detention camp at Drancy and sent more than 200 Jewish children from an orphanage to death camps, even when the defeat of the Third Reich was imminent.

Eichmann, who directly implemented the "Final Solution" to eliminate the Jews, was tried in Israel and hanged in 1961.

Brunner was tried in absentia in France and condemned to death for war crimes.

A resolution urging the Syrian government

to agree to Brunner's extradition was adopted by a vote of 219-1, with eight abstentions. One of its several co-sponsors was Simone Veil, a former president of the parliament and an Auschwitz survivor.

Numerous Extradition Requests

The resolution calls on the 12 E.C.-member states to launch a joint initiative with Syrian President Hafez Assad to bring Brunner to justice.

It states that Brunner has been living in Damascus under the assumed name of Georg Fischer.

"It's a well-known fact that he occupies an apartment at 70 Hadad Street," under protection of the government, which provides him with Syrian bodyguards, the resolution says.

It notes that Syria has failed to respond to numerous requests for Brunner's extradition.

Such bids were made by Israel and Austria in 1961, West Germany in 1984, France and Austria again in 1988 and East Germany in 1990.

The French warrant delivered in 1988 was returned with the notation that there was "no Alois Brunner" in Syria.

This past July, a French judge issued an international arrest warrant for Brunner. The warrant, asking for Brunner "also known as Georg Fisher," was delivered to authorities in Damascus.

Syria also ignored a 1987 search warrant issued by Interpol, the international police agency, and a resolution adopted by the U.S. House of Representatives in April 1991.

The European Parliament asked its committee on relations with the Middle Eastern Arab countries to raise the issue of Brunner's extradition when it visits Syria this month.

The resolution also expresses concern over human rights in Syria, particularly the condition of political prisoners. Several members raised the issue of Syria's 5,000 Jews, who are not permitted to emigrate.

The recent requests for Brunner's extradition from Syria may, in fact, be too late. In July, the French news magazine Le Point reported that Assad had asked the head of the Syrian secret police to find a new haven for Brunner, probably in Latin America.

SYRIAN JEWRY RALLY STAGED IN ROME

By Ruth E. Gruber

ROME, Sept. 15 (JTA) -- About two dozen people carried banners urging "Freedom for Syrian Jews" and "Let My People Go" in a peaceful demonstration outside the Syrian Embassy here Friday.

They prepared a letter for the Syrian ambassador to "transmit to the official organs" in Damascus.

It contained a statement explaining the purpose of their demonstration and extended "to the Syrian Jewish community our most sincere and heartfelt wishes for a 'Shanah Tovah' for the Jewish New Year 5752."

The statement said: "As democrats concerned with the defense of human rights and as Europeans truly interested in contributing to peace in the Middle East, we firmly commit ourselves to solidarity with all Jewish minorities in the Arab states, whose human rights are violated and who are not permitted to emigrate."

The demonstration was sponsored by the Italy-Israel Association, the Jewish Students Cultural Movement, the Young Zionists Union and other groups.

JEWS MARK YAHRZEIT OF BABI YAR, ASK UKRAINE TO CONFRONT HISTORY

By Susan Birnbaum and Jackie Rothenberg

NEW YORK, Sept. 15 (JTA) -- In two weeks, Jews from around the world will come to the Ukrainian city of Kiev to mark the 50th anniversary of one of the darkest tragedies of the Holocaust: the massacre of tens of thousands of Jews at Babi Yar.

But on the Jewish calendar, the yahrzeit of that slaughter was last Thursday. And so, Nobel Peace Prize winner Elie Wiesel and a delegation of Jewish leaders gathered at the site to memorialize those who died there.

Peering into a ravine leached with human blood, they recited the Kaddish and the El Molch Rachamim, the lamentation for the dead, remembering the 33,771 Jews murdered in one day by the Nazis and their Ukrainian collaborators.

On that day in 1941, the Jews, stripped naked, were shot in lines, shoved into the pit, bodies layered over bodies, some still alive as the crush buried them.

The tragedy was also marked Sunday at a ceremony at New York's Park East Synagogue.

During their visit to Babi Yar, Wiesel and World Jewish Congress President Edgar Bronfman met two Jewish women from Kiev who had survived the killings, and a gentle woman who had rescued one of them by hiding her.

One of the survivors had crawled out from under the bodies. The other had been told to run away by a German soldier, who warned her of what was about to happen, Elan Steinberg, WJC executive director, related in a telephone call from London.

Joining Wiesel, Bronfman and Steinberg at Babi Yar were WJC Secretary-General Israel Singer and Vice President Kalman Sultanik; Michael Chlenov, co-president of the Vaad, the federation of Jewish institutions in the Soviet Union; and Ukrainian Chief Rabbi Ya'akov Bleich.

Menorah And New Plaque Planned

A menorah is being built at the site, to be unveiled at the end of this month, when a week-long series of events will take place to commemorate the killings.

A monument that stands away from the actual site of the massacre now recalls only that more than 100,000 "citizens of Kiev and prisoners of war" were killed in that place, over a period from 1941 to 1943.

On Sept. 29, a new plaque will be set, which will state clearly that the principal victims of Babi Yar were Jews. Ukrainian flags will be flown at half-mast, on what has been officially designated a day of remembrance.

That is one of a series of observances being planned by the Ukrainian government, whose own search for its nationalist roots and sovereignty from the Soviet Union have led it to a feeling of kinship with the Jewish people.

In putting up the two monuments to Jews and hosting symposia and ceremonies, the Ukraine is trying to come to terms with a tarnished past whose memory has been long suppressed.

Wiesel, a survivor of Auschwitz and Buchenwald, recalled in a telephone conversation his first trip to the killing field in 1965.

"They didn't even want to show me Babi Yar," he said. "I went around from person to person. No one would tell me where it was. It was as though it hadn't happened."

In 1979, he came as chairman of the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Commission, at which time the Ukrainians, "with great pride, organized a ceremony for us.

"And I let them have it," he recalled.

Even today he feels the anger. "Each time I go, I confront them," he said.

'How Many Doors Were Open?'

Last Thursday, Wiesel vented his outrage at Ukrainian President Leonid Kravchuk, with whom the Jewish delegation met after the small ceremony at Babi Yar.

Wiesel, still pained by the years of Ukrainian amnesia, confronted Kravchuk, asking him to explain why 50 years ago some Ukrainians had taken part in the killings, while others stood by and allowed them to happen.

"The Jews were walking from morning to evening to their death," through the streets of Kiev, Wiesel said he told the Ukrainian president. "How many doors were open?"

Why did no one "take one child in and say to the Jewish child, 'You won't die?'"

The Ukrainian president seemed hard-pressed to respond. He said his mother had protected a Jewish woman during the war.

And he said he wanted to see a new era begin between Ukrainians and Jews.

The Ukrainian past was also discussed Sunday at the memorial ceremony in New York, where diplomats, politicians and Jewish rabbinic and organizational leaders spoke against the backdrop of American, Israeli, Soviet and Ukrainian flags.

Visiting Ukrainian Foreign Minister Anatoli Zlenko acknowledged that relations between Ukrainians and Jews "were not always cloudless."

But he added, "It is difficult to find something so far from the truth than the assertion that for centuries Ukrainians were anti-Semites and the Ukraine was a center of anti-Semitism."

Another speaker, Valentin Ladzhinsky, Soviet deputy ambassador to the United Nations, said that while there might appear to be a resurgence of anti-Semitism in the Soviet Union, this is not the case.

Rather, he said, the bigotry and anti-Semitism that had flourished underground in a suppressed Soviet society are now surfacing in the more democratic Soviet Union that exists today.

Anti-Semitism A Treatable 'Illness'

"These are the side effects of an open, democratic society," he said. He spoke of this phenomenon in a positive way, emphasizing that when an "illness" such as anti-Semitism is exposed rather than hidden, it becomes much easier to "treat."

Ladzhinsky spoke on behalf of Yuli Vorontsov, the Soviet ambassador to the United Nations, who attended the ceremony but could not speak due to laryngitis.

Other speakers at the commemoration included Thomas Pickering and Yoram Aridor, the U.S. and Israeli ambassadors to the United Nations; Sen. Alfonse D'Amato (R-N.Y.); New York Mayor David Dinkins; Shoshana Cardin, chairman of the Conference of Presidents of Major American Jewish Organizations; Benjamin Meed, president of the American Gathering/Federation of Jewish Holocaust Survivors; and Rabbi Arthur Schneier, chairman of the U.S. Commission for the Preservation of America's Heritage Abroad and senior rabbi at Park East Synagogue.