



QUAYLE STRESSES SUPPORT FOR ISRAEL IN A BID TO PATCH UP TIES WITH JEWS

By David Friedman

WASHINGTON, April 7 (JTA) -- Vice President Dan Quayle's attempt this week to make amends with the Jewish community over the tension between the United States and Israel may not have achieved the result the Bush administration had hoped for.

While Quayle was repeatedly cheered in a luncheon address Tuesday to nearly 2,000 pro-Israel activists, mention of President Bush's name drew hisses and boos.

The loudest cheers for the vice president came when he greeted the delegates attending the American Israel Public Affairs Committee's 33rd annual policy conference as "fellow Zionists."

"I am here as George Bush's vice president to underscore his commitment to Israel," Quayle told the policy conference, which was attended by some 3,000 people, including 1,000 college students.

"The bumps in the road trouble him and all of us deeply, but they do not change or threaten the basic principles behind our relationship," he said.

Quayle then quoted Bush's remarks in a letter last month to a leading Republican Jew, George Klein, in which he said, "Our fundamental commitment to Israel is just that -- fundamental."

The Bush letter, conciliatory comments made by Secretary of State James Baker last week on public television's "MacNeil/Lehrer Newshour" and Quayle's appearance before AIPAC were all seen as efforts by the administration to convince American Jews that it is not hostile to Israel.

Quayle stressed that the U.S.-Israel alliance is permanent and based on strategic interests and shared democratic values.

'Closest And Most Reliable Ally'

Rejecting the view that this alliance has changed because of the breakup of the Communist bloc, Quayle maintained that "Cold War or no Cold War, Israel remains our closest and most reliable ally in the Middle East.

"And nothing will change our commitment to maintaining Israel's qualitative edge against any likely combination of aggressors," he said.

But most of the AIPAC delegates would not accept this. They had spent three days hearing denunciations of the administration for refusing to guarantee \$10 billion in loans sought by Israel unless it halted settlement activity in the West Bank.

Their loudest applause at Wednesday's luncheon was for Sen. Robert Kasten (R-Wis.), who had joined Sen. Daniel Inouye (D-Hawaii) in introducing legislation never voted upon that would have provided the guarantees without strings attached.

Quayle said "all the right things," conceded Norman Arnold, a delegate from Columbia, S.C. But he said the vice president's remarks did not jibe with the facts.

Evan Pickus, a student at the Cardozo Law School in New York, said he was not sure what effect Quayle had on U.S. foreign policy.

But Pickus said he had voted four years ago for Bush, in the belief that he would follow the

Reagan administration's pro-Israel policy, and now felt betrayed.

In fact, when mentioning the Bush administration, Quayle frequently linked it with its predecessor. "I hope you'll agree: Ronald Reagan's presidency and George Bush's presidency have been good for Israel," he said.

Quayle listed as accomplishments by Reagan and Bush the large-scale Soviet emigration, the rescue of Ethiopian Jewry, the repeal of the U.N. General Assembly resolution defining Zionism as racism, the start of direct peace talks between Israel and its Arab neighbors, and an end to the Iraqi military threat against Israel.

'Every Right' To Lobby For Israel

The vice president also was seen as trying to apologize for Bush's attack last September, in which he pitted himself as "one lonely guy" against 1,000 lobbyists for the loan guarantees. The attack came as Jews from across the country were in Washington to press their senators and representatives to support the loan guarantees.

"As Americans, you have every right to voice your support for the State of Israel," Quayle told his listeners, some of whom had been among the lobbyists the president referred to. "You have every right to remind your fellow Americans of the value of the American-Israeli relationship."

But Renee Garfinkel of Silver Spring, Md., said she would like to see the apology made not just before a Jewish group but at a televised news conference, as were Bush's remarks last September.

At the AIPAC policy conference banquet Monday night, Sens. Connie Mack (R-Fla.) and Joseph Biden (D-Del.) both denounced the administration for linking the loan guarantees to settlements. Both stressed that Jews in the former Soviet Union are in danger and must be gotten out as soon as possible.

Mack called the Bush administration position "immoral" and urged Israel not to "back down one iota" in its settlement policy.

Biden asked how any Israeli government could be asked to end its settlement policy in the midst of an election and while it was engaged in peace negotiations.

Participants at the AIPAC conference all seemed eager to continue pressing for approval of the loan guarantees.

"For our community, the issue of the loan guarantees is not over," Thomas Dine, AIPAC's executive director, told the gathering Sunday night. "We cannot and will not give up until we succeed in finding the resources to finance the rescue of 1 million Jews in the former Soviet republics.

"This is the only choice we can make because it is just, because it is humane, because it means saving lives, and it means fulfilling the promise of freedom for Ethiopian and Soviet Jewry. We will use the resources of our community and the tools of our democracy to achieve the goal," he vowed.

"We are a united American Jewish community," Shoshana Cardin, chairman of the Conference of Presidents of Major American Jews, emphasized at Tuesday's luncheon.

ATTACK IN LEBANON FORCES ISRAEL TO RE-EVALUATE ITS ROLE IN REGION

By Gil Sedan and Hugh Orgel

JERUSALEM, April 7 (JTA) -- In the wake of Monday's ambush attack on Israeli soldiers in southern Lebanon, Israel is being forced once again to re-evaluate its role in the region.

But as in the past, security experts and policy-makers can find no easy solutions.

The attack left two Israel Defense Force soldiers dead and five wounded. Two soldiers of the Israeli-backed South Lebanon Army also were wounded. The three gunmen who carried out the attack, identified as members of the radical Islamic Jihad, were killed.

The incident was the latest in an increasingly bloody guerrilla war being waged against Israel by Moslem fundamentalists linked to Iran.

The passive complicity of the Lebanese army, which the Beirut government sent to re-establish its authority in the south, is partly to blame for the situation, Israeli sources say.

Terrorists use villages ostensibly controlled by the Lebanese army as bases, leaving and returning at will, the IDF reports.

But Israel is well aware that the Beirut regime and its army are dominated by Syria, whose forces have a free hand in Lebanon.

If Lebanon and the Syrian army, which actually runs the country, wanted to prevent terrorist activity, they would have done so, said Brig. Gen. Micha Tamir, commander of the Israeli liaison unit in Lebanon.

Syria has a special relationship with Iran, which controls Hezbollah, probably the most dangerous of the fanatical Shi'ite fundamentalist militias confronting Israel.

Orders From Teheran

Israel estimates there are at least 600 Hezbollah guerrillas active in southern Lebanon. They are held responsible for nine major attacks so far this year and at least 99 in the last 18 months.

The Islamic Jihad, which claimed credit for the latest attack, is also identified as pro-Iran.

Uri Lubrani, coordinator of Israeli affairs in southern Lebanon, observed Tuesday that "someone in Teheran gives an order and things start happening in the security zone," a 9-mile wide, 50-mile long area in southern Lebanon controlled by Israel.

Yossi Olmert, director of the Government Press Office, who is an expert on Syria and Lebanon, suggested that Iran uses its relationship with Damascus to assist Hezbollah's operations against Israel with impunity.

And the Syrians, given the choice of confronting Iran or angering Israel, will always choose the latter option, Olmert said.

The latest IDF fatalities were buried Tuesday. They were identified as Sgt. Sharon Ben-Arye, 22, of Kibbutz Ein Gedi and Cpl. Salah Tafesh, 21, from the Druse village of Beit Jann.

The wounded are Col. Muniv Bader, Maj. Seri Amar, and Nissim Hazan, Ilan Weizmann and Aviel Jirafi. Bader, Amar and Hazan had serious wounds but were reported out of danger Tuesday.

The two wounded SLA soldiers are Mohammad Amar and Abed el-Rahman. Neither was seriously hurt and both were expected to be released from the hospital Tuesday.

The incident began shortly after noon Monday, when an eight-car IDF-SLA convoy approached Huleh village in the security zone, less

than two miles from the Israeli border near Kibbutz Manera in the Upper Galilee panhandle.

Details of the encounter were not released to the news media for nearly 12 hours.

According to the official account, the convoy came under a hail of LAW anti-tank missiles, rocket-propelled grenades and automatic weapons fired from gunmen hidden on the roof of a three-story building. Ben-Arye was killed and another soldier wounded in this first round.

One of the gunmen was killed by return fire but his companions continued to rain bullets on the convoy.

IDF Commander Was The Target

According to the IDF account, the return fire was suspended to allow a group of women and children to leave the house where they may have been used as shields by the gunmen.

Tafesh, a medic, died in the second assault as he went to the aid of a wounded soldier.

Meanwhile, heavy reinforcements from the Golani Brigade arrived on the scene, backed by tanks, armored personnel carriers and helicopter gunships. They quickly dispatched the two remaining guerrillas.

The Islamic Jihad said IDF Maj. Gen. Yitzhak Mordechai, commander of the northern region, was its specific target.

The group said the purpose was to avenge the death of Sheik Abbas Musawi, the local Hezbollah leader killed along with his family and retinue by Israeli attack helicopters in southern Lebanon on Feb. 16.

Mordechai had indeed been in a convoy Monday carrying senior IDF and SLA officers on a goodwill visit to Shi'ite villages in the security zone on the occasion of Id el-Fitr, the feast marking the end of the Moslem holy month of Ramadan.

He was accompanied by the SLA commander, Gen. Antoine Leahd, and by Gen. Tamir. But Mordechai left the convoy before the ambush occurred for a helicopter tour of other parts of the security zone.

The general later dismissed the claim that he had been the target of Monday's attack. "They couldn't have known I'd be there. In fact, I was far away from Huleh village when the convoy got there," he said Tuesday.

But military observers believe the IDF must reconsider the wisdom of having top brass make non-operational visits to combat areas that could be anticipated by the enemy.

Sharon Urges Expansion Of Zone

Israel is now grappling with the question of whether and to what extent it should maintain its involvement in the area.

Housing Minister Ariel Sharon, who was defense minister when Israel invaded Lebanon in 1982, suggested it was time to expand the security zone, which Israel established when it withdrew the bulk of its forces from Lebanon 10 years ago.

But Lubrani and reserve Maj. Gen. Ori Orr, former commander of the northern sector, disagree. If such a move were made "there would be no end to it," Lubrani said Tuesday.

Orr said enlarging the security zone would only expand the area of anti-Israel hostilities.

Lubrani also ruled out an Israeli punitive strike at Iran, which it considers to be the source of the trouble. Asked if Iran is too far to send a "message," Lubrani replied, "At present, yes."

LUBAVITCH SHUL IN MOSCOW ATTACKED; HARASSMENT REPORTED IN TAJIKISTAN

By Susan Birnbaum

NEW YORK, April 7 (JTA) -- The Lubavitch synagogue in Moscow was firebombed Sunday night, causing extensive damage but no casualties.

There was no claim of responsibility for the attack.

Rabbi Boruch Cunin of Los Angeles and Joseph Aronov of Kfar Chabad in Israel, both in Moscow, said workers had been in the Polyakov Synagogue finishing a renovation job in preparation for Passover when a kerosene bomb was tossed through a window at 10 p.m. Sunday.

The bomb landed in a front office in an area where a rabbi usually sleeps. Workers put out the flames but walls were blackened.

The rabbi who sleeps in that room, Yitzhak Kogan, had been in St. Petersburg to supervise the kosher slaughter of chickens, said Cunin.

The attack was also reported from Kiev by Leonid Stonov, the chairman of the Moscow-based International Bureau on Human Rights and Rule of Law of the Union of Councils for Soviet Jews, who said he saw it on Ukrainian television.

In another attack of an anti-Semitic nature, a Jewish teen-age boy in Dushanbe, Tajikistan, was beaten, robbed and threatened with death because he was Jewish.

Moreover, all Jews in Dushanbe were threatened, according to the accounts.

The attack, which occurred April 1, was reported by both Stonov and Martin Wenick, executive director of the National Conference on Soviet Jewry.

Wenick met with the youth a half-hour after he returned from militia headquarters and saw welts on his back.

'Jews Don't Belong Here'

The youth, Tabob Kharanbaev, was reportedly beaten by the October Region militia after having been apprehended for allegedly trying to break into a parked car. He was reportedly kept in custody six hours.

Some details about the attack on the teenager varied in accounts provided by Stonov and Wenick, both of whom were in Dushanbe last week.

Stonov said Kharanbaev was "savagely beaten around his kidneys and spleen." Wenick saw clear signs of beating on his back.

Stonov said the boy had been almost raped by the examiner, who then shouted: "You are a Jew, and if we were allowed, we would kill all of you."

Wenick said the youth "mentioned nothing of rape" but said the attacker menaced him as a Jew and also said, "This is not a Jewish town. Jews don't belong here."

Both accounts said the youth had been robbed, although there were discrepancies over whose money it was and how much was taken.

Wenick said he discussed the incident with the charge d'affaires at the American Embassy, who indicated he would be raising it with the local authorities.

Wenick and Shosana Cardin, the National Conference's chairman, had met earlier with Tajikistan's foreign minister.

Wenick said the Jewish community in the largely Moslem republic is alarmed, particularly by a new anti-government coalition of New Democrats and Islamic fundamentalists.

SHAMIR VOWS TO CONTINUE BUILDING SETTLEMENTS ALL OVER 'ERETZ YISRAEL'

By Gil Sedan

JERUSALEM, April 7 (JTA) -- Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir has once again vowed that nothing would stop Jews from settling everywhere in "Eretz Yisrael," which includes the West Bank and Gaza Strip.

Jewish settlement in all parts of Eretz Yisrael -- or Greater Israel -- will continue as long as there are Jews and there is empty territory, he told the Knesset Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee on Monday. He emphasized there is no part of Eretz Yisrael from which Israel will withdraw.

Shamir also indicated that as far as he is concerned, settlements in the administered territories take precedence over settling the Negev.

But the prime minister played down his government's confrontation with the United States on the issue of settlements, which the Bush administration views as an obstacle to peace.

Shamir refrained from criticizing the Bush administration.

He cited as an example the U.S. announcement last week that its investigation found no evidence that Israel had transferred Patriot anti-missile technology to China without Washington's approval.

That statement was "very clear," he said, and he now regards the matter as "closed."

Shamir rejected the idea that Jewish settlements in the disputed territories are provocative.

"Jewish settlement in Judea and Samaria is provocation only in the eyes of enemies," Shamir said, using the biblical names for the land comprising the West Bank.

"But those elements also did not want Tel Aviv to be settled," he added.

"Let there be as many such provocations as possible, and let there be as many settlements as possible in Judea and Samaria," Shamir said.

When Labor Knesset member Arieh Eliav observed that he lived in the Nitzana region of the Negev where there are thousands of empty acres to be settled, Shamir replied: "Their turn for settlement will come too."

IDF CHIEF OF STAFF VISITS AUSCHWITZ

By Hugh Orgel

TEL AVIV, April 7 (JTA) -- Backed up by an honor guard of 18 young Israeli soldiers, the Israel Defense Force chief of staff, Lt. Gen. Ehud Barak, laid a wreath at the site of the Auschwitz death camp Tuesday.

"Maybe Israeli soldiers have come to Auschwitz 50 years too late," he said.

The soldiers, children and grandchildren of Holocaust survivors, were flown to Poland to join Barak, the first incumbent IDF chief of staff to visit Eastern Europe.

He said at the ceremony that the events of the past 50 years have taught two lessons: that Israel must remain "very strong" and that the political and independent existence of the Jewish state could not depend on military strength alone.

Political wisdom and understanding were also required, he said.

Barak visited the site of the Warsaw Ghetto on Monday, stopping briefly at the place where his maternal grandparents once lived. From there they were taken to their deaths in Nazi concentration camps.

BEHIND THE HEADLINES:
MANY JEWISH AND PRO-ISRAEL LAWMAKERS VULNERABLE OR NOT RUNNING IN NOVEMBER
 By Howard Rosenberg

WASHINGTON, April 7 (JTA) -- Redistricting, an anti-incumbency mood and a wave of retirements promise the biggest turnover in this year's congressional elections since the first post-Watergate elections in 1974.

Jewish incumbents in the House of Representatives and the Senate will be affected along with many non-Jewish lawmakers with strong pro-Israel records.

Jewish activists predict that such turnovers will not hurt Israel's interests in the long term. In the short term, however, the new lawmakers are expected to be generally less responsive to Jewish interests on key issues such as loan guarantees to help Israel resettle immigrants from the former Soviet Union and Ethiopia.

Already, pro-Israel Sen. Alan Dixon (D-Ill.) was eliminated in last month's Illinois primary by Cook County deeds recorder Carol Moseley Braun, whose position on Israel is not known.

But the same primary ousted Reps. Charles Hayes and Gus Savage, both Democrats who are pro-Palestinian.

Savage's perceived anti-Semitic rhetoric had made him one of the Jewish community's prime targets this year.

The pro-Israel lobby still winces at the memory of the last significant congressional turnover in 1980.

The Reagan administration was determined to sell AWACS surveillance aircraft to Saudi Arabia in 1981. Pro-Israel advocates had a hard time trying to get Senate Republicans who were elected on Reagan's coattails the previous year to oppose the White House.

Pro-Israel Senators Face Tough Races

This year, four of the most important pro-Israel Senate Republicans appear vulnerable, all of them staunch supporters of providing Israel with \$10 billion in loan guarantees -- a move rejected so far by the Bush administration.

They are Alfonso D'Amato of New York, Robert Kasten of Wisconsin, Bob Packwood of Oregon and Sen. Arlen Specter of Pennsylvania.

Specter will be the first of them to face a primary test when Pennsylvania Republicans select their senatorial candidate on April 28. They are still reeling from the shock of last November's split victory by Democratic Sen. Harris Wofford over President Bush's former attorney general, Dick Thornburgh.

Specter, considered a moderate Republican, is under attack from the right for opposing Robert Bork's unsuccessful Supreme Court candidacy.

He has been hit from the left for leading the Republican onslaught to discredit law Professor Anita Hill during Clarence Thomas' successful but bloody confirmation hearings last year.

His rival, conservative state Rep. Steve Freind, has accused Specter of costing the U.S. economy more than 100,000 new jobs because of his stands against arms sales to Saudi Arabia.

Freind, who opposes the loan guarantees, says that Pennsylvania does not need "a senator from Japan or a senator from Israel."

D'Amato is expected to have an easy primary win in September. His opponent in the general election will likely be one of several Democrats running in a hotly contested primary -- New York

state Attorney General Robert Abrams, New York City Comptroller Elizabeth Holtzman or former U.S. Rep. Geraldine Ferraro -- all of whom are staunchly pro-Israel.

Other pro-Israel lawmakers considered vulnerable are Sens. Dan Coats (R-Ind.), Christopher Dodd (D-Conn.), John Seymour (R-Calif.) and Timothy Wirth (D-Colo.).

Sen. John Breaux (D-La.) is considered safe, but could be challenged by Republican state Rep. David Duke, a former Ku Klux Klansman and American Nazi.

Redistricting Hurting Jewish Incumbents

Six senators have announced their retirement: Warren Rudman (R-N.H.), who is Jewish, Alan Cranston (D-Calif.), Brock Adams (D-Wash.), Kent Conrad (D-N.D.), Jake Garn (R-Utah) and Steve Symms (R-Idaho).

Adams, Conrad and Cranston are strongly pro-Israel, while Garn, Rudman and Symms have mixed records.

In the House, 31 incumbents have announced their retirements, including three of the 33 Jewish members: William Lehman (D-Fla.), John Miller (R-Wash.) and Howard Wolpe (D-Mich.).

Jewish activists say that Lehman and Wolpe's decisions were prompted by redistricting in their home states, Jewish activists said.

Jewish incumbents have been disproportionately affected by the redrawing of congressional districts after the 1990 census.

But the most pro-Palestinian legislators are also vulnerable this year. They include House Majority Whip David Bonior (D-Mich.) and Rep. Mary Rose Oaker (D-Ohio), who is of Lebanese descent.

Rep. Nick Joe Rahall (D-W.V.), also of Lebanese descent, could be vulnerable because of redistricting and will likely face Republican Benjamin Waldman, former executive director of the National Jewish Coalition, an organization of Republican Jews.

Besides those who are retiring, at least three more Jewish representatives are expected to lose their seats because of redistricting.

Rep. Mel Levine (D-Calif.), who has one of the nation's most strangely drawn districts, found himself severely short of white voters. He is running instead for one of California's two Senate seats at stake this year.

Another Jewish incumbent, Rep. Barbara Boxer (D-Calif.), is running against Levine and Lt. Gov. Leo McCarthy for the Democratic nomination to replace Cranston.

New York Jewish Incumbents Vulnerable

Two Jewish incumbents in the House from New York City could very likely also be leaving.

The expected elimination of one House seat in New York City and the possible creation of a new, Hispanic-majority seat in the Bronx could very well force eight of the area's nine Jewish incumbents to face each other.

Elsewhere in the nation, Jewish House members considered vulnerable to redistricting are Reps. Anthony Beilenson (D-Calif.); Ben Erdreich (D-Ala.); Martin Frost (D-Texas); Sander Levin (D-Mich.); and Richard Zimmer (R-N.J.).

One non-Jewish pro-Israel lawmaker considered vulnerable to redistricting is Rep. Vin Weber (R-Minn.), a key point man in the House.

Non-Jewish pro-Israel lawmakers who are retiring include Reps. Edward Feighan (D-Ohio) and Gus Yatron (D-Pa.). Pro-Palestinian Rep. Mervyn Dymally (D-Calif.) is also retiring.