

LIKUD, SMARTING FROM DEFEAT, DECIDES TO ELECT NEW LEADERS

By David Landau

JERUSALEM, June 29 (JTA) -- The Likud, smarting from its worst election defeat in 23 years, has decided to reconstitute its leadership, and there is no shortage of candidates for the top post.

Likud ministers in the outgoing Cabinet met Sunday and decided the party would hold primaries by the end of the year, enabling all registered members around the country to participate in the choice of a leader.

The incumbent, Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir, has indicated he will be leaving the post soon, and already there are a number of hopeful successors waiting eagerly in the wings.

The latest to indicate his interest in the post was Benjamin Netanyahu, the popular deputy minister, who announced Monday that he would run in the primaries.

In a television interview, Netanyahu asserted that Likud supporters had defected in the elections in considerable numbers, not because they disagreed with the Likud's policies, but because they were turned off by the constant internal struggles within the party leadership.

"People want clean politics," Netanyahu proclaimed. "I can lead the party toward that goal."

Other candidates who have indicated their intention to fight for the leadership are Ariel Sharon, David Levy, Ze'ev "Benny" Begin and Meir Sheerit, the Jewish Agency treasurer who will sit as a Likud member of the new Knesset.

A senior Likud official who will not be running is Defense Minister Moshe Arens, who announced Thursday that he was quitting politics.

'Greater Israel' Vision Criticized

Arens surprised political circles here over the weekend by criticizing some of Likud's key positions on peace and security, especially its vision of a "Greater Israel" and its refusal to consider giving up the Gaza Strip.

"I was never an activist in the Greater Israel movement," Arens told the newspaper Hadashot. "I don't think that slogan solves anything."

He added that all Israeli governments since 1967 had failed to pay sufficient attention to the Palestinian problem, and continued: "I don't talk about all of the territories. For instance, I don't talk about Gaza.

"As regards Judea and Samaria," he said, "we have to reach an agreement with the Palestinians. We cannot ignore their problem."

Arens also criticized Shamir, with whom he has long been aligned, for disclosing in a newspaper interview last week that he had intended the autonomy negotiations with the Palestinians to drag on "for 10 years."

"What Shamir said was a mistake," the outgoing defense minister said. "I do not accept it.

"Maybe what he said is what he felt in his heart," he added. "Maybe that's what the public felt: that the Likud is not serious about reaching an autonomy agreement with the Palestinians."

Likud's decision to hold primaries is a tacit

acknowledgment of Labor's success this year in reconnecting to an increasingly disaffected public.

For it was Labor that this year became the first Israeli political party to open its internal leadership contest to the entire party membership.

Ariel Sharon, who has always been popular among the more hawkish elements of Likud's rank and file, said he had "long fought" for the introduction of primaries in the Likud.

But less charismatic Likud politicians were not as pleased by the decision. In a statement Monday, Eliahu Ben-Elissar, outgoing chairman of the Knesset Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee, said the Likud ministers who made the decision Sunday did not constitute an elected party forum and therefore had no authority to decide on any system of electing a new leader.

The only such legitimate decision-making forum is the Knesset faction, he claimed.

Shamir, meanwhile, told the Likud ministers Sunday that he would announce his retirement at a time he thought appropriate. He made it clear that time would be soon.

Several ministers said later that if Shamir left before the primaries, an interim party leadership would be put in place. But some ministers publicly urged Shamir not to step down until an elected replacement could be installed.

NEWS ANALYSIS:**PALESTINIANS RETURN TO AN ISRAEL WITH A NEW POLITICAL LANDSCAPE**

By Gil Sedan

JERUSALEM, June 29 (JTA) -- The Palestinian delegation to the Middle East peace talks returned Monday from 11 days of consultations in Jordan to find a dramatically changed political landscape waiting for them on the other side of the Allenby Bridge.

The 17 Palestinians were greeted by Israeli police investigators, who questioned them about their public meeting with Palestine Liberation Organization chief Yasir Arafat.

But they were released without bail, amid general expectation that the newly elected Israeli Knesset would overturn the law barring meetings with PLO officials.

That is not the only change expected from the new government that Yitzhak Rabin is expected to form by mid-July. Even though Palestinians do not like the Labor Party leader, remembering his role in suppressing the intifada as defense minister, they are willing to give him the chance for a dialogue.

"In politics, there is no room for sentiments -- only for interests," said Ziyad Abu-Ziyad, the delegation's legal adviser.

Speaking at a news conference in Jericho after the brief interrogation, Faisal Husseini, the unofficial leader of the delegation, was guarded, saying he did not want to comment on the new government until it was actually formed.

Privately, however, Palestinian moderates say the defeat of Yitzhak Shamir's Likud has boosted their morale. Not so much because of the promise of dramatic developments as for the boost that the dramatic election returns gave to the status of moderates within the Palestinian community.

In recent months, Moslem fundamentalists

and rejection-front activists have attacked Hussein and other mainstream Palestinian leaders for having few political gains to show from the peace negotiations.

Now, the Palestinian delegation can point to the Labor victory as proof they have changed the Israeli mood toward the peace process.

Moratorium On Attacks Urged

Along those lines, one leader from the Gaza Strip this week challenged the population of the administered territories to "help" the moderates of Labor and Meretz assume power.

Dr. Hatem Abu-Ghazala, who heads an education network of some 4,000 students, urged Palestinians to put an end "to the indiscriminate killing of Israeli civilians."

Abu-Ghazala told the Jewish Telegraphic Agency that such a development would help legitimize dovish views within the Israeli population and speed up the peace process.

Coming from a Palestinian leader who until the beginning of the intifada identified with the PLO's mainstream, these views are surprising.

Abu-Ghazala further suggested that within the context of an overall settlement, the Gaza Strip should be handed over to joint Egyptian-Jordanian control, which would "return law and order to the Gaza Strip."

Egypt would not shrug off responsibility for the Gaza Strip, which it held until 1967, if it were officially approached by the Palestinians, he said. Ultimately, he said, Gaza and the West Bank should be linked in some form to Jordan.

Such a "Jordanian option" would certainly be to the liking of Rabin, who favors territorial compromise but is loath to accept a Palestinian state.

So far, however, the Palestinian delegation has only hinted at the possibility of matching changes in Israel's negotiating positions with moderation of its own stance.

"We shall see what steps the new government takes, and only then shall we react with our own measures," said Hussein.

'Cannot Negotiate With Ghosts'

Real progress in the peace process would change the patterns of the intifada, he said, but he stopped short of saying it was time to call off the uprising.

"The new government creates a new situation, since it is ready for territorial compromises and self-administration in the territories," Abu-Ziyad said as he arrived at his home in Abu Dis, just east of Jerusalem.

But he warned that the Rabin government would not be able to bypass the PLO forever.

"One cannot negotiate with ghosts, and once an agreement will be signed, it will have to be signed with the legitimate representative of the people, the PLO," said Abu-Ziyad.

The ground rules for the peace talks prohibit the participation of PLO members. But the Shamir government turned a blind eye to the widely reported and acknowledged meetings of the Palestinian delegation with PLO officials.

The meeting two weeks ago with Arafat threatened to become a political storm because it took place in plain view of the television cameras, just days before the Israeli elections.

But Hussein made no apologies. During the armed struggle, he had met Arafat secretly, he said. Now that he meets with Arafat to discuss peace, "why keep it secret?"

LABOR OWES ITS BIG ELECTION WIN, AT LEAST IN PART, TO IMMIGRANTS

By Michele Chabla

JERUSALEM, June 29 (JTA) -- Israel's Labor Party owes its big win in last week's elections in part to the country's new immigrants.

According to the pollsters, 47 percent of the more than 300,000 new immigrants who voted in the June 23 referendum chose Labor, while only 18 percent supported the Likud.

Another 11 percent favored the left-wing Meretz party, while 1.4 percent voted for Tsomet, a far-right party whose share of Knesset seats skyrocketed from two to eight. But the new immigrant party Da was left out in the cold.

The bottom line is that the immigrant vote gave Labor an additional three or four Knesset seats, for a total of 44.

"The new immigrants from the former Soviet Union made a significant difference in the election's outcome," said Dr. Aharon Fein, a pollster for the Tatzpit Research Institute.

"Among the general population, including immigrants, Labor received 35 percent of the votes. Without the immigrants, the total was less than 32 percent," he said.

Another way to appreciate the immigrants' influence, Fein said, is to look at voting patterns in places where large numbers of immigrants have settled.

"Among all Israelis, Labor gained 15 percent more supporters than it had in 1988. But in those communities where many immigrants live, Labor increased its representation by 25 to 30 percent," he said.

The pollster singled out the coastal city of Ashdod as an example. "In 1988, Labor won 23.4 percent of the vote. Last week it won over 32.8 percent. That's quite a jump, and it's due mainly to the new immigrants," he said.

Will Honor Campaign Promises

Fein, who has surveyed thousands of new immigrants since April 1990, said that the election returns offered no surprises.

"For several months, our findings have shown that the vast majority of these immigrants were dissatisfied with the Likud and would choose to vote left-of-center," he said. "Even before this year, the indications have been that the olim were shifting from right to left."

"At the end of 1991, after the first big year of aliyah, we did a survey of olim who were in the country just a year," Fein continued. "They were looking for jobs so they could take care of themselves. They found a society that wasn't ready to absorb them."

Now that Labor has the upper hand, the party says it will honor its campaign promises, both to new immigrants and veteran Israelis.

"It is not a question of feeling indebted to any one group," said Yossi Genosar, who led Labor's push to woo new immigrant voters.

Party leader Yitzhak Rabin "has felt and continues to feel a responsibility toward renewing the flow of immigration, of easing unemployment and finding homes for everyone. This is regardless of who voted for him or not," Genosar said.

What happens remains to be seen, but Gregory Stern, a musician from Moscow, is hopeful.

"Sure, politicians are the same everywhere," he said. "But when you vote in a democracy, at least you feel there is the opportunity to change the system. I only hope I'm not disappointed."

**JEWISH GROUPS DEPLORE RULING
RESTRICTING ACCESS TO ABORTION**

By Cynthia Mann
States News Service

WASHINGTON, June 29 (JTA) -- Jewish pro-choice groups expressed deep disappointment over the Supreme Court's ruling Monday giving states sweeping powers to restrict abortion.

They said it is now more urgent than ever to pass the Freedom of Choice Act, federal legislation guaranteeing abortion rights.

The court upheld most parts of a Pennsylvania law restricting abortion that had been challenged as unconstitutional by Planned Parenthood.

At the same time the majority of the court claimed to have reaffirmed Roe vs. Wade, the 1973 landmark ruling that legalized abortion, voting 5-4 against allowing states to outlaw all abortions.

But pro-choice experts challenged that claim. They said the justices have given state legislatures the green light to impose burdensome restrictions on abortion, overturning the essence of Roe vs. Wade. Access to abortion is no longer the fundamental right it once was, they argued.

The ruling "may well have been a highly political decision designed to avoid political backlash from the pro-choice majority in the country," said Ann Lewis, who chairs the Commission for Women's Equality of the American Jewish Congress.

"It is a decision which maintains Roe vs. Wade by title but not in substance," said Lewis, whose group, like many of the others, filed a friend-of-the-court brief in the case.

"I am outraged," said Joan Bronk, president of the National Council of Jewish Women, who spoke at a pro-choice rally opposite the White House following the announcement of the decision. "The rights of all women have been diminished," she said.

"And no matter how slyly it was couched in the language, the effect will (be to) hit poor, rural and young women" especially hard, she said. "It will cause them tremendous turmoil and financial strain."

Denied 'Fundamental Right To Choose'

The Pennsylvania law that was upheld requires women to receive counseling prior to abortions on fetal development and alternatives to abortion. They are then required to wait 24 hours before receiving abortions, and doctors are required to submit detailed reports to the government on each abortion performed.

The justices also upheld the requirement that a minor obtain the consent of at least one parent or a state judge, but struck down, 5-4, a requirement that husbands be notified prior to the procedure.

"It is clear that even if Roe vs. Wade has not been formally overturned, the restrictions being imposed on women who may seek an abortion are such that we are being denied our fundamental right to choose," said Joan Kort, president of B'nai B'rith Women.

The ruling "certainly will encourage other states to pass more legislation weakening, if not negating Roe vs. Wade," said Harriet Green, president of Na'amah USA.

Pro-choice groups are particularly concerned with language in the majority opinion by Justice Sandra Day O'Connor adopting an "undue-burden"

standard to be used to determine the legality of a state's abortion restriction.

A restriction enacted "in the state's profound interest in potential life" can pass legal muster if it does not impose "an undue burden" on women seeking abortion, O'Connor wrote.

This standard is weaker than the one in Roe vs. Wade, which provided for an absolute right to an abortion in the first three months of pregnancy but allowed some limits in the last six months.

NJCRC Mobilizing Lobbying Drive

Diana Aviv, associate executive vice chair of the National Jewish Community Relations Advisory Council, said the definition of undue burden was "so narrow, it would enable states to enact all sorts of restrictions," including those that pressure women not to go forward with abortions.

"The idea of promoting (unborn) life takes primacy over a woman's right to choose," said Aviv.

Alfred Moses, president of the American Jewish Committee, said his organization was "greatly disturbed" by the court's decision. "While claiming to reaffirm Roe," the undue burden test "does, in fact, overturn that portion of Roe vs. Wade which treated the right to choose as a fundamental right," said Moses.

Jewish groups on the right were also upset with the ruling -- because it did not go far enough.

Abba Cohen, Washington director of Agudath Israel of America, an Orthodox group, said he had hoped the court would "reconsider and overturn Roe vs. Wade. To the extent that it did not, we were disappointed."

Aviv said NJCRC would focus on organizing support for the Freedom of Choice Act, which would ensure that abortion remains legal nationally. Aviv said there is nearly complete consensus on the issue among member organizations.

The measure is scheduled to be taken up by House and Senate committees this week. The bills are expected to reach the floor of both chambers soon thereafter, where they would have to win a two-thirds majority to survive a promised presidential veto.

Women's American ORT, which called the court's decision "regressive," said it would mobilize its chapters to urge politicians "to reinstate a national policy on reproductive health care that protects all women in the United States," according to its president, Sandy Isenstein.

Hadassah, the Women's Zionist Organization of America, also protested the decision. President Deborah Kaplan said she "deplored" it and pledged to enlist her organization's grassroots ranks in the "battle for reproductive freedom."

What the court did was "unacceptable," and has a "special ring to it for the Jewish community," said Rabbi Lynne Landsberg, associate director of the Religious Action Center of Reform Judaism.

"With our history of oppression and persecution, we are only too aware of the (dangers inherent in) the court's intention to place restrictions on a targeted community for the 'good of society,'" said Landsberg, who also addressed the pro-choice rally.

The JTA Daily News Bulletin will not be published Monday, July 6, because of the Independence Day holiday in the United States.

**HIGH COURT LEAVES INTACT RULINGS
MAINTAINING CHURCH-STATE SEPARATION**

By Cynthia Mann
States News Service

WASHINGTON, June 29 (JTA) -- The Supreme Court has decided to let stand a host of lower court rulings that uphold the constitutional separation of church and state.

The news Monday drew cautious initial praise from the major Jewish defense groups, especially in light of the court's major ruling last week in a Rhode Island case that strengthened the ban on prayer in public school.

"Overall it appears the court is willing to let stand important lower court decisions maintaining the wall of separation and therefore religious liberty," said Mark Pelavin, Washington representative of the American Jewish Congress.

Steven Freeman, legal director of the Anti-Defamation League, said he welcomed the news. "It's a very encouraging development for those who are concerned with church-state separation."

Freeman said that the Lee vs. Weisman case in Rhode Island seemed to indicate the court would make a distinction between public schools and other arenas. But he said now it appeared that may not be the case.

For Richard Foltin, director of governmental affairs for the American Jewish Committee, "it's always a matter of conjecture why the court agrees to let stand a group of cases."

"Given the Lee vs. Weisman case, we could conjecture the court wants to let the smoke clear and let the lower courts figure out the implications of that decision," he said. "It could also mean the court is so split, it didn't see the point of ruling on church-state cases at this time."

Among other cases, the court left intact:

- * A ruling that a Denver public school principal acted properly in ordering a fifth-grade teacher to remove a Bible from his desk and two religious books from the class library.

- * A ruling that barred celebrating a Roman Catholic mass in a city park in the Chicago suburb of Crestwood as part of an Italian festival.

- * A ruling that barred two Chicago suburbs, Zion and Rolling Meadows, from using a cross and other religious symbols on their city seals.

- * A ruling that upheld the University of Alabama's warning issued to a professor to stop telling his students about his Christian beliefs.

In a departure from the tenor of the other decisions, the justices let stand a Hawaii law declaring Good Friday an official holiday.

IDF SOLDIERS INJURED IN LEBANON

By Hugh Orgel

TEL AVIV, June 29 (JTA) -- Four Israeli soldiers were injured Sunday night in Lebanon, in a roadside bomb attack perpetrated by the Moslem fundamentalist movement Hezbollah. The attack occurred in the eastern sector of what Israel calls its security zone in southern Lebanon.

The spokesman for the Israel Defense Force said one soldier sustained medium wounds, while the other three were lightly wounded. All were helicoptered to Haifa's Rambam Hospital.

The Hezbollah organization claimed credit for setting off the bomb as an IDF convoy passed along a road near Ishiyah village.

The Israeli air force retaliated at noon Monday by bombing Hezbollah targets at Kafir Harif, north of the security zone.

**GAO TEAM VISITING ISRAEL
TO INSPECT ARROW MISSILE**

By Hugh Orgel

TEL AVIV, June 29 (JTA) -- Israel's experimental Arrow missile defense system faced its potentially most crucial test this week, as a team from the General Accounting Office of the U.S. Congress arrived for a 10-day technical and financial audit.

The anti-missile missile, known in Hebrew as the Hetz, is being developed by Israel Aircraft Industries but largely financed by the United States.

The visit was planned several months ago, at the request of the Senate Appropriations Committee. It comes after the failures of three successive test launches.

But U.S. Embassy spokesman Carl Chan downplayed the critical nature of the inspection, saying the visit reflects strong congressional interest in the Arrow project.

The United States is committed to financing the first two phases of the project, approximately \$358 million of a total of \$480 million.

But the future of the Hetz is not all clear sailing.

The Americans are developing a system of their own, to be part of the overall Strategic Defense Initiative, referred to as Star Wars. If successful, the United States is likely to withdraw its participation in Israel's Arrow project.

Already, the Israelis and Americans seem at odds over the research and development timetable. The Americans anticipate further tests this summer, while the Israelis say they will not occur before winter.

In any case, the Arrow project is still well shy of actually intercepting an incoming missile.

The project is scheduled for completion by mid-1995, with possible deployment by 1996.

Senior military sources here say that Israel may even cancel the project voluntarily, following the inauguration of a new Israeli defense minister to replace outgoing Moshe Arens, one of the Arrow's most enthusiastic backers.

But offsetting any pessimism in IAI circles about the Arrow's future is the confidence expressed last week by IAI spokespersons that the state-owned aerospace company believes it has won a contract to build a new pilotless aircraft for the U.S. Army and Marines.

The IAI bid won out over a competitive bid submitted by the U.S. McDonnell Douglas Corp.

SOUTH AFRICA GETS LIONS FROM JUDAH

By Hugh Orgel

TEL AVIV, June 29 (JTA) -- Ten lions, all born in captivity, have been sent from the Tel Aviv Safari Zoo to South Africa, to help a reported shortage of the "king of beasts" in their natural habitat there.

The lions -- five males and five females-- were presented Sunday free of charge to a private farm in South Africa, where they are to be raised, but the breeder there paid the charges for shipment by sea aboard a Zim vessel.

A safari spokeswoman said the aim was to stop inbreeding among the 40 lions in the Tel Aviv-Ramat Gan Safari Zoo, where a highly successful breeding program has now brought about a lion population too large for the zoo to handle -- even though the lionesses have been given birth control pills for some years.