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ATMOSPHERE IS 'WARM AND CORDIAL' AS BUSH AND RABIN MEET IN MAINE

By Cynthia Mann
States News Service

WASHINGTON, Aug. 10 (JTA) -- President Bush and Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin engaged Monday in talks that senior administration officials described as "warm and cordial."

The upbeat picture was delivered at a background briefing for reporters at the president's vacation home in Kennebunkport, Maine, where it was strongly hinted that the announcement of a long-awaited loan guarantee package for Israel would come Tuesday morning.

"There was an extensive discussion of loan guarantees," an administration official said, adding that the talks were "constructive and productive."

When pressed on whether an agreement had been reached, the official said, "I don't think I'm being ambiguous," but then added: "Wait until the press conference" Tuesday.

Administration officials also used the briefing to announce that all parties to the Middle East peace talks had agreed to participate in the sixth round, scheduled to begin in Washington on Aug. 24.

The day and a half of talks at Bush's seaside retreat are aimed at forging closer ties between the two countries and securing a deal on U.S. guarantees for billions of dollars of commercial loans Israel wants to help absorb immigrants from the former Soviet Union.

According to officials, there was considerable progress on these issues. They said the two leaders had one-on-one discussions in the morning which "covered a full range of topics, including loan guarantees, the Arab-Israeli peace negotiations, a survey of the challenges and opportunities in the (Middle East) region," and global problems.

'Better And More Intimate Relationship'

The two leaders were later joined by Secretary of State James Baker, National Security Adviser Brent Scowcroft, Israeli Ambassador Zalman Shoval and Cabinet Secretary Elyakim Rubinstein, who heads the Israeli delegation to the peace talks.

The talks continued through lunch, after which Bush and Rabin scrapped tennis plans to stroll on the patio and view the seascape from the rocks.

More talks were slated for Monday night, along with a cocktail party and dinner hosted by Bush for Rabin.

The only public appearance came when the two posed for photographs before the talks and exchanged pleasantries that showed Rabin's visit was starting off on the right foot.

"The welcome mat is out," Bush said to Rabin. "We are looking forward to strengthening a relationship that is strong and will be even stronger."

Bush added that the prime minister should consider him a friend.

"We would like to make sure there is a better and more intimate relationship between our two countries, our two peoples and our two

governments," said Rabin. "And let's hope this visit will give the chance to at least make clear where we stand, what we can do to achieve these goals."

The warm remarks and harmonious atmosphere signaled a sharp departure from the chilly relationship Bush maintained with Rabin's predecessor, Yitzhak Shamir.

Strong Support On Capitol Hill

Much of the strain in the relationship was caused by Shamir's resistance to territorial compromise with the Arabs and his unwillingness to freeze Jewish settlements in the territories, which Bush made a condition for receiving the loan guarantees.

Rabin already has demonstrated he will make compromises and is eager to press forward quickly with the peace process. "We would like to give a real chance to the peace negotiations," he said Monday.

On Sunday, Israeli officials announced they would try to change a law that bars Israelis from contact with the Palestine Liberation Organization.

Rabin also has called for a halt in "political" settlements in the territories, canceling 6,500 planned units, while reserving the right to continue building "security-related" settlements.

On Monday, he underscored the vast transformation he is orchestrating in Israel. "We would like to change the order of our national priorities. We believe the real problems are in the domestic field," he said.

These changes are what has helped pave the way for the loan guarantee package, which is supposed to help create jobs for immigrants.

The assistance enjoys strong support on Capitol Hill. Roughly 250 members of the House of Representatives sent a letter to Bush last month, in anticipation of the Rabin visit, urging him to approve a loan package.

"The purpose of our letter is to let President Bush and Prime Minister Rabin know that Congress is ready, that there is no obstacle here to approval of the loan guarantees," said Rep. Charles Schumer (D-N.Y.), who co-authored the letter. He predicted Congress would approve the package as soon as Bush submits it.

But ironing out what Rabin means by "political" settlements was expected to be high on the agenda of the Bush-Rabin talks. Also expected to be worked out was how much money, if any, should be deducted from the amount guaranteed for any building that continues to take place in the territories.

Economic Issues Kept Separate

The White House had also been expected to place extensive demands on Israel to reform its economy in exchange for the loan guarantees, a prospect criticized in some Israeli quarters.

But a highly placed American Jewish source said Monday that, following a visit to Washington last week by Bank of Israel Governor Jacob Frenkel, economic reforms would be kept separate from an agreement on the guarantees.

The stakes are high on this visit for both leaders. Bush would like to point to progress in the peace talks as one of the few fruits of the

Persian Gulf War. He also is looking at a loan guarantee deal as a way to win back Jewish voters disaffected by his hard-line approach to the Shamir government.

Rabin, meanwhile, is eager to deliver to his country much-needed U.S. aid and a closer relationship with its most important ally.

The prime minister, whose settlement policies triggered a large demonstration in Israel prior to his departure for the United States, also encountered opposition here.

The right-wing extremist Kahane Chai group had chartered a sailboat to deliver a petition protesting Rabin's settlement policies, but the sailboat was intercepted by the Coast Guard.

The group claimed it did manage to stop Rabin's motorcade in Kennebunkport before members were detained and taken to local police headquarters.

ISRAELI CABINET SHARPLY CONDEMNS PROVOCATIVE ACTIVITIES BY SETTLERS By David Landau

JERUSALEM, Aug. 10 (JTA) -- Just hours before President Bush welcomed Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin at his Maine vacation home Monday, Israel's Cabinet issued a statement sharply condemning provocative activities staged by Jewish settlers the day before in Jerusalem and the West Bank town of Kiryat Arba.

The statement blasted the settlers' activities, which included confrontations with the Israel Defense Force, as illegal and said they were "intended to divert public attention from the peace process and (immigrant) absorption efforts" being discussed by Bush and Rabin.

It vowed the government would take legal action to thwart the settlers' efforts and would use "the means at its disposal in order to restore order and security."

But while Cabinet ministers said they expected the attempt to start a new neighborhood of Kiryat Arba to be thwarted by legal action, they made it clear that the occupation of Jewish-purchased homes in the Moslem Quarter of Jerusalem could not be reversed by process of law.

At the suggestion of Energy Minister Amnon Rubinstein, however, the Cabinet ordered a close examination of the monetary sources used to purchase the four buildings in question.

Rubinstein, a senior member of the dovish Meretz bloc, hinted there were likely to have been state funds involved, possibly funds from the public custodian, who is charged by law with disbursing bequests left to the state.

"It is quite unthinkable," Rubinstein told reporters after the meeting, "that this government would condone state monies going to such purposes."

The settlers who occupied the Jerusalem homes said Monday that they were bought with private funds and that additional purchases would take place. They did not deny that their timing was deliberately chosen to drive a point home to Rabin and Bush.

Likewise, the Cabinet statement was issued with the clear purpose of counteracting any possible impact of the settlers' actions on Rabin's visit to the United States.

It said that the settlers' actions, particularly their confrontations with the IDF, were "worthy of all condemnation."

"The government of Israel will not acquiesce to the illegal activity of the settlers who acted

yesterday in Hebron," it said, adding that the government "will not allow any element to act against the law."

The statement was issued after the Cabinet's weekly meeting, which was held a day later than usual because of the Tisha B'Av holiday. With Rabin out of the country, the session was chaired by Foreign Minister Shimon Peres.

In another decision plainly intended to project the new government's more moderate approach to international affairs, the Cabinet decided to grant diplomatic status to the European Community representative responsible for monitoring economic, technical and humanitarian aid to the Palestinian population in the territories.

TWO IN ISRAELI AIR FORCE KILLED IN HELICOPTER RESCUE EXERCISE By Hugh Orgel

TEL AVIV, Aug. 10 (JTA) -- Two members of the Israeli air force were killed Sunday night during a helicopter rescue exercise in southern Israel.

A preliminary finding by a committee of investigation found that a hoist attached to the outside of the craft's fuselage had suffered a "technical malfunction" that caused the cable on which the men were suspended to snap.

The two men plunged to their deaths. One of the dead men was identified as Cpl. Assaf Rosenberg, 19, of Petah Tikva. He was buried in his hometown Monday afternoon.

The name of the second casualty had not yet been released for publication, but his family was notified.

The air force investigating panel was appointed by the air force commander, Maj. Gen. Herzl Budinger.

In addition, the Israel Defense Force chief of staff, Lt. Gen. Ehud Barak, ordered reserve Brig. Gen. Giora Zorea to undertake an external investigation that could provide any implications this could have for similar exercises in other IDF branches.

Zorea has been ordered to report back within 10 days, during which time all high-risk training exercises are to be halted throughout the IDF.

The unit in which the helicopter was involved is part of an elite group of volunteers that spends much of its time in training that involves the rescue of both military personnel and civilians, on the ground or at sea.

The unit's pilots and crew are trained to operate in all weather conditions and on all terrains or on the sea.

The unit also operates behind enemy lines, frequently under fire, to rescue downed pilots.

In many instances in which the helicopter cannot land, rescuers and paramedics are lowered to the ground by a cable attached to a winch or crane, which lifts them either alone or with the people rescued, sometimes strapped to stretchers.

A member of the same unit was killed a month ago and five other soldiers wounded in the crash of a rescue helicopter returning from a stand-by operation during an air raid on terrorist bases in Lebanon.

Over 500 people, both soldiers and civilians, have been rescued by the unit helicopters in the past two years. Many of the civilians were hikers who fell down steep cliffs during hiking or mountaineering trips.

**JEWISH GROUPS STEP UP DRIVE
TO HALT ATROCITIES IN BOSNIA****By Debra Nussbaum Cohen**

NEW YORK, Aug. 10 (JTA) -- Jewish groups across North America are continuing to press the Bush administration and international agencies to stop atrocities being perpetrated against innocent civilians in Bosnia-Herzegovina, crimes that remind many of those carried out against Jews by the Third Reich.

Serbsians in Bosnia-Herzegovina are reportedly murdering thousands of civilians guilty only of being Croats and Moslems, and are imprisoning, starving and torturing hundreds of thousands more in 94 concentration camps in the former Yugoslav republic, according to Bosnian reports.

The crimes are part of the Serbian drive to "cleanse" the republic of non-Serbs in order to achieve "ethnic purity."

Approximately 400 Jews remain in Bosnia, mostly in Sarajevo, the republic's capital. They are not being targeted by any of the ethnic groups competing for control of the territory, according to sources near the scene of the conflict.

Sarajevo's Jews continue to use their community center and synagogue, said Srdjan Matic of the Jewish community in Zagreb, Croatia. But Sarajevo's ancient Jewish cemetery, located on a hill above the city, is being used as a base by Serbian irregulars, he said.

In the United States, the Jewish community has been more active than any other in crying out for action on the Bosnia crisis, according to Abraham Bayer, director of international concerns for the National Jewish Community Relations Advisory Council.

It is the only ethnic group to have had meetings with Bush administration officials, representatives of the U.S. Mission to the United Nations and the Red Cross, Bayer said.

Israeli Unable To Reach Sarajevo

Jewish leaders urged the officials to use whatever means they have at their disposal to end the crimes against humanity.

Israel has also responded to the crisis. The Rabin government dispatched Knesset member Yossi Sarid to report on the situation. He has been stuck in Zagreb, unable to reach Sarajevo to coordinate the relief effort planned jointly by the Israeli government and the Jewish Agency.

Sarid said that travel to the republic's capital is virtually impossible and that U.N. officials in the area who spent time in war-torn Beirut described the Lebanese civil war as "child's play" compared to Sarajevo.

The American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee is also arranging non-sectarian relief efforts in the capital. Its representatives have brought in five tons of food and medicine over the last few days, which is being distributed by the Jewish community there to all those in need.

Together with Sarid, the Jewish Agency and the JDC are trying to arrange safe passage for refugees from Sarajevo to get to Zagreb.

More than 400 Jews from war-torn areas have arrived in Israel since fighting broke out and half the Jews left in Sarajevo are said to want to make aliyah.

Meanwhile, in separate efforts, the JDC and B'nai B'rith International are accepting contributions that will go directly to ease Bosnia's shortage of food, medicine and clothing.

Leaders of the American Jewish Committee,

American Jewish Congress and Anti-Defamation League met at the White House last week with National Security Adviser Brent Scowcroft to urge the president to galvanize the international community to take action in the besieged republic.

They asked that Bush make it unmistakably clear that those who are guilty of crimes against humanity will be held individually accountable.

Military Intervention Urged

They told Scowcroft that if the president is considering military intervention to enable humanitarian aid to get through, he should consider using that same force to get into the detention camps, according to Henry Siegman, executive director of AJCongress.

In a separate conversation, Scowcroft told Shoshana Cardin, chairman of the Conference of Presidents of Major American Jewish Organizations that the United States is working through the United Nations on the situation.

Cardin, NJCRAC and the Hebrew Immigrant Aid Society, sent separate letters to Bush last week urging him to take action.

On Monday, the United Nations was nearing a resolution, backed by the United States, that would call for taking "all measures necessary," including force, to enable humanitarian organizations to deliver emergency aid to Bosnia.

At a meeting with a delegation of Jewish representatives on Monday, officials of the International Committee of the Red Cross said they have gained access to 10 detention camps with some 4,000 prisoners.

Peter Kaung, the ICRC's chief representative in the United States, told participants his agency was unable to count the number of camps and that they are being run by all the parties involved in the conflict: Serbs, Croats and Moslems.

"When oil was at stake, the U.S. was very capable of rallying together a coalition of concerned countries. Now we're talking about the lives of innocent civilians, and it's hard to understand why we can't gather together a coalition" just as quickly, said Joan Bronk, president of the National Council of Jewish Women, which organized the meeting.

Outreach To Moslem Leaders

The Simon Wiesenthal Center has gathered several hundred signatures on a petition urging President Bush to take action.

And Jewish communities around the country are trying to get local Moslem leaders involved in the effort, according to Bayer of NJCRAC. In Los Angeles, Detroit and Dayton, Ohio, joint efforts are under way, he said.

Other Jewish groups that have called for the U.S. and Canadian governments to take action and bring those responsible for the crimes against humanity to trial include: B'nai Brith Canada; Canadian Jewish Congress; National Jewish Democratic Council; Religious Action Center of Reform Judaism; Union of Orthodox Jewish Congregations of America; United Synagogue of Conservative Judaism; Union of Councils for Soviet Jews; and Zionist Organization of America.

Contributions can be sent to JDC's Open Mailbox for Bosnia-Herzegovina, 711 Third Ave., New York, N.Y. 10017, or to the B'nai Brith Disaster Relief Fund, 1640 Rhode Island Ave. N.W., Washington, D.C. 20036.

(Contributing to this report were JTA correspondents Ruth E. Gruber in Rome and Hugh Orgel in Tel Aviv.)

**FLORIDA JUDGE ORDERS DEPORTATION
OF MEMBER OF WARTIME KILLING UNIT**
By Susan Birabaum

NEW YORK, Aug. 10 (JTA) -- A federal judge in Florida has ordered the deportation to Lithuania of a resident of the St. Petersburg area who was a member of a Lithuanian mobile killing unit during World War II.

The U.S. Immigration Court in Miami entered the deportation order on Aug. 6 against Antanas Mineikis of South Pasadena, Fla., after he failed to respond to an order issued at the behest of the Justice Department's Office of Special Investigations.

Mineikis did not attend the court hearing.

The government charged Mineikis was involved in Nazi-sponsored acts of persecution while serving as a member of the 12th Lithuanian Auxiliary Security Police Battalion, also known as the Lithuanian Schutzmannschaft, during World War II.

At the July 1991 hearing, the government presented evidence which included a confession by Mineikis that on several occasions he had transported Jews in Byelorussia to death pits that they had been forced to dig.

Mineikis said he had not shot the victims but had watched. "I drove a truck to about six shootings," he said in a sworn statement.

He said that in June 1941, he was living near Vilna, Lithuania, when the Germans invaded. "I was taken into the German army," but given a Lithuanian uniform, he said.

In 1941, he was sent to Minsk. "The Germans offered money to members of my unit to shoot people," he said, but "I did not volunteer."

"I was ordered to drive a truck to where the people were and transport them to the place where they were shot," he testified. "I made several trips each time a shooting happened."

He was captured by U.S. forces in September 1944, placed in a prisoner-of-war camp and later released. He entered the United States from England in June 1956 and became a citizen in March 1965.

Mineikis, who was denaturalized in January, is the 39th person the Justice Department has stripped of U.S. citizenship and the 19th ordered deported. The government had charged that he obtained his citizenship by lying about his wartime activities.

The order to deport Mineikis to Lithuania follows an agreement last week between the U.S. Justice Department and the government of Lithuania providing for mutual cooperation in cases relating to wartime crimes.

It is the first law-enforcement agreement between the independent Baltic state and the United States since before World War II. The agreement was reported in the Lithuanian press.

**CANADIAN WAR CRIMINAL ENTITLED
TO ANOTHER DEPORTATION HEARING**
By Gary Pogrow

VANCOUVER, British Columbia, Aug. 10 (JTA) -- A convicted war criminal was given another chance to convince Canadian officials that he did not enter the country illegally by concealing his Nazi past.

A Canadian immigration adjudicator ruled that Jacob Luitjens was entitled to a full deportation inquiry, despite the fact that he recently lost his case before a federal court.

Luitjens, 72, was convicted in absentia in

the Netherlands in 1948 for being a member of the Landwacht, a police force established by the Nazis to round up Jews and resistance fighters.

Canadian immigration adjudicator Daphne Shaw Dyck ruled that she was not bound by Justice Frank Collier's decision and rejected the Justice Department's arguments that it would be ridiculous to "relitigate" the earlier ruling.

Collier ruled last October that Luitjens hid his Nazi past when he applied for Canadian citizenship in 1971. He was then stripped of his citizenship. In April, the Federal Court of Appeals in Ottawa upheld Collier's decision and ruled that Luitjens could not appeal it.

According to the daily Toronto Globe and Mail, Shaw said she "could not rely on the essential findings of fact rendered by Justice Collier when he found Luitjens had lied about his past three times in applying to immigrate to Canada."

"The Immigration Act requires me to make a decision in this case based on credible evidence presented to me," said Shaw. "Such is my statutory duty, and to do otherwise places the integrity of the immigration inquiry in jeopardy."

Shaw added that "the minister of immigration, not Mr. Luitjens, has initiated this inquiry, and according to the immigration regulations, he must be given the opportunity to reply to evidence against him."

As a result of Shaw's ruling, Canadian officials have begun reintroducing evidence used in the prior federal court case.

Last fall, following the court's ruling, Luitjens, a former University of British Columbia botany instructor, became the first Canadian to be stripped of his citizenship and face deportation because of war crimes.

In January, the Dutch government formally sought Luitjens' extradition under a new treaty.

**GERMAN STATE PLANNING TO ERECT
NEW MEMORIAL AT BUCHENWALD CAMP**
By David Kantor

BONN, Aug. 10 (JTA) -- A new memorial will be erected at the site of the Buchenwald concentration camp to commemorate the 10,000 Jews who perished at the infamous camp.

Plans for the new memorial were announced by the state government of Thuringia, which was formerly part of East Germany. The new marker will replace one erected by the Communist regime there that barely mentions Jews died at the camp.

The existing plaque focuses on the persecution of Communists and Soviets under the Nazis.

Designs for the new memorial will be invited in a competition to be launched Oct. 1 by Thuringia, following discussions held last month involving representatives of the state government, Israel and the Jewish community of Germany.

Funding for the marker will come from Thuringia as well as from private donations, the state government said.

The new memorial will be erected on the remains of barracks No. 21, where many of the Jews were held.

The announcement came amid ongoing public debate on redesigning and possibly rebuilding memorials left by the rulers of the former German Democratic Republic.

One of them is at the site of Sachsenhausen concentration camp near Berlin, likely to become a site for frequent state visits when the German government moves its operations from Bonn to Berlin, the old German capital.