

Tuesday, September 19, 1989

## Israel tentatively accepts dialogue

### Rabin agrees to hold Egyptian-sponsored talks with Palestinians

CAIRO, Egypt (AP) — Israel's defense minister told President Hosni Mubarak Monday that Israel would accept an Egyptian-sponsored dialogue with Palestinians, but the two leaders disagreed on the composition of the Arab delegation.

Defense Minister Yitzhak Rabin and Mubarak aired their disagreement publicly after meeting in Cairo for more than three hours.

At a news conference, Rabin said Israel advocated negotiations only with Palestinians from the West Bank and Gaza Strip, occupied by Is-

rael since 1967. At a separate news conference, Mubarak insisted that Palestinians from outside the territories be included as well.

But both leaders voiced cautious optimism about the current Israeli-Egyptian exchanges on a scenario for overall settlement of the Palestinian problem, which has kept the Middle East in turmoil for four decades.

They said their two countries will have further high-level talks.

Rabin, a senior member of Israel's center-left Labor Party, flew in for a

seven-hour stay and was driven directly to Mubarak's office. The two met alone for 2½ hours, then called in aides.

Both said they expected Israel to present its final position on Mubarak's two-pronged peace proposal next month.

One segment of Mubarak's plan calls for a preliminary Israeli-Palestinian dialogue in Cairo to discuss a Palestinian election plan advanced by Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir.

According to Shamir's plan, Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza would vote to choose delegates to negotiate with Israel on interim autonomy.

Mubarak also has presented a 10-point memorandum, which basically attaches conditions to Shamir's plan that would make it acceptable to the Palestinians.

Points of that document include Israel's acceptance of the principle of trading land for peace, and giving

the vote to Palestinians in Israeli-annexed East Jerusalem.

Those points have split Israel's coalition government. Both ideas are anathema to Shamir's right-wing Likud bloc but are accepted by the Labor Party headed by Finance Minister Shimon Peres, who says they are a way to get the peace process moving.

Israel radio quoted Shamir on saying Monday that if Labor sticks to its support of Mubarak's initiative, "It will lead to a break in the government."

Rabin's visit was sanctioned by Israel's Cabinet, and Mubarak emphasized he believed that Rabin was acting as a representative of his government — not merely a Labor politician.

Israeli newspapers quoted Shamir as saying any deviation by Rabin from the Israeli peace plan would be "only an expression of personal opinion."

## Yeltsin was drunk on recent U.S. tour, says Pravda article

MOSCOW (AP) — Opposition legislator Boris N. Yeltsin shopped and drank until he dropped on his tour of the United States, said a scathing article reprinted Monday in the Communist Party newspaper *Pravda*.

The Communist Party maverick "leaves behind him a wake of catastrophic prophecies, insane expenses, interviews and above all the perfume of Jack Daniels Black label," the Italian newspaper *La Repubblica* said in an article translated into Russian and printed in full by *Pravda*.

*Pravda* did not comment on the article. But it gave its readers a taste of the page 5 piece in a front-page box quoting the article as saying Yeltsin found the United States "a holiday, a stage, a bar 5,000 kilometers long."

Yeltsin, who arrived back in Moscow late Monday evening, denied the report.

"It's garbage," Yeltsin told the Associated Press, flushing with anger.

"It's a simple lie, slander, and revenge for the fact that Americans received us with admiration," he said before slipping into a black Volga car to be whisked into Moscow.

The article is potentially very damaging to the silver-haired, 58-year-old populist who has become a hero to many Soviets by criticizing special privileges for party and government officials and urging that President Mikhail S. Gorbachev speed up his reforms.

It raises the question of the character of a leading politician more clearly than has been done in decades.

## Bush answers questions on China, Soviet Union

HELENA, Mont. (AP) — President Bush defended the slow pace of arms negotiations with the Soviet Union on Monday, and said "it's not time for normalcy" in relations with China, despite a gradual increase in contacts since last summer's bloody crackdown on student dissent in Beijing.

In a wide-ranging session with reporters in the ornate Senate chamber of the Montana legislature, Bush said reforms in Hungary had made it possible to extend new economic privileges to the Communist nation.

The president was emphasizing environmental issues in a three-state swing to South Dakota, Montana and Washington, defending his decision not to travel to Alaska to view the oil spill damage in Prince William Sound.

He said he was hopeful that "winter will be kind" in restoring environmental conditions in Alaskan waters. He said he'd sent his "environmental vice president" to inspect the clean-up efforts and predicted that Exxon would "come back" next spring if further clean-up was necessary.

The president also vowed to fight

on the floor of the Democratic-controlled House to win passage of his plan for a cut in the capital gains tax, and said his plan is "not as my critics say, a tax that will help the rich."

Asked why there hadn't been more progress on a strategic arms agreement, Bush said he had put more early emphasis on conventional arms. Soviet foreign minister Eduard Shevardnadze has been critical of the Bush administration for not advancing any major proposal on long-range arms.

He acknowledged rumors that Shevardnadze would bring a new arms proposal to the United States during meetings later this week, but said, "I don't know what he's going to bring. We haven't had that confirmed."

He added, "I feel under no rush on the subject. I think our handling of the Soviet account is pretty good."

"These are not easy problems," Bush said, mentioning verification issues as among the thorniest to a so-called START pact limiting long-range ballistic missiles. At the same time, he said, "don't see any insurmountable stumbling blocks there."

## Ethnic problems fill Communist docket

MOSCOW (AP) — Communist Party leaders converged on Moscow Monday for a Central Committee meeting on the ethnic problems that have left more than 200 people dead, one republic virtually blockaded and mass movements calling for secession.

Soviet President Mikhail S. Gorbachev first promised the special session — which begins Tuesday — 18 months ago, after 31 people were killed in Armenian-Azerbaijani rioting in the republic of Azerbaijan in February 1988.

Since then, ethnic tension in this country of more than 100 nationalities has worsened. Violence has broken out in Armenia, Georgia, Uzbekistan and Kazakhstan in addition to Azerbaijan. The ethnic problems have combined with severe shortages of consumer goods, food rationing and unsettling political changes — all threatening Gorbachev's program of perestroika, or economic and social restructuring.

Gorbachev said last week on national television that discordant voices are speculating openly

about the possibility of a coup, imminent chaos, and even civil war.

The Central Committee meeting will have to deal with a range of problems.

They include the following:

- Armenians say their republic is being strangled by an economic blockade launched by neighboring Azerbaijan, which controls the key rail and highway access.

- Millions of Baltic residents have signed documents favoring independence for Estonia, Lithuania and Latvia.

- One hundred ten enterprises with mostly Russian workers are on strike in Soviet Moldavia over a law making Moldavian the official language of the republic.

The death toll of around 200 in the ethnic unrest includes 100 killed in rioting in the Fergana Valley of Uzbekistan in June and more than 100 killed in violence between Armenians and Azerbaijanis since February.

Out of this unrest, the Communist Party says it hopes to create a situation where all Soviet citizens can "feel at home in any part of the country."

A draft ethnic policy published for discussion last month calls for restructuring the Soviet Union as a federation of republics with broader autonomous powers and even suggests that the agreement that created the union in 1922 could be rewritten.

It blames the ethnic tension on disputes dating back centuries, aggravated by dictator Josef Stalin's mass reprisals and "resettlement" of whole peoples, including the Crimean Tatars, Meskhetian Turks, Germans, Koreans, Greeks, Kurds, Kalmyks, Karachayevs, Balkarians, Chechen and Ingkush.

It offers the republics the power to question national laws before a strengthened high court and the right to use and distribute their national resources.

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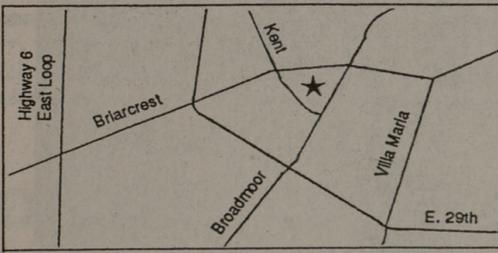
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