

empty handed. Moreover, the European Parliament meeting in Madrid put its weight behind the Palestinian peace initiative, by calling on Israel to put forth a comprehensive peace plan.

Inside the US the pro-Israeli lobby group—the American Israeli Public Affairs Committee has been engaged in a desperate attempt to salvage the deteriorating Israeli image in America. Their latest efforts have resulted in recruiting 9 US senators who sent a letter to Secretary of State James Baker calling on the administration to give unequivocal support to the Shamir plan. Subsequently President Bush sent a letter to Shamir expressing his continued support of his plan. It's ironic that the Shamir plan receives more support inside the US Senate than the Israeli Knesset.

On July 7 the Likud Central Committee held its long-awaited meeting to

discuss the Shamir plan amidst threats by Shamir that he will resign if the Likud bloc does not ratify his plan.

The opposition, headed by Ariel Sharon along with Yitshak Modai and David Levy won the battle and changed the plan which was approved by the government by adding new provisions to it.

Shamir did not resign but Labor's leadership bureau adopted a proposal to the party's central committee which recommends the withdrawal from the coalition government. The proposal cites that «there is no room under these circumstances for the continuation of the government.»<sup>5</sup>

The proposal was introduced by the party chairman Shimon Peres and was passed by a vote of 45 to 2. The central committee meeting will take place during the month of August.

Shamir in an attempt to placate the

Labor party, said that as far as the government is concerned there will be no changes in his plan.

On the other hand the US administration is worried that if in fact Labor does withdraw from the government it will lead to the collapse of the Shamir plan, which would strengthen Sharon's position within Likud. Sharon is on the roll, and if the present trend continues, he will try to push Israel into an openly fascist society which will in turn erode any hopes for peace and push the region on a course of destruction. ●

1 *Ha'aratz*, April 10

2 *Ha'aratz*, April 21

3 *International Herald Tribune*, May 23

4 UNL Call No. 39, translated by the PFLP Central Information Department, 1989

Associated Press, July 11

