

Begin Cabinet teetering as member quits

JERUSALEM (AP) — Israel's Finance Minister Yigael Hurvitz resigned Sunday in a dispute over a raise for Israel's teachers, bringing the government of Prime Minister Menachem Begin to the brink of collapse.

Begin called a special Cabinet meeting for Monday morning to decide whether to set early elections or try to go on governing without Hurvitz.

Elections are already scheduled for November, but judging from the remarks of Cabinet ministers Sunday, Begin may advance the voting date to the early summer.

Hurvitz said he and his two political partners will quit the coalition, leaving Begin's government with 58 seats at most in the 120-member Knesset (Parliament), and dependent for survival on a handful of free-floating splinter factions.

Education Minister Zevulun Hammer said "the government would like to serve out its term, but it doesn't want to do so if it doesn't have appropriate parliamentary support."

Asked whether Begin was planning an election for around June, Justice Minister Moshe Nissim replied: "that can be assumed."

A compromise was sought on the teacher's salary issue at a marathon 7½ hour Cabinet meeting.

Hurvitz, 62, resigned after the Cabinet made concessions to Israel's 58,000 teachers, who are demanding pay increases recommended last year by a government commission.

He argued the wage hikes would cripple his efforts to curb public spending and reduce Israel's world-leading inflation rate of 131 percent in 1980.

Government sources said the Cabinet on Sunday approved by a vote of 11-2 a compromise that obliged the government to accept the teachers' demands in principle but postponed the actual payment of higher salaries.

Hurvitz said he voted against the resolution because it was "too watery and wouldn't be understood by all the workers' sectors." His resignation takes effect Tuesday.

The opposition Labor Party warned that unless Begin resigned, it would present a bill to dissolve Parliament and have elections 100 days hence. Opinion polls strongly favor the Labor Party, but the large percentage of undecided voters makes predictions difficult.

Over the weekend, Begin aides made it known that the 67-year-old prime minister had all but despaired of saving his Cabinet. But media reports said Begin was being pressured by hardliners in his Cabinet to hold on as long as possible so the government could complete its projects for settling Jews in the Israeli-occupied West Bank.

The hardliners fear the Labor Party will restrict Jewish development on the West Bank and trade parts of it for peace with Jordan.

making the news

From Associated Press Reports

Iran has dropped its demand that the United States deposit \$24 billion in Algerian banks before the 52 Americans being held hostage in Iran are released, a top Iranian negotiator was quoted as saying Sunday.

But U.S. officials in Washington said they had not been notified by Iran that the demand had been dropped and they could not independently confirm the statement.

A fresh blast of arctic air swirled into the already frozen Northeast on Sunday, snarling traffic on ice-clogged waterways from New England to Maryland.

Foot-long ice blocks bobbed in the Chesapeake Bay where the Coast Guard restricted navigation to steel-hulled boats.

Traffic through the Cape Cod Canal was suspended Friday when large ice flows blocked the waterway, which permits ships to bypass the Massachusetts cape.

ST. AUGUSTINE, Fla. — Actor Richard Boone, best known for his role as the hired gun Paladin in the "Have Gun Will Travel" television series, is dead at 63.

The craggy-faced veteran actor, who retired here to paint in 1972 and was the state of Florida's cultural ambassador, died Saturday night at his home of cancer of the throat.

Boone had entered a hospital for an undisclosed illness in October 1979 but was later released.

A spokesman at Craig Funeral Home in St. Augustine said Boone's body was to be cremated and a private service held. The family asked that no flowers be sent.

Boone won three Peabody Awards, including one for his role as Dr. Styner in the "Medic" television series, which ran from 1954 to 1956. He was nominated as best actor five times by the National Academy of Television Arts and Sciences.

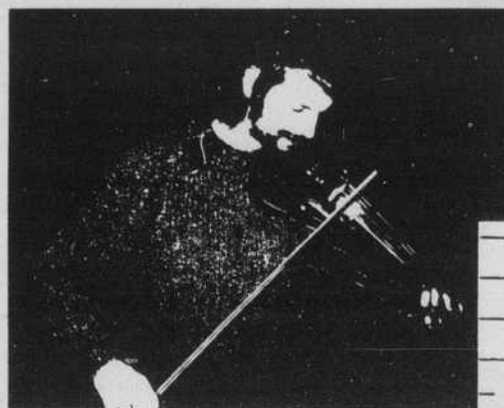
He portrayed the late John Wayne's adversary in the films "Big Jake" in 1971 and "The Shootist" in 1976, but was better known for his television roles.

"Have Gun Will Travel," one of television's classic Western series, was produced by CBS from 1957 to 1963. As

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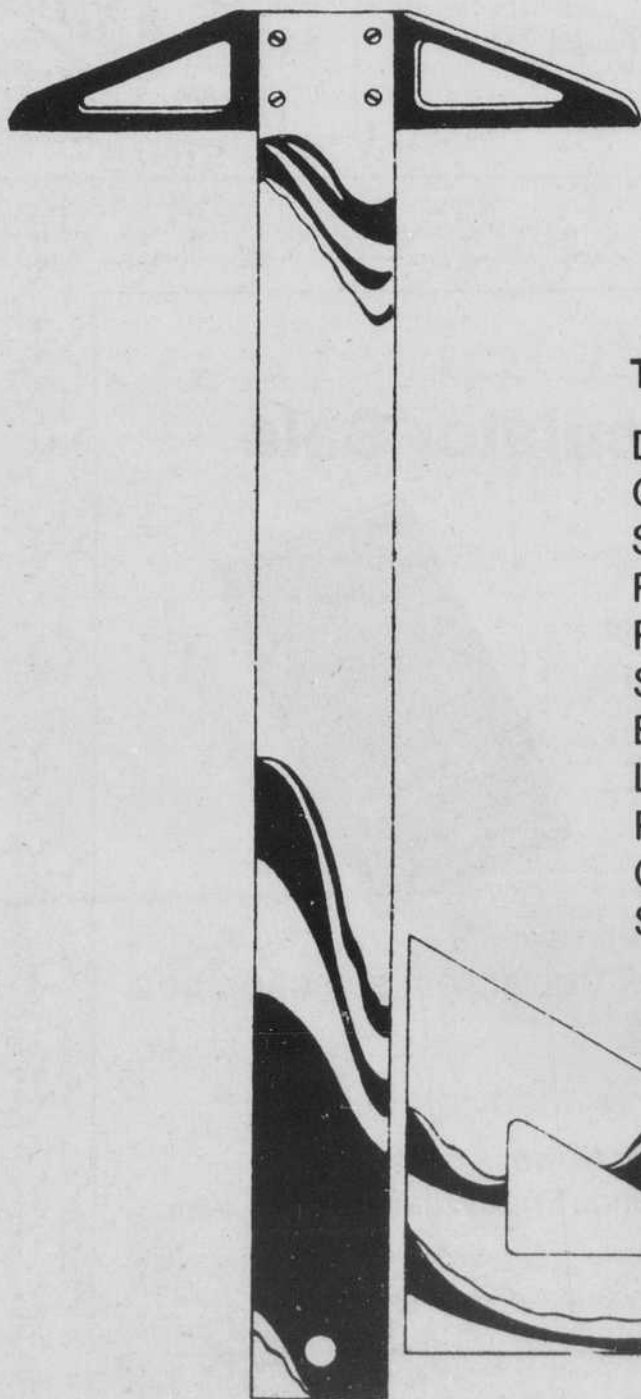
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