

NATIONAL BRIEFS

Baker working to resume talks

WASHINGTON (AP) — Secretary of State James A. Baker III, trying to rekindle Mideast peace talks, has proposed Arab and Israeli delegations resume negotiations April 27 in Washington, U.S. and diplomatic sources said Sunday.

The sources said "letters of suggestion" from Baker proposing a resumption of negotiations were sent to Israel, Jordan, Syria, Lebanon and Palestinian Arabs late last week.

Details were expected to be announced at the State Department on Monday.

The diplomatic sources, who spoke only on condition they not be identified by name, said Baker urged the Arabs to send him a list of possible sites outside Washington for the round of talks that would follow the Washington meeting.

Baker first made the request a month ago, but only Israel has responded, the sources said.

Jordan's Foreign Minister Kamel Abu Jaber said he had received a letter. Hanan Ashrawi, spokeswoman for the Palestinian delegation, also said her group had received an invitation. Both said no decision on participating would be made until after an Arab foreign ministers meeting, tentatively set for Wednesday.

Lebanon has invited the foreign ministers of Syria, Jordan and the Palestine Liberation Organization to meet in Beirut to discuss the usefulness of holding another round of peace talks before Israel's June 23 national elections. All promised to attend.

Three previous rounds of peace talks have failed to produce progress on the three main goals: limited self-rule for Palestinian Arabs, resolution of Israel's territorial dispute with the Arab nations and Arab recognition of Israel.

In Israel, Foreign Minister David Levy, the cabinet's strongest champion of the U.S.-brokered peace talks, announced his resignation Sunday.

Levy has frequently been at odds with Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir for his efforts to push aside procedural roadblocks and get the peace talks going.

Shakespeare portrait questioned

NEWARK, N.J. (AP) — A famous image of William Shakespeare — the engraving on the first edition of his collected works — was based on a portrait of Queen Elizabeth I, a computer expert has concluded.

The engraver, Martin Droeshout, may have used the queen as a model to acknowledge her patronage of the theatre and perhaps her inspiration to Shakespeare, says computer artist Lillian Schwartz.

Schwartz, who suggested in 1986 that Leonardo

da Vinci was his own model for the Mona Lisa, used computers to compare the portrait on the 1623 First Folio edition of Shakespeare's collected works with other images of Shakespeare and other Elizabethan notables.

The photo matched the 1588 portrait of Elizabeth by her staff artist, George Gower, she said. She said the eyes, cheeks and nose match, and the distance between the eyes is the same.

"With this, it's so perfect that there's no doubt," said Schwartz. "You could take the two portraits, scale them to the same size on a Xerox machine and lay them on top of each other and see for yourself."

Schwartz attributed the differences — beard, mustache, jaw lines and forehead — to an attempt by Droeshout to add masculine features for Shakespeare, "like a child painting on a mustache."

Schwartz, a consultant to AT&T Bell Labs who has won an Oscar and an Emmy for her computer art work, published her findings in the March-April edition of *PIXEL* magazine.

Shakespearean scholars disparaged the findings.

"Absolute garbage," scoffed Paul Bertram of Rutgers University, who has written studies of Shakespeare's portraits. "It's astounding — what is invisible to the naked eye is only visible to the computer."

Shuttle mission extended

CAPE CANAVERAL, Fla. (AP) — Atlantis' environmental mission was extended Sunday from eight to nine days so its crew can make extra measurements of Earth's endangered ozone layer and other parts of the atmosphere.

The shuttle's crew of six men and one woman had done everything possible to save enough power for an additional day in space, including turning off the cabin lights and galley equipment when not in use.

Atlantis was supposed to return Wednesday after eight days in orbit, but scientists involved in the mission asked for a ninth day. Landing is now scheduled for just after sunrise Thursday at Kennedy Space Center.

As Atlantis whizzed around the world for the sixth day, the astronauts tried again to communicate by radio with the two cosmonauts aboard the Russian space station Mir.

Astronaut Kathryn Sullivan, who speaks a little Russian, said she thought she heard a return signal as the spacecraft passed within 62 miles of one another just south of New Zealand. But she said the signal was "very weak and garbled."



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