

Omerts government teetering

Contributed by Joel Evans
Wednesday, 16 January 2008

Israeli government in turmoil. Ehud Olmert government has taken a serious blow as a major partner in the coalition has bolted. Avigdor Libermans party Yisroel Beytenu has decided to leave the Olmerts ruling coalition and support early elections. This will lessen the coalition to only 67 kneset members. If any other party decides to leave the new fragile coalition the government will fall. There are two other parties that are threatening to leave very soon. Shas an orthodox religious party has told Olmert that if his government starts any negotiations on the final status of Jerusalem his party will leave. Analysts say this likely in the coming weeks.

All this means that Arab Israeli final status negotiations that have technically started now will be interrupted by an election likely to bring back to power former Prime minister Benjamin Netanyahu. The ongoing battles in the Gaza strip will also not help negotiations any.

The middle east a crazy place.