

**Weekend Developments in South Lebanon:
9 SHIITE GUERRILLAS KILLED DURING
IDF, SLA SEARCHES OF SHIITE VILLAGES;
A NUMBER OF LOCAL RESIDENTS WOUNDED
By Hugh Orgel**

TEL AVIV, Feb. 24 (JTA) -- Nine Shiite guerrillas were killed and some local residents were wounded during Israel Defense Force and South Lebanon Army (SLA) searches of Shiite Moslem villages in south Lebanon over the weekend. An undisclosed number of villagers were detained for further questioning.

As the searches of the villages east of Tyre continued, 10 attacks against IDF and SLA units were reported, including two attacks against SLA units this morning, but there were no casualties.

In the village of Dir Arabiye, 10 men tried to escape during the search. Eight of them were killed by IDF fire and two were wounded and captured. Rocket-propelled grenades (RPG) and anti-tank missiles were reportedly found in the village, as well as two cars containing explosives, which were blown up by IDF sappers. A number of villagers were detained for further questioning.

In Burj Rahal, the scene of searches and arrests last week, one guerrilla was killed and several buildings were demolished by the IDF. Searches were also conducted in Kefar Tura, where arms were found.

The weekend attacks on IDF and SLA units included RPGs and light arms fire in the villages of Bidyas, Hasbaya el-Ein and Hamus. The body of an unidentified man was found beside a roadside bomb near Bidyas.

In today's attacks, fire from a speeding car was directed at an SLA roadblock in Tyre, and automatic fire was directed at an SLA patrol near Hasbaya.

Need To Maintain IDF Morality

In weekend Israel Radio interviews, former Chief of Staff Rafael Eitan and Col. (Res.) Meir Pail, a leftwing military historian and former Knesset member, both of whom are at opposite ends of the political spectrum and almost invariably disagree on any issue, were in rare agreement on the need to maintain the morality of the IDF.

They were commenting on soldiers' statements on radio and television reports that the IDF should take tougher action, even against women and children, to protect themselves "as this is the only language the Lebanese know." The soldiers complained that guerrillas and terrorists in Lebanon frequently use women and children as screens to protect themselves from IDF units. They said the SLA shot at women and children, and "maybe in Lebanon we have to do as the Lebanese do."

Pail said that revenge was a natural response when soldiers were killed and injured, "but we should use our brains, not our instincts." He said that Soviet and Syrian tactics against rebels and opponents, aside from their moral reprehensibility, are simply inefficient and don't get results.

Eitan agreed that destroying villages does not solve the problem. He noted that in the past, he

ordered home IDF planes which were on attack missions when they did not have a military target and wanted to hit "anything."

In another radio interview, Shlomo Ilya, head of the IDF liaison unit in south Lebanon, said the only weapon against terrorism was terrorism, and that Israel had options beyond those already used for "speaking the language the terrorists understood." He did not specify the nature of the options.

Justifies Steps Against Attacks On The IDF

Deputy Premier and Foreign Minister Yitzhak Shamir told reporters during a visit to wounded soldiers in Rambam Hospital in Haifa that the steps taken by the IDF in Lebanon to prevent attacks on its units were justified. "We must do everything we can to stop the attacks, or at least to reduce them to a minimum" he said. He added that the IDF, under the present conditions of withdrawal, was being forced to defend itself with all means at its disposal.

Meanwhile, the Cabinet today heard reports by Defense Minister Yitzhak Rabin and heads of the security establishment regarding the situation in south Lebanon, but made no decisions. However, the Cabinet is expected to discuss at its next meeting next Sunday proposals to speed up the IDF withdrawal from Lebanon.

As the Cabinet was in session, a group called Parents Against Silence staged a quiet protest in front of the Prime Minister's Office demanding that the IDF withdrawal be speeded up. The group, a non-political organization which has been active in recent months demanding an Israeli pull-out from Lebanon, argued that the rise in the number of attacks against IDF soldiers in Lebanon was a result of the decision to withdraw in stages. The demonstration was joined by members of the Citizen Rights Movement. At the same time, Mapam MK Chaika Grossman urged the government to beware of the way it treats the Shiites in southern Lebanon. She warned that the tough measures exercised in the last few days against the Shiite villages suspected of terrorism could lead the entire Shiite community to a deep, irreversible hatred of Israel. She, too, urged the government to speed up the withdrawal process.

**PERES SAID HE REJECTED AN
INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON THE
MIDEAST IN HIS TALKS WITH EUROPEANS
By Hugh Orgel**

TEL AVIV, Feb. 24 (JTA) -- Premier Shimon Peres, who returned home Friday after meeting with Pope John Paul II at the Vatican, Italian President Bettino Craxi in Rome, and Rumanian President Nicolae Ceausescu in Bucharest, said the topic which was common at all the meetings was that of an international conference on the Middle East as a possible opening stage for negotiations with the Jordanians and Palestinians who are not members of the Palestine Liberation Organization.

Peres said he explained that Israel could not support such a conference because it would be attended by the Soviet Union, which had severed diplomatic relations with Israel, by the People's Republic of China, which never recognized Israel, by Syria,

which wants to destroy Israel, and by the PLO which is engaged in terrorist acts against Israel. "Anybody who wants an international conference will have to change the international condition," Peres said he explained each time the idea of an international conference was broached. He said that the time has come for the Soviet Union to renew its diplomatic relations with Israel and for China to establish relations with Israel.

Exchange Of Views Was Cordial

The Premier said that the exchange of views with his hosts "was very frank, very cordial. I was given a fair opportunity to explain our position very carefully" and that Ezer Weizman, Minister in the Prime Minister's Office, and himself "really had an open and friendly ear wherever we went."

Asked if Ceausescu had promised to try and get the Soviet Union to reestablish relations with Israel to facilitate the holding of an international conference, Peres said: "I cannot commit Ceausescu about the steps he may take, but he is fully aware of our position. The minimum we can expect from Soviet Russia is that it should renew relations (with Israel) and to take a more middle rather than a one-sided position" toward the Arab-Israeli conflict.

Rumania is the only Soviet bloc country which has maintained friendly relations with Israel, serving as an intermediary between Israel and the Arabs.

Reagan Rejects International Conference

(In the United States, President Reagan reiterated at a press conference in Washington last Thursday night his Administration's opposition to an international peace conference. "We don't favor that," he said. "We don't believe that there should be that many hands in the pot, just as we're not envisioning any participation in the negotiations. We have said we'll stand by and we'll try to help in any way we can, but these negotiations must be between the Arabs and the Palestinians and the Israelis."

(Asked about the two days of talks in Vienna between U.S. and Soviet officials on the Mideast, Reagan replied: "These talks were not, had nothing to do with negotiations or anything of that kind. We simply felt that it was time to exchange views with each other and make sure that there couldn't be any miscalculations that could lead to some kind of confrontation or problem. We brought them up to date on our views and what we thought and they were talking on their own and that's all.")

Peres also said, upon his return home, that in the talks with the leaders he and Weizman met "there was a general appreciation about Israel's decision to withdraw from Lebanon. There was an understanding about the policies we are trying to introduce in the area, and then there was a great interest in what can be done in order to enhance peace on the eastern frontier --with the Jordanians, and to solve the Palestinian problem."

ISRAEL CONTINUES TO MAINTAIN LOW PROFILE ON HUSSEIN-ARAFAT ACCORD

By Gil Sedan

JERUSALEM, Feb. 24 (JTA) -- Israel continued today to maintain a low profile regarding the agreement reached between King Hussein of Jordan and Palestine Liberation Organization chief Yasir Arafat on a joint framework for negotiations with Israel.

The Cabinet, at its weekly session, did not discuss the agreement, signed in Amman February 11 by Hussein and Arafat. But Israeli spokesmen continued to stick to their reserved analysis of the agreement even after its contents were officially publicized yesterday, including what amounted to implied acceptance of UN Security Council Resolution 242.

The PLO-Jordan accord specifies five principles upon which their "bid for joint action" should be based. A key provision includes "total withdrawal" by Israel from "the territories occupied in 1967 for comprehensive peace as established in United Nations and Security Council Resolutions."

Differences Between The PLO and Jordan

Nonetheless, while the PLO's Executive Committee has approved the draft agreement, there remained substantial differences between the PLO and Jordan. The Executive Committee said in a statement issued in Tunis last Wednesday that it continued to oppose Resolution 242. Jordan, meanwhile, has stressed it would remain committed to the Resolution.

The Resolution, rejected by the PLO through the years, calls for recognition of Israel's sovereignty and borders in exchange for the return of Arab territories captured in the 1967 Six-Day War. The U.S. has refused to recognize or negotiate with the PLO until it accepts Resolution 242 and acknowledges Israel's right to exist.

Israeli analysts here noted that although accepting Resolution 242, Arafat accepted it by implication and that there was still no explicit commitment to accepting 242 without equivocation. Furthermore, analysts noted that the reference in the joint framework to "comprehensive peace as established in United Nations and Security Council resolutions" could include not only Resolution 242 but other resolutions condemning Israel's "continued occupation" of "the territories occupied in 1967," including the infamous General Assembly resolution equating Zionism with racism.

Other Sticking Points

There remained other differences between the PLO and Jordan over the substance of the accord. The PLO continues to seek self-determination for an independent state which would later merge with Jordan. Amman, meanwhile, is in favor of self-determination within a confederation between the Jordanian and Palestinian peoples.

According to the text of the accord distributed in Amman, the "achievement of a peaceful and just settlement of the Middle East crisis" must include "termination of the Israeli occupation of the occupied territories." The accord said a joint peace bid should affirm the "right of self-determination for the Palestinian people."

Palestinians, the accord continues, will exercise this right "when Jordanians and Palestinians will be able to do so within the context of the formation of the proposed confederated Arab states of Jordan and Palestine."

Another sticking point between the PLO and Jordan revolves around the participants to the proposed international peace conference on the Middle East. The PLO has made clear in the past that it would take part in such a conference as the sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian people on an equal footing with all other Arab participants to the conference.

But while the PLO-Jordan agreement calls the PLO the "sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian people," it asserts that it will participate in any

peace talks "within a joint delegation (joint Jordanian-Palestinian delegation)." Israel and the U.S. have repeatedly rejected the concept of an international conference on the Middle East. In view of the differences which have surfaced since the accord was announced, some observers suggest that the PLO-Jordan agreement might prove short lived.

BEHIND THE HEADLINES YORDIM ARE RETURNING HOME By Yitzhak Rabi

NEW YORK, Feb. 24 (JTA) — More than 2,350 former Israelis returned to live in Israel in 1984, after residing for many years in the United States and Canada, according to Consul Amos Haddad, the chief representative of Israel's Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs in the U.S. and Canada.

In a special interview with the Jewish Telegraphic Agency here, Haddad warned, however, that the economic crisis in Israel might have an adverse effect on returning Israelis, who are referred to as "yordim." He noted that during the last year 2,353 Israelis returned to Israel, compared with 2,346 the previous year.

"This is a marginal increase in the number of returning Israelis," he pointed out. "We expected more Israelis to return in 1984. But whenever there are uncertainties in Israel — such as the recession and the war in Lebanon in 1984 — there is a decrease in the number of returning Israelis."

Haddad said his office estimates that there are at least some 250,000 to 300,000 former Israelis — or yordim — living in the United States. He said this number was carefully arrived at from figures supplied by American immigration authorities and the Israeli Consulate in New York.

Employment Available For Professionals

According to Haddad, the availability of employment for professionals in Israel is the major factor in the return of Israelis to their homeland. Therefore, he pointed out, his office is more successful in increasing the number of returning Israeli academics, especially engineers, computer experts and scientists.

"Last year alone the number of academics who returned to Israel was 1,301," Haddad noted. He said that there is growing demand for professional, academic manpower in Israel and that many Israeli industries are increasingly looking to recruit Israeli engineers and scientists who presently live in the United States and Canada.

But Haddad noted that most of the yordim are not academics, and finding employment for them in Israel today, where unemployment is on the rise, is almost an impossible mission.

Haddad said, in response to a question, that he could not predict the number of Israelis who will return to Israel in 1985. "On the one hand, we know that there will be an increase in the number of Israeli academics returning home, but on the other hand, it is clear that the economic crisis in the country will have an impact on the over-all number of returnees," he said.

Haddad said that presently there are 10,850 Israeli families registered in his office for the process of returning home. Last year alone, 3,922 families joined the list, compared with 1,750 in 1983, he said. Asked for the reasons that make Israelis decide to return home after years in America, Haddad said:

"First, there are the very attractive offers of employment, with relatively high salaries and opportunities to advance. Another factor is the wish of many Israelis to raise their children in a total Jewish environment and give them a Jewish education. Many of them feel that they cannot provide the same Jewish education for their children in America. And third, many feel that it is simply a time to go and live at home after so many years of living abroad."

RELIEF FOR KENYAN FAMINE VICTIMS

TEL AVIV, Feb. 24 (JTA) — Some 55 tons of food, medication, tents and mobile field kitchens donated by the Magen David Adom (MDA) First Aid Society, Israel's equivalent of the Red Cross, have arrived in Kenya to aid famine victims in that country, it was reported here today.

The relief supplies, shipped from Eilat to the Kenyan port of Mombasa, included 20 tons of flour, 20 tons of sugar, 15 tons of edible oil, five tons of baby food, some half a ton of antibiotics, about 60 family tents and 10 mobile field kitchens — all Israeli-made.

The goods were purchased and shipped with funds raised following an MDA appeal to the Israeli public in line with a request from the International Red Cross in Geneva to Red Cross and associated societies throughout the world for emergency aid for the afflicted populations of several African countries suffering from drought and famine.

SHAHAL GOING TO EGYPT

JERUSALEM, Feb. 24 (JTA) — Moshe Shahal, Minister of Energy and Infrastructure, will leave for Egypt tomorrow on a three-day official visit to discuss Israel's oil purchases from Egypt. Shahal, the first minister of the national unity government to visit Egypt, was invited by his Egyptian counterpart.

There was some speculation here today that he will be received by President Hosni Mubarak as a gesture of good will on the eve of the Egyptian leader's visit to the United States where he will meet with President Reagan and other top Administration officials.

Speaking to students in Nahariya over the weekend, Shahal said the invitation to Egypt was the result of the Israeli government's effort to improve relations with its Arab neighbor. He expressed the hope that he would return from Egypt with a positive message that Egypt is ready to serve as a link between Israel and its other Arab neighbors.

LEADING TERRORIST DEPORTED TO LEBANON

JERUSALEM, Feb. 24 (JTA) — Abdul Aziz Shahin, reportedly one of the founders of the El Fatah terrorist group, was deported to Lebanon last week, hours after the Supreme Court rejected his appeal against deportation. Shahin, who was arrested in 1967 and served a 15-year jail sentence for possession of sabotage equipment, had claimed that deporting him to Lebanon or Jordan would endanger his life.

His lawyers, Leah Semel and Avigdor Feldman, accused the Defense Ministry of contempt of court, in a telegram to Attorney General Yitzhak Zamir. They contended that the State prosecutor had promised the court to consider a proposal that Shahin be deported to Cyprus where his personal safety would not be in jeopardy. However, before any reply was given, he was expelled to Lebanon.

SPECIAL TO THE JTA
POPE AFFIRMS CATHOLIC-JEWISH
RELATIONS AS CATHOLIC DOCTRINE;
HOLDS STATUS QUO ON ISRAEL

By Marc Tanenbaum

(Editor's note: Rabbi Marc Tanenbaum, director of international relations of the American Jewish Committee, was a member of the AJC delegation which met with Pope John Paul II at the Vatican.)

VATICAN CITY, Feb. 24 (JTA) -- At a private audience with American Jewish Committee leaders February 15 held in the resplendent Apostolic Palace, Pope John Paul II went further than any Pope in recent memory in affirming that improved Catholic-Jewish relations is now an article of Catholic doctrine, "an expression of the (Catholic) faith, a word of the Divine Wisdom."

At the same time, he remained cautious and vague about the relationship of the Holy See to Israel.

Howard Friedman, AJC president, led an eight-member AJC delegation in an audience devoted to commemorating the 40th anniversary of the end of World War II and the defeat of Nazism and the 20th anniversary of the adoption by Vatican Council II of *Nostra Aetate*, the declaration which opened a new chapter in Catholic-Jewish relations. It was the first audience in 1985 of any Jewish group with the Polish Pope devoted to examining the impact of the Vatican Declaration on Catholic-Jewish relations during the past two decades.

Statement By AJC President

"As the Nazi trauma appalled us with despair over human evil," Friedman said in his prepared text, "so the 20th anniversary of the close of Vatican Council II inspires all of us with hope and promise for a more humane future.... It is no exaggeration to state that as a result of these far-reaching pronouncements and the practical actions they have inspired, greater progress in improved Catholic-Jewish relations has taken place during the past two decades than in the past two millennia."

Friedman then said that "the American Jewish Committee shares" the Pope's vision "of upholding human dignity by vigorously advocating the universality of civil and political liberties, and, in particular, religious liberty for all peoples everywhere, especially those in oppressive totalitarian societies."

The AJC president then referred to his agency's "close cooperation with Catholic Relief Services in seeking to relieve the suffering, hunger and deprivation of millions of fellow human beings in Ethiopia, and in Africa generally."

The climax of Friedman's statement concentrated on the importance of establishing "diplomatic ties between the Holy See and the State of Israel and her people." He said: "Such an historic act, we believe, would be a watershed event in Catholic-Jewish relations. It would help create the sense of reality (in the Arab world) which is indispensable to peace, and we would consider it a happy development and confirmation of the decisions of Vatican Council II."

Pope Cites 'A Teaching Which Must Be Followed'

In response, the Pope declared, "I wish to confirm, with utmost conviction, that the teaching of the Church proclaimed during the Second Vatican Council in the Declaration *Nostra Aetate* ... remains always for us, for the Catholic Church, for

the Episcopate ... and for the Pope, a teaching which must be followed -- a teaching which it is necessary to accept not merely as something fitting, but much more as an expression of the faith, as an inspiration of the Holy Spirit, as a word of Divine Wisdom."

Vatican authorities told us that the Pope affirms by that statement that he regards improved Catholic-Jewish relations as an "article of Catholic faith," of permanent value, and its progress is irreversible. That assumed importance in light of anxiety in Catholic circles that the Vatican Synod called for November may lead to reversal of progressive achievements of Vatican Council II.

Asserting that "the relationships between Jews and Christians have radically improved in these years," the Pontiff stated: "Where there was distrust and perhaps fear, there is now confidence. Where there was ignorance and therefore prejudice and stereotypes, there is now growing mutual knowledge, appreciation and respect. There is above all, love between us, that kind of love, I mean, which is for both of us a fundamental injunction of our religious traditions and which the New Testament has received from the Old."

Condemns Anti-Semitism

The Pope then condemned anti-Semitism, saying, "Anti-Semitism, which is unfortunately still a problem in certain places, has been repeatedly condemned by the Catholic tradition as incompatible with Christ's teaching and with the respect due to the dignity of men and women created in the image and likeness of God. I once again express the Catholic Church's repudiation of all oppression and persecution, and of all discrimination against people -- from whatever side it may come."

Pope John Paul acknowledged "the close collaboration between the American Jewish Committee with some of our Catholic agencies in alleviating hunger in Ethiopia and in the Sahel."

Vague Statement On The Mideast

On the Middle East, the Pope then vaguely said, "I know also of your concern for the peace and security of the Holy Land. May the Lord give to that land, and to all the peoples and nations in that part of the world, the blessings contained in the word 'shalom.'" He then expressed the hope that "the sons and daughters of Abraham -- Jews, Christians and Muslims may live together and prosper in peace."

Then, in private conversation with the AJC representatives, he spoke concretely of "peace and security for Israel," but said there were "complexities" that stood in the way presently of establishing diplomatic relations.

In meetings prior to the audience with the Pope, the AJC leaders spoke at great length with Archbishop Achille Silvestrini of the Vatican Secretariat of State and with Jan Cardinal Willebrands, president of the Vatican Secretariat for Religious Relations with Jews, on the importance of "full recognition throughout the civilized world, including the Holy See, of Israel's sovereign legitimacy as the only means of dispelling the illusion in the Arab world that somehow Israel's continued existence can be undermined. Nothing would contribute more to peace in that area than the dispelling of that illusion."