

## RABIN TRAVELING TO CAIRO TO DISCUSS EGYPTIAN PROPOSALS REJECTED BY LIKUD

By Gil Sedan

JERUSALEM, Sept. 17 (JTA) -- As members of the Likud half of Israel's coalition government rejected new Egyptian proposals on the peace process, Defense Minister Yitzhak Rabin of Labor was preparing to discuss them in Cairo on Monday with Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak.

Egypt's 10-point paper suggesting terms and conditions for the Palestinian elections proposed by Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir was officially presented to Israel on Friday by the Egyptian ambassador in Tel Aviv, Mohammed Basiousny.

The elections are to choose Palestinian delegates with whom Israel would negotiate self-rule in the West Bank and Gaza Strip and eventually the final status of those territories.

Sources said Egypt also gave Israel a list of Palestinian names with whom it could negotiate. The list reportedly was compiled by Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza Strip, without consulting Palestine Liberation Organization leader Yasir Arafat.

The Egyptians say any negotiations must embrace the principle of land-for-peace, which is the basis of the 1979 Israeli-Egyptian peace treaty.

But that principle conflicts with Likud dogma, which says that by relinquishing Sinai, Israel already has given up enough land.

Rabin came under fierce attack from Likud ministers after Sunday's Cabinet meeting for even taking notice of Mubarak's plan. The defense minister himself said last week that the Egyptian paper was not up for discussion in any government forum.

But that apparently has not prevented Rabin from discussing the Egyptian plan with Mubarak. The Labor Party is said to be more receptive to the proposals.

### Proposed Negotiators Linked To PLO

The proposed Palestinian delegation contains prominent residents of the territories whom Israel considers to be members or avid sympathizers of the PLO. The Israeli government has vowed never to negotiate with the PLO under any circumstances.

First on the list is Faisal Husseini, whom the authorities regard as the top PLO man in the Jerusalem area.

Husseini was held under administrative detention for 18 months, meaning incarceration without being charged or tried. Since his release a half year ago, he has been widely accepted as the most senior Palestinian personality in the territories and has spoken frequently before Israeli audiences.

He is followed on the list by Radwan Abu-Ayyash, chairman of the Palestinian Press Association, who also is considered close to the PLO mainstream. He, too, has been held under administrative detention.

Third is Elias Freij, mayor of Bethlehem since 1967. He is considered one of the most moderate Palestinian leaders and has good contacts with the PLO, Jordan and Israeli authorities.

Fourth is Hanna Siniara, editor of the East Jerusalem Arabic daily Al-Fajr, one of the best known Palestinian activist-intellectuals, who is also associated with the PLO mainstream.

Next on the list is Jamil Tarifi, a Ramallah lawyer and businessman who made news earlier this year when he admitted having met with Shamir, apparently with Arafat's consent.

Two others on the list are Said Canan, a Nablus businessman known for his good contacts in Jordan, in PLO circles and with Israelis; and Fayez Abu-Rahme, chairman of the Gaza Bar Association, who is widely accepted as a moderate by Israelis.

Two Palestinians deported from the territories have also been proposed, in order to satisfy PLO demands that Palestinians outside of the territories be included.

They are Mohammed Milhem, the former mayor of Halhoul who was deported in 1980 and now heads the PLO's department for the territories, and Akram Aniye, Arafat's adviser on the territories, former editor of the East Jerusalem daily A-Shaab, who was ousted in December 1986 and has since joined the PLO leadership.

## EUROPEAN JEWISH CONGRESS DELEGATES SAID TO HAVE MET WITH PLO OFFICIAL

By Edwin Eytan

PARIS, Sept. 17 (JTA) -- A number of delegates who attended a meeting of the European Jewish Congress in London last week took time out to meet with a senior official of the Palestine Liberation Organization.

The delegates told the Jewish Telegraphic Agency they met with Bassam Abu Sharif, one of Yasir Arafat's top advisers, who offered a lengthy explanation of what he said was the PLO's current policy and its "desire for peace and negotiations."

In New York, the World Jewish Congress, of which the European Jewish Congress is part, promptly dissociated itself from the meeting.

WJC Secretary-General Israel Singer stressed that "no such meeting took place under the auspices of the World Jewish Congress. It goes against the very grain of WJC policy."

The delegates said the meeting took place Sept. 10 and was attended, on the Jewish side, by delegates from France, Belgium and Italy.

It was arranged, they said, by David Susskind of Belgium, a veteran Zionist leader and outspoken dove, who is chairman of the Secular Jewish Community Center in Brussels.

Another participant mentioned was Henry Bulawko, president of the French branch of the WJC and a prominent official of the Representative Council of Jewish Organizations in France.

Tullia Zevi, president of the Union of Italian Jewish Communities and the only Italian representative at the EJC assembly, said in New York on Sunday that she "was informed that such a meeting took place, but I didn't go."

According to those who attended, Abu Sharif was accompanied by a member of the PLO delegation in London.

He is reported to have said the PLO wants peace with Israel and would be open to discussion of any Israeli requests for security arrangements.

## AJCONGRESS GIVEN SIGNS OF HOPE AFTER MIDEAST MEETING WITH BAKER

By David Friedman

WASHINGTON, Sept. 17 (JTA) -- The 10-point proposal of Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak to advance Israel's peace plan is one of the signs of hope that progress is being made in the Middle East, Secretary of State James Baker told leaders of the American Jewish Congress last week.

"This does not mean the United States subscribes to the 10-point program," Robert Lifton, president of the AJCongress, said after the 30-minute meeting at the State Department on Sept. 13.

"But it does mean that a country like Egypt has accepted as a basic premise the concept of elections."

The Bush administration has supported the idea of elections, which would allow Palestinians to elect representatives for negotiations with Israel on autonomy in the territories.

Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir, in proposing the idea to Bush last spring, promised that after a period of autonomy, there will be negotiations for the final status of the territories.

Lifton was accompanied to the meeting by Henry Siegman, executive vice president of the AJCongress; Phil Baum, associate executive vice president, and Mark Pelavin, the organization's Washington representative.

Also present were John Kelly, assistant secretary of state for Near Eastern and South Asian affairs, and Dennis Ross, the State Department's director of policy planning.

"We came out of the meeting with a lot more hope than we had when we went in," Lifton said. "It is very easy to be pessimistic about the situation."

Lifton said the AJCongress delegation also expressed opposition to granting PLO chief Yasir Arafat a visa to enter the United States to address the upcoming meeting of the U.N. General Assembly in New York.

Arafat should not be "rewarded with a visa" since the PLO had not made any progress in moving forward in the peace process, Lifton said.

But Baker maintained that there had been no application from Arafat for a visa and it was therefore premature to discuss the issue, Lifton said.

## NETANYAHU MEETS WITH U.S. OFFICIALS

By David Friedman

WASHINGTON, Sept. 17 (JTA) -- The United States is following a self-defeating policy in talking to the Palestine Liberation Organization while trying to convince Palestinians to accept Israel's proposal for elections in the West Bank and Gaza Strip, Israeli Deputy Foreign Minister Binyamin Netanyahu warned Friday.

"We don't think you encourage Palestinian Arabs in the territories to participate in the elections and at the same time engage the very force, the PLO, that is opposed to this very idea," he said.

The reason Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza Strip do not step forward to discuss the proposed elections, which would lead to peace talks with Israel, is the "fear of being gunned down" by the PLO, Netanyahu said at a news conference with reporters from the Jewish media.

Netanyahu on Friday ended a whirlwind of

meetings with members of Congress and the Bush administration.

At the State Department, he held separate talks with Deputy Secretary of State Lawrence Eagleburger; Robert Kimmitt, undersecretary of state for political affairs; and John Kelly, assistant secretary of state for Near Eastern and South Asian affairs.

## TWO SOLDIERS INJURED BY GUNMAN WHO HID ON BANK OF JORDAN RIVER

By Hugh Orgel

TEL AVIV, Sept. 17 (JTA) -- Two Israel Defense Force soldiers were slightly wounded Saturday morning, when their patrol was ambushed near the Jordan River, south of the Sea of Galilee, by a gunman believed to be a Jordanian soldier.

The incident was the third in the Jordan Valley in the past 10 days and the sixth this year in which Jordanian soldiers were suspected of attacking Israeli troops.

According to the IDF, the gunman left behind six magazines of a Jordanian army-issue M-16 rifle and a towel.

Tracks were discovered in the thick reeds between the river bank and the border fence near Kibbutz Ashdot Ya'acov, where the ambush occurred. The border fence was not breached, the IDF said.

The wounded men were a Bedouin tracker, who was struck by fragments of flying stone from a ricochet bullet, and the patrol commander, whose hand was grazed.

Although the patrol returned the fire and threw grenades into the reeds, the assailant apparently escaped unharmed.

Israel holds Jordan responsible for infiltration attempts from its territory and has let Amman know it will not tolerate such activity.

The Jordanians say if their soldiers were involved they were either "demented," "berserk" or "amok."

IDF sources said the Jordanians have been seen clearing the ground on their side of the river in an apparent effort to deprive would-be infiltrators of concealment.

The increased number of incidents has been attributed to the effects of the Palestinian uprising in the West Bank and Gaza Strip. Many Palestinian Jordanians have family in the territories.

The most serious of the recent incidents occurred on Sept. 2, when an IDF soldier was killed in an ambush near Kfar Ruppim, in the Beit She'an Valley.

## ISRAELI PLANES STRIKE ABU NIDAL BASE

By Hugh Orgel

TEL AVIV, Sept. 17 (JTA) -- Abu Nidal's Fatah Revolutionary Council was the target of the latest Israeli air force strike in southern Lebanon, which occurred Thursday evening near the coastal city of Sidon.

Three Palestinians reportedly were wounded in the attack, which Lebanese sources said was carried out by three Cobra assault helicopters. All Israeli aircraft returned safely to their bases.

Thursday's air strike was the 10th carried out against terrorist targets in Lebanon this year. Recent attacks have been aimed at groups allied with the Shiite extremist Hezbollah, or Party of God.

## JEWISH LEADERS REASSURED THAT U.S. ISN'T ASKING JEWS TO RETURN TO USSR

By David Friedman and Andrew Silow Carroll

WASHINGTON, Sept. 17 (JTA) -- Top Bush administration officials are trying to reassure Jewish leaders that the new procedure for issuing U.S. refugee visas to Soviet Jewish emigrants will not reduce their options or force them to return to the Soviet Union.

Deputy Secretary of State Lawrence Eagleburger met at the State Department Thursday with leaders of the National Conference on Soviet Jewry to discuss the policy, which goes into effect next month.

Eagleburger and Attorney General Richard Thornburgh also sought to mollify members of the Agudath Israel of America on the subject at a White House meeting Thursday.

The fence-mending by the two administration figures was occasioned in part by what NCSJ's chairwoman, Shoshana Cardin, called an "unfortunate" statement the U.S. coordinator for refugee affairs, Jewel Lafontant, made last week during testimony before a House subcommittee.

Speaking Sept. 13, Lafontant said Jews denied refugee status by the United States "can always return to Russia in these days of glasnost" or can go to Israel.

Her remarks seemed to apply to the backlog of thousands of Soviet Jews still in Vienna or Rome awaiting U.S. refugee visas.

Lafontant, who was at the meeting with Cardin and other NCSJ leaders, said her statement was misunderstood.

She said that she was merely trying to define the legal status of Soviet Jewish emigrants, not state a new policy denying them access to the United States.

### 'Victim Of Our Own Success'

According to NCSJ people at the meeting, Eagleburger was abashed by Lafontant's remarks and called them "insensitive."

The deputy secretary said his top priority is to expedite the immigration to the United States of Jews stranded in Rome and Vienna and to see to it that the situation does not reoccur.

As of Oct. 1, all applications for U.S. refugee visas must be made at the U.S. Embassy in Moscow, rather than in Rome, where many Soviet Jews who emigrate on Israeli visas apply to settle in the United States instead.

Jewish organizations are concerned about Soviet Jews who already have left on Israeli visas and are waiting in Rome and for American officials to act on their U.S. visa requests.

Many have already been denied U.S. refugee status because they failed to meet the criteria.

Cardin observed that the new U.S. policy means Jews still will be able to come to the United States. But it may take longer, and more Jews might decide to go to Israel rather than wait, she said.

Eagleburger told the Agudath Israel leaders at the White House that the United States is "a victim of our own success. Jews are being allowed out in larger numbers than was ever the case and, damn it, I think that we had something to do with it."

Eagleburger pointed out that Soviet Jews who do not qualify for refugee status can still enter the United States under public interest parole status. But that does not entitle them to financial assistance.

Those with refugee status receive U.S. government funds for food, shelter, transportation and other relocation costs.

Thornburgh gave the group assurances that in no case will "any such person be returned to the Soviet Union."

He said he continues to support creation of a special immigration category for up to 30,000 emigres who may not be eligible for refugee status.

### INS To Reconsider Refugee Denials

But meanwhile, he has ordered the U.S. Immigration and Naturalization Service to make an "immediate re-evaluation" of 4,000 cases of Soviet Jews refused refugee status, some of them stranded in Italy for 18 months.

The Agudath Israel meetings took place as part of the organization's daylong National Leadership Mission to Washington, which brought some 200 members from 16 states to the capital for meetings with administration officials and members of Congress.

Eagleburger's meeting with the NCSJ delegation was held to provide the administration with its views before Secretary of State James Baker meets Soviet Foreign Minister Eduard Shevardnadze next week in Jackson Hole, Wyo.

Cardin presented Eagleburger with a list of 400 refusenik families, totaling about 2,000 persons, who have still not received emigration visas. She said that only four refuseniks have received visas in recent months, despite Soviet promises to expedite their cases.

Joining Cardin in the meeting were Malcolm Hoenlein, executive director of the Conference of Presidents of Major American Jewish Organizations; Albert Chernin, executive vice chairman of the National Jewish Community Relations Advisory Council; Abraham Foxman, national director of the Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rith; and Daniel Mariaschin, associate director of public affairs for B'nai B'rith International.

### ABSORPTION MINISTRY IS GEARING UP FOR MASSIVE INFLUX OF SOVIET JEWS

By Gil Sedan

JERUSALEM, Sept. 17 (JTA) -- Israel will mobilize every form of shelter, including sanatoriums and army camps, to provide temporary housing for the influx of immigrants, including Soviet Jews, expected in the coming year, Absorption Minister Yitzhak Peretz told a news conference here over the weekend.

He expects immigration to total 20,000 by the end of this year. Last month's arrivals numbered 1,900.

Israel estimates that 100,000 Jews will receive exit permits from the Soviet authorities next year. How many of them will choose to come to Israel is not known, but the percentage is expected to increase as the United States tightens its refugee policy.

The acute shortage of housing in Israel remains a major obstacle. Peretz said his ministry already has appointed committees to deal with that and other aspects of absorption.

The immigrants will be sent directly to absorption centers, but may be housed in hotels, sanatoriums and even army barracks, if necessary, until more permanent shelter can be found.

Peretz also said that each immigrant family will receive an "absorption basket" equivalent to \$11,000 for their first year in the country.

# **SMALL SIGNS OF PROGRESS EMERGE IN RESOLVING DISPUTE OVER CONVENT**

By Edwin Eytan

PARIS, Sept. 17 (JTA) -- Hints of limited progress in resolving the controversy over the Carmelite convent at Auschwitz emerged over the weekend, as Cardinal Jozef Glemp of Poland was reported to be striking a more conciliatory posture on an issue that has exacerbated tensions between Catholics and Jews.

Glemp, who only weeks ago called for the renegotiation of a 1987 agreement to relocate the convent, was quoted in a Polish newspaper interview Saturday as saying it would be better if the Carmelite nuns living there would leave, though they have the right to stay.

On Thursday, Glemp met with a wealthy Jewish businessman of Polish origin who reportedly offered to help pay for the cost of relocating the convent.

The official Polish news agency PAP identified the businessman as a West German named Zygmunt Nissenbaum, who has set up a charitable trust.

Glemp claimed recently that the Polish Church lacked funds to relocate the nuns.

But in New York, a World Jewish Congress official claimed Sunday that "the whole question of who is going to pay for it is a canard."

Elan Steinberg, the organization's executive director, said the 1987 agreement makes clear that three Catholic cardinals who signed the accord will help raise the necessary funds.

Here in France, one of those cardinals, Archbishop Albert Decourtray of Lyon, offered to meet with Glemp to resolve the issue, but no meeting has yet been arranged.

In Brussels, the Jewish magazine *Regards* said that unidentified American Jewish leaders have written to Glemp suggesting that talks on the convent issue be restarted from scratch.

According to the magazine, which is published by the left-leaning Secular Jewish Community Center of Brussels, "there could be more than coincidence between this Jewish move and recent remarks by Glemp demanding to negotiate with competent people."

The umbrella organization of Belgian Jewry has called for a protest Wednesday outside the residence of the papal nuncio, the Vatican envoy, in Brussels.

(JTA correspondent Yossi Lempkowicz in Brussels contributed to this report.)

# **FRENCH REVISIONIST LEADER ATTACKED, BUT IDENTITY OF CULPRITS IS UNCLEAR**

By Edwin Eytan

PARIS, Sept. 17 (JTA) -- Robert Faurisson, a French revisionist leader who denies the Holocaust ever occurred, was attacked and severely beaten Saturday morning by three men near his home in Vichy.

An organization calling itself the "Sons of Jewish Memory" telephoned the news media to claim responsibility and threatened that "falsifying history will not go unpunished."

But French Jewish leaders expressed doubts about the organization's existence. Jean Kahn, president of the Representative Council of Jewish Organizations in France, speculated that Faurisson's assailants were right-wing hoodlums hoping to provoke anti-Jewish sentiment.

Faurisson is regarded as the founder of the

French revisionist school of historians. In the early 1970s, he tried to publish a thesis contending there were no gas chambers and that the number of Holocaust victims "is vastly exaggerated."

Although repudiated by most historians, his notions have been publicized by Jean-Marie Le Pen, leader of the extreme right-wing National Front.

Right-wing organizations called Faurisson's attackers "terrorists" and demanded that the government launch a major investigation.

He was set upon while walking his dog. He is reportedly in serious condition in the intensive care unit of Clermont Ferrand Hospital, with facial-bone fractures and broken ribs.

The so-called "Sons of Jewish Memory" blamed Faurisson's writings for the failure of the Polish Church to remove a convent from the grounds of the former Auschwitz death camp.

"We want all those who deny the Shoah to walk in fear," they said.

# **OFFICIALS MUTE ON SOVIET REPORT ISRAEL FIRED LONG-RANGE MISSILE**

By Hugh Orgel

TEL AVIV, Sept. 17 (JTA) -- Officials in Israel have voiced ignorance about a Soviet report last week that Israel had launched a ballistic missile into the Mediterranean Sea between Libya and Greece.

Both the prime minister's media adviser, Avi Pazner, and Foreign Ministry spokesman Yosef Amihud declined Friday to comment on the Tass report, saying they "had no knowledge whatsoever about this matter."

Official military sources also said they had no knowledge of such a missile firing.

The Tass report quoted "data from the Defense Ministry of the USSR" that the missile had been launched in the region of Jerusalem over a range of 800 miles, landing some 250 miles north of Benghazi, Libya.

According to Tass, Israel previously launched a ballistic missile in January 1988.

The Soviets have long been concerned that Israel is developing a long-range missile that would have the capability of striking targets in the USSR.

A ballistic missile is a long-range rocket, guided by preset mechanisms in the first part of its flight that becomes a free-falling object as it approaches its target.

According to Jane's Defense Weekly, Israel conducted secret tests of its Jericho-II surface-to-surface tactical nuclear missile in May 1987 and September 1988. During the first of these attempts, the rocket reportedly covered a 525-mile distance and splashed down in the Mediterranean, south of Crete.

# **AUGUST INFLATION HIGHER THAN EXPECTED**

By Hugh Orgel

TEL AVIV, Sept. 17 (JTA) -- Israel's cost-of-living index rose by 1.2 percent last month, some 50 percent higher than anticipated, the Central Bureau of Statistics announced Friday.

The August figure brings inflation for the year so far to 14 percent, dashing Finance Minister Shimon Peres' hopes of keeping it under 10 percent.

Last month's rise was attributed to government-initiated price increases of subsidized goods.