

**ISRAEL WILL NOT ATTACK IRAQ
UNLESS THREATENED, SHAMIR SAYS**

By Mark Joffe

NEW YORK, Dec. 10 (JTA) -- Israel will not launch a military strike against Iraq unless it is directly threatened, Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir said Monday.

"We are not interested in any wars. Our main interest is the immigration" from the Soviet Union, Shamir told members of the American Jewish press at a breakfast meeting here.

The prime minister was responding to a question about Israel's intentions toward Iraq, should the United States conclude a deal with Saddam Hussein that removes his troops from Kuwait but leaves him in control of his military arsenal.

Asked whether Israel would consider a pre-emptive strike against Iraq in such a scenario, Shamir said, "We will not be the initiators of any military action" against Iraq.

But he added that "if the Iraqis say we will be the target of their attacks, we have to be ready to defend ourselves."

His stance appeared to be more moderate than one taken early last week by Israeli Foreign Minister David Levy, who was reported to have warned the U.S. ambassador to Tel Aviv, William Brown, that Israel would attack Iraq if the United States failed to do so.

More Communication With U.S.

In Jerusalem, Levy announced Monday that he had begun a dialogue with U.S. officials on the situation in the Middle East after the Persian Gulf crisis is resolved. He said the purpose of this dialogue is "to avoid misunderstandings, God forbid" over the regional situation in the aftermath of the crisis.

Shamir was asked by the Jewish journalists Monday to assess the degree of coordination between the United States and Israel on the Gulf crisis. "There is good communication and many contacts in many sectors," he replied, "but maybe we need more."

The prime minister was expected to discuss the Gulf crisis and the Middle East peace process Tuesday with President Bush. The White House is said to be looking for a sign that the Likud leader is truly interested in advancing the peace process.

Asked by the Jewish journalists whether he was still committed to his May 1989 peace plan, Shamir said, "I am fully committed to this initiative. All of us are ready and interested to make this initiative a reality in the Middle East."

Shamir said the "main obstacle" to the peace process, before it was interrupted by the collapse of Israel's government and then the Gulf crisis, was the attempt to involve the Palestine Liberation Organization.

But now that the PLO has been "fully identified with the Iraqi dictator," it should be clear to everyone that "peace is not their goal and not their intention," he said.

If the PLO is left out of the peace process, "I don't see any special obstacles," he said.

The prime minister called on the Palestinians to abandon their intifada, which entered its

fourth year Sunday. He called the uprising a "useless sacrifice" of lives and economic well-being.

"We regret all these losses and human suffering, which do not come for anything," he said.

More Money For Absorption Than Defense

Shamir said that during his meetings at the White House on Tuesday, he would ask the president for additional U.S. assistance in resettling the thousands of Soviet Jewish immigrants arriving each week in Israel.

"President Bush is very sympathetic and he has a great admiration for this human undertaking," he said.

The prime minister spoke candidly of the challenges Israel faces in absorbing the Soviet immigrants, who he said are arriving at the rate of at least 1,000 a day.

The most difficult problem, he said, is finding jobs for the new immigrants. Israel will have to create hundreds of thousands of new jobs in the next few years.

Finding housing for the Soviet Jews, he said, "is a question of time and money, and it will be solved -- no question about it."

When pressed on why construction of additional housing had gotten off to such a slow start, Shamir said, "There is progress, there is progress," though he conceded it may not be sufficient.

Asked where Israel was going to come up with the money to absorb the 1 million immigrants expected to arrive in the next three to five years, Shamir said Israel is "taking the main resources for it from our own budget."

He pointed out that, for the first time, defense is not the largest item in the government's new budget -- immigrant absorption is.

Shamir called on Jews in the Diaspora to give the maximum possible assistance "in order to absorb this great aliyah."

"We have to take this opportunity to do everything we can," he said.

The prime minister also put in a strong pitch for additional Jewish tourism to Israel, which has dropped sharply since the Gulf crisis erupted.

"We are calling on our Jewish friends to come to Israel, to visit Israel and in such a way to show their solidarity, their identification with Israel," he said.

Shamir applauded the solidarity missions to Israel organized by many Jewish groups in recent weeks. "It gives us the feeling that we are not isolated in this world," he said.

**PIPE BOMB IN BETHLEHEM
KILLS ISRAELI SOLDIER**

By Hugh Orgel

TEL AVIV, Dec. 10 (JTA) -- An Israeli soldier was fatally injured and two others were wounded when a pipe bomb exploded Sunday evening on the road outside civil administration headquarters in the West Bank town of Bethlehem.

The dead soldier was identified as Pvt. Guy Friedman, 19, of Haifa. He died at Hadassah-Hebrew University Medical Center in Jerusalem

while undergoing surgery for shrapnel wounds in the head and was buried Monday in Haifa. His two companions were treated for minor wounds.

All were recruits doing their compulsory military service and had been sent to the West Bank on Sunday as reinforcements on the third anniversary of the start of the intifada.

More than a million Palestinians in the territories were under curfew Sunday to prevent disorders.

Bethlehem, not considered a trouble spot, was one of the few West Bank towns where no curfew was in force. But it was put under curfew immediately after the bombing, which was denounced by its Arab mayor, Elias Freij.

According to accounts of the incident, eight Israel Defense Force paratroopers were returning to their base from patrol duty.

As they walked along the Hebron-Jerusalem highway where it passes through Bethlehem, an explosive charge detonated nearby without causing injuries.

But some 250 feet further down the road and about two minutes later, a second bomb exploded, causing the casualties.

The bombs consisted of 2-inch pipes packed with explosives attached to timers.

Military sources called the attack a "show-case operation," intended to call attention to the start of the fourth year of the intifada.

An IDF spokesman said that nine soldiers have been killed in intifada-related incidents since the Palestinian uprising began on Dec. 9, 1987. Six of the fatalities were in the West Bank and three in the Gaza Strip.

BEHIND THE HEADLINES: TABOO SUBJECTS OF 'TRANSFER' AND PLO DIALOGUE BANDIED ABOUT By David Ludau

JERUSALEM, Dec. 10 (JTA) -- With the intifada entering its fourth year and the peace process apparently at an impasse, Israeli politicians are beginning to speak openly of solutions to the Palestinian problem that were once beyond the fringes of respectability.

There is talk of "transfer," a euphemism for the mass expulsion of Arabs from the Israeli-administered territories, if not Israel proper.

The concept, once taboo, was the line taken by the late Rabbi Meir Kahane, the assassinated leader of the extremist Kach movement who was ousted from the Knesset when his party was declared racist.

The idea has been advocated in a more genteel fashion by Rehavam Ze'evi of the Moledet party.

But now it is being heard on the mainstream right and is no longer the mark of the "extremist" or "fanatic."

According to a just-published survey by respected pollster Hanoch Smith, 49 percent of Israel's Jews now favor expelling the Palestinians from the West Bank and Gaza Strip, should no peaceful solution be found, The New York Times reported Monday.

The Times compared this finding with one made 20 months ago by Smith in which 38 percent of Israeli Jews favored transfer.

However, Smith also found that 25 percent of Israeli Jews are ready to accept the establishment of a Palestinian entity, the weekly Jerusalem Report said last week.

The idea of negotiations with the Palestine

Liberation Organization, once anathema to all but members of the farthest left part of the political spectrum, is now being advocated by members of the Labor Party.

The proponents of such talks are from Labor's dovish wing, to be sure. But until recently, no Laborite would suggest talks with the PLO for fear of being labeled a communist.

The "transfer" doctrine was discussed Sunday by Geula Cohen, deputy minister of science and energy and a veteran Knesset member of the Tehiya party.

'Transfer' Remarks Disavowed

Cohen denied emphatically that transfer is part of Tehiya's political platform. She insisted, in fact, that the party opposed it and considered it an entirely impractical solution.

Cohen was commenting on remarks over the weekend by Science and Energy Minister Yuval Ne'eman, the Tehiya party leader, which sounded to some like an endorsement of transfer.

Cohen admitted, moreover, that some members of her party -- its spokesman Avi Farhan, for one -- want Tehiya to incorporate transfer in its election platform.

Not too long ago, a party like Tehiya would have been embarrassed to admit publicly that any of its members thought in those terms. Cohen insisted that it would not even be debated in the party's policy forums.

Nevertheless, Ne'eman recalled that some 700,000 Palestinians fled the country between 1948 and 1949, during and after Israel's War for Independence. He implied strongly that if Palestinians in the territories and in Israel do not behave, they might meet a similar fate.

Officials here assured reporters that Ne'eman's remarks did not reflect government policy. Several ministers dissociated themselves from their implications.

Health Minister Ehud Olmert of Likud, for instance, told reporters that the Cabinet is totally opposed to the idea of transfer on both ideological and practical grounds.

GULF CRISIS CUTTING INTO TOURISM By Hugh Orgel

TEL AVIV, Dec. 10 (JTA) -- The Persian Gulf crisis seems to have had a worse effect on Israeli tourism than the intifada, according to figures released Monday covering the first 11 months of this year.

After falling sharply during the first two years of the Palestinian uprising, tourism was running 8 percent ahead of 1989 figures until Iraq's invasion of Kuwait in August raised the danger of war in the region.

From August through November, tourist arrivals in Israel dropped 46 percent, compared with the same period of the previous year.

In September and October, the decline was 30 percent. In November, it was a stunning 58 percent.

Only 45,000 visitors arrived from abroad last month, compared with 108,500 tourists in November 1989.

Eilat, a resort town on the Red Sea, was especially hard hit. It registered about 1,000 arrivals on direct flights in November, compared to 16,000 in the same month a year earlier.

A total of 1,252,400 tourists came to Israel in the first 11 months of 1990, 3 percent fewer than in the same period of 1989.

WALLACE RESPONDS TO CHARGES MADE THAT '60 MINUTES' REPORT WAS BIASED

By Andrew Goldsmith

NEW YORK, Dec. 10 (JTA) -- Jewish organizations are up in arms over a report on the Temple Mount killings broadcast on the CBS television program "60 Minutes."

But correspondent Mike Wallace strongly defends his report, which aired Dec. 2.

The most extensive charges were leveled by the Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rith, which claimed the segment "failed to meet journalistic standards."

ADL's national director, Abraham Foxman, said "60 Minutes" "engaged in unprofessional techniques which demonstrated bias and a prejudicial attitude" toward Israel's handling of the Oct. 8 incident, in which 17 Arabs were killed by Israeli police as they tried to control huge riots.

Specifically, ADL pointed out that Wallace's interviewing method was marked by "leading questions and essentially telling his subjects what to say."

The report cited as an example Wallace's interview with Fatima Abu Hadir, a wounded Palestinian. Wallace interrupted her account to say, "And then as the ambulance pulled away, it was shot at again and tear gassed."

Wallace responded that the interview "was a highly emotional one. She was still in an emotional state in the course of the interview and I tried to get as clear a picture as I possibly could."

Hadassah, the Women's Zionist Organization of America, called the coverage "one-sided and incomplete."

Ruth Hurwitz, public affairs chairman for Hadassah, wrote a letter to the show critical of its report, which said that no one was hurt and that the attack by the police was unprovoked.

"There were approximately 30 Jews wounded by rocks and treated at two Hadassah hospitals," she wrote in the letter. "What is the number of injuries you consider provocation?"

Beth Wohlgeleter, national executive director of Hadassah, said, "The only way to combat this type of program is to answer them with facts. I would hope that in the future they would attempt to be more evenhanded."

'A New Low Of Unreliability'

Arnold Wagner, chairman of the national executive committee of the Zionist Organization of America, said that "60 Minutes" has "launched a new low of unreliability."

In a letter addressed to Don Hewitt, executive producer of the show, Wagner also questioned the lack of an interview with a member of the Israeli commission that investigated the incident.

Wallace responded that "we tried over and over to meet with them. We attempted to speak with members of the commission, police, border police and the Government Press Office. None would meet with us."

When asked if he felt that this lack of official cooperation by the Israelis contributed to the result of the report, Wallace responded, "100 percent."

ZOA further wrote, "You would like to have the audience believe that the many Arabs gathered by the Western Wall that day had only peaceful intentions, but were provoked to violence. Mr. Wallace, even your viewers who are not knowledgeable will not accept this affront to their intelligence."

ADL charged that no official Israeli perspective was offered to counter the claims made by "60 Minutes." According to ADL's report, although clips did show Deputy Foreign Minister Binjamin Netanyahu, they were from an interview broadcast Oct. 8, the day the incident took place.

Wallace said the clips were taken from an interview with Netanyahu that took place on Oct. 14, well after the incident.

B'tselem, the Israel Information Center for Human Rights in the Occupied Territories, criticized the segment for not including any mention of an investigation conducted by its members.

"I have nothing but praise for their actions and the report," Wallace said in response, "but many things did not make it to the segment."

ADL also charged that "60 Minutes" failed to give historical and political context for the incident, and that Wallace failed to challenge any Palestinian statements.

According to Foxman, a CBS spokesperson said the network had received many letters criticizing the report. Two such letters were read on the program's Dec. 9 broadcast: one from Jerusalem Mayor Teddy Kollek, who said his views had been taken out of context, and the other from Israel's consul general in New York, Uriel Savir.

ISRAEL TO GET LOAN FROM E.C. BANK FOR INDUSTRY, ENVIRONMENT PROJECTS

By Yossi Lempkovic

BRUSSELS, Dec. 10 (JTA) -- Israel will receive a \$46 million 12-year loan from the European Investment Bank, 60 percent of which will go to industrial development, with the remainder used to finance environmental projects.

The bank, based in Luxembourg, is the financial arm of the European Community. Since 1978, it has provided Israel with \$1.7 billion in loans, which have been used to finance 65 projects in chemicals, the food industry and plastics.

The loans have been credited with creating more than 2,000 new jobs in Israel.

The bank lends the money to the Industrial Development Bank of Israel, which is an important source of long-term financing for local industry.

While 60 percent of the new round of loans will help industries finance new projects, the Israeli government puts a high priority on improving the environment.

Projects in that area include the treatment of industrial waste, monitoring atmospheric pollution and maintaining a clean water supply.

Improving the efficient use of water resources is also considered an environmental measure by the Israeli government.

The 12-year loan will be granted in the framework of the third financial protocol concluded between Israel and the E.C.

IDF CONTINUES TO SHUFFLE THE PACK

By Hugh Orgel

TEL AVIV, Dec. 10 (JTA) -- The Israel Defense Force continued to reshuffle its top ranks this week.

Brig. Gen. Amnon Shahak, currently chief of military intelligence, has been named deputy chief of staff in charge of the IDF's operations branch. Shahak will replace Lt. Gen. Ehud Barak when Barak takes over as chief of staff in April.

Shahak was commander of the Beirut area during the Lebanon war in 1982 and was later appointed commander of the central region.

SKINHEADS BLAMED FOR VANDALISM OF JEWISH CEMETERY IN SLOVAKIA

By Josef Klansky

PRAGUE, Dec. 10 (JTA) -- The prime minister of the Slovak republic believes "a small group of psychologically unbalanced Skinheads" was probably responsible for the vandalism of the Jewish cemetery in the Slovak town Nitra last month.

But Vladimir Meciar was less than forthright when asked why no acts or expressions of moral outrage emanated either from Slovak officialdom or the citizenry at large.

In sharp contrast, the crude anti-Semitism drew a strong rebuke from Civic Forum, the largest political movement in the Czech republic, and an apology from Czechoslovak President Václav Havel.

Meciar replied in writing to questions submitted by the Jewish Telegraphic Agency about the incident in Nitra, 75 miles northwest of Bratislava, capital of the Slovak republic.

There, early in November, Jewish gravestones were daubed with swastikas and slogans calling for the extermination of Jews.

Asked why neither the Slovak government nor the national council took a position in the case, Meciar indicated he did not think it was a national issue.

"The Slovak republic distinguishes between the attitude of the Slovak nation toward the Jewish question and the attitude of a small group of psychologically unbalanced Skinheads," he said.

He went on to claim that Slovakia proved its sympathy toward Jews under the Nazi puppet regime in World War II headed by Father Josef Tiso, a Roman Catholic priest.

"While the clerico-fascist leadership of this state paid the Nazis 500 marks for every deported Jew, our citizens gave shelter to and cared for thousands of Jews," he claimed.

More than 100,000 Jews lived in Slovakia before the war. Only about 3,000 live there today.

A Controversial Political Figure

Meciar said the Slovak republic made clear its feelings by participating in the erection of a memorial to Nazi victims in the town of Komarno.

But Komarno was not part of Slovakia during the war.

The town on the Danube was then in Hungary, and the Jews and others deported from there in 1944 were victims of Hungarian fascists. Their Slovak counterparts had deported most Jews two years earlier.

Asked if in Bratislava or elsewhere in Slovakia some protest action was being organized to express the repugnance felt over the Nitra cemetery desecration, Meciar replied, "Here in our country, the silent majority of decent people was induced into a state of complacency by the quick revolution over totalitarianism."

He was referring to last year's so-called "velvet revolution," which ended 40 years of Communist rule in Czechoslovakia without bloodshed.

"As a result of the blustering of extremist groups, such as displays of anti-Semitism, this complacency is being overcome," he said.

According to the prime minister, "the investigation is not yet closed" in the Nitra incident. He preferred not to speculate about the outcome.

He thought, however, that it was "an individual act of morally unbalanced Skinheads," be-

cause if it were the work of the "local neo-Nazi underworld, the investigation would be easier."

Meciar has become one of the most controversial figures in Czechoslovakia. Though he entered politics as a democrat and never belonged to the chauvinist separatist movement, Meciar has been demanding ever more autonomy for Slovak authorities and a concomitant reduction in the authority of the Prague government.

His clashes with Havel and the federal prime minister, Marian Calfa, have brought the country to the brink of a constitutional crisis.

MORE THAN 10,000 SOVIET JEWS ASK GERMANY FOR IMMIGRANT VISAS

By David Kantor

BONN, Dec. 10 (JTA) -- More than 10,000 Soviet Jews have applied for immigration visas to Germany, according to official figures.

Jews are arriving in Berlin from the Soviet Union at the rate of about 20 a day.

Their number seems insignificant, however, compared to the tens of thousands of Soviet Jews pouring into Israel each month.

Nevertheless, Israel is displeased and has notified the German authorities it hopes they will stop accepting Soviet Jews as immigrants.

The issue is a delicate one. Many political factions in Germany, especially on the left, are urging the Bonn government to admit as many Jews as wish to come here.

They argue that Germany has a special responsibility to protect Jews from persecution and hunger in the Soviet Union.

The official Jewish community, eager to increase its numbers, is also asking unrestricted entry of Jews from the East.

But Benjamin Navon, Israel's ambassador to Germany, said he hoped the authorities would take Israel's position into consideration when they meet Dec. 14 to discuss the highly emotional subject.

Israel's position, Navon told a German newspaper, is that "there are no Jewish refugees, because the Jews have a country, a homeland where they would always be welcomed. This land, of course, is Israel."

1,000 ETHIOPIANS PER MONTH EXPECTED

By Mark Joffe

NEW YORK, Dec. 10 (JTA) -- A thousand Ethiopian Jews per month could soon be allowed to make aliyah, Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir said Monday.

In Washington, the American Association for Ethiopian Jews said it had received similar information.

Those numbers would represent a significant increase in Ethiopian emigration over recent months. Some 500 Ethiopian Jews were allowed to leave the country last month, but only 58 were permitted to emigrate the month before.

Shamir, speaking to members of the American Jewish press, said approximately 20,000 Ethiopian Jews are now waiting in the capital city of Addis Ababa for permission to emigrate.

"They are waiting there not in the best conditions of life," he said, referring to the makeshift housing, unsanitary conditions and rampant disease with which they must cope.

"We have tried to accelerate their emigration," Shamir said. "In such a way, we will put an end to their suffering."