

## **JEWS TAKE OVER TWO BUILDINGS IN MOSLEM QUARTER OF OLD CITY**

By Gil Sedan

JERUSALEM, March 3 (JTA) -- The brutal murder last week of a yeshiva student in the Old City of Jerusalem is credited with inspiring a group of Orthodox Jews to take possession of two buildings in the Moslem Quarter of the city.

The move could inflame ethnic tensions in Jerusalem, where similar attempts in the past by Jews to occupy non-Jewish sections of the Old City have triggered angry protests from Arab residents.

Last Thursday night, less than 12 hours after the killing of Elchanan Attali, a number of Jewish families and fellow students at the Ateret Cohanim yeshiva settled into two empty buildings on Haggai Street, where Attali's body was found.

The buildings were purchased by the Ateret Cohanim Society, reportedly at a high price from Arab owners.

Negotiations over the two properties began 10 years ago, and Jews moved into the buildings in 1982. But they were vacated on orders of then Prime Minister Menachem Begin, who bowed to pressure from Jerusalem's Mayor Teddy Kollek.

Ateret Cohanim refrained from taking possession of the property all this time to avoid causing undue tensions during the intifada, said Yossi Baumol, executive director of Ateret Cohanim yeshiva.

Now, however, the purchase process has been completed, and authorities have given their consent to the move.

However, a Palestinian resident of the Old City, Sa'ad Tarti, said the property belongs to his family and that he is seeking a court order to evict the students. The case will be debated Thursday in Magistrates Court, Israel Radio reported.

The yeshiva students have unfurled Israeli flags from the building where Attali's body was found. The yeshiva said it would dedicate the new buildings to Attali, who was 25.

### **Like Handing Over Brooklyn**

Jewish settlement in non-Jewish quarters of the Old City continues, despite objections from Kollek, who has long tried to maintain equilibrium and respect among the city's many ethnic and religious groups.

Last year, just before Easter, students from Ateret Cohanim moved into St. John's Hospice in the Christian Quarter, drawing fire from Christians and diplomats in many countries. The Greek Orthodox Church, which said it owns that property, is contesting that move in a case still before the courts.

Ateret Cohanim is one of three yeshivot that received funds from Israel's Housing Ministry to buy property. The funds were approved by Housing Minister Ariel Sharon, who owns a home in the Moslem Quarter.

The group strongly defends the right of Jews to live in all parts of Jerusalem and disagrees strongly with the notion that Jews should respect the integrity of non-Jewish neighborhoods.

"Asking the Jewish people to give up eastern Jerusalem is tantamount to asking the mayor

of New York to hand over Brooklyn to Saddam Hussein," said Baumol.

Attali's murder marks a return to the violence that prevailed during the three years of the intifada before the Persian Gulf war began. Israelis have depicted it as a desperate attempt by Palestinian activists to rekindle the uprising in the wake of Iraq's defeat.

"Elchanan's Palestinian murderer would have loved to sink his knife into President George Bush's back," said Baumol. "But the only available representative of Western civilization was a quiet, peace-loving scholar."

No one has been arrested in the killing, but police believe it was the work of several assailants. Attali's throat was cut, and there were 13 stab wounds on his body.

Security sources said they expected a further escalation of protests, which could climax during next week's visit of Secretary of State James Baker. Police are deploying large forces in Jerusalem, and the army is maintaining a relatively high state of alert in the administered territories.

For the time being, there is no plan to lift the nighttime curfew that has been in effect since the beginning of the war.

## **U.S. DETERMINED TO SEEK PEACE, BUT WON'T IMPOSE A SETTLEMENT**

By David Friedman

WASHINGTON, March 3 (JTA) -- While President Bush says he is determined to move quickly to bring about a resolution of the Arab-Israeli conflict, Secretary of State James Baker has made it clear that the United States is not looking to impose a peace settlement.

Instead, Baker said that when he visits Israel, Egypt, Saudi Arabia and Syria next week, he wants to hear from the leaders of those countries how they view the next step in the peace process.

"We are not going with a specific plan," the secretary said in an appearance Sunday on the NBC-TV program "Meet the Press."

"We have said many times that we can be effective as a catalyst in encouraging peace in the Middle East, but only as effective as the desire of the parties to the conflict to want a solution. They've got to want a solution," he said.

The United States "cannot impose a peace" in the Middle East, "notwithstanding the excellent relationship we have with Israel, notwithstanding the enhanced, perhaps, stature and standing we have with some of our Arab coalition partners," Baker said.

At a White House news conference Friday, Bush said he believes "the time is right" to seek a solution to the Arab-Israeli conflict, as a result of the success of the U.S.-led campaign against Iraq.

But like Baker, he said that while the United States wants to "play a very useful" role, it does not plan to make any proposals, including an international peace conference.

"Whether it proves to be a peace conference or some bolder, new idea, time will tell," Bush said. "But we are beginning very serious consultations on this."

Baker said that "the worst thing we can do

is arrive in the region and say this is the American plan for peace." Such a proposal would be "shot up like a Scud missile with a couple of Patriots," he said.

#### **U.S. Has Done Israel A 'Great Favor'**

While repeatedly calling the Arab-Israel conflict an "intractable problem," Baker said that "we have got to find a way for the Arab states and Israel to make peace, and we have got to find a way for Israelis and Palestinians to begin a dialogue."

He said he will be exploring "a two-track approach" on these issues, on "what might be possible in the aftermath of this very significant development in the region."

Baker said he had a "gut feeling" that both the Israelis and the Arab countries want to find a solution. But he added, "That doesn't mean it's going to happen."

The secretary said Israel, Saudi Arabia and Kuwait owe it to the United States to make the effort because of the elimination of Saddam Hussein as a threat.

"We have done everybody in the region a great favor, including Israel," he said. "The biggest threat to their security has been eliminated."

Baker repeated that the United States is "appreciative" of Israel's restraint in responding to the Scud missile attacks on the Jewish state. He said he hoped Israel would not launch such a military response now, as some expect it to do.

The coalition forces have "seriously eroded, if not eliminated, any threat" from Iraq and will continue to make sure that the threat from weapons of mass destruction are eliminated, he said.

#### **No Role For The PLO**

As for the Palestine Liberation Organization, Baker and other administration officials ruled out a role in the peace process for that organization and its leader, Yasir Arafat, because of its support of Saddam Hussein.

"I think that he was seriously and substantially hurt," Baker said of Arafat.

"The PLO made a colossal bad decision" in supporting Hussein, Brent Scowcroft, the president's national security adviser, said Sunday in an appearance on the ABC-TV program "This Week With David Brinkley."

Scowcroft said Baker will be discussing with the Saudis their support for an alternative Palestinian leadership to the PLO. Saudi Arabia, which, like Kuwait, was a major financial backer of the PLO, has already indicated it will look for some other Palestinian group to back.

But Saudi Arabia has also let it be known that it will no longer help Jordan, which sided with Iraq.

The Bush administration, however, continues to show a measure of sympathy for King Hussein, despite U.S. anger at his backing of Iraq.

"We understand his situation," Baker said, referring to the large number of Palestinians in Jordan.

"We have no lasting pique with Jordan," Bush said Friday. He said the United States has had "very pleasant relationships with Jordan," which turned into a "certain sense of disappointment" at Jordan's position during the Gulf crisis.

Bush said a rapprochement will take time. "I can't say how much, but clearly we do not want to see a destabilized Jordan. I have no personal animosity toward his majesty, the king."

#### **PROSPECT OF BAKER VISIT TRIGGERS A HOST OF COMPETING PEACE PLANS** By David Landau

JERUSALEM, March 3 (JTA) -- The upcoming visit here of U.S. Secretary of State James Baker has prompted a new rupture in the government's ranks, following six weeks of unity in the face of a common foe, Saddam Hussein.

Baker's first visit to Israel, which begins March 11, has prompted a flurry of peace proposals both within the ruling Likud coalition and the opposition Labor Party.

Foreign Minister David Levy, a one-time Likud hard-liner, has argued forcefully that Israel needs to undertake a bold initiative to seek peace with its Arab neighbors. He was due to fly to London on Monday for talks on the peace process.

Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir, on the other hand, believes Israel should stick with its May 1989 peace plan and wait for Israel's Arab neighbors to agree to recognize Israel and negotiate for peace.

Voices on the right are accusing Levy of readiness to cede the Golan Heights because of his declared willingness to talk to the Syrians without conditions.

At the weekly Cabinet meeting Sunday, Shamir assured Levy that he need not worry about attacks against him so long as he stays within government policy guidelines.

"What do you mean, 'as long as I keep to government policy guidelines'?" Levy shot back.

On the right, pressure to counter most suggestions of sacrificing anything to the Palestinians came from Housing Minister Ariel Sharon of Likud, Science Minister Yuval Ne'eman of the Tehiya party and Minister-Without-Portfolio Rehavam Ze'evi of Moledet.

Sharon has urged the immediate unilateral annexation by Israel of the sections of the West Bank and Gaza Strip settled by Jews. Ze'evi supports voluntary "transfer" of Arabs out of the territories.

#### **Revival Of Jordanian Option**

But these hard-line positions were countered by a somber warning from Interior Minister Arye Deri of Shas, who said peacemaking topped the Orthodox party's list of priorities.

Recalling that the previous government, a self-described "national unity" regime, fell in March 1990 precisely over its peace policy, he warned that no government has the "right to exist" if it does not strive for peace.

On the left of Labor, there have been calls to the United States to offer Israel a formal defense treaty in return for its withdrawal from the territories. Variations on this theme have been made by the Citizens Rights Movement, Shinui and Mapam.

Within the Labor Party Executive, discussion began Sunday on a gamut of peace proposals aired in the last few days. There was even an open call for a Palestinian state within the confines of acceptable security conditions.

But a proposal made by Labor Party leader Shimon Peres did not go as far as that. He called for revival of the "Jordanian option," in which a joint Jordanian-Palestinian negotiating team would choose a government for the West Bank.

Sources close to Peres say there has been a series of signals from Amman in recent days indicating that King Hussein would now like to re-enter the peace process.

## E.C. CONFIRMS BOYCOTT OF PLO, CALLS FOR ALTERNATIVE LEADERS

By Yossi Lempkowicz

BRUSSELS, March 3 (JTA) -- The leadership of the European Community has confirmed in a formal statement that the E.C. is boycotting contacts with the Palestine Liberation Organization, because of Yasir Arafat's support for Iraq during the Persian Gulf crisis.

But the statement by Foreign Minister Jacques Poos of Luxembourg, current chairman of the E.C. Council of Ministers, underscores that the decision does not undercut the standing of the PLO itself or Palestinian rights. It calls on the Palestinian people to choose new representatives.

"In view of Mr. Arafat's numerous messages of support for the aggressor, Saddam Hussein," the statement says, the E.C. foreign ministers have agreed under "the present circumstances not to plan any high-level contact between the E.C. presidency and the PLO."

"The Palestinian people will choose its own representatives, whom we shall respect and whom all the concerned parties shall respect," the statement says.

The PLO representative in Brussels, Chawki Armali, was informed of the decision on Feb. 17. Armali called the decision not to meet Arafat an "error" and stressed it could be blamed on an "outburst of temper" by Poos.

The E.C. decision also drew sharp reactions from the PLO leadership. In Tunis, at the group's headquarters, Bassam Abu Sharif, one of Arafat's closest advisers, criticized Poos for "allowing himself to designate the representatives of the Palestinian people."

### Levy Plan Called 'Encouraging'

The E.C. move is one more indication that the PLO leadership, especially Arafat, has lost its standing because of its pro-Iraq stance. Leaders of both Saudi Arabia and Kuwait, formerly primary financiers of the PLO, have announced in no uncertain terms that they have cut the cord to the PLO.

The PLO was excluded from a list of Middle East parties that would be seen by the so-called E.C. "troika," made up of the current, next and immediate past chairmen of the Council of Ministers.

The troika, currently made up of the foreign ministers of Luxembourg, Italy and Holland, had canceled scheduled meetings that were to be held with their counterparts from Jordan, Israel, Egypt, Libya and Syria because of developments in the Gulf war.

David Levy, Israel's foreign minister, had been scheduled to meet with the E.C. chiefs last Monday. No new dates have been set for the meetings.

At a meeting last week of the European Parliament, the E.C.'s legislative body, which meets in Strasbourg, France, the group's political director called a recent letter from Levy to Poos "encouraging for the future with regard to the Palestinian question."

In the letter, Levy called for an end to the state of belligerency between Israel and the Arab states, "in order to make progress and prepare the ground for global peace negotiations."

He called for direct negotiations between Israel and its neighbors and parallel discussions over a solution to the Palestinian problem.

## WITH END OF FIGHTING IN GULF, FLIGHTS TO ISRAEL BEGIN AGAIN

By Hugh Orgel

TEL AVIV, March 3 (JTA) -- The cessation of the fighting in the Persian Gulf has brought an end to the suspension by foreign airlines of flights to Israel and other countries of the Middle East.

That should reinvigorate the flagging tourism industry, which already is reporting a resurgence of inquiries about trips to the region.

International airlines that halted service to Israel before the start of the war because of high insurance rates are gradually winging their way back to Ben-Gurion Airport.

The stalwart El Al and the American carrier Tower Air, which had been the sole carriers flying to Israel during the war, will no longer have an uncontested choice of runways.

Germany's Lufthansa on Friday became the first foreign carrier to resume its full daily scheduled service to Israel. Air France began flights again on Sunday.

Olympic Airlines, the last to pull out, had hoped to be the first back this week. The Greek carrier will return to Tel Aviv on Tuesday. For the time being, Olympic will fly twice weekly from Athens, returning eventually to its former schedule of three flights a week.

Most of the some 18 other carriers that flew to Israel have said they will resume their flights here gradually, working their way up from abbreviated service to full schedules within a few days.

The last to return will be the American carriers, and one of them may not return there at all.

### TWA May Not Resume Service

Trans World Airlines, which had not expected to suspend flights to Israel even as war was looming, has now indicated it may not be able to resume operations to Israel. Its chief reason appears to be its own troubled finances.

TWA's local staff in Israel, who have not yet received their salaries for February, have been told they need not plan to return to work, as the Israeli office of the airline may not reopen at all.

The air carrier, which cut its first-class ticket prices by 60 percent and business-class tickets by 50 percent if purchased by March 15, has defaulted on a \$75 million bond payment, because it needs cash to continue operating, The New York Times reported.

However, a spokesman for TWA told the Times that the airline was "looking into the possibility of restoring service to Tel Aviv and other cities whose service was suspended."

British Airways will resume service on March 14, providing six flights per week to Tel Aviv, just as before the war.

Pan American Airlines, which has filed for bankruptcy, will probably be the last to return to Israel. Its senior vice president of corporate communications, Jeffrey Kreindler, told the Times that the carrier plans to resume flights to Israel in May.

Meanwhile, the time required for check-in was being somewhat reduced by some airlines. Lufthansa has stopped asking passengers to arrive at the airport two to three hours prior to their flights, but has returned to normal check-in time, 90 minutes before boarding, according to the Times.

## 21 NATIONS CALL FOR CONDEMNATION OF SYRIAN BLOOD LIBEL ACCUSATION

By Tamar Levy

GENEVA, March 3 (JTA) -- Twenty-one nations have called on the U.N. Human Rights Commission to issue a public condemnation of Syria's ritual blood libel accusation against Jews, made by a Syrian diplomat at a session of the commission here on Feb. 8.

A letter making the request was sent last Thursday to Jan Martenson, the U.N. undersecretary-general for human rights.

It has been signed so far by the United States and the 12 member states of the European Community, as well as Australia, Canada, Czechoslovakia, Japan, New Zealand, Poland, Switzerland and Yugoslavia.

Daniel Lack, representative of the World Jewish Congress, denounced Syria for "a hideous anti-Semitic canard, reviving the notorious medieval blood libel."

Lack observed that such statements would be the subject of criminal prosecution under the laws of many countries.

Earlier, David Littman, representing the World Union for Progressive Judaism, urged the commission to name a special representative to inquire "into the situation of the Jewish minority community in Syria, particularly the approximately 200 single Jewish girls and women who wish to leave their country of birth for the purposes of marrying abroad a person of their faith, but have been forcibly retained in Syria for years."

Lack and Littman spoke in response to a Syrian attempt to contain the mounting outrage in and outside U.N. circles here over the blood libel.

An official letter was sent to Martenson on Feb. 19 with the imprimatur of the permanent representative of Syria to the United Nations.

It claimed, among other things, that Syria respects Judaism and is a country known for its tolerance. But it evaded the libelous content of its statement accusing Jews of ritual murder.

The statement was read by Nabila Shaalan, the second-ranking member of the Syrian delegation, at a session of the Human Rights Commission presided over by Martenson.

It strongly recommended that commission members read "a valuable book" called "The Matzah of Zion," by Syrian Defense Minister Mustafa Tlas, which justified ritual murder charges brought against Jews in Damascus in 1840 for the death of a Catholic missionary.

According to Shaalan's statement, the book "confirms the racist reality of Zionism" and proves that Jews have engaged in ritual murder.

Littman described the book as "ethnic pornography."

## ISRAEL STRIKES TARGETS IN LEBANON

By Hugh Orgel

TEL AVIV, March 3 (JTA) -- The Israeli air force on Sunday attacked what were described as "vehicle depots of terrorist organizations" north of the Zaharani River in southern Lebanon, the IDF spokesman announced.

The area, some five miles north of Nabatiya, lies considerably north of the six-mile-wide security zone Israel maintains in Lebanon.

Reports from Lebanon said that several people were wounded in the air attack.

All of the targets were destroyed, and all planes returned safely to their bases.

## HOROWITZ RESIGNS POSITION AS TOP PROFESSIONAL AT UJA

NEW YORK, March 3 (JTA) -- The president and chief professional officer of the United Jewish Appeal, Stanley Horowitz, has resigned from his position, effective July 1.

Horowitz's "request to be relieved of day-to-day executive responsibilities at UJA," rumored for some time, was confirmed in a memorandum sent to national UJA leaders Thursday by Morton Kornreich, chairman of the UJA board of trustees, and Marvin Lender, its national chairman.

Horowitz, who has worked as a professional in UJA and the federation movement for the last three decades, has been at the helm of UJA for the last seven years. As such, he has presided over a national campaign to raise hundreds of millions of dollars annually for Israel and other overseas Jewish needs.

Under his leadership, UJA last year raised what Kornreich and Lender called in their memo a "record-shattering \$1.2 billion dollars" in UJA pledges and \$500 million in cash collections.

The memo said UJA leaders were "surprised" several months ago when Horowitz "initiated the discussions" leading to his resignation.

According to the memo, Horowitz "wants to turn his attention to writing, teaching, foundations and other activities." He will become a consultant to UJA after July 1.

The members of a search committee for the next president are to be announced at a UJA board of trustees meeting later this week.

## ISADORE HAMLIN, 74, A PIONEER IN ZIONIST MOVEMENT, IS DEAD

NEW YORK, March 3 (JTA) -- Isadore (Itzik) Hamlin, a pioneer of the Zionist movement in America, died here Friday after a long illness. He was 74 years old.

For close to two decades Hamlin worked for the American Section of the World Zionist Organization, which promotes aliyah and Jewish education in the Diaspora.

When the American Section came into being in 1971, Hamlin was picked to be its first executive director. In 1974, he took over as executive vice chairman, a position created specifically for him. He retired from the office in 1988 but continued serving as a special consultant.

"Mr. Hamlin played a pivotal role in the development of the Zionist movement in America," said Bernice Tannenbaum, chairman of the WZO-American Section. "His devotion and dedication for everything Zionist and pro-Israel was exemplary."

During World War II, Hamlin reached the rank of captain in military intelligence in the U.S. Army and was also decorated with the Bronze Star. While serving in the Army in Europe, he assisted Jewish concentration camp survivors to immigrate to what was soon to become Israel.

After the war, Hamlin took a post in Washington with the Jewish Agency and later served as executive director of its American Section.

Besides his professional posts, Hamlin served on the board of directors of the Jewish Telegraphic Agency and was active in the United Jewish Appeal of Greater New York.

Hamlin, who was born in Cambridge, Mass., in 1917, graduated from Cornell University and did graduate work at the New School for Social Research. Funeral services were held here Sunday.