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**AUSTRIANS HARBOR NEGATIVE ATTITUDES TOWARD JEWS AND ISRAEL, POLL FINDS**

By Debra Nussbaum Cohen

NEW YORK, Oct. 23 (JTA) -- Substantial portions of the Austrian population harbor strongly negative attitudes toward Jews and have little sympathy for Israel, according to the findings of a new American Jewish Committee survey, which were to be released in Vienna on Thursday.

The survey, which is the fifth in a series AJCommittee is conducting in Central and Eastern Europe, reveals that a plurality of Austrians believe that Jews have caused much harm in the course of history and that Jews exert too much influence on world events.

However, to the extent that there is encouraging news about Austrians' attitudes toward Jews, Israel and the Holocaust, it is that younger and better-educated Austrians are more tolerant than their older and less-educated compatriots, said one AJCommittee official.

"In the end, it coincides with what our traditional assumptions have been: that virtually everywhere, younger and better-educated people have better attitudes toward Jews," said David Harris, the organization's executive vice president.

"It offers some encouragement for the future," he said. But he added that on the whole, the findings "are very disturbing in many respects."

In the nationwide survey, 28 percent of the respondents contended that Jews have too much influence in Austria.

**One-Fifth Want Quotas On Jews**

A stunning 20 percent said they want the entry of Jews into influential positions controlled and numerically limited, and 19 percent said that it would be better for Austria not to have Jews in the country at all.

A plurality of 37 percent agreed either strongly or somewhat that now, as in the past, Jews exert too much influence on world events. Thirty-five percent disagreed strongly or somewhat with that, and 28 percent said they do not know.

A majority of the Austrians polled -- 53 percent -- said they believe it is time to put the memory of the Holocaust behind them. Just 28 percent disagreed with that statement.

Thirty-two percent of respondents said they believe Jews are exploiting the Holocaust for their own purposes, while slightly more, 36 percent, did not agree that is true.

A majority of 56 percent said they think the Austrian government should not prosecute Nazi war criminals, while 38 percent said they think the government should.

Austrians are almost evenly divided over whether Israelis basically treat the Palestinians no differently than the Germans treated the Jews. Forty-three percent of respondents agreed with that statement, and 46 percent did not.

Austrians are also closely split on where their sympathies lie in the Middle East. Just 11 percent of respondents said they sympathize with Israel; 9 percent sympathized with the Arab nations; and 13 percent sympathized with the Palestinians.

Fully 25 percent of the respondents agreed that Zionism is racism, and 40 percent said they did not know. Thirty-five percent disagreed with the statement.

The poll was taken between June 24 and Aug. 21 by the Gallup Institute of Austria. Attitudes toward Jews, Israel and the Holocaust varied among different subgroups of the 2,000 respondents.

**Noticeable Age Differences**

One illustration of the differences between older and younger Austrians' attitudes is that precisely half of respondents over age 50 agreed that Jews have caused much harm in the course of history, compared to 30 percent of those under age 30.

And 33 percent of those over age 50 said that Jews must answer for killing Jesus, compared to 12 percent of those under age 30.

The survey also revealed a correlation between church attendance and attitudes toward Jews, Israel and the Holocaust. The more frequently respondents attended church, the more they tended to express negative attitudes toward Jews.

Forty percent of those who attend church at least once a week agreed that Jews must answer for killing Jesus, compared to 16 percent of those who never go to church.

Fifty-eight percent of weekly churchgoers agreed that it is time to put the memory of the Holocaust behind them, compared to 45 percent of non-churchgoers.

More than a third of churchgoers, 36 percent, agreed that Zionism is racism, compared to one-fifth of non-churchgoers.

The survey contained 31 questions and is accurate within plus or minus 3 percentage points.

**ISRAELI GOVERNMENT ROCKED BY DISCORD OVER WHO'S GOING TO TALKS IN MADRID**  
By David Landau

JERUSALEM, Oct. 23 (JTA) -- The Israeli government was rocked Wednesday by sharp disagreements among Cabinet ministers over who will be representing the country at next week's Middle East peace conference in Madrid.

Serious rivalries have surfaced in recent days between the Prime Minister's Office and the Foreign Ministry, which each want to supply the top negotiators for the conference and the series of bilateral talks that will follow.

The strains hit the breaking point Wednesday night, when Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir announced that he would personally head the Israeli delegation to the peace conference and that he would hand-pick some of its other members.

Foreign Minister David Levy immediately announced that he would stay home, prompting speculation that he would resign his post.

Shamir, Levy and Defense Minister Moshe Arens had held consultations earlier Wednesday, in an attempt to resolve the composition of the Israeli delegation. But those talks apparently ended inconclusively.

Shamir wants to entrust the most delicate diplomatic tasks to non-diplomats.

He insists that his two closest aides, Yosef

Ben-Aharon, director of the Prime Minister's Office, and Cabinet Secretary Elyakim Rubinstein, head the delegations to the Israeli-Syrian and Israeli-Jordanian-Palestinian talks respectively.

The Defense Ministry has been assigned to run the talks with Lebanon, probably because the Lebanese border presents the only active military problem at this time.

That leaves the Foreign Ministry with the multilateral working group on regional issues, which may not get off the ground if Syria holds to its refusal to participate.

#### Provoked By Statements On PLO

Meanwhile, aides to Shamir said Wednesday night that the prime minister had decided to bring a number of hard-liners with him to Madrid, including Deputy Foreign Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, Knesset member Ze'ev "Benny" Begin and a West Bank Jewish settler.

If true, that would only rankle Levy further, as relations between the moderate foreign minister and his hawkish deputy had reportedly reached a low point of late.

Opposition Labor Party politicians immediately accused Shamir of trying to sabotage the peace conference.

But political observers pointed out that the Likud prime minister had been provoked almost beyond endurance by the flurry of Palestinian claims in recent days that Israel would be negotiating with the Palestine Liberation Organization.

The latest of these came Wednesday when one of the official Palestinian delegates, Saeb Erekat, told the Cable News Network outright that the group going to Madrid was a "PLO delegation."

Shamir aide Ben-Aharon immediately responded that Israel would regard Erekat as an unacceptable negotiator.

#### **GENERAL STRIKE STAGED IN TERRITORIES TO CHALLENGE MADRID GROUP LEGITIMACY** **By Gil Sedan**

JERUSALEM, Oct. 23 (JTA) -- A general strike Wednesday in the West Bank and Gaza Strip challenged the legitimacy of the 14-member Palestinian delegation selected to go to Madrid for the peace conference with Israel next week.

The strike was called by Hamas, the Moslem fundamentalist movement active in the intifada, which favors armed struggle over negotiations.

Although many who observed the strike said they closed their businesses out of fear rather than identification with the dissidents, it seems clear that the Palestinians remain divided on the peace issue.

Gunfire was exchanged Tuesday night in the Jenin refugee camp between elements of Hamas and loyalists of Al Fatah, the Palestine Liberation Organization faction headed by Yasir Arafat. It supports the peace conference, although PLO members were excluded at Israel's insistence.

Public demonstrations against the conference were urged this week by Hamas, and by two PLO breakaway groups opposed to Arafat -- the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine and the Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine.

About 20 Arab women, most of them widows or mothers of men killed in the intifada, staged a sit-down strike outside the East Jerusalem home of Faisal Hussein, a leading advocate of the conference.

Hussein, whom the Israelis ruled out as a

negotiating partner, will head a six-member advisory panel that will accompany the Palestinian delegation to Madrid and act as liaison between the delegation and the PLO.

The Palestinian delegation plans to leave Sunday for Amman, Jordan, to coordinate with the Jordanian delegation that will serve as its umbrella in the peace talks with Israel.

#### Building Occupied In Moslem Quarter

One member, Sameh Canaan, a former terrorist from Nablus, may have trouble leaving. Yigal Carmon, the prime minister's adviser on terrorism, said Tuesday that Israel would again investigate Canaan.

Canaan said he conformed to all of Israel's demands with respect to the Palestinian delegates. He is not a resident of East Jerusalem, a member of the "Palestinian diaspora" or a member of the PLO.

Jewish settlers, meanwhile, carried out another provocative act when, with fanfare and ceremony, they occupied another building in the Moslem Quarter of the Old City.

It will house 10 students of the Ateret Cohanim yeshiva, which has been expanding rapidly in the Old City with the blessings of Housing Minister Ariel Sharon and right-wing and religious circles.

The yeshiva claims the building was owned by Jews 100 years ago and repurchased from Arab owners through a fund-raising drive.

It is next door to the heavily guarded apartment purchased some years ago by Sharon.

#### **PALESTINIAN CONFIDENT THAT U.S. WILL PRESSURE ISRAEL IN MADRID** **By Ruth E. Gruber**

ROME, Oct. 23 (JTA) -- The man who will head the Palestinian delegation to the Madrid peace conference next week is confident that the United States will force concessions from Israel.

"With the end of the Cold War, many things have changed. We are no longer with the Russians, and the Americans seem more receptive to Arab positions," Dr. Haider Abdel-Shafi said in an interview published Wednesday in the Milan daily *Corriere della Sera*.

"I seem to have noted a new willingness in (U.S. Secretary of State James) Baker to put pressure on Israel," he said.

Shafi, a 72-year-old physician from the Gaza Strip, has been designated chairman of the 14-member Palestinian negotiating team that will confront the Israelis under the umbrella of a joint Jordanian-Palestinian delegation.

"I know we Palestinians yielded on all the conditions imposed by the Israelis" for convening the conference, Shafi said. "But I think it was right to participate in the conference, if for no other reason than to show that it is not we who oppose peace."

Israel insisted it would not negotiate with members of the Palestine Liberation Organization, residents of East Jerusalem or Palestinians living abroad.

Shafi offered an advance scenario. He said the Palestinians would urge a ban on settlements in the Israeli-administered territories.

"The Israelis will oppose this. Then it will be up to the Americans and to the international community to push for at least a temporary freeze, such as happened during the Camp David negotiations," he said.

## IDF FIGHTING HEZBOLLAH ATTEMPTS TO SABOTAGE MIDEAST CONFERENCE

By Hugh Orgel

TEL AVIV, Oct. 23 (JTA) -- The Israel Defense Force is taking strong countermeasures against attempts by the pro-Iranian Hezbollah to sabotage the Middle East peace conference by escalating violence in southern Lebanon.

An IDF force of about 50 infantrymen, supported by three tanks and two armored personnel carriers, advanced more than a mile beyond the southern Lebanon security zone Tuesday night.

They took up positions overlooking Hezbollah concentrations in the Syrian controlled Bekaa Valley in eastern Lebanon.

Meanwhile, artillery of the IDF and its allied South Lebanon Army continued the bombardment of Shi'ite villages in southern Lebanon that have given support and shelter to Hezbollah guerrillas.

The Islamic fundamentalist militia, whose name means Party of God, said it would continue to harass Israel to thwart the peace conference, due to open in Madrid on Oct. 30.

Disregarding IDF warnings of retaliation, Hezbollah claimed responsibility for planting a road mine that slightly wounded three SLA soldiers Wednesday and damaged their armored vehicle.

It detonated two remote-control explosives aimed at IDF vehicles in the security zone Tuesday. One Israeli soldier was bruised.

The most serious casualties occurred Sunday, when a remote-control device blew up an IDF vehicle in the security zone, killing three soldiers and wounding two. Hezbollah promptly claimed credit.

Defense Minister Moshe Arens, visiting the scene, accused the Lebanese regular army of deliberately failing to disarm Hezbollah, although it has disarmed all other militias in its drive to assert the Beirut government's authority in southern Lebanon.

But according to Arens, Hezbollah was left intact on orders from the Syrian authorities, who are in de facto control of Lebanon.

The Lebanese army, in fact, has avoided entering the Bekaa Valley, where fierce fighting was reported Wednesday between Hezbollah and the mainstream Shi'ite militia, Amal.

## HOSTAGES IN LEBANON WILL BE HOME BY YEAR'S END, NEGOTIATOR PREDICTS

By Debra Nussbaum Cohen

NEW YORK, Oct. 23 (JTA) -- Uri Lubrani, Israel's chief hostage negotiator, says he hopes all of the remaining Westerners held captive in Lebanon will be home by year's end.

Lubrani said his hope is based on the fact that, "for the first time, all the parties concerned, both sides of the game, are willing and ready to move ahead."

Now it is a matter of negotiation, he said, "not the problem of principle that has been the case" until recently.

The change in attitude has come about, according to Lubrani, because all of the parties involved "realize that keeping hostages has become a liability, a hump which they have to get rid of if they want to be reintroduced into civilized society."

Shi'ite kidnappers in Lebanon this week released American hostage Jesse Turner, leaving

behind four Americans, a Briton, an Italian and two Germans. Israel also received definitive proof that one of its missing soldiers, Yossi Fink, is dead.

But still unknown are the whereabouts of Ron Arad, the Israeli airman whose plane was shot down in 1986 and who is believed to be alive, Lubrani said.

Three other missing Israeli soldiers have also not been accounted for: Zachary Baumel, Yehuda Katz and Zvi Feldman.

Lubrani, who is the Israeli Defense Ministry's coordinator of affairs in Lebanon, shared his views with the Jewish Telegraphic Agency while in New York to appear at a fund-raising dinner sponsored by the UJA-Federation of Jewish Philanthropies.

He will be part of Israel's negotiating team at the Middle East peace conference in Madrid next week and is also credited with orchestrating the Operation Solomon airlift that brought more than 14,000 Ethiopian Jews to Israel in a 36-hour period last May.

## JEWS OF CROATIAN TOWN REPORT DAMAGE TO JEWISH SITES THERE

ZAGREB, Yugoslavia, Oct. 23 (JTA) -- The Jewish community in the war-ravaged Croatian town of Osijek has appealed to Jews around the world to try to stop the "senseless war" that is destroying lives and property in their town and elsewhere in the breakaway Croatian republic.

Osijek, which has a Jewish population of about 200, has been in the center of battles between the Croatian militia and the Serbian-led Yugoslav army.

The message, signed by Darko Fischer, president of the Jewish Community of Osijek, disclosed for the first time damage to Jewish communal property, including the local synagogue.

Although it reported "over 100 civilians killed and over 1,000 wounded," the message did not mention Jewish war casualties.

"If you would be able to come to Osijek today, we could only show you, with pain and sorrow, a destroyed city," it said. "Every third apartment building is damaged and most of the industry is completely destroyed."

"Sites important for the Jewish tradition were also targeted. The building of the Jewish community and the small synagogue in it are severely damaged."

"The monument 'Mother and Child,' by sculptor Oskar Nemon, which is dedicated to the memory of Jewish victims of war, was saved only by a miracle when a bomb exploded only 50 feet from it, killing one citizen and leaving a deep crater on the lawn of the park."

The message, addressed to "all Jewish communities of Yugoslavia" and to "all Jews of Yugoslavia," also called on "Jews of Diaspora and Israel" to realize what is happening in Osijek and cities like it.

"The people that carry in their genes the 3,000 years of suffering and persecution must raise their voice and use their influence to stop the insanity of war," the message said.

"The people that remembers Masada and the Warsaw Ghetto, pogroms and concentration camps must show to the world the senselessness of war on the eve of the 21st century."

The message was translated by Srdjan Matic, executive vice president of the Jewish Community Council in Zagreb, the Croatian capital.

## ADL CHARGES COMPUTER SERVICE WITH CONDONING ANTI-SEMITISM

By Debra Nussbaum Cohen

NEW YORK, Oct. 23 (JTA) -- The Anti-Defamation League has accused Prodigy, the on-line computer services giant, of allowing subscribers to post virulently anti-Semitic messages on its electronic bulletin boards while at the same time refusing to allow other subscribers to post responses.

But Prodigy attests that ADL is basing its claims on "small snippets of a legitimate political debate taken out of context."

"Because they were taken out of context, their import was grossly exaggerated," said Steven Hein, communications program manager at Prodigy, which is owned jointly by IBM and Sears, Roebuck and Co.

"We absolutely reject any implication that Prodigy supports or condones anti-Semitism," he added.

Examples of what Jeffrey Sinensky, director of the civil rights division of ADL, called "real gutter-level anti-Semitism" include the following messages:

"Most of the exterminationist survivors' tales have long been demolished as fantasy and exaggeration."

"The Holocaust itself is really an edifice, a monument so to speak, to the naive gullibility of the world in which even the most outrageous survivors' tales and the falsest testimonies are totally believed without the slightest doubt."

ADL initially believed that one particularly offensive message was publicly posted on a Prodigy bulletin board.

The message called for "a REAL, and this time, worldwide Holocaust," and said that "it is a fact that wherever Jews exercise influence and power, misery and warfare and economic exploitation of the host people follow." It also spoke of how "Jewish power is acquired and applied behind the scenes."

### 'Beyond The Bounds' Of Decency

After making its assertions public, ADL officials learned that particular message had been transmitted privately through the Prodigy system from one subscriber to another, and not posted publicly on a bulletin board.

Hein of Prodigy said the recipient of that message, who ironically was "pro-Israeli and pro-Jewish," tried to post it to the system's bulletin board so "there could be public discussion of it."

"He tried to post it 15 times," Hein said. "And 15 times we rejected it, because we felt it went beyond the bounds of society's standards of decency."

But ADL stands behind its contentions and asserts the Holocaust messages substantiate its position that Prodigy's rules allow bigotry to be disseminated through the bulletin boards.

Moreover, on several instances, several individuals have had their responses to anti-Semitic messages blocked by Prodigy, Sinensky said.

After an exchange of letters and a 90-minute meeting with ADL officials on Oct. 21, Prodigy officials asked to review copies of the notes that ADL says were disallowed by the bulletin board overseers.

Sinensky is in the process of obtaining permission from the writers of those notes to show Prodigy the material.

Prodigy's 1.1 million users send 100,000

messages each week to be posted on its bulletin boards, which are devoted to topics ranging from news headlines to politics to the arts.

While individual notes are not edited or altered, they are scanned "for language" by a "handful" of Prodigy employees and are then "randomly sampled" for a closer look, according to Henry Heilbrunn, a Prodigy senior vice president.

If they do not meet Prodigy standards, they are returned to the sender unposted.

### No 'Grossly Repugnant' Language

In a letter to Sinensky, Prodigy's president and chief executive officer, Theodore Papes Jr., wrote that the exchange of ideas that takes place through the bulletin boards is "limited only by the standards of communication appropriate to a family service."

The messages are not posted if, among other things, they breach those "family standards" by involving personal insults, abusive language or insulting behavior, according to Prodigy's rules.

"We will not post notices containing language so scurrilous that it is grossly repugnant to society's standards of decency," said Hein.

Another example of one subscriber note which was disallowed by Prodigy referred to a popular rap musician and read, "Vanilla Ice is a weenie," according to Heilbrunn, the Prodigy senior vice president.

To refuse to post a note like that while allowing Holocaust revisionism, says ADL's Sinensky, is "bizarre. To say that personal insult is outside of the guidelines" and to have rules that allow someone to advocate genocide "is preposterous."

Barring anti-Semitism from the Prodigy forum is "well within the editorial policy they've established," he asserted.

"The point is that they're still saying that you can't attack an individual, but they're allowing attacks on a group of people," said Richard Klein, an ADL spokesman.

Players in the new interactive electronics media industry have had varying degrees of success navigating the debate over the limits on freedom of expression.

Prodigy has come under fire before, from the press, subscribers and civil libertarians, for being "overly restrictive" in deciding what can appear on its bulletin boards, according to Heilbrunn.

### Accused Of Censorship

"As a result, we have evolved our policies to be less limiting. We have been accused of censorship and have moved toward more free expression, not less free expression," he said.

"The free and open nature of our bulletin board system means that we will post notes on controversial subjects, to which some people may object at times. That is the essence of the lively and vital exchange of views which have come to characterize interactive electronic media," said Hein.

But according to the ADL, the argument is not one about the First Amendment.

Prodigy is "not a government agency, and they are in the business of editorial review," Sinensky said.

"They decided to engage in it (making editorial judgments) and, having done that, they have an obligation to implement it consistently. They have not done that," he asserted.