

LEBANESE AND PALESTINIANS AGREE TO TALKS, BUT ISRAEL HOLDING OUT
By David Landau and Gil Sedan

JERUSALEM, Nov. 25 (JTA) -- Both Lebanon and the Palestinians on Monday accepted the U.S. invitation to resume the bilateral phase of peace talks in Washington on Dec. 4, leaving Israel and Syria the only holdouts among the parties who attended the first round of talks in Madrid on Nov. 3.

Jordan earlier accepted the invitation, which was issued as Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir arrived in Washington last week for talks with President Bush.

Israel has insisted on a Middle East venue for the talks, which brought it into conflict with the Bush administration as well as the Arab delegations.

Political observers here said Israel will most likely agree, reluctantly, to the American invitation, but with several conditions attached and not before midweek.

The delay is widely interpreted as Israel's way of showing its profound displeasure over Washington's failure to consult it before issuing the invitations only hours before Shamir's White House meeting last Friday with Bush.

In Washington, the State Department seemed to go out of its way Monday to excuse Israel's failure to respond by Nov. 25, the date on which the invited parties were asked to reply.

Department spokeswoman Margaret Tutwiler cited Shamir's late return to Israel from Washington on Sunday, which precluded a meeting of the Cabinet.

Considering Shamir's tight schedule, she said, choosing the Nov. 25 date might have been an "oversight by somebody in the State Department" and if so, "I apologize."

Tutwiler asserted, moreover, that Nov. 25 was "not a line drawn in sand."

She announced Lebanon's acceptance of the invitation. But word of the Palestinian reply had not reached the State Department at the time of her news briefing.

Three Conditions From Israel

It was announced shortly after Dr. Hanan Ashrawi, adviser and spokeswoman for the Palestinian delegation, conveyed the Palestinian acceptance to the U.S. consul general in East Jerusalem, Molly Williamson.

The Palestinians are said to consider the selection of Washington a victory for themselves, if only because Israel was strongly opposed.

Shamir is expected to take his time replying to Washington. The policy-making Inner Cabinet regularly meets on Wednesdays, and Shamir apparently intends to let it deliberate and vote on the matter before sending a reply to Washington.

Though the Israeli response will be favorable, it will be hedged by three conditions, sources here said.

Israel will insist that talks held in Washington are confined to procedural matters. That would put them on a par with the first round of bilateral meetings in Madrid with the Syrian, Lebanese and Jordanian-Palestinian delegations.

The Syrians have insisted that the next set

of bilateral talks include substantive as well as procedural matters.

Israel's second condition is expected to be that the Washington talks not be held at the same time or in the same place with each delegation. Doing so might give them the air of an ongoing international conference, something Israel wants to avoid.

Finally, Israel will demand a clear undertaking that the talks will move to a site in or close to the Middle East "soon," meaning after one or, at most, two rounds in Washington.

Israel originally wanted the bilateral negotiations to be held in the region, alternating between sites in Israel and the Arab countries. The Arabs refused on the grounds that doing so would grant Israel de facto recognition before negotiations start.

Israel is said to be willing to settle now for Cyprus, Greece or Turkey.

Loopholes In Visa Law?

Dr. Haider Abdel-Shafi, the Gaza physician who heads the Palestinian delegation, said Monday that the Palestinians would like their "advisers" to receive the same status as the advisers of the other delegations when the talks move to Washington.

Abdel-Shafi's request raised the problem of U.S. visas for members of the Palestine Liberation Organization, who are barred by an act of Congress from entering the United States.

Aware of the situation, Abdel-Shafi conveyed his request as a "wish" rather than a condition. He said the Americans told the Palestinians they would "consider their view."

When the subject was raised in Washington at Tutwiler's news briefing, she indicated there were loopholes in the congressional statute.

The law gives Secretary of State James Baker discretion to deal with PLO applicants on a "case-by-case basis." Tutwiler said that in the past, persons normally not welcome were admitted to conduct business in the United States or for medical or family reasons.

The official panel of advisers that accompanied the Palestinian delegation to Madrid was headed by activists Faisal Hussein and Ashrawi.

Though they remained outside the conference hall, they served, in fact, as liaison between the delegation and the PLO. Hussein and Ashrawi have been received by Baker in the past in East Jerusalem and in Washington.

While Israel considers them PLO supporters, they are not members of the PLO.

(JTA correspondent Howard Rosenberg in Washington contributed to this report.)

ASHRAWI WILL NOT BE PROSECUTED, ISRAELI ATTORNEY GENERAL DECIDES
By Gil Sedan

JERUSALEM, Nov. 25 (JTA) -- Attorney General Yosef Harish will not prosecute Palestinian activist Hanan Ashrawi for alleged meetings with officials of the Palestine Liberation Organization in Tunis.

The attorney general announced his decision a week after State Attorney Dorit Beinisch recommended that the government not press legal

charges against the popular activist. Beinish had questioned police claims against Ashrawi and also pointed out the political implications of arresting or trying her.

The Israeli police had recommended Ashrawi's indictment after investigating charges that she had met with the PLO, an infringement of Israeli law.

Harish did not say in his announcement that there were insufficient grounds for prosecution. He said in reaching his decision, he took into account "interests and values which are more important than the possible benefit which would derive from pressing charges against Ashrawi."

Ashrawi, a lecturer at Bir Zeit University in the West Bank, served as spokeswoman for the Palestinian delegation at the Madrid peace talks.

SOARING UNEMPLOYMENT PRESENTS A DILEMMA FOR ISRAELI LEADERS By Gil Sedan

JERUSALEM, Nov. 25 (JTA) -- The Israeli government is facing the tough choice of risking inflation to create jobs for a growing army of unemployed or doing nothing in the hope that the economy will improve by itself and jobs somehow will materialize.

The Cabinet discussed that economic dilemma for six hours Sunday without agreeing on effective measures.

The ministers promised themselves to tackle the problem again at their next session. But the do-nothing camp has prevailed so far.

Moshe Nissim, the minister of industry and trade, insists the economy is on the right track and that growth is just around the corner, with jobs for all.

The stark fact is that there are 145,000 jobless in Israel now, and predictions are that the figure will rise to 200,000 by the end of the year and 250,000 in 1992.

In other words, the current 11 percent unemployment rate, which is already gigantic by Israel's standards, is likely to reach 12.5 percent next year.

In development towns where immigrants are settled, unemployment is running at 20 percent and easily tops that in some Israeli Arab villages.

Suheil Diab, deputy mayor of Nazareth, estimated this week that 28 percent of Israeli Arabs are unemployed, though Arabs account for 18 percent of the total population.

Fear Of Triple-Digit Inflation

Money is so tight that even the housing industry, a major employer and one of the few enterprises to derive immediate benefit from large-scale immigration, has stalled after working at full steam for the past 18 months.

Housing Minister Ariel Sharon reported this week that many projects had to be halted because the Treasury would not provide the funds promised to contractors. More builders were thrown out of work.

If the government acts to create jobs, as many are urging, it will have to expand the national budget, which would invite a new inflationary spiral. Inflation this year is running at an annual rate of 20 percent.

Politicians and the public remember Israel had triple-digit inflation not too many years ago. They fear that any tinkering with the budget that requires printing more money could bring back those conditions.

But the alternative could be hungry job-seekers taking to the streets.

Menachem Porush, the deputy minister of labor and welfare, told the Cabinet that starving children have been seen scavenging garbage cans in the development town of Netivot.

The only one of his proposals that the Cabinet accepted was to increase the number of unemployed eligible for retraining. At best, it would provide a few thousand jobs when tens of thousands are needed.

Mayor Shlomo Ben-Lulu of Beit She'an, a town ravaged by unemployment, warned pointedly that small measures will yield small results.

Many believe a massive restructuring of the national economy and drastic budgetary changes are necessary to cope with the situation. Otherwise, the nation may find itself gripped simultaneously by high inflation and high unemployment, a sure invitation to public disorder.

But the government at present is so heavily occupied with political problems it is finding little time to cope with economic and social challenges.

The looming unemployment crisis has a strong bearing on the political situation.

With 145,000 Israelis looking for jobs and the likelihood that number will double before the end of next year, Israel's need for \$10 billion in U.S.-guaranteed loans has become desperate.

Such circumstances make it more difficult than ever for Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir to withstand U.S. pressures on issues related to the peace process.

VISITING ISRAELI FINANCE MINISTER SCOUTS TRADE ALLIANCE WITH HUNGARY By Agnes Bohm

BUDAPEST, Nov. 25 (JTA) -- Israel is exploring the possibilities of a trade partnership with Hungary.

Israeli Finance Minister Yitzhak Moda'i ended a three-day visit here Sunday on an upbeat note. Israel regards Hungary as well endowed to become the business, service and financial center of Central and Eastern Europe.

The Hungarians, for their part, think they could benefit from Israel's free trade status with the European Community and the United States.

Moda'i's visit here, though the first by an Israeli finance minister to a former Eastern bloc country, was overshadowed in the media by Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir's trip to Washington and Israel's first official trade mission to China, led by Dan Gillerman, head of the Federation of Israeli Chambers of Commerce.

But all of this activity is part of Israel's new economic diplomacy.

Israel recognizes that Hungary's low-wage, high-quality labor force positions the country to be the economic gateway to Eastern Europe. It can be the starting point for further economic and financial contacts in this region.

Last Friday evening, Moda'i visited the Jewish Community Center in Budapest, the third largest in Europe.

He offered Israeli financial assistance to the community, which numbers about 100,000. The Jewish leadership thanked him for the gesture but explained that they did not expect financial help from the Jewish state, which itself is in real need of economic aid, investment and jobs.

However, they said they would like spiritual guidance from Israel and help in interesting more young Hungarian Jews in aliyah.

CORNERSTONE LAID FOR BUILDING TO REPLACE CONVENT AT AUSCHWITZ

By Debra Nussbaum Cohen

NEW YORK, Nov. 25 (JTA) -- The effort to relocate the Carmelite convent at Auschwitz received a boost Saturday, when a cornerstone was laid for a new convent a short distance away from the site of the notorious death camp in Poland.

The ceremony took place in the presence of more than 100 local, government and Catholic representatives, including senior Vatican officials, according to representatives of IJCIC, the International Jewish Committee on Interreligious Consultations.

The new cloistered convent is part of a three-building complex under construction at a site across the street and not visible from the Auschwitz compound.

Between a dozen and 20 nuns from the Carmelite order presently occupy a former theater at Auschwitz, a building in which the Nazis stored the Zyklon-B pellets used to kill 1.6 million Jews at the death camp.

The foundation of the new convent building has been laid and construction on the second floor is under way, Rabbi A. James Rudin, director of interreligious affairs for the American Jewish Committee, said in a telephone interview from Warsaw.

Rudin said the conference center and library in the complex are already in use. A hospice and meditation center, which will accommodate visitors overnight, have not yet opened.

Among the church officials present at the cornerstone-laying ceremony were two cardinals: Franciszek Macharski, archbishop of Krakow, and Edward Cassidy, president of the Vatican's Commission for Religious Relations With the Jews.

Cassidy brought the cornerstone with him from Rome, according to Elan Steinberg, executive director of the World Jewish Congress, whose president, Edgar Bronfman, is the current chairman of IJCIC.

The presence of the cardinals at the ceremony "is a concrete manifestation of the Vatican's commitment to its agreement to move the convent," Steinberg said.

That it was a Catholic ceremony without any Jewish participation is appropriate, he added, "since it is clear from the original 1987 agreement" to move the convent that "this is a Catholic undertaking, not a joint one" with the Jewish community.

The progress "now shows that this is a problem on the way to being solved," said Rudin of AJCommittee, an IJCIC member agency.

The ceremony was covered in Poland by at least three daily newspapers and the television news, he said.

Ground was broken on the new convent site in March 1990. Officials of the Carmelite order have pledged to have the nuns out of the Auschwitz convent and into their new home by October 1992.

KOHL RESPONDS TO AJCOMMITTEE CONCERN OVER RACIST VIOLENCE

NEW YORK, Nov. 25 (JTA) -- Responding promptly to American Jewish expressions of alarm over neo-Nazi rampages in Germany, Chancellor Helmut Kohl has condemned the violence that has been taking place with considerable frequency in

his country recently and offered assurances it will not be tolerated.

In a letter to officials of the American Jewish Committee, Kohl denounced "the shameful conduct of small neo-Nazi groups and radical right-wing groups of hooligans as well as the attacks on asylum-seeker hostels in Germany."

His letter, dated Nov. 19, was addressed to Alfred Moses, president, and David Harris, executive vice president, of the AJCommittee, who wrote him on Nov. 11 to emphasize their special concern over the rising incidence of attacks by neo-Nazi and other extreme right-wing gangs on guest laborers and asylum-seekers in Germany.

Kohl wrote that "Germany is well disposed to foreigners, and will remain so."

He said that whoever flees his homeland to escape religious or racist persecution will find shelter in Germany.

Harris said the AJCommittee welcomed Kohl's "thoughtful answer" and was gratified that the Bonn government shares its apprehension over recent events.

The mixture of xenophobia and neo-Nazi racism has alarmed the German Jewish community, as well as many non-Jewish Germans.

Kohl pointed out the opposition of the vast majority of Germans against the attacks.

"Political extremists -- whether right-wing or left-wing -- have in the past brought nothing but suffering to our people." Because of the suffering in the Nazi era, the "mothers and fathers of our constitution regarded the right of asylum as sacrosanct," Kohl's letter pointed out.

"During the last few weeks and months I have time and again publicly expressed my disgust regarding the shameful conduct of small neo-Nazi groups and radical right-wing groups of hooligans, as well as the attacks on asylum-seeker hostels in Germany," Kohl wrote.

"I have repeatedly called upon the state -- and will continue to do so -- to counter such tendencies with the greatest determination and combat them with all available legal instruments, including the resolute application of the appropriate penal provisions," the chancellor wrote.

The national chairpersons of the various political parties in Germany as well as of the Bundestag parliamentary group, comprising the Christian Democratic Union, Christian Social Union and Free Democratic Party, met Nov. 21 with Kohl to discuss the issue of the asylum-seekers.

The participants to the meeting then again called for the creation of pan-European regulations to govern asylum.

Germany expects 230,000 asylum applicants by year's end.

IDF REPLACEMENTS ANNOUNCED By Hugh Orgel

TEL AVIV, Nov. 25 (JTA) -- The Israel Defense Force has announced replacements for two high-ranking officers completing their military service next year.

Maj. Gen. Avraham Ben Shoshan, the military attache at the Israeli Embassy in Washington, will leave his post in June, to be replaced by Brig. Gen. Giora Rom, who will be promoted to major general, an IDF spokesman said.

In another change to go into effect next June, Maj. Gen. Yoram Ya'ir will become head of the General Staff's Manpower Branch, replacing Maj. Gen. Ran Goren, who is retiring.

**BEHIND THE HEADLINES:
CAMPUS IS NEW FLASH POINT
FOR BLACK-JEWISH TENSIONS**
By Debra Nussbaum Cohen

NEW YORK, Nov. 25 (JTA) -- University campuses are the new battlegrounds for conflicts between blacks and Jews, proving havens for revisionist academicians and platforms for outside radicals' views, according to the author of an upcoming book on the black-Jewish relationship.

Student-council funds have paid as much as \$10,000 to host Black Muslim leader Louis Farrakhan and others in "a parade of racial extremists," according to Dr. Murray Friedman, author of a book with the working title "African-Americans and Jews: What Went Wrong," to be published next fall by The Free Press.

Friedman noted that the current roster of speakers addressing student groups across the country include Dr. Leonard Jeffries, director of the African-American studies department at City College of New York; former civil rights activist Stokely Carmichael, who is now known as Kwame Ture; "neighborhood rabble-rouser" Al Sharpton; and "Professor" Griff of the rap group Public Enemy.

Friedman also cited David Levering Lewis, a black historian who has described the black-Jewish relationship, in essays in historical journals, as "an apparent rather than real soul fellowship that was minimally beneficial to the Afro-Americans."

He has also written of the "caginess" of the Jews, who, through the use of "intelligence, money and influence tried to fight anti-Semitism by remote control," Friedman said.

Harold Cruse, now professor emeritus of Afro-American studies at the University of Michigan, is "very virulently anti-Semitic, and has a strong anti-Israel thrust," Friedman said.

He is "the patriarch of the revisionist movement as it relates to black-Jewish history," he said.

Included in the ranks of black-Jewish revisionists are a number of "white Marxists coming from a left-nationalist perspective," he said.

These campus speakers and scholars "stir up hatred for Jews and the State of Israel and destroy the partnership that has existed between blacks and Jews," said Friedman, who serves as the American Jewish Committee's Middle Atlantic States director and was a vice chair of the U.S. Civil Rights Commission during the Reagan administration.

College Administrators Apathetic

"Black intellectuals are challenging old dogmas and strategies and some are creating the emerging overt bigotry," Friedman said, adding that they are "clearly creating additional strains."

Campuses are particularly conducive to these messages, he said, because "the black condition had worsened, and the campus elements of the black intelligentsia were especially upset about the deteriorating condition in black America."

Students in particular "are being targeted for some of this political and ideological garbage that is passed off as scholarly research," according to Friedman. "A central theme of their argument is that Israel is an outpost of Western imperialism in the Middle East, a counterpart of Jewish 'exploitation' in black ghettos."

And campus administrators have, in some

cases, proved to be "apathetic to racism and bigotry on campus," Friedman said.

He recalled that NOMMO, a black magazine at the University of California at Los Angeles early this year quoted approvingly from "The Protocols of the Elders of Zion" and "The International Jew: The World's Most Foremost Problem," circulated by automaker Henry Ford Sr.

The magazine article "was clearly influenced by revisionist 'Afrocentrist' thought," said Friedman. It defined real Semites as Africans while dismissing the Jews as "a small group of European people who have proclaimed themselves God's chosen by using an indigenous African religion, Judaism, to justify their place in the world."

"After months of dawdling, the administration denounced the magazine and cut off university funding" to NOMMO, Friedman said. "I'm critical of campus authorities and media who have avoided grappling with all-out bigotry out of fear of being called racist."

In an effort to counter some of the recent black-Jewish campus problems, the American Jewish Committee, in concert with the Washington-based Joint Center on Political and Economic Studies, a black think tank, is offering to send teams composed of a black and a Jew to any campus that requests it.

Friedman presented his findings to student newspaper editors and reporters last Friday at the Council of Jewish Federations General Assembly in Baltimore.

**TSONGAS BLASTS BUSH ON DUKE,
CALLS HIMSELF FRIEND OF ISRAEL**

By Larry Yudelson

NEW YORK, Nov. 25 (JTA) -- Democratic presidential candidate Paul Tsongas pressed his attack on President Bush last week, calling defeated Louisiana gubernatorial candidate David Duke the inevitable result of the Bush administration's economic policies.

"A shrinking pie by definition creates an illiberal society," he told members of the Conference of Presidents of Major American Jewish Organizations on Nov. 18.

But he said the dismal science of economics does not account for all the factors that bred Duke, and he blamed the White House, and its use of racially charged code words, for creating a climate conducive to bigotry.

Turning to the Middle East, Tsongas praised Bush for "providing the environment for the Madrid conference to take place," but argued that "any Democratic candidate is more supportive of Israel than George Bush.

"Look at the people around him. It's pretty obvious there's no one to make a case for Israel as strongly as John Sununu will make on the other side," he said, referring to the White House chief of staff.

"In the long term," the candidate said, "there has to be a relationship between Israel and the Arabs motivated by economic self-interest."

He suggested that such self-interest could be embodied in a Middle East common market, combining Israeli technological know-how with Arab capital.

"I'm proud to have a record of supporting Israel," he said.

Vouching for his pro-Israel credentials was his Boston law partner Louis Weinstein, past chairman of the Conference of Presidents.