

**U.S. WILL ACCEPT NO CONDITIONS  
FOR PARTICIPATION IN PEACE TALKS****By David Friedman**

WASHINGTON, Nov. 26 (JTA) -- The Bush administration is insisting that Israel, the Palestinians and Syria accept without conditions its invitation to come to Washington next week for the next round of bilateral peace talks.

"We are not in the business at this point of the game in dealing in conditions to acceptance of a response that they knew was what they originally signed on to," State Department spokeswoman Margaret Tutwiler said Tuesday.

She said when the parties agreed to attend the peace conference in Madrid, after eight months of negotiations, they knew it would be followed by bilateral talks, in which Israel would negotiate separately with Syria, Lebanon and a joint Jordanian-Palestinian delegation.

Tutwiler said Washington is annoyed that both the Palestinians and Syria have expressed "a readiness to respond positively" but only with "some questions." She said those questions could be interpreted as conditions.

Israel also has some questions, Tutwiler said, but Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir has indicated that Jerusalem's answer would not come before the Inner Cabinet met on Wednesday, two days after the U.S. deadline for a reply.

In fact, there were indications in Israel that the response might not come until the regular Cabinet meets Sunday, just three days before the Washington talks are to begin.

Israel's main objection is that the bilateral talks are to be held in Washington, rather than the Middle East. Jerusalem wanted the talks to alternate between Israel and an Arab site.

In New York, Dennis Ross, director of the State Department's policy planning staff, told the Conference of Presidents of Major American Jewish Organizations on Tuesday that the administration issued the invitations to keep the "momentum" going after the parties could not agree on a site for the bilateral talks.

**PLO Advisers Won't Get Visas**

Malcolm Hoenlein, executive director of the Conference of Presidents, said Ross explained that the United States actually prefers that the talks be held in the Middle East and hopes that later rounds can move there.

But Abraham Foxman, national director of the Anti-Defamation League, and Jess Hordes, ADL's Washington director, urged the administration, in a meeting Monday with White House and State Department officials, to announce definitely that the talks will move to the Middle East.

"The United States should restate that it understands Israel's concerns and reasons why Washington is not an appropriate venue for talks, and should publicly undertake to ensure that the next phase of the talks is in the region or close to it," Foxman said.

Only Jordan and Lebanon have accepted unconditionally the invitations sent late last week for the bilateral talks to be held in Washington, Tutwiler said.

She specifically rejected one demand that the Palestinians are making, that the "advisers"

from the Palestine Liberation Organization who were present in Madrid be allowed to enter the United States.

She confirmed that a law banning PLO members from entering the United States contains some waivers, but they do not apply to bilateral negotiations.

Ross told the Conference of Presidents that the administration has also rejected a demand from Syria that it be removed from the U.S. list of states supporting terrorism.

Tutwiler said that "once you step down that road" of agreeing to conditions from one party, you have to begin agreeing to conditions from the other parties.

**Wording On Golan Troubles Israel**

The U.S. position is supported by the co-sponsor of the peace conference, the Soviet Union, Tutwiler said. She said Secretary of State James Baker talked to Soviet Foreign Minister Eduard Shevardnadze by telephone Tuesday, and that the Soviet leader would also be pressing the parties to attend the Washington meeting.

But neither Baker nor Shevardnadze will be at the bilateral talks, since this will be on the expert level, Tutwiler said. They are expected to participate in the broader conference on regional problems, which is expected to be held next month but which has not yet been scheduled.

Meanwhile, the wording of the invitations could result in another dispute with Israel, since the United States suggested that Syria and Israel discuss what Damascus might concede in exchange for an Israeli withdrawal from the Golan Heights.

Foxman of ADL said that while the United States has always said U.N. Security Council Resolutions 242 and 338 apply to the Golan Heights, as well as the West Bank and Gaza Strip, it has never specifically called for an Israeli withdrawal from the Golan.

But Tutwiler maintained that the proposals for negotiations the administration made to each of the parties were "nothing more than the U.S. view," which the parties could freely accept or reject.

She said there is no change in U.S. policy and that "every word of this has been discussed a number of times with the parties."

**NEWS ANALYSIS:****U.S. SNUB OF SHAMIR HEIGHTENS  
SUSPICIONS OF AMERICAN MOTIVES****By David Landau**

JERUSALEM, Nov. 26 (JTA) -- To say that Israel is being dragged kicking and screaming to the next round of bilateral talks with the Arabs in Washington would be an overstatement.

But enough rancor has been generated by the seemingly innocuous issue of venue to set observers wondering whether there is a truly significant basis for the high-profile public tension between Israel and its most powerful ally.

It may very well be that Israel and the United States suspect each other of having secret agendas.

In any case, the Israelis believe they are justified in feeling the Bush administration has compounded injury with insult by its seemingly

high-handed treatment of Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir during his visit to Washington last week.

Since the bilateral talks formally opened in Madrid three weeks ago, Israel has insisted, against Arab opposition, that they be resumed in the Middle East, preferably alternating between sites in Israel and the Arab countries.

But only hours before Shamir could make his case to President Bush at their Oval Office meeting last Friday, the State Department issued invitations to all parties to restart the bilateral phase in Washington on Dec. 4.

Israel was not consulted in advance and, in fact, was presented with a fait accompli, which raised lingering suspicions over U.S. intentions.

#### An 'Impudent Ultimatum'

Shamir was badly stung but managed to hold his temper better than many of his ministers, who accused the Americans of betrayal and denounced the invitation as an "impudent ultimatum."

There was no chance that Israel would respond by Nov. 25, the date requested on the U.S. invitation. Shamir conveyed his displeasure by postponing a response at least until after his Inner Cabinet discusses the matter Wednesday.

In the end, Israel has no choice but to accept the invitation, since it has already been accepted by the Palestinians, Jordan and Lebanon.

The only other holdout is Syria, which Israel regards as obstructionist and does not want to be coupled with.

Nevertheless, Israel's acceptance of the U.S. invitation will be loaded with conditions. It will demand that the Washington talks be limited to procedural rather than substantive issues and that they be shifted to the Middle East or nearby after one or two sessions in Washington.

Still, many wonder why Israel would risk a quarrel with the United States over a technical matter of where the talks should convene.

Publicly, Israel has argued that as the long-term site of the talks, the U.S. capital would require frequent, exhausting and costly trans-Atlantic shuttling by Israeli delegates to consult with the political decision-makers in Jerusalem.

A Middle East venue, on the other hand, not only would put all of the participants in easy travel distance of their homes but would create a climate of "normalization" in the region, which is what the talks are supposed to be striving for.

#### Concern About Active U.S. Role

As the argument with Washington has developed over the last few weeks, Israel's objections have taken a more political hue.

From the viewpoint of Israeli policy-makers, American and Arab enthusiasm for the Washington site reveals a U.S. desire and an Arab intent for the United States to play a continuing substantive role in the talks themselves.

That suspicion seemed to gain corroboration from the letter of invitation to the parties. In it, Secretary of State James Baker reiterated America's wish not to interfere in the substance of the negotiations. But he proceeded to suggest areas and directions he thought the talks should take.

Israelis say that contradicts earlier understandings between Jerusalem and Washington that the negotiations were to be a series of separate, one-on-one talks between Israel and its various Arab adversaries, with no outside involvement.

America's professed role as "honest broker" requires a hands-off posture, not active interventionism, the Israelis say.

Against the background of the rather cavalier treatment they perceive Shamir to have gotten in Washington last week, dread is growing in Jerusalem that the administration is preparing to impose a settlement on the parties.

Many Israelis see evidence that the Bush administration, suddenly beset by domestic woes, is seeking a foreign policy success at any price in the Middle East before the 1992 elections.

Not all Israeli officials subscribe to that view. But the raucous right wing of Shamir's coalition, which opposed a peace conference from the start, is now clamoring for the talks to be broken off forthwith, with the blame placed on Washington's "bad faith."

American officials, for their part, suspect that Israel is "stalling for time," determined to get nowhere in the peace process until the approach of elections in Israel and the United States next year makes substantial progress impossible.

#### **POLICE CAN EVICT SETTLERS, BUT GOVERNMENT MUST DECIDE** By Gil Sedan

JERUSALEM, Nov. 26 (JTA) -- Israeli Attorney General Yosef Harish has handed Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir a political time bomb with the potential to bring down his government or wreck the shaky Arab-Israeli peace process.

Harish, the government's chief legal adviser, ruled Tuesday that the police had sufficient grounds to forcibly evacuate two families of Jewish settlers who last month took over buildings in Silwan, an Arab village within Jerusalem's municipal boundaries.

Harish cited security reasons, meaning Arab unrest that could arise and spread throughout the city if the Jewish squatters are allowed to remain.

The attorney general recognized, however, the sensitive political ramifications, which overrode the legal aspects. Therefore, he said, it is up to the government to decide whether to remove the settlers or allow them to remain.

Time is of the essence, as the High Court of Justice is scheduled to hear the settlers' claim to ownership of the buildings this Sunday. As counsel for the government, Harish wants to know what position to take.

The settlers movement and its supporters on the right reacted immediately, demanding Harish's instant dismissal.

He is already in hot water with the far right for declining to prosecute Palestinian activist Hanan Ashrawi for violating the law against contacts with the Palestine Liberation Organization. In that case too, he cited the political considerations.

The situation in Silwan could also impinge on the peace conference if Israel allows Jewish settlers to remain in houses taken over from Arabs, a week before bilateral talks are set to resume in Washington.

On the other hand, eviction of the Jews could so enrage the right that Shamir's Likud coalition would fall apart.

About 40 Jewish families clandestinely occupied five houses in Silwan on Oct. 9, four days before Baker was due in Jerusalem on one of his peace missions.

The police intervened and, after prolonged negotiations, all but two of the houses were evacuated. Two families were allowed to remain, pending a court ruling on their ownership claims.

## ESTONIAN JEWS DISTURBED BY DRIVE TO REHABILITATE NAZI COLLABORATORS

TALLINN, Estonia, Nov. 26 (JTA) -- Jewish community leaders in this newly independent republic are expressing concern about a stepped-up campaign by World War II veterans to rehabilitate those who collaborated with the Nazis in wartime crimes against Jews and others.

A statement issued here by G. Gramberg, chairman of the Jewish Cultural Society in Estonia, and D. Slomka, chairman of the Jewish religious community here, appealed for Western assistance in lobbying the Estonian government to halt the rehabilitation effort.

The Jewish leaders said that many veterans who are being hailed now as heroes of Estonian independence belonged to military units responsible for the genocide of Estonia's 2,000 Jews, an operation that made the republic "Judenfrei" by December 1941.

They also assisted the Nazis in more than 20 concentration camps, where Jews from Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Germany, Czechoslovakia, France and Holland were killed.

The Jewish leaders expressed particular concern about a rally for Estonian "freedom fighters" held Nov. 9 in the town of Paide.

Radio advertisements for the rally invited, among others, veterans of police battalions and of the self-defense organization Omakaitse who were part of the 20th Division of the Nazi SS.

There seem to have been other such rallies in Tartu and in the towns of Tori and Adaveri.

The two Jewish leaders claimed their own safety is in jeopardy for passing on information about these events. "But the memory of the dead does not let us keep silent," they said in their joint statement.

Estonian war veterans attempted in vain to hold a similar rally last year, before the Baltic republics gained their independence from Moscow.

On July 6, 1990, heavily armored Soviet troops broke up a rally in Tori that had been organized by the Heritage Society, a group that bills itself as "seeking to promote awareness of Estonian history."

### Little Awareness In U.S.

In New York, American Jewish organizational leaders, who have devoted a lot of attention to efforts to rehabilitate wartime collaborators in Lithuania, seemed to be largely unaware that a similar campaign is building in Estonia.

When asked about the Estonian rallies, Abraham Bayer, director of international concerns for the National Jewish Community Relations Advisory Council, said, "I don't want to tarnish the name of a new republic that has fought so hard for its sovereignty."

But if the details in the Estonian statement are true, he added, "it reinforces our sadness about those who do not express their remorse for having participated in such heinous crimes."

The Anti-Defamation League sent a letter to Estonian President Edgar Savissar at the end of October, asking for the opportunity to discuss subjects pertinent to Holocaust survivors, possible return of Jewish property and the issue of Nazi war criminals, said Myrna Shinbaum, the agency's director of public relations.

"Now that there is an independent, free Estonia, we would hope that the government of Estonia would live up to all its obligations on behalf of those Jews who were victims during the

war and want to make sure that we would not have the same situation as happened in Lithuania," she said.

Elliot Welles, director of ADL's Nazi task force, said, "Jewish blood is still on the head of Estonia, and no justice has been done by the government of Estonia in condemning the SS."

Elan Steinberg, executive director of the World Jewish Congress, pointed out that the popular campaign to rehabilitate collaborators in Estonia "is not a situation unique" to the republic.

"We've seen these rallies and similar kinds of rallies in the other Baltic countries and in the Ukraine," he said. The question, he said, is what influence these "reactionary forces have on the newly established independent governments."

(JTA staff writer Susan Birnbaum in New York contributed to this report.)

## GAINS BY BELGIAN RIGHT-WING PARTY ELICITING MEMORIES OF PREWAR YEARS

By Yossi Lempkowicz

BRUSSELS, Nov. 26 (JTA) -- The extreme right made strong gains in Belgium's parliamentary elections Sunday, a worrisome development for Jews, who recall similar victories by the far right in the years just preceding World War II.

The most significant advance was made by the ultra-nationalist Flemish Bloc (Vlaams Blok), which increased its representation from two to 12 seats in the 212-member Parliament.

The party campaigned on a xenophobic, anti-immigrant platform. It did best in the northern port city of Antwerp, home to 20,000 Jews, where it emerged as the largest single party in the local government, with 25 percent of the vote.

Moreover, the extreme right-wing National Front, a party akin to its French equivalent led by Jean-Marie Le Pen, made important gains in Brussels, winning its first seat in Parliament.

Belgian politics have long been divided between Flemish- and French-speaking nationalists, with Flemish spoken largely in the North, the region that abuts the Netherlands, and French spoken in the South, abutting France. Brussels, the capital, in the country's center, is officially bilingual, but French predominates.

The Flemish Bloc seeks to establish a separate Flemish state. It also advocates returning immigrants to their countries.

The Belgian Parliament is elected through a system of proportional representation, which inevitably means coalition governments. In Sunday's national elections, 39 political parties or groups ran.

Many observers attributed the election results to a loss of credibility by the mainstream Socialists and Christian Democrats, who have traditionally governed this nation of 10 million.

While some commentators described it as a protest vote rather than a trend, others compared the right-wing successes Sunday to those of extreme right-wing candidates in the 1936 elections who went on to become Nazi collaborators when Belgium was occupied four years later.

According to Lazard Perez, chairman of the Coordinating Committee of Belgian Jewish Organizations, "these elections confirm the analysis made recently in Berlin by European Jewish leaders who foresaw a general rise of extreme right-wing movements" in Europe.

Right-wing parties have been racking up substantial vote counts in other European countries, including Austria and Germany.

# ISRAELI WOMEN TAKE TO STREETS TO PROTEST VIOLENCE AND ABUSE

By Catherine Gerson

TEL AVIV, Nov. 26 (JTA) -- An unusual marathon was run through the streets of Tel Aviv on Monday, one that had neither winners nor prizes.

The participants were women, and they ran under the banner "A Race for Our Lives." The marathon triggered the start of what is considered a long overdue national campaign to protest violence against women in Israel.

The race followed the release of some shocking statistics that reveal a dark aspect of Israeli society: One of every six women in Israel is battered, and one of every three girls suffers sexual abuse of some kind, according to the study.

Thirty-three Israeli women are known to have been murdered by their husbands, boyfriends or a member of their immediate family since the beginning of the year.

Perhaps dozens more violent deaths of women at the hands of family members or lovers were recorded as "accidents," with claims that "she fell off the balcony and died" or "she was killed by an unknown man who broke into her home."

Despite these frightening statistics, there are only four shelters for abused women in Israel, and none in Tel Aviv, its biggest city.

On Monday, a discussion was held in the Knesset about violence against women. But of the 120 members of Knesset, only 12 took part. Most outspoken was Sarah Doron of Likud, who said, "The problem is not the battered women but the battering men."

On Monday night, a documentary about divorce, funded by the Israel Women's Network, was aired on Israeli television.

The program directly addressed the relationship between violence in the home and Israel's slow divorce process.

One of the women interviewed said her husband forced her into prostitution in the presence of their children.

## 'Have To Fight Violence Now'

Israel's struggling feminist movement, which includes a significant number of transplanted Americans, organized the "Race for Our Lives."

"We have decided to stop 'walking' and to start 'racing' against the violence against women," one member told the Jewish Telegraphic Agency.

Hallie Fernandez, originally from Buffalo, N.Y., but now an Israeli, has been involved with the movement for three years. She explained that in addition to raising the awareness of the Israeli public, the purpose of the race was to collect funds for a battered women's shelter in Tel Aviv.

The marathon attracted only about 150 runners. It began at the Dolphinarium in southern Tel Aviv and ended at Malchei Yisrael Square outside City Hall, where about 300 more people joined them in a rally.

"We have to fight the violence, now, and not tomorrow," 29-year-old Orly Hadar, one of the runners, told JTA.

"I have never been beaten, but I have a friend who has, and I want to do as much as possible to protest, fight and correct the situation," she said.

Hadar does not belong to the feminist move-

ment but professes a strong interest in it and attends feminist lectures. "I feel very strongly against the violence, and I am really shocked and horrified by the enormous number of victims in Israel," she said.

Another runner, Donna Wallach, originally from California, was among the first to reach the finish line. A 10-year resident of Ramat Gan, she said she ran "because I want to tell the world how sick I am of the violence against women."

Wallach, a member of the Society for the Protection of Personal Rights in Israel, a support group for lesbians and gay men, was part of a group of 34 women who held posters with the name, age and date of death of the 33 women murdered by their spouses.

The 34th poster simply read, "Anonymous, of Blessed Memory," representing the countless unknown women victims.

## 'Desperately Need More Shelters'

The runners were mostly young, single women, most of whom had personally never suffered such abuse.

But some among the group did have firsthand experience with violent spouses, and they acknowledged it in public for the first time.

"It was bad," one elderly woman told JTA. "In Morocco, before we came here, he was a good husband. He was never violent," she said. "But here, everything changed."

The woman, in her 70s and a widow for 20 years, said she nevertheless misses her husband.

"Today, if I would be young again, and my husband would hit me, I might leave him. But I am not sure," she admitted.

She connected his physical abuse with long periods of unemployment, during which he blamed her for all their problems.

"I realize that he probably felt ashamed in front of the children. But then I hurt, both mentally and physically. I can still feel the blows and kicks, although over 20 years have passed," said the woman, who asked to remain anonymous.

The paradox of why abused and battered women return to their husbands was raised by a young vocalist who sang about a village on the slopes of a volcano in India.

"The life of a battered woman," explained Shirley Youval, introducing the song, "can be compared to the lives of villagers who keep returning to the volcano that destroys their village time after time. Why do they return?"

An obvious reason is that they have nowhere to go. The four existing shelters, in Jerusalem, Ashdod, Herzliya and Haifa, can house no more than 50 women and children between them. Women seeking shelter are turned away every day.

"We desperately need more shelters in Israel," said Ruth Reznik, who manages the Herzliya shelter.

To emphasize the dimensions of the shortage, she compared Santa Barbara, Calif., a city of 400,000 that has four shelters, with Tel Aviv, which has not even one.

The campaign for women will continue until Dec. 10, which is International Human Rights Day. Petitions have been circulated declaring violence against women a violation of their human rights.

Because of the Thanksgiving holiday in the United States, the JTA Daily News Bulletin will not be published Friday, Nov. 29.