

75th ANNIVERSARY YEAR**MONDAY, FEBRUARY 10, 1992****VOL. 70, NO. 27****ISRAEL READY TO FREEZE NEW HOUSING
IN ORDER TO GET U.S. LOAN GUARANTEES****By David Friedman**

WASHINGTON, Feb. 9 (JTA) -- Israel appears to have conceded it will have to freeze new housing starts in the West Bank and Gaza Strip in order to get U.S. guarantees for \$10 billion in loans badly needed for immigrant resettlement.

Still to be settled is how many of the settlement construction projects begun in the administered territories Israel would be permitted to complete, and what other conditions would be attached to U.S. underwriting of the loans.

When the Israeli ambassador to Washington, Zalman Shoval, emerged Friday from his latest meeting with Secretary of State James Baker, he indicated the discussions have a long way to go.

He told reporters Israel does not believe that the humanitarian issue of loan guarantees should be linked to the settlements.

But in an apparent sign of resignation, he added, "Obviously that view is not entirely shared by the United States."

Of his meeting with Baker, Shoval said there was "agreement on some points," and disagreement on others. Neither the Israeli envoy nor Baker would give any details.

The Bush administration is making it unequivocally clear to Israel that it will not receive the guarantees if it does not stop building settlements on disputed land.

"If the American people are going to be called upon to make additional assistance available, it's only appropriate, we think, that it be done so based on U.S. policy," Baker said in an interview Saturday on the Cable News Network.

He reiterated that U.S. policy since 1967 has been that the settlements in the territories are an obstacle to peace.

Baker said that any agreement on the guarantees would have to be coupled with a halt to new construction activity, and that anything completed would be reduced "dollar for dollar from assistance to Israel."

Disagreement On Number Of Units

The U.S. proposals have already been made public. They are that Israel would be allowed to complete housing already under construction. The number has been estimated by the United States to be no more than 9,000 units and by Israel to be 13,500 units.

Any construction beyond that would result in the United States canceling the guarantees.

In addition, the United States would deduct from the amount covered by the guarantees the amount of money Israel spends building the houses now started, as well as the cost of new roads and infrastructure to support the settlements.

Israel reportedly has agreed to a slowdown, but not a halt, to new construction and wants to be able to continue building in existing settlements.

In Jerusalem, Israeli officials were trying to put a positive gloss on the difficult negotiations in Washington.

Health Minister Ehud Olmert indicated Sunday that Israel had agreed to the principle that it could complete whatever it has started

building. What is under discussion is numbers, the Likud minister said.

"The question whether it is 10,000 or 12,000 or 14,000 is not essential," he said.

The issue was not on the agenda of Sunday's weekly Cabinet meeting. Foreign Ministry sources said the Shoval-Baker talks would continue later this month and that the hope in Israel is for an amicable accord.

The sources declined to discuss whether the money spent completing the approved building starts would be deducted from the guarantees.

Complicating the negotiations are the positions of Sen. Patrick Leahy (D-Vt.), chairman of the Senate Appropriations subcommittee on foreign operations. He met with Baker after the Shoval meeting.

Leahy, who first proposed the dollar-for-dollar cut, told The New York Times that if the administration and Israel cannot reach an agreement, he will make his own proposal.

If either Israel or the administration rejects the proposal, "there won't be a loan guarantee package this year," Leahy told The Times.

(JTA correspondent David Landau in Jerusalem contributed to this report.)

**PALESTINIANS PROTEST ARAB'S DEATH,
WHICH CORONER BLAMES ON HEART ATTACK****By Gil Sedan**

JERUSALEM, Feb. 9 (JTA) -- Anti-Israeli violence erupted during the funeral Saturday of Palestinian security suspect Mustafa Akawai, despite an autopsy report confirming that his death was not the result of torture by Israeli interrogators.

The report did not deter Palestinian activists from using the incident to gain maximum political mileage at home and abroad.

Akawai, an alleged member of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine, was placed under administrative detention on Jan. 22 on suspicion of security offenses.

He died Feb. 4 at a military prison in Hebron. An Israel Defense Force physician attributed death to a heart attack.

The post-mortem, performed Friday by an Israeli coroner, was witnessed by an American forensic expert, Dr. Michael Baden, whose presence was requested by the Akawai family.

Baden, director of the New York State Department of Criminal Medicine, confirmed that a heart attack was the cause of death. Akawai, only 33, suffered severe arteriosclerosis, the autopsy found.

Justice Minister Dan Meridor promptly expressed satisfaction with the results. He said he was relieved, adding that it was important that the authorities who supervise interrogations make sure that "deviations" from acceptable practices are avoided.

But Baden did not entirely absolve the Israeli authorities. He told a news conference here Friday that the harsh conditions in the prison, the pressures of the interrogation and the near freezing temperatures in the room could have contributed to cardiac failure.

As news of Akawai's death spread, the Palestinian community and many Israelis held the

General Security Services -- or Shin Bet, Israel's internal intelligence agency -- responsible.

Its operatives have been implicated in suspicious deaths of Arab detainees in the past.

Suspicion of torture increased after Akawai, appearing before a Hebron military court Feb. 3 to have his period of detention extended, displayed bloody wounds and bruises he claimed were inflicted under questioning.

The presiding judge, Maj. Moshe Knobler, ordered the police to investigate but refused an appeal by Akawai's attorney to release the prisoner for medical treatment.

Baden said at his news conference that if the prisoner had received immediate medical attention and was hospitalized, his life might have been saved.

Temple Mount Violence Averted

Both before and after the autopsy, passions ran high among the Palestinians. Faisal Husseini, a nationalist leader in East Jerusalem, summoned a news conference at which he accused the Israelis of having beaten Akawai to death.

Left-wing Knesset members Amnon Rubinstein and Yossi Sarid, along with Haim Oron, chairman of the Labor Party's Knesset faction, joined the attack on the Shin Bet.

A day after Akawai died, Palestinians staged a protest parade in East Jerusalem, which police broke up when it threatened to get out of hand.

Thousands attended Akawai's funeral, which began at the deceased's home in Jerusalem's Wadi Joz neighborhood and ended at the Moslem cemetery near the Lion's Gate, at the eastern entrance to the Old City.

Palestinian leader Faisal Husseini was among the mourners, as was Ali Abu-Hillal, a deported activist who was allowed to return to Jerusalem late last year.

Simultaneously with the funeral, a ceremony outside Al-Aksa Mosque on the Temple Mount turned into a fierce nationalist rally. Youths climbed to the roof of the mosque waving giant Palestinian flags. The crowd began to chant demands for revenge.

The Jerusalem police was poised to enter the Temple Mount to restore order but thought better of it.

A police attack to end a rock-throwing riot there 18 months ago resulted in the deaths of 17 Palestinians and touched off a series of revenge stabbings of Jews.

This time, Police Commander Haim Albaldes appealed to the heads of the Supreme Moslem Council, who are in charge of the Islamic shrines on the Temple Mount. They intervened and quiet was restored within minutes.

There were scattered incidents over the weekend in the administered territories. An Israeli farmer who picked up Arab workers from Dahariya, near Hebron, said one of them stabbed him while he was driving and left him for dead in the back of his truck.

And Hilla Levy, a 23-year-old resident of Netsarim settlement in the Gaza Strip, was seriously injured by an explosive device that detonated in the settlement's greenhouse.

An Arab woman from Artas village, near Bethlehem, died of heart failure Saturday after Israeli soldiers fired rubber bullets at a car rushing her to a hospital.

The car, driven by the woman's son, smashed through an IDF roadblock, "endangering the lives of the soldiers," the IDF said.

JEWISH GROUPS URGE U.S. TO STOP REPATRIATION OF HAITIAN REFUGEES

NEW YORK, Feb. 9 (JTA) -- Mindful of the way some Jews fleeing Nazi Europe were denied haven as they approached U.S. shores, Jewish groups have strongly protested the Bush administration's forced repatriation of Haitian boat people seeking asylum in the United States.

More than 1,000 of some 9,000 Haitian refugees given temporary shelter at the U.S. naval base in Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, have been forcibly returned to their politically volatile island nation since Jan. 31, when the U.S. Supreme Court upheld the Bush administration's decision to deny them asylum.

The American Jewish Committee, Anti-Defamation League, Hebrew Immigrant Aid Society and National Council of Jewish Women are all calling for a cessation of the forced returns.

Several Jewish groups are also backing legislation introduced in Congress that would provide temporary protected status for the Haitians.

The Bush administration maintains that the Haitians are fleeing mainly for economic reasons, rather than because of political persecution, and are therefore not eligible for U.S. refugee status.

But that has been disputed by Jewish groups.

The Anti-Defamation League said in a terse statement last week that the Haitians' "flight from their native country is impelled by justifiable fear for their physical safety." It urged the government to offer the refugees temporary protection.

Joan Bronk, president of the National Council of Jewish Women, observed in a letter to President Bush last week that the "continuing violence and terror" in Haiti "has led the U.S. to recall its ambassador -- a clear confirmation of the extremely dangerous conditions" there.

"Certainly the lives and safety of the repatriated Haitians cannot be guaranteed," she wrote.

'Ethical And Legal Obligations'

"The United States, with its current diminished embassy staff, cannot effectively monitor the safety of people forcibly repatriated," Gary Rubin, director of national affairs at the American Jewish Committee, said in a statement issued Feb. 3.

"To carry out the policy of involuntary return is a severe violation of our ethical and legal obligations," he said. "We urge the government to cease the current misguided policy immediately."

Similarly, Ben Zion Leuchter, president of HIAS, argued, in a statement issued Friday, that it is "an abrogation of the United States' long-standing commitment to humanitarian values to return Haitians whose safety cannot be guaranteed in a country torn by political violence and unrest."

He expressed concern that, with Congress in recess, the proposed legislation to grant the Haitians temporary protected status may not be adopted in time.

He urged the administration to halt the repatriation operation until Congress can take action.

The bill has been introduced in the House of Representatives by Rep. Romano Mazzoli (D-Ky.) and in the Senate by Sen. Connie Mack (R-Fla.) and Dennis DeConcini (D-Ariz.).

ARGENTINA TO ASK OTHER COUNTRIES TO OPEN THEIR FILES ON NAZI CRIMINALS

By Tom Tugend

LOS ANGELES, Feb. 9 (JTA) -- The Argentine government, which last week opened its files on Nazi war criminals, will ask other Latin American countries to do likewise.

The assurance was given Feb. 6 by Argentine Interior Minister Jose Manzano to Shimon Samuels, a senior official of the Simon Wiesenthal Center, at a lengthy meeting in Buenos Aires.

According to Samuels, Manzano pledged that:

- Argentina will establish a working relationship with the Wiesenthal Center and consider it a "professional partner" in tracking down information on Nazis sheltered in Argentina.

- Suspected Nazis named by the Wiesenthal Center will be arrested and held by authorities, pending full investigations.

- The Argentine government will order all regional and local authorities to turn over to the National Archives any documents on their investigations of suspected war criminals.

At the same time, Samuels is pursuing two priorities. One is to track down the files on Adolf Eichmann, which are mysteriously missing. Argentine Foreign Minister Guido di Tella has told Samuels he is puzzled by the missing information and will look into the matter immediately.

"It is clear that someone had an interest in hiding the Eichmann files," said Rabbi Marvin Hier, dean of the Wiesenthal Center here.

Samuels is also searching for any leads on Heinrich Muller, last head of the Gestapo and Eichmann's boss, who was last seen leaving Adolf Hitler's bunker in Berlin the day before the fuhrer's suicide. Muller has not been seen since and his disappearance is "one of the biggest mysteries of World War II," said Hier.

Numerous Death Threats

President Carlos Menem of Argentina, who personally unsealed the war criminal files in a ceremony on Feb. 3, has come under intense criticism from Peronist trade unions for the move. Menem has been accused of betraying Argentina at the bidding of Zionists and the United States.

Samuels himself has received numerous death threats, after his hotel room number was published in a local newspaper. He has been assigned a protective detail of 25 policemen and travels only with armed motorcycle escorts.

Despite such pressures, di Tella assured Samuels that his government would "come clean" on its past help to fugitive Nazis, regardless of the possible political cost. He also expressed his apologies to the Jewish people for Argentina's past role in sheltering war criminals.

Samuels read the file on Josef Mengele and reported that German and Argentine authorities had known as early as 1956 that the man known as the "Angel of Death" at Auschwitz was hiding in Argentina.

In an important move, Mengele's son and widow have agreed, after years of refusing, to make available blood samples, to be matched against DNA extracted from the bones of the man exhumed in 1985 in Sao Paulo, Brazil, and assumed to be Mengele.

The tissue typing is being done in England, and is the last test an international team has been waiting for to release findings it is believed will absolutely verify that the man who drowned in Brazil in February 1979 was indeed Mengele.

CANADIAN COURT DEALS SETBACK TO PAWLOWSKI WAR CRIMES CASE

By Gil Kezwer

TORONTO, Feb. 9 (JTA) -- A Canadian Supreme Court ruling barring federal prosecutors from using videotaped evidence in court has dealt a legal blow to the war crimes case pending against Michael Pawlowski.

As a result of the ruling, the Justice Department will have no live eyewitness testimony against Pawlowski when pretrial proceedings resume March 13.

Pawlowski, 74, was charged in November 1989 with eight counts of war crimes and crimes against humanity in the deaths of 410 Jews and 80 Poles killed in 1942 in the Minsk region of White Russia, now independent Belarus.

Federal prosecutors had hoped to send a team to Belarus, formerly the Soviet republic of Byelorussia, to gather evidence against Pawlowski.

But the Supreme Court last week barred an appeal of a ruling issued last May by Justice James Chadwick of the Ontario Court General Division, which found that videotaped evidence from witnesses in the former Soviet Union was inadequate as the central basis of the case.

That month a key witness died in Canada who was to have given critical testimony involving the massacre of 80 Poles and eight Jews in the village of Yeskovich.

David Matas, a lawyer for B'nai Brith Canada, urged the Justice Department "to proceed with the case and address the evidence-gathering issue at trial."

Matas, who is the author of a book called "Justice Delayed: Nazi War Criminals in Canada," said war crimes trials are suffering from a low priority and a lack of sympathy and attention from the judiciary.

No Convictions Yet In Canada

Sol Littman, director of the Simon Wiesenthal Center's Canadian office, said that in view of the decision on videotaped evidence, Canadian courts should follow the example of a Scottish court that traveled to Lithuania to hear the evidence against a war crimes suspect.

Littman acknowledged the difficulties of mounting a trial half a century after the crimes were committed but accused the government of dragging its feet in delaying investigations.

"If there is any sincerity whatever in Canada's prosecution of war criminals, then they will not stop now and, if necessary, they will simply move the venue over to the country where the crimes were committed."

Pawlowski, a retired carpenter, has been living since 1951 in Renfrew, Ontario, 65 miles west of Ottawa. He is the second person arrested under war crimes legislation enacted by Parliament in September 1987.

Unlike in the United States, Canadian law allows for the criminal prosecution of certain offenses perpetrated on foreign soil before the accused entered the country, in addition to civil proceedings, like deportation or extradition.

A 1986-1987 royal commission headed by Justice Jules Deschenes identified 20 prime Nazi war crimes cases to be urgently pursued. The Quebec Superior Court judge also recommended another 200 cases be further investigated.

Since then, one accused war criminal has been denaturalized, but none has been convicted on war crimes charges.

LONELINESS MORE A PROBLEM THAN JOBS FOR RECENT IMMIGRANTS, SURVEY FINDS

By Hugh Orgel

TEL AVIV, Feb. 9 (JTA) -- Loneliness, rather than anxiety about jobs or housing, appears to be the chief source of unhappiness among recent immigrants from the former Soviet Union, according to a new survey conducted by the Jerusalem Institute for Israel Research.

That may be because more than half of the recent olim entering Israel's work force have found jobs, according to the Absorption Ministry.

The survey, whose results were published Sunday in the daily Ma'ariv, found that 66 percent of the 150 immigrants surveyed listed lack of social ties and the emotional support of friends as the chief source of unhappiness.

Only 27 percent cited joblessness as their chief anxiety, and 6 percent cited housing.

When 150 absorption workers were asked what they thought to be the immigrants' chief problems, their responses differed markedly, indicating a misperception on their part of the absorption difficulties olim face.

Only 18 percent of the absorption workers surveyed thought that lack of social support was the main cause of discontent. Thirty-four percent cited joblessness.

One-third of the olim said they were most annoyed by the rude and inefficient treatment they receive from the Israeli bureaucracy. That is also the main complaint of veteran Israelis.

Economic problems were cited by 29 percent of the immigrants as their chief concern; 18 percent complained of lack of culture, lack of civility and uncleanness in public places.

Negative attitudes of Israelis toward immigrants was mentioned by 11 percent.

Asked if they were sorry they came to Israel, 80 percent replied no.

Majority Satisfied With Israel

Likud Knesset member Ariel Weinstein said last week that 62.5 percent of the new olim are "satisfied" or "very satisfied" with their life in Israel, according to another recent poll.

Nevertheless, the poll found that more than 35 percent of the immigrants would advise friends and relatives still in the former Soviet republics to stay put for the time being, compared to 21.7 percent who would tell them to come here now.

Immigration to a different country would be recommended by 15.6 percent.

Weinstein said the survey was taken among 820 immigrants from different parts of the former Soviet Union who arrived in Israel between September 1989 and September 1991.

Meanwhile, Absorption Minister Yitzhak Peretz told the Knesset last week that only 30,000 of the 135,000 immigrants who have sought jobs in the last three years are idle. The rest of those not working -- more than half the unemployed -- are enrolled in job-training or Hebrew-language courses.

The minister gave a breakdown of immigrant employment. Of the 65,000 olim who are working, 39,000 are in industry, 5,000 in construction, 2,500 in tourism and 1,200 in agriculture.

An additional 2,500 immigrants have established small businesses of their own, and 6,000 are employed in business services.

There are 9,500 working in the public sector as doctors, nurses, teachers, scientists and other occupations, Peretz reported.

JEWISH AGENCY CHIEF URGES SHAMIR TO ACT TO STEM DECREASE IN ALIYAH

By Bernard Josephs

London Jewish Chronicle

LONDON, Feb. 9 (JTA) -- Jewish Agency Chairman Simcha Dinitz carried his political fight over national priorities in Israel to London last week, pulling no punches at meetings with fund-raisers and Zionist loyalists.

Dinitz, a member of Israel's opposition Labor Party and a former ambassador to the United States, challenged Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir to take measures to stem the falling immigration rate from the republics of the former Soviet Union, instead of indulging his ideological proclivities.

If the government puts settlements and territory first and fails to provide jobs and homes for the newcomers, the results will be disastrous, said Dinitz, who is also chairman of the World Zionist Organization.

"In years to come, everyone will forget whether Jews take over another three or four houses in a village like Silwan," he said. But "if we fail to bring Jews here from Russia, we will be forever accused of a sin of omission."

Silwan is an Arab enclave within Jerusalem's municipal boundaries where Jewish militants, backed by government funds, have ousted Arab inhabitants and occupied their homes.

Dinitz said he was alarmed by last month's immigration rate from the 11 republics of the Commonwealth of Independent States, the successor to the Soviet Union.

The monthly figure was down to around 6,000, compared to over 20,000 a month when Soviet aliyah was at its peak. Dinitz called it a "yellow warning light."

"We have people sitting on their suitcases in the former Soviet Union waiting to see what is happening in Israel," he said.

"We are now facing a serious slowdown in immigration and this cannot be permitted," he added. "We do not know how long we have to get the Jews out."

Dinitz said the Israeli government is doing too little, too slowly, to provide jobs for the olim. He urged Shamir to take charge of the task, which is the country's top priority.

"Compared to this, settlements and borders, whatever their merits, are meaningless. We have to reverse the trend of falling immigration."

JEWS BEG TEMPORARY DUTCH ASYLUM

By Henriette Boas

AMSTERDAM, Feb. 9 (JTA) -- A group of former Soviet Jews who came to Holland from Israel seeking asylum begged a court here last week for permission to remain until they can find another country willing to accept them.

The 57 emigres were appealing a lower court's decision to return them to Israel on grounds that they could wait there just as well as in Holland for a chance to emigrate.

But their lawyer said their lives would be endangered if they were returned.

About 300 former Soviet Jews arrived here from Israel during the past year saying they could not adjust to life in that country.

But most have since been returned. Dutch authorities, usually liberal toward people seeking asylum, denied them refugee status on grounds that they did not face persecution in Israel.