

## ISRAEL CAUGHT OFF GUARD BY NEW SCHEDULE FOR PEACE TALKS

By David Landau

JERUSALEM, July 26 (JTA) -- A proposal to resume the Middle East peace talks in Washington next month has caught Israel off guard.

While Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin has stressed his desire to speed up the pace of negotiations, government sources said he would much prefer to stick to the schedule worked out before the talks adjourned in late spring. This called for the talks to resume in September in Rome.

Rabin was quoted as saying at a cabinet meeting on Sunday that Washington was "too far" and August "too near."

The change in venue from Rome to Washington was reportedly due to Italy's inability to guarantee necessary security arrangements in August, when half the city's policemen apparently take vacation.

But Israeli observers feel the proposed transfer back to Washington may be linked to U.S. Secretary of State James Baker's desire to continue overseeing the process even after he takes up his expected new role as manager of President Bush's re-election campaign.

There is also a belief that the Bush administration wants to advance the talks in order to produce a major foreign policy success prior to the November elections.

After returning from a six-day tour of the Middle East, Baker said Saturday that the United States would like to see the talks resume August 10 in Jerusalem.

### Ministers Somewhat Embarrassed

That date is reportedly not to the liking of Rabin, who is scheduled to visit with Bush in Maine that week and would like an interval between that visit and the resumption of the peace talks.

Ministers were somewhat embarrassed Sunday by the turn of events. After all, the new Rabin government has laid heavy emphasis on its desire both to intensify and to speed up the peace process.

Minister of Agriculture Ya'acov Tsur and Minister of Health Haim Ramon both told reporters that Israel wanted to comply with U.S. proposals for an early resumption of talks. Nevertheless, officials later made it clear that this desire to cooperate did not extend to moving the talks back to Washington.

The previous Israeli government put a premium on moving the talks close to the Middle East, for both symbolic and logistic reasons. The new government basically subscribes to the same reasoning. In fact, the logistical considerations take on even more urgency under the Rabin plan for the talks, given that the new prime minister wants the negotiating rounds to continue for several weeks on end.

Previously, each round lasted at most ten days -- a schedule seen as a manifestation of the Likud government's desire to drag out the talks indefinitely. Long sessions in Rome, with periodic breaks for consultations at home, was seen by the new government as an efficient and convenient way to advance the talks.

On Sunday night amid the confusion, it seemed that if Baker insists on Washington as the venue and August as the time, Israel will probably not want to make an issue of it.

Also on Sunday, Syria announced it would attend the next round in Washington, putting further pressure on Israel to comply with the American plan.

"Clarifications are proceeding," a government source told the Jewish Telegraphic Agency. "Nothing is finalized, despite American statements."

## SETTLERS DEALT NEW BLOW AS CABINET INVESTIGATES SUBSIDIES AND TAX BREAKS BY Gil Sedan

JERUSALEM, July 26 (JTA) -- The settlers movement, still reeling from the dramatic housing cuts announced last week, received another blow from the Israeli cabinet.

In its weekly meeting Sunday, the cabinet set up a committee to investigate the benefits received by settlers in the administered territories. The tax breaks, discount mortgages, and subsidized power and water that have drawn thousands of non-ideological Israelis to the settlements are likely to be rescinded.

For their part, the settlers are planning campaigns to continue construction without government funding, and to fill up the many apartments built in the past two years which still lie vacant. Also under discussion are massive protests and legal challenges to the new government's policies.

Threats of violence were also being heard. Both Housing Minister Binyamin Ben-Eliezer and Finance Minister Avraham Shohat have received threatening phone calls. It was those two ministers who last week cancelled contracts and plans for 6,681 housing units in the territories.

Noam Federman, an activist with the extremist Kach movement, said if the government did not back down on its new policy, he "would not be surprised," if "people will be hurt, not only (Ben-Eliezer), but also other ministers."

A more moderate reaction was issued by Aharon Domb, the spokesman for the Jewish settlements in the administered territories. He said that no one intends to hurt the minister, and that the conflict would be carried out "in a public manner."

### Ben-Eliezer Warns Against Violence

Ben-Eliezer said that attempts by settler leadership to dictate government priorities were futile.

"They used violent methods also during the Likud government. This will be no more," he told Israel Radio.

Ben-Eliezer met Sunday with a delegation of Jewish mayors from the territories.

"It was no picnic," said the mayors, after trying to persuade him that the announced \$410 million cuts in spending on the territories was too drastic and worked contrary to the government's own policy.

They were particularly upset by the government's decision to cancel several new roads. Even under the autonomy plan, those roads were neces-

sary for strategic supervision of the West Bank, they said.

On the other end of the political spectrum, Labor's main coalition partner, Meretz, also voiced dissatisfaction with the government's building policy in the territories. The cuts were too minimal, Meretz argued.

Al Hamishmar, the daily newspaper of Meretz' Mapam faction, proclaimed in a banner headline, "Meretz will find it difficult to remain in the government, which builds housing units for yet another 50,000 settlers."

However, sources inside Meretz said the party had no intention of quitting the coalition because of the housing policy.

The freeze announced last week covered mostly units for which contracts have been signed but construction not yet begun and units only in the planning stages. It did not deal with another roughly 10,000 housing units already under way in the territories, which Meretz says could provide homes for another 50,000 settlers.

"We do not threaten that we shall not sit in the government," said Knesset Member Haim Oron, "but according to the guidelines of the new government, Meretz does not regard itself responsible for the settlement of 50,000 to 60,000 new settlers in Judea, Samaria and Gaza."

It seems likely, however, that the government will soon suspend work on thousands of apartments already under construction. More than 2,300 units at the foundation stages have been temporarily suspended, and it is expected that work will also be stopped on at least 1,600 units even further under way.

In accordance with Rabin's distinction between "security" and "political" settlements, construction was not frozen on 1,686 units in the greater Jerusalem area, including settlements such as Ma'aleh Ephraim, Efrat, Betar and Ma'aleh Adumim.

But it remains to be seen whether U.S. Secretary of State James Baker, who has insisted that all settlements are an obstacle to peace, will allow construction to proceed in those areas.

## STATE DEPARTMENT'S ROSS ENCOURAGES ISRAELIS ON ARMS CONTROL TALKS

By Hugh Orgel

TEL AVIV, July 26 (JTA) -- Dennis Ross, a senior aide to U.S. Secretary of State James Baker, told Israeli leaders that Israel and its Arab neighbors got off to "a very good start" in arms control talks but all sides must remain "creative, patient and determined."

Ross, director of policy planning at the State Department and head of the American delegation to the Middle East arms control talks, addressed a meeting at Tel Aviv University on Friday. He had returned here to brief Israeli leaders after Baker concluded his swing through Jordan, Syria, Lebanon, Saudi Arabia and Egypt.

Ross sounded upbeat about the new prospects for the peace process and termed Baker's talks with Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin "extraordinarily good."

Most of his talk was devoted to arms control. The arms race has been a source of increasing concern here since the Israeli defense establishment estimates that Iran, Iraq and possibly other countries in the region may possess a nuclear capability within a decade.

Ross said the countries concerned should set themselves "ambitious goals" but "be realistic

about how we're going to get there. We have to go step by step, brick by brick."

Incremental steps can alter the climate and the perceptions of one another and can reduce mutual suspicions, he said.

Ross suggested the parties begin by studying their own experiences with the existing limitation-of-forces agreements in the Sinai and the Golan, as well as the tacit agreements concerning Lebanon which have proven effective.

Some, but not all, of the American and former-Soviet experiences could be copied too, he maintained.

Israel and the Arabs could also introduce confidence-building measures such as communication links between their armies, advance notice of military exercises and a declaration of intent not to use chemical weapons.

"You start with them because they don't put one side or the other at a disadvantage. They can be extremely important to create a different psychological atmosphere," he said.

During his talk, Ross emphatically denied that President Bush and Secretary of State Baker are anti-Semitic.

"The extraordinary reality is that Baker's most senior advisers on Middle East issues happen to be Jewish," he said. Ross also reiterated that the U.S. commitment to Israel's security is "absolutely unshakable."

## ARAB CHILD KILLED BY IDF FIRE; ARMY APOLOGIZES FOR INCIDENT

By Gil Sedan

JERUSALEM, July 26 (JTA) -- A 4-year-old Arab child was killed by Israel Defense Force soldiers in a shooting incident in Khan Yunis on the Gaza Strip.

In a rare move, the army issued a statement expressing sorrow over the death of the child even before completing its investigation into the matter.

The statement added that the three soldiers involved were suspended from regular duty, pending completion of the investigation.

The incident occurred Friday. An army roadblock had been placed in Khan Yunis following a report that an Arab-owned car carrying several terrorist suspects was seen in the area.

A car fitting the description of the one carrying the wanted terrorists was seen approaching the roadblock and then turning abruptly onto a side road.

According to the army statement, the soldiers fired several shots in the air, but the car failed to stop. They then fired in the direction of the fleeing car, which soon disappeared from the scene.

A short while later, a 4-year-old Arab child, Na'im Salim Emuna, of Khan Yunis, was brought to the local Nasser Hospital, suffering fatal bullet wounds. He died shortly thereafter.

Kamel Emuna, the child's father, admitted that he diverted his car from the army roadblock, because he wanted "no complications," since he did not possess his driving license and insurance documents. He said he had heard the shots, but did not think they were directed at him, and only a while later did he realize his son was wounded.

Following the incident, tension ran high in Khan Yunis, where the now-widespread intifada first got its start in December 1987.

An army outpost in town came under machine-gun fire Saturday night. No one was hurt.

**DEMOLITION OF GREEK ORTHODOX SITE  
SPARKS IRE OF ATHENS FOREIGN MINISTRY**  
By David Landau

JERUSALEM, July 26 (JTA) -- Greece has lodged a diplomatic protest with Israel over the destruction last week by the Jerusalem municipality of two buildings on the Mount of Olives belonging to the Greek Orthodox Patriarchate.

The protest, made public over the weekend by the foreign ministry in Athens, called on the Israeli authorities to compensate the Patriarchate and to allow it to rebuild the two structures.

Greek officials and clerics claim that one of the two demolished buildings had been a church, although it had not yet been completed or consecrated. They cited the presence of icons in the building as proof that it was being used for religious purposes.

City officials said they had acted only after long months of futile attempts to get the Greek Orthodox Church to cease construction, which had been done in contravention of city planning ordinances.

They cited several letters of warning delivered to the Patriarchate. They added that the patriarch, Diodorus I, had actually pledged to stop the work but had not abided by his commitment.

City officials then sent notice to the Greek Patriarchate informing it of their intention to act. They also sent copies of the letter to all the other churches in the city as well as to all the consuls-general stationed here.

Two days after the Patriarchate was notified, city bulldozers appeared at the site. Under police protection, they proceeded to demolish both buildings. Greek officials offered no resistance when demolition began.

Observers have registered surprise and dismay at the incident, given the long history of cordial relations between the Greek Patriarchate and the Israeli authorities.

The Greek Orthodox Church is one of the oldest denominations in the city. It is also the largest landowner in Jerusalem.

**GROUP COMMEMORATES PETAIN'S DEATH,  
PROVOKES PROTESTS OVER VICHY CRIMES**  
By Michel Di Paz

PARIS, July 26 (JTA) -- The 41st anniversary of the death of Marshall Philippe Petain was commemorated last week by a group of some 50 people on the Atlantic island of Yeu, off the French coast of Vendee.

The event provoked protests from those who recalled the anti-Semitic crimes of the Vichy regime that he headed during World War II.

Petaín had been exiled to a small jail on Yeu after the death penalty imposed on him following the war was commuted to a life term.

The commemoration attracted more reporters than supporters of the man who led France into collaboration with the Nazis.

The group solemnly marched through the main street of Yeu before hearing a mass in memory of Petain. Afterwards, they walked to the cemetery to lay a wreath on Petain's grave and then visited the cell where he spent the final years of his life.

The marchers belonged mainly to the Association for the Defense of Marshall Petain's Memory, a group supportive of Petain's policies, including his anti-Semitic laws.

Former French President Charles De Gaulle

decided to honor Petain's memory, and on Nov. 11, 1968, he sent a wreath to Yeu to mark the 50th anniversary of the end of World War I. All of De Gaulle's successors -- including current French President Francois Mitterrand -- have done the same on various occasions.

These gestures have been strongly criticized by many French intellectuals, who have been infuriated by Mitterrand's steadfast refusal to condemn openly the crimes of the Vichy regime, especially the part France took in the Final Solution.

French lawyer and Nazi-hunter Serge Klarsfeld stated that a close adviser to the French president assured him that Mitterrand would stop sending flowers to Petain's grave.

Mitterrand's entourage was embarrassed by the subject and refused to confirm this information.

Klarsfeld said it was an "aberration" to lay wreaths on Petain's tomb to honor the hero of World War I and at the same time to dissociate oneself from the Vichy regime. "I don't see how one can one day mourn the victims of Dr. Jekyll and the next day honor the memory of Mr. Hyde. They were, after all, the same person," said Klarsfeld.

French Foreign Minister Roland Dumas, a close friend of Mitterrand, commented last week about the responsibility of Vichy in the Final Solution, "Let's avoid (inflicting) new wounds to the nation."

Asked about the campaign requesting Mitterrand to acknowledge the crimes of Vichy, Dumas called it "an operation of dirty politics" against Mitterrand.

**ITALIAN OFFICIAL AND JEWS CLASH  
AT DINNER HONORING IDA NUDEL**  
By Ruth E. Gruber

ROME (JTA) -- A dinner in Turin in honor of ex-Soviet refusenik Ida Nu-del became the scene of a clash between supporters of Israel and Turin's deputy mayor.

Nudel, who is in Turin to promote the Italian edition of her autobiography, was awarded honorary citizenship of the city in a ceremony July 15.

At the dinner following the ceremony, five members of the Italy-Israel Association stood up and walked out, claiming they could not sit at the same meal with deputy mayor Marziano Marzano, a socialist.

The group has long maintained that Marzano is anti-Israel, but there also appeared to be a strong dose of local politics surrounding the incident.

"We will not eat with any enemy of Israel, which is what Marzano has demonstrated himself to be," said Angelo Pezzana, president of the association, who is also a Turin city council member from a party opposing Marzano's.

"Out of respect and in an evening in which the guest is a person who fought for 17 years, held in Siberian camps, in criminal mental hospitals, to defend the rights of Jewish compatriots, this person (Marzano) cannot be at the same table. Either he goes or we do," Pezzana said.

According to the Turin newspaper La Stampa, Marzano left the room, but was convinced to return by Mayor Giovanna Cattaneo "out of respect for the guests."

Marzano refused to comment, saying only that he was "bitter" over the incident.

## CANADIAN JEWRY MOBILIZES BEHIND NATIONAL UNITY AND REFORM

By Bram D. Elsenthal

MONTREAL, July 26 (JTA) -- Canadian Jews have mobilized to support the ongoing efforts to reform their country's constitution and salvage ties with French-speaking Quebec, home to one of Canada's oldest and most viable Jewish communities.

Under the auspices of its National Unity Committee, the Canadian Jewish Congress has become a vocal supporter of a proposed constitutional accord that would safeguard federalism. B'nai Brith Canada has also participated actively in the passionate debate over national unity.

At the recent CJC national plenary in Toronto, newly elected CJC national president Irving Abella stressed the importance of unity. "Coupled with the question of survival as a people must be survival as a nation," said Abella.

"The message that has emerged loud and clear from this Congress Assembly was that we Jews cannot afford to be spectators in the most fundamental constitutional crisis in our history," he said. "Apathy signifies defeat; silence at this time will destroy us."

Progress in the unity talks has been stalled, however, because Quebec has been boycotting the negotiations since the collapse of the Meech Lake Accord to reform the Canadian constitution in 1990.

But earlier this month Quebec Premier Robert Bourassa began studying an offer from the premiers of the eight remaining provinces that represents the best hope so far that a compromise will be achieved.

### Quebec To Have More Autonomy

Under the new package, Quebec would have more autonomy -- a crucial issue for Bourassa and his constituency -- while the now largely ineffectual Canadian Senate would gain additional power.

A bill passed by the Quebec legislature requires Bourassa to hold a referendum on the future of the province before Oct. 26. To date, the Quebec leader, who faces a vocal opposition that wants the French-speaking province to separate from Canada, has been carefully non-committal regarding the compromise package.

At issue during the current negotiations has been a long list of items. Of major significance in the new package is that Quebec will finally achieve recognition in the constitution as a distinct society.

The distinction was coveted by the predominantly French-speaking population, which is almost obsessed with preserving what it views as a unique language and culture in a country that is overwhelmingly Anglophone.

But Quebec's separatists and federalists alike have lately been voicing opposition to the package. The sticking point for both groups is the issue of senate reform. The new proposal calls for an equal number of senators from each province -- and both groups are angered over the possibility that Quebec might end up with fewer senators than before.

Max Bernard, chairman of CJC's National Unity Committee, remains confident that some sort of a deal could be worked out, one that would please all the provinces. "I'm optimistic. I think that all Canadians, including those in Quebec, are far too intelligent to shoot themselves in

the foot," said the Montreal lawyer. "We're all beginning to realize what a great country we have."

The National Unity Committee is part of the Constitutional Coalition, composed of members of the Jewish, Greek, and Italian communities. In recent months, Bernard and other coalition members have toured Canada making a pitch for unity and Bernard is extremely pleased with the results.

"I think it has made a difference," he said. "We met with Canadians from all walks of life and, significantly, those from our individual communities. We made them understand the value of unity and the value of keeping Quebec within Canada."

Bernard said that Canadian Jewry's involvement in the unity debate has had positive ramifications for the community, even among French Quebecers. "I don't think that there has been a negative perception of Jews because of our involvement, quite the opposite.

"On the national tour, we received very positive feedback from all parts of the country, Quebec included. I think what we've done is very positive for our community," he said.

Ian Kagedan, B'nai Brith Canada's director of government relations, believes the crucial issue is constitutional protection for multiculturalism. This, he said, is paramount to protection from racism.

"We have a clear vision of Canada as a multicultural, non-racist state," said Kagedan. "It's a country of immigrants, built by immigrants, and we have always felt strongly that ethnic groups should not have to trade in their own backgrounds in order to become Canadian."

"We want the multicultural nature of Canada recognized in the 'Canada clause' (the introductory portion of the constitution) entrenched in our constitution as much as any other fundamental principal," he added.

Kagedan considered it essential that Quebec remain a part of Canada. "One needs the other, but it's a tragedy beyond words for Canada if Quebec separates."

He rejected the sentiments expressed by those like author Mordecai Richler, who in his recent book, "Oh, Canada! Oh, Quebec!" stated that Quebecers are anti-Semitic.

Kagedan said Jews here had nothing to fear. "I think the problem is one of insensitivity where others are concerned and too much sensitivity where French Canadians are concerned," he said. "But that's not the same as racism."

### IDF CONTINUES RAIDS ON HEZBOLLAH BASES

By Hugh Orgel

TEL AVIV, July 26 (JTA) -- Israeli aircraft attacked Hezbollah bases in southern Lebanon on Friday, continuing a series of raids against the Islamic fundamentalist group.

The raids came in response to stepped-up attacks on Israel Defense Force and South Lebanon Army forces in the border security zone, apparently aimed at disrupting the recent visit to the region of U.S. Secretary of States James Baker who was here to promote the Middle East peace process.

Reports from Beirut said that four planes had carried out two sorties against targets in the Jebel Safi area in the Tufach region some 10 miles east of Sidon.

The IDF spokesman said all planes returned safely to their bases after the raids.