

**PROGRESS IN PEACE TALKS HAMPERED BY VIOLENCE AND CHARGES OF BLAME**

By Cynthia Mann

States News Service

WASHINGTON, Nov. 17 (JTA) -- Middle East negotiators were wrapping up a round of bilateral talks here this week that has been tarnished by regional violence and public charges of blame for undermining the prospects for peace.

Some of the parties said they were disappointed in the paltry results of the round and by Tuesday none had accepted a U.S. invitation to reconvene the talks next month.

But some analysts cautioned against pessimism. They said that progress cannot and should not be measured round for round and that the fact that the talks are continuing is itself a breakthrough. They also said the pace reflects a natural slowdown during the presidential transition of the talks' chief sponsor.

"Everyone is looking for results in every session, but that is a mistake" said Judith Kipper, Middle East scholar for the Brookings Institution. "People have to have a perspective. There are painful decisions to be made that will take a long time."

The parties "are only now starting to understand the complexity of the issues," she said.

There had been hopes that Israel and Syria would reach an agreement of principles before the end of the round that would form the basis for the negotiation of a peace treaty.

But those hopes were dashed with a series of sharp exchanges between Israel and Syria in the wake of violence in southern Lebanon and the administered territories.

Last weekend, Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin charged that Syrian President Hafez Assad was undermining the peace talks by allowing the Islamic fundamentalist Hezbollah to launch rocket attacks against Israel. The strongholds of the Iranian-backed Hezbollah guerrillas are controlled by Syria.

Israel retaliated for the attacks in raids the Lebanese protested as excessive. Once the rocket attacks stopped, the Israelis pulled back.

**Gesture Sought From Assad**

Rabin called for a gesture from Assad that would allay Israeli doubts about striking a deal with Syria that involves giving up part of the Golan Heights.

On Monday, Syria's chief negotiator in the talks lashed back with the accusation that Rabin is the party "blocking peace" because he refuses to commit to withdrawal from the Golan.

Rabin has said repeatedly that Israel is willing to withdraw from part of the strategic plateau. But he has said he will not spell out the concessions until Syria details the nature of the peace it envisions in return.

Likewise, the head of Israel's negotiating team with Syria, Itamar Rabinovich, said Monday that Syria's "insistence on full withdrawal, without any willingness to elaborate on or elucidate peace" is "a recipe for no progress."

He said Syria could advance the process by "a series of measures" that would "indicate publicly a transition to a policy of peace."

By Tuesday, the parties reported more serious and engaged discussion. Rabinovich said the Israelis' persistence apparently had paid off in a new understanding by Syria of "why it is important for us to hear more about peace before we can clarify more about withdrawal."

Syrian negotiators appear to have hardened their posture during the consultations in Damascus during the recess for the U.S. presidential elections. The Israelis believe they will try to stall until they have a chance to take stock of the incoming administration.

Rabin has also accused Palestine Liberation Organization leader Yasir Arafat of purposely stalling the Palestinian track of the talks until Bill Clinton assumes the presidency.

Clinton has maintained a discreet distance from the talks, though he frequently has reiterated his strong support for the peace process. The Bush State Department, meanwhile, is trying to cajole the parties forward.

**More Progress With Jordan**

Some analysts say the Palestinians are playing for time until they consolidate their authority back home.

But a Palestinian press attache said the delegation is eager to press ahead in the talks on an interim Palestinian self-government, and that it is the Israelis who are playing for time.

"We had hoped for more concrete proposals in the seventh round for a self-governing authority and for human rights, and we are not encouraged," he said.

The Israelis were more optimistic about the gains made in this track. They said they had broken up into groups discussing human rights, land, the economy and the administration of law in the territories under interim Palestinian authority.

"If someone thinks they will be able to show progress on a daily basis, they are wrong," said Ruth Yaron, the Israeli Embassy spokeswoman. "But the fact that we are sitting with Palestinians in informal working groups" and discussing details on a wide range of issues signifies real progress, she said.

In the talks between the Lebanese and the Israelis, chief Israeli negotiator Uri Lubrani reported "relief and satisfaction" on both sides at the de-escalation of the border conflict.

Last week Lubrani issued a tough warning to the Lebanese delegation that Israel would "make life intolerable" on their side of the border if the Hezbollah attacks continued.

This week he said he made it "very clear" that progress at the talks could be made only through a peace treaty and that "tranquility" on the border would enhance the talks and prospects for such a treaty.

He also reported the Israelis submitted a revised proposal for a meeting between Israeli and Lebanese military officers to discuss security problems along their common border.

The highlight of this round of talks remained an agreement reached between Israel and Jordan on an agenda on which to base the negotiation of a peace treaty. The negotiators this week began to address the first item on the agenda, sharing water resources.

**POLICE HOLD MEMBER OF KACH GROUP  
IN CONNECTION WITH GRENADE ATTACK**  
By Gil Sedan

JERUSALEM, Nov. 17 (JTA) -- Police have detained a member of the extremist Kach movement in connection with a grenade attack that killed one Arab and wounded 12 in the Old City of Jerusalem. They said they were questioning a Petach Tikvah man in his early 20s after an Israeli army-issue grenade was hurled into the Butchers Market, killing a 70-year-old shopkeeper, Atef Marzouk Abdul Rizk Dakidak.

Large reinforcements of police and border police were rushed to the city after rock-throwers Tuesday targeted Israeli-owned vehicles in the Old City. Several persons, including tourists, were reportedly hurt.

Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin condemned the attack and said those kind of assaults could not be tolerated whether they were committed by Arabs or Jews.

The suspect was described as a man with ultraright-wing views and a criminal record. Police said his arrest did not necessarily mean he was involved in the attack. They cautioned against premature conclusions on the identity of the perpetrators.

News agencies said they had received reports both prior to the attack and after it attributing responsibility to followers of Rabbi Meir Kahane, the Kach movement leader who was assassinated in New York two years ago.

A Labor Party Cabinet minister warned that the situation in eastern Jerusalem was dangerous. Housing Minister Binyamin Ben-Eliezer said it was "very tense, on the threshold of blowing up."

He said that pointing a finger at Jewish extremists before the conclusion of police investigations only added to the tension. He said, too, that it was still too early to judge whether a new Jewish underground was in the offing.

**RIOTS ERUPT IN JERUSALEM  
OVER UNEARTHING OF BONES**  
By Gil Sedan

JERUSALEM, Nov. 17 (JTA) -- Just as Jerusalem police were trying to restore quiet in the Old City following a grenade attack there Monday that killed an Arab shopkeeper, riots broke out Tuesday in the western part of the capital.

The demonstrators were not Palestinians but haredim, or fervently Orthodox Jews, who were protesting archaeological digs on alleged gravesites.

The digs are being carried out in the French Hill neighborhood, in an effort to save archaeological findings before a new road is built in the neighborhood.

The haredim have charged that the excavations are desecrating old burial caves.

In the haredi neighborhood of Mea Shearim, rioters threw stones and eggs at vehicles, including police cars, overturned garbage bins in the middle of roads and set them on fire.

At least one woman complained that her car was badly damaged by angered religious Jews and that she had been beaten as well.

Police dispersed the demonstrators by force. At least 15 haredi demonstrators were detained.

The riots continued until late Tuesday evening. When quiet was finally restored, large police forces remained at hand to maintain the calm.

**GERMAN ARMY CHIEF OF STAFF  
BECOMES FIRST TO VISIT ISRAEL**  
By Gil Sedan

JERUSALEM, Nov. 17 (JTA) -- When Gen. Klaus Naumann arrived here Sunday night to begin a four-day official tour of Israel, he became the first German army chief of staff to visit the Jewish state.

The arrival of the strongly pro-Israel German military leader comes against a background of deepening defense cooperation between the two countries.

But his schedule acknowledges the symbolism of a visit by the top German soldier to a state created in the aftermath of the Nazi genocide against the Jews.

In a memorial ceremony Monday, Naumann laid a wreath on behalf of the German armed forces at the Yad Vashem Memorial to victims of the Holocaust.

And at his own request, the 53-year-old German chief of staff was to speak on neo-Nazi violence in today's Germany at a meeting with top Israeli commanders.

Naumann is reportedly well aware that Germany's worst enemies are now located within German society -- and not outside.

Naumann's visit is a reciprocal one for a visit paid to Germany last April by the Israeli chief of staff, Lt. Gen. Ehud Barak. He is accompanied by senior German officers and a group of reporters.

Despite longstanding Israel-German military cooperation, the visit has a problematic aspect because of sensitivity, particularly in Israel, to the buildup of German armed forces. Germany now has the largest standing army in Europe.

*(Contributing to this report was JTA correspondents Hugh Orgel in Tel Aviv.)*

**THATCHER TELLS AUDIENCE IN ISRAEL  
WESTERN LEADERS SHOULD NOT DISARM**  
By David Landau

REHOVOT, Israel, Nov. 17 (JTA) -- Former British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher, addressing an audience at the Weizmann Institute of Science here, called on Western leaders this week not to disarm too rapidly in the wake of the fall of communism.

"We live still in a world full of uncertainty," she said. "As I look around me now, I have one fear: It is that people will be taking down our defenses too quickly."

Thatcher and her husband, Sir Denis, were due to leave Wednesday at the end of a three-day private visit as guests of the Weizmann Institute. The former prime minister of Britain was one of six honorees awarded doctorates at a special session of the institute's board of governors.

Another honoree was a longtime friend of Israel's, U.S. Sen. Daniel Inouye (D-Hawaii), who was cited for "unflinching personal courage in the pursuit of dignity, justice and freedom, both at home and abroad."

Thatcher was recognized for her "defense of freedom around the world, her valiant championing of human rights" and her "enduring support for Israel and the Jewish people."

Thatcher, now a member of the House of Lords, earlier unveiled a plaque dedicating the Margaret Thatcher Interdepartmental Scientific Equipment Center in the chemistry department of the Hebrew University.

## CJF APPROVES RULES TO GIVE NEW POWERS TO CENTRAL BODY

By Larry Yudelson

NEW YORK, Nov. 17 (JTA) -- The Council of Jewish Federations has approved new bylaws that will turn the umbrella organization into a parliament of its member federations.

But that small step of organizational reorganization represents a giant leap for the concept of an American Jewish community larger than the sum of its parts.

Much as the U.S. Constitution put issues of federalism and states rights at the center of political discussion for two centuries, the restructuring of the council is only the beginning of what is likely to be a protracted debate on who should control money raised by local federations.

Should the money be allocated by the community that raised it? Or should the needs of the North American Jewish community as a whole dictate priorities, just as the decisions on how to spend the funds passed on to Israel are made by central bodies?

The federal idea -- what is being referred to by federation leaders as "fair share" payment to meet "continental responsibilities" -- was developed in recent years in response to the massive exodus of Jews from the former Soviet Union.

Federations created a formula for allocating among themselves the responsibility for resettling immigrants in America and for guaranteeing \$900 million worth of loans for immigrants to Israel.

These allocations were based on the size of the communities and the amount they were able to raise for their federation campaigns.

But the new institutionalization of the principles of fair share and collective responsibility comes at a crucial time for the CJF, as it shifts its focus away from helping imperiled Jews around the world and toward the issue of ensuring the survival of American Jewry in the face of rampant assimilation and intermarriage.

In addressing that issue, the federations face fewer clearcut answers and a level of controversy perhaps jarring for institutions much more comfortable working within a consensus.

### Binding Levy Idea Controversial

With its new form of governance, the CJF has become, arguably, the most democratic American Jewish organization, and the closest the Jews of the United States have come to a national Jewish congress.

The new CJF board of delegates consists of representatives of its nearly 200 member federations, with each delegation reflecting the size of the community and its campaign. This replaces a board of directors which, while striving for geographic representation, was truly accountable only to itself.

And the newly formed executive committee, a body of about 50 individuals overseeing CJF's day-to-day operations, will be more representative than its predecessor under the old bylaws. The new committee will have drawn from small, medium and large federations from each of four regions in the United States and one in Canada.

This shift of power, from a board of individuals to a board representing federations, has aroused little controversy.

What has aroused controversy, however, is the creation of a new power of the CJF to raise a binding levy on its member federations.

This levy could be ratified in one of two

ways: either by 85 percent of the delegates and 85 percent of the federations, or by 85 percent of the much smaller CJF executive committee.

The actual impact of this clause, as approved, is minimal, since a ceiling for the levy was set at 0.1 percent of the overall federation campaign, or roughly \$800,000.

That figure is less than the amount recently approved under a non-binding fair-share formula to aid the Florida Jewish community in the wake of Hurricane Andrew in September.

### Passes By A Wide Margin

But the clause is seen by both its proponents and its opponents as the beginning of things to come. If it works, the dollar ceiling could be raised -- enabling the federation system as a whole to take broader action.

This communal mandate will inevitably come at the expense of local autonomy. And that, say some federations, is not a good thing.

"We are frankly opposed," Phillip Pinsky, president of the Syracuse, N.Y., federation said last Friday, before his delegation cast two of the 16 votes opposing the new bylaws. There were 407 votes in favor.

Pinsky cautioned that his federation had yet to decide how it would deal with a bill from the CJF office in New York for the \$1,000 it could be asked to pay under the new bylaws.

Those who advocated the new system do not dispute that it could ultimately lead to a national decision-making authority.

But, said Conrad Giles, a vice president of the CJF and co-chairman of the committee which drafted the new bylaws, "that can only evolve as a result of the federations who are sitting here."

"When you say this is a tax," the other co-chairman, David Sacks, said prior to the vote, "I don't quarrel with the concept, though I don't like the language. But this additional amount can only be assessed with 85 percent approval," in contrast to CJF dues, which are assessed by a simple majority.

As to concerns that the executive committee could levy the tax without a consensus, Sacks pointed out that member federations must first be notified of the issue and given the opportunity to make their feelings known to the committee.

Said Giles: "This last (presidential) election turned on, trust me, read my lips. One thing this system has is, we trust ourselves. We do have a history together. The only way we can move forward is with a sense of trust."

### U.N. ASKS ISRAEL FOR EXPERTISE

UNITED NATIONS, Nov. 17 (JTA) -- Israel has been asked to provide the United Nations with experts to help direct and observe democratic elections around the world.

The request, conveyed by U.N. Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali to Israeli Ambassador Gad Yaacobi, is only the latest indication that Israel is being permitted to play a normal role in the world body.

Responding affirmatively to the request, Yaacobi pointed out that Israel can contribute expertise to the advancement of democracy, having educated large numbers of immigrants from non-democratic countries in the ways of elections.

In Jerusalem, the Foreign Ministry has begun looking for experts to place at the United Nations' disposal, from academia, party election committees and the Interior Ministry.

## EX-JUSTICE DEPARTMENT ATTORNEY SAYS HE DIDN'T THINK DEMJANJUK WAS 'IVAN'

By Judith A. Saks  
The Observer

NASHVILLE, Nov. 17 (JTA) -- A former U.S. Justice Department attorney testified at a special hearing that he did not believe John Demjanjuk was "Ivan the Terrible," a guard accused of committing atrocities at the Treblinka concentration camp during World War II.

Testifying at hearings last week into possible misconduct by Justice Department officials in the 1986 extradition of Demjanjuk to Israel, John Parker said he had expressed his hesitation to others.

"When I left the department, I did not believe Demjanjuk was 'Ivan the Terrible,'" said Parker, a trial attorney for the Office of Special Investigations from 1978 to 1980.

The Ukrainian-born Demjanjuk, 72, a retired Cleveland-area autoworker, was stripped of his U.S. citizenship in June 1981. He was deported in 1986 to Israel, where he was convicted in 1988 of crimes against the Jewish people and sentenced to death. He has been held in solitary confinement since 1986.

The Israeli Supreme Court, presented with new evidence of possible mistaken identity, is expected to rule soon on the appeal.

Parker testified in Nashville before U.S. District Judge Thomas Wiseman Jr., who is sitting as a special master in the case at the behest of the 6th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals in Cincinnati, which handled the original extradition hearings.

The case was reopened last summer when new evidence surfaced, raising the possibility that government attorneys may have withheld information during the extradition proceedings.

### Discrepancies In Descriptions

Parker testified Nov. 12 that he had expressed doubts at the time over discrepancies in physical descriptions of "Ivan the Terrible."

"There were inconsistencies among the people who were there," Parker testified.

Another puzzling aspect of the case was the omission of Demjanjuk's name from a Polish list of 43 Treblinka guards.

"The Sobibor evidence was going this way and the Treblinka evidence was going that way," Parker testified.

Asked by Demjanjuk's lawyer, Michael Tigar, if he had ever shared his doubts with Demjanjuk's counsel in 1979-80, Parker replied, "No."

The judge then asked Parker if he knew the law required the department to turn over all evidence to the defense attorney. Parker said he understood the attorney had to ask for specific information.

There was "a whole lot" the defense attorney had not asked for, Parker said.

The "law required you to come forward and give information even if the wrong question is asked," Wiseman explained.

In testimony Nov. 13, Martin Mendelsohn, another Justice Department attorney, denied withholding documents that might have been helpful to Demjanjuk's defense. He said the department only gave the defense papers that were specifically requested.

The hearings are tentatively scheduled to continue here Dec. 21, with testimony from other former Justice Department attorneys.

## HUNGARIAN PRIME MINISTER ANTALL TAKES SWIPE AT ANTI-SEMITE CSURKA

By Agnes Bohm

BUDAPEST, Nov. 17 (JTA) -- Amid growing international focus on anti-Semitism in his backyard, Hungary's prime minister has taken a sharp but indirect swipe at a leader of his own center-right governing party.

Without mentioning him by name, Prime Minister Jozsef Antall attacked Istvan Csurka, a vice president of the ruling Hungarian Democratic Forum, for publishing articles asserting that Jews, capitalists, liberals and communists were seeking to undermine Hungary. Antall is president of the party.

He told a party forum here last week that it is unacceptable that the prime minister of Hungary remains a target of challenge from many parts of the world because of conduct Antall described as stupid and foolish.

Csurka was hailed as a hero at commemorations here Oct. 23 of the 1956 Hungarian uprising against Soviet rule.

At the ceremony, hundreds gathered in front of Parliament, bearing symbols of the Arrow Cross, the Hungarian fascist party of World War II. Many of them were skinheads. They heckled and silenced President Arpad Goncz, who left.

Csurka's outbursts, which blame international banking and international Jewish influence, come in the ruling party's newspaper and in regular radio broadcasts.

Antall's attack on Csurka, albeit without naming him, drew praise from the newly elected leader of the largest opposition party in Hungary. Ivan Peto, 46, head of the Alliance of Free Democrats and himself a Jew, welcomed Antall's forceful opposition to extremist forces within his own party.

But the organized Jewish community was unhappy over Antall's reluctance to push for legislation banning extremist organizations and making it illegal to deny the Holocaust took place.

Meanwhile, the Jewish community has welcomed a statement by the Hungarian Catholic Church condemning anti-Semitism. The condemnation was patterned on the Oct. 28 statement by Pope John Paul II deploring "hatred, persecutions and displays of anti-Semitism directed against the Jews at any time and from any source."

### **20 ARRESTED AT SOCCER MATCH**

By Henriette Boas

AMSTERDAM, Nov. 17 (JTA) -- Police arrested 20 people during a soccer match here last weekend after it erupted in anti-Semitic catcalls.

Supporters of the Rotterdam team Feyenoord made hissing sounds to imitate Nazi gas chambers and shouted "Jews" at members of the Amsterdam team Ajax.

For some reason, the Ajax team, which has no Jews, is known as the "Jews Club."

Against the background of growing anti-Semitic and racist expressions at European soccer matches, an attempt at a response was made by supporters of both teams, who distributed flyers against racist epithets.

Holland has no law to prevent such expressions. But another Dutch soccer team installed closed-circuit video in its stadium to locate such hooligans, arrest them and prevent them from attending games.