

**CLINTON AIDE TELLS AMBASSADORS
PEACE TALKS TO BE HIGH PRIORITY**By Cynthia Mann
States News Service

WASHINGTON, Dec. 1 (JTA) -- President-elect Bill Clinton's top national security adviser has met with the Israeli and Egyptian ambassadors here to reassure them that the Middle East peace process will remain a high priority of the U.S. government under Clinton's leadership.

Samuel Berger told the Jewish Telegraphic Agency he conveyed to Israeli Ambassador Zalman Shoval and Egyptian Ambassador Ahmed Maher el-Sayed that "Clinton is deeply committed to the peace process" and that "we want to maintain continuity."

Shoval will actually be stepping down from his post Feb. 5, shortly after Clinton officially takes office. He will be succeeded by Itamar Rabinovich, the head of the Israeli team negotiating with Syria in the bilateral peace talks here.

Berger said the meetings with the two envoys went little beyond the basics, in recognition that "Bush is president until Jan. 20" and "we don't yet have a secretary of state."

He said he explained "we are in the early stages of the transition" and "our first priority is getting the team organized, and there is an understanding of that."

Berger is heading the transition team responsible for picking the players and determining the strategies that will shape the Clinton administration's foreign policy.

Parties Looking For Signals

Israeli Embassy spokeswoman Ruth Yaron said Shoval spent much of the hour-long meeting briefing Berger about the peace process and about U.S.-Israeli bilateral relations. She said it was the first in a series of such meetings planned by Shoval and Berger.

Clinton himself told Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin after his election that he would assign high priority to the peace process.

But all the parties to that process appear eager for signals about how the regional talks will be handled by the Clinton team, which has stressed domestic priorities over foreign ones.

The last round of the bilateral talks, which ended two weeks ago, made little progress, as the parties accused each other of stalling until they could size up the incoming administration.

Particularly concerned are the Arab parties, which seem to feel that Clinton may tilt more toward Israel than did President Bush and his former secretary of state, James Baker.

Syrian President Hafez Assad told Time magazine last week that if Clinton is as "enthusiastic" as Bush and Baker were, "he will receive the appreciation of the people of this region. If he is not so enthusiastic, which we think is highly improbable, then everything will come to a standstill."

Yaron said she hoped the delegations would "come around and engage" in the eighth round of talks, scheduled to begin Dec. 7.

Israel has accepted the U.S. invitation to the new round, but the Arabs have put off their decision until their foreign ministers meet.

**ISRAEL REVOKES PRESS CREDENTIALS
OF 2 WHO REPORTED TZE'ELIM AFFAIR**

By Lisa Clayton

JERUSALEM, Dec. 1 (JTA) -- Israel revoked press credentials Tuesday from two foreign journalists who published details of an army training accident without first submitting them to the military censor.

The Foreign Press Association said it would fight the "deplorable action" taken by the Government Press Office against Carol Rosenberg of the Miami Herald and Ian Black of The Guardian in Britain.

They were penalized for filing stories on a Nov. 5 army exercise in the Negev, in which five members of an elite army unit died and six more were wounded when a missile was fired accidentally.

Four other correspondents have been summoned to the office of the military censor to receive the lesser penalty of a rebuke for similar violations.

The press association said it suspected information on the ill-fated military accident at the Tze'elim training grounds may have been "deliberately leaked" to correspondents by insiders anxious to broaden public knowledge of the disaster.

The disciplinary actions come amid calls for changes in censorship procedures that date back 50 years to a pre-electronic era. Members of the press want a policy that takes into account the technologies of instant communication.

Information Deliberately Leaked?

Adding another note of complexity to the debate is what has been dubbed the war of the generals inside the army itself over responsibility for the accidental firing of the missile during the exercise at Tze'elim.

An army board of inquiry singled out Maj. Gen. Amiram Levin and two other officers for discipline. But military sources began leaking information that the Maj. Gen. Uri Saguy, chief of military intelligence, had been present at the exercise and should also carry responsibility for what happened there.

Both Black and Rosenberg have denied they were the ones who revealed the fact of Saguy's presence or the report that the exercise was in preparation for the planned assassination of a leader of the Islamic fundamentalist Hezbollah in Lebanon.

They claim their information came from Israeli sources, who deliberately leaked it so that Israelis could learn of it. Israeli newspapers are able to cite news items reported abroad without submitting them to censorship.

In an interview with Israel Radio, Black said he reported only information that had appeared in the Israeli news media and that he therefore had no need to submit the copy to censorship.

He claimed the real story was the intentional leaking of information to foreign correspondents by government officials and senior officers determined to have the Tze'elim incident reported more fully.

The Foreign Press Association said it would take legal action to fight the penalties imposed

by the censor on its members. It charged Israel with fostering a hostile atmosphere against the foreign press corps in "an effort to divert attention from the accident that resulted in the death of five Israel Defense Force soldiers."

It said the very existence of military press censorship "is incompatible with a free press in a democratic state."

BROADCASTING AUTHORITY TO REVIEW TERMS USED TO REFER TO TERRITORIES By Hugh Orgel

TEL AVIV, Dec. 1 (JTA) -- Israel will re-evaluate terminology used in news broadcasts to refer to territories captured in the Six-Day War, according to an Israeli Arab leader.

Dr. Ahmed Tibi said the minister in charge of a public body that oversees state-supported television and radio has promised to look into his complaints about their use of the names "Judaea and Samaria" to refer to the West Bank.

That terminology, which is used in the Bible, has long been preferred by the right-wing Likud bloc, which believes that the area is an inseparable part of the biblical Land of Israel. The governing Labor Party and its allied Meretz bloc, on the other hand, favor territorial compromise.

Tibi said that Education Minister Shulamit Aloni, who heads Meretz, has pledged to ask the Israel Broadcasting Authority to re-examine the names by which news reports refer to the territories, which came under Israeli control in 1967.

A spokesman of the ministry has denied instructions are given to radio and television broadcasters on terminology to be used for the territories.

Tibi is chairman of the association of academics in the Israeli Arab town of Taiba and is reported to have close ties with the Palestine Liberation Organization.

He said he had written to Aloni on the issue and received a reply from one of her advisers, who also confirmed that the official term used by Israel at the peace talks is "the territories."

RABIN CLARIFIES HIS COMPARISON OF PLO AND ZIONIST ORGANIZATION By David Landau

JERUSALEM, Dec. 1 (JTA) -- Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin this week found himself trying to explain a controversial analogy he drew between the World Zionist Organization and the Palestine Liberation Organization.

In a letter to Simcha Dinitz, chairman of the World Zionist Organization, Rabin said the comparison was intended only to illustrate the subordinate position to which the Tunis-based organization would be relegated after Palestinians in the administered territories assumed self-rule under an autonomy framework.

"The analogy with the PLO was intended solely to stress that the focus of (Palestinian) political decision-making will be transferred from abroad to Eretz Yisrael," the prime minister wrote Dinitz.

Rabin was careful to stress the ongoing importance of the WZO after the establishment of the Jewish state.

He said the analogy "in no way relates to the importance of maintaining and strengthening the ties between Israel and the Diaspora, in which the WZO fulfills a central role."

"The Zionist movement played a central role

in the aliyah of half a million Jews to Israel during recent years," the prime minister noted in the letter. "It is also active in Zionist education and in educating young people toward aliyah.

"I am certain that the World Zionist Organization has great national tasks ahead of it, and I send my greetings to those who undertake this work," he wrote.

Rabin elicited a startled reaction when he made the comparison Sunday at a luncheon of newspaper editors. As he himself predicted on the spot, the remark generated headlines the next day.

Leaders of the opposition Likud bloc responded with wrath.

Knesset Member David Levy, a former foreign minister, said Rabin had implied the PLO would undertake the task of encouraging the Palestinian diaspora to immigrate to the territories following a political settlement.

Another Likud Knesset member, Michael Eitan, said Rabin had shown himself unfit to be prime minister.

Dinitz, a Labor Party ally of Rabin's, said the remarks were ill chosen. But he told a radio interviewer it had not been the prime minister's intention to criticize the WZO.

ISRAEL REVIEWING POLICY BARRING AIDS CARRIERS FROM IMMIGRATING By Michele Chabin

JERUSALEM, Dec. 1 (JTA) -- Israel's Interior Ministry has decided to re-examine a controversial regulation barring people from developed countries who are infected with the virus that causes AIDS from immigrating here.

Until the issue is resolved, any potential immigrant infected with HIV, the virus that causes AIDS, cannot be stopped from entering the country, according to ministry officials.

The decision to reconsider the regulation, which went into effect in April but was rarely, if ever, enforced, follows three weeks of public protests.

Health professionals, advocacy groups and private citizens have demanded that the regulation be revoked. A special session of the Knesset was also convened to examine the issue.

Health Minister Haim Ramon and Absorption Minister Yair Tsaban will meet with Interior Minister Aryeh Deri in the near future to decide whether the regulation is an effective means of limiting the spread of AIDS in Israel.

On Tuesday, which was designated World AIDS Day, opponents of the regulation insisted that education about AIDS is the key to preventing the proliferation of the fatal disease.

Toward that end, the Health and Education ministries, as well as the Israel AIDS Task Force and other groups, sponsored a series of events designed to educate people about the disease, which has already infected some 2,000 Israelis.

Among the more controversial efforts was a poster depicting the importance of using condoms to prevent AIDS, which was hung on hundreds of bus shelters around the country.

The Health Ministry, which sponsored the poster, said it had made every effort to steer them away from bus stops in religious neighborhoods.

"We've tried to be sensitive to peoples' sensibilities," a ministry spokesperson said, adding, however, that "several parents have already called in their objections."

FRENCH COURT RULES TOUVIER CAN BE TRIED FOR WAR CRIMES

By Michel Di Paz

PARIS, Dec. 1 (JTA) -- France's highest court has ruled that French war crimes suspect Paul Touvier may stand trial for his role in the killing of seven Jewish hostages in 1944.

But that does not necessarily mean he will be brought to justice at any time in the near future. The case against him could still be thrown out by a lower court, triggering a new round to a legal battle that has dragged on for years.

Touvier was head of the Milice in Lyon, a paramilitary militia that rounded up Jews. He was a close aide to Klaus Barbie, the Lyon Gestapo chief, who was known for his brutality toward Jews and Resistance figures.

After the war, Touvier twice received death sentences in absentia. Granted refuge by members of a right-wing splinter group of the French Catholic Church, he evaded capture until his arrest in 1989.

The Paris Court of Appeals had ruled in April that Touvier could no longer be tried for war crimes, especially if they were committed under orders.

That ruling was met with strong protest throughout France, from Jews and non-Jews alike, who saw it as a whitewash of the Vichy regime.

The decision was overturned Friday by the French Supreme Court, which ruled that Touvier could be tried for crimes against humanity, which are not subject to a statute of limitations.

However, the Supreme Court agreed with the lower court to dismiss, for lack of evidence, charges that Touvier killed the head of the French League of Human Rights and his wife. It also said he could not be prosecuted for allegedly handing over Resistance fighters to the Nazis.

Trial Considered Unlikely

The Supreme Court referred the remaining case against Touvier to the Court of Versailles. It will now have to investigate Touvier's responsibility for rounding up the seven Jews who were shot in July 1944 in Rillieux-le-Pape, near Lyon, in retaliation for the assassination of a Vichy minister by Resistance fighters.

If the Versailles Court rules against Touvier, he would be the first Frenchman to stand trial for crimes against humanity.

Two other high Vichy officials, both in their 80s, are also awaiting trials. Maurice Papon administered the Bordeaux region. Rene Bousquet was head of the Vichy police.

All three men were involved in deporting Jews to their deaths.

Observers predict that none of these men will ever be brought to trial. In the Touvier case, the Versailles judges could throw the case out of court, in which case a new appeal would probably follow.

The only thing likely to bring these men to justice is a signal from French President Francois Mitterrand that he is in favor of such a trial. But such a move is considered highly improbable, since Mitterrand has said often that modern-day France bears no responsibility for the crimes of the wartime Vichy regime.

What is more likely is that in order to calm the anger of the Jewish community, Holocaust survivors and former Resistance fighters, Mitterrand will decide to make the anniversary of the roundup of the Jews an official commemoration.

VANDALS RANSACK A SYNAGOGUE IN FRENCH CITY OF STRASBOURG

By Michel Di Paz

PARIS, Dec. 1 (JTA) -- A synagogue in the eastern French city of Strasbourg was vandalized late Monday night by intruders who ransacked its offices and scrawled anti-Semitic slogans on the walls.

Vandals sneaked into the Meinau synagogue and systematically smashed whatever they could find in the offices. They also daubed the walls with such slogans as "Death to the Jews" and "Hitler will kill all the Jews."

They were scared off the premises after the wife of the rabbi unexpectedly opened the door.

She noticed the alarm had been turned off and then saw the destruction. Too frightened to scream, she ran out and slammed the door behind her. She then heard the vandals running out through another exit.

Her appearance probably prevented the vandals from desecrating the sanctuary.

"Nothing seems to have been stolen," the rabbi's wife told the Jewish Telegraphic Agency. "They were just out to break everything."

The attack was called a national issue by Jean Kahn, head of CRIF, the representative council of French Jewish groups, who is a founder of the Meinau synagogue.

"Democracy must prove its will to face the threats these aggressions involve," he said. "Should they be renewed, should the culprits not be discovered and prevented from carrying on their criminal activities, then France, like Germany, would become a prey to violence."

THOUSANDS OF ITALIANS MARCH TO SHOW SOLIDARITY WITH JEWS

By Ruth E. Gruber

ROME, Dec. 1 (JTA) -- Tens of thousands of Italians marched in protest against racism and anti-Semitism over the weekend.

The march followed two more incidents involving the desecration of Jewish cemeteries. Late last Thursday night, Nazi slogans were scrawled on tombstones in two small cemeteries near Como, in northern Italy.

Earlier last week, it was discovered that a Jewish cemetery in Naples had been vandalized.

On Saturday, thousands of people, mainly students, marched through Rome, Milan, Bari and other cities to show solidarity with Italy's 30,000 Jews and to protest racist violence.

Many marchers wore big yellow stars, recalling those the Nazis forced Jews to wear during the Holocaust. They carried banners and chanted slogans such as "Never Again," and "We are all Jews."

On Sunday, about 4,000 people marched through Rome to the old ghetto area, near the main synagogue, to demonstrate identification with the Jewish community.

"I am happy for this display of solidarity, but it would be much better if it hadn't been necessary," said Rome Chief Rabbi Elio Toaff.

Speaking to the crowd through a megaphone, he said, "We are grateful to you because you demonstrate that those who have shown violence and mental shortcomings, that small fringe, does not count for anything among the Roman people."

The march was organized by local district officials who said they wanted to set an example for the city.

RELIGIOUS LEADERS CALL ON U.S. TO TAKE ACTION IN BOSNIA, SOMALIA
By Debra Nussbaum Cohen

NEW YORK, Dec. 1 (JTA) -- In a rare show of unity, Jewish, Moslem, Catholic, Protestant and Eastern Orthodox religious leaders have called jointly on the U.S. government to take stronger action in war-torn Bosnia-Herzegovina, and in Somalia, where people are starving in a man-made famine.

The leaders gathered Tuesday to demand that the Bush administration "see to it, by whatever morally responsible means may be necessary, that relief supplies reach the people for whom they are intended in both Bosnia and Somalia."

Through the many tens of millions of congregants represented by the umbrella organizations of each faith, the religious leaders hope to turn up pressure on the U.S. government to intervene in the Balkan and Somalian conflicts.

They designated the first Sabbath in December -- this Friday for Moslems, Saturday for Jews and Sunday for Christians -- a "National Sabbath for Prayer and Petition."

Over this weekend, spiritual leaders will be asked to read from their pulpits "A Joint Resolution of the American People," a document issued at the meeting.

The resolution calls on the U.S. government to approve an emergency refugee program and the funding necessary to admit up to 25,000 additional refugees from the former Yugoslavia.

It also demands that the president and other elected officials, acting "in concert with other nations where possible, alone where necessary," redouble efforts to end the violence in Somalia and Bosnia-Herzegovina, and move expeditiously through the United Nations and other international groups to intervene wherever civilians are at risk of mass death.

The meeting was the brainchild of Leonard Fein, a Jewish writer and founder of Moment magazine. It was held at the offices of the World Jewish Congress in New York.

Differences On Use Of Force

Though united on taking stronger action, coalition members differed on whether U.S. intervention in Bosnia and Somalia should include use of military force.

Jewish participants, including Fein and Rabbi Alexander Schindler, president of the Union of American Hebrew Congregations, said that military intervention should be used, if necessary, to ensure the success of humanitarian efforts.

Archbishop Theodore McCarrick, chairman of the Migration and Refugee Committee of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops, said that while he does "not believe in military intervention," he supports the idea of using a military presence if it is needed to set up protected areas where refugees inside Bosnia can safely survive the winter.

The National Council of Churches has not decided its position on the use of military force in these conflicts, said Jay Rock, who is in charge of interfaith relations for the group, which includes Protestant and Orthodox churches.

In the past, there has been a reluctance on the part of its member churches to support force, Rock said.

The Rev. Leonid Kishkovsky, an Eastern Orthodox priest and immediate past president of the National Council, urged U.S. political leaders to help "marginalize" those Orthodox Serbs who

are "committed to violence," and to "enhance" those among the Serbian Orthodox who want to work for peace.

Jewish groups endorsing the resolution and the Sabbath of prayer and petition include the Synagogue Council of America; Reform, Reconstructionist, Conservative and Orthodox bodies; the American Jewish Committee; American Jewish Congress; Anti-Defamation League; Hebrew Immigrant Aid Society; New York Association for New Americans; and the National Jewish Community Relations Advisory Council.

The national Christian signatories are the National Council of Churches, which represents 32 Protestant and Orthodox denominations, and the National Conference of Catholic Bishops.

The National Council of Mosques also endorsed the effort. Its president, Dawud Assad, was scheduled to speak at a news briefing Tuesday but did not show up.

'People Are Literally Starving'

In addition to the religious leaders, members of Sarajevo's Jewish community were present at the meeting.

Citizens of Bosnia-Herzegovina are getting increasingly desperate for help, said the head of Sarajevo's Jewish community, who left his city two weeks ago and is in the United States to speak to religious and political leaders.

Ivica Ceresnjes said that while foreign aid is finding its way into the besieged city, the food and medicine is providing only one-tenth the sustenance that people require.

"People are literally starving," he said. "Before I left I saw a man walking on the street, and he suddenly sat down and died."

"Soon you will be seeing pictures like you saw of the Warsaw Ghetto," Ceresnjes warned. "Without even counting one bullet, we are expecting 50,000 people dead from hunger and the winter by March."

In his own visit this week to the republics, Nobel laureate Elie Wiesel visited detention camps and checked reports of human rights violations there.

During his visit to Sarajevo, which ended Monday, Wiesel proposed to Bosnian President Alija Izetbegovic that he meet with Serbian leaders in Paris.

Izetbegovic rejected the idea, calling the Serbian leaders "the murderers of our children" and their efforts "genocide."

BILL COULD MAKE PROSTITUTION 'KOSHER'

JERUSALEM, Dec. 1 (JTA) -- Israel's prostitutes may be able to practice their profession indoors and above board, if a bill supported by the government passes the Knesset.

Justice Minister David Libai said the spread of the sexually transmitted virus that causes AIDS lends urgency to passage of a bill that would allow prostitutes to get off the streets and conduct business within the safer confines of a home or hotel room.

Libai heads a Cabinet committee that on Monday endorsed a private members' bill that would also permit prostitutes to advertise services that now are published under the guise of massage parlors and escort services.

Skepticism over the bill's chances of getting through the Knesset over the opposition of the Orthodox was expressed by the leader of a group of Knesset members submitting the bill.