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NO. 9

**ISRAELIS, PALESTINIANS CALM  
AS U.S. AND ALLIES ATTACK IRAQ**

By Gil Sedan

JERUSALEM, Jan. 13 (JTA) -- Israelis and Palestinians alike reacted calmly this week to news of the allied air strike on southern Iraq.

Foreign Minister Shimon Peres may have summed up the feeling of many Israelis when he told reporters in Paris on Wednesday that the Iraqis "got what they deserved."

Israeli military sources said the raid by the United States and its allies "does not relate to us directly."

Over and over again, official sources stressed that currently "this is not our war" and there was little chance that the conflict would escalate to include Israel.

U.S. and allied aircraft attacked surface-to-air missiles and other targets in southern Iraq on Wednesday in response to repeated violations of the cease-fire agreement that ended the 1991 Persian Gulf War.

The raid, which reports said lasted about three hours, came after Iraq defied the Western warnings and sent workers into Kuwait to seize military gear left behind at the end of the war and to demolish warehouses remaining there.

In Washington, White House spokesman Marlin Fitzwater said the allied attack would serve to impress upon Iraq that the West meant business when it warned Iraqi leader Saddam Hussein to withdraw anti-aircraft missiles menacing allied aircraft patrolling a "no-fly zone" over southern Iraq.

Fitzwater said more attacks were possible.

In Israel, the calm contrasted starkly with painful memories of the toll taken by the last confrontation between Washington and Baghdad two years ago. During that conflict, Scud missiles were fired at Israel and Israelis donned gas masks in sealed rooms, under threat of chemical attack.

**Missile Attack Unlikely**

Sources said the likelihood Iraq would repeat its missile attacks on Israel was small, partly because its capability had been diminished by the Persian Gulf War and partly because Iraq had no interest in involving Israel at this time.

Sources in Jerusalem said Israeli policymakers were in close touch with Washington over developments.

Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin, who also holds the defense portfolio, spent Wednesday evening in Tel Aviv as usual. And the Israel Defense Force chief of staff, Lt. Gen. Ehud Barak, was in the United States, where he was expected to have a scheduled meeting Thursday with Gen. Colin Powell, chairman of the U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff.

Israelis, generally, showed little anxiety over reports of the raid.

Gas mask distribution stations handled their normal daily load of 300 gas mask replacements, as part of an ongoing national program to update equipment supplied during the Gulf War.

The Tel Aviv Stock Exchange showed some nervousness, with stocks going down 2 percent. But economists said the change was mostly due to speculators making good on profits.

On the other hand, the Palestinian street

showed nothing of the euphoria which characterized it during the Gulf crisis.

The Palestinians' apparent indifference was an indication of the lesson they had learned in losing the good will and aid of Arab states like Saudi Arabia by their support of Iraq's Hussein.

It also reflected their preoccupation with the peace process and with the issue of the more than 400 Moslem fundamentalists expelled by Israel to Lebanon last month.

An indication of their change of heart came in a statement made this week by a top leader of the Palestine Liberation Organization.

On a visit to Saudi Arabia, Mahmoud Abbas, also called Abu Mazen, expressed public remorse over the open support given Hussein by the Palestinians.

"The results of the Gulf crisis have proved the Palestinians should have known not to stray into error and not to let the enemy take advantage of it," he said.

**CHRISTOPHER AFFIRMS HIS COMMITMENT  
TO A STRONG U.S.-ISRAELI RELATIONSHIP**

By Deborah Kalb

States News Service

WASHINGTON, Jan. 13 (JTA) -- Secretary of State-designate Warren Christopher this week affirmed the incoming Clinton administration's support for America's "special relationship" with Israel and expressed its desire to maintain momentum in the Middle East peace talks.

In an opening statement during confirmation hearings Wednesday, Christopher said the Clinton administration would be "committed to maintaining a strong and vibrant strategic relationship" with Israel.

"Our democracy-centered policy underscores our special relationship with Israel, the region's only democracy," he told the Senate Foreign Relations Committee.

He added: "We also believe that America's unswerving commitment to Israel and Israel's right to exist behind secure borders is essential to a just and lasting peace."

The firmly pro-Israel remarks may have been designed to assuage the fears of some in the organized Jewish community who had expressed concern over the past few months about Christopher's commitment to a strong U.S.-Israeli relationship.

A New York Times article last week reported that the Jewish community was dissatisfied with President-elect Bill Clinton's selection of Carter administration veterans, including Christopher, for his foreign policy team.

The Carter administration has been perceived by some in the Jewish community as having been tough on Israel, despite the fact that it helped bring about the Jewish state's first peace treaty with an Arab country, Egypt.

The Times article caused consternation in the Clinton transition team and controversy in the organized Jewish community, with many Jewish organizational leaders saying they did not subscribe to the views espoused in the article.

In an attempt to clear the air, Christopher met last week with a small group of Jewish leaders. Afterward, they expressed satisfaction

with the secretary-designate's willingness to hear their concerns, as well as his affirmation of pro-Israel views.

The National Jewish Democratic Council was quick to issue a statement Wednesday praising Christopher's remarks on Israel.

The secretary-designate's remarks "underscore the strong commitment which he has to the State of Israel, which we have never doubted," said the statement, which was issued by the council's executive director, Steve Gutow.

The testimony is "another sign that Bill Clinton's powerful pro-Israel campaign positions will be translated into foreign policy once he takes office," the group said.

#### Attacks 'Savage' Serbian Policy

In his testimony before the Senate committee Wednesday, Christopher praised the outgoing Bush administration for "bringing the Arabs and the Israelis to the bargaining table," and said, "We must maintain the momentum behind the current negotiations over peace and regional issues."

"We will continue our efforts with both Israel and our Arab friends to address the full range" of issues in the Middle East, he said.

Questioning in the opening hours of the confirmation hearings did not focus on Arab-Israeli relations. Instead, the senators raised questions about such issues as Christopher's role in the Iran hostage crisis, the conflict with Iraq, the current U.S. military operation in Somalia and the ethnic conflict in Bosnia-Herzegovina.

Christopher told the committee the Clinton administration would work with its allies to try to halt the "savage" Serbian policy of "murder, rape and ethnic cleansing" in Bosnia.

The ongoing human tragedy in Bosnia has aroused the concern of American Jewish groups, some of which have drawn parallels between the Nazi Holocaust and the "ethnic cleansing" practiced by the Serbs against Bosnian Moslems.

The Middle East did come up later Wednesday, when Sen. Larry Pressler (R-S.D.) asked Christopher about the administration's commitment to ending the Arab boycott against Israel.

The secretary-designate said he would "do my best" to carry out Clinton's campaign promise of working to end the boycott. He said the "main means for doing that will have to be diplomatic contacts with our Arab friends, and I expect that I will be meeting with them in the very near future."

Treasury Secretary-designate Lloyd Bentsen also pledged to fight the Arab boycott during his confirmation hearings Tuesday.

In response to a question from Sen. Charles Grassley (R-Iowa), Bentsen called the boycott "an anachronistic policy" that does not serve Arab interests. He said he would work with other industrialized nations to "see if we can't bring that boycott to an end."

Rep. Charles Schumer (D-N.Y.) introduced legislation last week that would deny most-favored-nation trade status to "countries that participate in or cooperate with the economic boycott of Israel."

Such legislation has been introduced unsuccessfully in the past, but proponents expect it to fare better in the 103rd Congress.

Christopher was introduced at the start of his confirmation hearings by the two new women senators from his home state of California: Democrats Dianne Feinstein and Barbara Boxer, both of whom are Jewish.

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They are still searching for a third suspect. All three are relatives from the Aida refugee camp, near Bethlehem.

Haim Nahmani, 25, was stabbed and bludgeoned to death at an apartment in Jerusalem's upscale Rehavia neighborhood on Jan. 3. He was due to meet an informer from the Islamic fundamentalist Hamas movement.

Security forces identified the two suspects in custody as Nasser and Mahmoud Abu-Srou, both students at Bethlehem University. The third suspect, Maher Abu-Srou, a Hamas activist, was the informer Nahmani was to meet.

Security sources said it was still not clear whether Maher was acting under orders or whether he was trying to clear himself of suspicion of being a collaborator.

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#### **ISRAEL INDICTS JEW IMPLICATED IN PLOT TO KILL ISRAELI LEADERS** By Hugh Orgel

TEL AVIV, Jan. 13 (JTA) -- An Indian-born Jewish resident of Rishon le-Zion has been indicted for plotting to kill Israeli leaders at the instructions of a Palestine Liberation Organization faction.

Rafael Avraham, 44, was ordered held in custody pending completion of the investigation.

Prosecutors say Avraham, driven by a desire for money, turned to the Fatah group half a year ago after being turned down by the Jordanian and Iraqi embassies in London, to whom he first allegedly offered his services.

Al Fatah is a constituent group of the PLO; both the faction and the umbrella organization are headed by Yasir Arafat.

Avraham allegedly made contact with the group through a Pakistani taxi driver in London who put him in touch with an official of the PLO, Abdul Achman.

Avraham, who has not served in the Israel Defense Force because of mental problems, represented himself as a senior officer in the Israeli army.

He was sent on to Tunis, where he met with Jibril Rajub, described as a senior aide to Arafat and "coordinator of PLO activities in the occupied territories."

Avraham was given \$20,000 and instructed to return to Israel and assassinate an Israeli leader from among a list headed by Ariel Sharon, and including Yitzhak Shamir, Geula Cohen, Yitzhak Rabin and Rafael Eitan.

Rabin became prime minister in July after succeeding a Likud government headed by Shamir and including Sharon. Cohen and Eitan represented right-wing parties in the Knesset at the time.

Avraham spent three days in Tunis, returning to London via Switzerland. While in London, he telephoned Rajub. Pretending he was speaking from Israel, he said he needed another \$11,000 to complete his arrangements.

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## PERES PROPOSES WEAPONS-FREE MIDEAST, HOLDS MEETINGS ON DEPORTATION ISSUE

By Michel Di Paz

PARIS, Jan. 13 (JTA) -- Israeli Foreign Minister Shimon Peres urged the Arab states this week to join in establishing a Middle East free of weapons of mass destruction.

Addressing an international conference on chemical weapons proliferation here Wednesday, Peres urged the creation of a "mutually verifiable zone, free of surface-to-surface missiles and of chemical, biological and nuclear weapons."

Israeli willingness to include nuclear weapons in arms control considerations evidently opened the way for Arab states to participate in the signing here of an international treaty banning chemical weapons.

Earlier, the Arab states had said they would stay away from the chemical weapons conference because of Israel's refusal to sign the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty.

But according to sources here, all of the Arab countries of northern Africa -- including Algeria, Morocco, Tunisia and even Libya -- have now agreed to sign the Convention for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons.

And sources here say that Jordan, Oman, Kuwait, Yemen and Mauritania are expected to follow suit.

On another front, Peres met here Wednesday evening with U.N. Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali in an attempt to resolve the deadlock over the fate of more than 400 Moslem fundamentalists Israel expelled to Lebanon last month.

The meeting took place as Arab states began lobbying for U.N. sanctions to be applied against Israel for its failure to comply with a Dec. 18 Security Council resolution calling on the Jewish state to return the deportees to the administered territories.

### 'Looking For A Solution'

Peres told reporters he had discussed several alternative courses for resolving the issue during the half-hour meeting and that further discussions would take place. He declined to elaborate.

"We are looking for a solution" he said, explaining that Israel does not want to be on a "collision course" with the United Nations.

But he added that the Islamic fundamentalist Hamas movement, to which many of the deportees belong, "must not come out a winner and appear to be getting a prize."

Peres put forward the same point of view in earlier meetings with U.S. Secretary of State Lawrence Eagleburger and with the foreign ministers of China, Italy and the Netherlands.

Dutch Foreign Minister Peter Kooijmans said he was sorry his first official act after taking office last month was the cancellation of a planned visit to Israel by Dutch Justice Minister Ernst Hirsch Ballin, in protest over the deportations.

Initiative for the cancellation came from Dutch Prime Minister Ruud Lubbers at the request of Palestine Liberation Organization chief Yasser Arafat.

Peres met Wednesday night with French Foreign Minister Roland Dumas.

The Israeli foreign minister also was honored with the Personality of the Year Award, which was presented to him by the speaker of the French National Assembly, Henri Emmanuelli.

## ARABS URGING ANTI-ISRAEL SANCTIONS, BUT IMMINENT U.N. ACTION IS UNLIKELY

By Larry Yudelson

UNITED NATIONS, Jan. 13 (JTA) -- The Arab states are urging the U.N. Security Council to consider using sanctions, if necessary, to get Israel to reverse its expulsion of more than 400 Moslem fundamentalist activists to Lebanon.

Representatives of the Arab states met with the president of the U.N. Security Council on Wednesday and asked him to expedite the council's consideration of the matter.

Japanese Ambassador Yoshio Hatano, who this month holds the council's rotating presidency, said he would bring the request to the attention of the body's 15 members.

But according to an Israeli official, Hatano also told the Arab representatives that a U.N. envoy who traveled to the Middle East this week in an attempt to resolve the issue might be sent back to the region for further discussions.

The envoy, Chinmaya Gharekhan, was in Paris on Wednesday, briefing U.N. Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali on his mission.

"When you put it all together, it's clear they're rolling it over to the incoming Clinton administration," said the Israeli official.

The Arab representatives gave Hatano a copy of a resolution approved Tuesday in Cairo at the end of an emergency meeting of Arab League foreign ministers.

The statement calls on the Security Council "to take adequate measures, including the application of the rules of Chapter 7 of the United Nations Charter, to oblige Israel to implement Resolution 799 immediately."

Resolution 799 of Dec. 18 calls on Israel to return the deportees. Chapter 7 of the U.N. Charter enables the Security Council to impose sanctions for failure to comply with resolutions.

Israeli officials have said they believe the United States will veto any attempt to impose sanctions on Israel over this issue, though the State Department has publicly refused to make such a promise.

The Arab representatives also asked Hatano to invite the Israeli ambassador for a meeting, at which he could express his concern over the situation. As of Wednesday afternoon, the Israelis had yet to receive the invitation.

## OLDEST OLIVES FOUND NEAR HAIFA

By Hugh Orgel

TEL AVIV, Jan. 13 (JTA) -- Traces of what are believed to be the oldest olives in the world, and indications of their early use for industrial purposes some 7,000 years ago, have been found in underwater archaeological digs off the Israeli coast, south of Haifa.

The turbulent waters in recent storms have helped to uncover the remains of several primitive villages, found between 400 and 500 yards from the present shoreline, indicating that at that time the land extended further westward, with the beach areas eroded over the ages.

According to Israel Antiquities Authority official Ehud Galili, the containers in which the olives were found, and what appears to have been primitive equipment for treating or working with the olives, indicate that the villagers, recently turned from an earlier hunting existence to living by farming and primitive agriculture, were already evolving a "cottage industry."

## VISITING UKRAINIAN LEADER DISCLAIMS COUNTRY'S BLAME FOR BABI YAR KILLINGS

By David Landau

JERUSALEM, Jan. 13 (JTA) -- Ukrainian President Leonid Kravchuk said this week that the Ukrainian people should not be blamed for the Babi Yar massacre of Jews during World War II.

Speaking toward the close of a three-day state visit, he said it was a "historical error" to blame the Nazi killings on the people of the Ukraine.

He said Communist rulers had tried to conceal the Jewish identity of most of the victims. But, he said, thousands of Ukrainians had been slain at Babi Yar alongside the Jews.

Kravchuk's reference to the wartime mass killing came during a meeting with Simcha Dinitz, chairman of the Jewish Agency, and other officials of the agency, which plays a key role in immigration of Jews to Israel.

The Ukrainian president underlined his commitment to the right of Jews to leave his country and settle in Israel.

He recalled that back in 1985, as a responsible official in the region, he had permitted a Ukrainian Jewish poet to place a Hebrew inscription at the site of the Babi Yar massacre, for which he was rebuked by the Soviet authorities in Moscow.

Dinitz's reply was carefully worded.

"It is possible to correct the historical error of silence," he said. "But the massacre cannot be corrected."

Dinitz dwelt on the importance of stressing that most of the victims were Jews. He referred in this context to the worrying resurgence of racism and anti-Semitism in European countries at this time.

### A Visit To Yad Vashem

Regarding the aviation accord signed by Israel and Ukraine this week, Dinitz said he hoped the flights would carry not only immigrants but many Israelis whose families came from Ukraine, as did Dinitz's own.

He said he spoke both for Israel and for the Jewish people in voicing his appreciation to Kravchuk for Ukraine's cooperative attitude regarding Jewish aliyah, and thanked the president for the recent accreditation of five Jewish Agency offices in Ukraine.

In a speech to the Knesset earlier this week, Kravchuk referred to "dark pages" in the common history of the two peoples, and said "we must ensure that history does not repeat itself."

He expressed similar sentiments after a moving visit to the Holocaust memorial at Yad Vashem, where seven Ukrainian peasants in his group were honored as Righteous Gentiles for saving Jewish lives during the Holocaust.

"We, citizens of free Ukraine, will do all in our power to ensure that such things never happen again," Kravchuk wrote in the visitors' book at Yad Vashem.

In comments to reporters in Tel Aviv before his departure Wednesday evening, Kravchuk said his visit to Israel had been "very successful" and represented "a new page" in relations between the two nations.

He said he would set up a special committee to review the cases of 12 Ukrainian Jews being denied exit visas on the grounds that they held secret or sensitive national information in the context of their work.

## KOHL ENCOURAGING SCHOOLS TO TEACH VALUE OF TOLERANCE, AND ADL MAY HELP

By Debra Nussbaum Cohen

NEW YORK, Jan. 13 (JTA) -- German Chancellor Helmut Kohl recognizes the need for schools in his country to begin teaching the value of tolerance, and he is encouraging them to do so, according to officials of the Anti-Defamation League, who met with him Wednesday in Bonn.

The meeting took place during an 11-day visit to Germany undertaken by a 30-member ADL delegation, led by Abraham Foxman, the organization's national director, and Melvin Salberg, its national chairman.

The visit, which began Monday, was made at the invitation of the German government.

In addition to Kohl, the group has already met with Foreign Minister Klaus Kinkel, Justice Minister Sabine Leutheusser Schnarrenberger and leaders of the German parliament, among others.

The delegation also met with the American and Israeli ambassadors to Germany, Robert Kimmit and Benjamin Navon, and the head of Germany's Jewish community, Ignatz Bubis.

During the 90-minute meeting with Kohl, Foxman told the chancellor that while the Jewish community is pleased with the recent reduction in violence that has come as a result of the government's crackdown on law-breakers, Jews are concerned about the long-term treatment of the problem.

"What kind of staying power will there be when people stop marching in the streets?" Foxman asked rhetorically, in a telephone interview from Bonn.

He was referring to the series of candlelight vigils and street demonstrations against racism in which millions of Germans have participated in recent weeks.

### Meetings With Teachers In Rostock

"I told the chancellor that just as they spent 40 years teaching democracy, now they'll have to spend a good deal of time teaching tolerance," Foxman said.

After the meeting, the chancellor's office put out a statement saying the two sides "agreed that the respect for and maintenance of human rights worldwide requires constant effort, which also and particularly relates to the education of youth for tolerance."

As a result of the chancellor's encouragement, the ADL plans to implement in Germany its World of Difference program, which has been used in 20 cities around the United States over the last six years.

ADL officials planned to meet later this week with school administrators and teachers from Rostock, the northeastern port city where major violence against foreigners took place last August, when a hostel housing foreign workers was firebombed, to the applause of area residents.

The World of Difference program is sensitivity training for educators and students, teaching them to live with and accept people from different cultures.

Implementing the program in Rostock would be "symbolic," said Foxman, while the ADL tries to organize corporate sponsorship from German companies so that the program can be brought to larger school systems around the country.

(Contributing to this report were JTA correspondents David Kantor in Bonn and Igal Avidan in Berlin.)

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Israeli willingness to include nuclear weapons in arms control considerations evidently opened the way for Arab states to participate in the signing here of an international treaty banning chemical weapons.

Earlier, the Arab states had said they would stay away from the chemical weapons conference because of Israel's refusal to sign the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty.

But according to sources here, all of the Arab countries of northern Africa -- including Algeria, Morocco, Tunisia and even Libya -- have now agreed to sign the Convention for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons.

And sources here say that Jordan, Oman, Kuwait, Yemen and Mauritania are expected to follow suit.

On another front, Peres met here Wednesday evening with U.N. Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali in an attempt to resolve the deadlock over the fate of more than 400 Moslem fundamentalists Israel expelled to Lebanon last month.

The meeting took place as Arab states began lobbying for U.N. sanctions to be applied against Israel for its failure to comply with a Dec. 18 Security Council resolution calling on the Jewish state to return the deportees to the administered territories.

### 'Looking For A Solution'

Peres told reporters he had discussed several alternative courses for resolving the issue during the half-hour meeting and that further discussions would take place. He declined to elaborate.

"We are looking for a solution" he said, explaining that Israel does not want to be on a "collision course" with the United Nations.

But he added that the Islamic fundamentalist Hamas movement, to which many of the deportees belong, "must not come out a winner and appear to be getting a prize."

Peres put forward the same point of view in earlier meetings with U.S. Secretary of State Lawrence Eagleburger and with the foreign ministers of China, Italy and the Netherlands.

Dutch Foreign Minister Peter Kooijmans said he was sorry his first official act after taking office last month was the cancellation of a planned visit to Israel by Dutch Justice Minister Ernst Hirsch Ballin, in protest over the deportations.

Initiative for the cancellation came from Dutch Prime Minister Ruud Lubbers at the request of Palestine Liberation Organization chief Yasser Arafat.

Peres met Wednesday night with French Foreign Minister Roland Dumas.

The Israeli foreign minister also was honored with the Personality of the Year Award, which was presented to him by the speaker of the French National Assembly, Henri Emmanuelli.

## ARABS URGING ANTI-ISRAEL SANCTIONS, BUT IMMINENT U.N. ACTION IS UNLIKELY

By Larry Yudelson

UNITED NATIONS, Jan. 13 (JTA) -- The Arab states are urging the U.N. Security Council to consider using sanctions, if necessary, to get Israel to reverse its expulsion of more than 400 Moslem fundamentalist activists to Lebanon.

Representatives of the Arab states met with the president of the U.N. Security Council on Wednesday and asked him to expedite the council's consideration of the matter.

Japanese Ambassador Yoshio Hatano, who this month holds the council's rotating presidency, said he would bring the request to the attention of the body's 15 members.

But according to an Israeli official, Hatano also told the Arab representatives that a U.N. envoy who traveled to the Middle East this week in an attempt to resolve the issue might be sent back to the region for further discussions.

The envoy, Chinmaya Gharekhan, was in Paris on Wednesday, briefing U.N. Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali on his mission.

"When you put it all together, it's clear they're rolling it over to the incoming Clinton administration," said the Israeli official.

The Arab representatives gave Hatano a copy of a resolution approved Tuesday in Cairo at the end of an emergency meeting of Arab League foreign ministers.

The statement calls on the Security Council "to take adequate measures, including the application of the rules of Chapter 7 of the United Nations Charter, to oblige Israel to implement Resolution 799 immediately."

Resolution 799 of Dec. 18 calls on Israel to return the deportees. Chapter 7 of the U.N. Charter enables the Security Council to impose sanctions for failure to comply with resolutions.

Israeli officials have said they believe the United States will veto any attempt to impose sanctions on Israel over this issue, though the State Department has publicly refused to make such a promise.

The Arab representatives also asked Hatano to invite the Israeli ambassador for a meeting, at which he could express his concern over the situation. As of Wednesday afternoon, the Israelis had yet to receive the invitation.

## OLDEST OLIVES FOUND NEAR HAIFA

By Hugh Orgel

TEL AVIV, Jan. 13 (JTA) -- Traces of what are believed to be the oldest olives in the world, and indications of their early use for industrial purposes some 7,000 years ago, have been found in underwater archaeological digs off the Israeli coast, south of Haifa.

The turbulent waters in recent storms have helped to uncover the remains of several primitive villages, found between 400 and 500 yards from the present shoreline, indicating that at that time the land extended further westward, with the beach areas eroded over the ages.

According to Israel Antiquities Authority official Ehud Galili, the containers in which the olives were found, and what appears to have been primitive equipment for treating or working with the olives, indicate that the villagers, recently turned from an earlier hunting existence to living by farming and primitive agriculture, were already evolving a "cottage industry."

## VISITING UKRAINIAN LEADER DISCLAIMS COUNTRY'S BLAME FOR BABI YAR KILLINGS

By David Landau

JERUSALEM, Jan. 13 (JTA) -- Ukrainian President Leonid Kravchuk said this week that the Ukrainian people should not be blamed for the Babi Yar massacre of Jews during World War II.

Speaking toward the close of a three-day state visit, he said it was a "historical error" to blame the Nazi killings on the people of the Ukraine.

He said Communist rulers had tried to conceal the Jewish identity of most of the victims. But, he said, thousands of Ukrainians had been slain at Babi Yar alongside the Jews.

Kravchuk's reference to the wartime mass killing came during a meeting with Simcha Dinitz, chairman of the Jewish Agency, and other officials of the agency, which plays a key role in immigration of Jews to Israel.

The Ukrainian president underlined his commitment to the right of Jews to leave his country and settle in Israel.

He recalled that back in 1985, as a responsible official in the region, he had permitted a Ukrainian Jewish poet to place a Hebrew inscription at the site of the Babi Yar massacre, for which he was rebuked by the Soviet authorities in Moscow.

Dinitz's reply was carefully worded.

"It is possible to correct the historical error of silence," he said. "But the massacre cannot be corrected."

Dinitz dwelt on the importance of stressing that most of the victims were Jews. He referred in this context to the worrying resurgence of racism and anti-Semitism in European countries at this time.

### A Visit To Yad Vashem

Regarding the aviation accord signed by Israel and Ukraine this week, Dinitz said he hoped the flights would carry not only immigrants but many Israelis whose families came from Ukraine, as did Dinitz's own.

He said he spoke both for Israel and for the Jewish people in voicing his appreciation to Kravchuk for Ukraine's cooperative attitude regarding Jewish aliyah, and thanked the president for the recent accreditation of five Jewish Agency offices in Ukraine.

In a speech to the Knesset earlier this week, Kravchuk referred to "dark pages" in the common history of the two peoples, and said "we must ensure that history does not repeat itself."

He expressed similar sentiments after a moving visit to the Holocaust memorial at Yad Vashem, where seven Ukrainian peasants in his group were honored as Righteous Gentiles for saving Jewish lives during the Holocaust.

"We, citizens of free Ukraine, will do all in our power to ensure that such things never happen again," Kravchuk wrote in the visitors' book at Yad Vashem.

In comments to reporters in Tel Aviv before his departure Wednesday evening, Kravchuk said his visit to Israel had been "very successful" and represented "a new page" in relations between the two nations.

He said he would set up a special committee to review the cases of 12 Ukrainian Jews being denied exit visas on the grounds that they held secret or sensitive national information in the context of their work.

## KOHL ENCOURAGING SCHOOLS TO TEACH VALUE OF TOLERANCE, AND ADL MAY HELP

By Debra Nussbaum Cohen

NEW YORK, Jan. 13 (JTA) -- German Chancellor Helmut Kohl recognizes the need for schools in his country to begin teaching the value of tolerance, and he is encouraging them to do so, according to officials of the Anti-Defamation League, who met with him Wednesday in Bonn.

The meeting took place during an 11-day visit to Germany undertaken by a 30-member ADL delegation, led by Abraham Foxman, the organization's national director, and Melvin Salberg, its national chairman.

The visit, which began Monday, was made at the invitation of the German government.

In addition to Kohl, the group has already met with Foreign Minister Klaus Kinkel, Justice Minister Sabine Leutheusser Schnarrenberger and leaders of the German parliament, among others.

The delegation also met with the American and Israeli ambassadors to Germany, Robert Kimmit and Benjamin Navon, and the head of Germany's Jewish community, Ignatz Bubis.

During the 90-minute meeting with Kohl, Foxman told the chancellor that while the Jewish community is pleased with the recent reduction in violence that has come as a result of the government's crackdown on law-breakers, Jews are concerned about the long-term treatment of the problem.

"What kind of staying power will there be when people stop marching in the streets?" Foxman asked rhetorically, in a telephone interview from Bonn.

He was referring to the series of candlelight vigils and street demonstrations against racism in which millions of Germans have participated in recent weeks.

### Meetings With Teachers In Rostock

"I told the chancellor that just as they spent 40 years teaching democracy, now they'll have to spend a good deal of time teaching tolerance," Foxman said.

After the meeting, the chancellor's office put out a statement saying the two sides "agreed that the respect for and maintenance of human rights worldwide requires constant effort, which also and particularly relates to the education of youth for tolerance."

As a result of the chancellor's encouragement, the ADL plans to implement in Germany its World of Difference program, which has been used in 20 cities around the United States over the last six years.

ADL officials planned to meet later this week with school administrators and teachers from Rostock, the northeastern port city where major violence against foreigners took place last August, when a hostel housing foreign workers was firebombed, to the applause of area residents.

The World of Difference program is sensitivity training for educators and students, teaching them to live with and accept people from different cultures.

Implementing the program in Rostock would be "symbolic," said Foxman, while the ADL tries to organize corporate sponsorship from German companies so that the program can be brought to larger school systems around the country.

(Contributing to this report were JTA correspondents David Kantor in Bonn and Igal Avidan in Berlin.)