

**ISRAEL AND JORDAN CLOSE TO PACT
AFTER PERES MEETING WITH HUSSEIN**

By David Landau

JERUSALEM, Nov. 7 (JTA) -- Israel and Jordan are close to a peace agreement, according to Foreign Minister Shimon Peres, who met at length last week with Jordan's King Hussein.

The foreign minister gave this upbeat assessment in a speech here Saturday night during a seminar on relations between Europe and the Middle East, held under the auspices of the Hebrew University.

Meanwhile, the autonomy implementation talks between Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organization, cut short in the Sinai border town of Taba last week, were to resume in privacy Monday morning in Cairo.

Palestinian officials suspended the Taba talks last week over disagreements regarding Israeli troop withdrawals in the Gaza Strip and the West Bank town of Jericho. The pullback is scheduled to begin Dec. 13.

According to Israeli sources, each side will be sending five delegates to the security subcommittee, which is the main subcommittee in the autonomy negotiations.

The talks will continue indefinitely in Cairo, far from the prying eyes of the news media.

The Peres-Hussein meeting, one of many held in secret between the king and Israeli leaders over the years, was unique in that, with the consent of the two sides, it was leaked to the media almost immediately after it took place.

Peres himself, in hints and comments to reporters on Nov. 3, made it clear something was "in the air."

By the next day, the Israeli press was hot on the trail, and by last Friday most newspapers here were reporting that a Peres-Hussein meeting had taken place on Nov. 2.

Most significantly, though, and seen as a Jordanian confirmation, was a brief report Saturday in the semi-official Jordan Times about the Israeli media's stories.

This is the first time any Jordanian newspaper has ever published reports of a meeting between Hussein and Israeli leaders.

Progress In Talks With Syria?

Hussein, who was originally shocked and disturbed by the secret dealings between PLO Chairman Yasser Arafat and top Israeli officials, later met with Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin, who reportedly alleviated at least some of Hussein's concerns.

The king is concerned about any arrangements reached by Israel and the PLO because more than 2 million Palestinians live in Jordan, making up two-thirds of the country's population.

Hussein reportedly has signaled to the Israeli side that he will be able to move ahead in the peace process after Monday's parliamentary elections in Jordan.

Peres, it is understood, gave the king further assurances regarding Israel's firm intention to keep full control of the Jordan River crossing points located near Jericho even after the autonomy accord with the PLO goes into effect.

Israeli control over the crossings will pre-

vent undesirable or disruptive elements from crossing into Jordan, a subject of concern for Hussein.

Meanwhile, a flurry of media reports here have spoken in recent days of behind-the-scenes progress in negotiations between Israel and Syria.

According to these reports, secret talks between the two countries are focusing on possible territorial exchanges that would enable Israel to retain a foothold atop the Golan Heights.

The reports touch on a topic that is vitally important to Jordan: Hussein has been clearly reluctant to move out ahead of Damascus and sign a peace agreement with Israel while the Israeli-Syria track remains paralyzed.

The meetings with Hussein and the prospect of further progress with Jordan are politically important for the Israeli government.

Israeli leaders have been attempting to maintain popular support and enthusiasm for the peace process despite a spate of fatal attacks on Israelis mounted by Arab rejectionist elements in the West Bank and Gaza Strip.

Israeli policy-makers are growing anxious about their ability to sustain public support during this interim period, when the PLO has not yet taken up power and authority in any part of the territories -- and therefore cannot be held accountable for the attacks against Israelis.

On Sunday, following an attack by terrorists in Hebron, the Israeli Cabinet sent a plainly worded message to the PLO leadership, urging that Arafat and his top lieutenants issue a firm and unequivocal condemnation of all such attacks.

**ATTACK ON EX-MEMBER OF KNESSET
TOUCHES OFF NEW SETTLER UNREST**

By Cynthia Mann and David Landau

JERUSALEM, Nov. 7 (JTA) -- Jewish settlers have launched a second series of violent demonstrations in as many weeks to protest the latest attack by Arab terrorists bent on destroying the Israeli-Palestinian peace initiative.

The demonstrations occurred Sunday after terrorists attacked the car of Rabbi Chaim Druckman near the West Bank town of Hebron.

Druckman is a founding member of the Gush Emunim settlers movement and a former Knesset member from the National Religious Party.

Ephraim Ayubi, 30, the settlement leader's driver, was killed in the attack. Druckman suffered bullet wounds in the arm and shoulder.

The Damascus-based Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine, a group opposed to the peace process, claimed responsibility for Sunday's attack.

Israeli security officials said Druckman may well have been targeted for assassination.

It was the latest in a series of recent attacks by radical groups seeking to derail Israel's autonomy accord with the Palestine Liberation Organization, and it provoked a violent reaction among settlers.

Last week, Israeli settlers embarked on a series of violent demonstrations after an Israeli settler from Beit El, Chaim Mizrahi, was kidnapped and murdered by gunmen from the Islamic fundamentalist Hamas movement.

The violent demonstrations, directed at

Palestinian homes and property, were held as a protest against an Israeli government that the settlers believed has turned a blind eye to their security needs.

In the latest demonstrations, dozens of Israeli settlers came to the scene of the shooting, while hundreds of others reportedly charged the outdoor Arab market in Hebron, where they overturned food stalls, smashed windows and blocked roads.

A Warning From Settlers

A demonstration was also held in downtown Jerusalem on Sunday night. Settlers and yeshiva students battled with mounted police and border police during the demonstrations here.

The demonstration followed the funeral of Ayubi, which was attended by several thousand mourners, among them rabbis and political leaders from several parties.

In the West Bank settlement of Kiryat Arba, leaders of the Judea and Samaria Regional Council resolved to block all the main arteries in the territories Monday morning.

Settlers held a stormy meeting with Maj. Gen. Nehemia Tamaria, commander of the Israeli army's central region. They warned him "not to be surprised" if some settler, unable to control his grief and anger, were to enter an Arab village and kill dozens of inhabitants.

Tamaria, in a brief television interview, declared that the army would deal with any group seeking "to take the law into its own hands."

The latest settlers' protests followed incidents of violence in Hebron that began last Friday night, when Jews were stoned while walking to payers at the Machpelah Cave, where the patriarch Abraham is believed to be buried.

Jewish groups reacted by smashing windows of Arab cars and homes and beating Arab passersby. Settlers also threw stones at Arab cars on the road between Hebron and Kiryat Arba.

Druckman was attacked some six miles south of Hebron on the way from his home near Kiryat Gat to a yeshiva in Kiryat Arba.

Gunmen reportedly sprayed the car with bullets from a Kalachnikov rifle and fled in their car, which had Israeli license plates.

The attack prompted calls on the government from right-wing parties to stop negotiating with the PLO. Leaders of the opposition Tsomet and Moledet parties said the PLO could not continue to be excused for the repeated attacks.

They were joined by the mainstream opposition Likud party, which called on the government to guarantee the safety of Jews living in the West Bank and Gaza Strip.

HEZBOLLAH STEPS UP ATTACKS ON IDF

By Hugh Orgel

TEL AVIV, Nov. 7 (JTA) -- Two Israeli soldiers were wounded in a recent escalation of attacks by the Islamic fundamentalist Hezbollah movement on Israeli positions in the border security zone of southern Lebanon.

Some observers are suggesting the attacks are part of a Syrian-backed strategy to upset the ongoing Israeli-Palestinian autonomy talks.

The Israeli casualties occurred last Friday, when Hezbollah units fired several mortar rounds toward a military compound near Soujud village that is used by the Israel Defense Force and its allied South Lebanon Army.

At least one of the rounds exploded in the

compound, wounding two IDF soldiers, one of them seriously.

On Saturday, an SLA soldier was wounded when he stepped on a mine while troops were patrolling the Jezzine enclave north of the security zone.

On Sunday, three more SLA soldiers were wounded when Hezbollah gunners fired several mortar rounds south of Soujud.

PACT WITH PLO BEARS DIVIDENDS FOR ISRAEL IN SOUTHERN AFRICA

By Suzanne Belling

JOHANNESBURG, Nov. 7 (JTA) -- The recent agreement between Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organization has opened the way for links between Israel and several southern African countries.

Israel's deputy minister of health, Nawaf Massalha, an Israeli Arab, will hold top-level meetings with officials in Botswana, South Africa, Mozambique and Zimbabwe later this month as a representative of Foreign Minister Shimon Peres.

Zimbabwe's foreign minister, Nathan Shamuyarira, recently called the Sept. 13 agreement between Israel and the PLO the start of a new era and said his country was prepared to consider establishing diplomatic relations with Israel.

Several Israeli companies have already set up operations in Zimbabwe.

Israel has also established closer ties with Botswana, whose foreign minister, Gaositwe Chiepe, recently congratulated Israel on the agreement with the PLO.

And at a meeting in New York last month with Peres, Foreign Minister Theo Ben Gurirab of Namibia asked his Israeli counterpart if Jerusalem would extend economic assistance to his country.

Preparations are now being made in Israel for an economic delegation to visit Namibia.

Meanwhile, diplomatic ties with Mozambique are moving forward. Israel's ambassador to South Africa, Alon Liel, has been appointed non-resident ambassador to Mozambique and was due to present his credentials in the capital, Maputo, on Monday.

"Three months ago we had no official contact with any kind with these countries. Today we have links with all of them, although we have not established diplomatic links with all of them yet," Liel told the Jewish Telegraphic Agency.

"When Nawaf Massalha visits these countries -- as well as South Africa -- we will explain the peace agreement with the PLO and how it will be implemented. These visits can also help forge closer ties with these countries," Liel said.

In South Africa, the Israeli-PLO agreement has led to higher-level meetings between Israeli officials and members of the African National Congress.

Peres has met twice with ANC President Nelson Mandela, in New York and Lisbon, and ANC economic spokesman Trevor Manuel has met with Israeli Finance Minister Avraham Shohat.

These meetings followed months of work by Liel with the ANC, even prior to the signing of the agreement with the PLO.

Liel said that at his last meeting with Mandela, the ANC leader had told him he regards the Israeli-PLO agreement as historic. He also said he would recommend Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin and PLO Chairman Yasser Arafat for the 1994 Nobel Peace Prize.

Mandela and South African President F.W. de Klerk were joint winners of the 1993 peace prize.

ZIONISTS, FUND-RAISERS AGREE ON REFORMING THE JEWISH AGENCY

By Larry Yudelson

NEW YORK, Nov. 7 (JTA) -- A compromise has at last been reached in a long-running dispute between the two factions comprising the Jewish Agency for Israel.

The agreement will continue the process of disengaging the Jewish Agency from Israeli politics.

Under the deal, two department head positions that have traditionally been filled with political appointees will be eliminated.

And the Jewish Agency's Board of Governors will be expanded to include Israelis with accomplishments outside the political arena.

The Jewish Agency is the principal recipient of money raised for Israel by the United Jewish Appeal. Much of its half-billion-dollar budget is devoted to bringing emigres from the former Soviet Union and elsewhere to Israel, and assisting in their absorption.

The agreement still requires formal ratification and will not take full effect for four years.

Depoliticization has long been a goal of the so-called Diaspora fund-raisers, representatives of the United Jewish Appeal and Keren Hayesod campaigns that fund the Jewish Agency and share control of it with the World Zionist Organization.

The WZO, by contrast, is organized along political lines. It includes representatives of Diaspora Zionist organizations, such as Hadassah and the Religious Zionists of America, apportioned according to elections last held in 1987, as well as representatives of Israeli political parties, apportioned according to the Knesset elections.

Among the proposed changes will be the inclusion of Israelis not part of the political system among the WZO's delegation to the Jewish Agency board.

"Involving more Israelis in the whole process will help the Jewish Agency be seen as an integral part of the fabric of Israeli society, instead of as a separate Diaspora-led entity," said Shoshana Cardin, chairman of the Goals and Priorities Committee of the Jewish Agency's Board of Governors.

Chairmen Will Remain Till 1997

The conflict between the two separate cultures of the Jewish Agency -- the apolitical, largely American fund-raisers and the political, largely Israeli Zionists -- came to a head recently over the question of whether two Jewish Agency departments, Immigrant Absorption and Youth Aliyah, needed both a chairman and a director-general.

The fund-raisers argued that the department chairmen, selected along partisan lines in accordance with the political divisions in the WZO, duplicate the work of the director-generals, who are generally staff professionals.

WZO leaders argued that the department chairmen perform a role parallel to that of a lay leader of an American organization.

Under the agreement hammered out by a six-member committee of each side's top leadership and announced at a recent meeting of the Jewish Agency Board of Governors, the department chairmen's posts will be eliminated, but not until 1997.

The agreement requires formal ratification from the member bodies of the Jewish Agency, as well as of the Jewish Agency itself. But it is

expected that weariness over the long-running debate and a desire to conclude it will outweigh any qualms with the agreement.

The most far-reaching clause of the agreement may be one that would expand the Jewish Agency Board of Governors from 74 to 120 members.

The WZO would have to use its additional seats on the board to include Israeli leaders chosen on a basis other than politics.

These 23 new board members are slated to include academicians, business leaders and mayors of the underprivileged towns served by the Jewish Agency.

"It will enable personal relationships with Israeli peers -- educators, social scientists, entrepreneurs -- who would ordinarily not come through the current structure," said Cardin.

Among the other clauses in the proposed agreement is a moratorium on further changes in the governance structure of the Jewish Agency and WZO until 1997.

Members of the committee of six were Simcha Dinitz, chairman of the Jewish Agency Executive; Mendel Kaplan, chairman of the Board of Governors; Founding Chairman Max Fisher; United Israel Appeal Chairman Norman Lipoff; Yehiel Leket, chairman of the Jewish Agency Youth Aliyah Department; and Shlomo Gravetz, chairman of the Youth and Hechalutz Department of the WZO.

RECENT RASH OF TRAFFIC ACCIDENTS RENEWS DEBATE IN ISRAEL ON SAFETY

By Hugh Orgel

TEL AVIV, Nov. 7 (JTA) -- A recent rash of traffic accidents has renewed public debate here on what to do to halt the carnage on Israel's roads.

Israel has had one of the highest traffic fatality rates in the world, killing considerably more Israelis than are dying at the hands of Arab terrorists.

Concerns about the death rate on Israel's roads were highlighted over the weekend, when 11 people were killed in traffic accidents, one of the heaviest tolls here in a comparable period.

Their deaths brought to 30 the number of road fatalities during the past week -- far higher than the average of 10 traffic deaths per week registered during the past year.

Some of the victims were pedestrians, struck by vehicles while crossing urban streets.

But most victims were drivers with relatively little experience behind the wheel -- teen-agers and men and women in their early 20s.

Most were driving home from parties or places of entertainment in the small hours of the morning, all at excessive speeds, police said.

Some participants in the ongoing debate on how to check the situation point the finger of blame at substandard road conditions.

Others blame a recent reduction in the minimum driving age to 17½.

Many others blame the week-old increase in maximum speed limits on certain highway sections from 55 to about 60 miles per hour.

New drivers under the age of 18 have for more than a year been banned from driving cars on weekend nights from midnight to 5 a.m.

But opponents of this move say the teens are just drinking more than they had before, spending the nights in bars and nightclubs before proceeding home in the morning, intoxicated.

ISRAEL TRIP FOR RIGHT-WING YOUTHS COMES UNDER ATTACK BY DRESDEN MAYOR

By Miriam Widman

BERLIN, Nov. 7 (JTA) -- A trip that brought 19 youngsters with radical right views from the eastern German city of Dresden to Israel in an effort to educate them about Jews has come under severe attack.

The city has reprimanded the trip's organizer and put a halt to the travel program.

Dresden's mayor, Herbert Wagner, has issued a warning to Marita Schieferdecker-Adolph, the city's ombudsman for foreigners, for financing the weeklong trip from a fund used for the integration of new Jewish residents into German society.

Wagner also stopped all future trips, placed the control of the immigration fund into a different office and ordered the ombudsman to take a class in administration.

The trip cost approximately \$37,000 for the 25 participants, which included six Jewish youths from Dresden.

Schieferdecker-Adolph, in a telephone interview with the Jewish Telegraphic Agency, said that there was more than \$177,000 available in the fund and that since fewer Jews had stayed in Dresden than had been originally anticipated, there was money available for the trip.

Still, the city ruled that her actions were inappropriate and that the Social Welfare Office, not the Office of the Ombudsman, should have control over the fund.

The trip, which was conducted between Oct. 16 and 23, has been criticized for other reasons as well.

Yad Vashem Visit Produced Friction

Accounts in the German and Israeli press said that members of the visiting group insulted Jews in Israel and refused to visit the Yad Vashem Holocaust memorial during their stay in Jerusalem.

Both Schieferdecker-Adolph and Sabine Kurth, a social worker who was also on the trip, strongly denied these reports.

"Nothing of that is true," Kurth said. She said the youths did have trouble at Yad Vashem because of a guide she described as very anti-German and because of the mass of reporters that converged on the group.

But she felt that the trip was positive overall and that she would favor repeating it.

Officials and commentators have also questioned whether youths belonging to the radical right can benefit from a trip to Israel. Wagner said he sees "big risks" in such a program.

Henryk Broder, a well-known Jewish journalist and commentator here, strongly criticized the program, saying that if a neo-Nazi had an unpleasant experience in Israel the trip might actually reinforce his anti-Semitic feelings.

The German press reported that Frank Kaden, a leader of the neo-Nazi Viking Group, was part of the group. The Vikings are headquartered in the state of Saxony, where Dresden is located.

Schieferdecker-Adolph could not confirm the participation of Kaden.

She said she had not asked about party or group affiliation when selecting the group's participants, but focused instead on a candidate's general attitudes.

"Maybe this was my fault. I'm a little insecure about this point," she said.

SURVIVOR'S SUIT AGAINST GERMANY PROMPTS A U.S. SENATE RESOLUTION

By Steven Weiss

WASHINGTON, Nov. 7 (JTA) -- A resolution urging the German government to pay reparations to American victims of the Holocaust has been introduced in the Senate in the wake of a case involving a 70-year-old survivor.

The resolution, introduced last week by Sen. Frank Lautenberg (D-N.J.), asks President Clinton and Secretary of State Warren Christopher to "raise the matter with the German government" so that Holocaust victims who were U.S. citizens at the time of their capture can be compensated.

"We're determined to move the German government off its rigid stance," Lautenberg told reporters at a news conference last Friday. He said he expects full Senate support for the resolution.

The resolution is a response to the case of Hugo Princz, a Jewish Holocaust survivor who has not received any compensation from the German government because he is an American.

Princz, 70, brought suit against Germany for \$17 million after years of unsuccessful attempts to collect a war reparations pension.

The legal battle continued last Friday in the District of Columbia Circuit Court as Germany tried to have the case dismissed on the grounds that the German government cannot be sued under the Foreign Sovereign Immunities Act.

The court's decision, expected in the next several months, is "almost impossible to tell," said Princz's attorney, Steven Perles.

Anticipating a drawn-out court battle, Lautenberg authored the resolution in the hope of bringing about a quicker solution.

The senator presented a copy of the resolution to Princz last Friday, calling it "a reminder that we're going to work together" to see that justice is done.

Princz, who lost three brothers and three sisters in the Holocaust, called the senator's action "admirable."

"I appreciate what you are trying to do," Princz told him.

According to attorney Perles, the German government agreed to compensate Holocaust victims who were either German citizens or considered "stateless" at the time of their release from concentration camps.

As for victims from other nations, Perles said, Germany made deals with those governments on how to compensate former prisoners.

Germany considered Princz, a U.S. citizen at the time of his capture, to be neither a German citizen nor "stateless," Perles said.

Princz, who resides in Highland Park, N.J., is one of only two known Jewish Holocaust survivors who were American civilians at the time of their capture, according to a statement released by Lautenberg.

SCHOLARS TEACH BIBLE ON ITALIAN TV

ROME (JTA) -- Three Jewish scholars are participating in a nine-month, interfaith television initiative to teach Italians more about the Bible.

Since the beginning of October, Italian state-run television has been broadcasting a six-minute program, "Know the Bible," from Monday to Friday morning. Each program features a Bible verse with commentary by a panel of Jewish, Catholic and Protestant experts.