

**VIOLENCE BY BOTH ARABS AND JEWS  
LEAVES MANY SKEPTICAL ABOUT PEACE****By David Landau**

JERUSALEM, Nov. 16 (JTA) -- Despite government calls for moderation and warnings that the law would be strictly enforced for Israelis and Palestinians alike, disturbances erupted in several locations in the West Bank and Gaza Strip during a single day of violence that left many here skeptical about the prospects for peace.

In Gaza on Tuesday, an Israeli policeman was stabbed in the chest and his assailant, a young Palestinian, was shot dead by a witness to the incident.

In the West Bank town of Ramallah, soldiers shot dead a young Palestinian and wounded another after being pelted with stones from a school.

And the same day in Hebron, Israeli settlers went on a rampage in the center of town, overturning stalls, smashing windows and jostling Palestinians.

Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin, who was briefing Arab reporters on Tuesday at the end of his visit to Washington, said that Israeli security forces had largely failed at stopping the violence committed by terrorists and Israeli settlers.

"I can't say that we succeeded to prevent assassinations by extreme Palestinian terror groups of Israelis, and I cannot say that we have succeeded always to control reaction by the settlers to these assassinations," he said.

The violence provoked a warning from a senior Israeli government minister, who said that the government would act vigorously to protect the lives and property of Jews and Arabs in the territories and to impose the discipline of the law on settlers who defied the authorities.

The stabbing incident took place near the Erez checkpoint at the entrance to the Gaza Strip.

**Civilian Bystander Kills Assailant**

Israeli policeman Arye Ben-Shitreet was set upon by a young Palestinian and received several wounds to his chest and neck.

The attacker tried to escape, but a civilian bystander shot and killed him.

The assailant carried in his pocket a statement saying he was a member of the Islamic fundamentalist Hamas movement, which is opposed to the Israel-Palestine Liberation Organization self-rule accord.

Security sources said they regarded the attempted killing as a suicide-murder attempt.

Ben-Shitreet was hospitalized in Beersheba and was in stable condition.

In Ramallah, Israeli troops were pelted by stones thrown from a local Palestinian school. After repeated warnings failed to disperse the Palestinian youths, the soldiers opened fire, killing a student and wounding at least one other.

Farther to the south, in Hebron, the Israel Defense Force removed a curfew imposed on the town Monday after a Jewish settler from nearby Kiryat Arba was attacked by two ax-wielding terrorists.

The settler, Avraham Zarbiv, a father of 10,

managed to shoot and kill one of the assailants with his pistol; the other escaped, taking the pistol.

The Damascus-based Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine, a radical faction opposed to the peace process, claimed responsibility for the attack.

Following the removal of the curfew on Tuesday, Jewish settlers from Hebron and Kiryat Arba took to the streets in large numbers and engaged in a sustained riot.

The settlers attacked Arab businesses, broke windows and destroyed cars with Arab license plates.

The settlers' protests drew a harsh response from Justice Minister David Libai, who issued a stern warning to "those who would take the law into their own hands."

He said that while protests were valid in a democracy, recent actions had crossed the "red line that no government can allow to be crossed."

He pledged that the government would take vigorous action against the settlers' violent protests.

Settlers' groups have recently issued a promise that they will continue to employ violence as a means for getting the government to take their demands for security seriously.

**HOPEFUL SIGN AS ISRAELIS, PLO  
BEGIN ECONOMIC TALKS IN PARIS****By Michel Di Paz**

PARIS, Nov. 16 (JTA) -- Israeli and Palestine Liberation Organization officials convened here this week to begin their first formal economic talks in an effort to build a viable Palestinian administrative entity in the Gaza Strip and West Bank town of Jericho.

Meanwhile, with less than a month remaining before Israel is scheduled to begin withdrawing its troops from Gaza and Jericho, Israeli and Palestinian negotiators were reporting progress in their Cairo-based talks.

Those talks, which entered their sixth round this week, focused on Israeli troop withdrawals.

In Paris, heading the economic talks, which began Tuesday, were Israeli Finance Minister Avraham Shohat and the top official of the PLO economic division, Ahmed Karia, also known as Abu Alaa.

"The economy is one of the main issues of the peace process," said Alaa. "I believe that cooperation between us based on parity and equality will create and motivate this process and will help to make a real change on the ground."

Shohat urged the PLO to maintain close economic ties with Israel after Palestinian self-rule in the territories begins.

"Only through open and unrestricted trade can the West Bank and Gaza and Israel fulfill their potential," he said.

"It is precisely at this moment when we have begun to remove the barriers of hatred, that we must prevent the creation of new barriers -- economic or political -- which could restrict future joint progress," said Shohat.

Alaa was the PLO official who headed the secret negotiations with Israel in Oslo, Norway, that resulted in the historic agreement signed in

Washington on Sept. 13. The Economic Committee was created following the Oct. 6 meeting in Cairo between Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin and PLO Chairman Yasser Arafat.

The economic talks are aimed at establishing a framework of cooperation between Israel and the Palestinian authority that will administer Gaza and Jericho when Israel begins withdrawing its troops from the two regions.

That withdrawal, which is scheduled to begin Dec. 13 and to be completed by April 13, has been a source of contention between the two parties.

Two weeks ago, the Palestinians suspended the talks in the Sinai border town of Taba, saying that the Israeli proposals for troop withdrawals did not go far enough.

The talks were reconvened Nov. 8 in an undisclosed location in Cairo in an effort to conduct the negotiations away from the glare of the media spotlight.

On Tuesday, the second day of the talks in Cairo this week, Israeli as well as Palestinian sources indicated that progress had been made on the issue of security arrangements, including how Israel Defense Force troops will be redeployed after the withdrawals. No details were provided.

Also in Cairo this week, negotiators from 40 regional and overseas countries reported a first tangible breakthrough in the multilateral talks on environmental issues.

With cash subsidies provided by the World Bank, modern equipment for coping with oil spills will be bought and stored in the Jordanian port of Aqaba, for use by any of the four states bordering the Red Sea -- Jordan, Israel, Egypt and Saudi Arabia -- who may need it in an emergency.

Israeli sources said the United States is urging several Arab states to agree to host the next round of environmental talks in the spring.

Oman has already agreed to host the next round of the multilateral talks on water resources; Egypt will host the discussions on refugees; and Morocco will host the economics talks.

*(Contributing to this report was JTA correspondent David Landau in Jerusalem.)*

#### **ANALYSIS:**

#### **WITH A POCKETFUL OF PROMISES, RABIN TAKES LEAVE OF WASHINGTON** **By Deborah Kalb**

WASHINGTON, Nov. 16 (JTA) -- Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin left Washington this week with strong commitments from the Clinton administration that Israel would be well-compensated for the risks it is taking in the Middle East peace process.

On his last trip here, Rabin made history by shaking hands with Palestine Liberation Organization Chairman Yasser Arafat on the White House lawn after the Israelis and Palestinians signed a historic accord.

On his first post-handshake visit, Rabin was assured by U.S. officials that they would help Israel implement that accord by providing the Jewish state with additional displays of support.

Thus, Rabin accomplished one of the key goals of his visit, locking in American support as Israel makes difficult moves in its negotiations with its Arab partners.

Israelis have been nervous that as the Rabin government works to implement the declaration of principles it signed with the Palestinians, Israel's

security stands at risk. Since that accord was signed here Sept. 13, terrorist attacks and settler protests in the territories have provided political fodder for opponents of the accord and have led some initial supporters to waver.

Rabin came here as Israel appears to be on the verge of signing some sort of agreement with Jordan. But talks with Syria and Lebanon have been stalled for months.

Syria is viewed by the United States as the key to a "comprehensive" Middle East peace.

And Israel, too, sees the necessity of making progress on the Syrian negotiating track.

Rabin, however, has expressed concern that the Israeli public would have a hard time digesting simultaneous land-for-peace deals with both the Palestinians and Syria.

The prime minister has said to various groups here that his primary focus now is implementing the accord with the Palestinians.

During Rabin's stay here, President Clinton reportedly sent Syrian President Hafez Assad a letter stating that both the United States and Israel support the idea of a comprehensive Middle East peace.

Also during the Israeli leader's visit, the State Department announced that Secretary of State Warren Christopher would travel to the Middle East in early December to further progress in the peace talks.

It would be his first trip to the region since the signing of the Israel-PLO accords.

During his meetings at the White House and the Pentagon, Rabin was largely greeted by supportive American officials who seemed eager to help Israel continue on the road to peace.

#### **Clear Sign That Washington Is Pleased**

The Clinton administration has been making an effort to help the parties who cooperate in the peace process, pledging to maintain Israel's and Egypt's high levels of aid, and hosting an international donors' conference to raise money for the Palestinians.

Despite constraints on the U.S. budget, Clinton vowed last Friday to maintain Israel's aid level. Israel is the largest recipient of U.S. foreign aid, getting \$3 billion a year.

In addition, Rabin is returning home with pledges of American support in the area of military assistance.

In a meeting Monday at the Pentagon, Rabin and Secretary of Defense Les Aspin discussed how Israel could modernize its military capabilities, including the possible purchase of fighter jets.

The positive atmosphere in which these meetings were conducted was a clear sign that official Washington is pleased with the progress of the Middle East peace talks, which just several months ago some viewed as hopelessly stalled.

There were some signs of the changing times here, such as the first-ever meeting held here Tuesday between Rabin and Arab journalists, businesspeople and diplomats, including the ambassadors of Egypt and Qatar.

Besides meetings with the Arabs, Rabin spent most of his time here with the president, the secretaries of defense and state, members of Congress and the American Israel Public Affairs Committee.

He also visited the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum here for the first time.

Rabin was then headed to Montreal to address the General Assembly of the Council of Jewish Federations.

## JEWISH GROUPS HAIL SIGNING OF BILL ON RELIGIOUS FREEDOM

By Steven Weiss

WASHINGTON, Nov. 16 (JTA) -- Jewish groups joined religious organizations from all corners of American society in hailing President Clinton's signing of the Religious Freedom Restoration Act this week at the White House.

At a festive ceremony on the lawn of the Old Executive Office Building on Tuesday, Clinton signed the bill making it harder for the government to infringe upon the free exercise of religion.

"We all have a shared desire here to protect perhaps the most precious of all American liberties, religious freedom," Clinton said, flanked by Vice President Al Gore.

The new law honors "the principle that our laws and institutions should not impede or hinder, but rather should protect and preserve fundamental religious liberties," Clinton told the crowd, which included religious leaders and members of Congress.

"This is a proud and auspicious day for freedom of religion and freedom of conscience in this country," said Rabbi Moshe Sherer, president of the fervently Orthodox Agudath Israel of America.

A broad coalition of 68 religious and civil liberties groups worked for more than three years in a massive effort to push the bill through Congress and onto the president's desk for his signature.

Clinton thanked the organization, called the Coalition for the Free Exercise of Religion, for the "central role" it played in drafting and passing the legislation.

### 'Miracles Can Happen' Even In Legislation

The coalition is proof that "the power of God is such that even in the legislative process miracles can happen," Clinton said, drawing laughter from the crowd.

Due in large part to the coalition's efforts, the bill was approved unanimously in the House of Representatives in May, and passed by a 97-3 margin in the Senate in October.

The act in effect reversed a 1990 Supreme Court ruling that made it easier for states to pass laws banning certain religious practices.

The case, Oregon Employment Division vs. Smith, forbade the use of the hallucinogen peyote in Native American religious practices.

Jewish groups joined the religious community in deploring the decision as a serious infringement of their First Amendment rights. The Jewish community was ecstatic about the bill's signing.

Rabbi David Saperstein, director of the Religious Action Center of Reform Judaism, called it "the most important religious freedom bill of our lifetimes."

"By creating a statutory right to free exercise of religion, the Religious Freedom Restoration Act restores free exercise to its rightful place as first among all other First Amendment rights," Saperstein, a leader in the movement for the bill's passage, said at a new conference.

Among the groups that joined the coalition were Agudath Israel of America, American Jewish Committee, American Jewish Congress, the Anti-Defamation League, B'nai B'rith, the Council of Jewish Federations, the National Council of Jewish Women and the National Jewish Community Relations Advisory Council.

## ADL SETTLES CALIFORNIA CASE OVER COLLECTING INFORMATION

By Debra Nussbaum Cohen

NEW YORK, Nov. 16 (JTA) -- The Anti-Defamation League has reached a settlement with the San Francisco district attorney's office, which has been investigating the ADL for months, by agreeing to an injunction not to use illegal methods to monitor the activities of others.

In the settlement, ADL officials admitted no wrongdoing and denied that they had bought illegally obtained information despite San Francisco District Attorney Arlo Smith's contention that their fact-finding methods had breached the law.

The ADL will pay no fine or penalty.

The settlement also prevents criminal prosecution of ADL or of Roy Bullock, the researcher who collected personal information on nearly 10,000 politically active people and groups spanning the ideological spectrum and, according to investigators, sold most of it to ADL.

Bullock was described by the district attorney's investigators, in an April story in the San Francisco Chronicle, as a full-time spymaster for the ADL. The ADL continues to work with Bullock, according to Abraham Foxman, the organization's national director.

Foxman, along with Melvin Salberg, the ADL's national chairman, hailed the settlement as a victory. "The agreement we have reached confirms our consistent position that ADL has engaged in no misconduct of any kind," they said in a joint statement.

### D.A. Could Not Come Up With Anything

The settlement "also expressly recognizes ADL's right to continue to gather and disseminate information in any lawful and constitutionally protected manner," it said.

Foxman said that "the (San Francisco) district attorney moved heaven and earth to find something he could charge us with," but could not come up with anything.

Rather than go to trial and be found innocent, Foxman said, the ADL settled because "continuing with an investigation over your head for months and years leads some to believe there is something wrong."

To "continue this forever without resolution doesn't serve our purposes," he said. "We want to continue what we're doing."

As part of the settlement, the ADL has also agreed to create a San Francisco hate crimes award fund with \$25,000, which it will replenish with up to another \$25,000 over the next two years. The fund will reward people for bringing information to the police that results in the indictments of perpetrators of hate crimes.

In addition, the ADL will underwrite a program that will train assistant district attorneys to speak to San Francisco public school children about bigotry and discrimination.

Settlement of the criminal case has no effect on the two civil suits that have been filed against the ADL, which continue to slowly wend their way through the legal process.

One, a class action suit on behalf of 13 individuals, was filed in June, and the other, on behalf of several Arab defense organizations along with the National Lawyers Guild and the American Indian Movement, was filed in October.

The second suit alleges ADL violated their members' right to free expression and association.

## AFTER 28 YEARS, KOLLEK PREPARES TO LEAVE THE HELM OF JERUSALEM

By Cynthia Mann

JERUSALEM (JTA) -- Teddy Kollek is busy tying up loose ends as he prepares to leave his office in Jerusalem's old City Hall where he has served as mayor for 28 years.

For one, he has had to deal with a flood of letters and phone calls in the wake of his defeat after his hard-fought and bitter battle for re-election.

There have been expressions of commiseration as well as sympathy, including a phone call from New York Mayor David Dinkins, and a letter from former President Bush, both of whom were defeated in their re-election bids.

Likud Knesset member Ehud Olmert will be taking the municipal reins, but he won't be taking Kollek's place. Instead, Olmert has chosen to move into the new City Hall nearby.

In his office, filled with the clutter of work and memorabilia, Kollek looked worn but relaxed, thoughtful and good-humored as he answered questions from a few reporters gathered around his large desk.

Clearly, it will be hard for Kollek to let go, despite his 82 years and his giant contribution to his beloved city, visible in its countless parks, gardens, theaters and cultural centers.

When prodded, he conceded that not letting go sooner probably played a role in his loss, which stunned him, even though it could never have been totally ruled out.

Kollek had announced his retirement but changed his mind after the Labor Party and Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin, in particular, pressured him to run again.

Many voters, including Kollek loyalists, believed he should have stuck by his original decision.

### 'It Was A Shock To Me'

Olmert garnered a wide margin of victory largely due to an eleventh-hour deal he made with the fervently Orthodox, in which he promised several portfolios in return for the community's votes.

But Kollek also suffered from the low turnout by secular voters who had supported him in the past. Overall turnout was roughly 40 percent, and secular turnout considerably lower.

Rabin, meanwhile, has taken responsibility for the defeat.

Kollek admitted he might have groomed someone younger to take the lead in his stead, and he called the campaign the biggest regret of his 28 years in office. Still, he absolved the Labor Party of blame.

"I wasn't absolutely confident," he said about his chances of winning. "But I had a feeling that if I wouldn't try, I would have a very bad conscience. This is the reason I tried and not because the Labor Party pressed me."

"What convinced me," he said, was a bad feeling about Olmert, and an "even worse" feeling about Olmert's deal with fervently Orthodox parties.

Kollek's feelings evidently were strong enough to delay the requisite call to the winner on election night by a few days.

"Why should I (call him) immediately?" he asked. "It was a shock to me."

"Mr. Olmert is 30 years younger than I am," he added. "He could have phoned me as easily,

right? Why didn't he?" But he later offered his help to Olmert, "wherever he can use it."

"Jerusalem is bigger and more important than any individual," he said matter-of-factly, "so whatever I can do I'll certainly do."

Kollek was approached by the fervently Orthodox, he said, but refused them the key portfolios -- education and planning -- they wanted and won from Olmert.

"Those are the things that change the character of the city," he said.

Indeed, Kollek fears that polarization in the city will increase under the combined stewardship of the fervently Orthodox and Olmert, a Likudnik known for his combative political style.

Kollek's proudest achievement, he said, is making Jerusalem a "comparatively quiet city," despite the fact that "it's the most heterogeneous city you can imagine."

He points to the decline in tension between the secular and fervently religious, which at one time was manifested in stone-throwing and setting fire to bus stops with "immodest" advertising.

"They have learned to live together," he noted, though "not with great love."

He has worked to keep the city balanced, he said. He has expanded industry and fought for affordable housing to stem the steady exodus of young secular residents to the outskirts, where they have been lured by the incentives offered by the national government.

And Arab-Jewish tensions, even at the height of the intifada, never reached levels of those in the West Bank, he added.

He pointed to the access enjoyed by all faiths in the city to holy places and freedom of worship, calling this a major achievement. "I hope it lasts," he said.

### 'Question Is How Far Olmert Is Committed'

"The biggest danger is that tension will return to the city," he said, looking ahead to Olmert's tenure as mayor. "A few yeshivot in East Jerusalem will blow the whole thing up again."

Olmert has pledged that religion will not assume a higher profile under his leadership and that policies that may provoke Arab residents will not be adopted.

Kollek said, "The question is how far Mr. Olmert is committed" to the religious parties.

"If a year will pass without anything (else being) closed on Friday evening, and a year will pass without any new Jewish institutions being built in densely Arab areas, then it'll make me very happy," Kollek said, "But I can't know before that."

Meanwhile, Kollek said he has "all kind of plans."

He will throw the bulk of his effort into the celebration, still a few years off, marking the 3,000th anniversary of King David's declaration of Jerusalem as the capital of his kingdom. It will be a tool for tourism, for public relations and an attraction for business investment, he explained, in a proprietary tone.

He will also continue his long-time work with the Jerusalem Foundation and develop plans for an annual celebration of the works of Leonard Bernstein.

Asked if Olmert need fear he will dog him, Kollek quickly said no, and summed up his judgment of the transition. "I think there will be enough people to do that," he said, "and I'm afraid there will be enough occasions."