

**ISRAEL, PLO AGREE TO RESUME TALKS;
RABIN OUTLINES DEPLOYMENT OF TROOPS**
By Cynthia Mann

JERUSALEM, Jan. 6 (JTA) -- Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organization have agreed to resume talks for implementing the self-rule accord signed last September in Washington.

The talks were scheduled to resume early next week at the Egyptian border town of Taba, according to a joint Israeli-PLO statement released Thursday by the Foreign Ministry here.

Israel also announced late Thursday that it would release an additional 101 Palestinian prisoners from the West Bank and Gaza Strip on Friday.

Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin said Israel was returning to Taba without preconditions.

But he added, "I believe today it is clear, it is written in the declaration of principles (that forms the basis of the self-rule accord), that Israel is responsible for external security," an issue that led to this week's deadlock in the negotiations.

"The Israel Defense Force will be deployed all along the Jordan River and the western coast of the Dead Sea (and) all along the line between Egypt and the Gaza Strip," he said.

The joint statement said the negotiations would be resumed on the basis of the declaration of principles and the "understandings" reached last week in Cairo.

Meanwhile, a delegation of U.S. congressional aides met Thursday in Tel Aviv with the families of six missing Israeli soldiers.

The aides are in the region to try to determine the MIAs' fate. They are scheduled to travel to Syria and may also go to Lebanon.

In Damascus, meanwhile, the government radio station has reported that if Israel would withdraw from all occupied territories, it would enjoy peace on all fronts.

Such statements are being taken seriously here, according to Israel Radio. They are seen as being made in anticipation of the meeting later this month between Syrian President Hafez Assad and President Clinton.

The impasse in the Israeli-Palestinian talks in Cairo came after the PLO disputed Israeli claims that there had been an agreement reached last week.

According to the Israelis, there had been a clear understanding on who would control border crossings between the Gaza Strip and Egypt and between the West Bank town of Jericho and Jordan.

Israel Will Control External Security

The two sides had also agreed on the size of the autonomous area around Jericho that would come under Palestinian authority, said the Israelis.

Israel has claimed the Palestinians were deviating not only from what had been agreed upon in Cairo, but from the declaration of principles signed on Sept. 13.

Foreign Minister Shimon Peres said Thursday's joint statement means that the controversial issues of the control of border crossings and the dimensions of Jericho are no longer negotiable.

Peres said Israel will retain the right to control security at its external borders, adding

that the "understanding" reached on the dimensions of Jericho would stand.

According to the draft documents from Cairo, Palestinian-controlled Jericho would be about 22 square miles.

Peres conceded that Israel had bowed to some demands by the PLO for stylistic changes in the Cairo draft.

But he said the Palestinians have learned that when Israel says it will not retreat from its security needs, it means it, Israel Radio reported.

Peres warned PLO Chairman Yasser Arafat against renegeing on the latest joint statement.

"I think if (this happens) he will lose credibility," Peres said.

The resumption of the talks was not a victory for Israel but an "achievement for peace," Peres said. "And as long as the two parties are in favor of peace, it is a real achievement." The foreign minister declined to predict precisely how long it would take to conclude the talks and implement the accord.

"It depends upon the amount of difficulties we encounter as we go along," he said.

Peres said the Taba talks would focus on the transfer of civilian authority to the Palestinians in Gaza and Jericho, security on the roads leading in and out of the two areas, and the size and authority of a Palestinian National Council that is to be elected by next July.

**JORDAN VALLEY RESIDENTS FACE RABIN,
CITE FEARS OF BEING 'ISLAND' IN PLO TURF**
By Cynthia Mann

JERUSALEM, Jan. 6 (JTA) -- Angry residents of a Jordan Valley settlement met with Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin on Thursday, demanding to know what their status will be once they are surrounded on three sides by an autonomous Palestinian region.

The 27 families of Na'ama, located about three miles north of the West Bank town of Jericho, have held a series of protests in recent days, blocking roads with burning tires and cars.

They claim the government is abandoning them by entering into a self-rule agreement with the Palestine Liberation Organization because it will make the settlement an island within PLO-controlled land.

The residents had been reassured earlier in the week by Deputy Defense Minister Mordechai Gur that they would remain connected to the rest of the country and that the nearby highway would be under the full control of Israeli security forces.

On Monday, Likud leader Benjamin Netanyahu told the settlers of Na'ama that any future government led by Likud would not be bound by the Palestinian self-rule accord signed last September in Washington.

Rabin told the settlers he would guarantee that the Jordan Valley would always remain Israel's eastern security border.

He also promised to increase security and economic aid for the agricultural settlement.

But he did not back down from Israel's peace initiatives, telling the group that the self-rule accord with the PLO presented Israel with an opportunity to achieve co-existence and peace.

**IRISH CHIEF RABBI MEETS WITH ARAFAT,
BLASTS OTHER RABBIS' CENSURE OF ACCORD**
London Jewish Chronicle

LONDON, Jan. 6 (JTA) -- The chief rabbi of Ireland and the head of the Jewish Representative Council of Ireland have met with Palestine Liberation Organization Chairman Yasser Arafat in Dublin.

Rabbi Simon Harris, who took up his post four months ago, used the occasion last month to lash out at what he called "the moral bankruptcy" of most Orthodox rabbis for criticizing Israel's accord with the Palestine Liberation Organization.

A group of British Orthodox rabbis signed a statement blasting the Israel-PLO accord signed in September and a meeting that the leaders of the Board of Deputies of British Jews held with Arafat in mid-December.

Harris told the Jewish Chronicle that he respected the nearly 60 British rabbis who had acted "out of conscience, but as Zionists" in signing a statement opposing the Board of Deputies' decision to meet with the PLO chief.

The British Jewish secular leaders held a widely publicized meeting with Arafat in mid-December in London. That meeting, led by Israel Finestein, head of the Board of Deputies, was also attended by the Israeli ambassador to Britain.

Harris, who was accompanied by the Ireland council leader, Martin Simmons, in meeting with Arafat, told the Chronicle: "In spite of Mr. Arafat's past acts of unspeakable evil, if he shows any twitch of peace, we should meet him. I applaud the Israeli government for the courageous steps it has taken."

He said he met with Arafat "as a Zionist, as a spiritual representative of Jews in the republic, and also mindful of the more than 1,000 Irish Jews who have made aliyah."

Harris and Simmons met with Arafat during an official visit he made to Ireland.

At their meeting they pressed him for a "blanket public condemnation" of terrorism against Jews in Israel and abroad, an end to the Arab boycott against Israel and a change in the PLO charter, which calls for Israel's destruction.

Arafat has claimed that clause in the charter has been rendered obsolete. But he told Harris and Simmons that amending the PLO charter would require a meeting of the Palestine National Council.

Asked why he did not call such a meeting, he reportedly said, "It is very hard to arrange a meeting in Algiers at the present moment," in apparent reference to the strong criticism of the chairman within the PLO.

**IDF HITS TERROR BASES NEAR BEIRUT;
HEZBOLLAH SAID TO PAY A HIGH PRICE**
By Hugh Orgel

TEL AVIV, Jan. 6 (JTA) -- Israeli air force planes attacked Palestinian terrorist positions near Beirut on Thursday afternoon, according to reports from the Lebanese capital.

The warplanes fired two rockets and directed heavy machine gun fire on bases of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine, located about 10 miles south of Beirut, according to witnesses.

There was no immediate confirmation or comment about the raid from the Israel Defense Force.

On Wednesday, Maj. Gen. Yitzhak Mordechai, the IDF commander for the northern region, presented commendations to 10 reserve officers and soldiers who last week killed three terrorists attempting to infiltrate into Israel from southern Lebanon.

The terrorists had been members of Fatah Uprising, a militant faction that is allied with the Damascus-based PFLP and rejects the self-rule accord Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organization signed last September in Washington.

During the presentation ceremony, Mordechai said the IDF has been increasing its attacks against the Islamic fundamentalist Hezbollah movement, a pro-Iranian rejectionist group that has vowed to drive Israel out of southern Lebanon.

Mordechai said that as a result of the IDF operations -- some of which have not been publicized -- "Hezbollah is paying a heavy price."

**KUWAIT, SAUDI ARABIA BROKE PLEDGES
TO END PARTICIPATION IN ARAB BOYCOTT**
By Deborah Kalb

WASHINGTON, Jan. 6 (JTA) -- Citing statistics compiled by the U.S. Commerce Department, the World Jewish Congress charged this week that Kuwait and Saudi Arabia have not abided by their pledges to stop participating in the Arab boycott of companies doing business with Israel.

The WJC said Thursday that Commerce Department figures show Kuwait made over 700 boycott-related requests to U.S. companies since June, when the Arab emirate announced it would stop its participation of the so-called secondary boycott of companies here and abroad doing business with the Jewish state.

WJC issued a statement urging Washington "to take immediate measures so that both Kuwait and Saudi Arabia live up to their pledges to put an end to their shameful compliance with the Arab blacklist."

The U.S. State Department said last spring that both countries had pledged to end their participation in the secondary boycott of Israel, which harms U.S. and other companies doing business with Israel.

Under U.S. law, if a participating country requests an American company to provide boycott-related information, the company must report such requests to the U.S. government.

In 1993, there were 8,660 such requests -- mostly from Arab countries -- reported by American companies, the WJC said.

Of the 8,660 requests, 2,011 were from Kuwait and 1,605 from Saudi Arabia, the group reported.

Efforts to end the primary Arab boycott of Israel and the secondary boycott of companies doing business with the Jewish state have taken on new urgency here in recent months.

U.S. officials from President Clinton on down have spoken out against the boycott, with many calling it an anachronism that hurts the Middle East peace process.

But Arab countries have been reluctant to part with the longtime boycott, which has been in effect since before the 1948 founding of Israel.

The issue of Kuwait's participation in the secondary boycott has been a particularly sensitive one for some American officials because Washington came readily to Kuwait's defense against Iraq in the Persian Gulf War and many American lives were lost in Kuwait's defense.

MAGAZINE DEAL COSTS MORE, BUT IT COMES WITH A 'PRIZE'

By Debra Nussbaum Cohen

NEW YORK, Jan. 6 (JTA) -- The New Republic magazine wants to attract Jewish readers, but it charges more for a subscription to those responding to a solicitation targeting Jews than it charges to those who subscribe from a general solicitation.

Two pieces of direct mail soliciting subscriptions for The New Republic magazine arrived on the same day recently, one clearly targeting Jewish readers and the other, a more general audience.

The piece directed to Jews had, on the front of the envelope, rhetorical questions related to the Middle East, printed in black and red ink, which were designed to grab the recipient's attention.

The envelope for the general solicitation had different questions, devoted to health care reform, chief executive officers' salaries and one that is surely keeping readers awake at night, "Are Rush Limbaugh and David Letterman the same person?"

The solicitation targeting Jews also contained a letter from publisher Martin Peretz, which offered new subscribers copies of articles about the Israel-Palestine Liberation Organization accord by authors including Ruth Wisse, Leon Wieseltier and Peretz himself.

Peretz also tempts Jewish potential subscribers with an offer to contribute 20 percent of the subscription price to the Jerusalem Foundation, if payment is enclosed with the order.

The Jerusalem Foundation, of which Peretz is formerly chairman of the board, raises \$30 million a year internationally for social service, beautification and restoration projects in Jerusalem.

Reasons For Discrepancy 'Not Devious'

The two solicitations each offer a yearlong subscription to the political magazine at a different price -- \$37.50 to Jewish readers and \$34.99 to respondents to the general query.

According to Peggy Jarvis Ferrin, the magazine's associate publisher for circulation, the reasons for the discrepancy are "not devious" and are not related to "a price that a particular audience is perceived to be able to pay."

Rather, she said, the magazine is required by the Audit Bureau of Circulation to offer the subscription at the higher price to recipients of the Jewish solicitation because that deal includes a premium. The audit bureau also requires the publication to assign a value to the article reprints and charge for them.

Similarly, she said, the other special interest group that gets targeted mailings from The New Republic, gays and lesbians, includes a letter from Andrew Sullivan, the editor of the magazine, who is gay, offering reprints of articles thought to be of interest to that readership, and charges \$37.50 for a subscription.

The New Republic sends out 1 million pieces of direct mail a year to people who read other popular intellectual journals, such as Harper's and The Atlantic, and about 150,000 solicitations to readers of Jewish periodicals.

The response rate to both runs at about 4 percent. And though the magazine runs frequent reader surveys, it has never asked about reader's religion and has no idea what percentage of its readers are Jewish, Jarvis-Ferrin said.

AGED REFUGEES FROM SARAJEVO START BUSINESS KNITTING KIPOT

By Ruth E. Gruber

ROME, Jan. 6 (JTA) -- A group of elderly Jewish refugees from Sarajevo, living in temporary housing on the Croatian coast, has started a handmade yarmulke business to earn money and save for whatever future befalls them.

About 20 refugees recently formed the Menorah Club, a Jewish handicrafts workshop.

Club members knit handmade yarmulkes, which they sell for 10 Deutschmarks (about \$6.00) apiece, plus postage. The refugees receive 5 Deutschmarks per yarmulke, with the rest of the money going for materials as well as for other community expenses.

Most of the yarmulkes, or kipot, are blue with a metallic thread border, but other color combinations are available on request.

"The Menorah Club is working non-stop," said Lenka Montiljo Bilalagic. "Our members are delighted because we are busy, we are useful, we can earn for our future."

The project was started under the encouragement of the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee to help refugees from Sarajevo put something of their lives back together.

The JDC distributed 400 of the yarmulkes at its annual meeting in December, and Jewish organizations in Toulouse, France, this week placed an order for 200. The Grey Panthers, a club of middle-aged Jewish men in Split, Croatia, also placed an order for 20 yarmulkes.

"If these items catch on," a JDC representative said, "we may extend Menorah to the Svarc (Jewish) Old Age Home in Zagreb, (Croatia), which has so far welcomed about 18 elderly refugees among its 78 residents."

Bulk orders can be ordered from Montiljo Bilalagic, Split Jewish Community, Zidovski prolaz 1, 58000 Split, Croatia. Tel/fax: 385/58.45.672.

\$1.8 BILLION BATTLE FOR ORDER OF NEW JET FIGHTERS FOR ISRAEL

By Tom Tugend

LOS ANGELES (JTA) -- Two American aerospace giants are engaged in a high-stakes dogfight to land an Israeli order for new jet fighters worth \$1.8 billion.

Lockheed Corp. and McDonnell Douglas Corp., hurting from cuts in the U.S. defense budget, are lobbying for what is expected to be the last major foreign fighter contract for a number of years. The Israeli order would be financed with U.S. military aid.

Lockheed produces the F-16 fighter; McDonnell Douglas makes the FA-18. The planes have similar capabilities, but the F-16 is less expensive, said the Los Angeles Times in an analysis of the struggle between the two companies.

After the Israel-Palestine Liberation Organization accord, Israel's interest shifted to a more expensive plane, McDonnell Douglas' F-15E, which can fly longer distances without refueling.

In the fall, the aerospace trade press reported that McDonnell Douglas had won the \$1.8 billion order for up to 20 F-15s, or about \$90 million each, more than twice the price of a Lockheed F-16.

But Lockheed did not give up. A group of its executives visited Israel and announced a \$15 million fund for research and development ties with Israeli companies and universities.

**BEHIND THE HEADLINES:
AID EFFORTS DERAILED
IN WAR-RAVAGED BOSNIA**
By Caren Benjamin
Washington Jewish Week

WASHINGTON (JTA) -- With the crisis in Bosnia fading from the front pages, Jewish organizations are beginning to recognize that providing humanitarian assistance and delivering food and medical supplies may at this point be the most they can do.

A recent National Strategies for Bosnia conference brought together over 50 organizations that make up the World Alliance for Humanitarian Assistance for Bosnia and the American Task Force for Bosnia.

Jewish groups have long been involved in the task force, which has been lobbying for political action and public awareness.

These efforts have borne little fruit, as the U.S. government, the United Nations and NATO countries have made at best halfhearted attempts to stop the violence or level the playing field between Bosnia and its neighbors.

Political efforts will continue, if only as "a moral goad to the conscience of our nation and the world not to ignore the consequences of inaction," said Rabbi David Saperstein, director and legal counsel of the Religious Action Center, the social justice arm of the Reform movement.

Branching out into humanitarian aid is "something that can be done at a remedial level to help the situation," said Saperstein, who added that there is still little indication that political efforts "are going to make a difference in the short run."

The devastating lack of humanitarian aid actually getting in to Bosnia was a recurring theme of an international conference on Bosnia held recently in London and sponsored by the Bosnia-Herzegovina Information Center and the Friends of Bosnia Action Group in Great Britain.

During the conference, George Spectre, associate director of international, governmental and Israel affairs of B'nai B'rith, heard repeated questions, even direct accusations, about the incongruity between voluntary and government relief efforts and the reality of starvation on the ground in Bosnia.

Aid Like That Given To Berlin In 1948

Spectre chalks up at least a part of this situation to a lack of financial commitment to provide aid.

During a news conference by action groups for Bosnia, Spectre said, "Humanitarian aid must be provided on the scale and with the urgency that the United States provided on a continuous, round-the-clock basis to beleaguered Berlin in 1948 when the Soviets tried to isolate that German city."

But he repeatedly heard rumors and testimony that far more aid was available than was actually being distributed because the United Nation has been blocking efforts to get food and medicine to Bosnia.

Spectre did not give credence to the charges, but said he has "heard them enough to think that somebody ought to investigate."

Since 1991, the U.S. government has donated \$435,780,469 in humanitarian assistance to the former Yugoslavia. This figure does not include aid donated by non-governmental relief organizations.

"First of all, not quite enough food and medicine and money is being donated by Western countries," said Marshall Freeman Harris, foreign policy adviser to Rep. Frank McCloskey (D-Ind.)

Perhaps more importantly, said Harris, donations are simply not getting there. He said "Serbs, and to a lesser extent the Croats, block some of the aid."

There have been estimates that as much as 30 percent of any relief shipment disappears as soon as it lands at Sarajevo airport, now under Serbian control. An additional 50 percent of what remains gets taken at a checkpoint between the airport and Sarajevo.

"People are starving throughout Bosnia, and we are not willing to take on the small amount of resistance that kept the aid from getting through," Harris said.

Harris believes the United Nations could, if willing, rectify the situation.

Now, "a small group of people with a few hand-held weapons is enough to stop a convoy."

Harris also believed there is "some evidence of U.N. people being in bed, so to speak, with the Serbs."

Informal Accommodation With Serbs?

This is another result of the United Nation's unwillingness so far to employ credible force.

"U.N. troops are not armed as well as the Serbs. They are really there at the pleasure of the Serbs, and some have reached some kinds of informal accommodations with them," Harris said.

The U.S. Government Accounting Office is in the process of investigating U.N. aid to Bosnia programs as requested by Sen. Bob Dole (R-Kan.).

Dole's concern stemmed from media reports that U.N. officials have prevented creating large stockpiles of food and medicine in Bosnia, apparently to avoid giving Bosnia hope it can survive another winter without a peace settlement.

Dole also raised concern about whether U.N. troops are involved in the black market.

In a letter to Charles Bowsher, comptroller general of the United States, Dole wrote: "I am very concerned about reports that the United Nations is engaged in the manipulation and use of humanitarian assistance for political objectives."

Harris, too, has heard some evidence of aid redirected in possible attempts to weaken negotiating positions of different factions in Geneva.

If this is the case, aid may be subtly withheld, as arms are blatantly, to force a slow end to the war.

A joint statement issued by Jewish members of the task force, including the American Jewish Congress, American Jewish Committee, National Jewish Community Relations Advisory Council and others, calls for an end to the arms embargo.

To Spectre, sale of arms to Bosnia is clearly a humanitarian issue, and the embargo both "aids the aggressor and makes more desperate the plight of the victim."

To Henry Siegman, executive director of the AJCongress, who spoke at the strategies conference, lack of support for Bosnian Muslims is the ultimate hypocrisy -- regardless of whether aid is intentionally misdirected.

"The notion that the United States and its allies are helpless to do anything about this human and political disaster is a palpable lie," Siegman said.

"It is as believable as the argument that European countries and America could do nothing to help the Jews in the 1930s," he said.