

**HEZBOLLAH GUNMEN AMBUSH IDF PATROL
LEAVING ONE DEAD AND THREE WOUNDED**
By Hugh Orgel

TEL AVIV, June 21 (JTA) -- Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin said that a Hezbollah ambush on Monday that resulted in the death of an Israeli soldier did not represent an escalation of hostilities in southern Lebanon.

Rabin told reporters in Jerusalem Monday night that the Israeli unit that was ambushed had been on a relatively routine patrol which, on this occasion, "had proved painful."

"Unfortunately, this time we suffered casualties. I would, however, say that it's not out of the usual in terms of operations that have taken place until now," Rabin said.

Rabin said there are about five terrorist attacks in southern Lebanon each week, but they generally receive little media coverage because there are no casualties involved.

A sergeant with the Israel Defense Force was killed and three other soldiers were wounded in the ambush, which was launched by members of the Islamic fundamentalist Hezbollah movement in the eastern sector of the southern Lebanon security zone.

Sgt. Noam Simha, 21, from Kibbutz Rosh Hanikra, was laid to rest at his home near the Lebanon border on Tuesday.

In response to the attack, the IDF and forces with its allied South Lebanon Army launched heavy artillery barrages on suspected Hezbollah targets north of the security zone. Exchanges of fire continued throughout Monday evening.

NEWS ANALYSIS:**ISRAELIS AND PLO TO RESUME TALKS
DESPITE DIFFERENCES OVER AGENDA ITEMS**
By David Landau and Dvora Getzler

JERUSALEM, June 21 (JTA) -- Although some differences remain regarding the substance of their talks, Israeli and Palestinian officials have agreed to resume negotiations on Monday.

First word of the new date for negotiations came early in the week from Nabil Sha'ath, chief Palestinian negotiator at the Cairo talks for implementing Palestinian self-rule.

Sha'ath, who was recently named minister of planning and international cooperation in the Palestinian governing authority, was visiting the newly autonomous regions of the Gaza Strip and the West Bank town of Jericho.

With Maj. Gen. Amnon Shahak, the chief Israeli negotiator at the Cairo talks, at his side, Sha'ath told reporters in Gaza on Sunday of the new date, adding that the negotiations would signal a resumption of the peace process.

But there are disagreements regarding the agenda for the new round of talks.

The Palestinian side says it expects the talks to focus on the next stages of the peace process, including expanding self-rule to the rest of the West Bank.

But Israeli sources say there are issues in

the current implementation of self-rule in Gaza and Jericho that still need to be resolved.

Shahak raised no objections when Sha'ath said the talks would focus on the next phase of Palestinian self-rule, but sources in Jerusalem later indicated that Israel wants a slower pace than Sha'ath seems to be anticipating.

The sources said Israeli officials regard the Gaza-Jericho phase as still in its testing stage and that Israel wants to see greater stability in the two autonomous zones before embarking on further progress.

Under the terms of the declaration of principles signed by Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organization last September in Washington, negotiations for the next stage of the Israeli-Palestinian peace initiative will fall under three phases.

First, negotiators will focus on what has been termed "early empowerment," the expansion of Palestinian self-rule to the rest of the West Bank in a number of key areas of civil administration.

Second, there will be discussions regarding upcoming elections for a Palestinian governing council.

Finally, there will be negotiations on the "interim agreement" that would extend full Palestinian self-government throughout the West Bank.

Israel Says Unresolved Issues Remain

According to the declaration of principles, the two sides also will have to begin negotiations on the permanent status of the territories within two years after the start of self-rule in Gaza and Jericho, both of which gained autonomy in mid-May.

According to Israeli officials, unresolved issues from the initial autonomy phase include arrangements for providing secure passage on roads between Gaza and Jericho, prisoner releases and financial relations between Israel and the Palestinians.

Unofficially, some Israeli sources suggested the government in Jerusalem will not be ready to proceed to the next phase of the process until PLO Chairman Yasser Arafat has made his first visit to the self-governing zones.

The date of this event is still a matter of speculation, with Arafat apparently remaining cagey about the timing of his visit for reasons of security.

Sha'ath's trip this week to Gaza and Jericho was seen as preparatory to Arafat's visit -- which may be why Israel balked when Sha'ath spoke of visiting Jerusalem, a visit Arafat is also reportedly thinking of making.

Sha'ath, who was the highest ranking Palestinian official to visit the two self-rule districts so far, sparked much heated rhetoric among Israel's right wing when he said he wanted to worship at Jerusalem's Temple Mount.

The idea that this senior PLO official might arrive in Jerusalem was enough to heat rhetoric to a boiling point, with Jerusalem's Deputy Mayor Shaul Meir accusing the government of being

"even more anxious to sell Jerusalem than the PLO is to buy it."

In May, Meir, a member of the National Religious Party, reportedly offered a reward to anyone who assassinated Arafat.

Heedful of the potential for violence from the Israeli right and from the Islamic fundamentalist Hamas movement, Israeli officials sent Shahak to make it clear to Sha'ath that a visit to Jerusalem was not in the cards unless Israel was given sufficient notice to make the necessary security arrangements.

Sha'ath Criticizes Israeli Performance

Sha'ath responded that he would temporarily postpone his visit Jerusalem for another 10 days.

Leaving Jericho on Monday to return to Gaza, Sha'ath said he was "disappointed by Israel's performance" since the launching of self-rule in Gaza and Jericho.

He charged that Israel was not acting in accordance with the May 4 Cairo agreement for implementing autonomy.

Sha'ath said that Israel held up convoys of Palestinian vehicles at road blocks and frequently closed parts of the road linking Jericho and Gaza.

In an indication of the sensitive state of Israeli-Palestinian interactions, meanwhile, the Prime Minister's Office and the Foreign Ministry issued instructions this week that there are to be no further work contacts with Arafat's political adviser, Dr. Ahmed Tibi.

The reason appears to be that Tibi is an Israeli citizen.

According to a report on Israel army radio, the reason for the timing of the ban, just before the start of the next stage in the autonomy talks, is that Israel wishes to avoid any appearance that the PLO is speaking for Israeli Arabs as well as for Palestinians.

Interviewed on Israel Radio, Tibi denied any conflict of interest.

"I have merely sought to be a catalyst of peace between my country, Israel, and the Palestinians. When I meet with (Foreign Minister) Shimon Peres, or the prime minister, I do so not as an official representative of the other side, but as one who seeks to bring the two positions closer to each other, to bridge over differences," said Tibi.

Meanwhile, thousands of Palestinians still being held in Israeli jails for security offenses launched what they termed an "open-ended" hunger strike on Tuesday to protest the way their release was being handled by the Palestinian leadership.

The strike leader in Bethlehem, Issa Karaki, had harsh criticism for the PLO for agreeing to what he termed the "humiliating conditions" Israel had laid down for the release of the Palestinian prisoners.

Israel has been demanding that before being released, prisoners sign a document renouncing violence and acknowledging that their release falls under the terms of the Cairo agreement that pertain to prisoner releases.

Under the terms of the agreement, Israel was to release 5,000 Palestinian prisoners within five weeks of the signing.

Some 1,300 of those prisoners due for release are still incarcerated for having refused to sign the document.

KING HUSSEIN SEEKS ADDITIONAL AID AS JORDAN PURSUES TALKS WITH ISRAEL

By Matthew Dorf

WASHINGTON, June 21 (JTA) -- Two weeks after Jordan and Israel signed a broad agreement to pursue bilateral negotiations, Jordan's King Hussein is in town seeking additional aid from the Clinton administration.

Administration officials here expect President Clinton to announce an increase in military and humanitarian aid to Jordan after a White House meeting between the two leaders on Wednesday.

Jordan currently receives \$30 million a year from the United States in combined military and economic assistance.

In addition to meeting the president, Hussein is scheduled to meet with Secretary of State Warren Christopher, Defense Secretary William Perry, Commerce Secretary Ron Brown and House and Senate leaders during his three-day visit.

"This visit is no coincidence of timing," said Adam Garfinkle, director of the Middle East Council of the Foreign Policy Research Institute in Philadelphia.

"The Jordanians were pretty scrupulous in setting this up. They want to get the Americans as on board as possible before more negotiations with the Israelis," Garfinkle said.

According to the Israeli-Jordanian agreement signed June 7, diplomats from both countries will, for the first time, cross into each others' country to negotiate a peace treaty.

During the meetings, scheduled for next month, the parties will delineate borders and outline the future of economic relations.

Hussein was quoted saying during his visit that he hopes to meet openly with Israeli leaders in the near future.

In the past, meetings between the Jordanian leader and Israeli officials have taken place clandestinely.

Responding to Hussein's remarks, Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin said in Jerusalem on Tuesday that he was "ready to meet with King Hussein whenever and wherever he wants in an attempt to further peace between Jordan and Israel."

ISRAEL, U.S. INK ANTI-TERROR ACCORD

By Matthew Dorf

WASHINGTON, June 21 (JTA) -- Israel and the United States signed an unprecedented agreement last week to join forces to combat terrorism.

According to an anti-terrorism cooperation agreement signed at the State Department, Israeli and American officials will commit up to \$20 million to develop advanced systems to fight terrorism. In the coming weeks the sides will decide what specific projects to pursue and will establish an agenda for future projects.

The agreement with Israel marks the first time the American government has joined forces to combat terrorism.

An Israeli Embassy spokesperson refused to comment on the agreement, saying that "combating terrorism is a very sensitive issue and we do not discuss it publicly."

The State Department also refused to discuss the accord.

WZO DELEGATES WARNED THAT MOVEMENT MAY BECOME OBSOLETE IF NOT UPDATED

By Cynthia Mann

JERUSALEM, June 21 (JTA) -- The annual meeting of the Zionist General Council opened this week amid warnings that the Zionist movement risks becoming obsolete unless it restructures itself and redefines its goals.

Yehiel Leket, acting chairman of the Jewish Agency and World Zionist Organization, called for the Zionist entity to be restructured around a renewed emphasis on immigration to Israel, particularly from affluent countries such as the United States. Zionists should aim for the immigration of a quarter-million such Jews in the next 10 years, he said.

With its centennial just three years away, the Zionist movement is at a critical juncture, said Leket.

"There will be either a turning point in the renewal of Zionism or (its) requiem," he said.

"Zionism's current messages are not clear and the priorities are not sharply defined," he said. "The way of operation has not been updated to meet the (current) needs of Jewish life."

Many Jews in the Diaspora do not understand what Zionism means today, Leket said. "With a strong state (of Israel) and a viable Diaspora, they say, 'who needs the World Zionist Organization?'"

With its mandate in question, the deliberations of the Zionist Council -- the legislative body of the World Zionist Organization -- grew most heated about issues seemingly of more organizational than ideological import.

As an organization, the WZO derives its significance from its composition of representatives of Diaspora Zionist organizations, chosen in a quasi-democratic process, and Israel's Zionist political parties, represented in proportion to their representation in the Knesset.

Much of its power derives from its 50-50 partnership with Diaspora fund-raisers in the Jewish Agency for Israel, whose \$500 million budget represents the bulk of the money raised for Israel by the United Jewish Appeal and the Keren Hayesod, the UJA's international sibling.

On Collision Course

These two aspects were on a collision course this week, as delegates were warned that they could either approve a package of proposed changes in the WZO structure -- or risk jeopardizing their partnership with the fund-raisers.

"The crisis in the Zionist movement and the gaps between the Zionists and the fund-raising bodies necessitate a fundamental reform," said Leket.

Delegates had been expected to vote this week on the controversial package of reforms, proposed by the "Committee of Six," three members of the Jewish Agency's Board of Governors and three from the WZO. But by midweek it was evident the vote would be held during next-week's meeting of the Jewish Agency Assembly, half of whose 398 members belong to the WZO. The rest are from the fund-raising organs.

One of the most controversial committee proposals is to enlarge the Jewish Agency's Board of Governors from 74 to 120 members. The plan calls for the WZO to appoint its additional 23

representatives from outside its traditional political party framework, to include academics, cultural figures and local elected officials.

Many of the Zionists have resisted this proposal. They see it as an attempt to erode their power and as a frontal assault on the movement's fundamental democratic principles, which call for the election of its WZO members.

This will undermine the election process and "open the door to non-democratic processes," said one Israeli Zionist. He said the proposal was a cave-in to fund-raiser demands by a weakened Jewish Agency Chairman Simcha Dinitz.

Dinitz stepped aside from his post earlier this year after being indicted on charges of fraud related to alleged misuse of agency credit cards.

He said he feared that since the newcomers will not come from the Zionist party system, "they will have no obligation to the Zionist framework. In fact, in many ways, they may have (a certain) loyalty to the fund-raisers."

Others, such as Leket, a member of the Committee of Six, say the expansion reflects the need to broaden the structure of the partnership, which they believe is now too narrow.

He conceded the expansion is a concession to the American fund-raisers who believed they were not dealing with sufficiently diverse Israelis, but he said the change was an acceptable price.

'Irreparable And Irreversible Damage'

"Not accepting the recommendations will cause irreparable and irreversible damage to the very existence of the Zionist movement," he told the delegates. "You have been warned."

Meanwhile, Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin was asked to step in on behalf of the Zionists in another of the dramas being played out in the tense Israel-Diaspora partnership.

At issue is the "exclusivity" by which the Jewish Agency receives all of the money raised by the UJA and Keren Hayesod and earmarked for Israel. (UJA money is also allocated to the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee, which has its own projects in Israel.)

The contract between the Jewish Agency and the United Israel Appeal, the conduit between the UJA and the Jewish Agency, expires soon and is being renegotiated.

In these negotiations, the threat of eliminating exclusivity is the strongest card in the American fund-raisers' deck.

Jewish Agency-WZO Treasurer Hanan Ben-Yehuda responded to this threat this month by playing his own trump card, threatening to sever the agency's ties with UIA and to raise funds independently if UIA does not pledge exclusivity.

Leket quickly doused the firestorm that erupted, saying the Jewish Agency had no intention of severing its ties. This week Leket said current negotiations with UIA call for a five-year exclusive contract with the option on both sides to review and revise the terms after three years.

And pulling out the other card by which Israeli Zionists can trump their Diaspora partners, Leket met with Rabin on Tuesday, later reporting to the delegates that he had received assurances Rabin was committed to the Jewish Agency's status as the exclusive recipient of UIA funds.

Rabin said that as a basis of the Zionist-Diaspora partnership, "it would be inconceivable to give up the exclusivity," Leket reported.

**JEWISH ATHLETES AT GAY GAMES
CONNECT THEIR JUDAISM WITH SPORTS**

By Pamela Druckerman

NEW YORK, June 21 (JTA) -- Inside the lobby of the Hotel Pennsylvania, headquarters of this week's Gay Games, David Steinberg explained his personal connection between Judaism and sports.

"I don't know when I started doing this," said Steinberg, "but by the time I'm in the second stretch of a run, I'm going through the *amidah* (silent devotion) in my head."

Steinberg, 32, makes no claims to be a professional athlete, but he is halfway toward becoming a Reconstructionist rabbi.

Fresh from the 10-kilometer race, Steinberg said sports can be a religious experience.

"Running is a very, very spiritual, very religious thing for me," explained Steinberg. "It's

It was "a way of honoring my creator and all that," he said.

Along with about 100 other Jewish athletes from the games, Steinberg spent last Shabbat at Congregation Beth Simchat Torah, New York's gay and lesbian synagogue.

The synagogue sponsored a "Gay Games Shabbat" aimed at giving Jewish athletes a place to feel at home.

The weeklong Gay Games being held here -- part of the nationwide Gay Pride Month -- are the largest amateur athletic event in sports history, attracting an estimated 11,000 athletes from more than 40 countries, including some professional and Olympic athletes, competing in 31 sports.

This year marks the fourth Gay Games, which were held for the first time in 1982.

Included in the competition are two Israeli athletes -- a women's basketball player from Jezreel and a marathon runner from Tel Aviv.

The games are set to coincide with the 25th anniversary of the Stonewall riots, when a police raid of a gay bar in New York's Greenwich Village turned into a massive three-day demonstration that became a turning point in the struggle for gay rights.

On Sunday, a march to commemorate Stonewall and rally for gay rights is expected to attract thousands.

'Tied In With Who I Am'

And a gay cultural festival featuring theatre, dance and other events was being held throughout the week.

"It is one very, very gay week in New York City," explained Ken Dorph, a volunteer at the games.

For Roz Quarto, director of operations at the Gay Games and a first baseman on the women's softball team, it is also a very long week.

But despite sleepless nights and the endless crises involved in coordinating the thousands of athletic competitions, Quarto seemed to have things under control.

"For me, sports is very tied in with who I am as a person," she said.

Born a Roman Catholic, Quarto converted to Judaism in the fifth grade when her mother, an Italian, married a Jewish man.

From then on she received a full yeshiva education, attending Solomon Schechter Day

School and the Hebrew Academy of Nassau County.

Even then, said Quarto, she had an inkling that she was different.

"We had classes with boys and girls separate, which seemed to bother everybody but me," she said.

Overweight and withdrawn as a child, Quarto said she came into her own the first time she played kickball, and discovered she was good.

With that came popularity and her ticket beyond the yeshiva world.

She was bused to public school competitions to play in varsity sports.

It was, she said, a far cry from religious athletics.

"In the yeshiva league," explained Quarto, "20 points was a high-scoring basketball game."

Now a year-round employee at the not-for-profit Gay Games, Quarto gave up her career as a lawyer to dedicate herself to broadening the venues in which lesbians and gays can express themselves.

"There are so many times as a gay person when you just participate in life generally and people don't see you for everything that you are. And so often our parents or our family or our straight friends don't really like to see that part of you," she said.

Anyone who pays the \$60 registration fee can participate in the not-for-profit Gay Games, and all athletes receive a participation medal.

One person not participating in the games was Ira Jasinover, who instead was volunteering for the Stonewall 25 organization, which had set up a booth at the games.

Rebbitzin Jungreis Motivated Him

Jasinover -- who said he had not been involved in any political activities since college -- said he decided to volunteer for the Gay Pride Month activity after reading an article that mentioned Jewish motivational speaker Rebbetzin Esther Jungreis.

He said he recalled a lecture Jungreis had given to his United Synagogue Youth chapter, more than 15 years earlier, in which she warned about becoming complacent about being Jewish, especially in a place like New York.

"It came to my mind that the gays in New York City are very much like that, because they're very comfortable about being gay.

"You know it's very easy to be gay in New York City and not do anything, just to blend in," he said.

"For some reason, all of a sudden the connection was made," said Jasinover. "I have no idea why."

Ellen Markowitz, a participant in the tennis competition at the games, said her grandfather was a Reform rabbi.

But her own strong feelings about her Jewishness, and her desire to have a Jewish partner, she said, were mostly unconscious -- and cultural.

"I just feel more comfortable with women who are Jewish," said Markowitz, 32, a New Yorker who was playing in the women's tennis competition.

"I can't see spending the rest of my life with someone if they're not Jewish. It feels incongruent," she said.