

NEWS AT A GLANCE

■ **Israel and the Palestinian Authority resolved some key differences on security issues, paving the way to an agreement on the next phase of Palestinian self-rule. After their second meeting in two days, Israeli Foreign Minister Shimon Peres and Palestinian Authority Chairman Yasser Arafat set July 25 as a new target date for concluding an agreement. [Page 1]**

■ **Two Israeli security guards were fatally shot near the West Bank. Police were investigating whether the attack was carried out by terrorists. In a separate incident, a possible terrorist disaster was averted in the Gaza Strip when Israeli sappers defused a massive roadside bomb that was near the Israeli settlement of Morag. [Page 1]**

■ **The Simon Wiesenthal Center's Museum of Tolerance announced it would keep a photograph of Austria's far-right leader Jorg Haider on display, despite a retaliatory campaign by his followers against the veteran Nazi-hunter for whom the center is named. [Page 4]**

■ **The European Parliament condemned the continuation of human rights violations in Syria and criticized the European Council of Ministers for failing to report on the issue. The Parliament said it had provided financial aid to Syria on the condition that the issue of human rights be raised at high-level talks between the European Union and Syria. [Page 3]**

■ **French President Jacques Chirac told Jordan's King Hussein that the European Union wants a bigger political role in the Middle East. The European Union is now the largest aid contributor to the region, according to Chirac.**

■ **France's Consistoire Central, the body responsible for the religious needs of French Jews, said it would create a rabbinical seminar to train rabbis for communities in Eastern Europe, particularly in the former Soviet bloc.**

■ **Hungarian and world Jewish leaders commemorated the 51st anniversary of the deportations of Hungarian Jews during World War II at the Tabac Street Synagogue in Budapest.**

Moving closer toward accord, Israel and PLO resolve key issues*By Uriel Masad*

TEL AVIV, July 5 (JTA) — Israel and the Palestinians are one step closer to a new agreement on the next phase of Palestinian self-rule.

Although the originally agreed upon July 1 target came and went over the weekend, negotiations continued feverishly.

And after their second meeting in as many days, Israeli Foreign Minister Shimon Peres and Palestinian Authority Chairman Yasser Arafat emerged Tuesday apparently having resolved some key areas of disagreement with regard to security arrangements.

Officials set a new target date of July 25 for concluding an agreement.

The so-called second-stage interim agreement would usher in the next phase of Palestinian self-rule. The first stage involved the establishment of Palestinian autonomy in the Gaza Strip and the West Bank enclave of Jericho in May 1994.

The next phase would provide for a significant but partial redeployment of Israeli troops in the West Bank during the fall, and the holding of Palestinian elections throughout the West Bank and Gaza, probably in early November.

In their meeting Tuesday, the two sides apparently agreed in principle on specifics of an Israeli redeployment and the division of security responsibilities in the West Bank. However, no specific dates for redeployment and elections were mentioned.

Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin told a Cabinet meeting Wednesday morning that Arafat had accepted Israel's security demands.

Both Rabin and Peres emphasized that Israel would continue to maintain overall responsibility for all security-related matters in the West Bank.

This emphasis was seen as particularly important in the wake of two possible terrorist attacks just hours after Peres and Arafat emerged from their meeting Tuesday.

Israeli guards killed, bomb disaster averted

In one incident, two Israeli security guards were fatally shot near the West Bank early Wednesday morning. Police were investigating whether the attack was carried out by terrorists.

The two men, identified as Alex Polichenko, 22, of Kfar Saba and Hagai Lavie, 23, of Karkur were guarding an Israel Electric Company construction site near the northern farming village of Sha'ar Ephraim.

The village is located a few miles from the West Bank town of Tulkarm.

In the second incident, a possible terrorist disaster was averted in the Gaza Strip when Israeli sappers defused a massive roadside bomb near the Israeli settlement of Morag.

Under the tentative agreement between Peres and Arafat, the Israel Defense Force would be responsible for the security of all Israelis in the territories and would be free to carry out their ongoing war against terrorism, according to officials.

Arafat also said that two months after elections for a Palestinian Council, the Palestine Liberation Organization's National Covenant, which calls for Israel's destruction, would be amended.

An all-night meeting between Peres and Arafat on Saturday adjourned with mainly security issues left to be ironed out. Arafat asked for time to consult with his aides, and the two decided to meet again.

After a one-hour private consultation with Rabin, Peres flew to Gaza to meet with Arafat. He was accompanied by Chief of Staff Lt. Gen. Amnon Shahak and Foreign Ministry Director-General Uri Savir.

Savir also heads the Israeli delegation for negotiations with the Palestinians.

The agreements reached at the Tuesday meeting include:

- IDF redeployment in the West Bank in preparation for general Palestinian elections. Speaking to reporters from an Independence Day party at the U.S. Embassy in Tel Aviv, Rabin and Peres said Israel has agreed to

a total withdrawal from the centers of the West Bank towns of Jenin, Tulkarm, Kalkilya and Nablus.

In instances of anti-terrorist activities, the Israeli army would be able to re-enter city centers, they said.

Israel would also withdraw from the centers of Bethlehem and Ramallah, but only after the completion of new bypass roads sometime next year. Israel also reportedly agreed to an IDF withdrawal from the 450 Palestinian villages in the West Bank.

- A partial redeployment in Hebron, where Jewish settlers live in the heart of the predominantly Arab city. Israel had initially rejected any withdrawal from Hebron.

Details surrounding a redeployment in Hebron have yet to be finalized. But Rabin said Israel could not stop the 120,000 Palestinian residents of Hebron from taking part in the elections because of the 415 Israelis residing inside the city itself.

- The handing over of civilian authority to the Palestinians. Israel has already handed over responsibility for five spheres of civilian life. Talks on the transfer of eight more areas are continuing.

- The deployment of Palestinian police. The police would deal with crime prevention and law and order, but not with security issues, which would continue to fall under Israeli responsibility. The movements of Palestinian police outside these villages would require full coordination with the IDF, under the proposed agreement.

- The release of additional Palestinian prisoners. The two sides reportedly agreed to a staggered release, but not to the specific numbers. About 6,000 prisoners are jailed at this time. Israel has said no prisoners involved in fatal terrorist attacks against Israelis would be released.

Many of the prisoners had gone on a hunger strike to demand their freedom as part of the peace process. Their strike had triggered street demonstrations and much violence in several West Bank cities.

Hundreds of prisoners suspended their strike after progress was reported this week.

- The amendment of the Palestinian charter. "If the Palestinians will not commit to changing the covenant, there will not be a second stage of redeployment," Rabin said.

The Palestinians have also agreed that most roads, particularly the ones used frequently by Israelis, will remain under full IDF control.

'Agreed on most of the points'

Israel rejected the Palestinian demand for joint Palestinian-Israeli patrols similar to the ones that exist in Jericho and Gaza. Instead, there will be some ad hoc joint patrols that will deal with situations such as road accidents involving Palestinians and Israelis.

Israel and the Palestinians have yet to agree on a date for the Palestinian elections and the right of residents of eastern Jerusalem to vote and run in the elections.

The two sides are likely to reach a compromise that would enable only those residents who have second addresses outside the municipal limits to run. As for voting, residents will most likely be able to vote, but outside the city, according to Foreign Ministry officials.

Peres told reporters after their meeting that he and Arafat "agreed on most of the points, not all of them, some in writing and some orally. The major obstacle is lack of time. We agreed on principles, but to write it down will take quite a long time."

For his part, Arafat said, "We hope today we can say we achieved something concrete in our hands, so we will have very soon an agreement on redeployment and after that, elections, taking into consideration Israeli needs for security and to face terrorism."

Some officials have expressed concern that West

Bank settlers could create difficulties for the IDF redeployment plan. Although some bases will be established on state-owned land, the plan also calls for military bases inside some of the settlements.

It is feared that resistance from the settlers may slow down or even halt the redeployment, a prerequisite to the first-ever free and democratic Palestinian elections.

Shahak, the IDF chief of staff, told the Knesset Defense and Foreign Affairs Committee on Monday that if an Israeli-Palestinian agreement is not achieved in the near future, there is reason to fear that Hamas terrorist attacks would resume inside Israel again.

Palestinian and Israeli negotiating teams are expected to hammer out the details of the Peres-Arafat agreements over the next three weeks.

Meanwhile, the opposition Likud Party has leveled sharp criticism at the agreement. Describing it as another example of the government's "giving in" to Arafat, the party issued a statement charging that the Rabin government wants to turn over to the Palestinians cities in Judea and Samaria that would become escape routes for terrorists.

On the left, Meretz praised the agreement, with faction chairman Ran Cohen calling it "a tremendous achievement." The agreement "guarantees security and will remove the obstacle to peace presented by the settlements in Judea and Samaria," said Cohen, whose party is part of the Labor-led coalition government. □

(JTA correspondent David Landau in Jerusalem contributed to this report.)

Syrian official's remarks encourage Israeli government

By David Landau

JERUSALEM, July 5 (JTA) — Israeli officials have welcomed remarks by the Syrian foreign minister that the peace process with Israel should be speeded up.

Addressing reporters in Beirut, where he was briefing Lebanese officials on last week's peace talks in Washington, Farouk al-Sharaa said there had been "progress," but it was insufficient.

Last week's high-level military talks on security arrangements on the Golan Heights in the event of an Israeli-Syrian peace accord were seen as the first substantial negotiations between the countries in six months.

Al-Sharaa characterized the meetings between Israel's chief of staff, Lt. Gen. Amnon Shahak, and his Syrian counterpart, Lt. Gen. Hikmat Shihabi, as "serious."

Al-Sharaa said Syria wanted to move ahead quickly toward an agreement, but that Israel was dragging its feet.

In Jerusalem, Peres denied the complaint, but voiced his gratification at the minister's positive words.

"We are willing to move the peace process forward at the required rate in order to achieve peace as soon as possible," Peres said.

U.S. envoy Dennis Ross is due in the region Monday to continue the Israeli-Syrian dialogue and to prepare for further talks in Washington later this month between lower-ranking officers of the two military staffs.

Meanwhile, Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin reassured Golan settlers Wednesday that there would be no movement from the region before an agreement is ratified by the nation in a referendum. Rabin met with a group from the northern Golan settlement of El Rom.

The settlers said later that even though the prime minister empathized with the uncertainty of their situation, he did not allay their fears that their settlement would be the first to be withdrawn in a first-stage, partial pullback.

Israel reportedly would want to see the security and normalization provisions of an agreement with Syria going into effect before any further withdrawal. □

House vote on spending cuts both lauded and booed by Jews

By Steven M. Zeitchik

WASHINGTON, July 5 (JTA) — The latest scramble for diminishing federal funds has resulted in a victory and a defeat for American Jewish groups.

On the domestic front, American Jewish leaders expressed disappointment at last week's compromise between the House of Representatives and the Clinton administration to cut spending by about \$16.4 billion for 1995.

Known as the "Rescissions and Disaster Supplemental Appropriations for Fiscal Year 1995," the legislation is a softer version of a previous bill that mandated nearly \$17.1 billion in cuts. President Clinton vetoed that bill.

But even this agreement does not go far enough in revoking a painful array of spending cuts, according to many Jewish organizational leaders.

But on the foreign policy side, American Jews voiced unbridled support for the House decision to preserve the forgiving of Jordan's \$275 million debt to the United States. "This is a very important and positive development," said Neal Sher, executive director of the American Israel Public Affairs Committee, the pro-Israel lobby.

"It demonstrates there are tangible benefits for making peace with Israel," he said.

Malcolm Hoenlein, executive vice chairman of the Conference of Presidents of Major American Jewish Organizations, agreed.

"It's good for U.S. credibility because it is something the president has promised," Hoenlein said.

Clinton promised to forgive Jordan's debt when King Hussein made peace with Israel last October.

Perhaps more important than the practical benefits of the Jordan debt relief are the symbolic ones, said some Jewish officials.

"Congress is standing with the administration in its commitment to the peace process," said Martin Raffel, associate executive vice chairman of the National Jewish Community Relations Advisory Council. In addition, Raffel said, the measure reassures skeptics in the Middle East.

"Jordan's leadership is being rewarded to help shore up support among the Jordanian people," the NJCRAC official said.

Many Jewish groups oppose domestic damage

On the domestic front, however, NJCRAC, like many American Jewish organizations, does not believe that the House's concessions to the administration would sufficiently mitigate the damage to social service programs.

"We're looking at such severe cuts across the board," said Karen Senter, NJCRAC's co-director for domestic concerns.

Of the \$770 million in spending that the House restored, \$220 million would go to the safe and drug-free school program and \$225 million would go toward safe-drinking water projects. Most of the remaining money would go to environmental and educational projects.

That still leaves \$16.4 billion in spending cuts, some of which would indirectly, if not directly, affect Jewish organizations and charities.

According to the Council of Jewish Federations, the rescissions bill would severely affect a wide range of Jewish sponsored social-service programs, including housing for AIDS patients and the elderly, job-training programs for young people and nutrition programs for the poor.

"This is very serious stuff," said Joel Carp, senior vice president at the Jewish Federation of Metropolitan

Chicago. Carp, however, said he hopes that all is not yet lost, because the Senate has yet to vote on the bill.

The Senate postponed debate on the entire rescissions bill until after the July 4 break, after Sens. Carol Mosley Braun (D-Ill.) and Paul Wellstone (D-Minn.) protested the cuts as being too steep.

Clinton pledged to sign the House version if it crosses his desk. □

Congress extends legislation enabling U.S. funds for the PLO

By Jennifer Batog

WASHINGTON, July 5 (JTA) — The House of Representatives has voted to extend legislation enabling U.S. aid to the Palestinians until the middle of August.

The House's 45-day extension of the Middle East Peace Facilitation Act came at the end of last week, just as it was set to expire. The Senate voted to extend the legislation earlier last week.

The move gives Congress until Aug. 15 to come up with new legislation for aid to the Palestinians.

The issue has prompted much controversy in the American Jewish community, with supporters of the current peace process in favor of finding a way to continue funding the financially strapped Palestinians.

Opponents, however, argue that no more aid should go to the Palestine Liberation Organization until the PLO complies with all the provisions of its agreements with Israel.

Some lawmakers, including Sen. Alfonse D'Amato (R-N.Y.) and Rep. Eliot Engel (D-N.Y.), have already introduced legislation that would make it more difficult, if not impossible, for the Palestinian Authority to receive continued funding. □

European Parliament condemns human rights violations in Syria

By Joseph Kopel

BRUSSELS, July 5 (JTA) — The European Parliament has condemned the continuation of human rights violations in Syria and has criticized the European Council of Ministers for failing to report on the issue.

In a resolution, the Parliament, the legislative body of the European Union, reiterated that it had provided financial aid to Syria on the condition that the issue of human rights be raised at high-level talks between the European Union and Syria.

The Parliament also said it tied the aid to the drafting of an annual report about the situation of human rights in Syria. "The council has delivered no report on the situation of human rights in Syria," the European Parliament deplored in its resolution, adopted at a recent session.

In a move aimed at supporting Syrian participation in the Mideast peace process, the European Union had decided in November to relaunch its political and economic cooperation dialogue with Syria. For the first time in a decade, the E.U.-Syria Cooperation Council had convened in Brussels.

The European Parliament, at an earlier meeting, had cleared the way for a financial aid package to Syria, which had been refused three times to protest human rights violations in Syria.

In the recent resolution, the European Parliament said that "human rights violations continue to be denounced, notably by Amnesty International in April 1995."

European Parliament officials were upset that six months after the meeting of the cooperation council, the Council of Ministers had not yet seen a report on the situation of human rights in Syria. □

Report: Skinheads spread hate message across borders*By Avi V. Stieglitz*

NEW YORK, July 5 (JTA) — Neo-Nazi skinheads are becoming globally linked through an extensive international network, according to a recent survey released by the Anti-Defamation League.

"The Skinhead International: A Worldwide Survey of Neo-Nazi Skinheads," the first major study of its kind, reveals that the movement encompasses some 70,000 youths — half of whom are hard-core activists and the rest supporters — in 33 countries on six continents.

"Of great concern is the extent to which disparate neo-Nazi skinhead groups are globally linked," said Abraham Foxman, ADL's national director.

The 87-page report details how popular skinhead rock bands, the worldwide marketing of skinhead paraphernalia and music, the sale and trading of publications known as "skinzines," and the use of computer bulletin boards and the Internet enable different skinhead groups around the globe to spread their message of hate.

According to the report, the skinhead movement originated in England in the early 1970s, when gangs of youths with shaved heads, tattoos, combat boots and staunchly xenophobic attitudes became commonplace on the streets of lower-class neighborhoods. The movement attracts mostly young white men. Their beliefs blend white supremacy, anti-Semitism, ultranationalism and elements of Nazi doctrine, according to the report.

Skinheads retain the mythology of working class origins. But in reality, they come from a range of socioeconomic backgrounds, the report says.

The single greatest influence on skinheads, according to the study, is their music, a heavy brand of rock music called "oi." The lyrics contain bigotry and graphic descriptions of violence, such as: "Sharpen your knife on the sidewalk/Let the knife slip into the Jew's body."

Foxman said the purpose of the 18-month survey was to dispel any notion that skinheads are a passing fad.

'Dare not ignore the sound of jackboots'

"Cruel history has taught us that we dare not ignore the sound of jackboots," he said. "The violent and racist skinhead movement must be countered by government, law enforcement and all decent people."

In an effort to counter the movement, the ADL report recommends the establishment of police networking parallel to the skinhead network that crosses international borders and undercover operations to monitor skinheads.

The report also says that in countries where the promotion of racism and Nazism is illegal, skinhead music should be examined by authorities to determine whether it complies with the law.

Countries that have taken law enforcement seriously, such as the United States and Germany, have not seen the skinhead growth rate that other countries have witnessed, Foxman said.

Currently, 5,000 skinheads are in Germany and 3,500 are in the United States. Sizable numbers of the skinheads can be found in Hungary, the Czech Republic, Poland, the United Kingdom and Brazil.

Although skinheads in some countries have connections with neo-Nazi political parties, the report said, they reject the parliamentary road to power.

Instead, they seek to achieve their goals by destabilizing society through violence and intimidation.

Foxman applauded the recent HBO movie "The Infiltrator," which is based on the true experiences of Israeli journalist Yaron Svoray, who spent six months undercover in Germany with skinhead groups. □

Photo of Austrian extremist stays despite campaign at home*By Tom Tugend*

LOS ANGELES, July 5 (JTA) — A photograph of an Austrian far-right leader will remain on display at the Simon Wiesenthal Center's Museum of Tolerance here, despite a retaliatory campaign by his followers against the veteran Nazi-hunter for whom the center is named.

"The picture of Jorg Haider, who recently visited the museum, will stay in our rogues' gallery of contemporary demagogues," said Rabbi Abraham Cooper, associate dean of the Wiesenthal Center.

The controversy came to a head last week, when Vienna's city council voted to name two men honorary citizens of the Austrian capital. The nomination of 90-year old Viktor Frankl, an eminent psychotherapist, passed unanimously in a 99-0 vote.

However, the nomination of Wiesenthal, 86, though easily approved by the majority conservatives, socialists and environmentalist Greens representatives, was opposed by 22 deputies of Haider's right-wing Freedom Party.

Their dissent was preceded by an ad campaign in Austrian newspapers, claiming that Haider's picture was displayed in the museum alongside such mass murderers as Hitler, Stalin, Idi Amin of Uganda and Cambodia's Pol Pot.

The ads demanded that Wiesenthal travel to Los Angeles and help remove the photo.

Actually, Haider's photo hangs alongside such other right-wing, populist demagogues as Jean-Marie Le Pen of France and Ku Klux Klan leader David Duke, Cooper said.

Cooper added that the operation of the center and museum is independent of Wiesenthal.

The Nazi-hunter told Cooper in a telephone call after the city council vote that he took the Freedom Party's opposition as a badge of honor and that the honorary citizenship would be meaningless if extremists voted for it.

Haider, who is trying to bill himself as Austria's counterpart to Newt Gingrich, visited the museum in Los Angeles in early May, after unsuccessfully petitioning for a meeting with center leaders and for the removal of the photo.

Despite the rebuff, Haider and four companions appeared at the museum, paid the \$8 entrance fee and took the customary tour, led by a docent, said Cooper.

Since its opening two years ago, some 800,000 people have visited the museum, whose displays warn of the dangers of intolerance and racist persecution. □

Tel Aviv cabdriver stabbed to death*By Uriel Masad*

TEL AVIV, July 5 (JTA) — Avraham Davidi, 49, a cabdriver, was found stabbed to death last Friday night on a side street in a Tel Aviv industrial zone.

He was brutally attacked with a knife, but managed to call for help on his radio before he died.

Davidi did not give his location to police. When they found him, he was already dead. Neither the cash in the taxi nor Davidi's personal belongings were taken.

Cmdr. Gabi Last, Tel Aviv police chief, said Palestinian terrorists were not responsible for the killing, but did not offer further information.

Tel Aviv cabdrivers held a series of motorcade demonstrations over the weekend to protest what they called a lack of proper security measures.

A Transportation Ministry spokesman promised government assistance in the installation of reinforced partitions inside the cars. □