

Review
of
the
Year

UNITED STATES

Civic and Political

Intergroup Relations

TWO EVENTS IN 1985 created particular tension for the Jewish community. One was President Ronald Reagan's decision to visit the military cemetery at Bitburg in West Germany, where 47 *Waffen* SS soldiers were buried. The second was the nationwide speaking tour of Black Muslim leader Louis Farrakhan, preaching his anti-Israel and anti-Jewish message to successively larger, and seemingly approving, black audiences. The first event stirred memories of a time when the Christian world had been indifferent, if not worse, to the tragedy of the Holocaust. The second was seen by many as proof that the decline in black-Jewish relations, which set in after the 1960s civil rights revolution, was in fact growing worse.

The Bitburg Controversy

The Bitburg episode began when Chancellor Helmut Kohl of West Germany invited U.S. president Ronald Reagan to add a visit to Germany to a scheduled economic summit meeting in Europe in May. At this time, the two leaders would commemorate the 40th anniversary of Nazi Germany's surrender to the Allies in World War II. Kohl, who had been upset by the refusal of the Western Allies to include him in the 1984 D-Day celebration in France, saw the V-E Day anniversary as an opportunity to demonstrate U.S.-German reconciliation. Although Chancellor Kohl had suggested that the ceremonies include visits to both a concentration camp and a military cemetery, President Reagan announced in February—without giving a reason—that he would not visit a camp. On March 21, responding to a question about this at a press conference, the president said that the German people have had “a guilt feeling that's imposed on them, and I think it's unnecessary.” Further, he indicated, he did not want to “reawaken” painful memories of the past.

The announcement on April 11 that the president would visit a military cemetery at Bitburg and the subsequent discovery that among the 2,000 dead soldiers were 47 members of the notorious *Waffen* SS ignited a storm of protest. Jewish organizations, which, predictably, were sharply critical, were joined in their protest by a range of non-Jewish groups that included the American Legion, the National Council of Churches, the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People

(NAACP), and such eminent public figures as former president Jimmy Carter and Archbishop John J. O'Connor of New York.

In response to the outcry, and following an April 16 meeting with a delegation of the Conference of Presidents of Major Jewish Organizations, the president announced that he would visit a concentration camp. The change in plans did not, however, mollify the critics. Speaking at a Holocaust memorial service taking place in New York the very next day, Dr. Norman Lamm, president of Yeshiva University, told the audience of over 5,000: "A courtesy call at a conveniently located concentration camp cannot compensate for the callous and obscene scandal of honoring dead Nazis."

The U.S. Senate sent Reagan a letter "strongly urging" him not to visit the cemetery, and a similar request was made by the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Council, whose 55 members, presidential appointees, were prepared to consider mass resignation. The president managed to further inflame his critics when he said in a speech to newspaper editors and broadcasters on April 18 that the "young soldiers" buried in Bitburg were "victims of Nazism also," thus appearing to equate those who fought under Hitler with those whom Nazi soldiers burned in the crematoria.

The emotional climax of the controversy occurred the next day, at a White House ceremony in which Elie Wiesel, after receiving the Congressional Gold Medal of Achievement, implored President Reagan to cancel the Bitburg visit. "That place, Mr. President," Wiesel said—more in sadness than in anger—"is not your place. Your place is with the victims of the SS."

Unmoved by the protests and pleas, the president insisted, in remarks delivered just before his departure for Europe, that the cemetery visit was "morally right." His intention, he said, was not to honor anyone but to affirm the "miracle" of postwar reconciliation. In the final days before the president's departure, both houses of Congress passed resolutions (the Senate by a voice vote, the House by a vote of 390-26), calling on the president to change his plans.

Despite the uproar, the president's trip went forward essentially as planned. Both at Bergen-Belsen and at Bitburg Reagan delivered moving and sensitive remarks. At Bitburg, addressing himself to survivors of the Holocaust, he said, "Many of you are worried that reconciliation means forgetting. But I promise you, we will never forget."

On the president's return, some Jewish leaders sought to contain any potential damage in relations with the White House that might have been caused by the visit. Kenneth J. Bialkin, chairman of the Conference of Presidents of Major Jewish Organizations, told a press conference that while the Bitburg episode "was most regrettable," the president's words at Bitburg and at Bergen-Belsen "confirm our confidence in his compassion and understanding." He went on to acknowledge the president's support of Israel and his commitment to persecuted Jews in the USSR and elsewhere.

Jewish sensitivity to the repercussions of the episode grew out of awareness that Jews and non-Jews did not necessarily view the visit in the same light. A *Washington*

Post-ABC poll conducted at the height of the controversy, on April 22, revealed that Americans disapproved of the president's visit by only a slim margin: 51 percent considered it a bad idea; 39 percent approved. A *Newsweek* telephone poll published a week later yielded similar results.

A troubling finding in various surveys was the degree of hostility expressed toward Jewish critics. According to a *New York Times*/CBS News poll, 38 percent of respondents—including 60 percent of those who supported the cemetery visit and 18 percent of those who opposed it—agreed with the statement that “Jewish leaders in the U.S. protested too much over his visit.” Reacting to such responses, Midge Decter suggested, in the August *Commentary*, that because the Holocaust “is no longer a living memory” for many people, in the course of a month “Jews had progressed from being seen as people whose overweening sensitivity sometimes got in the way of necessary policy to being seen as no more than a self-serving pressure group, like the oil or farm lobby.” (See “The Bitburg Controversy,” in this volume, for a more detailed treatment of the subject.)

Holocaust-Related Issues

The Bitburg episode took place against a background of rising interest in the role played by U.S. intelligence officials after World War II in helping Nazi war criminals and former enemy scientists to enter the country and to become citizens, presumably to give the United States an edge on the Soviets in the cold war. Evidence for such a conspiracy was presented in a number of recent books, including *Quiet Neighbors: Prosecuting Nazi War Criminals in America*, written by Alan A. Ryan, Jr., former director of the Office of Special Investigations of the Justice Department. Some doubt was cast on the conspiracy theory, however, by a report submitted to Congress by the General Accounting Office. According to the GAO study, while 12 percent of the 114 individuals investigated were considered to have questionable records, there was no evidence of a program “specifically developed to aid the immigration of these types of aliens into the U.S.” By the end of the year there was a growing demand for the formation of a commission to investigate the role of U.S. intelligence agencies in bringing former Nazis to the United States after the war.

The issue of Nazi war criminals receiving safe haven in the United States continued to exacerbate the relations of various émigré organizations with both the Jewish community and the Justice Department. In April the World Jewish Congress issued a report charging more than 30 Baltic, Ukrainian, and other Eastern European groups with engaging in “an intensive and shocking campaign aimed at undermining the Justice Department’s Nazi prosecution program.” Specific activities cited in the report were: raising legal defense funds for accused Nazis, being openly anti-Semitic in their publications, and waging a campaign to set a statute of limitations on war crimes and to close down the Justice Department’s Nazi-hunting unit. Officials of the Justice Department’s Office of Special Investigations, which was

responsible for pursuing Nazi war criminals, confirmed that émigré groups hampered the department's work. In response, leaders of these organizations attacked the World Jewish Congress for its "vicious defamation campaign." They also countercharged that U.S. prosecutors relied on evidence supplied by the KGB, which was obviously suspect, since the Soviets sought to defame the Eastern European groups.

In July the Superior Court of Los Angeles ruled that the Institute for Historical Review must pay Mel Mermelstein, a Holocaust survivor, the \$50,000 reward it had offered for "proof" that the Nazis gassed Jews in concentration camps. The episode stemmed from 1980, when, in response to a challenge issued by the institute, Mermelstein submitted declarations by Auschwitz survivors who had witnessed friends and relatives being taken away to be gassed. In 1981, when the institute refused to pay the reward it had promised, Mermelstein brought suit. Even after agreeing to the settlement, the institute continued to publicize its contention that the Holocaust never happened, a position shared by a small number of so-called revisionist historians.

Black-Jewish Relations

LOUIS FARRAKHAN

The year saw the rising popularity of Louis Farrakhan, the Chicago-based leader of the Nation of Islam movement, who first gained public attention through his association with Jesse Jackson in the latter's bid to gain the Democratic presidential nomination in 1984. In the months following the election, Farrakhan embarked on a speaking tour of campuses and major cities around the country. During this period, the size of the crowds he attracted, the extremist and anti-Semitic tenor of his remarks, and the enthusiasm that greeted his statements made him a focus of attention and concern.

Whereas 300 had been a large crowd in Detroit a year earlier, some 6,000 now came to see him in that city. In Atlanta about 7,000 packed the hall and a large crowd stood outside. In Chicago there were 15,000 in the audience, in Philadelphia, 7,000, in Houston, 5,000. In July some 10,000 blacks jammed the Washington, D.C., Convention Center to hear Farrakhan's message. By the time he reached Los Angeles on September 15, where he spoke before 15,000 at the Felt Auditorium, he had become a major media event, appearing on "The Phil Donahue Show," the Cable News Network, and other news outlets.

Farrakhan's call for black self-determination and economic self-sufficiency was a primary source of his appeal. In May he announced the receipt of a \$5-million interest-free loan from Libyan leader Muammar Qaddafi that would be used "to help blacks build economic enterprises in the U.S.," specifically, businesses to produce and sell toiletries, such as soap, deodorant, and toothpaste. (Qaddafi had

addressed a Nation of Islam conference in Chicago, in February, by satellite, urging black soldiers to "leave the American army" and to join with other blacks to fight "your racist oppressors" and establish a separate nation.)

If Farrakhan's vision of economic independence for blacks had widespread appeal, so too, apparently, did his anti-Jewish and anti-Israel sentiments. In a report summarizing Farrakhan's activities, issued in June, the Anti-Defamation League (ADL) noted that he blended the preacher's call to self-respect and self-help with the demagogue's call to scapegoating and suspicion. At the State University of New York at Old Westbury, Long Island, Farrakhan charged Jews with threatening Jesse Jackson's life and with killing Jesus and declared they would be "punished and die" for these acts. In a speech at Northeastern University in Boston, Farrakhan was quoted as saying that Jews had "failed in their covenant." In October the *New York Times* reported that Farrakhan had been meeting with a former leader of the Ku Klux Klan in California, sharing intelligence about Jewish "extremist" organizations, and that the latter had attended the Farrakhan rally in Los Angeles as an invited guest. Of special concern was Farrakhan's apparent appeal to black college and high school students, who seemed to enjoy his general bashing of whites.

Early on, Jewish groups publicly and privately pressed black leaders to denounce Farrakhan's anti-Semitic remarks. While some did, the response was often timid or ambivalent. In some of Farrakhan's appearances, especially at the start of his nationwide tour, black city council members, state representatives, and prominent clergymen sat on the platform with him, and he was applauded by black intellectuals and professionals as well as the underprivileged. Only as Farrakhan's racism began drawing adverse comment from editorial writers in leading journals, as well as from civic and religious leaders, did black politicians show increasing discomfort. At the same time, they were reluctant to denounce Farrakhan publicly, for fear of dividing the black community and antagonizing their own base of support. Washington mayor Marion Barry, for example, delayed for two months in speaking out; then he offered a mild rebuke, not of Farrakhan but of specific remarks made by him. Los Angeles mayor Tom Bradley refused to denounce Farrakhan before his September West Coast appearance; afterward he criticized the "racism, hatred and bigotry" he said he found in the speech. Atlanta mayor Andrew Young declared in a newspaper interview, with obvious reference to Farrakhan's economic ideas, that he was "a legitimate player in the mainstream of black ideas." In November all 14 black members of the Chicago City Council voted against a resolution to condemn him.

A number of black political leaders expressed annoyance at appeals from Jews to speak out—to pass a litmus test, as it were, on where they stood on Farrakhan—on the grounds that this would make them appear to be bowing to Jewish pressure. Indeed, Farrakhan charged in September, in a Baltimore speech, that black politicians who criticized him were only seeking to "placate the Jews." In turn, Jewish leaders were attacked by Martin Peretz, publisher of the *New Republic*, for being "obsequious" in pressing for denunciations and then accepting responses that were, at best, grudging and weak.

When Farrakhan reached Madison Square Garden in New York in October, he addressed an overflow crowd of 25,000. Calling Jews "blood suckers whom Jesus condemned in the plainest of language," he warned that the "Jewish lobby has a stranglehold on government." Building on the experience of previous cities visited by the black leader, Jewish organizations in New York sought to maintain a low profile. They limited their protest to a single public statement that was issued by a coalition of Jews and non-Jews, including blacks and Hispanics, political and religious leaders. On the night of the event, the only protesters to be seen outside the Garden were 18 members of the Jewish Defense League.

In October Dr. Alvin Pouissant, a professor of psychiatry at the Harvard University School of Medicine and a respected observer of black affairs, presented a psychological and political appraisal of Farrakhan to a meeting of the National Jewish Community Relations Advisory Council (NJCRAC). Pouissant suggested that Farrakhan drew large audiences because he tapped the frustration and anger many blacks still felt over the unfulfilled promises of the civil rights revolution. Pouissant conceded that it was difficult to tell the degree to which Farrakhan's audiences absorbed or agreed with his anti-Semitic views; at the same time, he was optimistic that Farrakhan's continued anti-Semitic rhetoric would eventually alienate the black political leadership.

A few respected blacks did speak out forcefully against "Minister" Farrakhan, and not only for his anti-Semitism. Former civil rights leader Bayard Rustin, writing on October 11 in New York's *Daily News*, cited "three basic problems with the Farrakhan message: his anti-Semitism; the destructiveness of his black nationalism; and his insistence that black economic 'renewal' can be achieved only through a politically disastrous course for black America." Julius Lester, a black activist of the 1960s and 1970s who subsequently converted to Judaism, expressed his dismay that Farrakhan had become "America's preeminent black leader." In an essay in the October 28 *New Republic*, Lester wrote, "No people should make the journey from Martin Luther King, Jr., to Louis Farrakhan in fewer than 20 years." While acknowledging the "despair, poverty, deprivation . . . and the relentless heat of racism" that many blacks endured, Lester asserted that none of these "justified hatred, anti-Semitism, or the elevation of Louis Farrakhan to the position of spokesman and leader."

MAYOR EDWARD KOCH

An outspoken Jewish critic of Farrakhan was New York's mayor Edward Koch, who had many harsh words to say about the Black Muslim leader. Some observers attributed the strained relations between blacks and Jews in New York—at least in part—to the intemperate remarks made by Mayor Koch. As the year began, and on the eve of his reelection bid, the Union of American Hebrew Congregations (UAHC) called on Koch to proclaim "a moratorium on racial rhetoric and polarization, beginning with himself," a view reiterated a few days later by

the executive head of the American Jewish Congress. In the mayor's defense, Nathan Perlmutter of the ADL suggested that Jewish leaders who accused Koch of irritating race relations in the city were themselves "contributing to black-Jewish abrasions." He maintained that while the mayor was sometimes impolitic, he was not antiblack.

The mayor's feisty tongue continued to get him into trouble, however. Before the mayoral election, he accused two respected columnists of trying to elect a black mayor rather than a good one. He also complained publicly that few blacks attended the May solidarity rally in support of Soviet Jewry. In a newly published book, *I, Koch: A Decidedly Unauthorized Biography of the Mayor of New York City*, by Arthur Browne et al., the mayor was quoted as referring to California black congressman Ronald Dellums as a "Zulu warrior and a Watusi from Berkeley." This last prompted *Philadelphia Daily News* columnist Chuck Stone, a black, to ask why the media and Jewish leaders were not as critical of Koch as they were of Farrakhan and Jesse Jackson. In as near to an apology as he ever came in such matters, Koch declared that he meant to be, and was actually, complimenting Mr. Dellums. During the election campaign Koch lowered the volume of his rhetoric; in the election—which political observers predicted he would (and did) win handily—he actually fared better among black and Hispanic voters than he had in the past.

JESSE JACKSON

In contrast to the previous year, when he had been a potential presidential candidate, Jesse Jackson appeared much less frequently in the public eye. Nevertheless, he continued to express views regarded by many Jews as pro-Third World and anti-Israel. In a speech delivered in April to a symposium sponsored by Arab groups, Jackson called Israeli settlements on the West Bank a violation of international law and an impediment to peace. He appeared to be cool, also, to Israel's spectacular rescue and absorption of starving black Jews from Ethiopia, labeling the operation "a military mission," even though it was clearly humanitarian in purpose.

At the same time, and undoubtedly with an eye to the 1988 presidential race, Jackson appeared to want to heal the breach with the Jewish community. On his return from a trip to West Germany and France, Jackson declared that the time had come to reaffirm the "community of suffering" shared by blacks and Jews and the "collective capacity" of the two groups when they operated as a coalition. In November Jackson made a dramatic appearance at the Reagan-Gorbachev summit conference in Geneva, where he held an impromptu public dialogue with the Soviet leader—in full view of the television cameras. Jackson pressed Gorbachev on the predicament of Soviet Jews, telling him that trust between the two countries would be improved if anxiety over Soviet Jews were eliminated. Jackson's action won him praise from the American Jewish Congress and other Jewish groups that had been critical of him in the past.

SOUTH AFRICA

The issue of apartheid in South Africa was one over which Jewish and black groups could lay aside their differences and, in a manner reminiscent of civil rights efforts in the 1960s, join together in protest. Beginning in November 1984, regular daily demonstrations were organized outside the South African embassy in Washington by the Free South Africa movement. By the end of 1985 more than 3,000 protesters had been arrested, including many Jews. The protest movement reached a peak on August 12 when some 5,500 persons marched from the Washington Monument to the State Department, to demand an end to racial segregation in South Africa and the imposition of U.S. government sanctions on that country. Leadership in these efforts in the Jewish community came primarily from the UAHC and the American Jewish Congress. The ADL, although often seen as the most conservative of the major national Jewish bodies, staged an antiapartheid protest outside the South African embassy, in the form of a menorah-lighting ceremony on the first day of Hanukkah.

Despite the spirit of unity expressed in public demonstrations, black-Jewish interests did not entirely coincide. While some Jewish bodies supported the strategy of divestment advocated by many black groups—as a means of pressing American businesses to pull out of South Africa—others opposed it. They argued that American-run companies often played a liberalizing role and that their departure might actually destabilize the South African government, thereby opening the door to revolutionary rather than reform forces. The appearance at the August 12 Washington demonstration of numerous marchers in the crowd carrying anti-Israel placards and leaflets prompted Rabbi Sidney H. Schwarz, executive director of the Jewish Community Council of Greater Washington, to warn—in an op-ed piece distributed by Washington Jewish Week Features—that unless Third World rhetoric was shunned by the Free South Africa movement, it risked condemnation for intolerance and bigotry.

Jewish leadership was concerned also—although the concern was muted—about the visits to a number of U.S. cities of Bishop Desmond Tutu, the South African leader who won the Nobel Prize for Peace in 1984. Writing in *Midstream*, in May, David Neiman reviewed Bishop Tutu's ambivalent record with regard to Jews and Israel. He noted particularly his speech at the Jewish Theological Seminary the year before, in which he praised the Jewish people as “a light unto the nations” but declared himself “sad that Israel . . . should make refugees” of Palestinian Arabs. Tutu also accused Jews of behaving with “the arrogance of power,” because they “are a powerful lobby” in the United States.

REVIVING THE ALLIANCE

Various black and Jewish groups made efforts to demonstrate that a reservoir of goodwill existed despite the strains. In Philadelphia, for example, the local

American Jewish Committee chapter worked with a group of black leaders and Congressman William Gray, chairman of the House Budget Committee, and sent a group of black and Jewish high school seniors to visit Senegal and Israel during the summer. In May delegates of the UAHC and the NAACP met in Washington to consider programs of joint activity at both the grassroots and national levels. Existing community projects in the areas of economic development, health, and social welfare were reviewed and new activities proposed. The presidents of the two organizations, Rabbi Alexander Schindler and Benjamin Hooks, declared their belief that "the traumas which our communities sustained in recent years are in the process of being overcome."

A dissenting view on efforts at black-Jewish cooperation was expressed by Marvin Schick, writing in the *Long Island Jewish World* (October 18-24). He suggested that harmful side effects could result from "the perception by blacks that their destiny once more is being determined by . . . whites—and by whites who are Jewish." He urged both groups to lower their expectations of one another "on the grounds that the more we champion the idea of a special coalition, the more will Jews and blacks draw apart . . . [and] engage in conflict."

A survey of black members of Congress, released by the World Jewish Congress in August, found that most black legislators deeply resented the Jewish reaction to Jesse Jackson in the 1984 presidential campaign. The lawmakers also believed that the once strong alliance had deteriorated during the year as a result of some Jewish opposition to affirmative action and Israel's relations with South Africa. At the same time, according to the survey, the lawmakers saw enough "affinity of ideals and interests" to overcome obstacles to cooperation.

A pessimistic appraisal of black-Jewish relations was offered by Glenn C. Loury, a black political economist, writing on "Behind the Black-Jewish Split" in the January 1986 issue of *Commentary*. According to Loury, persistent feelings of inferiority in relation to Jews—"abetted by apartheid abroad and by poverty at home"—had combined to produce, among black intellectuals in particular, a broadly embraced, if somewhat nebulously defined, Pan-African political identity. This self-definition led blacks at all levels to see themselves as a "Third World people" whose relations with Americans of European descent were analogous "to the position of the nonwhite peoples of the developing countries vis-à-vis their former European colonizers." Loury concluded, "I fear that the conflict among blacks and Jews is not likely soon to abate, notwithstanding the earnest efforts of so many people of good will."

Urban Issues

New initiatives were taken by Jews in areas apart from traditional Jewish philanthropy. In February, spurred by the battle in Congress over the federal budget and threatened cuts to welfare programs, 36 leaders of major Protestant and Jewish denominations, religious agencies, and ecumenical organizations issued a call for a

national commitment to end poverty in America. The statement, which was initiated by the Interfaith Action for Economic Justice in Washington, D.C., claimed that it was possible to “finance the programs necessary to end poverty in this country without exacerbating the deficit problem.”

The formation of a new foundation, the Jewish Fund for Justice, was announced in August. While some financial aid would go to Jews, the fund’s organizers said, its primary purpose was to contribute to nonsectarian causes and to do so as Jews. In discussing the decision to create the fund, Lois Roisman, its executive director, claimed that political and religious developments were causing Jews to reassess their position in American life. “The Moral Majority’s call for the Christianization of America underlines the importance of a more active Jewish participation in efforts to create a just society,” she said. Initial grants made by the fund were to Navajos in Arizona, homeless blacks in Boston, and low-income Mexican-Americans in Colorado.

Another new organization, Mazon, was launched this year as “a Jewish response to hunger,” to serve non-Jews and Jews alike. Its novel approach to fund raising was to ask for a voluntary 3-percent surcharge on the cost of life-cycle events, such as weddings and bar/bat mitzvahs, as well as other festivities.

Quotas and Affirmative Action

A 1984 Supreme Court decision paved the way for the Justice Department to move this year to eliminate quotas and other “race conscious” measures currently in force. (The high court had upheld a Memphis fire fighters’ union refusal to adhere to an affirmative-action plan requiring that white fire fighters with greater seniority be laid off before black fighters with less seniority.) In January the department wrote to 47 cities and states—by May the number was expanded to 56—requesting them to modify affirmative-action court decrees and to eliminate hiring quotas except where they were used to help victims of past discrimination. The move came under sharp attack by civil rights groups, including the American Jewish Committee, which accused the Justice Department of “blurring the important distinction” between goals and quotas. In his statement, the Committee’s president, Howard I. Friedman, stressed that his group had always opposed the latter but favored the former.

Civil rights groups vigorously challenged the move to promote William Bradford Reynolds, the Justice Department’s chief civil rights officer and signer of the letter to the cities and states, to associate attorney general, the number-three position in the department. In July some 100 pickets from the NAACP and UAHC marched outside the Senate Judiciary Committee hearings on Reynolds. The committee eventually voted against his confirmation.

Strong protests were voiced in August when the White House staff drafted an executive order to repeal requirements that federal contractors set numerical goals

to remedy possible job discrimination. American Jewish Committee president Friedman stated that the answer to abuses in affirmative-action programs "must be vigorous supervision and correction, not the eradication of the programs themselves." The ADL's somewhat different view on the issue of goals and quotas had been expressed in testimony before the U.S. Civil Rights Commission in March by ADL director Nathan Perlmutter. Calling the distinction between quotas and goals "artificial," he asserted that "just as perniciously," a goal "can function as a ceiling for minorities." While ADL opposed affirmative action based on "racial proportionality," Perlmutter said, it favored practices that took into account an individual applicant's disadvantages and any "social, educational or economic barriers he or she may have overcome."

Anti-Semitism

In a major new work, *A Certain People: American Jews and Their Lives Today*, journalist-scholar Charles E. Silberman declared that anti-Semitism was no longer the significant factor in Jewish or American life that it had been a generation earlier. The new climate of acceptance, Silberman claimed, had dramatically altered the choices available to American Jews—choices about where to study, what occupation or profession to follow, and where to live.

This rosy view was not universally subscribed to. Basing himself on various community studies, Prof. Gary Tobin of the Brandeis University Center for Modern Jewish Studies claimed that most Jews in the United States believed they had experienced some form of anti-Semitism in their lifetime. Data from a Washington, D.C., study, for example, indicated that most personal experiences with anti-Semitism went unreported to the police, employers, or even Jewish agencies.

In the only index that is kept of reported anti-Semitic incidents, the ADL indicated that in 1985 acts of vandalism against Jews or their institutions or property were 11 percent lower than the previous year. The new findings reflected a five-year downward trend, interrupted only by a slight increase in 1984.

Anti-Israel Activity

American college campuses continued to be centers of anti-Israel propaganda. The Muslim Students Association at Wayne State University in Detroit, Michigan, distributed copies of the anti-Semitic czarist forgery *The Protocols of the Elders of Zion*, while the Stanford University *Daily* published an op-ed piece attacking Israel for "destroying Palestinian identity."

Arab-American groups became more aggressive and sophisticated in their campaign against Israel. In March the National Association of Arab Americans placed advertisements in the *Christian Science Monitor* and publications in Michigan and Ohio opposing aid to Israel. Similarly, the American-Arab Anti-Discrimination

Committee ran a series of full-page advertisements in the *Washington Post* in June, each ad headed "Should Congress give away almost \$5 billion each year for one foreign country's military buildup?"

Federal legislation protecting American companies and individuals trading with Israel from the Arab League's boycott was restored in July—following its expiration the previous October—without change in the antiboycott provisions. In the five fiscal years beginning in 1979 and ending in 1984, penalties imposed under the law totaled \$4,088,500. In an out-of-court settlement this year, the Lockheed Corporation agreed to pay a \$10,000 fine and to be stripped of its export privileges to Saudi Arabia for one year as a result of charges that the company violated antidiscrimination provisions of the Export Administration Act. Late in the year, the House of Representatives passed a bill that would require colleges and universities receiving federal aid to disclose sizable gifts from foreign donors.

During the summer the Senate and House adopted a joint resolution condemning the 1975 UN General Assembly resolution that equated Zionism with racism and urging its repeal. The lawmakers declared that the UN resolution was "itself clearly a form of bigotry."

A new book, *The American House of Saud*, by Steven Emerson, documented the use of Arab "petrodollars," beginning with the 1973 oil shortage, to influence American public opinion and win behind-the-scenes support for the Arab cause.

Attitudes Toward Israel

American public opinion reacted against Israel when Arab-inspired terrorist incidents occurred abroad, especially when they involved Americans. The reactions, however, proved to be transitory. During the Beirut hostage crisis in June, in which 40 male passengers from a hijacked TWA airliner were held prisoner by members of the Shi'ite Amal militia, a series of ABC/*Washington Post* polls found increasing support (a high of 42 percent with 41 percent disagreeing) for the proposition that "the United States should reduce its ties to Israel in order to lessen the acts of terrorism against us in the Middle East." This result paralleled a poll taken after the massacre of Palestinians at the Sabra and Shatilla refugee camps in Lebanon in 1982, when 42 percent said U.S.-Israeli ties should be reduced, and 47 percent disagreed.

That the anti-Israel sentiment was a temporary phenomenon became clear as soon as the hostages were released. A subsequent poll found that a majority of the public opposed reducing U.S. ties; indeed, a plurality (47 to 34 percent) believed that Israel had helped the United States to resolve the crisis to the extent of its ability. Writing in the October issue of *Commentary*, Mitchell Bard noted that while "the Arabs have made impressive strides in improving their standing with the public," as a result of sophisticated propaganda efforts, "greater support for their cause has not eroded support for Israel."

Church-State Relations

Reverberations of the election campaign of 1984, in which attempts were made to introduce religious doctrines into public life, continued into this year. In Denver, for example, the regional representative of the Department of Education distributed copies of a speech delivered to Christian educators that lamented the fact that "godlessness" had taken over a once "Christian" United States. Following a complaint by the American Jewish Congress, the department issued an official apology.

The Supreme Court ruled during the year on several major cases involving church-state relations. On March 27 the court divided 4-4 on whether the village of Scarsdale, New York, was required to permit the display of a privately sponsored Nativity scene on public land—a display opposed by the board of trustees of the heavily Jewish community. The effect of the split judgment was to automatically affirm a lower-court ruling allowing erection of a crèche as a free-speech right. The outcome of the Scarsdale case, taken together with a decision the year before in a Pawtucket, Rhode Island, case, seemed to indicate a trend toward an accommodation of religion in the public sphere.

In light of these decisions, a June 4 ruling by the high court appeared as a surprising about-face. By a vote of 6-3, and emphasizing that "government must pursue a course of complete neutrality toward religion," the court struck down an Alabama law that permitted a daily one-minute period of silent meditation or prayer in the public schools. Since "moment of silence" laws existed in varying versions in 25 states, the negative decision gave impetus to a renewed effort in Congress to pass a constitutional amendment permitting organized prayer in the public schools. In September Sen. Jesse Helms (R., N.C.) sponsored a proposal that would have removed the prayer issue from federal court jurisdiction and given state and local governments authority in this area. In what was regarded as a blow to the agenda of the Christian Right, the bill was defeated by a vote of 62-36. However, as the year drew to a close, the Senate Judiciary Committee, by a vote of 12-6, agreed to send to the floor of the Senate a proposed constitutional amendment that would permit silent prayer or meditation in the public schools.

On the issue of government aid to parochial schools, on July 1 the Supreme Court ruled unconstitutional the spending of millions of dollars in Michigan and New York to send public-school teachers into religious schools to conduct remedial programs. By a 5-4 vote, the justices invalidated a "shared time" program in Grand Rapids, Michigan, that placed 470 public-school teachers in 40 Roman Catholic and other religious schools, during regular hours, for special instruction. In the second case, the justices also divided 5-4 in finding constitutional flaws in a 19-year-old New York City public-school program that used Title I funds to provide remedial and other special education on religious-school premises to 40,000 children from low-income families. While these decisions were hailed by groups like the American Jewish Committee and the American Jewish Congress, they were decried by

members of the Orthodox community. The National Jewish Commission on Law and Public Affairs (COLPA), which filed friend-of-the-court briefs in both cases in behalf of Orthodox Jewish bodies, called the decisions "devastating" to children attending Jewish religious schools.

The apparent move by the Supreme Court toward renewed adherence to the separation principle brought sharp attacks from the Reagan administration. Attorney General Edwin Meese III lashed out at the court, arguing that the principle that government must maintain a course of neutrality between religion and nonreligion "would have struck the founding generation as somewhat bizarre." The newly installed secretary of education, William J. Bennett, cautioned state superintendents against scaling back all forms of aid to parochial schools, on the grounds that the high court's rulings did not necessarily affect forms of federal aid other than remedial programs. In speeches around the country, Secretary Bennett sought to stimulate interest in a voucher system; this would circumvent the court's decisions barring the use of public funds by giving parents in disadvantaged areas government vouchers with which to pay for schools of their choice, public or parochial.

On February 19 the Supreme Court agreed to rule in a Williamsport, Pennsylvania, case on whether public high schools could allow religious clubs to meet for prayer and discussion on school grounds on the same basis as other student groups. In July 1984 a three-judge panel of the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Third Circuit had reversed a ruling of a U.S. District Court upholding the students' right to meet. A day before the Circuit Court opinion was handed down, however, Congress passed the Equal Access Act, requiring schools that provide a "limited open forum" for student activities to permit religious groups to meet also. The American Jewish Committee, the UAHC, and others opposed the act as a violation of the separation principle, and the UAHC issued a guide alerting parents and community leaders to its dangers. The Pennsylvania case was seen as providing an opportunity for the court to review the constitutionality of the act.

Mainstream Jewish groups viewed attempts to reverse "proseparation" court decisions with alarm. In June the American Jewish Congress announced the creation of a new body, the Fund for Religious Liberty, whose purpose would be to combat the "Christianizing of America" through support of relevant litigation. At the fund-raising dinner held to launch the fund, Congressman Stephen L. Solarz (D., N.Y.) warned, "You can see from Beirut to Belfast the consequences of sectarianism."

This view was challenged by Prof. Nathan Glazer of Harvard University in an article in *The New Republic* of October 21. Conceding that evangelicals and fundamentalists had to be opposed when they sought equal time for "creationism" and other improper intrusions of religion in the public arena, Glazer worried that in New York City 20,000 poor children in nonpublic and Catholic schools, who had been receiving remedial aid for years under a historic 1965 compromise on the church-state issue, were now barred from receiving such aid. Moreover, he maintained, since Christians were a majority in this country, the fact "that this should find some

expression in public life seems not unreasonable." "It is impossible," Glazer concluded, "to draw too neat or sharp a line" between the public and private aspects of religion.

Writing from an entirely different perspective, author and political activist Arthur Waskow also challenged traditional Jewish-establishment assumptions about church-state relations. In an essay in the January-February issue of *Moment* magazine, he suggested that there is "a more 'Jewish' way to prevent Christianization than to take comfort in a bland, homogenized-secular culture." Waskow urged Jews to bring "the wisdom of Torah into the great public arena—rather than either withdrawing from the debate altogether, into a privatized religion, or relying on a frozen secular modernism as its way of thinking."

The Christian Right

There were indications this year that significant elements of the Christian Right were attempting to fashion a less hard-line identity for themselves. Writing in the *Philadelphia Inquirer* magazine on January 20, Larry Eichel reported, "They [the fundamentalists] have been smoothing away the rough and more controversial edges of their politics with hopes of expanding their potential base of support." In a debate with Judy Goldsmith of the National Organization for Women in February, Jerry Falwell, head of the Moral Majority, declared that he could support abortion, albeit reluctantly, to save the life of the mother. At the same time, he urged proliferators to create mechanisms to make "homes, beds, doctors, counselors and adoptive families" available at no expense to those who chose to forgo abortions. Appearing before the annual convention of the Rabbinical Assembly (Conservative) in March, he apologized for having advocated the "Christianization" of America. "We were wrong and we are sorry," he declared. Continuing with words of praise for Israel, he promised to mobilize Christians on behalf of the Jewish state and to fight anti-Semitism.

The most dramatic instance of the search for rapprochement with Jews was undoubtedly the turnabout of Jesse Helms. In March he led six other Republican senators in an attack on President Reagan's September 1982 Middle East peace initiative, urging the president to support continued Israeli occupation of the West Bank and Gaza Strip. The Helms attack, conveyed in a letter to the president, was a landmark of a sort in the conservative leader's evolving views with regard to Israel. Following the Israeli incursion into Lebanon in 1982, he had been sharply critical of the Jewish state, calling for a halt to U.S. assistance and for the resignation of Prime Minister Menachem Begin. Credit for Helms's shift was given, in part, to a small pro-Israel group, Americans for a Safe Israel, which had entered into discussions with the senator and arranged for him (and several others), later in the year, to visit Israel for the first time. In June, when the administration withdrew its request for the sale of sophisticated weapons to Jordan because of overwhelming opposition in both the House and Senate, the National Jewish Coalition, an arm of

the Republican party, attributed this victory to a growing awareness on the part of Republicans like Helms of the real dangers to Israel's security.

The term "New Right" was often applied to the newest brand of conservatives within the Republican party—congressmen like Jack Kemp of New York, Newt Gingrich of Georgia, and other House members affiliated with a caucus known as the Conservative Opportunity Society—but it was not a wholly accurate label. Often called the "C-Span Boys," since they used broadcasts of House sessions by the cable television network of that name as a forum for transmitting their views, they preferred to describe themselves as "populists." While giving nominal support to the Christian Right social agenda—and more than nominal support to the issue of voluntary school prayer—they sought to deemphasize more disruptive issues like abortion. During the year, they shocked some conservatives by joining with blacks and liberals to protest the Reagan administration's policy in South Africa, which they viewed as acquiescence in "the unacceptable status quo" of racial apartheid.

These developments on the Right had repercussions in the Jewish community. In February Kenneth Bialkin, national chairman of the ADL and chairman of the Conference of Presidents of Major Jewish Organizations, proposed to an ADL audience that Jews should reach out to Christian evangelical leaders, at the same time keeping a watchful eye on the boundary between church and state. Similarly, Rabbi Irving Greenberg, president of CLAL—the National Jewish Center for Learning and Leadership, urged in his syndicated column in the Jewish press that Jews seek common ground with right-wing groups in return for their "resocialization to true pluralism."

One Jewish leader who was less sanguine about relationships with the Right was Henry Siegman of the American Jewish Congress. He accepted Falwell at his word as a friend of Israel and said, "I don't believe he is an anti-Semite." "But," he went on, in Falwell's new willingness to accept Jews as Americans, he "misses the point . . . it's that the government is not identified with any one group."

Even as Christian Right groups sought to broaden their appeal, there were indications that they were not abandoning their basic goals. People for the American Way—a group founded to combat the Moral Majority—reported in August that attempts by rightist groups to censor curriculum and books in public schools nationwide had increased by nearly 40 percent during the previous academic year. The *New York Times* noted that school systems throughout the country remained under pressure to restrict discussion on such topics as evolution, abortion, communism, and something labeled "valuing."

Jewish-Catholic Relations

A number of events were held throughout the year to mark the 20th anniversary of "Nostra Aetate" ("In Our Time"), the declaration by the Second Vatican Council that rejected the charge of deicide against the Jews and repudiated anti-Semitism. In February a delegation of top American Jewish Committee leaders met with Pope

John Paul II at the Vatican to discuss problems of mutual interest. Following the papal audience, at which the pope reconfirmed the Vatican's support of the declaration, Rabbi Marc Tanenbaum, the Committee's director of international relations, said that over the past two decades "there has been a 180-degree turnaround" in Catholic attitudes toward Judaism. Moreover, he said, Vatican II "has now made possible the emergence of a whole new theology in which Jews and Judaism are respected in their own right."

An international conference organized by the ADL, in cooperation with the Vatican Commission for Religious Relations with Judaism, took place in Rome in April. The following month the Reform movement's UAHC announced the inauguration of a program aimed at bringing together Jews and Catholics at the local level in an effort to foster better relations between the two groups.

To commemorate the anniversary, Cardinal John O'Connor of New York delivered an address on Catholic-Jewish relations at that city's Temple Emanu-El, in October. Other observances of the anniversary were arranged in cities around the country, sponsored by Catholic and Jewish groups.

The spirit of good relations was marred somewhat by the appearance in June of guidelines ("Notes") for teaching about Judaism in the Catholic church, issued by the Vatican. While the document contained many positive elements, it drew immediate criticism from the International Jewish Committee on Interreligious Consultations (IJCIC), which included the American Jewish Committee, the ADL, and the World Jewish Congress. The group faulted the Vatican publication for including only a "vague, passing and almost gratuitous reference" to the Nazi crimes against the Jews and for failing to deal adequately with the religious significance of the State of Israel. A month later, a meeting of Catholic and Jewish leaders agreed on the need for further dialogue to clarify the issues raised in the document.

In the fall, leaders of the IJCIC gathered at the Vatican to celebrate the exact anniversary of "Nostra Aetate." Rabbi Mordecai Waxman, chairman of the group, said that while the Vatican declaration had "encouraged Jews everywhere to feel that there was a new spirit in the Christian world," Jews were "conscious that much of its vision has yet to be translated into reality and universal acceptance." For Jews, there were still outstanding issues—theological questions relating to the Holocaust and Israel as well as the practical matter of the Vatican's relationship with Israel.

While many Jewish leaders expressed satisfaction with the progress being made on these matters, the feeling persisted in some quarters that the pace was too slow. This view came to public attention in November, when Edgar M. Bronfman, president of the World Jewish Congress, made a dramatic appeal to New York's Cardinal O'Connor—at a dinner honoring the prelate for interfaith work—to press the Vatican for diplomatic recognition of the State of Israel. Bronfman's public challenge reflected a division among Jewish leaders about the kinds of tactics—public or private—most likely to achieve this goal. While the cardinal made no comment on the issue at the dinner, he later told reporters that he had "no hesitancy at all" about raising the issue with the Vatican, recognizing that that was about all he could do.

Extremism

Extremist right-wing groups received considerable attention during the year, either because of stepped-up activity on their part or action by public authorities taken against them.

Computer technology was being used increasingly by the rightists to maintain contact among themselves and to spread their propaganda. In January the ADL released a report detailing the operations of two computer networks that were intended for "Aryan patriots" but were in fact accessible to anyone with a home computer and modem attachment. The more widely known of the two was run by the Idaho-based Aryan Nations, a group whose aim was to establish a "nationalist racist state." The second hate network was operated out of West Virginia by George Dietz, a German immigrant (and former Hitler Youth member) who was well known as a distributor of neo-Nazi literature.

In April state and federal officials took control of a paramilitary camp in Arkansas run by the Covenant. In addition to an extensive arsenal and munitions factory and a cache of neo-Nazi hate literature, searchers found a converted submachine gun virtually identical to the weapon used to kill Alan Berg, the Jewish talk-show host, in Denver in 1984, and also, two weeks prior to the raid, a Missouri state trooper. In the camp, officials discovered in hiding four members of a neo-Nazi group called the Silent Brotherhood, or the Order, a splinter group of the Aryan Nations, whose objective was the violent overthrow of the government. Two of those detained, along with 21 other members of the white supremacist group, went on trial in September in Seattle, on charges including the two murders, robberies and bank holdups that netted the Order more than \$4 million, and counterfeiting. FBI director William H. Webster declared the Order to be more dangerous than the Ku Klux Klan. The trial lasted three and a half months, ending on December 30 with the conviction of the defendants under the federal racketeering act.

An ABC News "20/20" telecast in August, devoted to the economic crisis in the Midwest plains states, claimed that extremist right-wing groups, some of them anti-Semitic, were winning adherents among financially troubled farmers. Groups such as the Posse Comitatus, the new Populist party, and the Aryan Nations blamed the farmers' plight on the Federal Reserve System, the legal profession, and the banks, all of which, they charged, were controlled by Jews. Two leading Jewish organizations disagreed in their assessment of the danger posed by the extremists. On September 19 the ADL's research director, Irwin Suall, said, "Despite their intense efforts, they are not meeting with much success." He did indicate, however, that the ADL would continue to monitor the situation. The ADL view was disputed by Dixon Terry, chairman of the Iowa Farm Unity Coalition, and Rabbi James Rudin of the American Jewish Committee. At a news conference in New York City on September 20, Rabbi Rudin, who had just returned from a 10-day fact-finding tour of the Midwest, reported that the radical right was making "significant gains among some of the economically threatened farmers."

Jewish groups came under suspicion this year in five terrorist attacks that caused two deaths and four injuries. Among the groups suspected were the Jewish Defense League and the Jewish Defense Organization. The American-Arab Anti-Discrimination Committee was the target of numerous threats and three attacks, including a bombing in Santa Ana, California, in October, that killed Alex Odeh, the group's regional director. Mainstream Jewish groups were quick to denounce the violence.

Political Affairs

Two studies published this year by the American Jewish Congress shed additional light on the political behavior of Jews in the 1984 elections. The first, an analysis by Martin Hochbaum that surveyed some 2,900 Jewish voters in 14 regions across the country, concluded that fear of growing ties between government and religion and concern for social-justice issues were the factors that led American Jews to favor Democratic candidate Walter Mondale over President Reagan by a three-to-one margin. A definite denominational pattern characterized the vote, Hochbaum reported, with secular Jews giving Mondale 83 percent of their votes; Reform Jews, 72 percent; Conservative Jews, 71 percent; and Orthodox Jews, 49 percent. In the second study, *The Political Future of American Jews*, Earl Raab and Seymour Martin Lipset cited "overwhelming" journalistic and anecdotal evidence that on the national level more than a majority of the funds collected by the Democratic party, and as much as a quarter of Republican funds, came from Jewish sources.

Much of this money was contributed through Jewish political action committees (PACs) to support pro-Israel, or oppose anti-Israel, candidates. According to the *Wall Street Journal* of February 26, the network of these organizations had "multiplied its clout" in 1984, its contributions to candidates almost doubling since the 1982 elections to nearly \$3.6 million. The number of Jewish PACs also doubled, to more than 70. Taken together, the paper said, Jewish PACs gave \$1 million more during the 1984 campaign than the nation's largest single PAC, the Realtors PAC, which expended \$2.5 million.

A sharp break in the contribution patterns of the pro-Israel PACs occurred in 1985, the *Washington Post* reported on November 4. In the first six months of the year the groups gave more money (55 percent) to Republicans than to Democrats (contrasted with 80 percent to Democrats in 1983-1984). The shift occurred, apparently, because of a decision to favor powerful Republican incumbents, such as Robert Dole of Kansas and Bob Packwood of Oregon, who had been firm in their support of Israel, over liberal Democratic challengers who might better represent Jewish views on other matters. "We are single-minded about being single-issue," said Thomas Dine, executive director of the American Israel Public Affairs Committee (AIPAC), a group that did not itself raise funds but advised many of the Jewish PACs.

This position was criticized by Earl Raab and Seymour Martin Lipset (in their above-mentioned study), who cautioned the Jewish community against narrowing

its focus of interest to Israel. "American Jewish political effectiveness will depend not on . . . Israel-related activism," they declared, "but on general Jewish influence in the political process." In a debate on this subject at the 54th General Assembly of the Council of Jewish Federations, in November, Hyman Bookbinder, director of the American Jewish Committee's Washington office, argued that Jews should support a variety of issues that promoted the general good, not only because they were right but because by doing so the Jewish community gained sympathy and allies for its own causes, including Israel. Opposing Bookbinder, Marshall Breger, former White House liaison to the Jewish community, asserted that Jews diminished their political leverage by "not focusing on priorities." He urged Jews to concentrate on winning new friends, especially in the South and Southwest and among the Christian Right.

The whole question of the Jewish role in politics was examined in a new book by Murray Friedman, *The Utopian Dilemma: New Political Directions for American Jews*. Friedman argued that what seemed to be emerging in the Jewish community was "a better balance between universalism and particularism." "If this is a valid conclusion," he noted, "it cannot help being 'good for the Jews' and good for the broader society of which they are a part."

MURRAY FRIEDMAN

The United States, Israel, and the Middle East

FOR U.S. POLICY IN the Middle East, 1985 began with a convergence of developments that seemed to offer new hope for reviving the stalemated Arab-Israeli peace process. Although President Ronald Reagan's September 1982 peace initiative had been set aside because it aroused strong opposition in both Israel and the Arab world, the Reagan administration appeared optimistic that direct negotiations between Israel and a joint Jordanian-Palestinian delegation could conceivably begin by the end of the year. To this end, Assistant Secretary of State for Near Eastern and South Asian Affairs Richard W. Murphy and his aides met repeatedly with key figures in the area in an attempt to devise a diplomatic formula that would break the impasse.

As eager as the United States was to encourage progress toward peace in the region, President Reagan and Secretary of State George Shultz made it clear that the Arabs must first take the initiative by demonstrating a commitment to peace with Israel and a readiness for direct negotiations. The fact that the president not only had won reelection by a landslide but was a second-term president—not beholden to Jewish or any other voters—did not mean that he was prepared to pressure Israel into unilateral concessions, as some Arab leaders vainly hoped. In addition, the administration had learned from bitter experience in Lebanon that the United States could not impose peace in the Middle East. The terrorist bombings of the U.S. embassy in Beirut and heavy losses among U.S. Marines two years earlier had forced the administration, in the face of domestic pressures, to withdraw its military presence from Lebanon, thus dooming U.S. efforts to help end the Lebanese civil war.

Although the diplomatic activity that took place in 1985 did not result in any tangible accomplishment, it did open opportunities for future breakthroughs going beyond the bilateral peace treaty signed by Egypt and Israel in 1979. Hopes now centered on the possibility of negotiations between Israel and Jordan, with the participation of representative Palestinians.

Developments in Israel

Within Israel, a change in political leadership had taken place in July 1984, when Israel Labor party leader Shimon Peres became prime minister of a national unity government. Because of policy differences between the major Likud and Labor political blocs, as well as among the other political factions within the government, pundits in Israel and abroad did not expect the new government to survive. However, the unity coalition in fact worked cooperatively and effectively on a number of pressing issues. By January the government announced the decision to carry out

a three-stage rapid withdrawal from Lebanon. In addition, working closely with Secretary of State Shultz, who took a personal interest in Israel's economy, the regime embarked on a stringent program of economic recovery. Indeed, a major rationale for the formation of the national unity government had been that unpopular and harsh economic measures could only be implemented if the onus was equally shared by the two major parties, thus taking the issue out of the realm of partisan politics and enabling the broad coalition to enlist the cooperation of labor and industry both.

Although Shimon Peres had never been one of the more popular figures in Israeli politics, after he assumed leadership of the government his ratings in public opinion polls soared. While some of the change could be attributed merely to incumbency, a major factor was his effort to reduce jarring confrontations between the two major political groupings and to create an atmosphere of joint responsibility for running the government. Peres's good personal working relations with Likud deputy prime minister and foreign minister Yitzhak Shamir were to a certain degree also based on political calculations. The government of national unity was formed on the basis of a personal agreement between Peres and Shamir to exchange ministerial roles after two years. Peres did not want to be seen by the voting public as responsible for violating the rotation agreement, and Shamir knew that if the coalition government collapsed and new elections were called before the scheduled changeover, his position as leader of the Likud was open to challenge.

Prime Minister Peres made it clear that he wanted to see real movement toward peace during his term in office. Unlike his Likud coalition partners, who rejected the idea of giving up any territory west of the Jordan River, Peres did not dismiss entirely the 1982 Reagan proposal that in exchange for formal Arab recognition, genuine peace, and security, Israel would relinquish much of Judea and Samaria to a Jordanian-Palestinian federation. If negotiations with Jordan were to produce a real prospect for peace, Peres would have a legitimate reason to call early elections and seek public approval of the agreement.

Israel began its phased withdrawal from Lebanon in January. It had paid a heavy price for its 1982 "Operation Peace for Galilee." Over 600 Israeli troops lost their lives and close to 3,500 were wounded, a far higher toll than most Israelis had anticipated. The war had also sapped Israeli morale and broken the national consensus; for the first time in Israeli history, a movement of conscientious objectors developed among recruits and reservists.

Israel had scaled back its objectives and decided not to link its pullback from Lebanon to a comparable withdrawal by Syrian forces, or even to a political agreement with the Lebanese government. Reflecting bitterly on Israel's experience in Lebanon, Defense Minister Yitzhak Rabin, in a February address to the Conference of Presidents of Major American Jewish Organizations in New York, declared: "If Syria wants to stay in Lebanon, let them. Whoever puts a foot in the Lebanese mud will sink in it." He was suggesting that while Syria might remain the dominant military and political force in Lebanon, it was unlikely to be able to establish an effective government in the strife-filled country.

The war in Lebanon, despite its tragic cost, had not been a total failure, however. While Defense Minister Ariel Sharon's ambitious geopolitical plans came to naught, the Israel Defense Forces achieved much of their initial objective of destroying the Palestine Liberation Organization's military infrastructure in southern Lebanon and in Beirut. For the first time in many years, the northern Galilee was relatively free from bombardment by terrorist rockets fired from Lebanon, and there was no longer an autonomous and independent PLO with a territorial base of its own on any of Israel's borders.

Developments in the Arab World

A number of factors helped to buttress Prime Minister Peres's confidence in his ability to engage in more active diplomacy. The knowledge that Shamir would replace Peres in two years, coupled with Peres's greater openness to compromise, were believed to provide Jordan's King Hussein with an incentive to negotiate a settlement with Israel. Another factor was Hussein's concern over the fate of the West Bank. The extent of Jewish settlement activity during the previous seven years of Likud rule and the consolidation of de facto Israeli rule over the area contributed to the king's sense that time was running out.

Deprived of its independent military base in Lebanon, the PLO had become increasingly fragmented, and inter-Arab politics were proving as deadly to its fortunes as its avowed enemy, Israel. Syria was a leading player, with Damascus actively backing the defectors from Yasir Arafat's al-Fatah organization who were headed by Col. Saeed Musa, as well as other dissident Palestinian groups united in the Syrian-created Palestine National Salvation Front. With the help of Syrian military power, these factions hounded Arafat loyalists out of Tripoli, the last bastion of Arafat's forces in northern Lebanon.

The continuing decline in the importance of Arab oil was matched by a parallel decline in Arab financial power. The Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) was forced to accept three price cuts in 1985, while its share in international markets fell to less than one-third. In an attempt to stem the oil glut, Saudi Arabia cut its output from a peak of 9.6 million barrels a day in 1981 to 3 billion barrels a day in 1985. As a result of these developments, pressure from Arab oil-producing countries became less significant in Western political calculations.

The Peace Process

NEW U.S. APPROACH

After nearly a year of avoiding any high-level meetings with Arab leaders, the Reagan administration once again turned its attention to Middle East diplomacy. This time, however, the subject was approached with lower expectations and more caution than previously. In place of active American intervention and mediation,

the administration tried quietly to encourage direct negotiations between the parties to the Arab-Israel conflict. The operating premise of U.S. Mideast policy, according to administration strategists, was that "direct negotiations were the only way to achieve a settlement." The United States would not attempt to mediate problems that the Arabs and Israelis were not ready to solve themselves.

The new approach was evident when King Fahd of Saudi Arabia met with President Reagan in February—the first visit to Washington by a Saudi monarch since the late King Faisal's trip in 1971—and also during Egyptian president Hosni Mubarak's visit to Washington in March. Both Arab leaders were expected to focus on nuts-and-bolts issues, including requests for more American arms, and, in the case of Egypt, an increase in military and economic aid.

Pointing to the continuing Iraq-Iran war as justification for requesting additional sophisticated U.S. arms, the Saudis presented a shopping list that included nearly \$3 billion worth of F-15 fighter jets, Sidewinder missiles, M-1 tanks, and other advanced weapons systems. A week before the scheduled visit by King Fahd, the Reagan administration announced that it would postpone for several weeks a decision on new arms sales to Saudi Arabia or to any other Arab state. Assistant Secretary Murphy explained that before the administration proposed any new sales it would conduct "a comprehensive review of our security interests and our strategy in the area." The review, according to Murphy, would focus "on how our various programs in the security field will complement our efforts in the peace process and how it can help achieve a general stability in the region."

King Fahd's agenda was by no means confined to arms requests and oil-pricing policies. The Saudi ruler also urged the president to reactivate American involvement in Mideast diplomacy. In statements issued at the end of their meetings on February 13, Fahd and Reagan agreed that a stable peace in the Middle East must provide security "for all states in the area and for the exercise of the legitimate rights of the Palestinian people." However, the official communiqué underscored the differences between them on how to achieve these goals. The Saudi king continued to insist on the 8-point peace plan he had proposed—and which was accepted by Arab leaders at Fez, Morocco, on September 9, 1982—which called for the complete withdrawal by Israel from all territory captured in the June 1967 war, including East Jerusalem, the dismantling of all Jewish settlements on the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, and the establishment of a Palestinian state, with Jerusalem as its capital. The Fez plan did not call for direct negotiations but simply set out Arab conditions and vaguely suggested that the UN Security Council would guarantee peace among all states in the region.

The Fez plan was unacceptable to Israel for several reasons, among them the fact that it spoke of the Palestinian people's "right to self-determination and the exercise of inalienable national rights under the leadership of the Palestine Liberation Organization." This clause was also contrary to U.S. policy—as outlined in the 1982 Reagan plan—which rejected the creation of a separate Palestinian Arab state under PLO leadership. In the communiqué, President Reagan stated that he still stood by

his own Middle East initiative of September 1982, emphasizing his view that "the security of Israel and other nations in the region and the legitimate rights of the Palestinian people can and should be addressed in direct negotiations." Elaborating on the president's statement, Secretary Shultz declared more bluntly: "After all, if we're going to get some place in the peace process, an Arab negotiator has to sit down with an Israeli negotiator and try to work out the answers."

THE HUSSEIN-ARAFAT AGREEMENT

Although the Fahd-Reagan talks did not break new ground, simultaneous developments in the Middle East provided the impetus for more active American involvement in the peace process. The new developments centered on a "framework for common action" between Jordan and the PLO, announced on February 11.

For several years, Jordan had been reluctant to launch any peace initiative on its own. In late 1984, however, King Hussein, with Egypt's encouragement, began to pursue a more active policy. (Jordan had resumed relations with Egypt in September 1984 after a five-year break over Cairo's peace treaty with Israel.) Although Jordan had rejected the 1982 Reagan plan's call for direct negotiations, Hussein now viewed the Reagan initiative as an approach that could serve his own needs. The chance of movement seemed more likely now that Shimon Peres had assumed the premiership in Israel, since Peres had voiced qualified support for the Reagan plan when it was proposed in 1982, despite its rejection by the Likud government headed by Menahem Begin. Peres had also used his inaugural address to the Knesset in September 1984 to invite Hussein to join him at the negotiating table, without insisting that the Camp David accords serve as the basis for a peace settlement with Jordan.

In the belief that he needed authoritative Palestinian support for any move toward negotiations with Israel, Hussein began a series of discussions with PLO chairman Yasir Arafat, hoping to forge a common policy. Arafat, concerned about his position within a badly fragmented PLO, having no independent base of operations, and relentlessly hounded by Syria's president, Hafez al-Assad, was rapidly running out of options. Thus, a weakened PLO presented King Hussein with the opportunity to pressure Arafat into accepting a peace formula that might also be acceptable to the United States.

The process of PLO-Jordanian reconciliation had actually begun with Hussein serving as host of a meeting of the Palestinian National Council (PNC) in Amman the previous November. The Jordanian king had sharply criticized the PLO, calling on it to abandon the fruitless policy of armed struggle, and had invited Arafat to join him in seeking a negotiated settlement with Israel on the basis of Security Council Resolution 242 in the framework of a UN-sponsored international conference. Since the November 1984 PNC meeting, Hussein and Arafat had met periodically to hammer out the terms of an agreement, which was made public by the Jordanian side on February 11, although the text was not released until February 23.

The accord outlined a framework for an approach to peace, based on five principles: (1) total Israeli withdrawal from the territories occupied in 1967; (2) right of self-determination for the Palestinian people . . . within the context of the formation of the proposed confederated Arab states of Jordan and Palestine; (3) resolution of the problem of Palestinian refugees in accordance with UN resolutions; (4) resolution of the Palestine question in all its aspects; and (5) peace negotiations to be conducted "under the auspices of an international conference in which the five permanent members of the Security Council and all the parties to the conflict will participate, including the Palestine Liberation Organization, the sole legitimate representative of the Palestine people, within a joint delegation [joint Jordanian-Palestinian delegation]."

Israel and the United States objected to the agreement on several grounds. For one thing, there was no explicit mention of PLO acceptance of UN Security Council Resolutions 242 and 338. In addition, Israel and the United States were opposed in general to an international conference and specifically to one that included the Soviet Union. Also, Israel had long opposed the concept of total withdrawal from all the territory it captured in the June 1967 war. And finally, although the agreement did not specifically call for the establishment of a Palestinian state, its insistence on the right of self-determination for the Palestinian people clearly left open such a possibility.

Initial cautious optimism in Washington gave way to increasing doubts as to whether the agreement represented a significant breakthrough. Although Hussein had been pressing Arafat for an unambiguous statement that might allow the United States to accept the PLO as a party to negotiations, he settled for less. Arafat himself would not be pinned down, in several interviews refusing explicitly to endorse Resolution 242, a *sine qua non* for the United States. The very fact that the announcement was made by Hussein alone, rather than jointly with Arafat, pointed to unresolved differences between the Jordanian and PLO positions. As noted, the actual text of the agreement was not released for nearly two weeks. The Jordanians had apparently publicized a draft accord, and Arafat had not cleared it with other PLO leaders.

Although the Jordanians claimed that the PLO had implicitly accepted UN Resolution 242, this assertion conflicted with a statement issued in Tunis on February 20 by the PLO executive committee, which repeated the organization's long-standing rejection of the UN resolution. PLO leader Hani al-Hassan was quoted as saying, "Frankly and clearly, I say that we reject Resolution 242. We rejected it in the past and we reject it in the future." The executive committee announced its approval of the general principles contained in the agreement, but with reservations, until certain amendments were made.

Perhaps the most significant aspect of the accord was the notion of a joint Palestinian-Jordanian delegation, rather than a separate PLO representation, at future peace talks. Since Israel had long rejected negotiations with the PLO, while the Arabs had insisted that only the PLO could represent the Palestinians, the

Jordanian concept was an attempt to finesse the issue of PLO representation at peace talks. The Jordanian text of the agreement in fact included both principles. The international conference would conduct peace negotiations in which "all parties to the conflict will participate, including the Palestine Liberation Organization, the sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian people, within a joint delegation [joint Jordanian-Palestinian delegation]." But this proved not satisfactory to the PLO executive committee, which demanded that the words "Jordanian-Palestinian" delegation be changed to "Arab delegation," presumably one consisting of all the Arab states and the PLO. In addition, top PLO leaders, including those loyal to Arafat, demanded an explicit commitment to the creation of an independent Palestinian Arab state on the West Bank *before* any arrangement for a "confederation" with Jordan could be agreed upon.

The changes demanded by the PLO executive would have made the agreement wholly unacceptable to the United States as a vehicle for serious negotiations. Even if Arafat had not equivocated over the original Jordanian text of the agreement, it was clear to the United States that the PLO chairman could not deliver his executive committee and was becoming increasingly irrelevant as a potential partner to negotiations.

For the Reagan administration, the short-lived Hussein-Arafat agreement indicated that there had not yet been sufficient movement for the United States to embark on a new Middle East peace effort. Some officials remained encouraged by what appeared to be a serious effort by Jordan and Egypt to revive the peace process. The Jordanian approach in particular sparked U.S. interest, and the concept of a joint Jordanian-Palestinian delegation was seen as worthy of further exploration, provided, of course, that senior PLO members were not part of that delegation.

To U.S. officials, the Arab states most friendly to the United States—Egypt, Jordan, and Saudi Arabia—seemed genuinely interested in promoting a serious peace effort with active U.S. involvement. As already noted, when King Fahd was in Washington in February he had called on the United States to play a more active role, meaning to press Israel for concessions. Egyptian president Hosni Mubarak was scheduled to begin talks in Washington in mid-March and was also expected to press the administration to involve itself in the peace process. Secretary of State Shultz indicated that the administration might soon be amenable to more active involvement. Testifying before the House Foreign Affairs Committee in late February, he stated that the United States "was prepared to work in a helpful and direct way whenever we see the timing of it appropriate. And it may be that that would occur sometime soon."

THE MUBARAK INITIATIVE

In a February 24 interview with the *New York Times*, in anticipation of his visit to Washington two weeks later, Mubarak urged the administration to invite Israel and members of a joint Jordanian-Palestinian delegation to the United States to lay

the groundwork for direct peace talks. In an attempt to get around U.S. and Israeli opposition to dealing with the PLO, Mubarak suggested that a joint Jordanian-Palestinian delegation did not necessarily have to include known members of that organization. Although the Hussein-Arafat agreement had called for PLO participation in peace talks under UN auspices, Mubarak said he favored direct talks first between Israel and the joint Jordanian-Palestinian delegation, with an international conference to come after an agreement had been negotiated. "An international conference could be the last stage," he said, "as a blessing of the solution."

The timing of Mubarak's initiative, two weeks before his arrival in the United States, led some Israelis to wonder if the Egyptian president's proposals were simply part of an effort to gain a sympathetic ear in Washington for his request for more economic and military aid. Foreign Minister Yitzhak Shamir, leader of the Likud party, charged that the Mubarak initiative was a transparent attempt to draw the United States into talks with the PLO. But Prime Minister Peres reacted favorably, albeit cautiously, to the Egyptian president's call for direct negotiations. In a statement that some considered a deviation from the traditional Israeli position, Peres said that "if it is a Jordanian-Palestinian delegation without PLO members, that was always acceptable to us." Later, when asked by an ABC correspondent how closely Israel would check the credentials of Palestinian members of a joint delegation, Peres replied that it was "for them to do," and that Israel would not take part "in making" a Palestinian-Jordanian delegation.

As for the U.S. government, Assistant Secretary Murphy told a House foreign affairs subcommittee that while the administration was "ready to get more actively engaged" in the Middle East peace process, no one knew whether Mubarak's call for direct talks would be accepted by King Hussein. Despite the new flurry of diplomatic activity, therefore, State Department officials cautioned against the expectation of an imminent breakthrough.

Subsequent ambiguities in the Egyptian and Jordanian positions lent weight to administration concerns. President Mubarak began to downplay his initial call for direct talks. He suggested, instead, that the United States first hold talks with the proposed Jordanian-Palestinian delegation and only later bring in Israel, with the United States acting, in effect, as a mediator. Then, following discussions with King Hussein in early March to resolve differences with Jordan over the proposed peace negotiations, Mubarak appeared to backtrack on his earlier proposal that the joint delegation need not include known PLO members. In response to reporters' questions, he denied that he had ever suggested that non-PLO members be named to the delegation, adding that the United States could hold "discussions" or engage in "dialogue" with the PLO without formally recognizing it.

When President Mubarak arrived in Washington on March 11, President Reagan applauded his efforts to revive the peace process. At the same time, he rejected the Egyptian leader's proposal for a U.S. meeting with Jordanian and PLO representatives, reminding Mubarak that the United States had pledged not to talk to the PLO before it unequivocally accepted Security Council Resolutions 242 and 338 and

publicly recognized Israel's right to exist. The administration was prepared to assist the parties in reaching a settlement, Reagan said, but only if they were engaged in direct negotiations. Administration officials stressed to Mubarak that they saw nothing to be gained by having the United States first act as a mediator in indirect talks, and only later having the parties enter into direct dialogue with Israel.

Mubarak also faced harsh criticism from members of Congress for failing to return an Egyptian ambassador to Tel Aviv and renegeing on pledges to normalize relations with Israel. To add injury to insult, Mubarak failed to receive any commitments for the additional military and economic aid he had come to request. Perhaps to soften these rebuffs, Secretary of State Shultz announced that in order to sustain the momentum toward peace, Assistant Secretary Richard Murphy would tour the Middle East to explore various proposals in greater depth.

THE MURPHY MISSION

For the United States, the two major issues that had to be resolved before the peace process could move forward were the framework within which negotiations could take place and the nature of Palestinian representation. King Hussein had insisted that he needed the backing of Palestinians—specifically the Arafat wing of the PLO—before he could proceed, as well as the “cover” of an international conference—with the participation of the permanent members of the UN Security Council—to neutralize Syrian and Soviet opposition. The king contended that his February 11 agreement with PLO chairman Arafat represented PLO acceptance both of negotiations with Israel on the basis of UN Resolution 242 and the linkage of any Palestinian entity with Jordan, thus meeting two of the primary objectives of the 1982 Reagan plan. However, as we have seen, the PLO executive failed to endorse Resolution 242 explicitly and insisted on amending the February 11 accord so that it would include the goal of an independent Palestinian state.

During this same period, an escalation of Palestinian terrorist attacks, including some sponsored by Arafat's own Fatah group, raised serious doubts about Arafat's readiness for peace. In reality, PLO acceptance of UN Resolution 242 would not have been sufficient. The appropriations bill passed by Congress in October 1984 (PL 98-473) had put into law the existing policy of banning negotiations with the PLO “so long as [it] does not recognize Israel's right to exist, does not accept Security Council Resolutions 242 and 338, and does not renounce the use of terrorism.” The administration's intent had been conveyed in March 1984 in a letter from national security adviser Robert McFarlane to Sen. Rudy Boschwitz (R., Minn.), chairman of the Subcommittee on Near Eastern and South Asian Affairs of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, which assured Congress that the United States would not negotiate with the PLO “unless the organization formally recognizes Israel's right to exist and disavows terrorism.” The United States and Israel also opposed a broad international conference that would bring in the Soviet Union and include the more radical Arab states.

In an effort to prevent another breakdown in the peace process over these seemingly intractable problems, Assistant Secretary Murphy began to explore the possibility of selecting a Jordanian-Palestinian delegation that would include Palestinian representatives acceptable to all sides. Murphy also quietly investigated whether the PLO might be willing, as Hussein continued to claim, to accept UN Resolutions 242 and 338 explicitly. King Hussein's concept of a joint delegation was appealing to U.S. policymakers because it also offered the possibility of moving negotiations forward, even without direct PLO participation.

The process led inevitably to policy differences between the United States and Israel. Shortly before Murphy was to launch his sounding-out effort, President Reagan seemed to indicate a shift in the American position when he said in a televised news conference on March 22 that the United States would be willing to meet with a Jordanian-Palestinian delegation so long as it did not include members of the PLO. Since the administration had previously opposed the concept of talks from which Israel would be excluded, the State Department, in an attempt to quell growing Israeli fears, quickly qualified the president's remarks. What Mr. Reagan meant, officials explained, was that he would be prepared to meet with such a delegation if the move showed promise of leading to direct talks with Israel.

The administration and Israel also differed over the wisdom of supplying additional arms to Jordan. The State Department contended that Hussein required the weapons in order to demonstrate that he had credible U.S. backing to defend himself against Syria, which was aggressively opposing the peace process. Selling additional arms to Jordan, in the administration's view, would provide encouragement to Hussein and give him the confidence to pursue his efforts to open negotiations with Israel. Israel and its supporters on Capitol Hill stressed that advanced weapons should be provided to Jordan only after it recognized and began negotiations with Israel, not before.

It was widely accepted that Syria constituted the major regional obstacle to progress toward peace with Israel. President Hafez al-Assad was personally opposed to Arafat's leadership of the PLO and to any effort that would challenge Syrian status and prestige in the region by bringing together his rivals for power—Egypt, Jordan, and Israel. At the end of March, six Palestinian factions allied to Syria announced in Damascus the formation of a new coalition, the National Palestinian Salvation Front, whose purposes were to "obtain abrogation" of the February 11 Hussein-Arafat accord and to thwart efforts by Jordan to revive peace negotiations with Israel. The Syrian-sponsored coalition included the PLO-affiliated Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine-General Command, led by Ahmed Jibril; the Popular Struggle Front; the Syrian-controlled As-Saiqa; the Palestine Liberation Front; the breakaway Fatah faction led by Abu Musa; and George Habash's Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine. (The last had previously broken official ties to the PLO.)

In an attempt to keep alive his options and to outmaneuver Syria, PLO chairman Arafat convened a meeting of the PLO executive committee in Baghdad, in April,

coinciding with Murphy's visit to the Middle East. Arafat failed, however, to obtain sufficient backing for the assistant secretary's efforts to form a joint Jordanian-Palestinian delegation, and Murphy was unable to get a list of Palestinians who were acceptable to the United States and Israel and who were prepared to represent Palestinian interests in a joint delegation with Jordan. Indeed, when Murphy met with a group of Palestinian residents of the West Bank and Gaza, the majority were reported to have declared their allegiance to the PLO as their "sole legitimate representative."

THE SHULTZ MISSION

Despite the continuing deadlock over the composition of an Arab delegation, the State Department announced that Secretary of State Shultz would visit the Middle East in May. Department spokesman Bernard Kalb tried to minimize the failure of Murphy's mission by saying that while no dramatic breakthroughs had been made, neither had there been any setbacks.

The primary purpose of Shultz's trip was to take part in ceremonies honoring Holocaust victims at the Yad Vashem memorial in Jerusalem. (On May 5, President Reagan visited the Bitburg military cemetery in West Germany, which contained graves of Nazi SS troops, an episode that created wide opposition and protest both in Israel and in the United States.) Few observers expected the secretary to be any more successful than Murphy had been in promoting Arab-Israeli negotiations.

Just prior to Shultz's departure, the State Department announced that the United States would consider the possible participation of "independent" members of the Palestine National Council in a potential Jordanian-Palestinian delegation. This would allow the United States to maintain that it was not dealing with official members of the PLO and would also permit Arafat to claim that the PLO was sufficiently represented in negotiations. An official U.S. distinction between the PLO and the PNC that had been drawn up two years before and was now reiterated by the State Department declared that the United States did not oppose "direct contact with Palestinians, including PNC members, who, as independents, have no affiliation with the PLO's constituent political organizations."

On the heels of the State Department announcement, however, key PLO leaders in Tunis declared that the only acceptable Palestinian representation in a joint delegation with Jordan would be members of the PLO executive. Ahmed Abdel Rahman, the PLO's chief spokesman, Saleh Khalef (Abu Iyad), a leading member of al-Fatah, and Farouk Kaddoumi, the PLO's "foreign minister," ruled out any meeting between American officials and undeclared PLO members. They also voiced strong opposition to the February 11 Hussein-Arafat accord, thus indicating the PLO chairman's weakening position within his own organization. Moreover, Khalef bluntly declared that the PLO did not accept UN Resolution 242, further undermining Hussein's optimistic assertions.

Names of prospective members of a joint Jordanian-Palestinian delegation were reported to have been raised during Secretary Shultz's visit to Israel, Egypt, and Jordan, but apparently no real progress was made. PLO chairman Arafat's conditional response to a *Washington Post* reporter a day after Shultz's return from the Middle East that yes, he would accept Resolution 242 if Washington endorsed "self-determination" for the Palestinians, did not satisfy U.S. officials. Assistant Secretary Murphy, who stayed in the Middle East to brief Israeli officials, told them that Jordan still insisted on PLO participation in any joint delegation. As for the other key stumbling block, Jordan's foreign minister, Taher al-Masri, stated that "neither the PLO nor we speak of direct negotiations. We speak of direct talks between the PLO and the United States side only, within the Jordanian-Palestinian delegation." This backing away from direct Jordanian-Israeli talks seemed to confirm Israeli suspicions that Arab maneuvering over Palestinian representation was merely an effort to obtain prior U.S. consent to PLO participation in any future negotiations.

HUSSEIN'S PROPOSAL

Some in the State Department remained optimistic that movement could be achieved. King Hussein, who was scheduled to visit Washington at the end of May, had expressed a sense of urgency that his visit might be the "last opportunity" to revive the stalled peace process. In order to accommodate Hussein's concern for international support, the administration let it be known that some kind of international "umbrella" conference leading to direct negotiations would be discussed during the king's visit, although differences with Jordan over the nature of such a conference had not been resolved. U.S. policymakers were using the term to mean something less than a full-blown Geneva-style international conference, but enough to give Hussein the international sanction he believed he needed to talk with Israel. Some Israeli leaders expressed concern about Washington's apparent weakening on the issue of an international conference, and Defense Minister Yitzhak Rabin commented that "whenever anyone mentions 'umbrella' it reminds me of [Neville] Chamberlain and Munich."

When Hussein arrived in Washington he appeared to have moved significantly toward the U.S. position on the nature of an international conference. "It is our hope," he said, "that an international conference would enable the parties to the conflict to negotiate the establishment of a just and durable peace in the Middle East. We need the international umbrella to offer us the opportunity to negotiate, and when I speak of negotiations I obviously mean negotiations amongst the parties to the conflict; in other words, negotiations between the Arab side, in this case a Jordanian-Palestinian delegation, with Israel on the other side." The Jordanian monarch proceeded to outline a complicated four-stage process, one that could eventually lead to direct negotiations with Israel, but that could also fall apart at many points along the way.

The first step in the Hussein plan envisioned preliminary discussions between the United States and a joint Jordanian-Palestinian delegation that would not include PLO representatives. In the second stage, the PLO would formally accept UN Resolution 242 and announce its willingness to recognize and negotiate with Israel, but only after the United States had declared publicly its support for the right of "self-determination" for the Palestinian people within the context of a Jordanian-Palestinian confederation. In stage three, the United States would hold another meeting with a joint Jordanian-Palestinian delegation, which would now include PLO officials, in order to discuss details for an international conference. The final stage would see the convening of the international conference, consisting of the five permanent members of the UN Security Council (China, France, the United Kingdom, the United States, and the USSR), the neighboring Arab states, and Israel, for the purpose of producing a comprehensive peace agreement.

The components of Hussein's proposal left many issues unresolved, and highlighted once again the differences between Israel, Jordan, and the United States over proper pathways toward negotiations. Among its shortcomings, the Hussein plan did not guarantee that the preliminary talks between the United States and the Arab delegation would actually lead to direct talks with Israel. Perhaps most significantly, critics of the Hussein proposal pointed out, Israel did not enter into the Jordanian scenario until the very last stage of an international conference, or, as Prime Minister Peres characterized it, Israel would be "left in some darkened anteroom while everything is settled without her." The plan, taken in its entirety, was in fact predicated on U.S. recognition of the PLO and of Palestinian self-determination (by which the PLO meant a Palestinian state) in advance of any direct negotiations between Israel and the Arab side.

On June 11, Prime Minister Peres responded to King Hussein's four-stage proposal with his own five-point plan. In a speech to the Knesset, he said that his proposal was a realistic alternative to the king's plan, which he described as doomed to failure. The five points of the Israeli plan were: (1) continuation of U.S. contacts with Israel, Jordan, Egypt, and Palestinians who were not PLO members; (2) the naming of a Jordanian-Palestinian team to prepare an agenda for a conference in which the United States would also participate; (3) the enlistment of the UN Security Council's support for direct talks between the Jordanian-Palestinian delegation and Israel; (4) the appointment of "authentic Palestinian representatives" from the West Bank and Gaza; and (5) the opening of a full-fledged peace conference within three months.

Despite the many serious differences between the two proposals, the administration believed that the gap dividing the Jordanians and Israelis had narrowed sufficiently to enable the United States to continue its efforts. To encourage King Hussein, who, it believed, was sincere in his desire to negotiate peace with Israel, the administration proposed additional economic and military aid to the Hashemite kingdom. The administration requested and obtained \$250 million in economic support funds for Jordan, a substantial increase over the usual \$50-million annual

allocation. However, Israel's supporters in Congress continued to object to the sale of additional arms until such time as Jordan entered into direct negotiations with Israel.

The administration again pressed Jordan to recommend potential Palestinian participants in a joint delegation. In July PLO leader Arafat presented a list of names to King Hussein, who forwarded it to Washington, which relayed it to Prime Minister Peres. Peres's initial reaction, on July 17, was that the delegation, consisting almost entirely of top- and mid-level PLO leaders, was unacceptable. A few days later, however, Peres indicated that two of the seven Palestinian names proposed were acceptable. The two were Hanna Seniora, editor of the East Jerusalem pro-PLO newspaper *Al-Fajr*, and Faiz Abu Rahman, chairman of the Gaza lawyers' association. While both men were ardent Palestinian nationalists, they were not formally PLO leaders; they were also the only proposed delegates actually living in the administered territories. Despite—or perhaps because of—the positive Israeli reaction, the PLO later qualified the inclusion of the two, claiming that they were to participate only as “consultants.”

OTHER DIPLOMATIC MOVES

Another visit by Secretary Murphy to the Middle East in August again failed to produce progress. He reportedly planned to meet with a joint Jordanian-Palestinian delegation during the six-day mission to Jordan, Israel, and Egypt, in order to lay the groundwork for direct talks with Israel. However, according to State Department sources, when Israel vehemently objected to such a meeting, fearing that it might lead to U.S. recognition of the PLO, Murphy cut short his trip and returned home.

In fact, the talks between Murphy and the joint delegation did not materialize because Jordan and the PLO again failed to meet U.S. conditions for such a meeting. On August 17, as Murphy prepared for his final meeting with King Hussein, Arafat told reporters in Amman that the American official had come with nothing to offer “except further demands for concessions according to Israeli conditions.” The previous day, Jordan's prime minister, Zaid Rifai, had stated that Jordan remained committed both to U.S. recognition of the PLO and an international peace conference. Moreover, Murphy was still unable to win assurances that if the United States agreed to meet with an as yet undetermined Jordanian-Palestinian delegation, direct talks between Jordan and Israel would soon follow.

Although the administration continued to portray the Jordanians as having been cooperative in efforts to move the peace process forward, even letting it be known—while Murphy was still in Amman—that it would go ahead with plans for a major arms sale to the Hashemite kingdom, despite growing congressional opposition, it was difficult to mask U.S. disappointment over the slow pace of progress. King Hussein had hoped to win Arab endorsement for his accord with Arafat at the Arab League summit, convened by King Hassan of Morocco in Casablanca in early August. Yet even though the more radical states of Syria, Libya, Algeria, and South

Yemen boycotted the conference, Hussein failed to win formal approval from the ostensibly more moderate members—either for his peace initiative or for his bid to supersede the Rabat conference's designation of the PLO as sole representative of the Palestinians.

An episode involving Great Britain and the PLO proved instructive to U.S. policymakers as well as to King Hussein. London had agreed to meet with a joint Jordanian-Palestinian delegation that included two members of the PLO executive committee, counting on assurances that they would sign a statement disavowing terrorism and recognizing Israel's right to exist within its pre-1967 borders. The meeting between Britain and the Jordanian-Palestinian group was originally proposed by Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher on September 20, during a visit to Jordan, with Mrs. Thatcher making it clear that the two PLO members—Mohammed Milhem, a former mayor of Hebron on the West Bank, and Elias Khoury, an Anglican bishop from Jerusalem—would be invited to London as individuals, not as representatives of the PLO. According to British officials, Britain had received definite assurances from Jordan that the Palestinians would sign the required statement, presumably with the approval of Arafat. The meeting, scheduled for October 14, was canceled when the two PLO delegates reneged on the commitment to join in the statement renouncing violence and explicitly accepting Israel's right to exist. At this point King Hussein, embarrassed by the incident, began to distance himself from the PLO chairman.

One more serious effort toward reviving the peace process was made before the end of the year. Prime Minister Peres had already been moving toward endorsement of an international conference, if it served as an umbrella for direct negotiations, despite severe opposition from his Likud coalition partners and even from hard-line members within his own Labor party. On October 21, in his address to the UN General Assembly in New York, Peres offered a new seven-point peace plan. The major element in the plan was the suggestion that talks with Jordan could take place under international sponsorship. Peres reiterated Israeli insistence on direct negotiations, but added that the talks, "if deemed necessary, may be initiated with the support of an international forum agreed upon by the parties." The international forum, he stated, "while not being a substitute for direct negotiations, can offer support for them." The permanent members of the Security Council could be invited to support the initiation of these negotiations, he said. But, in a pointed allusion to the Soviet Union, he added, "It is our position that those who confine their diplomatic relations to one side of the conflict, exclude themselves from such a role."

Peres did not explicitly reject all members of the Palestine National Council as negotiating partners, but simply stated that Palestinians who "represent peace, not terror" would be welcome to participate in a joint delegation with Jordan. Although Peres's address was favorably received in Amman (there had been some reports that Peres had met secretly with King Hussein in Paris before formulating his plan) and in Cairo, other concerns, including a renewed spate of terrorist activity and American preoccupation with the upcoming summit between President Reagan and new Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev, meant that Middle East diplomacy would not

likely progress for the balance of the year. Assistant Secretary of State Murphy did make one more visit to the Middle East in December, but nothing came of it. King Hussein had proclaimed 1985 "the year of opportunity" for forward movement in the peace process. As 1985 ended, however, there was no breakthrough in sight.

Terrorism

The U.S. government was trying to project a determined and tough stand against terrorists and their state supporters, especially in the aftermath of attacks on U.S. forces in Lebanon in 1983 and 1984. Israel, too, had a policy of acting tough with terrorists. The uncertainty underlying the policy of both countries became painfully apparent, however, during two episodes: Israel's release of over a thousand terrorists in May, and the hijacking to Beirut of a TWA airliner in June.

In what appears to have been a desire to close the final chapter in its involvement in Lebanon, the Israeli government decided in May to release 1,150 convicted Arab terrorists being held in prison in exchange for three Israeli soldiers held in Damascus by Ahmed Jibril's Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine—General Command, which had captured them in Lebanon in July 1982. The decision was subjected to severe criticism in Israel and in the United States, with many commentators suggesting that the prisoner exchange was a blunder that would create long-lasting damage to Israel's counterterrorist strategy. It was not the numbers involved—such lopsided trades had been made in previous exchanges of prisoners of war after Arab-Israeli conflicts. Rather, the paramount concern was with the government's departure from the principle of not yielding to terrorist demands for the release of hostages. Public consternation about the prisoner swap was heightened by the knowledge that among the released terrorists were 167 convicted murderers, including Kozo Okamoto, the Japanese terrorist serving a life sentence for his part in the May 1972 Lod airport massacre, in which 27 persons were killed and 80 wounded. At least 380 of the terrorists were serving life sentences, and many others among the freed prisoners were directly responsible for killing Israelis.

TWA HIJACKING

On June 14, a month after the prisoner exchange, the United States and Israel together faced a challenge to the principle of refusing to negotiate with terrorists for the release of hostages. TWA Flight 847 was hijacked from Athens to Beirut, this time with 39 Americans on board. One of them, a U.S. serviceman, Robert Stethem, was shot and killed by the terrorists. The hijackers not only singled out American passengers but identified those passengers with "Jewish-sounding names," in a process reminiscent of the notorious "selections" practiced by the Nazis during the Holocaust.

Uli Dereckson, the German-born purser of the hijacked plane, was the focus of a brief controversy when it was reported that she had been involved in the selection,

since she had collected the passengers' passports at the behest of the terrorists. It was made clear afterward, following investigations by the FBI and the American Jewish Committee, that she had actually tried to hide the passports and frustrate the terrorists' efforts. She was later praised for her role by a number of the hostages, who said that her actions had probably saved several lives.

The Shi'ite Muslim hijackers made it known that the hostages would be freed only upon the release of 766 Lebanese, mostly Shi'ites, who were being held in an Israeli detention camp in Atlit, near Haifa. Most of the prisoners were affiliated with the Shi'ite militia, Amal, and had been arrested for suspected involvement in attacks on Israeli army units in southern Lebanon.

The choices facing the United States and Israel were not easy ones. President Reagan had stressed several times before and during the hijacking and hostage crisis that the United States would not make concessions to terrorists, because to do so would only invite more attacks. Israel, too, had long been on record against negotiations with terrorists, yet the government's own recent departure from that principle made it difficult not to release the Lebanese being held in Israel when American lives were at stake. Ironically, Israel had already begun the gradual release of the Lebanese Shi'ites it was holding on suspicion of anti-Israel activity; however, officials became concerned that if they were suddenly to release the remainder of the detainees, it would appear that Israel was giving in to blackmail.

Israeli officials were also troubled by the seemingly contradictory signals coming from Washington. While President Reagan and Secretary of State Shultz were insisting that they opposed yielding to terrorist demands or asking Israel to do so, lower-ranking U.S. officials were suggesting that Israel's transfer of the Shi'ites from Lebanon and their detention at the Israeli prison in Atlit were violations of international law. Israel claimed that the prisoners had participated in acts of violence against the Israeli army in Lebanon, and that their detention was permitted under Article 78 of the Fourth Geneva Convention, which allowed for internment "if the occupying power considers it necessary for imperative reasons of security, to take safety measures." Their transfer to Israel, according to the Israelis, was permitted under Article 49 of the same convention, which prohibited the transfer of detainees "except when for material reasons it is impossible to avoid," and with the understanding that those evacuated would be transferred back to their homes when hostilities ceased. In fact, 500 such detainees had already been released and returned to Lebanon.

Israel was under the strong impression that American officials had been implying that Israel should quickly exchange the Shi'ite prisoners for the TWA hostages. This led Israel's defense minister, Yitzhak Rabin, in an interview on U.S. television, to call on the Reagan administration to "not play games," but to state clearly what it wanted Israel to do. Other officials made it known that Israel wanted a specific and public request from the United States before it would consider yielding to the hijackers' demands for the release of the Shi'ite prisoners still held in Israel.

When Reagan administration officials were angered by the Rabin remarks, Prime Minister Peres attempted to calm the waters. In a speech to the World Zionist Organization's General Council in Jerusalem on June 21, Peres stated that "as far as I know, there has been no change in the U.S. position, nor has the U.S. approached Israel with a request that it take any action. We are not indifferent to the fate of the hostages—irrespective of nationality or religion. But from our experience we know that an operation to free hijacked persons must be carried out in a unified fashion. There is no one method of dealing with hostages because hijackings themselves are not the result of one single method. It is for this reason that Israel is refraining from giving advice or making declarations."

The TWA hostage crisis was complicated by internal factional rivalries within Lebanon. The hijacking had been carried out by pro-Iranian Shi'ite fundamentalists, members of Hezbollah (the "party of God"), who turned most of the hostages over to Nabih Berri, leader of Amal, Lebanon's dominant Shi'ite group. The leader of the Amal militia, who also served as minister of justice in the largely impotent Lebanese government, represented the more secular, and presumably more pragmatic, elements within the Lebanese Shi'ite community. Berri, who was being challenged for leadership by the pro-Iranian fundamentalists, was allied with Syria. He had little interest in the Islamic revolution or in war with Israel, but relied on Syrian support against Amal rivals within Lebanon.

The 39 American hostages were released on June 30, ostensibly with the help of the Syrian government. Their departure was briefly delayed when their captors added a new demand, calling on the United States to pledge publicly not to retaliate militarily after the hostages were freed. The United States refused, but at Syria's suggestion it issued an old policy statement that seemed to satisfy the hijackers. The statement indicated that the United States reaffirmed "its long-standing support for the preservation of Lebanon, its Government, its stability and security, and for the mitigation of the suffering of its people."

Despite rumors that seven other Americans who had been abducted from the streets of Beirut over the previous 15 months might also be released, Berri indicated that he had no control over those holding the missing Americans. They were believed to have been kidnapped by another shadowy terrorist group, the Islamic Holy War, that was demanding the release of relatives held in Kuwaiti prisons for terrorist acts committed there.

Although Israel did not immediately free the Lebanese prisoners whose release had been demanded by the hijackers, it was understood that Israel would soon do so. Israel continued to claim that there was no formal linkage and that the release of the Lebanese who were being held temporarily at Atlit was a gesture toward Washington, not a direct result of the negotiations with the terrorists. Likewise, administration officials in Washington continued to assert that the freedom of the Americans had been achieved without concessions being made. They also maintained that they had never pressed Israel for a guarantee that the suspected Lebanese terrorists interned in Israel would be freed.

The TWA hijacking had little impact on the Arab-Israeli dispute. Although the United States applauded Syria's role in the release of the hostages, sharp disagreements continued between Washington and Damascus over Middle East peace efforts, with the United States still attempting to salvage what it could of the February 11 accord between Jordan's King Hussein and PLO chairman Yasir Arafat, which Syria strongly opposed.

PLO ROLE

The year 1985 saw the reemergence of the Arafat wing of the PLO as a political factor in the Middle East, after its ouster from Lebanon in 1982 and the dispersal of its terrorist forces throughout the region had effectively destroyed it as a conventional military force and crippled it as a guerrilla movement. Following the agreement between King Hussein and Arafat on February 11, there was some speculation that the PLO had finally opted for a peaceful solution to the Arab-Israeli conflict. Recent Palestinian terrorist actions, it was suggested, were no longer the work of Arafat's al-Fatah but of more radical Palestinian factions opposed to Arafat's diplomatic approach. While conceding that rival Palestinian groups had been responsible for many of the terrorist attacks—apparently seeking either to embarrass the PLO chairman or to sidetrack any peace initiatives he might have considered joining—Israeli officials maintained that Arafat himself was still involved. They pointed to his long record of publicly denying complicity in terrorist actions for which elements under his control or linked to his organization were responsible. In 1970, for example, when Arafat was driven out of Jordan, he had pursued this two-track approach: a public diplomatic offensive to win wider legitimacy and recognition for the PLO, and a secret terror campaign directed by his closest associates, but in the guise of the group known as "Black September." The Israelis suggested that Arafat might be using the same tactics in the mid-1980s.

As if to bear out this theory, the signing of the Hussein-Arafat accord was followed by a marked increase in PLO attacks against Israel and targets abroad. According to Israeli sources, many of these attacks were planned at the PLO's new headquarters and training camps in Tunisia. These were under the complete control of Arafat and his associates, although Tunisian police and army troops assisted in guarding the facilities. Since the beginning of 1984, al-Fatah had also gradually begun to build up its presence in Jordan.

In addition to regular Fatah guerrilla forces, a special elite group of terrorist commandos, dubbed "Force 17," had been established by Arafat in the early 1970s. While the original function of its members had been to serve as bodyguards for Arafat and other PLO leaders, it evolved into a larger force which, in addition to its security functions, carried out special assassinations and attacks, sometimes against Arafat's rivals within al-Fatah or opposing Palestinian factions. In addition to its headquarters in Tunisia, Force 17 established offices in Amman that took on responsibility for carrying out anti-Israel activity in the West Bank.

On September 25, 1985 (Yom Kippur), three PLO terrorists attacked an Israeli civilian yacht anchored in the marina at Larnaca, Cyprus, and murdered its three Israeli passengers—a woman and two men. Arafat's Force 17 was implicated, as it had also been in three separate attempts to infiltrate Israel by sea between April and the end of August. Before their capture, the Larnaca terrorists demanded the release of 20 PLO prisoners being held in Israeli prisons, including the deputy commander of Force 17, who had been caught a few weeks earlier by the Israel Navy off the Lebanese coast. After a nine-hour siege, the terrorists surrendered to Cypriot police. Although PLO officials disclaimed any connection with the Larnaca attack, two of the gunmen captured were identified as Arab members of Force 17; the third was a British mercenary who had joined al-Fatah in Lebanon several years earlier and subsequently been recruited by Arafat into the elite unit.

On October 1, in retaliation for the attack at Larnaca and other recent terrorist attacks by PLO units under Arafat's control, the Israel Air Force bombed the PLO headquarters and facilities belonging to Force 17 at Hamam ash-Shaat in Tunisia. To no one's surprise, the attack was denounced at the United Nations, on October 4, as a violation of international law and an infringement of Tunisian sovereignty.

U.S. administration pronouncements left some confusion about the American position. On October 1, immediately after the Israeli bombing, President Reagan stated that the air strike was "understandable as an expression of self-defense" and a "legitimate response to terrorist attacks." The following day, in the face of mounting Arab criticism of what appeared to be the president's endorsement of the Israeli action, the White House issued a statement that continued to characterize the air raid as "understandable," but added that the bombing could "not be condoned." Sensitive to the possible repercussions for the pro-American government of Tunisian president Habib Bourguiba, the United States did not veto the Security Council resolution of October 4, but abstained in the vote, noting the lack of reference to the terrorist actions that had provoked the bombing. On the same day, Secretary of State Shultz told the *New York Times* that while the United States had helped persuade President Bourguiba to offer refuge to some of the PLO units evacuated from Beirut in August 1982, it had not expected the establishment of a base "out of which terrorist operations would be conducted."

Events in October offered further evidence that Arafat was employing Force 17 and members of smaller, pro-Arafat PLO factions to carry out his ongoing campaign of terror. For example, on October 5, two Israeli seamen were found tortured and murdered in the Spanish port of Barcelona. An anonymous caller told Western news agencies that Force 17 was responsible.

ACHILLE LAURO

The most dramatic instance of PLO-linked terror occurred on October 7, when the Italian cruise ship *Achille Lauro*, bound for the Israeli port of Ashdod, was hijacked by four members of the Palestine Liberation Front (PLF), a group with

close ties to Arafat. The original intention of the hijackers was reportedly to reach Israel, where they would take hostages and demand the release of convicted terrorists being held in Israeli prisons. The plan was foiled, however, when the weapons of the terrorists were discovered by crew members after the ship left the Egyptian port of Alexandria. The terrorists succeeded in taking control of the ship, holding some 97 passengers and 350 crew members as hostages. (Most of the 750 passengers had gotten off at Alexandria for an overland tour in Egypt.) They forced the *Achille Lauro* to sail toward Syria, and, to underscore their demands, threatened to kill passengers. Their threat was carried out when they shot and killed a 69-year-old disabled American Jewish tourist, Leon Klinghoffer, throwing his body and his wheelchair overboard.

The young men who perpetrated the hijacking and murder belonged to the Abu Abbas faction of the PLF. Its leader, Mohammed Abu al-Abbas, was an Arafat ally whose links to the PLO chairman became closer after al-Fatah broke up into pro-Syrian and pro-Arafat factions in 1983. In 1984 Arafat personally nominated Abbas and saw to it that he was elected to the PLO's ruling 11-member executive committee.

When the Syrian government refused to assist the *Achille Lauro* hijackers, they turned the ship back toward Egypt. PLF leader Abu Abbas, who had already flown to Cairo, was able to negotiate a deal for his terrorist cohort. If the ship and its passengers were released, the hijackers would be given safe passage out of Egypt. Over strenuous American objections, the Egyptian government allowed the four hijackers and Abu Abbas to leave the country on an Egyptian airliner, the hijackers under Egyptian police guard. The plane was initially bound for Tunisia, where, according to the Egyptians, Arafat had agreed to put the men on trial. This maneuver was undoubtedly intended to spare Egypt further embarrassment. At the same time, it would give Arafat a chance to demonstrate both that he was in control of his supporters and that he opposed unauthorized acts of violence against innocent civilians. Whether Arafat would really have punished the *Achille Lauro* hijackers was to remain a moot point because the Tunisian authorities refused to allow the plane to land.

While in flight over international waters in the Mediterranean, the plane was intercepted by U.S. Navy jets and forced to fly to an American base in Sicily. There the terrorists were seized by Italian guards who refused to permit American troops to take them into U.S. custody.

Throughout the episode, Arafat and the PLO observer at the UN denied that the American tourist had been murdered. Abu Abbas, too, denied that any of his group had killed Klinghoffer, and claimed that in fact he had died of a heart attack. A week after the hijacking, Syria announced that a body—which turned out to be that of the slain Leon Klinghoffer—had washed up on a beach near the Syrian city of Tartus. When the Syrians turned the body over to the U.S. embassy, it was clear that they were only too happy to add to the embarrassment of Arafat and his

loyalists in the PLO—especially since an autopsy confirmed that Klinghoffer had died from bullet wounds and not of natural causes.

The Syrians clearly wanted to undermine Arafat's relationship with Egypt and Jordan; they further wanted to damage Arafat's credibility and any possibility that the PLO leader would be included in peace moves initiated by Jordan's King Hussein. Egyptian president Mubarak had been encouraging the Jordanian monarch in his efforts to portray Arafat as a legitimate partner in peace negotiations. Now, the PLO chairman's apparent involvement in the *Achille Lauro* affair was a major setback for those efforts. If Arafat had indeed authorized Abbas to carry out the hijacking, that proved that the PLO leader was still supporting indiscriminate terrorist actions. On the other hand, if Arafat could not be directly linked to the *Achille Lauro* attack, he would be seen as having lost control of the PLO and therefore unable to commit it to peaceful negotiations.

The *Achille Lauro* affair had other consequences, including a temporary rift in Egyptian-U.S. relations. President Mubarak had issued conflicting statements on the whereabouts of the hijackers when they left the ship after returning to Egypt. He was clearly indignant over the U.S. interception and diversion of the Egyptian airliner carrying the terrorists out of Egypt, which he considered an affront to Egyptian sovereignty (although there were reports that the U.S. interception was aided by elements within the Egyptian defense establishment).

The incident also created tensions between the United States and Italy. Prime Minister Bettino Craxi, in a statement on November 6 that appeared to justify PLO violence in principle, observed that the PLO could legitimately resort to armed struggle since it was a "movement wanting to liberate its own country from a foreign occupation." The Italian government was widely denounced when it allowed Abu Abbas to flee to Yugoslavia, this despite urgent requests that he be held until the United States was able to provide documentation showing his direct involvement in the hijacking. U.S. officials believed that evidence existed that would warrant either bringing Abbas to trial in Italy for the hijacking or extraditing him to the United States for the killing of Leon Klinghoffer. The Italian government's haste in helping to spirit Abbas out of the country was sharply criticized both within Italy and the United States as a cowardly act of expediency.

Sensitive to the negative repercussions of the *Achille Lauro* incident, Arafat announced in Cairo on November 7, following a meeting with President Mubarak, that henceforth the PLO would limit its attacks to targets inside Israel and the Israeli-occupied territories. He also said he would "take drastic measures" to punish those who violated the order. Israeli officials dismissed Arafat's statement as a public-relations gimmick designed to improve the PLO's image in the West and an effort to mend strained relations with Egypt and Jordan over the *Achille Lauro* affair. Simcha Dinitz, a Labor-party member of the Knesset and a former ambassador to the United States, remarked that Arafat's declaration meant that "stabbing Jews on their way to prayers at the Wailing Wall will be permitted, but killing Americans on a ship will be forbidden."

OTHER INCIDENTS

PLO and PLO-inspired terrorism continued in the wake of the *Achille Lauro* hijacking. The most dramatic of the attacks were apparently intended to further discredit Arafat, since they were perpetrated by rival terrorist factions allied with the PLO leader's main enemies in the Arab world—Libya and Syria.

On November 23, armed Palestinian terrorists, later described by Egyptian officials as members of a "dissident group" backed by Libya, but believed to be members of the faction led by dissident Abu Nidal, hijacked an Egyptian airliner bound from Athens to Cairo with 91 passengers and a crew of 6 on board. The plane was diverted to Malta, where the terrorists began methodically shooting passengers, including two Israeli women, one of whom was thrown from the plane and miraculously survived. During an ill-planned rescue operation by Egyptian commandos who stormed the plane, the terrorists hurled grenades at the passengers. In all, 60 people died, including two of the three hijackers. The presumed motive of the terrorists, who issued no demands, was to humiliate both Egypt and Arafat for having pledged not to use violence outside of Israel. The terrorists had said they were members of a group called "Egypt's Revolution" that had earlier claimed responsibility for the slaying of an Israeli diplomat in Cairo, Albert Atrakchi, in August. Abu Nidal was known to use various names for the groups under his banner.

Abu Nidal had been expelled from Arafat's Fatah organization in 1974, after he engaged in unapproved terrorist acts designed to prevent the PLO's entry into negotiations following the October 1973 war. Until the end of 1980, Abu Nidal was based in Baghdad, operating with the support of the Iraqi regime. When his group was expelled from Iraq, Abu Nidal relocated his headquarters to Syria, although he frequently visited Libya, where he apparently also maintained facilities. The Abu Nidal faction was responsible for killing PLO officials allied to Arafat as well as Israeli and European Jews. Three members of his group were held responsible for critically wounding Israel's ambassador to London, Shlomo Argov, in June 1982. That shooting triggered Israel's invasion of Lebanon.

The year ended with two more dramatic terrorist attacks, apparently coordinated, on December 27, at the Rome and Vienna airports. The assaults left 20 persons dead, including 5 Americans—one of them an 11-year-old girl—and over 100 wounded. Although the gunmen, wielding grenades and submachine guns, focused their attacks on the El Al Israel Airlines counters, they managed to wreak havoc in the areas where passengers of other airlines were waiting to check in. One of the three terrorists in Vienna and three of the four attackers in Rome were killed by security police. A surviving gunman in Vienna declared that they were all members of the Fatah Revolutionary Council, which was the official name of Abu Nidal's organization. Israel charged that Libya and Syria were also implicated.

American officials, too, accused Libya of aiding and abetting the airport terrorists, and said they would support any Israeli retaliation against the sources of the attacks.

Israeli officials welcomed U.S. approval of the principle of retaliation, but questioned why Israel alone should bear the burden of responding to international terrorism. MK Simcha Dinitz, reflecting the concern of many Israelis, remarked, "We greatly appreciate the decisions the U.S. has adopted against terrorism—in words and deeds. But we would like to feel that the battle against terrorism is an international concern and not the exclusive domain of Israel."

As the year ended, America seemed determined to fight back against international and state-supported terrorism. The successful military interception of the jetliner carrying the *Achille Lauro* terrorists out of Egypt provided a needed morale booster, helping to compensate for the frustration experienced over the failure of earlier American efforts to deal effectively with terrorists and hostage-takers in Iran and Lebanon.

U.S.-Israel Cooperation

The year 1985 witnessed increasingly close cooperation between the United States and Israel in strategic planning, intelligence, and other defense-related areas. Traditional bipartisan support for Israel in Congress reached new heights, with the 99th Congress proving more favorably disposed than any of its predecessors toward Israel's needs.

The House and Senate voted \$1.8 billion in grant military aid and \$1.2 billion in grant economic aid. (The previous year's aid package of \$2.6 billion was the first to be given entirely in the form of grants rather than loans.) In April the administration topped the congressional aid package by announcing an additional two-year grant of \$1.5 billion in emergency economic aid, after it was convinced that Israel was serious about implementing necessary economic reforms. (Secretary of State Shultz, an economist by training, had taken a close personal interest in working with a team of American and Israeli economists and officials to develop Israel's austerity measures.)

A Free Trade Agreement (FTA) was signed by U.S. and Israeli officials on April 22; implementing legislation was passed by a 422-0 vote in the House of Representatives two weeks later and by the Senate on May 23. The FTA legislation would benefit Israel by gradually eliminating tariffs on its exports to the United States and would similarly benefit U.S. firms. The FTA would also allow U.S. businesses to take advantage of Israel's preferential relationship with the European Common Market countries by establishing plants or subsidiaries in Israel and exporting to Europe from there.

Congressional opposition to U.S. arms sales to Jordan intensified amid growing evidence that King Hussein was not prepared to enter into direct negotiations with Israel. In November the House of Representatives gave final congressional approval to compromise legislation blocking the administration's proposed arms sale to Jordan until March 1, 1986, unless "direct and meaningful peace negotiations" between

Jordan and Israel began before that date. The Senate had adopted an identical measure in October.

Americans played an important role in a purely humanitarian effort: the airlift of over 7,000 Ethiopian Jews from the Sudan in late 1984 and early 1985. The United States had been cooperating quietly with Israel in the rescue operation, with much of the cost of the Israeli-sponsored airlift being paid for out of \$15 million in resettlement aid and \$5 million in transportation aid given to Israel in the fiscal 1985 budget. When the Israeli airlift ended suddenly on January 6, due in part to its premature disclosure by Israeli officials in the Jewish and general press, at least a thousand Ethiopian Jews, possibly more, were left stranded in refugee camps in the Sudan. On March 23, some 800 Jews were flown from the Sudan to Israel on U.S. Air Force C-130 Hercules transport planes. This secret operation, directed by the CIA with the cooperation of the State and Defense departments, had been approved by the president and the Senate. The details of the plan were worked out during a scheduled trip by Vice-President George Bush to the Sudan in early March, when Sudanese president Gaafar al-Nimeiry agreed to the evacuation of virtually all the remaining Jews in the camps, as long as Israeli planes were not involved. When President Nimeiry was ousted in a military coup on April 6, among the many charges brought against him by his opponents was his alleged cooperation with the United States and Israel in the airlift of Ethiopian Jews.

The United States supported Israel in its efforts to prevent the inclusion of anti-Zionist references in the official report of the UN conference marking the end of the Decade for Women, held in Nairobi, Kenya, in mid-July. The first UN conference of the Women's Decade, held in Mexico City in 1975, had issued a declaration equating Zionism with racism, which served as a precedent for the subsequent UN General Assembly Resolution 3379. The Mid-Decade Women's Conference in Copenhagen in 1980 had adopted a "Program of Action" that also contained the Zionism-racism equation. At the conference in Nairobi, Maureen Reagan, the president's daughter and head of the American delegation, played a key role in assuring that the final document would not include the anti-Zionist slur.

In January President Reagan asked Israel to allow the Voice of America to set up a relay station in the Negev desert, to enhance American radio transmitting ability to the USSR. The Israeli government informed the United States of its agreement in principle to installation of a transmitter.

In April Israel responded positively to Washington's invitation to participate in research for the Strategic Defense Initiative.

The Pollard Affair

The arrest on November 21 of a Jewish U.S. Navy intelligence analyst, Jonathan Jay Pollard, on charges of spying for Israel, threatened to upset the equilibrium that had been achieved in U.S.-Israeli relations. When the story broke, two low-level

Israeli diplomats—Pollard's alleged contacts in the Israel embassy in Washington—quickly returned to their country. The two, Ilan Ravid and Yosef Yagor, were employees of a little-known branch of the Israel Defense Ministry, the Scientific Liaison Bureau, ostensibly an office for the collection of scientific data. According to Israeli sources at the time, Pollard was not recruited by anyone, but on his own approached an unnamed Israeli in Washington in the spring of 1984, offering to cooperate in counterterrorist activity. He was put in contact with a senior counterterrorism official in Israel, identified as Rafi Eitan, adviser on terrorism to then prime minister Yitzhak Shamir, and also with a top official of the Scientific Liaison Bureau—known as *LEKEM*, its Hebrew acronym. Eitan reportedly encouraged Pollard in his offer to obtain for Israel secret American intelligence on Arab armies and on Soviet weapons supplied to the Arab states, but it appeared that he was acting independently. Israeli officials claimed that despite Eitan's connections with the Israeli intelligence community—he had been a former chief of operations for the Mossad—he engaged Pollard on his own initiative and without gaining clearance from senior intelligence officials or political leaders.

Israel quickly issued an apology, declaring that “spying on the United States is in total contradiction to our policy.” The statement went on: “The relations with the United States are based on solid foundations of deep friendship, close affinity and mutual trust. . . . Such activity to the extent that it did take place was wrong and the government of Israel apologizes.”

At a meeting in Jerusalem on December 31 with leaders of the Conference of Presidents of Major American Jewish Organizations, Prime Minister Peres announced that the United States and Israel “had cleared up a great deal of the misunderstanding and I am optimistic that we will resume the close relationship between our two countries which reached new heights recently.” Secretary of State Shultz welcomed the Israeli statement and Peres's offer to cooperate with American investigators. Shultz's positive response was seen as part of an effort on both sides to prevent the Pollard affair from causing any permanent damage to relations between the two countries.

Yet the Pollard affair was not easily swept under the rug. The Justice Department and the FBI were determined to pursue the investigation vigorously and to enforce the law. The United States, for a time at least, reduced its customary sharing of intelligence information with Israel. Many Israelis feared that the affair would undermine the American people's confidence in Israel as a trusted ally. Fears were also expressed, in Israel and among American Jews, that the discovery of an American Jew spying for Israel could have a detrimental effect on the position of the American Jewish community, raising suspicions of dual loyalty. On the other hand, some Israelis attempted to minimize the incident, pointing out that Pollard had supplied intelligence material only on Arab military matters, and that in contrast to other American spies recently apprehended, Pollard had not handed over any information that could be considered harmful to the security of the United States.

Although the Pollard affair was viewed with utmost seriousness on both sides, it

was too soon to tell what the ultimate consequences would be. Israel and her supporters hoped that it would ultimately be judged as a minor, isolated episode and that Israel would continue to enjoy favorable public opinion in the United States. As earlier swings in public opinion had shown, however, Israel could not be complacent but had to demonstrate continually that the interests of the two countries remained congruent.

Violations of American law obviously ran counter to this objective. Fortunately, senior officials in the White House and the State Department, as well as in the Israeli government, were determined to repair the damage caused by the Pollard affair and to prevent such actions in the future, hoping to maintain the traditional excellent relations between the United States and Israel.

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