Review
of
the
Year

UNITED STATES
Civic and Political

Intergroup Relations

The 1988 presidential election campaign raised troubling questions about Jewish status in America and led to increased tensions with the black community. In addition, relations between the U.S. government and Israel were strained by Israel's handling of the intifada, the Palestinian Arab uprising. Otherwise, matters relating to American Jewish security were essentially variations on familiar themes.

1988 Elections

If political equality and efficacy are prime tests of a minority group's status, the general election year of 1988 was a rigorous testing period for American Jews. Both personalities and party politics posed potential threats to Jewish interests.

The personalities in question, at the beginning of the year, were the Reverend Jesse Jackson, a Democratic party presidential candidate, and the Reverend Pat Robertson, a Republican party presidential candidate. A question repeatedly raised was whether Jackson or Robertson would cost his respective party more Jewish votes. In a national survey carried out in the spring by Steven M. Cohen for the American Jewish Committee, 159 percent of Jews said that Jesse Jackson was anti-Semitic; 41 percent said that Pat Robertson was anti-Semitic. Jackson's burden, as far as Jews were concerned, was a record of some anti-Semitic references in the past and an association with Arab-American causes and forces in this country. Robertson's burden was the fact that he was a fundamentalist preacher with a strong belief in the primacy of Christianity.

In a Los Angeles Times survey carried out early in the year, about 3 percent of American Jews said they would vote for Jackson in the primaries, and less than 1 percent said they would vote for Robertson. Cohen's national survey came up with approximately the same results. In the latter, which was conducted in April and May, about a quarter of the Jews said they would vote for the Democratic ticket if Jackson were the vice-presidential candidate—one quarter of Democratic-
leaning Jews. About 10 percent of the Jews said they would vote for the Republican ticket if Robertson were on it—a little more than half of otherwise Republican-leaning Jews. Although both candidates were widely considered inimical to Jewish interests, Jackson received the most attention, partly because the Democratic party was the traditional political home for most Jews.

REACTION TO JACKSON

New York City mayor Edward Koch became a lightning rod for these attitudes when he said, in April, that any Jews who supported Jackson “have got to be crazy, in the same way that they’d be crazy if they were black and voted for someone who was praising Botha and the racist supporters of the South African administration.” Faced with a torrent of angry reaction from blacks, and some from Jews, Koch apologized, weakly, later in the month, saying, “If I was carried away in my language, it was because of what I perceived to be a danger at hand.” While many Jews apparently agreed with Koch’s sentiments, most Jewish community leaders were nervous about the bluntness of his style. David Pollock, an official of the Jewish Community Relations Council of Greater New York, said, “We are concerned about the community relations impact, and hope there’s not a fallout.” Seen as at risk were not only black-Jewish relations in general but the Jewish relationship to the Democratic party.

Throughout the remainder of the election year, there were constant attempts by both the Jackson forces and Jewish leadership to patch up relations. In April, while Koch’s remarks still resounded, Jackson met with a selected group of Jewish leaders in New York, including Rabbi Gilbert Klaperman, president of the Synagogue Council of America. At the meeting, Jackson was asked about his past association with Muslim leader Louis Farrakhan, who had in previous years called Judaism “a gutter religion” and Adolf Hitler a “great” man. Jackson reportedly held to the position that he disavowed the sin but not the sinner, believing in “forgiveness,” and indicated that he had had no recent contact with Farrakhan. He also said that he opposed any resolution equating Zionism with racism.

Rabbi Klaperman stated that he was not “completely satisfied” with Jackson’s responses and was particularly disappointed that Jackson had been unwilling to meet with any major Jewish groups as such. Jackson was the only Democratic presidential candidate to decline an invitation, issued six months before, to speak in New York at a preprimary meeting of the Conference of Presidents of Major American Jewish Organizations. Jackson’s reluctance to meet with Jewish organizations was still the subject of comment in August, when he held a meeting with Israeli ambassador Moshe Arad. Morris Abram, chairman of the Conference of Presidents, said that Jackson’s meeting with Arad was “appropriate,” but “is not a substitute for a meeting with representatives of the American Jewish community.”

During this period, Jackson addressed the question of black-Jewish friction in
generally conciliatory terms. In an interview with the *New York Times* in April, after Mayor Koch's initial strong remarks, he called for the Jews to be more willing to share power with the blacks and suggested that Jewish unwillingness to share power was itself a source of tension. He said that Jews "have no basis for being afraid of sharing power with blacks or of my leadership. I genuinely respect and care for Jewish people." In May Jackson placed a wreath at a statue honoring Holocaust victims, in a park overlooking the Statue of Liberty, saying that "the sons and daughters of the Holocaust and grandsons and granddaughters of slavery must find common ground to end racism and anti-Semitism forever." And in November, speaking at a *Kristallnacht* commemoration of the Union of American Hebrew Congregations in Washington, D.C., Jackson called for Jews and blacks to work together for social justice as they had during the 1960s civil rights movement.

Despite these expressions of rapprochement, most American Jews regarded as inseparable Jackson's attitude toward them and his attitude toward Israel. He made the connection explicit, for example, when, in the *New York Times* interview, he described the "Israel-South Africa connection" as a major source of "tension" between blacks and American Jews. An extensive document distributed to delegates at the Democratic National Convention spelled out in detail Jackson's long and close association with activist Arab-American groups. In April Abdeen Jabara, president of the American-Arab Anti-Discrimination Committee—while chiding Jackson for saying that he would not, as president, sit down with Yasir Arafat—pointed out that "virtually every Arab-American looked to [Jackson] as the one symbol of strength in a field of political candidates who are notorious for their unwillingness to stand up to the pro-Israel lobby."

After Jackson garnered 55 percent of the Democratic primary vote in Michigan in late March, Mark Siegel, a Democratic party consultant and Jewish liaison in the Carter administration, said that the Jewish community had a "good deal of concern about the possibility" that Jackson might become the Democratic candidate. At the end of 33 state primary votes, as recapitulated by the *New York Times* on June 13, Jackson had received well over six million votes, 29 percent of the total, compared with 28 percent for all other candidates except Dukakis, who had received 43 percent. Although blacks provided him with two-thirds of those votes, Jackson's share of the white vote had tripled since the election of 1984. Jews, who generally voted in much higher numbers for black gubernatorial and mayoralty candidates around the country than did other white, and even Hispanic, voters, went against this trend: only 8 percent of Jewish primary voters chose Jackson, as against 12 percent of white non-Hispanic voters and 30 percent of Hispanic voters.

It did not help that forces associated with Jackson's "Rainbow Coalition," as Mayor Koch pointed out in July, were instrumental in the promulgation of pro-Palestinian statements in seven Democratic party state platforms, although the national platform finally eliminated those statements. The same forces helped launch pro-Palestinian referenda in two California and two Massachusetts cities. Three of the four referenda were ultimately defeated after strenuous campaigns.
The initiatives in San Francisco and Newton, Massachusetts, called for Palestinian statehood and safeguarding the security of Israel and a Palestinian state. Both were defeated by more than 2-1 margins. A resolution on the Berkeley, California, ballot called for making Jabaliya refugee camp in Gaza a "sister city" of Berkeley. It too was defeated by more than 2-1. The Cambridge-Somerville (Mass.) initiative called upon Congress and the president to demand Israel's withdrawal from occupied territories, to stop spending U.S. taxpayer money for the occupation, and to support establishment of a Palestinian state. It passed by a narrow margin.

JEWS AND REPUBLICANS

Meanwhile, the Republican party was having its own problems with Jewish concerns. Early in the year, the source of the tension was the candidacy of evangelist Pat Robertson and his explicitly "Christian" views. Robertson used a half-hour TV program in March to deny that, as president, he would seek to impose his religious views on others, and one of his press secretaries maintained that there was no contradiction in campaigning on religious values while vowing to keep church and state separate. Nevertheless, the fact that as a Christian evangelist he did advocate religious values made Jews—as well as many other Americans—nervous. (His basic stump speech carried the line, "I want to see a time when little children can once again pray in the schools of America.")

Robertson faded as a serious presidential candidate, but the ultimate Republican candidate, George Bush, developed problems of his own. In September the Washington Jewish Week revealed that a campaign "ethnic outreach" committee appointed by Bush included a Holocaust revisionist and people with fascist connections. A cochairman of the committee, Jerome Brentar, had been active in groups that denied the Holocaust. Florian Galdau, honorary chairman, a Romanian Orthodox priest, was described by Nazi hunter Simon Wiesenthal as New York chief of the Iron Guard, Romania's anti-Semitic, pro-Nazi movement. A vice-chairman of the committee, Philip Guarino, was listed as a member of P-2, a conspiratorial Italian fascist group. Radi Slavoff, national chairman of Bulgarians for Bush, reportedly had served in a national front aligned with the Nazis. Lazio Pasztor had served as an official in Hungary's anti-Semitic, pro-Nazi Arrow Cross. Ignatius Bilinsky and Bohdan Fedorak had been leading critics of the Justice Department's investigations of Nazi war criminals living in the United States.

These seven members of the ethnic panel resigned before the end of the month, at the urging of the Bush campaign. Nevertheless, the Democratic party, worried about "the Jackson effect" on Jews, played up the revelations. Michael Dukakis said, "I think this raises continuing questions about Mr. Bush's judgment." And Hyman Bookbinder, a special adviser to Dukakis on Jewish matters, said that while it was "unfair" to suggest that Bush knew beforehand about the background of the resignees, it was not unfair to ask why "they chose Bush as the person they want to
support.” In the same month, Frederic V. Malek, a top adviser to Bush, resigned from a senior position at the Republican National Committee after admitting that in 1971, after twice refusing to do so, he had finally made a count of ranking Jewish officials at the Bureau of Labor Statistics, at President Richard Nixon’s request. Nixon had made this request of Malek after complaining that a “Jewish cabal” in the bureau was trying to undermine him. A couple of Jewish officials at the bureau were reassigned after Malek made his report.

ELECTION RESULTS

Whether or not these incidents made an impression on Jewish voters, and whether or not Jewish voters were reassured by the pointed distance which Dukakis kept between himself and Jesse Jackson after he became the Democratic candidate, Jews voted overwhelmingly for Dukakis, in about the same proportion that they had voted for Walter Mondale four years before. The three major national exit polls—CBS News/New York Times, NBC News/Wall Street Journal, ABC News/Washington Post—respectively counted the Jewish vote for Dukakis as 65 percent, 71 percent, and 72 percent.

The election results in general reassured Jews that their position in the political arena had not diminished. At election’s end, the House of Representatives had an all-time high of 31 Jewish members, and there continued to be 8 Jewish senators. In short, the proportion of Jews in the U.S. Congress was about three times higher than the proportion of Jews in the population. While it is true that congressional candidates tend to come from the higher educational and occupational brackets in the population, in which Jews are disproportionately represented, the figures are meaningful because most of these identifiably Jewish lawmakers were elected by overwhelmingly non-Jewish constituencies. It should also be noted that no significant expressions of anti-Semitism were reported in the course of the campaigns.

At the same time, the prime consensual agenda of the organized Jewish community promised to be treated sympathetically by the new body of public officials. Despite concerns about the intifada, in October Congress had approved a $3-billion grant to Israel—almost one-quarter of its total foreign-aid measure. It was passed by a voice vote in the Senate and a 327–92 vote in the House. Jewish Congress-watchers anticipated that, all things remaining even, the newly elected Congress would be just as supportive.

As for the White House, some concerns were expressed by Jewish organizations at the appointment of New Hampshire governor John H. Sununu as Bush’s chief of staff. Sununu, once a member of the National Association of Arab Americans, had refused to join all other governors in 1987 in condemning the UN resolution equating Zionism with racism. However, in a meeting with a delegation of Jewish organizational leaders in November, Sununu explained his action as merely a technical matter and willingly discussed his attitudes about the Middle East. At the end
of the meeting, Theodore Ellenoff, president of the American Jewish Committee, said that Sununu's explanations "satisfied the group. There was a measurably higher comfort level achieved."

Reactions to the Intifada

The Palestinian Arab uprising in the occupied territories of Israel caused the Jewish community considerable uneasiness in 1988. The daily media images of Palestinian youths being injured and killed by Israeli soldiers in the West Bank and Gaza raised fears of a public-opinion backlash and the effect of such a backlash on American-Israeli relations.

In March, 30 U.S. senators, including 5 Jews and a number of others historically friendly to Israel, signed a letter accusing Israel of being inflexible over the terms of a possible peace settlement. In June the State Department unsuccessfully urged Israel not to deport Mubarak Awad, a controversial Palestinian-American who had been living in the West Bank and who was accused of supporting the intifada. In August the State Department said that the United States was "shocked" at Israel's decision to expel 25 Palestinians from the West Bank and Gaza. In the same month, the Israeli government and American Jewish groups expressed dismay at U.S. Trade Representative Clayton Yeutter's decision to accept an American-Arab Anti-Discrimination Committee petition for him to investigate Israel's treatment of Palestinian laborers. In September the State Department criticizing Israel's use of plastic bullets. And, most significantly, in December the administration announced that it would hold a "substantive dialogue" with the PLO, a radical reversal of the American policy dating from 1975 that had ruled out any discussion with that organization. (See "The United States, Israel, and the Middle East," elsewhere in this volume.)

In addition to these U.S. government rebuffs, some American religious groups intensified their attacks on Israel's treatment of the Palestinians. In June a committee of the Presbyterian Church (USA) charged Israel with "a repressive policy." And for the second consecutive year, in the spring the American Friends Service Committee, with two other organizations, placed 200 posters on Boston's subways depicting a Palestinian locked in the grip of a helmeted Israeli soldier. The same type of campaign was mounted by the American-Arab Anti-Discrimination Committee in the Metro in the nation's capital, in July.

PUBLIC OPINION

Concerned over possible growing animosity in America, not just toward Israel but toward the American Jewish community as well, the major Jewish public-affairs organizations commissioned special surveys of the American population. Since public opinion on topical issues such as the Israeli-Palestinian clashes is notoriously
volatile, it is not surprising that the surveys showed an increasing sympathy for the Palestinians. At the same time, they also showed a continuing “bedrock of support” for Israel among Americans. At a panel discussion arranged in September by the Conference of Presidents of Major Jewish Organizations, the Penn and Schoen organization reported on the survey it conducted for the Anti-Defamation League the previous January. It found that there had been little erosion of American public support for Israel up to that time. By contrast, a Roper poll conducted for the American Jewish Committee in March found that American support for Israel had declined since the beginning of the intifada, although basically, “as a group,” the American public still supported Israel. The Martilla and Kiley organization reported on a survey conducted for the American Jewish Congress in April. It found that the American public registered “strong and secure” support for Israel and was by a large margin still “more sympathetic” to Israel than to either the Arab states or the Palestinians.

In short, these surveys and others conducted during the year found the level of American support for Israel more unsteady than it had been for years, although still much higher than for the Arab states or the Palestinians. Within that design, however, a large part of the American public was uniformly critical of Israel’s actions in the West Bank and Gaza, finding them “too harsh.” And while the PLO remained very low in American popularity, sympathy for the Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza seemed to be on the increase. Surveys also found that about a quarter of the American people believed, in one wording or another, that “most American Jews are more loyal to Israel than to the United States.” That figure was no higher than it had been in recent years, perhaps suggesting that no special backlash had set in against American Jews as a result of current events. Still, none of the surveys gave great comfort to American Jews, since political criticism of Israel often faulted the American Jewish community for allegedly walking in lock-step with Israeli foreign policy.

College campuses saw an increase in anti-Israel hostility and a number of overt anti-Semitic incidents during the year. At the University of Arizona, for example, a shot fired into the window of a Hillel lounge was linked to ABC-TV Nightline broadcasts about the intifada. The letters “PLO” were spray-painted in front of the Hillel building at one of the campuses of the University of Minnesota. Among the worst campus-based anti-Semitic incidents to take place during the 50th anniversary of Kristallnacht was the spray-painting of slogans, including “Kill the Kikes” and “Zionazi racists” on the wall of the Jewish Student Center at SUNY Binghamton. Although many of the campuses involved had substantial numbers of Arab students, which presumably accounted for the anti-Israel sentiment, there was concern about the wider effects of this activity on the thinking of other students, the potential future leadership of this country.

A related concern expressed by a number of Hillel directors was how the backlash was affecting Jewish college students. One Jewish Telegraphic Agency roundup in May reported that “some Hillel directors worried that Jewish students seemed slow
to defend Israel, and expressed fear that these future leaders of tomorrow may be turning away from the pro-Israel position.” This alleged weakening of Jewish college-student support of Israel reflected the widely asserted allegation that Jews in general were seriously split on the subject of Israel. The effect of such allegations on American Jewish status was problematic. On the one hand, an American Jewish split on Israel might presumably help to destroy both the image of a monolithic Jewish community and the notion that Jews were primarily loyal to Israel. On the other hand, any suggestion that American Jews were abandoning Israel might damage the still existing American consensus of support for Israel. That, in turn, apart from its effect on Israel, might accelerate an American public backlash against a Jewish population that continued to battle politically for Israel. As the substantial surveys of the *Los Angeles Times* and Steven Cohen both demonstrated, while American Jews were split in their opinions about Israeli strategy, they were still strongly consensual in their will to do political battle for American support of Israel. (See also “Jewish Communal Affairs,” elsewhere in this volume.)

**Hate Groups**

Small but often connected anti-Semitic and racist groups continued to operate in America, and efforts continued to prosecute them when they crossed the line to violence. The Anti-Defamation League reported that some 70 such organizations were active and increasingly violent, although small in membership numbers.

The U.S. Justice Department reported that, from 1979 to 1985, more than 150 individuals had been prosecuted for racially motivated violence. In December 1987, five top leaders of the Order, an offshoot of the notorious racist group Aryan Nations, were sentenced to long prison terms. However, efforts to contain the extremist movement were set back when 13 white supremacists were acquitted of seditious conspiracy and other charges by a federal court in Arkansas, in April. (A 14th defendant had been acquitted earlier by the judge, for insufficient evidence.) The defendants—among whom were the five already jailed—were charged with conspiring to overthrow the government by force; conspiring to murder a federal judge and an FBI agent; and other charges, such as transporting stolen money. Those on trial, aside from being members of the Order, had variously been leaders or members of the Ku Klux Klan and of groups such as Identity and the Covenant, Sword and the Arm of the Lord, which subscribed to a doctrine of religious and racial superiority.

The accused uniformly held that they had only been exercising their constitutional rights to free expression and free association, and the judge frequently called the prosecution to task for presenting “hearsay” evidence. Groups that monitor right-wing activity saw the acquittal as a victory for the white supremacist movement, with its leaders now free to rebuild their organizations.

Of continuing concern were teenaged “skinhead” gangs, whose members shaved their heads, often wore swastikas, and were prone to engage in violent activity
directed against Jews, blacks, or other minorities. An Anti-Defamation League (ADL) report released in March claimed that about two dozen such groups operated in a dozen states, with a combined membership of 1,000–1,500. Skinheads were arrested in many of these states for vandalism and assault. The skinheads seemed to epitomize the chief concern about extremist groups in America: not so much their membership numbers, which did not seem to increase significantly, but their apparently increasing propensity for overt action and violence. The ADL report also warned that skinheads were graduating into the network of adult white supremacist groups.

LYNDON LAROUCHE

Despite the fact that he himself was under indictment for fraud, Lyndon LaRouche's organization, the National Democratic Policy Committee, known for its anti-Semitic and other conspiracy theories, placed a number of political candidates in the field at the beginning of the year. In April, for example, it was revealed by unhappy Democratic party officials that 16 LaRouche members had filed for various state legislative and U.S. congressional seats to be decided at the June Democratic primary in Iowa. In the end, no LaRouche candidates were elected in any primary, except where uncontested, and none was elected to political office. The ADL reported that the LaRouche organization had expanded into Latin America, under the name of Partido Laboral. A former Panamanian consul-general in New York charged that General Manuel Noriega had given funds to the LaRouche organization, which then proceeded to attack U.S. senators who had been critical of Noriega. In December LaRouche and six of his top officials were convicted by a federal jury of conspiracy to defraud the Internal Revenue Service as well as a number of people who had loaned him millions of dollars.

Anti-Semitism

Even taking skinhead activity into account, the Anti-Defamation League's 1988 "Audit of Anti-Semitic Incidents" concluded that, while there had been an increase in reported incidents, "anti-Semitic vandalism, overwhelmingly, is not the work of organized hate groups." The audit reported 823 episodes of vandalism and desecration, fewer than in 1981 and 1982, but substantially higher than in 1987. The number of violent crimes, 28, was more than twice as many as in 1987; it included 7 cases of arson, 7 cases of attempted arson, 1 bombing, and 13 cemetery desecrations. About 60 percent of these acts of vandalism occurred in three states: New York and Florida, where the number of incidents had increased, and California, where it had decreased.

There were also reported 458 acts of anti-Semitic harassment, threats, and assaults against Jewish individuals and institutions, again the highest figure since 1982.
Of those, 21 were physical assaults against Jewish individuals. The most serious occurred in New York, in November, when a 19-year-old Yeshiva University student was beaten, stabbed, and robbed by a teenaged gang, to the accompaniment of anti-Semitic epithets.

In its audit of anti-Semitism, the ADL reported that "this year, for the first time, an external political event—namely, the West Bank/Gaza Palestinian 'uprising'—was clearly related to a high number of anti-Semitic incidents in the U.S." The perpetrators of almost 10 percent of reported anti-Semitic incidents, including bomb threats, vandalism, and other harassment, indicated explicitly that their actions were motivated by anti-Israel sentiments related to the Palestinian Arab intifada. In previous years, fewer than 1 percent of the episodes had revealed an anti-Israel connection. In this count, anti-Israel expressions were not in themselves considered anti-Semitic. It was only when, for example, synagogues were vandalized in company with anti-Israel graffiti, or harassment was accompanied by anti-Israel statements, that the acts were counted as anti-Semitic. It was not known how many more anti-Semitic incidents may have been rooted in anti-Israel animosity but not so labeled. Nor was it known how many of these anti-Israel references were simply used as a matter of convenience by perpetrators who would have engaged in anti-Semitic actions in any case.

In the week commemorating the 50th anniversary of Kristallnacht (November 9), when the media and Jewish agencies turned public attention to that night of ominous Nazi savagery, a substantial rise in anti-Semitic incidents was noted. According to the ADL, more than 60 incidents involving anti-Semitic graffiti and threats were reported during the week of November 6–13. An average weekly total was about 15.

"JAP"-BAITING

Reports continued of "JAP-baiting" on a number of college campuses, as did debate over the causes, seriousness, and implications of the phenomenon. It appeared that long-popular and relatively harmless (if still offensive) "JAP" (Jewish American Princess) jokes, which made fun of Jewish women for being pampered and materialistic, had escalated into something more ominous—abusive language and behavior. Jewish women at some university football games were heckled with shouts of "JAP! JAP!" and were exposed to "JAPS Do Not Enter" signs with swastikas, vulgar graffiti in libraries, and similar occurrences. A nationally distributed guide to campuses, produced by the Yale Daily News, referred to the prevalence of JAPS at certain schools.

Dr. Gary Spencer, a Syracuse University sociology professor who had made a study of the subject, said, "We have documented incidents at approximately 100 different institutions. This is not solely a campus phenomenon. It reflects what is occurring in the larger community." Indeed, the stereotype was perpetuated by
some Jews as well. Two Jewish male student disk jockeys at the radio station of American University ran a " Biggest JAP on Campus" contest, and a Jewish fraternity offered "Slap-a-Jap" T-shirts at a college carnival. In Coral Gables, Florida, the Jewish owner of a boutique called PAJ (JAP spelled backwards), offered a "JAP discount" in newspaper ads. When Jewish groups remonstrated with her, she said: "I'm fulfilling my lifelong dream (to be a Jewish American Princess) and I don't understand why my own are trying to take it away from me."

The existence of the problem was first exposed in the Fall 1987 issue of Lilith, a Jewish feminist magazine, and through a press conference convened jointly by the magazine and the American Jewish Committee in September of that year. Social analysts saw the emergence of hostile JAP stereotyping—at a time when Jewish women were increasingly career-oriented and the "princess" had virtually disappeared—as an outlet for several attitudes: hostility of Jewish men toward Jewish women, Jewish self-hatred, sexism, and anti-Semitism. They noted that precisely because overt expressions of anti-Semitism were now regarded as taboo, the JAP stereotype offered an ideal vehicle for anti-Jewish feelings, socially sanctioned precisely because it was started by Jews and perpetuated by them.

In an article in Newsweek (May 23, 1988), Laura Shapiro wrote that "until recently Jewish organizations have been reluctant to confront the problem, partly because it was seen as a women's issue and hence unimportant, and partly because the earliest jokes and images originated with Jews themselves...." Jewish feminists and their supporters sought to raise public consciousness of the problem through articles, conferences, media interviews, and other means. Hillels and other Jewish organizations did their best to discourage offensive graffiti and T-shirts and other expressions of the JAP stereotype. But they still had to overcome some reluctance to regard JAP-baiting and JAP jokes as a serious issue.

EVALUATING ANTI-SEMITISM

If most of the anti-Semitic vandalism and violence was "not the work of organized hate groups," what did it represent? Was a tidal wave of popular anti-Semitic sentiment gathering force among Americans? Judging from public-opinion polls, there was no evidence of such a rising tide in the expressed attitudes of Americans. The Los Angeles Times survey asked the question usually considered key to ferreting out serious anti-Semitic animosity: "Do the Jews have too much power?" About 15 percent of Americans answered affirmatively, a proportion at the lower end of responses elicited by that question in recent years. In April the Roper Organization asked the same question in a multiple-choice design: "Which groups do you believe have too much power in the U.S.?" About 8 percent of Americans designated the Jews, the usual multiple-choice level in recent years. But more than 8 percent of Americans said they believed that the Catholic Church, the blacks, and the Orientals each had too much power, and about 20 percent said that Arab interests had too
much power. Cohen's American Jewish Committee survey found that white non-Jewish Americans felt just as "favorable" toward Jews as they did toward Catholics and mainstream Protestants and about twice as "favorable" toward Jews as toward fundamentalist Protestants.

According to the Anti-Defamation League, some 80 to 90 percent of those apprehended for anti-Semitic violence were teenagers, which raised the possibility that if there was in fact a new "wave" of hostility toward Jews, it might be found among adolescent Americans. Indeed, much attention was given to racial and anti-Semitic incidents on the campuses of colleges and universities. The National Institute Against Prejudice and Violence said that it had recorded incidents motivated by racial or religious prejudice at 81 institutions of higher learning since the fall of 1986.

However, despite the JAP phenomenon and incidents of anti-Semitism on at least several dozen major campuses around the country, public-opinion surveys showed no evidence of increased anti-Semitism in the expressed attitudes of young Americans. When, for example, the response elicited by the Roper Organization on Jewish power was broken down by age, the negative response by younger Americans was a bit lower than that of other age groups and showed no signs of having increased from the past.

The hypothesis prevailed, as it had in recent years, that the phenomenon at hand was not so much an increase in the ranks of attitudinal anti-Semites as a rise in the level of licentious violence, a continuing breakdown in civility among the young in general. For example, various law enforcement agencies, as well as the Anti-Defamation League, cautioned that while all skinheads had a potential for violence, they were not all overtly anti-Semitic or racist. In Milwaukee, members of a local group calling itself the Skinhead Army of Milwaukee were described by a local Jewish official as being more "thugs" than white supremacists. Their violence had, so far, not been directed at Jewish or black individuals or institutions.

A general decline in civility was suggested on many levels. In June the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force recorded a 42-percent rise in reported incidents directed against homosexuals in the country. Over 7,000 such incidents, "ranging from verbal abuse to murder," had been reported in the preceding year. And heightened teenage gang violence in general was noted in every large city, typically associated with drug traffic. Young bigots also presumably participated in this permissive climate, expressing their bigotry more violently. Conversely, bigotry—including anti-Semitism—presumably served to provide a specific edge to generalized violent activity, as it had in the past.

There were, however, reassuring signs. In this election year, Jewish candidates for office, as detailed above, did not meet anti-Semitic opposition, nor were they shunned by overwhelmingly non-Jewish constituencies. And governments—federal, state, and local—responded swiftly and positively to anti-Semitic incidents. (Police departments in 19 states reported 124 arrests in connection with such incidents.) In addition, hate-crimes laws were promulgated in a number of localities around the country. In June President Ronald Reagan signed into law a bill passed by the U.S.
Congress to provide criminal penalties for damage to religious property. The new law imposed fines of up to $250,000 and/or ten years in prison for anyone convicted of causing more than $10,000 in damage to a religious institution or cemetery, or causing serious bodily injury to anyone trying to exercise his or her religious beliefs.

Another bill introduced this year would require the Justice Department to gather statistics and report annually on crimes against persons or property because of race, religion, ethnic origin, or sexual orientation. The need for such an annual report was emphasized by a study released in January by the Center for Democratic Renewal. The study indicated that about 3,000 prejudice-related incidents had taken place in the United States between 1980 and 1986 but noted that this figure was based mainly on unofficial sources, because only Virginia, Maryland, and Pennsylvania kept careful official figures on hate crimes. Rabbi James Rudin, director of interreligious affairs for the American Jewish Committee, supported the need for a federal reporting procedure, saying that the hate crime "is not a regional issue—as some might have thought years ago—it is a national issue." He added that such a reporting procedure would be "like tracking a disease."

The federal reporting bill was passed by the House of Representatives in May, 383-29. It also passed the Senate Judiciary Committee, but did not pass in the full Senate and was expected to be reintroduced in the next congressional session. Meanwhile, 5 more states passed hate-crime laws, lifting to a total of 43 the number of states that had passed such legislation.

**Soviet Jewry**

The American Jewish community had no serious reason this year to doubt its political status or influence with respect to American policy on Soviet Jews, although some difficulty did develop over immigration policy.

In the aftermath of the December 1987 rally, held on the eve of a Reagan-Gorbachev summit, when more than 200,000 people attended the largest ever Soviet Jewry event in Washington, D.C., the American government continued to press the Soviet government for increased emigration. Thus, in May, President Reagan made a point on his first trip to the Soviet Union to hold a highly visible meeting with refuseniks and dissidents, clearly offending his hosts in the process. Yuli Kosharovsky, one of the leading refuseniks, addressed the president at that meeting, which helped focus international attention on the emigration issue. In fact, emigration increased during the year and Jewish cultural opportunities were expanded, leading some to conclude that the overall situation for Soviet Jews had improved significantly.

In the wake of these developments, the Israeli government renewed its pressure on the American government not to allow Soviet Jews who had received Israeli visas to come to the United States under "refugee" provisions. While the American Jewish community was, by and large, sensitive to Israel's concern—the proportion of Soviet Jews choosing America over Israel reached 95 percent some months—it
was also committed to the principle of freedom of choice. As evidence grew that the Soviets would allow increased applications to the United States, and in order to avoid the potential for rancorous debate, American Jewish leaders began promoting a dual-track system. Soviet Jews seeking to come to the United States would be encouraged to apply directly for American visas, and Soviet Jews with Israeli visas would be required to go directly to Israel.

Ironically, as American Jews began to spread the word about the dual-track system, and as emigration of Soviet Jews increased significantly, the American government, for the first time, began denying refugee status to a number of individual Soviet Jews seeking to immigrate to the United States. Funds for refugee resettlement were exhausted, and the American government had begun to take a closer look at whether every Soviet Jew had a "well-founded fear of persecution." A backlog began to build of thousands of applicants waiting to be processed by an American embassy officer in Moscow. Near Rome, a colony of Soviet Jews waiting for permission to enter the United States began to swell in numbers. At year's end, the American Jewish community and the American government were amicably seeking some way to reduce the numbers of people waiting and to resolve the question of refugee status. (See also "Jewish Communal Affairs," elsewhere in this volume.)

Holocaust-Related Matters

In January the Vatican announced that Pope John Paul II would meet with Austrian president Kurt Waldheim during a visit to Austria in June. For American Jews this announcement rekindled the controversy with the Catholic Church dating from the pope's warm embrace of Waldheim at their meeting in Rome a year earlier.

A month later, the international commission of historians established by the Austrian government to investigate Waldheim's wartime activities issued its report. Although it concluded that "no proof" was found that Waldheim had committed war crimes, the report criticized him sharply for failing to intervene in, or protest, mass deportations and atrocities that he knew were occurring. The panel head, Swiss military historian Rudolff Kurz, said that Waldheim had concealed and lied about his wartime activities. Israeli panel member Prof. Yehuda Wallach maintained that the report contained enough information to bring criminal proceedings against Waldheim for being a participant in illegal activities. In the wake of calls for his resignation, Waldheim defended himself yet again and added that "it must be our holy obligation to do everything to see that the crimes of that time will not be repeated."

When the pope met with Waldheim in Vienna in June, a small group of American Jewish demonstrators, dressed in concentration-camp uniforms, protested outside the Austrian leader's office. The pope's failure to mention Jews in remarks made on a visit to Mauthausen concentration camp, and his reference to Austria as a victim of Nazism, provoked strong condemnation from American Jewish leaders. Elie Wiesel, summing up the feelings of many, wrote in the New York Post (June 28) that
the pope wanted to "de-Judaize the Holocaust" with his "strange and offensive behavior whenever he is confronted by the cruelest event in recorded history. . . . It is now clear: This pope has a problem with Jews, just as Jews have a problem with him. His understanding for living Jews is as limited as his compassion for dead Jews. . . ."

**FORMER NAZIS**

This year saw the conclusion of the trial in Jerusalem of John Demjanjuk, for his participation in the murder of some 800,000 Jews killed in the gas chambers at Treblinka death camp. (Demjanjuk had been stripped of his U.S. citizenship and extradited to Israel in 1986.) On April 18, he was found guilty of crimes against humanity, war crimes, crimes against the Jewish people, murder, and other offenses. The court concluded that the cumulative evidence furnished proof that the 69-year-old retired automobile worker from Cleveland, Ohio, was in fact "Ivan the Terrible," who brutalized Jews as he herded them into the gas chamber. On April 25, he was sentenced to death under the 1950 Nazi and Nazi Collaborators Law. (Adolf Eichmann was the only other former Nazi ever sentenced to death by an Israeli court, in 1962.) Defense attorney Yoram Sheftel appealed the verdict, citing insufficient evidence and a lynch-mob atmosphere.

In the United States, legal proceedings against ex-Nazis continued. In a rare case, in February a 76-year-old Jew from Brooklyn was stripped of his American citizenship for collaborating with the Nazis and brutalizing Jewish concentration-camp inmates. Jacob Tannenbaum confessed to having been a kapo at the Goerlitz concentration camp in Germany. Tannenbaum, whose parents, five sisters, first wife, and their baby were killed in the Holocaust, and who was in ill health, was not deported.

In a report issued in June, the Justice Department admitted that convicted Nazi war criminal Robert Jan Verbelen—a resident of Austria—and at least 13 other former Nazis had worked for the U.S. Army's Counter Intelligence Corps in Vienna from 1946 to 1956, but claimed it had no evidence of Verbelen's true identity before mid-1956.

Controversy surrounded the case of 83-year-old Boleslav Maikovskis, a Long Island resident who had served as police chief in Nazi-occupied Latvia, where hundreds of civilians were murdered. In October it was discovered that he had secretly fled to West Germany in 1987, presumably to avoid deportation to the Soviet Union, which had sentenced him to death in absentia in 1965. The Anti-Defamation League accused the Justice Department—which denied the charge—of covering up his flight. West German authorities arrested Maikovskis soon after his arrival, on war-crimes charges.

On another front, in October the U.S. Congress finally passed a bill making genocide a crime in the United States. The bill, named the Proxmire Act after the senator who had led the ratification fight for 20 years, implemented the United
Nations Convention Against Genocide. Anyone convicted of "incitement to genocide" would face a fine of up to $500,000 and/or 5 years in prison—and a fine of up to $1 million and/or 20 years in prison if the act resulted in death.

In other government action, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency barred scientists, on ethical grounds, from including data from Nazi medical experiments in a report on the effects of a toxic gas. And the National Jewish Commission on Law and Public Affairs (COLPA) challenged the decision of the Internal Revenue Service to grant tax-exempt status to the German American Information and Education Association, a group which denied that the Holocaust took place.

HOLOCAUST EDUCATION

Meanwhile, government-assisted efforts to foster awareness of the Holocaust continued. The Department of Defense distributed a book entitled *Days of Remembrance* to American armed forces, urging that programs and ceremonies be planned during the week of remembrance in the spring. In October President Reagan dedicated the cornerstone of the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum on the National Mall in Washington, D.C. At the ceremony he stated that "the Jewish people will never stand alone against tyranny." The museum, scheduled for opening in late 1990, had embarked on a $170-million fund-raising campaign.

Finally, it was reported in October that, as part of a growing trend, eight states—New York, California, Pennsylvania, New Jersey, Ohio, Tennessee, Virginia, and Connecticut—and a number of cities had adopted curricula for teaching about the Holocaust to high-school students.

All 50 governors and over 150 mayors issued proclamations to commemorate the 50th anniversary of *Kristallnacht*, urging their constituents to "always strive to overcome prejudice and inhumanity through understanding, vigilance and resistance."

Black-Jewish Relations

The Jesse Jackson phenomenon was a prominent element in the year's black-Jewish relations, but Jews and blacks viewed him in different contexts. Jews tended to see Jackson as inseparably anti-Israel and anti-Semitic, and were particularly bothered in 1988 by his political stand on the Middle East. Blacks did not see Jackson primarily in the context of the Middle East. Roper's survey in April found that while 29 percent of white Americans found Israel's response to the Palestinian uprising "too harsh," only 27 percent of black Americans agreed, even though Jackson referred often to what he considered Israel's harsh response. In short, while most Jews tended to see Jackson as primarily reflecting a black point of view on Israel, most blacks tended to see Jackson as primarily reflecting a black point of view on domestic affairs. It was not clear what the long-range effect of Jackson's candidacy would be on black-Jewish relations.
Otherwise, 1988 was a mixed year for black-Jewish relations, beginning and ending with calls for cooperation and reconciliation, but with a number of tense encounters in between.

In April it was learned—through some tapes acquired by the Anti-Defamation League—that Steve Cokely, an aide to Chicago’s mayor Eugene Sawyer, had delivered a series of virulently anti-Semitic speeches to the Nation of Islam, headed by Louis Farrakhan. Among the accusations he made were that Jews were conspiring to rule the world and that “the AIDS epidemic is a result of doctors, especially Jewish ones, who inject AIDS into blacks.” Sawyer hesitated nearly a week before firing Cokely. Jewish leaders were outraged over the slow response by Sawyer and other black leaders, especially as only 3 of the 18 black aldermen on the Chicago City Council called for Cokely’s dismissal. Some black leaders, in turn, were upset over the dismissal of Cokely as a perceived result of Jewish pressure. In a piece in the *New York Times* (July 26), Prof. Eugene Kennedy of Loyola of Chicago wrote: “Virulent anti-Semitism has gripped Chicago’s black community. Nobody morally powerful enough to try to combat it, including the Rev. Jesse Jackson, who lives here has attempted to do so.”

Jewish leaders in Chicago took a less alarmist view than Kennedy, pointing to a *Chicago Tribune* poll which indicated that only 8 percent of blacks thought Cokely should have been kept in office. In the ensuing weeks and months, clergy and lay leaders representing Chicago’s black and Jewish communities cooperated on joint statements denouncing “all expressions of anti-Semitism, racism and other forms of bigotry, to prevent them from gaining legitimacy,” and in a series of meetings in churches and synagogues to stress the “historic ties” between the two groups.

Several other incidents around the country also aggravated black-Jewish relations. In April a speech at the University of Pennsylvania by Louis Farrakhan, in which he blamed Jews for instituting black slavery in America, was protested by more than a thousand Jewish students. At the University of Massachusetts, Julius Lester, a black professor of Afro-American studies and a convert to Judaism, who criticized black author James Baldwin for anti-Semitic remarks he had made, was forced out of the department in a unanimous vote of its faculty members. The move to oust Lester from that department actually began after the publication in 1987 of his book *Lovesong*, which chronicled the steps leading to Lester’s conversion, and was brought to a head over the Baldwin issue. Many saw the ouster as a blow to academic freedom. In the meantime, Lester joined the university’s department of Judaic studies.

In Los Angeles, a racist memo laying out a plan for a Jewish-financed campaign to defeat black mayor Tom Bradley was made public in August. The memo, prepared by two political campaign professionals for Jewish city councilman Zev Yaroslavsky, said in part, “You’ve got 50 IQ points on him (and that’s no compliment). . . . But your IQ advantage is of no electoral use if you don’t use it.” Yaroslavsky immediately dissociated himself from the memo, emphasized his “high personal regard” for the mayor, and ultimately dropped out of the race.
These incidents were offset by an equal number of new attempts to reaffirm the importance of the traditional black-Jewish alliance. In January the Israel embassy in Washington held its fourth annual observance of Martin Luther King, Jr.'s birthday. Some 300 Jews and blacks attended the event, although some black leaders stayed away in protest of Israeli policies in the West Bank and Gaza. Ambassador Moshe Arad said, "We fervently hope that the spirit of peace and reconciliation exemplified in Dr. King's life and work will overcome the forces of evil and hatred and violence in the world today. This has always been the hope of the Jewish people."

In April boxing promoter Don King contributed $75,000 to be administered by B'nai B'rith to launch the Don King Center for Black-Jewish Relations in Washing-

In Oklahoma, in May, in the aftermath of a resurgence of anti-Semitic and racist graffiti, black and Jewish groups organized a "Say No to Hate" campaign. Black and Jewish groups had been working closely in the state to combat anti-Semitism among farming families.

In October the American Jewish Committee's National Leadership Conference on Black-Jewish Relations sponsored a conference at Wingspread in Wisconsin for religious, political, academic, and business leaders from the Jewish and black com-munities. At a follow-up meeting it was agreed that a "code of community conduct" should be developed. The code would offer guidance "so that all aspects of social and economic life can proceed with a minimum of racism, bigotry and discrimina-

Finally, in November Jewish and black veterans of early civil-rights battles came together in Atlanta, Georgia, for a reunion and a reaffirmation of their commitment to the cause. Nearly 100 civil-rights veterans spent two days at the gathering, called "The Black-Jewish Alliance: Reunion and Renewal," which was videotaped as part of a planned archive of black-Jewish history. Among the recollections recorded was that of Jewish community-relations official Charney Bromberg on meeting an elderly black woman in Mississippi in 1963. She immediately said she knew he was Jewish, "because Jews are the best Christians."

Civil Rights

Affirmative-action controversies, which sometimes exacerbated Jewish-black re-
lations, continued to occupy the courts. In June the Supreme Court expanded the use of statistical evidence by employees to prove bias (Watson v. Ft. Worth). A black woman in Texas had been barred by a lower court from using "disparate-impact" statistics to prove that she was discriminated against because she was black. (In most cases, "disparate impact," demonstrated by statistical patterns of employment, is easier to prove than "disparate treatment," or intentional discrimination.) The
Justice Department argued against the acceptance of a "disparate-impact theory," saying that it would lead to quotas. But the main Court opinion, written by Justice Sandra Day O'Connor, held that statistics could be used as a factor in determining discrimination.

The Supreme Court also upheld a 1984 New York City law aimed primarily at requiring the admission of women to private clubs that presumably had a role in business life. The Court left open the possibility that certain genuinely private clubs had a constitutional right to discriminate with respect to race, sex, or other characteristics, under the First Amendment freedom of association.

**Interreligious Matters**

One issue in the area of interreligious relations that captured public attention in 1988 was a Hollywood film, *The Last Temptation of Christ*, which was released in late summer and received mixed, though largely favorable, reviews from the critics. Primarily because it portrayed Jesus imagining himself—in his final moments—living a normal family life, including sexual relations, the film was accused by some Christians of being blasphemous. It was denounced prior to its screening by major fundamentalist and other religious leaders around the country who called for picket lines and boycotts.

Some of the protests focused on Lew Wasserman and other Jewish principals in the MCA company that owned Universal Pictures, the distributor of the film, and warned of a "backlash against Jews." The fact, well advertised, that the film was directed by a Roman Catholic (Martin Scorsese) and based on a book by a Greek Orthodox (Nikos Kazantzakis), did not stop several ugly anti-Semitic incidents, including a demonstration on July 20, led by Rev. Robert Hymers, head of the Baptist Tabernacle of Los Angeles, outside Lew Wasserman's home.

The Campus Crusade for Christ at the University of Georgia agreed not to seek out Jews specifically for conversion. The Jews for Jesus organization sued the Jewish Community Relations Council in New York, alleging that the JCRC threatened a boycott against a Catskill Mountains country club unless it backed out of a contract with Jews for Jesus. A Presbyterian nursery school in Los Angeles told its Jewish teachers that they would be dismissed unless they expressed their faith in Jesus. This led a number of parents, non-Jews as well as Jews, to withdraw their children. And the California State Supreme Court ruled in October that two former members of the Unification Church could sue the church on grounds of deception and brainwashing, "because freedom of religion does not protect fraudulent recruiting."

A number of American rabbis refused to attend a scheduled meeting with Joseph Cardinal Ratzinger on January 27 because of his earlier statement that the proper Christian approach to dialogue was to maintain that Judaism finds its fulfillment in Christianity. Among those who declined the invitation to meet with Cardinal Ratzinger, a close adviser to Pope John Paul II, were Rabbi Wolfe Kelman, executive vice-president of the Rabbinical Assembly, Rabbi Henry Michelman, executive
vice-president of the Synagogue Council, and Rabbi Marc Tanenbaum of the American Jewish Committee, who said that the cardinal's expressed view on dialogue "calls for the most thorough examination and reflection."

At a news conference the next day, however, Cardinal Ratzinger stated that Catholics should "respect the point of view of our Jewish brothers. . . . We must be able to read the Old Testament the way the Jews read the Old Testament, rather than always looking at it from a Christian perspective." Other attempts to repair relations included an announcement at the end of the year that a Jewish-Vatican conference would be organized to explore the roots of Christian anti-Semitism.

**Church-State Issues**

At the beginning of the year, the U.S. armed services agreed to permit Jewish personnel to wear yarmulkes routinely, following the signing of an amendment to that effect in the Defense Authorization Law. Rep. Stephen Solarz (D., N.Y.) led the effort in the House and Sen. Frank Lautenberg (D., N.J.), in the Senate.

In a widely publicized matter, Sen. Daniel Inouye (D., Hawaii) acknowledged that he had made a mistake in judgment in sponsoring an $8-million appropriation for the Jewish education of North African refugees in France. The project was supported by a campaign contributor, but opposed by the State Department, the UN refugee agency, and the French government. Following public criticism (although most American Jewish groups remained silent), Inouye moved to rescind the appropriation.

In February the Supreme Court refused to hear an appeal from fundamentalist Christian families in Tennessee who objected to some of the textbooks used in their children's elementary school. The U.S. Court of Appeals ruling that the children must use the books taught in school (Mozert v. Hawkins County Public Schools) thus stood. Objections had been made against books ranging from *The Wizard of Oz* to *The Diary of Anne Frank*.

In March the New York State Court of Appeals dismissed an appeal challenging the constitutionality of an *eruv* in Belle Harbor, Queens. (An *eruv* is an unobtrusive boundary marker around an area that permits observant Jews within its limits to carry objects on the Sabbath.) In the initial ruling, Justice Aaron Goldstein held that the *eruv* was a valid accommodation of the religious needs of a minority.

In April a federal appeals court in New York overturned a lower court's ruling that would have required a school in North Babylon, Long Island, to accommodate the religious beliefs of David Smith, an Orthodox Jew, by not holding its high school graduation on a Saturday. The court decided that Smith would not be denied his diploma by reason of not attending the graduation ceremony and therefore "the burden being placed on David Smith's free exercise of his religious belief simply makes the practice of his religion more difficult than the practice of other religions."

In October the Supreme Court agreed to hear its first case involving the constitutionality of a Hanukkah menorah display. At issue was the display of an 18-foot-
high menorah standing alongside a Christmas tree, on the steps of Pittsburgh city hall. In this case (*ACLU et al. v. County of Allegheny and City of Pittsburgh*), the Chabad organization (Lubavitcher Hassidim), which owned the menorah, joined with the city and county in filing an appeal. They jointly argued that it was not only constitutionally permissible for the city to permit display of a menorah alongside a Christmas tree, but the city might be required to ensure such equal treatment of majority and minority religions. In the 1986 suit brought by the ACLU, the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Third Circuit ruled earlier in the year that the Constitution barred both the 18-foot-high menorah at city hall and a nativity scene placed on a staircase landing inside the Allegheny County courthouse near city hall, because the displays were evidence of unconstitutional establishment of religion.

The Supreme Court also agreed to hear the case of an Illinois man (*Frazee v. Department of Employment Security*) who claimed he was denied state unemployment benefits as a result of his refusal to work on Sunday, his Sabbath. The court was to decide whether an individual must demonstrate that he is a member of a formal religious group which requires strict Sabbath observance. In this case, the man belonged to no organized church or denomination.

Throughout the year, President Reagan continued to endorse the concept of a constitutional amendment permitting school prayer, but there was no serious activity in response.

Among the most difficult issues for the American Jewish community was the matter of church-state separation and child-care legislation. The organized Jewish community actively supported, in concept, major national legislation to provide funding for child care. Since church-based centers, as major providers of child care, would be among the chief recipients of federal funds, debate ensued about how to build in protections to ensure separation of church and state. Open controversy on this issue broke out in late August and September as House and Senate committees debated a proposed $2.5-billion child-care measure. As originally drafted, the bill not only barred church-based centers from engaging in "any sectarian purpose or activity" if they accepted federal funds but also required the removal of all religious symbols and the hiring of all staff members without regard to their religion. The U.S. Catholic Conference found these last two provisions unacceptable, and they were removed from the bill. As a result, other members of the coalition supporting the bill, including the National Education Association, the National PTA, a Baptist committee, and the American Jewish Committee, now also found the bill unacceptable.

_Earl Raab_  
_Douglas Kahn_
The United States, Israel, and the Middle East

The year 1988 was unusual in America's relations with Israel and the Middle East: It was characterized by frenetic diplomatic activity during a period when both the United States and Israel were conducting national elections. The pattern during the previous decade had been that elections, either in the United States or Israel, signaled a time for pause. Not so in 1988.

What was different this time? Principally, it was the new ingredient in the Arab-Israeli cauldron, the intifada. Begun in December 1987, the uprising in the Israeli-occupied territories of the West Bank and Gaza became the overarching event of 1988, its impact felt strongly in Israel, in Jordan, among the Palestinians, in the United States, and within the American Jewish community.

While there was a rising feeling among many of the concerned parties that, as a result of the uprising, the status quo was no longer viable, the implications of the new situation were seen differently by them. For some in Israel it implied the need for Israel to make a new peace offer involving major territorial concessions; for others it offered evidence that Jews and Arabs could not live together and that some movement of population was necessary. For King Hussein of Jordan, it meant a reassessment of his relationship to the Palestinians and the West Bank. For Yasir Arafat, it raised new questions about his relations with Israel, the residents of the territories, and the United States. And for the United States, there was a new urgency based not so much on the fundamental interests that had impelled American involvement in the 1970s—matters of oil supplies and the U.S. conflict with the Soviet Union—but on the perception that the intifada was both a heightening of the conflict and a moment of opportunity.

November elections in the United States and Israel brought new governments into office, but if they differed significantly from their predecessors, this was not immediately apparent. The intifada continued unabated. Only at the end of the year did the landscape change dramatically, by virtue of one event. This was the American decision to open a dialogue with the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO), following a series of statements by its head, Yasir Arafat, which were interpreted as meeting U.S. demands that the PLO accept Israel and renounce terrorism.

The Intifada and U.S.-Israeli Relations

As the year began it became clearer that the rioting in the territories that had started on December 9, 1987, was qualitatively different from previous waves of unrest there during the 21 years of Israeli occupation. Apart from being increasingly well organized and involving all segments of Palestinian society, the depth of feeling
expressed seemed to ensure that the violence would endure for some time. This was a new factor to be reckoned with in assessing possible resolutions of the Arab-Israeli, and more specifically the Palestinian-Israeli, conflict.

The uprising took on a predictable pattern. Demonstrators, sometimes in Gaza, sometimes in the West Bank, sometimes in both places, would confront Israeli soldiers daily, burning tires, setting up barricades, throwing rocks or firebombs. Israel reacted with a variety of measures—shooting at attackers, firing tear gas, arresting demonstrators. Boycotting Palestinian shopowners were forced to reopen their shops. Israel's military and police forces were reinforced. Alleged leaders of the uprising were arrested and deported. By the end of 1987 more than 20 Palestinians had been killed and 1,200 Palestinians detained. (By the end of 1988, some 300 Palestinians had been killed, according to the Israel Defense Forces count, and over 5,000 were in jail, including 1,500 under administrative detention.)

Israel's handling of the *intifada* was a source of continuing tension between Washington and Jerusalem during the year. While American policymakers took a much more balanced approach to events in the territories than did the rest of the world, there were continuing exchanges, if not confrontations, between the two governments concerning the situation. Overall, the United States tended to focus on specific Israeli abuses, rather than engage in broad condemnation. Even when reservations were expressed about Israel's use of violence, there was also recognition of Israel's right and responsibility to restore law and order. However, when Israel's defense minister spoke of a policy of "beatings" or of using plastic bullets to deter the demonstrators, American officials reacted with criticism.

American objections were strongest in regard to one issue: Israel's decision to expel those it considered leaders of the *intifada*. The U.S. administration repeatedly expressed opposition to these deportations; voted with the other Security Council members on one resolution speaking to this matter; and hinted that should Israel expand its deportation policy, the fundamental U.S.-Israeli relationship could be damaged.

Israel's response to U.S. reactions reflected the many dilemmas embodied in the relationship. Israelis felt under siege—from the Palestinians, from the media, from the international community—and looked to the United States for support. When it came, such as in the U.S. refusal to go along with many UN resolutions condemning Israel, or when the American president defended Israeli actions at a televised press conference, Israel welcomed it. On the other hand, when the United States once voted with the other Security Council members in condemning Israel, or when a strong State Department letter was conveyed to Israel about its behavior, Israeli officials expressed surprise and disappointment. Still, all in all, at year's end the relationship remained fundamentally intact, its true strength reflected in its ability to withstand the many emotional exchanges caused by Israel's anxieties and U.S. concerns.
AMERICAN RESPONSES TO ISRAELI ACTIONS

The administration had expressed unreserved opposition in late December 1987 to proposed Israeli expulsions of Palestinian activists. On January 3, Israel announced that it would expel nine Palestinians, five from the West Bank and four from Gaza, who were described as the “chief instigators” of the uprising and senior organizers of the PLO and Muslim fundamentalist groups in the territories. The nine Palestinians were allowed to appeal their expulsions to a military review board and, if that failed, to the Israeli Supreme Court. Within Israel there was virtually no criticism of the expulsion order.

On January 5, the United States joined with the rest of the UN Security Council in unanimously adopting a resolution calling on Israel to drop plans to deport the Palestinians. This was the first time the U.S. delegate had voted in favor of a Security Council resolution criticizing Israel’s handling of the uprising. Indeed, the last time the United States had voted in favor of a Security Council measure against Israel was in 1982, during Israel’s siege of Beirut. Before that, in 1981, the United States backed two such resolutions, one declaring Israel’s annexation of the Golan Heights “null and void,” the other criticizing Israel for bombing the Iraqi nuclear reactor. On the latest occasion, U.S. deputy representative Herbert S. Okun indicated that his government opposed deportation of Palestinians and believed that Israel had used unnecessarily harsh measures to restore order in the territories. The following day, Israel expressed “regret and disappointment” over the U.S. vote, and an Israeli Foreign Ministry official expressed surprise: “We thought they would just abstain.” The State Department immediately played down the significance of the vote, denying that it represented any deterioration in U.S.-Israeli relations. State Department spokesman Charles Redman described the relationship as “very strong” and said the U.S. action was in direct “continuity” with its long-standing opposition to the Israeli practice of deportations. Secretary of State George P. Shultz was reported to have reassured a delegation representing American Jewish organizations that the vote did not mark any shift in the relationship.

On January 13, Israel carried out the deportation of four of the Palestinians, after they had withdrawn their appeals on the grounds that they were denied access to evidence they contended had been arbitrarily ruled secret. An Israeli army helicopter flew the four from a prison in Nablus to an area in southern Lebanon, just north of Israel’s security zone on the border. The State Department said it was an action “we deeply regret.” The following day the Security Council adopted a second resolution, calling on Israel to cancel the deportations and to allow those already deported to return home. This time the United States abstained. American ambassador to the UN Vernon A. Walters indicated that while the administration of President Ronald Reagan remained opposed to the deportations, it would abstain, because repeatedly raising the issue did not help the situation. Reports indicated that following the prior vote the administration had decided to avoid associating itself with any further council criticism of Israel’s handling of the riots and would make its views known directly to Israel.
Defense Minister Yitzhak Rabin of Israel indicated in an interview on January 18 that the disturbances were the most difficult and widespread Israel had yet faced but vowed to bring the unrest to a "manageable" level. He described the protests as difficult because of "the number, frequency, and the simultaneous public disorders." Most significantly, he said that "whatever started it, it started without any instructions from outside. It took the PLO leadership two to four days to catch up."

Rabin said Israel would continue to use tough measures, such as curfews, curbs on the press, and large troop deployments, but he emphasized that restoring law and order was only an interim measure and that political negotiations among Israel, Jordan, and Palestinians from the territories would be necessary for a long-term solution.

The following day Rabin announced a new policy to deal with the uprising: "The first priority is to use force, might, beatings." A senior Israeli military source explained that the new policy was meant as a substitute for using live ammunition. The State Department's Redman indicated that the United States was "disturbed by the adoption of a policy . . . that calls for beatings as a means to restore or maintain order."

The reaction to Rabin's words and to stories of some 200 Palestinians being treated for broken bones or other serious injuries from beatings in the first few days after Rabin's announcement was one of widespread criticism. Israel's ambassador to Washington, Moshe Arad, appearing on Israeli television, said that the damage to Israel was most heavy and had "hurt Israel's image of being an enlightened country." Other criticism came from the American Jewish community, including Morris Abram of the Conference of Presidents of Major American Jewish Organizations and Alexander Schindler of the Union of American Hebrew Congregations.

Israel's police minister, Haim Bar Lev, said on January 24, following a cabinet meeting, "There is no beating. This is an unfortunate term." Despite the criticism, Rabin said on January 25 that he still believed the beatings policy in general was "the right one" and that it helped produce "a relative calm." He explained that the beatings were to be used only against rioters and only "while the violence is going on—not after, not before."

Although the outside world was harsh in its condemnation of Israel's conduct, there was little public debate on the subject in Israel. Pollster Hanoch Smith explained that "the riots have aroused hostility on the part of the Israeli population," and "when these eruptions take place, it presses people to take a harder stand." At the same time, Israeli officials increasingly talked of "the other war," the struggle over media coverage. Complaints were voiced about oversaturated coverage—there were between 600 and 700 foreign reporters, cameramen, soundmen, photographers, editors, and television producers in the country—and about a high degree of anti-Israel bias.

In February Deputy Chief of Staff Ehud Barak told foreign journalists that "unacceptable" behavior by Israeli soldiers, such as the attempt to bury alive four Palestinians, would be punished, but that the army had no choice but to use force since it was something "forced upon us by the situation." On Friday, February 19,
Attorney General Yosef Harish instructed Rabin to issue strict written guidelines prohibiting soldiers from using physical force except when dispersing riots or making arrests.

On the evening of February 24, in a televised press conference, President Reagan claimed that outside agitators were behind the uprising: "There's every evidence that these riots are not just spontaneous and homegrown." The president went on to say, "We have intimations that there have been certain people suspected of being terrorists, outsiders coming in not only with weapons but stirring up and encouraging the trouble in those areas." Reagan also declined to criticize Israel's response to the riots. The following day, Secretary Shultz, on the way to Israel, modified the president's remarks. He said that the "fundamental origins" of the violence were "essentially indigenous. There is an underlying problem consisting of a large number of people in occupation who haven't had the basic rights of governance."

In March the focus shifted to talk of Israel restricting press coverage on the West Bank. On March 4, the entire area was closed. Israel claimed this represented no change in policy, but was the decision of the commander in charge who expected disturbances in the area. On March 25, Charles Redman of the State Department expressed U.S. "regrets" concerning Israeli restrictions on the West Bank, including sealing off the area and limiting media access. He added, "We hope these restrictions will be lifted quickly and not resumed." At the same time, Assistant Secretary of State for Human Rights and Humanitarian Affairs Richard Schifter told a House of Representatives hearing, "In our view, Israel clearly has not only the right, but the obligation, to preserve or restore order in the occupied territories and to use appropriate levels of force to accomplish that end." Schifter indicated that the administration had protested "regularly and consistently" to "the highest level of the Israeli government" about abuses. But, he noted, "there is a sharp difference between a peaceful march in which slogans might be displayed or shouted and acts of violence. While we must insist on human rights grounds on respect for the right of peaceful assembly, this does not extend to assembly for the purpose of throwing rocks and firebombs."

MORE DEPORTATIONS

On April 11, Israel expelled eight more Palestinian activists; once again, the State Department condemned the expulsions. The expulsions were seen as designed to deflect public criticism that the army had been too soft on the uprising. The eight deportees were described as main organizers for the PLO and Islamic fundamentalist groups in the territories. Four days later the Security Council considered another resolution urging Israel to return deported Palestinians and calling for a Middle East peace settlement under UN auspices; 14 members voted in favor but the United States vetoed it. U.S. delegate Okun called the resolution "redundant and inappropriate" and said "its broad and sweeping condemnation of Israel contains not a scintilla of balance."
The next day, news came of the slaying in Tunis of the PLO’s military commander, Abu Jihad, which was attributed to Israel. (See below.) Palestinians in the territories poured into the streets following the first news broadcasts, shouting: “We will take revenge.” By day’s end, 14 Palestinians had been killed, the highest toll since the beginning of the uprising. The previous single-day high was 6 killed.

On April 19, Israel deported 8 more Palestinians, raising the total to 20. Again the U.S. government criticized the Israeli action, labeling it “counterproductive, in violation of the fourth Geneva Convention,” and sure to “inflame further passions.” Meanwhile, in an Israeli Supreme Court ruling on April 10, Israel’s deportation policy was upheld as not being in violation of the Geneva Conventions.

On May 6, Israeli prime minister Yitzhak Shamir ordered the expulsion of Mubarak Awad, a Palestinian-American activist who preached civil disobedience against Israeli rule in the territories. The United States strongly protested the decision, the State Department describing him as an “American citizen, born in Jerusalem, who espouses nonviolence and reconciliation between Palestinians and Israelis.” U.S. officials said that he “should not be forced to leave without due process of law.” On June 5, the Israeli Supreme Court upheld the government’s decision, not by addressing the government’s assertion that Awad was a mastermind of the uprising, but because his visa had expired and Israel had the right to refuse to give him a new one. Awad, who lived in the United States from 1970 to 1983, had argued that because he was born in Jerusalem before the State of Israel was founded, the government had no authority to deport him. Israel’s Foreign Ministry explained the government’s decision: “There is a widespread conviction that Mubarak Awad is a dedicated disciple of Mahatma Gandhi and Martin Luther King, Jr., and that he is committed to the philosophy, practice, and support of nonviolence. This belief is a misconception, based on lack of familiarity with his fundamental views.” Eight days later, Israel deported Awad; he was placed on a flight to New York. Charles Redman, speaking for the State Department, repeated the U.S. view that Awad was an authentic voice of political moderation who deserved Israeli encouragement, not deportation.

ONGOING DIFFERENCES OVER HUMAN RIGHTS

On June 14, another intifada-related issue arose between Washington and Jerusalem. On Sunday, June 12, Rabin had told the cabinet that civilians in the territories were free to shoot Palestinians seen with firebombs; firebomb attacks had increased in the weeks before. The State Department urged Israel to rescind the shoot-on-sight policy, in these words: “We believe that Israeli civilians should not be given the authority to maintain law and order. That requires proper training and is the province of the police authority.”

U.S. concern about human-rights abuses in the territories surfaced again the same month following a visit to the area by Schifter. He indicated on his return that there
had been "clear human rights violations" resulting from excessive use of force, and he said Israel should create a special court of appeals for the territories because there were "very limited opportunities" for Palestinians to appeal through the existing military court system there. He indicated that Israel and the United States had recently agreed on "a joint effort to monitor" conditions in the territories, through U.S. ambassador to Israel Thomas R. Pickering and Israel's chief administrator of the territories, Shmuel Goren.

Late in June, on the occasion of Defense Minister Rabin's visit to the United States, the Reagan administration told him that the "preservation of order in the territories must neither provide a justification for civilian lawlessness nor act as an excuse for avoiding political discourse with the Palestinians of the West Bank and Gaza." Rabin, when asked about U.S. criticism (he met with Reagan, Bush, Powell, and others), said: "I explained Israeli policy. I am not saying that everyone here is in agreement with our policy, but we are a free, independent state."

The expulsion policy continued. On July 8, Israel announced plans to expel 10 more Palestinians; 8 were deported on August 1. Four more were expelled on August 17, while orders had been issued for 25 others. The army saw this as an intensification of the crackdown on the intifada's leadership—the so-called popular committees—and Israel indicated that the measure was the most effective means of deterring violence. Since the start of the uprising, 33 Palestinians had been deported.

On August 23, Washington made a new strong protest to Israel, Acting Secretary of State John Whitehead reportedly telling Israeli representatives in Washington that the administration would not veto future attempts in the Security Council to censure Israel for expulsions. The following day the administration said it was "deeply concerned" over Israel's expanding use of expulsions and "shocked" by the decision to expel 25 more Palestinians. Israeli officials were quoted as saying that the U.S. protest was "very harsh," but they denied any crisis in relations over the issue. The Jerusalem Post on August 24 published a text of a U.S. protest in which the administration told Israel that expelling Palestinians "has reached the point that an increasing number of Americans are wondering what Israel is doing." The United States further warned Israel that, if the expulsions continued, "damage to our bilateral relations will occur," and the U.S. government would oppose the policy "in the UN and elsewhere."

U.S. criticism of Israel was voiced again on September 6, by Assistant Secretary of State for Near Eastern Affairs Richard Murphy, who told the biennial convention of B'nai B'rith International that "Israel's attempts to end the Palestinian uprising have been ineffective, and at times counterproductive. Force is not the answer. Intimidation is not the answer. Deportation of Palestinians is not the answer."

In its continuing efforts to put down the uprising, Israel announced in September a decision to use plastic bullets, which could be fired at longer range and with greater accuracy than rubber bullets, against Palestinian rioters. The State Department said on September 28 it saw "no justification" for such a decision and was "disturbed" by the recent rise in Palestinian casualties. Rabin, in explaining the use of plastic
bullets, said “our aim is to hit those involved” in demonstrations “but not to kill them.” His statement was seen as a desire to demonstrate toughness in Israel’s election campaign.

On December 8, the beginning of the second year of the uprising, Palestinian leaders acknowledged that the revolt had grown stagnant, that a certain inertia had set in, partly because various factions had extreme differences of view on how to proceed. Some urged more violence, others less. Still others wanted a more political approach. And the feeling was articulated by its leaders that the uprising had lost its ability to achieve its principal aim, exciting public opinion in the territories and abroad.

The Peace Process

In 1988 Secretary of State George Shultz conducted himself in a significantly different manner in regard to the Middle East than he had previously. Up to that time he had consistently expressed an unwillingness to take risks before the parties themselves were ready to do so. In 1988, pushed by the intifada and the criticism, whether justified or not, that U.S. inaction had been harmful, Shultz repeatedly put himself on the line—against what many saw as impossible odds. He paid four visits to the Middle East; at one point he even set a deadline for the parties to respond to his initiative; and he was more blunt about his differences with Yitzhak Shamir than he had ever been. Clearly, as his own remarks indicated, the stepped-up activity reflected not only the pressure of the intifada but the fact that his own days in office were winding down.

The year began with a flurry of activity reflecting the new sense of urgency generated by the intifada. Israel’s foreign minister, Shimon Peres, and Jordan’s prime minister, Zaid al-Rifai, in separate interviews, called for the convening of an international peace conference. Rifai, speaking to the BBC, asserted that the violence in the territories offered “another proof of the necessity of keeping the peace process alive. As long as there is no chance of a settlement in sight on the West Bank and Gaza, this is only the beginning.” In line with King Hussein’s long-standing policy, the Jordanian called for a conference attended by all parties to the conflict, as well as the five permanent members of the Security Council, to be held under UN auspices. Peres, too, continued to speak in behalf of a conference, in opposition to Prime Minister Shamir, but the conference he envisioned had clear parameters not spelled out by the Jordanian. Speaking on ABC’s “This Week,” on January 3, Peres said: “I would not mind seeing the Russians participate in the conference if the conference does not have any authority to impose a solution or to intervene in the negotiations.”

Meanwhile, Hosni Mubarak, president of Egypt, told the Kuwaiti newspaper Al-Anba, on January 6, “I fail to understand why we have turned Camp David into ... a problem.” He noted that the autonomy agreement “provides the general framework for solving the Palestinian problem in all its aspects ... it is a method
for a solution." Mubarak went on to say, "If we would have continued with the talks on the second framework [the autonomy proposal], we would have been in a better situation. . . ." Several days later, Shamir referred with satisfaction to Mubarak's comments about Camp David and indicated that he would turn to Mubarak and tell him, "You yourself said that you were sorry that the negotiations were broken off. So let's resume them." In the same interview, in what was read as possibly a new direction in Likud thinking, Shamir said that he did "not object to the idea" of bilateral talks with the inhabitants of the territories on the implementation of the autonomy proposals of Camp David, if Egypt and Jordan refused to participate. Long-time Likud policy pointed to talks with Palestinians of the territories only in the context of talks with Egypt and Jordan.

Soon calls began to be heard for movement toward an international peace conference. The conventional wisdom that nothing could be done to launch the peace process until after the 1988 elections in the United States and Israel was held to be no longer valid because of the uprising. The Jerusalem Post reported that UN officials had decided to launch a new diplomatic initiative to reinvigorate the peace process and to fill the void created by U.S. inactivity. It was reported in the Arab press on January 14 that Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher of Great Britain and Claude Cheysson, European Community commissioner, had joined the call for an international conference. In a January 19 letter to UN Secretary-General Javier Pérez de Cuéllar, Foreign Minister Eduard Shevardnadze of the Soviet Union proposed that the Security Council discuss convening an international conference.

The Reagan administration entered into internal deliberations on whether to take a more active and visible role in pursuing peace efforts. A State Department official told the New York Times on January 21 that the "violence, so intense and so prolonged as it has been confirms that the status quo is not sustainable and there is an even more urgent need to identify the problems and get the peace process going." But, he added, "the more we look at it, the more we realize that the fundamental elements that made it difficult to move over recent years have not changed, so I think progress is unlikely." On the subject of sending an envoy to Israel, which Labor party representatives had recommended, there was little interest in Washington: "There's the old idea that you can send an envoy out and beat up on all sides until they come around. Frankly, that doesn't sound very appealing to the Administration." American officials pointed out that neither Shamir nor King Hussein had called for increased American activity. They noted as well that Israeli elections might work against Israeli flexibility because Shamir would not want to be outflanked on the right by Ariel Sharon and others.

On January 21, in an interview with the Washington Post, Mubarak rejected Shamir's call for a renewal of Camp David, saying that events had overtaken the 1979 accord. Instead, he said, he would launch a peace initiative urging the Palestinians to stop all acts of violence against Israelis in return for agreement by Israel to halt new Jewish settlements in the territories, to move toward an international peace conference, and to "respect and strictly observe the political rights and
freedoms of the inhabitants of the West Bank and Gaza" over the next six months. Mubarak emphasized that he saw an international conference as a ceremonial prelude to direct negotiations: "If the Israelis want direct negotiations, I'm telling them, an international conference will start and the negotiations will be bilateral." He said there would be no attempt to impose any solution and he offered no specific details on how the problem of Palestinian representation at such a conference would be resolved.

The following day, Pérez de Cuéllar called on the Security Council to begin an urgent effort to end the Arab-Israeli conflict, saying a political solution was the only way to ensure the safety of Palestinians in the occupied West Bank.

The pressure on the Reagan administration to do something continued. At a briefing on Friday, January 22, White House press secretary Marlin Fitzwater defended the administration's Middle East record against the charge that it was not aggressive enough. "From day one," Fitzwater said, the administration had "a pretty high profile in the area." He cited the visits to the region by Assistant Secretary of State for Near Eastern Affairs Richard Murphy, Secretary of State George Shultz, and Vice-President George Bush. "On all of these occasions we expressed U.S. interest in being helpful in any way possible. It's just that nothing has materialized. If there is a new opening here, we certainly will take it, and we'll be an active participant in the process."

On January 23, the Arab League's representative in the United States and senior diplomats from Jordan, Tunisia, and Kuwait met with Richard Murphy in Washington and urged the administration to endorse a broad international peace conference that would have substantive authority to determine the outlines of a settlement of the Arab-Israeli conflict. Late in January, Mubarak arrived in Washington for three days of talks. After a meeting at the White House, President Reagan said that the Palestinian problem should not be allowed to "fester" any longer and called for "practical, not merely rhetorical, steps" to restart the stalemated peace process. Reports indicated that U.S. and Egyptian officials were discussing new ways to begin negotiations on local autonomy for the West Bank and Gaza as a step toward a peace settlement.

On January 30, without any prior announcement, special envoy Philip C. Habib met with King Hussein in Amman. State Department officials said Habib's objective was to bring Hussein into the process. Apparently Shultz had concluded that the dispute over an international conference was so intractable and the demand for positive movement so intense that Washington had to explore transitional arrangements. These would seek to improve the living conditions and increase self-government for Palestinians in the territories as well as to look at the territories' final status at the end of an interim period—in other words, to focus on substance as well as procedure. King Hussein reacted negatively, calling the U.S. proposal "just a variation of Camp David."
SHULTZ INITIATIVE

Within days, however, this approach was being labeled a new U.S. initiative, one described by an administration official as aimed at providing "some kind of interim arrangement that would give the Palestinians a stake in their future." The United States had outlined the plan to Israeli representatives Eli Rubinstein of Likud and Nimrod Novik of Labor, and to President Mubarak. At the same time, the United States vetoed a Security Council resolution that would have formalized a UN role in negotiating a settlement.

The Shultz plan called for Israel and Jordan, working through a shuttling U.S. mediator, to agree by September on limited Palestinian self-rule in the territories, with direct negotiations on the final status to follow in December. The plan, which Shultz called "a blend of ideas," was based on Camp David but greatly accelerated the timetable of a five-year interim autonomy period. The quickened pace was intended as an inducement to King Hussein to take part in negotiations.

On a trip to Bonn (February 9), Hussein said he welcomed the new U.S. engagement but added that any attempt to arrive at "piecemeal" solutions short of eventual Israeli withdrawal from the occupied areas was doomed to failure. On the same day, Shamir sharply criticized the idea of accelerating the Camp David plan for autonomy. Foreign Minister Peres, however, took a different tack: "Why again tell Washington 'nyet'? Even if this is a one-in-a-hundred chance, it is worth investigating." Assistant Secretary Murphy, who met with Shamir, Peres, Hussein, Syrian president Hafez al-Assad, Mubarak, and King Fahd of Saudi Arabia during a special mission to the region, told reporters on February 10 that he had found "a sense of eagerness and enthusiasm in each place that I visited."

Shamir, however, demurred from another aspect of the Shultz plan. Shultz had referred to the new initiative as being based on the "territory for peace" formula. Ehud Olmert, visiting Washington in mid-February as an envoy for Shamir, told the administration that this could not be a basis for talks.

To follow up on the U.S. initiative, Secretary Shultz decided to visit the region himself, following a trip to Europe. In a news conference in Brussels two days before his visit, Shultz said, "It's going to be tough." But, he added: "I believe that if there are chances, even if the chances are small, it's worthwhile trying. You can't be too afraid of failing. Suppose I go and I don't succeed? What am I saving myself for? So we'll try, and people want to have the United States come, and maybe we'll get somewhere."

Arriving in Jerusalem on February 25, Shultz called on Israel to make "decisions of historic proportions" to help change the status quo. Warning that the status quo was "not a stable option for any of the parties," he said he was bringing "a workable proposal" that addressed both Israel's security concerns and the Palestinians' need for "legitimate rights." Speaking with reporters on the plane before arrival, he warned that the plan would not work if each party simply picked one part it liked and discarded the others. Other remarks were seen as directed to Prime Minister Shamir. Shultz indicated that it was essential to get into discussion of final-status
issues promptly and said the "fundamental touchstone here is Resolution 242." He noted that having a large number of people under occupation for a long time was "just inherently not a stable situation."

On February 26, Shamir and Shultz met and, not surprisingly, reports indicated that Shamir resisted two elements of the plan—an international conference as a framework for negotiations and giving up land for peace. Shultz was also planning to meet with local Palestinian representatives on the same day at the American Colony Hotel in East Jerusalem, but under instructions from the PLO, none of the Palestinians showed up. In a statement, Shultz said that "Palestinian participation is essential to success in the peace process."

The following day, Shultz flew to Amman and Damascus, where both governments resisted Shultz’s plan as offering only a partial solution. Following a two-and-a-half-hour meeting in Amman, there was little evidence of any fundamental progress. Jordan’s foreign minister, Taher al-Masri, repeated past Jordanian positions, namely, that "the only way to arrive at a peaceful settlement is through the convening of an international conference," including participation of the PLO, and the basis for a settlement "must be withdrawal of Israel from the occupied territories." Foreign Minister Farouk al-Sharaa of Syria made similar remarks after his meeting with Shultz, adding that "partial and unilateral solutions would only complicate the situation rather than solving it." The visit of Shultz to Damascus was significant in that it was his first since 1983, when he tried in vain to persuade President Assad to accept a U.S.-negotiated security agreement between Israel and Lebanon. When a reporter on his plane leaving Damascus asked whether he had made progress, Shultz laughed and said, "I’m overwhelmed by your sense of humor." He added that the "idea of negotiations of this kind is to get people to be realistic. We are not there yet."

The secretary had better luck in Cairo, where his plan received Egyptian endorsement. With Egyptian foreign minister Esmat Abdel Meguid standing by his side and indicating agreement, Shultz said, after three hours of talks with President Mubarak, that "we both feel we have a package and it’s promising. Whether anybody else will think it’s promising is a question." On February 29, Syrian foreign minister al-Sharaa called Shultz’s proposal a "fig leaf" to keep Palestinians "under Israeli hegemony." Like the others, however, in not wanting to appear rejectionist, he expressed a desire for further U.S. contact on the matter.

The issue of Palestinian representation became a more serious stumbling block than it had been previously when Shultz paid a second visit to Jordan on February 29. Jordanian officials suggested they would support the PLO’s demand for a separate seat at any peace conference. Previously, in order to get around the U.S. and Israeli ban on dealing with the PLO, the United States and Jordan had talked of a joint delegation made up of Jordanians and Palestinians approved by the PLO. The PLO was said to have told Jordan it was no longer interested in a joint delegation, reflecting the feeling that its diplomatic hand had been strengthened by the continuing uprising.

Leaving Israel for Europe on March 1, Shultz could only say that no one had
rejected the plan outright: "No one has signed our proposals, but everybody wants us to keep working. So we'll keep working." In London, he met with King Hussein. The following day in Brussels, President Reagan, attending a meeting of NATO, announced that Shultz would return to the region to devote two more days to his peace mission: "It's clear that all countries in the region believe it is useful for the United States to remain engaged in this process. We will spare no effort in our search for a comprehensive settlement." Describing his objectives, Shultz said, "In a way, the more important negotiations go on within each constituency. As you operate on the tip of the iceberg, which is what I do, what you are doing is you are saying to people, 'You better go back and try to condition your constituency along certain lines or try something out on them and so on.'"

Returning to the region on March 4, Secretary Shultz paid short visits to Jerusalem, Damascus, and Cairo, where he met Shamir, Peres, Assad, and Mubarak. In each place he delivered letters spelling out the American peace plan and requested all parties to make their views known to him "in the next week and a half or so." He indicated that, at the very latest, he wanted their answers before he met with Shamir in Washington on March 16. Shultz discussed with reporters several aspects of the process. He said that he continued to favor a joint Jordanian-Palestinian delegation; indicated that Hussein "continues to believe that's the way to go," but conceded it would not be easy to resolve the issue if the PLO continued to oppose the joint delegation. He said his "time line" for the peace plan was "very ambitious" and that the next administration might be responsible for implementing part of the plan. But he insisted that giving the parties a deadline was a good way "to get people to make up their minds."

On Shultz's return to Washington on March 5, more details of his proposal appeared in the press. Under the plan, according to State Department officials, negotiations would begin May 1 on an interim phase of self-administration for Palestinians living in the territories, to include election of an administrative council by the Palestinians. An international conference, involving Israel, Syria, Egypt, a Jordanian-Palestinian delegation, and the five permanent members of the Security Council, would convene two to four weeks before these talks. The conference would have a continuing role but could not veto or impose a settlement. The negotiations on self-administration would last six months. By December, talks would begin between Israel and a Jordanian-Palestinian delegation on the final status of the territories; the interim phase would not go into effect until those talks were under way. The final talks would last one year, and whatever solution they produced would take effect three years after the interim phase began.

Shultz returned to Washington to find a letter, written to him March 3, from 30 U.S. senators, including some of Israel's staunchest supporters, criticizing Shamir, suggesting he could be obstructing efforts for peace. Although the letter also criticized Arab states—excluding Egypt—for not committing themselves to guarantee recognition and peace for Israel, the fact that it criticized Shamir's position and sided with Peres was unprecedented. Declaring support for Shultz's recent peace
efforts, in particular the concept of "land for peace," the senators said they were "dismayed to read in the New York Times of February 26 that Prime Minister Shamir had said that 'this expression of territory for peace is not accepted by me.'"
The letter also said that "peace negotiations have little chance of success if the Israeli Government's position rules out territorial compromise." The letter was circulated by Senators Carl Levin (D., Mich.) and Rudy Boschwitz (R., Minn.). Other signers included Edward Kennedy (D., Mass.), Alan Cranston (D., Calif.), Daniel Patrick Moynihan (D., N.Y.), Howard Metzenbaum (D., Ohio), and Frank Lautenberg (D., N.J.). On March 7, White House spokesman Marlin Fitzwater said that the administration "welcomed" the letter.

PRIME MINISTER SHAMIR'S U.S. VISIT

In advance of Shamir's visit, Minister Without Portfolio Moshe Arens met with Shultz in Washington, conveying the Israeli prime minister's opposition to the proposal for an international conference because he feared it would have too much authority and result in "extreme positions." With criticism of Shamir mounting on the eve of his visit, Shultz met with members of the House, urging them not to pressure Israel publicly to accept the U.S. plan. He indicated that Israel was a friend and ally and that the administration would not push her into a corner. The impression was left that Shultz would seek to convince Shamir to accept the plan through persuasion and the assurance that the United States would not desert Israel, rather than through coercion. Shamir himself responded to the 30 senators on March 9 in identical letters to Boschwitz and Levin. He wrote, "We were astonished by the words of criticism you leveled at us" and said that Israel had complied and remained committed to the Camp David accords.

Shultz continued to press forward in his effort to generate an atmosphere for a breakthrough. At a hearing of the House appropriations subcommittee on foreign operations on March 10, he urged Israel to rethink its concept of defense and to address the "ticking demographic time bomb." Clearly, this was part of Shultz's strategy of friendly but firm appeals designed to maneuver Shamir into making the necessary compromises to get negotiations under way.

On March 11, Shamir struck back. In an interview with Ha'aretz in which he used unusually strong language, he said, "The only word in the Shultz plan I accept is his signature." The document "does not serve the cause of peace or advance it even by one centimeter," he asserted. He told the Jerusalem Post that these proposals "harbor grave dangers for the future of Israel. It obligates me to resist them with all my power. And my power to resist is very great." Shamir reiterated his objection to "the very convening of an international conference" and said he would seek changes in the American position. Of Shultz's proposals he said, "The whole thing is an attempt to satisfy the Arabs. It has been done in a way that eliminates every element favorable to Israel while emphasizing and making permanent all that is comfortable to the Arabs."
Yitzhak Shamir arrived in Washington on March 14 for four days of talks. Tension was high, because of the Shultz-Shamir differences, as well as the criticism of Shamir from the senators and some in the American Jewish community. By the end of his stay, the perception was that Shamir had quieted the waters, at least for the time being, mainly because the U.S. administration was unwilling to push him into a corner where he would have no choice but to reject the plan. As it was, Shamir managed to avoid outright rejection, while expressing his own strong objections. Shamir and Shultz met on March 14 and 15, and on March 16, Shamir and Reagan met for two hours. The president indicated after his session that the United States "will not slice this initiative apart and will not abandon it." With Shamir standing by his side, Reagan said: "Those who will say ‘no’ to this plan—and the Prime Minister has not used this word—need not answer to the United States. They’ll need to answer to their people why they turned down a realistic and sensible plan to achieve negotiations."

Shamir, meanwhile, continued to focus his opposition on the international conference proposed by Shultz. "We are interested, first of all, to negotiate directly with all the parties concerned. We don’t see any positive role for an international conference." At the same time it was reported that Shamir offered an alternative approach involving the construction of 41,000 apartments in Gaza and the West Bank for 280,000 Palestinians living in refugee camps, the funding to come from the international community; a peace treaty and diplomatic relations with Jordan at the beginning—not the end—of negotiations on the final status of the territories; and support for the Camp David accords.

In addition to his meetings in Washington, Shamir spent much time with Jewish groups to shore up his perceived weaknesses there. On March 14, he told the UJA Young Leadership Conference that the *intifada* was aimed not just against the occupation but "against the existence of the State of Israel."

Shortly after Shamir ended his visit, Shultz, appearing before the Senate Budget Committee, gave a lengthy rebuttal to Shamir’s contention that an international conference would be stacked against Israel’s interests: "The United States opposes, and will not participate in, an international conference designed to replace bilateral negotiations. . . . The conference will be specifically enjoined from imposing solutions or vetoing what had been agreed bilaterally." Shultz also echoed the president’s statement to Shamir that the administration would not abandon its plan: "The strength of the American approach is its integrity; no individual aspect of it can be extracted, finessed or ignored without sacrificing its balance. The United States will not permit any aspect of its proposal to be eroded or compromised."

When asked in an interview with Reuters whether the initiative was on the brink of failure, Shultz said, "No . . . because it’s the only game in town." Reflecting the effort to remain intensively engaged, the administration sent Philip Habib to the region to talk with leaders in Jordan, Egypt, Saudi Arabia, and Morocco. On Habib’s return several days later, the State Department announced that Shultz would return to the region on April 3 in a new attempt to gain acceptance for his
plan. When asked by reporters why Shultz was going back, spokesman Charles Redman said: "No one has said no. Our proposal is still on the table. People are actively and seriously considering it."

SHULTZ'S THIRD AND FOURTH TRIPS

Stopping off in Rome on the way to the Middle East, Secretary Shultz indicated on April 2 that he expected his talks to produce "a little progress—measured in small increments." In talking with reporters, he said that the United States "would keep working for peace," but conceded that he had given up hope of getting the quick "yes" or "no" answers to the plan that he had said he would insist on when he began his personal involvement in the new peace effort.

This time the Shultz shuttle lasted five days, including visits to Israel, Jordan, Syria, Egypt, and Saudi Arabia, but at its end had little to show for the effort. In Israel, Peres continued to back the plan, while Shamir again avoided rejecting the plan outright though reiterating his specific criticisms. In Jerusalem, Shultz pointedly emphasized that his plan was based on "land for peace." In Amman, where he lauded Hussein's "constructive" approach to peace, it was significant that Jordanian TV refused to air an interview with Shultz. Officials were reportedly offended by the American's strong defense of Israeli security needs, his rejection of a PLO role, and his warning to Jordan that it could not expect to get back all the territories.

Despite the lack of progress, Shultz would not give up. On his return to Washington he said that he wanted to "leave something constructive for my successors" and promised that he would be back again during the remaining months of the Reagan administration. When asked why he was willing to commit so much time to this seemingly intractable problem, he responded: "What am I saving myself for?"

On May 9, the State Department announced that Shultz would return to the region in June. In mid-May, Peres visited Washington, and President Reagan lavished praise on the foreign minister for supporting American peace efforts. On the same day, May 17, the White House issued a statement praising Peres for displaying a "positive attitude toward peace," while criticizing "those leaders who are negative, consistently reject new ideas and fail to exploit realistic opportunities to bring about negotiations."

Earlier, Secretary Shultz, at a luncheon for Peres, agreed with him that the status quo "is not only unsatisfactory," but would not last: "As you once told me, the status quo now is like a pregnant woman. It is not an option; something is going to change. The question is whether it is going to change for better or worse, whether it is going to change in response to conscious efforts to work at it, or whether it will simply be allowed to take whatever course it takes." Peres said that "without the U.S. initiative" and without America's strong support for Israel, "the Middle East today might already be torn to pieces."

During this period, there was a great deal of discussion about how a changing
Soviet Union under Mikhail Gorbachev would relate to the Middle East. President Reagan, in an interview with European journalists at the White House in late May, shortly before his departure for a summit meeting in Moscow, insisted that the USSR would have to restore formal diplomatic relations with Israel before it could participate in an international peace conference. On June 1, following the Reagan-Gorbachev meetings in Moscow, Gorbachev reiterated his support for an international conference, while calling for recognition of Israel's "right to security" as well as the Palestinians' right to "self-determination." In reviewing the summit, American officials indicated satisfaction over discussions concerning the Middle East, citing greater Soviet flexibility on the nature of an international conference and how the Palestinians would be represented.

Between June 3 and June 7, Shultz tried personal diplomacy one more time. His refrain was familiar. In Israel, he warned that the occupation was "a dead-end street" that only increased the threat of war. In Cairo, he called on both sides to "lay aside prejudices, hatred and overblown dreams in favor of a negotiated settlement." And while there was no reported progress, in public remarks Shultz continued to take heart that none had rejected his overtures out of hand.

The last day of his visit to the region also saw the opening of an emergency Arab summit meeting in Algiers. Labeled the *intifada* summit, it was a marked contrast in focus to the last summit in November 1987 in Amman, where Iran was the central issue. A resolution vowed "all possible support by all possible means" to the uprising, but there was no public pledge of the financial aid sought by the PLO. And although the final communiqué called for a Palestinian state and affirmed the PLO as the sole representative of the Palestinians, Arab leaders did not accede to Arafat's request to disavow the U.S. peace plan, which neither recognized the PLO nor envisioned an independent state.

As Shultz returned from his fourth trip to the region since the uprising began, observers in Washington speculated that he was unlikely to make any more.

**Hussein's Surprise Move**

If the *intifada* was the spur for increased peace efforts, it became clear on July 31 that it also had forced King Hussein of Jordan to reconsider his own involvement. On that day, in a television address to his nation, the king announced that his government would cut its legal and administrative ties to the Israeli-occupied West Bank, thereby surrendering its claims to the territory to the PLO. The move seemed to surprise all the interested parties, though there had been forewarnings just a few days earlier. On July 28, Jordan canceled a $1.3-billion economic development plan for the West Bank; on July 30, the king dissolved the lower house of Jordan's Parliament, half of whose 60 members represented West Bank districts.

In his address, Hussein said he recognized the right of the PLO "to secede from us in an independent Palestinian state," which would be "established on the occu-
pied Palestinian land after its liberation.” Focusing on Jordan’s own independence, and evidently trying to warn away any who hoped to establish the independent Palestinian state on the East Bank, Hussein stressed that “Jordan is not Palestine” and that “there should be a separation of the West Bank from the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan.” The address provoked much analysis. Some saw it as merely a tactic, the king gambling that the West Bankers would turn to him once they realized that the PLO could not fill the void left by Jordan’s disengagement. In this view, the announcement was not an irreversible step. However, regardless of Hussein’s intent, the action was undeniably a blow to the peace efforts of both George Shultz and Shimon Peres, both of which sought to deal with the Palestinian problem by negotiating with Jordan.

In August, when it was already evident that the peace process was slowing down, Shultz sent Assistant Secretary Murphy to the region, rather than going himself. After Murphy met in Israel on August 7 with Shamir and Peres, an Israeli Foreign Ministry official said, “It’s clear to the United States and to Israel that nothing will happen in the peace process until after November,” the time for elections in both countries. Murphy himself, however, denied that the process was in a “holding pattern.” The following day, Murphy called on Israeli leaders to increase their contacts with “moderate Palestinians.” His remarks were seen as a reaction to King Hussein’s drastic move, with its implication that Israel had no choice but to negotiate the future of the territories with the Palestinians.

U.S. and Israeli Elections

As the fall advanced, and elections in the two countries drew closer, politics intruded into everything. Thus, when it became known that President Reagan had invited the foreign ministers of Israel and Egypt to meet with him in New York on September 26, supporters of Yitzhak Shamir charged that Washington was trying to boost the election chances of Shimon Peres, whose views on a settlement were far closer to those of Ronald Reagan and George Shultz. U.S. sources described the meetings as merely intending to discuss the next moves, in light of Hussein’s decision to step back.

On September 16, in a speech at a conference sponsored by the Washington Institute for Near East Policy, Shultz laid out his views on the process and substance of future peace efforts. He warned, “Peace cannot be achieved through creation of an independent Palestinian state or through permanent Israeli control or annexation of the West Bank” and asserted that the status of the territories “cannot be determined by unilateral acts of both sides, but only through a process of negotiations.” He was blunt in telling the Arabs that they could not now get what they had turned down in the 1940s, namely, the partition of Palestine into Jewish and Arab states, nor for security reasons could they expect Israel to surrender all the territory captured in the 1967 war. On the other hand, he called on Israel, as he had done in the past, to withdraw from some of the occupied land. Israel “must find a way
to respond to expressions of Palestinian grievances," he maintained. "It cannot
claim there is no one to talk to while suppressing political expression and arresting
or deporting those who speak out—even those who speak in moderate terms."

On September 26, Reagan, Shultz, Peres, and Egyptian foreign minister Abdel
Meguid met in New York. Not surprisingly, there was no breakthrough, and some
indeed saw the meeting as an effort by the United States and Egypt to boost Peres’s
chances in the coming election.

The month of October was a time of waiting. The sensitivities relating to Israel’s
approaching election were highlighted when King Hussein appeared on the ABC
News “Nightline” program, on October 20, reportedly as a result of arrangements
by a Peres political adviser, and said that should Shamir win, “the whole area is
threatened, and I cannot begin to imagine what the end results will be.” Shamir
issued a statement the next day expressing “regret and dismay” over Hussein’s
appearance and saying Labor’s involvement was “a sign of a lack of national pride.”
Officials of Labor claimed that the Hussein comments would demonstrate to unde-
cided Israeli voters that there was a realistic basis for Peres’s proposal that Israel
and a joint Jordanian-Palestinian delegation begin negotiations under the auspices
of an international conference.

The Israeli election on November 1 proved inconclusive, with the Likud bloc
winning 40 seats and Labor, 39. However, the ballot was immediately seen as a
defeat for Labor, because of the increased number of seats won by the religious
parties, who were viewed as most likely to join a Likud coalition. The official
Washington response was that the United States would “work closely with whatever
government is formed” in Israel, noting that relations were based on “the mutual
interests of our two countries, not on the leadership.”

While Israeli politicians went through the long, tortuous process of forming a new
government, the U.S. elections on November 8 produced a clear-cut winner, George
Bush. By early December there were reports of discussions by key Bush advisers
on the new administration’s Middle East focus come January 1989. Dennis Ross,
the director of national security affairs for Bush’s transition team, a man expected
to have an important role in the new administration’s foreign-policy decision mak-
ing, indicated the need for swift U.S. diplomacy to promote the peace process.

On December 19, following a month and a half of intense wrangling, a coalition
government was agreed upon in Israel. It would have Shamir remaining as prime
minister, Rabin at Defense, Moshe Arens at the Foreign Ministry, and Peres head-
ing the Ministry of Finance.

The month of December was chiefly notable, however, for a development that had
the potential to change fundamental conditions that had long been taken for granted
in the Arab-Israeli conflict. This was the decision by the United States, on December
14, to begin a dialogue with the Palestine Liberation Organization.
U.S.-PLO Relations

When the intifada began, it was unclear what its impact would be on the PLO's standing. On the one hand, the fact that it thrust the Palestinian issue to the fore seemed to work to the PLO's advantage. On the other hand, since the uprising was a phenomenon overwhelmingly generated by the residents of the territories themselves and not by the leadership of the PLO residing elsewhere, the possibility existed that the PLO would lose influence in the territories to indigenous forces.

At the beginning of 1988 not much had changed in the U.S. attitude toward the PLO since the day in 1975 when Henry Kissinger reached agreement with Israel that the United States would not deal with the PLO until it recognized Israel and renounced terrorism. Over the years there had been many reports of secret American-PLO talks—all denied; many reports that the PLO itself was going to move—never realized; and reports that the United States might abandon its commitment—which never occurred.

Early signs were that 1988 would be no different. In Baghdad, on January 14, Arafat said that before he would recognize Israel's right to exist, Israel and the United States had to accept PLO participation in an international conference and UN resolutions supporting Palestinian rights to an independent homeland. An aide to Shamir said, "There is nothing new in what Arafat proposes." There was no U.S. response.

When the PLO tried to arrange for a ship to carry back to Israel Palestinians deported since the beginning of the uprising—a reenactment of the 1947 sailing of the Exodus with Jewish refugees—the publicity effort collapsed when the ship was sabotaged in a Cypriot port. This took place on February 15, one day after three senior PLO military officers were killed by a bomb in Cyprus. Although the perpetrators of neither act were identified, Arafat not only blamed Israel but threatened to revoke a PLO declaration made in Cairo in 1985, committing the organization to limit guerrilla attacks to Israel and the occupied territories. Several days later, however, the PLO seemed to back off this threat as Abu Iyad, the head of the PLO's counterintelligence unit, told reporters in Tunis, "We will answer inside the occupied territories and we will not be dragged outside." The shift was seen as a response to an Egyptian warning to the PLO to "err on the side of caution" in public statements relating to the current crisis.

It became increasingly clear that the intifada had strengthened the PLO vis-à-vis Jordan as the focal point of West Bank activity. Thus, when Shultz visited the region on his first trip in February, his invitation to meet with Palestinians met with rejection on orders from the PLO. Late in March the State Department announced that Shultz would meet with Edward Said and Ibrahim Abu Lughod, professors and U.S. citizens who were members of the Palestine National Council (PNC), the PLO's unofficial government in exile. Shamir told U.S. ambassador to Israel Thomas Pickering that he viewed such a meeting "with grave and serious concern because the United States guaranteed in 1975 it would not meet PLO members..."
barring certain conditions which have not been met.” The U.S. position, not accepted by Israel, was that these individuals were not technically members of the PLO and did not fall under the 1975 agreement. According to the State Department, the Shultz decision signified “no change in U.S. policy on negotiating with or recognizing the PLO. That policy remains as it has been since 1975.” After the disputed meeting, held on Saturday, March 26, State characterized it as “a routine consultation with prominent Palestinians.”

In April Soviet leader Gorbachev urged Arafat to grant formal recognition of Israel’s right to exist as an important step toward peace. At a meeting of the two in Moscow, Gorbachev said the Palestinians had broad support for “self-determination,” but added that “in the same way, recognition of the state of Israel, consideration of its security interests... is a necessary element for the establishment of peace.”

On April 16, Abu Jihad (Khalil al-Wazir), the PLO’s senior military figure, was gunned down at his home in Tunis. The PLO accused Israel of the killing; Israel withheld formal comment. In March Israeli officials had accused Abu Jihad of organizing the hijacking of a bus in Israel which resulted in the deaths of three Israelis. Within days of Abu Jihad’s death there were reports based on comments by Israelis with access to government officials that Israel had decided to kill him because they believed he was directing the uprising in the territories. The government, however, remained silent.

The situation took a surprising turn in June, when an aide to Arafat issued a statement calling for negotiations with Israel and a referendum in the territories. The aide, Bassam Abu Sharif, circulated his statement, which was also sent to the State Department, at the Arab summit conference in Algiers June 7–9. The document was signed by Abu Sharif, but the Beirut daily As Safir quoted him as saying in an interview that the document had been drawn up and approved by Arafat. In the statement, Abu Sharif maintained that the time had come to invest the gains of the uprising in a political settlement. He said that the Palestinians “would be making a big mistake if they thought they could solve their problem without talking directly with Israel,” adding that the PLO should be prepared to talk to Israel in the framework of an international conference.

Abu Sharif’s comments were condemned by various Palestinian guerrilla organizations, including one within the PLO, the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine. When Arafat was asked, while on a visit to Belgrade, whether Bassam Abu Sharif’s statement was authoritative or personal, Arafat said: “I will not tell this to you, but only to an American representative.” He indicated that he was “ready to meet an official American representative and discuss the solution of the Palestinian question and the crisis in the Middle East.” State Department spokeswoman Phyllis Oakley praised the Abu Sharif statement for its “constructive tone” and “positive points,” but added: “If the PLO is serious about moderating its positions so as to make a practical solution to the peace process, it can do so in an authoritative way. We have yet to see an authoritative statement.” Another State
Department official was quoted as describing the document as "the clearest, best-formulated indication of a willingness to meet with Israelis or negotiate with Israel." Some administration officials reportedly attributed the PLO's movement to Soviet pressure on Arafat to moderate his position.

When King Hussein made his dramatic announcement on July 31 severing his ties to the West Bank, which seemed to leave the PLO as the dominant force in the territories, speculation mounted as to how the United States would proceed. The next day, the administration indicated that there was no basis for it to change its conditions for dealing with the PLO, but that the administration would put new pressure on the PLO, through intermediaries, to accept these conditions.

Reports soon began to circulate that the PLO was considering plans to form a government in exile, because of the vacuum created by Hussein's withdrawal. On August 9, Arafat confirmed the reports and indicated that the PNC would officially consider such a plan within a month. Meanwhile, pro-PLO figures in the West Bank prepared a document detailing a plan to establish a Palestinian state unilaterally, within the partition boundaries determined in 1947. An American Jewish peace activist, Jerome Segal, professor of philosophy at the University of Maryland, was said to have inspired this statehood plan through his own proposals, including specific steps leading to the establishment of a state, which had been widely circulated among Palestinian circles in East Jerusalem and the West Bank.

The pot continued to boil in mid-August, with reports that the PLO, under pressure from the clandestine leadership of the intifada, was considering a plan for Arafat to declare a provisional government explicitly recognizing Israel. The plan would be announced in mid-September, when Arafat would attend a European Community meeting in Strasbourg, and would be swiftly followed by ratification by the PNC.

Shultz indicated in an interview with CBS News on August 17 that he would welcome a decision by the PLO to recognize Israel's right to exist, but maintained that the establishment of an independent Palestinian state "doesn't make sense as far as I can see." Asked about rumors that the PLO was about to recognize Israel, he said that "before anyone takes the [PLO] statement seriously, it needs to be an official, full statement."

While there were reports that a critical PNC meeting would convene in Algiers in mid-September, the meeting was put off because of what were said to be fierce internal debates on how to proceed. The fundamental conflict was between those who wished to condemn terrorism and opt for support of a two-state solution and the more radical PLO elements that threatened to destroy the organization should the PLO adopt such an approach.

Despite the built-up expectations, Arafat's speech on September 13 at Strasbourg offered no breakthrough. As in the past, he accepted UN Resolutions 242 and 338, but only in the context of all other UN resolutions on the conflict. The United States had long maintained that PLO acceptance of 242 and 338 should be unconditional and not part of a blanket acceptance of all Security Council resolutions on Arab-
Israeli issues. On the question of the formation of a Palestinian provisional government, Arafat said that such an action could be taken only by the PNC, but indicated that King Hussein's renunciation of Jordanian claims to the West Bank had brought the search for Middle East peace to a "crucial stage" calling for new initiatives from the PLO leadership.

Meanwhile, Egyptian minister of state for foreign affairs Butrus Ghali was quoted as saying that his government had urged Palestinian leaders to delay a decision on their next political moves until after the Israeli and U.S. elections. His aim with regard to the United States was "to avoid giving either candidate for the United States presidency the chance to bid for Jewish votes by making pledges it would be hard for the new administration to ignore." As to Israel, he said, "a premature Palestinian decision on the next steps could also reinforce the Israeli extremist wing."

PLO WINS U.S. ACCEPTANCE

On October 20, the PLO, under pressure not to inflame the Israeli election process, decided to delay the PNC meeting in Algiers to November 12–14, after both elections. The meeting opened on the 12th with a speech by Arafat appealing to President-elect Bush to formulate a new U.S. policy of "justice and fairness" toward Palestinians. Two days later, by a vote of 253 to 46, the PNC formally approved a policy document that called for an international conference to be held under the auspices of the UN Security Council on the basis of "Resolutions 242 and 338 and the assurance of the legitimate national rights of the Palestinian people," starting with the "right to self-determination." It "rejected terrorism in all its forms, including state terror" and renewed the council's commitment to previous related UN resolutions, which confirmed the right of people to struggle against foreign occupation. It called for "the escalation and continuation of the intifada." On November 15, Arafat read the PNC's declaration of independence of a Palestinian state: "The Palestine National Council, in the name of God, and in the name of the Palestinian Arab people, hereby proclaims the establishment of the state of Palestine on our Palestinian territory, with holy Jerusalem as its capital."

Israeli leaders of both major parties were unimpressed. Shamir called the unilateral declaration of independence "another step in the war of the Arab terrorist organizations against the existence and independence of the state of Israel." Peres said that the PNC's supposed recognition of Israel was so hedged with "ambiguity and double talk" as to be essentially meaningless. On the same day, the White House rejected the PNC's independence proclamation but saw "positive elements" in the apparent acceptance of 242 and 338. Reagan said he saw "some progress," while President-elect Bush said, "I think the jury is still out."

The following day the State Department issued a formal reaction after studying the text of the PNC document. State Department spokesman Redman called the
PNC resolutions "an advance over previous efforts," but said that "possibly implied or indirect reference to Israel's right to exist is not sufficient."

Amidst the controversy over what the PNC meeting did or did not do arose another issue of contention. Back on November 9, Arafat, in a move that had been rumored for months, asked the United States for a visa so that he could address the UN General Assembly in New York later in the year. Secretary of State Shultz, whose decision it was whether to grant the visa, had received a letter on September 29 signed by 51 senators, including vice-presidential candidates Lloyd Bentsen and Dan Quayle, urging the administration to deny Arafat's expected visa request. By the third week of November, a major debate was reported to be taking place within the State Department on this issue. The Bureau of Near Eastern and South Asian Affairs was said to be arguing in favor of granting Arafat a visa, in order to avoid stalling the Middle East peace process. The Bureau of International Organization Affairs and the Office of Counter-Terrorism were reportedly opposed to Arafat's entry.

On November 26, after listening to both sides, Shultz denied Arafat a visa because of his "associations with terrorism." A State Department statement explaining the decision cited a U.S. law that "excludes members of the PLO from entry into the United States by virtue of their affiliation in any organization that engages in terrorism." The only question was whether to grant Arafat a waiver; State decided not to do so because it had "convincing evidence that PLO elements have engaged in terrorism against Americans and others," and that Arafat, as chairman of the PLO, "knows of, condones, and lends support to such acts." The statement also cited the presence at the Algiers PNC session of Mohammed Abu al-Abbas, the PLO executive committee member implicated in the 1986 Achille Lauro hijacking in which an American citizen, Leon Klinghoffer, was murdered.

The decision caused an international uproar, and Arab nations immediately moved to shift the UN meeting to Geneva so that Arafat could participate. On November 26, a White House spokesman indicated that the president was aware of the Shultz decision but had no role in it; the following day, Reagan said he "agreed very much" with it. Asked if the decision would send a signal that the United States was obstructing the peace process, Reagan replied: "I think the other way would have sent out the wrong signal. That we were patsies." Two days later, Shultz defended his decision, saying that "it's too easy for people to forget" the serious threat that terrorism posed to "civilized society." On December 2, the General Assembly overwhelmingly voted to move the session of the Palestine debate to Geneva, on December 13–15.

The turbulence surrounding U.S.-PLO relations continued when a group of five American Jews, acting on their own initiative, met with Arafat in Stockholm on December 6 and 7. (The five were Rita Hauser, Drora Kass, Stanley Sheinbaum, Menachem Rosensaft, and Avraham Udovitch. See "Jewish Communal Affairs" article elsewhere in this volume.) At the conclusion of the discussions, Arafat and the Jewish delegation issued a four-point statement clarifying what they said were
the stands taken at the PNC's Algiers meeting. These were that the PNC had "established the independent state of Palestine and accepted the existence of Israel as a state in the region" and that it had "declared its rejection and condemnation of terrorism in all its forms, including state terrorism." Afterward, at a news conference, Arafat added: "The PNC accepted two states, a Palestinian state and a Jewish state, Israel. Is that clear enough?"

Israel quickly dismissed Arafat's words, Shamir saying the declaration "doesn't add anything because the philosophy of the PLO has not changed—that is, the destruction of Israel." Peres called Arafat's remarks "a cunning explanation" and "a postulation in theory." Nor was Shultz ready to accept the contention that the PLO had satisfied U.S. conditions for acceptance: "I have read the reports from Stockholm and it seems to be a little bit further clarification, and I welcome that. But there's still a considerable distance to go." Shultz went on to say that the PLO had to accept 242 and 338, explicitly recognize the existence of Israel, and renounce terrorism "directly, not inferentially or partially. They haven't met our conditions yet."

On December 13, Arafat addressed the UN General Assembly in Geneva. He delivered an 80-minute speech in Arabic, dressed in his checkered headdress and khaki uniform, but without the pistol holder that had caused controversy in his 1974 address to the assembly. He proposed a three-point plan, including an international conference to be attended by "the state of Palestine, Israel, and other neighbors" that would seek a comprehensive settlement based on 242 and 338. He called on the "leaders of Israel to come here, under the sponsorship of the United Nations, so that we can forge that peace." On terrorism, he said, "I condemn terrorism in all its forms, and at the same time salute those sitting before me in this hall who, in the days when they fought to free their countries from the yoke of colonialism, were accused of terrorism by their oppressors."

The American reaction was that, once again, Arafat had not gone far enough. Charles Redman said that the speech "contained some interesting and some positive developments," but "it continued to be ambiguous on the key issues ... as a consequence the speech did not meet our conditions." President-elect Bush, in much the same vein, said the United States needed "a much clearer statement of everything." These reactions were seen as particularly significant because there had been reports—in the days before the speech—that, through intermediaries, Arafat had received the exact wording that would be necessary to enable the United States to end its boycott of the PLO.

According to reports, immediately following the speech and the U.S. reaction, a number of those intermediaries, particularly a team of Swedish diplomats, went to work relaying U.S. demands to the PLO and the PLO's responses back to Washington, all with the purpose of gaining U.S. acceptance of the PLO. The following day, December 4, Arafat called a news conference, at which, apparently as a result of the hectic diplomatic exchanges, he modified his language slightly. He affirmed "the right of all parties concerned in the Middle East conflict to exist in peace and
security, including the state of Palestine, Israel, and their neighbors.” He omitted his usual reference to the Palestinian right to self-determination when declaring his acceptance of 242 and 338, and further stated—a State Department precondition—that the PLO “renounces” rather than merely “condemns” all forms of terrorism.

A few hours later the White House issued a statement from Reagan saying that the PLO had met American conditions and authorizing “the State Department to enter into a substantive dialogue with PLO representatives.” Reagan emphasized that the PLO still had to “demonstrate that its renunciation of terrorism is pervasive and permanent.” Simultaneously, Shultz announced that he had designated the American ambassador to Tunisia, Robert H. Pelletreau, Jr., to carry out the dialogue with the PLO. He also stressed that the United States “does not recognize the declaration of an independent Palestinian state.”

Seeking to reassure Israel, the president said that the U.S. government’s “special commitment to Israel’s security and well-being remains unshakeable.” The following day, he said that the United States would “certainly break off communications” with the PLO if it broke its vow on terrorism. And U.S. officials were quick to point out that while the American aim was ultimately to bring Israelis and Palestinians together in direct talks, the administration would not simply “deliver” Israel to the PLO.

On December 15, Pelletreau telephoned PLO headquarters to arrange a meeting. The first talks with the PLO team, which was led by executive committee member Yasir Abed Rabbo, took place the next day and lasted 90 minutes. Pelletreau said the talks were “practical and characterized . . . by seriousness of purpose”; Abed Rabbo called them “constructive and fair.”

Shamir called the U.S. decision a “grave mistake” that “will have an impact” on U.S.-Israeli relations. Peres was more restrained, saying bilateral relations were “as friendly, as deep, as meaningful” as ever, despite disappointment over the issue. American Jewish reaction was subdued, Jewish leaders apparently showing little inclination to criticize Shultz or Reagan, who were viewed as strong supporters of Israel.

The American decision was warmly received on the international level. The General Assembly ended its special session by adopting two resolutions—one calling for an international peace conference, the other changing the designation of the PLO’s observer mission at the UN from “PLO” to “Palestine.” Only the United States and Israel voted against the two resolutions, although a large bloc of Western nations abstained in the voting for the second measure.

In the final analysis, it could be seen that the intifada had not only moved the PLO to center stage but had induced it to utter the magic words it had resisted for so many years. The result was a new relationship with the United States, an astonishing development, but one whose future direction remained uncertain.
U.S.-Israeli Bilateral Relations

During all the difficult moments between the United States and Israel in 1988—centering on controversies involving the intifada, the peace process, and U.S.-PLO relations—George Shultz was fond of saying that American-Israeli relations had never been so strong and that all the controversies would have no impact on that strong relationship. Shultz had every right to reach such a conclusion, since he had been the key figure in building up bilateral relations ever since he took over as secretary of state in 1983. While the United States had for a long time had “special relations” with Israel, the Shultz tenure was unique in displaying fewer inhibitions than its predecessors about developing more intimate ties, lest the United States be perceived as too close to Israel.

Strategic, economic, and trade relations between the two countries underwent dramatic change during the Shultz years. Strategic cooperation was transformed into a living reality, with greater information sharing, visits of American forces to Israeli facilities, training of forces, and so on. Economic assistance not only increased but was converted entirely into grants, rather than the previous arrangement of part loans. During Israel’s economic crisis of 1984–85, Shultz got personally involved and was responsible for providing the emergency U.S. aid that helped Israel recover. Free trade was becoming a reality through the Free Trade Act (FTA) of 1985, which offered possibilities of substantial business dealings between American and Israeli companies. All this took place amidst continuing diplomatic conflict, whether it was Israeli opposition to the Reagan plan, the Pollard case, or the Iran-contra fiasco.

STRATEGIC COOPERATION

The fundamental reason that U.S.-Israeli strategic cooperation survived successive diplomatic disputes through the Reagan years was the perception—different from that of the Carter administration—that ties with Israel were in America’s interest rather than being merely a reward for diplomatic concessions. Thus, the strategic theme ran on a separate track from the diplomatic relationship and evolved on its own terms. As developments during 1988 indicated, the administration still preferred to keep the tracks separate. At no point during Shultz’s critique of Shamir’s policy or of the administration’s unhappiness with the deportation of intifada leaders were there threats of cutbacks in the strategic area; all the areas of cooperation, including the regular forum of the Joint Political Military Group—to identify areas of common interest largely in connection with the external threats to the eastern Mediterranean area—continued to function as before.

Even further steps in cooperation were taken this year. Of particular importance, on April 21, the two countries signed a five-year agreement formalizing their cooperation on a range of military, economic, political, and intelligence matters. The document, known as a memorandum of understanding, was signed by Reagan in
the White House and Shamir in his office in Jerusalem. On Israeli television, Shamir said that it was "very significant indeed that we give today special expression to this unique partnership in common values, in interests and in the desire for peace." The agreement, which had been completed early in April in Shultz-Shamir meetings and was signed to coincide with Israel's 40th-anniversary celebration, formalized the variety of cooperative arrangements that had evolved over the years. The preamble welcomed the "achievements made in strategic, economic, industrial, and technological cooperation" and took note that Israel was designated "as a major non-NATO ally" of the United States. It went on to say that the parties wished "to enhance their relationship through the establishment of a comprehensive framework for continued consultation and cooperation."

Following were four articles spelling out the agreements. The first recognized the value in continuing, frequent consultations and periodic meetings between the top officials of the two nations. The second spelled out plans for regular meetings—called a Joint Political Consultation (JPC)—between the director-general of the Israeli Foreign Ministry and the U.S. under secretary of state for political affairs. It also called for periodic meetings between representatives of the Agency for International Development and Israel's Division of International Cooperation to "coordinate and facilitate programs of cooperative assistance to developing countries." The third article spelled out and reaffirmed the importance of existing joint groups, including the Joint Political Military Group (JPMG), the Joint Security Assistance Planning Group (JSAPG), and the Joint Economic Development Group (JEDG).

JPMG was described as the forum for discussions of joint cooperative efforts such as combined planning, joint exercises, and logistics. It met biannually, alternating between the United States and Israel, and was cochaired by the director-general of Israel's Ministry of Defense and the U.S. assistant secretary of state for politico-military affairs.

JSAPG was described as the forum in which the two states would review Israel's requests for security assistance, as well as discuss industrial and technological cooperation and cooperative research and development related to Israel's designation as a non-NATO ally. JSAPG met annually in Washington and was cochaired by the director-general of Israel's Ministry of Defense and the U.S. under secretary of state for security assistance, science, and technology.

JEDG was described as the forum for discussions of Israel's economy, with a view to stimulating economic growth and self-reliance, and evaluating Israel's requests for U.S. economic assistance. The JEDG met annually, alternating between the United States and Israel, and was cochaired by the director-general of the Israel Ministry of Finance and the U.S. under secretary of state for economic affairs.

The fourth article of the memorandum of understanding stated that the agreement was in force for an initial period of five years and would be renewed for additional periods of five years, unless either party indicated that it wished to terminate the agreement.
Speaking to a meeting of AIPAC (American Israel Public Affairs Committee) one month after the signing of the agreement, Secretary of Defense Frank Carlucci indicated that strategic cooperation was moving ahead. He said, for example, that Israel's weapons sales to the United States rose from $9 million in 1983 to $250 million in 1987 and would “continue to grow.” Carlucci described Israel as “a faithful friend in a turbulent region” and said that Israel would “remain an important source of weapons systems that are proven and ready in some cases, saving the United States the time and expense of developing its own.” He indicated that the Pentagon spent 54 percent of its budget allocation for the evaluation of foreign weapons on testing weapons made in Israel. And he noted that Israel was one of four U.S. allies working on the Strategic Defense Initiative, building the experimental antitactical ballistic missile known as the Arrow.

The issue of the Arrow took on new significance in light of the spread of ballistic missiles in the Middle East. In March it was disclosed that Saudi Arabia had purchased a mobile Chinese ground-to-ground missile system. When Shamir aide Yosef Ben-Aharon declared in Los Angeles that “the possibility always exists” that Israel might strike at the missile sites, the administration approached the Israeli government and expressed its “serious concern.” On March 25, Reagan urged Israel to refrain from any military action against the Saudi missiles, saying that “we would be totally opposed to any such thing and hope that they are not considering any such action.”

On Tuesday, June 28, following a visit by Israeli defense minister Rabin to the White House, Reagan issued a statement saying he was troubled by “ominous new military developments” in the region, including the spread of ballistic missiles and chemical weapons. Reagan said that the situation called for international efforts to stop the spread of the weapons and made continued U.S.-Israeli defense cooperation imperative.

On June 29, the United States and Israel signed a memorandum of understanding to develop and produce jointly the new defensive missile, the Arrow. Under the agreement, the United States would pay 80 percent of research costs of the Arrow. The new antitactical ballistic missile was under development in Israel, but additional U.S. funding and technology were needed. According to Defense Minister Rabin, Israel proposed to demonstrate the Arrow's usefulness “within two to three years,” by showing that it was capable of intercepting an incoming missile that had a range of 625 miles. Rabin told the National Press Club the same day that the action amounted to a decision to allow Israel “to develop the technical feasibility to intercept tactical ballistic missiles.” At a news conference on that day, Shultz said that the development of a defensive ballistic system was “very desirable” and a major contribution to the deterrence of war. Shultz, as was often the case, was able to put himself in Israel’s place: “I suppose if you happen to be sitting in Israel with ballistic missiles—in this case, shorter-range ballistic missiles, but nevertheless ballistic missiles that are hard to defend against—around you, you feel very strongly the importance of learning how to defend yourself against them.”
On Monday, July 11, one more example of increasing strategic cooperation took place when the U.S. aircraft carrier *Eisenhower* of the Sixth Fleet began an exercise with the Israel Navy. The first such joint activity was reported to involve mock combat and refueling of the *Eisenhower* by Israeli naval vessels.

**FREE TRADE**

The Free Trade Agreement (FTA) between Israel and the United States, signed in 1985, went through some difficult days in 1988. In June it was reported that Washington had protested trade taxes levied by Israel that it said violated the FTA. The taxes, an import price-equalization tax and purchase taxes, were said to have raised the prices of U.S. manufactured goods to uncompetitive levels. U.S. ambassador to Israel Thomas Pickering was reported to have written a tough letter to Israel's Trade and Industry minister, Ariel Sharon, complaining of "artificial steps and arbitrary taxes" to make U.S. imports more expensive. Sharon dismissed the American criticism as "economic pressure," and a spokesman for the Trade and Industry Ministry indicated that in an upcoming meeting of the Free Trade Area Consultative Group, Israel would raise its "concern with the intensifying protectionist policies, as reflected in the new American trade law and in different procedures of the American government."

Despite these differences, American and Israeli officials tried to minimize the extent of the tension caused by the implementation of the FTA accord. At the same time, in New York on June 6, an international trade specialist involved in drafting the FTA accord warned that Israel was endangering the agreement through "unfair business practices." Harold Paul Luks, speaking at a symposium on America-Israel Economic Relations, said that Israeli government attempts to bypass the agreement by imposing various taxes and subsidizing exports could eventually create a backlash. He emphasized that the agreement was not a charity, "but a bilateral, reciprocal agreement." Luks did, however, see a brighter side as well, predicting that there were still many advantages Israel could reap from the FTA. In particular, he pointed out that Israeli exporters should be looking ahead to January 1989, when Taiwan, Korea, Hong Kong, and Singapore would lose their preferential treatment in the U.S. market.

Meanwhile, it was reported that under the FTA, U.S. exports to Israel increased by 40 percent in 1987, while imports increased by 9 percent.

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