

## Talks punctuated by promise, frustration

### Arabs, Israelis go home, pledge to meet in future

MADRID, Spain — Arabs and Israelis went home Monday with mixed feelings of frustration and anticipation after an intense foray into the realm of peace. Israel and Syria were mired in recriminations, but promised to meet again.

The talks smashed a 43-year taboo

on direct Israeli-Arab talks, setting in motion a process of face-to-face negotiations to resolve one of the most intractable regional conflicts in the world.

The United States and Soviet Union sponsored the talks, and President Bush's assessment was: "We have a long way to go and interruptions will probably occur, but hopes are bright."

The brightest are for negotiations between Israel and the Palestinians living under its military rule in the West Bank and Gaza Strip. The dimmest are for a thaw between Israel

and Syria, the region's most bitter foes.

"I would like to express our regret for leaving this city without having tangible results," said Syrian Foreign Minister Farouk al-Sharaa.

Hard-line Israelis inaugurated a new Jewish settlement in the Golan Heights just hours after the talks ended. Syria's main demand is for the return of the heights, captured by Israel in the 1967 Mideast war.

There were also reports that Israeli troops shelled the positions of radical Muslim guerrillas in Lebanon.

In the Iranian capital of Tehran, Shiite Muslim demonstrators burned American and Israeli flags and an effigy of Uncle Sam outside the former U.S. Embassy compound to mark its takeover 13 years ago by Iranian radicals.

The late-night talks in Madrid were the first-ever direct discussion between Israel and Syria and they lasted five hours, into the early hours on Monday. The enemies failed to move even an inch from their positions.

Syria refused an Israeli request to establish direct contacts to arrange

the site for the next round of talks, scheduled later this month.

Both agreed to meet again — if the United States comes up with an acceptable location. Officials on both sides said Washington or other sites in North America were possible.

Israel's delegates "talked about everything except the land that the Israelis occupied and have been occupying for the last 24 years. That is the Golan Heights," al-Sharaa said.

The Israelis countered that Syria's demand for Israeli concessions dominated the meeting.

### Interest cut predicted

Fed to lower rates, economists say

WASHINGTON — The Federal Reserve will decide today to lower interest rates again, many private economists predicted.

Some analysts said Monday that they believed Washington policymakers will be forced to take more dramatic steps in a bid to dissipate widespread gloom about the economy.

These economists saw the chance for a triple-play package of further Fed rate cuts coupled with a tax-cut package from Congress to put money in consumers' pockets and an easing of bank regulations aimed at alleviating the credit crunch.

While ruling out a tax cut this year in an interview in the Wall Street Journal, White House budget director Richard Darman said, "If the economy is still sputtering, then it is conceivable to me that there would be the right political context

in which to enact a responsible tax cut (next year)."

While economists were split on the chances of a tax cut in 1992, they were in general agreement that at least one more round of Fed rate cuts was in the offing, given the dismal economic reports of recent weeks.

The government reported last week that the unemployment rate climbed to 6.8 percent in October, while home sales took their biggest nosedive in 2 1/2 years and consumer confidence plunged. After the unemployment report Friday, President Bush renewed his call for the central bank to lower interest rates.

The Fed's top policymaking committee, the Federal Open Market Committee, will meet behind closed doors today to consider what to do next.

## 17 killed as blacks strike, shake S. African economy

JOHANNESBURG, South Africa — Millions of blacks went on strike Monday as anti-apartheid groups shut down large parts of the economy in a bid to force the white government to share power. At least 17 people were killed in strike violence.

The massive strike, which was to continue today was officially called to protest a new tax. But it was widely seen as a power struggle between the government and black opposition groups.

The strike appeared to be one of the most politically effective actions taken recently by opposition groups, which have frequently been left on the defensive by President F.W. de Klerk's rapid reforms.

Skeleton staffs made up of mainly white workers kept many businesses operating at partial capacity, but the streets of some cities were deserted.

Johannesburg's sidewalks were

clear of the hundreds of blacks who normally sell fruit and vegetables, and white supervisors unused to cash registers struggled to serve whites.

Essential services were not hit by the strike, and power stations, most transportation and other services ran normally.

Strike organizers claimed at least 3 million people were taking part in the action, but the figure could not be confirmed. The Congress of South African Trade Unions alone has 1.2 million members.

The African National Congress and the allied Congress of South African Trade Unions, the groups that called the strike, want a say in economic policy. Although de Klerk has scrapped apartheid laws, the opposition says little has changed.

"The organized working class has

today and will tomorrow strike a body blow to apartheid," said Jay Naidoo, general-secretary of the trade union congress.

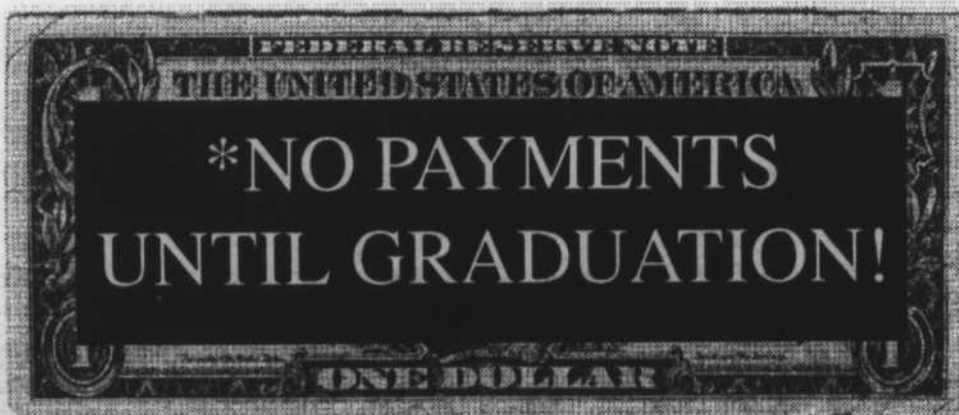
The government alleged that many blacks were intimidated into staying home, a charge denied by the groups. Opposition leaders threaten further action if the government does not accept their demands.

Business spokesmen said they had no nationwide figures, but that 50 percent to 80 percent of black workers did not show up at most major businesses. The country has 30 million blacks.

Government officials estimated the strike will cost the economy about \$800 million in lost production.

The strike is opposed by the ANC's main black rival, the Zulu-dominated Inkatha Freedom Party.

## What does the new Apple Computer Loan mean to you?



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## Food facts

### FDA prepares changes in nutrition labeling

WASHINGTON — For years, beverage manufacturers have said each 12-ounce can of soda pop sold in vending machines contains two servings.

But most people drink the whole can in one sitting and the federal government is likely to propose Wednesday that the label say it's just one.

The change is expected to be one of the hundreds of serving sizes that will be specifically designated as the Food and Drug Administration unveils its plans for implementing the bulk of the new Nutrition Labeling and Education Act.

When all is done, the sporadic, conflicting, often purposefully unclear labels now voluntarily stamped on food packages will conform to specific rules. The labels, which will be required on about 90 percent of all food sold in grocery stores, could revolutionize the way Americans eat by making them more aware.

The FDA has already laid out its ideas for

changing ingredient listings, adding details about sweeteners and including whether the product contains monosodium glutamate, a flavor enhancer said to produce allergic reactions in some people.

The agency has also detailed how juice beverage manufacturers should specify the percentage of real fruit juice contained in their products and how grocery stores should display nutrition information for fresh produce and fish.

This week, the food industry and the public will learn for the first time specifically how the government wants terms such as "low-fat," "low-cholesterol," "low-sodium" and "light" to be defined.

They'll find out what kinds of foods are recognized by the government as helpful in fighting certain illnesses.

And, after years of debate over what constitutes a serving size, federal regulators will give their opinion.

## Kerrey calls for cuts in federal government

WASHINGTON — Nebraska Sen. Bob Kerrey said Monday that he would seek dramatic cuts in the federal bureaucracy, congressional operations and the defense budget if he were elected president in 1992.

Kerrey, one of six Democrats seeking the party's nomination, proposed cutting the number of federal departments in half and reducing the military budget by up to 40 percent in the next decade.

Kerrey, who like other candidates is campaigning against a government he says has gone astray, also said Congress should cut its staff by 30 percent and make do with only a quarter of the committees and subcommittees now operating.

"Government waste at the Washington level is a moral issue," the former governor said in a speech at the National Press Club. "This is an attempt to re-establish the confidence of the American people that we understand that our tax dollars come from them."

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