

## Middle East parties fail to RSVP on talks

WASHINGTON — The Bush administration's Mideast strategy was put to a test Monday as the three key parties — Israel, Syria and the Palestinians Arabs — let the deadline descend without accepting invitations for a resumption of peace talks.

Secretary of State James Baker found himself in an uncomfortable disagreement with Israeli officials on the way the invitations were issued to hold the talks in Washington beginning Dec. 4.

Only Jordan and Lebanon have notified the State Department they intend to participate in the negotiations.

Department spokeswoman Margaret Tutwiler signaled Baker's willingness to postpone the Monday deadline. "What I think we're all

losing sight of," she said, "is what really should be the real issue. It should not, in my personal opinion, be a haggle over a site or timing.

"What is so important to these parties, to the process, is to get these bilateral talks going. And that is what is somehow getting lost here in some of this traffic," she said.

The negotiations, cosponsored by the United States and the Soviet Union, have been in recess for three weeks amid disagreement between Israel and the Arabs on where and when to proceed.

Baker, after meeting Thursday with Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir, instructed U.S. embassies in the Middle East to inform government leaders the negotiations should be resumed in Washington on Dec. 4.

Jordan instantly agreed, and Lebanon followed suit, but persistent U.S. efforts to get the others to go along did not succeed.

Even as Baker sent instructions to U.S. embassies, Shamir was still insisting on holding the negotiations in the Middle East. He took his appeal Friday to President Bush at the White House, but by then the invitations had gone out and the deadline for accepting had been set.

Israeli officials, speaking mostly in private, suggested that the prime minister had been treated rudely, though Shamir tried to play down the dispute.

"There is no crisis of confidence, not personal and not any kind," he said upon his return to Israel on Sunday.

Syria held back its reply amid reports it would insist as a precondition that Israel agree to consider in the negotiations a withdrawal from the Golan Heights, the disputed territory Israeli forces occupied in the 1967 Six-Day War.

Spokeswoman Tutwiler said "myself and others here are puzzled" by accusations of mistreatment from Israeli officials.

She said that while Washington was not the first choice of any of the parties, holding the talks in the capital had been discussed over several months with Israeli officials.

Tutwiler said Baker waited a week longer than originally planned in selecting a time and place after the Arabs and Israel were unable to decide on their own.

## Nuclear aid OK'd for Soviets

\$500 million approved to dismantle arsenal

WASHINGTON — The Senate voted Monday to spend up to \$500 million to help the Soviet Union dismantle its nuclear arsenal rather than risk letting it fall into the hands of terrorists or Third World dictators.

The 86 to 8 vote came after several Democratic senators declared a political truce on the issue, promising not to criticize President Bush if he goes ahead with the aid.

The Senate also voted, 90 to 4, to approve a treaty setting strict ceilings on conventional weapons in Europe.

Despite claims that it is outdated, Majority Leader George Mitchell said the Conventional Forces in Europe Treaty "remains an important benchmark and building block for ensuring the future security of the European continent."

As Congress hurried to adjourn by Thanksgiving:

- House Democrats were poised to seek a floor vote on a compromise crime bill that President Bush said was "simply not acceptable." Republicans threatened to filibuster the legislation in the Senate, saying the bill was too soft on crime.

- House and Senate negotiators completed work on major sections of a \$151 billion highway measure hailed as capable of putting some 2 million Americans to work. The tax-writing committees had yet to approve a four-year extension of a 2.5 cent-a-gallon gasoline tax, necessary to pay for much of the bill.

## Crime bill

Major provisions of the anti-crime package approved by House and Senate negotiators.

**DEATH PENALTY**  
Capital punishment for murder of federal officials ranging from egg and poultry inspectors to the president. It would also apply to espionage, treason and terrorist acts resulting in death. Drug kingpins could also be executed.

**GUN CONTROL**  
Five-day waiting period for handgun purchases. It also sets up a program so that "instant checks" can eventually be conducted by gun dealers hooked up to centralized computers.

**HABEAS CORPUS**  
Restricts appeals that state prisoners can file in federal court. Inmates allowed one habeas corpus petition, successive filings limited to claims that a sentence was invalid, or when there is new evidence. It would repeal a 1989 Supreme Court decision that generally bars state prisoners from benefiting from high court rulings on criminal law that were issued after their convictions.

- Congressional tax committees attempted a last-ditch effort to extend 12 targeted tax breaks scheduled to expire Dec. 31. There is strong support among lawmakers of both parties for extending the provisions in a time of economic

**EXCLUSIONARY RULE**  
Would allow introduction of improperly seized evidence in federal court cases if police acted in good faith while executing a search warrant.

**DRUG TREATMENT**  
Earmarks money for states to provide residential drug-treatment for prisoners. Requires drug testing and treatment of federal prison inmates. Sets up 10 regional drug prisons that would be run by the federal government for both state and federal offenders.

**TOUGHER PENALTIES**  
Triples the penalty for drug crimes that involve minors. It also provides tougher penalties for selling drugs in public housing, near truck stops and in other drug-free zones. The measure increases sentences for crimes with assault weapons, explosives, stealing firearms and smuggling arms.

**ENFORCEMENT AID**  
The bill provides aid to states and cities to put more police on street patrols, improve police training and juvenile offender programs. It designates drug emergency areas that can qualify for increased federal aid and law enforcement assistance to combat drug trafficking.

slump. On Soviet aid, debate revolved around whether helping dismantle the former adversary's nuclear weapons was urgent enough to warrant U.S. taxpayers picking up part of the tab.

## Gorbachev set back in bid to save union

Republics send treaty to legislatures

MOSCOW — President Mikhail Gorbachev on Monday suffered a serious setback in his bid to hold the nation together when the leaders of seven republics refused to endorse a treaty to create a new political union.

Instead of initialing the Union Treaty as planned, the leaders decided to send it to the legislatures of their republics for consideration, a weary Gorbachev said after a four-hour meeting.

He warned again that time was running out for holding the nation together as a looser confederation, with most powers moving from the Kremlin to the republics. He said economic, ethnic and other problems cannot be addressed until the union question is settled.

The powerful Ukraine stayed away from Monday's meeting. The leader of Azerbaijan also did not attend because of escalating tensions with neighboring Armenia, and Gorbachev said Armenia and Azerbaijan were verging on war in their ethnic dispute.

Members of the State Council reportedly clashed sharply over the Union Treaty's wording during a closed session at a government villa outside Moscow.

During a live, nationally televised news conference, the normally confident Gorbachev appeared nervous and hesitant as he tried to put the failure in a positive light.

He said the decision to send the document to the legislatures without endorsement of the leaders represented a sort of "collective initialing" and predicted it would be signed "around

Dec. 20." The pact now will be debated by local legislatures, where it almost certainly will face further revision, delay and potential opposition. Original plans called for republic leaders to sign it, then have the legislatures ratify it.

"The country and society are in such a state that the process should move ahead, as reforms will not work, nor the economic treaty, nor anything else, unless we untangle this main knot of statehood," Gorbachev said.

He also failed to win endorsement before a critical referendum on independence Sunday in the Ukraine, the strongest of the five Soviet republics that refused to attend Monday's session. The Ukraine has balked at signing the treaty although it has agreed to join in an economic grouping with eight other republics.

Russia, the largest republic, is the most important participant in the new union, but the Ukraine's absence would severely weaken the confederation. The Ukraine is an agricultural and industrial power, and Gorbachev has said a union without it is "unthinkable."

Several changes are to be made in the Union Treaty before it is sent to the legislatures, Gorbachev said. He did not spell out the revisions.

The treaty would limit the Kremlin's role to foreign affairs, strategic nuclear arms and coordination of economic policy. It also would establish a five-year, directly elected national presidency and an independent judiciary and would let the republics introduce their own currencies.

## State Department says U.S. can increase condom use

WASHINGTON — America's AIDS fight could benefit from lessons learned in developing countries where condoms are vigorously promoted, with U.S. help, on television and in drug stores, the State Department says.

Dr. Jeff Harris, director of the AIDS program for the U.S. Agency for International Development, said that modern marketing techniques based on research about target populations has increased condom use substantially in countries where the heterosexual spread of AIDS poses a serious threat.

The lesson for the United States, he said, is "that we can increase condom use" with programs based on a thorough understanding of what would motivate sexually active adults to use condoms and practice "safe sex."

AIDS, or acquired immune defi-

ciency syndrome, is caused by the human immunodeficiency virus, or HIV. It is spread principally through sexual activity or the sharing of contaminated drug injection needles.

Latex condoms have proved effective in decreasing the spread of AIDS through sexual intercourse.

Harris said efforts should be made in the United States to "portray condoms positively" and to work at a community or neighborhood level to promote their use.

He said research on sexual practices and attitudes "is essential" to accomplish these goals. Harris declined to comment about the administration's consistent opposition to such research within the United States.

The National Institutes of Health have recommended that the federal government sponsor research among sexually active adults to learn how

best to promote changes in sexual behavior and safe sex practices such as the use of condoms.

Such research proposals have been turned down in the face of opposition from the White House and from some members of Congress.

Harris said that USAID programs have promoted both sexual abstinence and safe sex practices. Abstinence, he admits, has not been a widely accepted message and leaders of some countries recognize this.

"In Uganda, the president and first lady say they would like a return to traditional values (of no sexual promiscuity) but they also recognize that condoms have a role," he said. Condoms are widely promoted now in Uganda with advertising and grassroots distribution programs.

Television ads, based on market research, have successfully promoted

condom use in such areas as Turkey, Ecuador, the Caribbean and south central Africa. In other areas, condoms are promoted with store posters and even bus-stop billboards.

Harris said that in each country, the program has to be based on a key concept that makes condoms acceptable.

In Mexico, he said, prostitutes were not insisting on condom use until a survey found that most of them were mothers. The campaign shifted to encourage condom use to protect the children and was successful.

A condom program in the Dominican Republic faltered until research showed that people didn't know how to use the devices. Condoms became more accepted after a comic strip brochure was printed and counselors began explaining how to use condoms in person-to-person interviews.

## Daily Nebraskan

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