

# JTA daily news bulletin

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## ISRAELIS DEMOLISH TERRORIST BASE

TEL AVIV, Jan. 16 (JTA) -- An Israeli commando force demolished a terrorist base on the Lebanese coast south of Tyre last night and returned safely to its base, a military spokesman announced today. He said the target of the sea-borne raid was at Ras-el Ein which Israeli intelligence determined was the starting point of the three terrorists who attacked a guest house at Maalot last Saturday and were slain by Israeli soldiers.

In a related development, an Arab shepherd and his father were arrested in the Galilee village today on suspicion of aiding the terrorists and directing them to Maalot. According to police, the shepherd encountered the three, who identified themselves as terrorists, outside the village. He took them into his home where his father prepared food for them and later showed them how to reach Maalot, the police said. The suspects admitted to collaboration with the terrorists but said they did so at gunpoint.

Meanwhile, a military court in Ramallah imposed long prison terms on two Arabs whose attempt to bomb a school in Ramat Gan a year ago failed when the watch they used as a timing device stopped before it could trigger the explosive charge they had planted near the school building. Hassan Abdul Majib, 41, was sentenced to 18 years in prison, and Saleh Bangu'i, 37, drew an eight-year term. Their downfall came when they took the defective watch to a Jewish watchmaker in Jerusalem for repairs.

## TERRORIST OUTRAGE AVERTED

JERUSALEM, Jan. 16 (JTA) -- A terrorist outrage that could have caused many civilian casualties was averted here this morning when police sappers safely dismantled a powerful explosive device concealed in the trunk of a car parked in one of the busiest sections of the city. But two-and-a-half hours passed from the time the car first aroused suspicion until the police pried open the trunk.

A special internal investigation committee recently established by the city's police department is trying to determine the cause for the delay that might have been fatal. The car, a silver Mercedes with Tel Aviv license plates, was first spotted at 6 a.m. local time by a news vendor. It was parked on a side street just off one of the main thoroughfares, Ben-Yehuda Street.

A woman soldier was summoned, but she apparently saw nothing suspicious about the vehicle. Later, local shopkeepers coming to work reported the car to police. Several policemen arrived, looked into the car, but they, too, found nothing suspicious.

By 8:30 a.m., the car had not been moved and police broke into the trunk to discover the explosive device. The area was promptly cordoned off and large numbers of persons breakfasting in nearby cafes were evacuated while the sappers went to work. Police searched the neighborhood for additional bombs and pronounced it all clear, after which the streets were reopened to traffic. The Mercedes turned out to be a stolen car.

## EFFORTS TO ASSUAGE NRP OVER MINISTERIAL RESHUFFLE

JERUSALEM, Jan. 16 (JTA) -- Premier Menachem Begin's government is working behind the scenes to find a means of soothing the anger of the National Religious Party over the failure to bring more NRP members into the Cabinet in the latest ministerial reshuffle. The possibility of more deputy ministers for the NRP has been raised. Begin has filled the several Cabinet vacancies by giving them to Likud members already in the Cabinet, a move approved by the Knesset yesterday by a 49-40 vote. There were nine abstentions, all members of the NRP. (See Jan. 16 Bulletin for ministerial changes.)

Interior Minister Yosef Burg, the leader of the NRP, said that while his party feels aggrieved it decided not to force a Cabinet crisis in view of the delicate situation of the Israeli-Egyptian peace talks and the danger that such a crisis could shake the stability of the government coalition. The NRP believes it should have more Cabinet ministers because at present it has three ministers with 12 Knesset members, the same number as the Democratic Movement led by Deputy Premier Yigael Yadin, which has only seven MKs following the split in the former Democratic Movement for Change.

## CHANCES SEEM PROMISING FOR CURRENT SENATE TO RATIFY GENOCIDE CONVENTION

By Joseph Polakoff

WASHINGTON, Jan. 16 (JTA) -- Senate ratification of the United Nations Genocide Convention "looks better" in the 96th Congressional session that began yesterday than at any time since President Truman approved it 22 years ago, according to Sen. William Proxmire (D-Wisc.), the Senate's most determined advocate of the measure.

In an interview with the Jewish Telegraphic Agency shortly before the current Congress held its first session, Proxmire said that chances for success are better because of the atrocities in Cambodia and Uganda and the effect of the NBC-TV series "Holocaust" last spring which he said had "a deep emotional response all over the country."

Proxmire said he had been talking to a number of Senators since they began arriving here Jan. 3 and he believes that 50-60 of the 100 Senators favor the Convention. Two-thirds of the Senate is needed to ratify an international treaty. The legislation will be adopted by the Senate, Proxmire believes, if former California Governor Ronald Reagan, who looms as the leading potential Republican Party nominee for President in 1980, is neutral or friendly to the Convention.

Conservative members of the Senate have historically felt that the Convention would abridge the U.S. Constitution, and Reagan's position may persuade his Senate supporters not to oppose it.

On every Senate business day for the past 11 years, Proxmire has urged that body to pass the Convention. His speeches and statements testify to the doggedness with which he has fought to have the U.S. abide by the measure which was adopted in the wake of the Nazi atrocities. Every President Secretary of State and Attorney General since 1949 has backed the Convention.

The American Bar Association, which had

been a persistent opponent, finally approved it in 1976, thus improving the chances for passage. The Senate Foreign Relations Committee, which has voted out the measure for Senate debate four times, is expected to do so again in the current session. Senate conservatives last session blocked its passage by parliamentary maneuvers.

#### WALDHEIM CRITICIZES ISRAEL AND CHRISTIAN FORCES IN SOUTH LEBANON

By Yitzhak Rabi

UNITED NATIONS, Jan. 16 (JTA) -- Secretary General Kurt Waldheim, in a report to the Security Council which was made available here today, charged that the United Nations Truce Supervision Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL) "lacks the cooperation both of the de facto forces (in south Lebanon) under Major (Sa'ad) Haddad (the Christian militia) and of the Israeli Defense Forces, in relation to the complete deployment of UNIFIL in its entire area of operations."

UNIFIL, therefore, is unable to help restore the Lebanese government's control over the area as called for by Security Council Resolution 425, which created UNIFIL last spring, Waldheim said. "The assumptions on which UNIFIL was set up have not been fulfilled," he reported, adding: "Indeed, the attitude of the de facto forces has, if anything, stiffened and the pattern of threats and harassing actions (against UNIFIL) has persisted and increased in intensity."

Waldheim, recommending the renewal of UNIFIL's mandate -- which expires Friday -- for another period of six months, concluded his report by declaring that in his view the present situation in south Lebanon cannot continue indefinitely. "Through no fault of its own, UNIFIL has not been in position to alter... a situation which is neither acceptable to the government of Lebanon nor compatible with the intentions of the Security Council," Waldheim said. He added: "I therefore appeal to those immediately concerned to reconsider urgently their attitude to UNIFIL and to ask themselves whether, in the context of the maintenance of international peace and security, they would really be better off if UNIFIL were obliged by continuing frustration to withdraw without fulfilling its mandate."

Meanwhile, the Security Council is expected to meet Thursday to extend the mandate of UNIFIL. Sources here said it was not clear yet whether the mandate will be extended for four or six months. Consultations toward the Council's meeting are due to start tomorrow.

#### TALKS WITH ATHERTON TO BEGIN WEDNESDAY

By David Landau

JERUSALEM, Jan. 16 (JTA) -- Talks between Israeli officials and the U.S. special envoy to the Mideast peace talks, Alfred Atherton, will begin here tomorrow morning. Atherton rested at his hotel tonight after arriving earlier in the afternoon accompanied by Herbert Hassell, the State Department's legal advisor.

In a brief statement at Ben Gurion Airport, Atherton said he was in the Middle East to "prepare the way" for the resumption of Israeli-Egyptian talks on the ministerial level. This was seen as an indication that in his talks here and in Egypt, Atherton will focus on attempting to clear up differences between the countries on Articles IV and VI of the proposed peace treaty while leaving the issues of linkage and the exchange of ambassadors by Israel and Egypt to the ministerial level.

The Israeli team that will meet with Atherton is headed by Eliahu Ben-Elissar, director-general of the Prime Minister's office, and includes Foreign Ministry legal aide Meir Rosenne, Attorney General Yitzhak Zamir and Prof. Ruth Lapido, a Hebrew University international law expert. It was Ben-Elissar and Rosenne who, with Atherton and Egyptian officials, launched the first round of Israeli-Egyptian negotiations in December, 1977, at the Mena House Hotel in Cairo.

The fact that Ben-Elissar is heading the Israeli team, and that the talks are to be held in the Premier's office, shows, according to observers here, Begin's intention to personally and closely supervise them. Foreign Ministry sources denied press speculation that there had been "differences" between Begin and Foreign Minister Moshe Dayan and that these had led to the decision to hold the talks under Begin's aegis. On the contrary, the sources said, Dayan himself positively wanted the Premier to be fully and closely involved.

The talks are likely to continue through tomorrow, with a special Cabinet session Thursday a possibility if Begin feels, after hearing Ben-Elissar's reports, that new decisions must be taken.

#### Buoyed By Begin's Mood

Begin told Joe Clark, leader of Canada's opposition Progressive Conservative Party, who is visiting Israel for three days, that adverse developments in the region -- Iran, Ethiopia, Afghanistan, South Yemen -- make it doubly urgent for Israel and Egypt to conclude the peace as expeditiously as possible.

Begin gave the distinct impression during this conversation, and during recent meetings with American diplomats and other foreigners, that he himself is still determined to press towards concluding the treaty with all possible speed and is anxious for a resumption of direct negotiations as soon as possible. The Americans are reliably understood to be buoyed by Begin's mood and remarks.

But they are openly worried at signs of "erosion" in the enthusiasm of other Cabinet ministers towards the peace process. The events in Iran and the long delays caused by legal wrangling between Israel and Egypt appear to have brought a number of the ministers to reconsider their support of the Camp David accords and the entire direction of the peace process.

Dayan and Defense Minister Ezer Weizman -- and particularly the latter -- have privately expressed their own real concern at this "erosion" apparent in some of their colleagues. Hence, observers here believe, the importance of Atherton's mission in achieving at least some movement forward, even if on only some of the disputed issues. Progress achieved now would certainly restore some of the flagging momentum to the peace process, these observers feel.

NEW YORK (JTA) -- Israel's collective agricultural communities (moshavim) have put out a world-wide call for volunteers urgently needed to harvest crops between now and April. According to Dani Kritchman, an Israel Aliya Center emissary specializing in moshavim, this is the first time these agricultural settlements have recruited volunteers. "Until now moshavim have been able to handle their harvests from within the country. Moshavim have grown, however, and their needs today are greater," he said. Moshavim seeking volunteer help are located in the Arava, Sinai, Red Sea area and Galilee, and the primary crops to be harvested between now and April include flowers, melons and peppers.

## BEHIND THE HEADLINES WOMEN IN THE CONSERVATIVE RABBINATE

By Reana Sigman Friedman

NEW YORK, Jan. 16 (JTA) -- Members of the Rabbinical Assembly will decide at their 97th annual convention Jan. 28-Feb. 1 to be held in Los Angeles whether or not women are to become spiritual leaders within the Conservative movement. Their momentous decision will be based on recommendations made by the Commission for the Study of the Ordination of Women as Rabbis, an interdisciplinary advisory body charged with studying all aspects of this complex question.

Soon after the Commission presents its report, the RA membership and the administration of the Jewish Theological Seminary of America (JTS) will independently evaluate it, since there is a tacit agreement that no one arm of the Conservative movement may legislate for another.

Created in September 1977 by Dr. Gerson D. Cohen, JTS chancellor, the Commission developed out of a compromise resolution passed at the 1977 annual convention of the RA after lengthy and heated debate. The original resolution, which encouraged the JTS "to consider and admit to the Rabbinical School all qualified candidates regardless of sex," was ultimately tabled. At that time, Cohen formed a study group to deal with the question and agreed to accept its findings "only if all activity is suspended for two years so our faculty will not be exploded."

### Will Draw Upon Legal Expertise

According to Rabbi Gordon Tucker, assistant to Cohen and executive director of the Commission, the group will draw upon the legal expertise of its outstanding Talmudic scholars as well as the experience of other Commission members. Consideration will also be given to the written statements received from RA members throughout the country whose opinions, legal and otherwise, have been solicited. Tucker made it clear that a definitive halachic decision against the ordination of women could override a show of public opinion to the contrary. Undoubtedly, halachic considerations play a central role in this controversy and cannot be dismissed lightly.

According to Rabbi David Weiss Halivni, chairman of the JTS' Department of Talmud and Rabbinics, who has previously opposed the ordination of women, "The only real halachic problems would be marriage and divorce since women cannot be witnesses in ritual matters." That is, under Jewish law, a woman may not be a witness at a wedding (where the rabbi's role is to be sure that everything is done properly and that the two witnesses are legitimate), nor can she serve as a judge on the rabbinical court granting a Jewish divorce.

Although Halivni is willing to consider the idea of female rabbis, he feels that the halachic prohibitions against women cantors are more absolute. He explained that anyone not obligated to fulfill positive, time-bound mitzvot cannot serve as the "shaliach tzibur," the representative of the community leading in prayer and reading from the Torah scrolls.

On the other hand, a number of scholars are convinced that these obstacles can be overcome. For example, Rabbi David Silverman of the JTS suggested that women be ordained and that subsequent provisions be made regarding the difficult issue of "edut" (witnessing). Furthermore, Judith Hauptman, instructor in Talmud at the JTS, noted that it "was possible to have two other wit-

nesses at weddings in addition to the woman rabbi. 'Rabbi' means teacher, that the person has attained a certain level of education." Surely, she concluded, a woman was capable of performing this key rabbinic function.

In addition to consulting scholarly opinion, the Commission has sampled the views of members of Conservative congregations who will be intensely affected by this decision. The results of a survey of 14 selected congregations throughout North America conducted by Yankelevitch, Skelly and White, a highly respected public opinion research firm, have been computerized for the Commission's review. Also, public forums have been held in Los Angeles, Vancouver, Minneapolis, Chicago, Washington, D.C., New York and Toronto. Notices announcing the meetings were circulated among presidents of United Synagogue of America congregations and members of the RA in each region, requesting that they encourage their congregants to participate.

### Division Of Opinions

Assessing the responses that he has heard, Tucker observed that opinion was divided along regional lines -- that is, congregants in Minneapolis and Los Angeles tended to be more liberal in their views, while those in Canadian cities were more conservative -- but that the arguments pro and con could not be classified according to age and sex.

Tucker also noted that the great majority of speakers, although they did make some reference to the halachic issues involved, tended to base their arguments upon sociological, historical and psychological grounds. This was clearly the case of the men and women offering testimony at the New York hearing held at the JTS last Nov. 1 and 2, as well.

A number of those arguing in favor of the ordination of women spoke from a sociological standpoint. Some asserted that the time required for housekeeping and child rearing has been dramatically reduced, leaving women freer to observe the positive, time-bound mitzvot from which they had previously been excused, and to play a more prominent role in communal religious life.

Others urged the Commission members to acknowledge the impact which the women's liberation movement has had upon all aspects of American society. Above all, they said, feminist demands have compelled people to recognize that, in both the religious and secular spheres, it is necessary to grant it all people the opportunity to realize their potentials to the full.

Dr. Sarah Lieberman, a religious school principal in Framingham, Mass. and the wife of a Conservative rabbi, cited historical precedent in support of her argument. Her own research, she said, has revealed that, in the past, women often occupied prominent positions within the Jewish community, as the spirit and the needs of the time dictated. For example, they served as professional mourners and dirge-reciters long before the establishment of the modern rabbinate. "The rabbis of today," she declared, "have taken away from women what was rightfully theirs by tradition."

### Concern For Movement's Future

Many pleas were of a more personal, emotional nature. Some speakers suggested that women could not only perform rabbinic functions as well as men, but would contribute a uniquely feminine perspective, particularly a heightened sensitivity, to the rabbinic role. Other women described the alienation they had

tell from a Judaism that excluded them, as well as their elation upon having an ally or leading services for the first time.

Somewhat surprisingly, the presentations of those speakers who opposed the ordination of women were emotionally charged as well. Several plainly stated that they were, as yet, psychologically unprepared to see a woman in the pulpit and to entrust her with their confidences and other rabbinic functions. Others contended that they were acting in the best interest of the women themselves for, as they were quick to point out, the female graduates of Reform and Reconstructionist rabbinical seminaries have not been well accepted by the public and have had difficulty finding pulpits.

Above all, these speakers stressed their heartfelt concern for the future of the Conservative movement. They reiterated that maintaining a balance between tradition and change has always been a hallmark of Conservatism, and warned against jumping on the contemporary bandwagon without giving the ordination question long and serious thought. Moreover, as Rabbi Wayne Allen of Staten Island New York argued, such a radical departure would undermine the authority of the JTS as well as that of its rabbinical school graduates.

In the opinion of Rabbi David Wolfe Silverman, Associate Professor in Philosophy at Judaism at the JTS, those in the top ranks of the Conservative leadership must not perpetually peer over their shoulders to see what the Orthodox are thinking, nor can their decisions be made solely on the basis of how the movement's right-wing element will react. These policymakers, he maintained, have an equal responsibility to the large numbers of young people, nurtured on Camp Ramah and Praxdorf (the JTS high school), who will be the future leaders of the Conservative movement.

#### Confronted With A Difficult Task

The Commission members are thus confronted with a most difficult task -- that of striking a delicate balance between the forces of tradition and change. When asked for his prognosis of the outcome of the deliberations, Tucker replied that the possibilities are virtually limitless. The report may advise the RA to admit female rabbis who have already been ordained, while permitting the Rabbinical School to keep its doors closed to female applicants. He added that the reverse procedure might also be recommended, although this is highly unlikely.

It is also possible, according to Tucker, that the report will propose various compromises, such as different levels of ordination for men and women, or that women be ordained but prohibited from serving in pulpits. However, he is reasonably certain that the Commission's final decision will be more black-and-white in nature and will probably not create an entirely new system of rabbinic titles and functions.

#### JEWISH VICTIM IN IRAN

WASHINGTON, Jan. 16 (JTA) -- Martin Berkovitz, a 53-year-old American engineer working in Iran, was stabbed to death in the kitchen of his home in the southern Iranian town of Kerman, possibly because he was Jewish, according to reports reaching the State Department.

Khayon, the largest English-language publication in Teheran, was quoted here as reporting that a note posted on the front of his door said, "Go back to your own country." The newspaper

also said that Berkovitz was killed apparently because he was Jewish. In Iran's recent demonstrations, anti-American and anti-Israeli feeling was reportedly rampant.

The U.S. Embassy identified the victim as Berkovitz, a Vietnam war veteran who was married and the father of two daughters. He worked for the Jordan Arsons Construction Company of Pasadena, Ca. He is believed to have been from San Francisco. Berkovitz, a former Air Force Colonel, was working on a billion dollar copper mine project in the Kerman area.

#### TRYING TO COOL TEMPERS FOLLOWING CLASH BETWEEN ORTHODOX, SECULAR JEWS

By David Landau

JERUSALEM, Jan. 16 (JTA) -- Municipal authorities are trying to cool tempers following new outbursts of violence between Orthodox and secular Jews in the northern suburb of Sanhedria and a running battle between ultra-religious youths and police in the Meah Shearim quarter. Arrests were made.

The religious-secular clashes in Sanhedria, heavily populated by Orthodox Jews, have become almost a weekly occurrence as secular Jews from the outlying neighborhood of Ramot encounter a barrage of stones when they drive their cars on the Sabbath along the new road that passes through Sanhedria. The matter was the subject of several agenda motions introduced in the Knesset last week by religious and secular factions.

The latest trouble erupted last Friday night when masses of Orthodox Jews from Meah Shearim and other religious enclaves as well as Sanhedria residents hurled stones at cars driving after sundown. This time, the Ramot Residents Council organized a party of some 250 men in 40 cars to break the road block. The religious demonstrators fled, but not before police arrested a half-dozen rock throwers.

The Orthodox claim that traffic on the road from Ramot disturbs their Sabbath peace. The Ramot residents demand the right to use the road, a main traffic artery to and from Jerusalem. The fighting in Meah Shearim began after Orthodox residents blocked the main thoroughfare to protest the events in Sanhedria. Police moved in to clear the road for buses and other traffic and were reportedly assaulted by Orthodox youths. Three policemen were injured and 10 youths were arrested.

#### TWO BANKS AGAINST ARAB BOYCOTT

NEW YORK, Jan. 16 (JTA) -- The American Jewish Congress has hailed the decision of two banks -- both subsidiaries of American corporations -- to withdraw from a syndicate organizing a \$34-million loan to Algeria after the Bank Rothschild of Zurich was excluded because of its Jewish ownership. The two banks that withdrew from the syndicate were Citicorp International Finance of Geneva and the Dow Banking Corporation of Geneva.

Shortly after the syndicate's blacklisting of Bank Rothschild was disclosed, Will Maslow, general counsel of the AJCongress, wrote to the subsidiaries' parent corporations, Citicorp and Dow Chemical Company. Noting that Treasury Department guidelines expressly forbade participation by American firms in syndicates that excluded banks on the basis of race, religion or national origin, Maslow also cited public declarations by both corporations to their shareholders stating company policy of non-participation in discriminatory arrangements. Officers at Dow and Citicorp immediately replied that they had withdrawn from the syndicate.