

# JTA daily news bulletin

Contents may vary. Resubscription only by previous arrangement.

Published by Jewish Telegraphic Agency / 165 West 46th Street / New York, New York 10036

Vol. XLVI - 62nd Year

Tuesday, May 15, 1979

No. 93

## FEAR PLO TERROR IN WEST GERMANY

By Alfred Schroeder

BONN, May 14 (JTA) -- The arrest of 11 armed Palestinian terrorists in West Germany during the past two weeks has raised fears in official circles that their comrades will resort to bomb threats or kidnappings to obtain their release. The arrests were confirmed today by the Interior Ministry which said the terrorists, carrying explosives and time fuses, were apprehended near the Austrian and Dutch borders and in West Berlin.

The arrests coincide with reports of increasing activity by Palestinian groups in West Germany. Horst Herald, president of the Federal Police Agency (BKA) told the Interior Committee of the Bundestag last week that terrorist attacks must be anticipated. He said terrorist acts were probably linked to the Israeli-Egyptian peace treaty. Counter-intelligence sources said security measures have been tightened at Egyptian, Israeli and Jewish institutions in West Germany.

According to police reports, the 11 arrested terrorists are members of either the Palestine Liberation Organization or of various splinter groups. Documents found on them, and their boast that they would not be in jail for very long, heightened fears that other terrorists may attempt to seize hostages for their release. Herald did not refer to the PLO in his report to the parliamentary committee but spoke of Palestinians generally.

Meanwhile, observers here continued to express amazement over last month's revelation of contacts between Federal police officials and the PLO in Beirut. The purpose apparently was to persuade the PLO into closer cooperation with German police to prevent further crimes by the German Red Army terrorist organization. The latter are known to have received training in the past from the radical Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine. The PLO reportedly told the police that it had no dealings with German terrorists. The Bonn government so far has neither confirmed nor denied that its police had semi-official contacts with the PLO.

## NEO-NAZI GROUP GOES UNDERGROUND

VIENNA, May 14 (JTA) -- The neo-Nazi Aktion Neue Rechte (Action for a New Right) has disbanded because it was not allowed to run for the university boards elections in June. However, the group has announced that it will continue to work underground on an informal basis. Last month, several members of the group clashed with police in Braunau, Hitler's home town, when they gathered to celebrate the Nazi dictator's 90th birthday. The incident provoked a demonstration of more than 2000 anti-Nazis in the center of Vienna who called for a ban of all neo-Nazi organizations.

## WHAT CAPUCCI DIDN'T SAY

By Lisa Palmieri-Billig

ROME, May 14 (JTA) -- When Msgr. Hilarion Capucci made a bravado declaration in an interview after his Papal audience May 8 to the effect that the Pope, who fought in his country

(Poland) against the Nazis, "had "understood" Capucci's "problem," he omitted the Pope's reply in their private audience.

According to reliable sources, when Capucci told Pope John Paul II, "I defended my people just as you did yours in Poland," the Pope raised his finger at him and said, "In Poland we defended morality without engaging in politics whereas you engaged in politics without taking morality into account."

While there has been "no comment" by the Vatican on Capucci's statements, informed sources reveal he is being watched very closely because of the Vatican's honor in holding to its agreement with Israel at the time of Capucci's release in 1977. He was freed on condition that he would not engage in politics or return to the Middle East.

## LEONID SLEPAK ARRIVES IN ISRAEL

JERUSALEM, May 14 (JTA) -- Leonid Slepak, son of Soviet-Jewish activist Vladimir Slepak, arrived in Israel last night with his wife Olga, 19, their three-month-old daughter and a message from his father who was arrested six months ago and is serving a five-year sentence in a forced labor camp in Siberia.

The elder Slepak, who has been seeking an exit visa for the past 10 years, sent an appeal to all aliyah activists to work for his release and emigration to Israel. It was on his advice that his 20-year-old son refused to enlist in the Soviet army when he was due for military service and hid out for two years in a village where he met his wife. He described his own release from the Soviet Union as something of a miracle attributable to the vagueries of the Soviet bureaucracy.

Although he had evaded military service, he explained, one government agency in the USSR does not interfere in the affairs of another. He was not only granted a visa but was allowed to visit his father shortly before he left Russia, he said.

## TWO KILLED AND 37 INJURED IN TERRORIST BOMBING IN TIBERIAS

By Yitzhak Shargil

TEL AVIV, May 14 (JTA) -- A bomb blast in the crowded main street of Tiberias killed two people and injured 37 this afternoon. Five of the injured, reported in serious condition, were rushed by helicopter to the Rambam Hospital in Haifa after the facilities at nearby Poriya Hospital proved inadequate for the emergency surgery required. Most of the other injured were treated at Poriya.

According to police, the bomb exploded at 3 p.m. local time in a trash can chained to a telephone pole just as a local bus passed by. Several passengers were among the casualties. Eight ambulances from the Red Magen David first aid station were on the scene in minutes to evacuate the wounded. Police cordoned off the area and after a search for additional bombs, the road was reopened to traffic.

The latest terrorist outrage was apparently timed to coincide with the beginning of the Lag Ba'omer festival when thousands of Orthodox Jews come to Tiberias to pay homage to Rabbi Meir Baal Hanes, whose tomb is located there or pass through the town on the way to Miron, near Safad where another sage, Rabbi Shimon Bar Yochai, is buried. Hagallil Street,

the main thoroughfare in Tiberias on the shores of the Sea of Galilee, is also the highway leading to Miron. The street was jammed with vehicles and pedestrians today as were the municipal gardens directly opposite the site of the explosion.

Lag Ba'omer began officially at 1 p.m. and by then tens of thousands of pilgrims had established themselves in a tent city on the slopes of Mt. Miron, protected by police and army first aid stations. Thousands more continued to pour into Tiberias despite the tragedy. The festival was celebrated in other parts of Israel. Bonfires lit the skies over Safad, Haifa, Tel Aviv and Jerusalem at sundown. The local fire brigades are always kept busy on these occasions. Tonight there was an additional alert for terrorist acts.

### ECONOMIC PLAN SEEKS TO REDUCE INFLATION BY 30 PERCENT

JERUSALEM, May 14 (JTA) -- Finance Minister Simcha Ehrlich submitted a five-year economic plan to the Cabinet yesterday aimed at reducing inflation by 30 percent by drastic curtailment of public consumption and further cuts in government spending. It was greeted with skepticism by many of his colleagues but a general debate was postponed until next week.

Ehrlich's plan calls for a special budget to cover the redeployment of Israeli military forces from Sinai to the Negev. He promised almost full employment and to maintain the real value of wages. However, there would be an almost total freeze on public consumption and drastic cuts in private investment. Ehrlich also recommended periodic increases in the value-added tax (VAT) at the rate of one percent per year. The current VAT is 12 percent.

Yisrael Katz, Minister of Housing and Construction, claimed Ehrlich's plan would impose the most severe burdens on the poorest sections of the population. Yitzhak Modai, Minister of Energy and Infrastructure, who is Ehrlich's main rival in the Cabinet, announced that he would present an alternative economic program of his own.

Histadrut Secretary General Yeruham Meshel commented on hearing of Ehrlich's plan that he would be willing to cooperate if the government accepted Histadrut's demands. These include an adjustment of income tax brackets to keep pace with rising living costs and full compensation to workers for every increase in the cost-of-living index. However, Meshel emphasized that Histadrut will not permit Israel to become "a paradise for the capitalists." Ehrlich's economic plan, he added, is designed to divert attention from his present failure to solve Israel's economic problems.

### TALKS HELD ON RETURNING SINAI OILFIELDS TO EGYPT IN SEVEN MONTHS

TEL AVIV, May 14 (JTA) -- Members of the Israeli-Egyptian Committee on Sinai Oil met today at A-Tur where the oilfields are located to discuss problems dealing with the return of the oilfields to Egypt in seven months.

Among the questions discussed was whether Egypt would contribute all or part of the \$30 million cost of maintaining the Alma oilfield at its present output of 33,000 barrels a day during the transition period. Also discussed was whether the Egyptians would buy the equipment at Alma and how much they would pay for it.

The meeting was to have been held in Tel Aviv. But Premier Menachem Begin insisted that

it be in Jerusalem and the Egyptians refused on the grounds that other Arab states might see this as a recognition of Jerusalem as Israel's capital. It was then decided to hold the talks at the oil fields.

Meanwhile, in El Arish, a high-level Israeli-Egyptian committee was discussing today the problems of housing, property, agriculture and communications involved in Israel's transfer of the northern Sinai town to Egypt on May 27. Israelis and Egyptians will work together in maintaining the town's telephone exchange and water system until they are disconnected from their links with Israel May 25. The local banks are working on exchanging Israeli currency for Egyptian. Local construction workers are, meanwhile, building a new officers club for the Egyptians.

### PATIR: MOSLEMS, DRUZE AND CHRISTIANS IN SOUTH LEBANON SEEK ISRAEL'S AID

NEW YORK, May 14 (JTA) -- Moslems and Druze as well as Christians in southern Lebanon look to Israel to protect their security, Premier Menachem Begin's chief media advisor said today. Dan Patir, currently on a brief visit to the United States, told a news conference at the office of the Conference of Presidents of Major American Jewish Organizations that more than half of the 60,000 Lebanese living in the area south of the Litani River are Moslems and Druze. He said they lived and worked in friendship and cooperation with their Christian neighbors.

"Moslem units have joined Christian forces under the command of Maj. (Saad) Haddad to protect the security of their homes and farms against PLO terrorist attacks," Patir said. "In so doing, they are serving also to protect Israel's security."

Patir charged that the United Nations peace-keeping force in Lebanon had "failed in its mission of keeping the area free of PLO terrorists. As a result, Israel must assume that responsibility itself and will press its attacks on PLO-controlled areas until the Palestinians can no longer conduct raids across the border."

He said there was "increasing activity" by the PLO against Israel coming from territories that were supposed to be secured by United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL). Patir added that Israel had vowed that "southern Lebanon will no longer be a jumping off point for PLO attacks against Israel" necessitating stepped up "search and destroy" actions by the Israeli defense forces by land, sea and air "as long as UNIFIL remains helpless to prevent PLO incursions against Israel."

### DISCUSSION ON DROP-OUTS

JERUSALEM, May 14 (JTA) -- A serious discussion of how to reduce the number of drop-outs -- Soviet Jews who opt to settle in countries other than Israel after leaving the USSR -- is now taking place. "We will discuss the problem thoroughly with Premier Menachem Begin in order to reach decisions" before the annual assembly of the Jewish Agency convenes in Jerusalem next month, Raphael Kotlowitz, head of the Jewish Agency's immigration and absorption department, said at a press conference today.

He said the leadership of American Jewry is fully aware of the problem and that he found, at a recent meeting with American Jewish leaders, that they were worried that if the number of Soviet Jews coming to the U.S. increases, they will have to allocate more money for their absorption. Currently there are some 45,000 Soviet Jews in the U.S. according to Kotlowitz.

He claimed that most of them do not identify with the Jewish people and therefore did not go to

Israel. But, he said, recently there has been a growing number of Soviet Jewish emigres who justify going to the U.S. on the basis of reuniting with their families there.

Kotlowitz said that in spite of the rising number of drop-outs -- 63 percent of those who left the Soviet Union so far this month -- Soviet Jews are still the main source of immigrants for Israel. In the first four months of this year 6042 arrived out of an anticipated total immigration of 35-40,000 this year. He noted that in 1978 there was a 19 percent increase in immigration and in the first four months of this year immigration ran 65 percent higher than the same period last year.

But Kotlowitz warned that if the drop-out situation did not change drastically, immigration to Israel would suffer because most Soviet Jews would be going to the U.S. He said "I have no moral qualms about this issue. Those who use visas issued for Israel to leave the USSR should use them to go to Israel. Otherwise, let them use different visas."

Kotlowitz said the shortage of housing is still the main problem in the absorption of immigrants. Currently there is need for some 8000 to 10,000 flats. The only available flats are in development towns, but many immigrants refuse to go there, he said.

Referring to Iranian Jewry, Kotlowitz said that in the last seven months some 24,000 Jews left Iran. Ten thousand of them are currently in Israel, either as tourists or as immigrants. "So far, Jews can still leave Iran, unless they are on the black list of the authorities."

#### CONGRESSIONAL ACTION ON BARRING PLO MEMBERS FROM ENTERING THE U.S.

By Joseph Palakoff

WASHINGTON, May 14 (JTA) -- A Senate-House conference committee will work out language that will have the effect of barring members of the Palestine Liberation Organization and officials of labor organizations in Communist countries from entering the United States unless both the Secretary of State and the Attorney General agree on a special waiver for them.

The House of Representatives, which rejected a proposal on that basis last year, had adopted the legislation providing for the toughened law last week after its introduction by Rep. Stephen Solarz (D.NY) and Edward Demwinski (R.Ill.). A proposal with a similar purpose was introduced by Senators Jacob Javits (R.NY) and Robert Dole (R.Kans.). The Senate approved it 87-2.

The measure is part of the authorization bill for the State Department. Sen. Howard Baker (R.Tenn.) and 10 other Senators asked the Senate to repeal the McGovern Amendment that made it easier for members of proscribed organizations such as the PLO to enter the U.S. But Javits and Dole urged milder language as a compromise because the McGovern Amendment had been originally offered to strengthen the U.S. position with respect to the Helsinki accords.

In the debate on the proposal, the Carter Administration had declared its opposition to any changes in the law, contending that the McGovern Amendment supported the U.S. position under the Helsinki agreement. But opposition to the Administration emerged strongly after the State Department granted a visa to Shafik al-Hour, director of the PLO operations in Beirut, to visit the United States for three weeks during which he traveled freely after he was invited by

unidentified groups at four American universities.

#### Opposition To McGovern Amendment

The AFL-CIO and the American-Israeli Public Affairs Committee had opposed the McGovern provision. Baker noted that the proviso allows Communist officials "under the guise of trade unionism" to enter the U.S. and "grant the stamp of legitimacy to this patent charade." Under the law, "the PLO is a proscribed organization" but Baker added that "PLO members have had virtually free access to this country." Contrary to some recent assertions, Baker said, "it is a matter of official record at the Department of State and the Immigration and Naturalization Service that these agencies interpret the McGovern Amendment to require approval of visa applications for PLO officials."

Baker observed that the amendment he offered "redresses this problem -- these excesses of the present law -- without doing any violence whatsoever to the legitimate and laudable purposes of the Helsinki accords." It would require a U.S. government decision to admit visitors "openly rather than secretly and it reaffirms the commitment of the U.S. to an exchange of views and the movement of people that is truly free -- not the convenient captive of propagandists and terrorists."

Javits agreed that Baker was "absolutely right" about the waiver question but he wanted the law to be clear that the McGovern Amendment was passed to encourage free exchange of ideas and movement of citizens in the spirit of the Helsinki accords but not to accept representatives of the PLO which seeks to destroy Israel.

Sen. George McGovern (D.SD) opposed any changes in his amendment but he said he knows the law has been "a divisive matter in terms of our domestic political climate." He added "It has obviously distressed certain spokesmen of the American labor movement and some representatives of the American Jewish community in this country who have misunderstood the impact of the amendment." He voted for the amendment. The lone opponents were Senators William Armstrong (R.Colo.) and James McClure (R.Idaho).

#### ARABS REBUFF PEACE NOW GESTURE

By Gil Sedan

JERUSALEM, May 14 (JTA) -- A good will gesture by members of the Peace Now movement was rebuffed by Arab farmers on the West Bank yesterday. They uprooted vines and olive tree saplings that were planted by the peace advocates on the slopes of Jaabari Hill near Hebron Friday to replace groves vandalized two weeks ago by Jewish militants.

According to an Israel Radio report, the farmers understood the nature of the gesture but feared that if Jews planted the slopes they would later claim ownership of the land. They were also quoted as saying "Jews don't know how to plant vines." About 1000 Peace Now demonstrators came to the Hebron area last Friday to redress the damage done earlier by unknown vandals, believed to be residents of Kiryat Arba, a Gush Emunim stronghold adjacent to Hebron. They destroyed more than 500 trees and vines with power saws, apparently in protest against the government's refusal to recognize Kiryat Arba's claim to the Jaabari Hill where the Orthodox township wants to expand. Meanwhile, Kiryat Arba residents were elated last night because the Cabinet yesterday declined to discuss the possible eviction of some 40 Kiryat Arba women and children who have occupied the old Hadassah clinic in Hebron for the past two weeks.

## SPECIAL INTERVIEW

## STATUS OF CATHOLIC-JEWISH DIALOGUE

By Lisa Palmieri-Billig

ROME, May 14 (JTA) -- The Catholic-Jewish dialogue, dating back to the troubled birth on Oct. 28, 1965 of the "Nostra Aetate" document of the Second Ecumenical Council, and matured after the publication on Dec. 1, 1974 of the Catholic "Guidelines" for implementing the document, is presently considered by the Vatican, in its efforts to improve relations with other religions, as a shining example to be followed.

This was made clear in an exclusive interview with the Jewish Telegraphic Agency by a top Vatican official, Msgr. Pietro Rossano, Secretary of the Secretariat for Non-Christians. Judaism, according to Rossano, occupies a special place in Catholic theology, setting it in a closer relationship with Christianity than other non-Christian religions.

In fact, while contacts with other "non-Christians" (e.g. Islam, Buddhism, Hinduism and the African religions) are dealt with by the Vatican Secretariat for Non-Christians, the Catholic-Jewish dialogue is under the sole competence of the Commission for Religious Relations with Jews, which is joined to the Vatican Secretariat for promoting Christian unity.

Difficulties encountered by the Vatican in the past in drawing up a basic document for relations with the Jews, now seem minimal in respect to some large roadblocks in the way to Catholic dialogue with other religions. The Vatican Secretariat for Non-Christians adjourned an international plenary session last month which saw the first draft of a similar document sent back for major revisions, postponing its publication until, probably, the year's end. The document will deal with all non-Christian faiths except Judaism which, as noted, already has its own address and its own document at the Vatican.

The Vatican And Islam

In speaking to the JTA of the Vatican's relations with Islam, Rossano expressed his hopes that some of the major difficulties might be overcome by emphasizing those aspects of the religious heritage held in common by both faiths -- the concept of one God, parts of the Bible, the veneration of Christ and Mary. Moreover, he said, he hoped the Catholic-Islam dialogue would eventually attain the same advanced levels as those already achieved by Catholics and Jews.

"While Christianity was born of Judaism," Rossano said, "and this creates a special bond between the two religions, it is also true that Islam came to being after Christianity and therefore contains inherent points of contact as well."

As for the current draft of the document regarding all non-Christian religions, Rossano said, "Consideration of the wide diversity of religious forms taken by communities in different socio-political systems in the world will force us to eliminate any reference to steps for practical action in the document. Our only hopes are in finding common theological roots, including even the basic concept of divinity in African religions."

The unofficial and still-to-be-revised summary of the plenary session's discussion of the Catholic-Islamic dialogue -- considered a "working paper" -- speaks of various difficulties to be overcome, necessarily of a different nature

from those that plagued the beginnings of Catholic-Jewish dialogue. Most seem to be centered around the effects of the explosion of Islamic nationalism in various parts of the world.

According to Rossano, this is in part a reaction to feelings of humiliation in relation to Jews, Christians, Israel and the Western nations. Its main danger is considered lying in the reversion to religious fundamentalism in some countries, to the revival of ancient legal codes which are intolerant of "different" behavior. Dialogue, ideally based on a sense of equality between the two partners, thus becomes difficult and further impaired by feelings of superiority of each towards the other.

Issue Of Proselytism

Mutual dedication to proselytism is also seen as a danger as it was by Jews before the publication of the Catholic "Guidelines" which allayed Jewish concerns by stating: "...Test the witness of Catholics to Jesus Christ should give offense to Jews, they must take care to live and spread their Christian faith while maintaining the strictest respect for religious liberty in line with the teaching of the Second Vatican Council...."

But in the Catholic-Islamic dialogue, the problem is greater because it is two-sided: Judaism, unlike Islamism, has not actively sought proselytes for centuries.

Rossano pointed out that another focal point for Catholic-Islamic dialogue is the Vatican's consideration that dialogue with the Islamic world is facilitated by communication between individuals, rather than with large groups defined by institutional or national boundaries. The greatest opening to dialogue is perceived by the Vatican in "enlightened individuals" of the Islamic faith in countries "where Islam is a minority religion." Catholic-Jewish dialogue considers "joint social action" and "human rights" of primary concern, and the Vatican hopes to achieve the same aims with Islam.

An example of this could be the way a meeting last month in Paris between representatives of the Secretariat for Non-Christians and Libyan government officials was handled. "Political issues were completely taboo, only religious matters were discussed," Rossano said.

As concerns the Mideast, the Vatican has noticeably increased its efforts at equidistance in its relations with Jews and Moslems, with Israel and the Arab nations, ever since the first unsteady steps towards the Israeli-Egyptian peace treaty. Following and expanding on Pope Paul VI's initiatives, Pope John Paul II supported the peace process fully from the beginning and inserts positive comments on the Mideast in his sermons wherever he can manage.

From a human point of that view, the way this correspondent's conversation with Rossano ended illustrates better than any generalities, the way the Vatican is presently concerned with avoiding any possible misunderstandings. Rossano suddenly glanced at his watch and politely excused himself for having to rush off not to be late for the open house which was being held at the Israel Embassy in honor of Israel Independence Day. "I have so much work," he confided, "but Cardinal Pignedoli (head of the Secretariat) reminded me how important it was for us to accept the invitation.... You know...in these delicate times."

COPENHAGEN (JTA) -- Jewish resistance fighters in Denmark's liberation from the Nazis in World War II were commemorated last week at a ceremony held at the Monument for War Heroes here.