

JTA daily news bulletin

Contents copyright. Reproduction only by previous arrangement.

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

Vol. XLVI - 62nd Year

Friday, August 10, 1979

No. 154

TERRORISTS' TRIAL OPENS

By Yitzhak Shargil

REHOVOT, Aug. 9 (JTA) -- The trial of two Palestinian terrorists, who participated in the coastal road massacre 17 months ago, opened here today before a military court presided over by Col. Aharon Kalperin. The two terrorists were represented by an Israeli lawyer, Lea Zemel.

Haled Mouhammed Ibrahim Houssein, 22, and Ibrahim Mahmoud Fuad, 19, are charged with 13 counts of murdering 34 civilians and injuring 73 others after a bus full of passengers was hijacked near Kibbutz Maagan Michael south of Haifa. The two terrorists were part of an 11-member raiding party which landed on the beach near Maagan Michael and killed, on its way to the highway, American nature photographer Gail Rubin of New York. Houssein and Fuad are the only survivors of the raiding terrorist group. The others were killed in a shootout with police.

The two defendants admitted being members of the El Fatah terrorist organization and part of the raiding group but they told the military court today that they did not participate in the actual shootings because the rubber boat that brought them from Lebanon capsized before they landed on Israel's coast and they lost their arms in the accident.

Sought Release Of Jailed Terrorists

The prosecutor told the court that before landing near Maagan Michael the terrorists made three attempts to reach the coast of Tel Aviv, planning to take over one of Tel Aviv's hotels and then demand the release of jailed terrorists in Israel. But because of technical difficulties and poor navigation they did not reach Tel Aviv and landed instead in Maagan Michael -- many miles north of the target. From there, the prosecutor charged, the terrorists, including the two on trial, started their rampage.

The coastal road massacre on a Saturday night in March 1978, stunned the world for its cruelty and brutality. Should the two defendants be convicted the prosecution may demand the death penalty. The death penalty is not in effect in Israel, although the Israeli government recently empowered courts to apply it in cases of crimes of extreme inhumanity.

The opening of the trial today was marked by tension and a short incident between relatives of the victims and the two terrorists. The incident occurred when the defendants entered the courtroom with smiles on their faces and their fingers raised in a victory sign. This infuriated one of the spectators who lost control of himself and spit at the two, who in return spit back at him. The courtroom was stunned for a moment but order was immediately restored.

Today's trial session adjourned without a new date being set for future sessions.

ENTRY VISAS TO EGYPT INCREASE

TEL AVIV, Aug. 9 (JTA) -- There has

been a sudden spurt in the number of Egyptian visas for Israelis who wish to visit that country, it was reported today by the Israeli Foreign Ministry special office for visas to Egypt. The office said it had received 59 visas in one batch today. Until now, visas dribbled in in ones or twos.

Israeli circles assume that the increase in the number of visas is the result of talks held earlier this week between Foreign Minister Moshe Dayan and Egyptian Minister of State for Foreign Affairs Boutros Ghali. During a meeting between the two men at Dayan's home, the Israeli Foreign Minister expressed disappointment with the slow pace of visa approvals by Egypt. Hundreds of Israeli visa applications were being held up in Cairo, Dayan told Ghali. The Egyptian official, who was in Israel to participate in the autonomy talks, told Dayan that the delay was due to bureaucratic snafus.

STORMY LIKUD MEETING

By Yitzhak Shargil

TEL AVIV, Aug. 9 (JTA) -- Likud Knesset members comprising Herut, Liberal Party and La'am, held a stormy meeting here Tuesday night to assess the state of their coalition in the wake of Foreign Minister Moshe Dayan's harsh criticism earlier in the day of the government coalition and the Cabinet in which he blamed both for creating an image of Israel abroad as "dying economically."

The Likud members took the opportunity to conduct a searing critique of the government for acting without consulting the Likud Knesset faction, for the lack of contact between the Cabinet and the faction and for the ineffectual way in which the government has been functioning of late.

Most speakers at the meeting confirmed Dayan's assessment that the government seemed to be paralyzed, especially in the economic field which he had described as chaotic. Even Herut Knesset Whip Chaim Kaufman said the government was facing an unprecedented crisis. La'am Knesset member Yitzhak Peretz suggested that Premier Menachem Begin resign and form a new Cabinet.

The meeting ended with the adoption of a resolution calling on Begin and Likud ministers to convene in two weeks and bring to that meeting a detailed plan to improve the situation. The stormy nature of the meeting and the self-critical statements were made, according to some of those in attendance, because most of the Likud Cabinet ministers were not present, nor was Begin. He was at home convalescing.

New Bombshell In Israel:

RABIN LAUNCHES ALL OUT POLITICAL WAR AGAINST PERES

By Gil Sedar and Yitzhak Shargil

JERUSALEM, Aug. 9 (JTA) -- Former Premier Yitzhak Rabin launched yesterday an all out political war against his long-time rival, Labor Party chairman Shimon Peres. In a new book, whose first two chapters were to be published this week by Maariv, Rabin accuses Peres as "constantly undermining" his rule, at all costs. Details of the new book were publicized last night by Israel Television.

Rabin wrote that Peres was determined to become Premier, and for that goal, everything was permissible; including leaking to the press of state secrets. According to Rabin, this reached a climax

when the local press publicized the story of a secret visit by Soviet emissaries.

Rabin wrote that he regarded the leak with grave concern, and ordered an investigation among civil servants. When no one was found responsible for the publication, Rabin summoned both Peres and Deputy Premier Yigal Allon, who suggested that they all undergo a lie detector test to see if any of them was responsible for the leak.

"Peres became as white as the wall," wrote Rabin. "He said he did not find it suitable for a minister to undergo such a test, and said he would refuse to do so in principle. Allon and I exchanged glances, and I knew there was no need to have a test," Rabin wrote.

Rabin, in the book, entitled "Service Record," disqualified Peres from serving as Israel's Premier on the grounds that he was never a soldier. Rabin recalled that he did not consider Peres the suitable candidate for Defense Minister in his Cabinet, but was forced to appoint him by the implied threat of the ex-Raf wing that it would not support the government unless Peres was appointed minister.

Peres Rebuts Rabin's Charge

In an interview with Israel TV last night, Peres said he had served in the Hagana, the Israel Defense Force and the defense establishment from his early youth. He said he had been one of the men inducted into the IDF, at its very inception, by the first Chief of Staff, Gen. Yaacov Dori. "My number was easy to remember," Peres said. "It was 54466." He said he had started out as a commander of a unit, and ended up 27 years later as Minister of Defense.

Peres noted that the element of revenge was sometimes much stronger in political autobiographies than the historical record, "but I am sure that the truth will come out one day... He added: "... I am at peace with myself. My memory is intact."

Rabin alleged in the book that "53 hours after the Air France airliner was hijacked to Entebbe (Airport in Uganda in July, 1976) Peres had not fulfilled the minimum requirement of a Defense Minister, to ascertain from the commanding officers the military options." But Peres had a totally different version: "... I am happy that on the eve of the operation, Rabin joined in the decision to carry out the raid, and the Cabinet approved it."

On the illicit Rabin Washington bank account, which finally brought him down, Rabin wrote that six months before the account was exposed, a "well-known" Israeli journalist had informed one of his aides that certain circles in the Labor Party knew of the account and planned to use it to discredit him. These circles even sent an investigator to Washington. Rabin ignored the warning, and this was, he wrote, his "tragic mistake."

Peres said he thought the book would do its author a great deal of harm, and indicated that Rabin must realize that if Peres ever became Premier, he would not make a place for Rabin in his government. Rabin, in his book, said that he would never want to serve under Peres as Premier.

Peres expanded the verbal battle this morning with a declaration in *Yediot Achronot* that it should be remembered Rabin was ousted as Premier not because of any action by Peres but because of the discovery of the Rabin bank

account in Washington. The controversy revived the situation of 1976 when the issue of the Labor Party's leadership was also Peres versus Rabin. Some sources said Allon might emerge as the central figure in the Labor Party because of the bitter public clash between Rabin and Peres.

Israelis Left Bewildered

Observers agreed that the Rabin charges had left Israelis bewildered and wondering who was running Israel and who could run Israel. Israelis were troubled by an ailing, though recovering Premier Menachem Begin, and an ailing Cabinet in which personal and ideological rifts repeatedly sparked fights between the ministers, a situation publicly criticized by Foreign Minister Moshe Dayan earlier this week.

Even the Labor Alignment opposition, seeking to capitalize on the disarray in the ruling Likud and even maneuvering to move up the elections in that hope, was obviously split by internal disputes. The Israeli public had scarcely absorbed

Dayan's sweeping charges of incompetence in the Begin government, when the Rabin blast was publicized by television. Rabin, currently in Bucharest, is not expected to be back in Israel before late tonight. Asked by telephone about Peres' counterblast, Rabin refused to comment on any aspect of his charges against Peres.

The Labor Party leadership held a closed meeting this morning and the leaders decided to impose a total news blackout on their discussions. It was learned, however, that some of Peres' supporters wanted Rabin ousted from the party leadership, and ousted immediately. Their argument was that the situation was a tumor that must be cut out and the sooner the better. But other Labor leaders said the party should try to dampen down the dispute rather than let it grow in ferocity. Some of the leaders expressed deep regret that Rabin chose this time to cast aspersions at the party when it was making excellent progress in emerging from its crisis.

Timing Of The Rift

The newest rift came after months of efforts by Labor leaders to rehabilitate the party after it lost power in 1977 to Likud after uninterrupted control from the start of the State. The party appeared to have accepted Peres' leadership. Even Allon, who had been considered a candidate for the party's leadership, soon accepted Peres as leader. But Rabin remained silent until the television report made clear his total rejection of the Peres party leadership.

Rabin's supporters, coming to his defense, cited a statement in the memoirs of Moshe Sharett, who served as both Foreign Minister and Premier, that he lacked confidence in Peres. But the main criticism of Rabin involved not ideology but his personal attack on Peres.

Other speculation centered on Dayan, with some observers saying that his criticism of the present government suggested he was ready for another major move, including the possibility of his rejoining the Labor Party, or a bid to lead a new party which, given the rifts in the two major parties, might emerge as a strong political grouping.

Meanwhile, many Likud ministers said they felt that the Rabin-Peres squabble could not have come at a better time, in view of Dayan's stinging criticism of the government. Some felt that the Labor Party's preoccupation with its own Pandora's Box of troubles would prevent it from being a real threat to the Likud government. Mapam, a partner in the Labor Alignment, was maintaining a careful watch on the developments arising out of Dayan's criticisms and Rabin's book.

U.S. STUDYING HOW IT CAN HELP EGYPT REVITALIZE ITS ARMS INDUSTRY

By Helen Silver

WASHINGTON, Aug. 9 (JTA) -- The State Department said today that the United States was studying how it can help Egypt revitalize its arms industry. Department spokesman Tom Reston said that no decision has been made yet on what the U.S. will do and all proposals will have to be discussed with Congress.

Reston said that William Perry, director of the Pentagon's Research Bureau, has recently returned from Cairo where he discussed with the Egyptians what assistance was needed for the organization and operation of that country's defense industry.

The proposed U.S. assistance is within the context of the Carter Administration's long-held policy. Reston stressed, and would be aimed at improving Egypt's legitimate defense needs. "We have been cooperating with Egypt in a number of fields over the last several years with broad support from Congress to pursue the peace process and advance the economic development of Egypt," he said.

"We have allocated a \$1.9 billion program of military assistance to help Egypt meet its legitimate defense needs," Reston added. "We also explored whether we could appropriately contribute to Egypt's industrial capacity and upgrade its military equipment as well as to produce such equipment." Reston stated that while no decision has been made, "we would be prepared, in consultation with Congress, to provide some advice and assistance that Egypt may require in mutually agreed areas."

In a related Mideast development, West German Foreign Minister Hans-Dietrich Genscher met with President Carter today at the White House and then had lunch with Secretary of State Cyrus Vance. There was no immediate comment on the meeting, although Reston said he assumed they discussed the Mideast along with other international developments. Diplomatic sources said yesterday that West Germany is making an effort to start peace talks between the Arabs and Israel and is offering its good offices and contacts to get the talks moving.

JEWISH-BORN PHILOSOPHER-NUN TO BE HONORED AT ST. PATRICK'S MASS

NEW YORK, Aug. 9 (JTA) -- The Edith Stein Guild, formed in memory of the Jewish-born philosopher-nun who converted to Catholicism and who was murdered at Auschwitz in 1942, will sponsor a mass in her memory at St. Patrick's Cathedral here this Saturday.

The mass will be held on the 37th anniversary of Edith Stein's death and in memory of all who died in the Holocaust. While some of her Catholic admirers search for evidence that might qualify her for sainthood, they also stress her martyrdom for Jews and Christians. The Edith Stein Guild is a Roman Catholic Society dedicated to better relations with Jews but specifically bars evangelization of Jews.

The Rev. John Kelley of Rockaway, Queens, plans to say in his homily Saturday at the mass that since Dr. Stein's murder "we are free to realize that a new prophetic type has risen among us. By her martyrdom, judgement is passed on the Nazis. By her death, even more than by her life, she condemns the demons in our world."

Born in 1891 in Breslau, then in Germany,

now Wroclaw, Poland, Dr. Stein was the youngest of seven children in an Orthodox home. She became an agnostic at 13 and remained one until she was 21 when she began to study the views of Edmund Husserl, the German philosopher in Freiburg, Germany, where she became his assistant and a leading German philosopher.

Always Considered Herself A Jew

She became a Catholic in 1922 and taught at Catholic schools in Germany and Austria but she always emphasized she considered herself a Jew. In 1933, when Hitler came to power, she joined the Carmelite Order and became Sister Teresa Benedicta. In 1938 she was transferred from Cologne to The Netherlands for her own safety but she and another nun, Sister Rosa, were arrested by the SS in 1942.

In his homily, Father Kelley, who is active in ecumenical work between Jews and Christians, will note that in April, 1973, the French Bishops Committee for Relations with Jews issued a statement emphasizing Jewish ties to Israel and stressing that "Jews are called to glorify the Divine Name by the holiness of their lives. Within the Jewish community this is known as a vocation to righteousness, or Tzedekah."

Father Kelley also will say that "if the loss of the lives of Edith Stein and the millions of Holocaust martyrs says anything at all, it certainly says that we, the witnesses of today, must accept a greater responsibility for our world and for its social structures."

Msr. Nicholas Moore of Our Lady of Victory Church in Manhattan, headquarters of the Edith Stein Guild, said one of the activities of the Guild is to investigate incidents of anti-Semitism and anti-Catholicism at American colleges.

INTERNATIONAL CONFAB ON PALESTINIANS TO BE INITIATED BY CEAUDESCU

TEL AVIV, Aug. 9 (JTA) -- President Nicolae Ceausescu of Rumania intends to initiate an international conference on the problems of the Palestinians with the participation of the Soviet Union and the United States, according to reports from Bucharest where Ceausescu met with former Israeli Premier Yitzhak Rabin. The Rumanian President also told Rabin he intends to invite Israel, the Palestine Liberation Organization, the Arab countries and "other states" to that conference. According to reports from Bucharest, Rabin told Ceausescu he did not believe such a conference could materialize. Rabin has reported on his talks in Rumania to Premier Menachem Begin.

TERRORISTS GO ON TRIAL IN BRUSSELS

BRUSSELS, Aug. 9 (JTA) -- Two Palestinian terrorists, at the opening of their trial here on charges of throwing a bomb in the Brussels Airport and injuring 12 people last April 16, told the court that their original plan was to seize an El Al plane and take its passengers hostage. The two terrorists, Khaled Dayekh Dokh and Hussein Rad Mahmoud, said that they threw the bomb into a crowded corridor in the airport when they realized they could not reach the Israeli plane, which arrived later with its passengers from Tel Aviv. They said they wanted to kill as many Israelis as possible once it became clear they could not take hostages.

PARIS (JTA) -- Israel's new ambassador to France, Meir Rosenne, expressed hope Thursday that West Europe will not support any attempt to modify UN Security Council Resolution 242. Rosenne, who participated in the Camp David and Alexandria Israeli-Egyptian negotiations, said that any change in the resolution would jeopardize the Israeli-Egyptian peace treaty.

**SPECIAL TO THE JTA
THREATENING LETTERS RECEIVED BY
JEWISH EDITORS OF THE ROMANIAN
SECTION OF RADIO FREE EUROPE**
By Rochelle Sidel-Wolk

ALBANY, N.Y., Aug. 9 (JTA) -- Jewish editors of the Romanian Section of Radio Free Europe (RFE) in Munich have received anonymous threatening letters, and two RFE employees there, Jacob Popper and Edgor Rafael, claim there is a link between the letters, deportation proceedings against accused Nazi war criminal Archbishop Valeriu Trifa, and allegations of anti-Semitism within the Romanian Department of RFE.

A copy of a letter written in Rumanian to Popper, program editor, was forwarded to the Jewish Telegraphic Agency with the following translation: "Stinking Zhid! For our Archbishop, it's you and your 'havra' who will have to pay! The Legion lived, lives and will live!" The signature is "The Death Squad, 'Mota and Marzi'." According to Popper and Rafael, six of their Jewish colleagues also received the letter, and the letter is believed to be related to RFE's broadcast of interviews with Trifa in May.

Rep. Elizabeth Holtzman (D-NY), chairman of the House Judiciary Committee, has been investigating circumstances that led to the broadcasts. According to a spokesman in her office, it has been extremely difficult to uncover the facts and the investigation is still in progress.

Trifa Hearing Postponed

Trifa, of Grass Lake, Michigan, faces denaturalization hearings within the next 60 days. He is accused of playing a leading role in the January 1941 Bucharest pogrom. As president of the National Union of Christian Rumanian Students, the youth arm of the fascist Rumanian Iron Guard, he allegedly committed atrocities that resulted in the murder of some 1200 to 12,000 Jews.

Trifa's hearing had been scheduled for July 30, but the government requested and received a 60-day continuance. Rumania, currently seeking most favored nation status, has indicated its willingness to cooperate with U.S. efforts to obtain further evidence there, according to a Justice Department official.

In June, Noel Bernard, director of the Rumanian Department for RFE, met with Holtzman and with Dr. Charles Kremer of New York to discuss Trifa's RFE broadcasts. Kremer, 62, has been seeking justice for Trifa for over 20 years.

Trifa, head of the Orthodox Episcopate Church of America, had been interviewed on RFE on May 1 for 45 minutes by Liviu Floda, using the pseudonym "Brancusi," a Rumanian Jew who has worked for RFE for many years. The subject of Trifa's discussion was the 50th anniversary of the Rumanian Missionary Episcopate Church of America.

This church is under the aegis of the Orthodox Church of Constantinople and Trifa's church, founded in 1952, is under the aegis of the Russian Orthodox Church of Moscow. RFE's choice of Trifa came under fire not only because he is an alleged Iron Guardist facing denaturalization proceedings, but also because his church was not celebrating the anniversary he was discussing, according to Kremer.

As a result of his meeting with Bernard,

Kremer told JTA he was promised that RFE would report the facts of Trifa's past and present, apologize for the "erroneous report," give him equal time on RFE to "speak the facts of Trifa's past," and interview Bishop Victorin Ursache, head of the Rumanian Missionary Episcopate Church of America. A spokesman for Holtzman confirmed that she was given these same general assurances by Bernard.

In a letter to Kremer, dated June 20, Bernard said that he had met with Holtzman and her staff, and that "Both Mr. (William) Buell, senior vice president of RFE and myself assured them that this organization has no interest whatsoever in protecting Bishop Trifa from whatever may be coming to him." Buell told the JTA in a telephone interview that he was not aware of Bernard's promises to Kremer. He said that while some of the promises "seem reasonable," Bernard could not make some of them because "he is not in a position to do so."

Meanwhile, Kremer has asked Holtzman to investigate why, after more than two months, Bernard has not fulfilled these promises. "Since RFE is funded by Congress and you've done more than anyone in Congress on this issue, I appeal to you to see that Bernard lives up to his words," Kremer said in a letter to the Congresswoman.

**SHCHARANSKY IS 'JUST SKIN
AND BONES,' FAMILY REPORTS**

NEW YORK, Aug. 9 (JTA) -- Anatoly Shcharansky "looks very bad, and is very skinny," according to his brother Leonid, who, with his mother Ida Milgrom, was permitted a two-hour conversation with him Monday at the Chetipal Prison, 500 miles from Moscow. The talk had to be conducted through a glass partition under the eyes of two guards. Leonid was reached by phone by Mrs. Lynn Singer, president of the Long Island Committee for Soviet Jewry.

Shcharansky said his brother's condition is "awful, intolerable. We're afraid some tragedy may take place." Despite substantial foreign protests, Shcharansky told Mrs. Singer, Anatoly has received no medical care.

According to the Student Struggle for Soviet Jewry and Union of Councils for Soviet Jews, and London activist Michael Sherbourne, Mrs. Milgrom reported separately that "although we knew it was Tolya (Anatoly), it was impossible to recognize him. He was just skin and bones. He had a sharp nose like a knife and staring eyes. He has severe headaches if he reads more than ten minutes."

According to Mrs. Milgrom, she told her son that she had written to the Ministers of Health and Interior about his severe head pains and failing eyesight, and was informed that he was examined and his illness treated. Anatoly responded that the only examination he had was the routine check all Chetipal Prison inmates had received by a visiting doctor, and all had been declared healthy. His eyes were never examined.

LENINGRAD REFUSNIK DIES

NEW YORK, Aug. 9 (JTA) -- Leningrad refusnik Tamara Joffe died last week, apparently the result of kidney failure, according to information received by the National Conference on Soviet Jewry. Joffe, her husband, Yakov, and their child, first applied for an exit visa in May, 1976, and were refused the following January. Tamara had suffered from kidney failure and the most recent reports from Leningrad indicated she was about to start dialysis. Western doctors, notably those at the Cleveland (Ohio) Clinic, felt she would have been a good candidate for a kidney transplant.