

# JTA daily news bulletin

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## CABINET SETS SPECIAL SESSION ON PROPOSED IL 15 BILLION CUT IN ISRAEL'S DEFENSE BUDGET

By Gil Sedar and Yitzhak Shargil

JERUSALEM, June 17 (JTA) -- The Cabinet will meet in special session tomorrow to consider a proposed IL 15 billion cut in the defense budget. But if the controversial measure is approved, it is expected to encounter difficulties in the Knesset where both coalition and opposition members denounced it today as a danger to national security and criticized the haste with which it was brought before the full Cabinet.

The issue has sparked a bitter dispute between the defense establishment and the Treasury. Premier Menachem Begin sought to resolve it yesterday by appointing a five-man committee headed by Agriculture Minister Ariel Sharon to work out a compromise. Although the panel was expected to deliberate for several days, Sharon convened it immediately and after a 5 1/2 hour meeting, the budget cut was approved by a vote of 3-2.

The outcome was expected since Sharon made it clear yesterday that he supported the cut. He held the deciding vote. In addition to Sharon, the panel consisted of two Treasury officials and two Defense Ministry officials.

The issue was discussed in the Knesset's Foreign Affairs and Security Committee today. Labor MK Haim Barlev, a former Chief of Staff, said a cut of that magnitude could not be sustained without severely affecting Israel's defense capabilities. He also criticized the "most ridiculous way" in which the decision was made. Such cuts cannot be decided by sitting down for a few hours. "It is simply not serious," Barlev declared.

### Charge Cut Will Endanger Security

Yehuda Ben-Meir, of the National Religious Party, a coalition partner, said he was convinced that the proposed cut would do inestimable damage to the country's defense establishment. "You can cut IL 15 billion and you can decide that the army won't train this year," Ben-Meir said. "Anything can be decided. The question is, what is in the best interests of the State?" He said he would vote against the budget cut in the Knesset.

Begin, who is serving temporarily as Defense Minister, refused to allow defense officials to appear before the Knesset committee prior to the special Cabinet session. But defense sources warned that if the budget cut is approved by Begin, it would result in serious delays in producing Israel's second generation jet fighter plane, the "Lavie." Soldiers stationed in the Negev desert and hills will be forced to live in tents for the next year or two and the size of the army may have to be reduced.

The IL 15 billion cut in defense spending was demanded by Finance Minister Yigal Hurwitz. Defense Ministry officials and senior officers said today that they could absorb an IL 4 billion cut at the very most and expressed hope that Begin would not accept the Sharon committee's recommendations in full.

Equally disturbing to many coalition members are the political implications of Begin's appointment of Sharon as the principal arbitrator in the

defense budget dispute. While powerful coalition objections prevented Begin from naming the hawkish Sharon as Defense Minister, he now seems to have emerged as the "strong man" on the most basic issue affecting defense. Some coalition members were asking today whether Begin will make it a habit of giving Sharon jurisdiction over matters that are normally the prerogative of the Defense Minister.

## U.S. FILES SUITS AGAINST ALLEGED EX-NAZIS

By Joseph Palakoff

WASHINGTON, June 17 (JTA) -- The U.S. Department of Justice said today that it had filed actions in Philadelphia and Los Angeles against two former residents of Baltic states, who allegedly cooperated with Nazi forces in the killing of Jews during World War II.

The Justice Department asked the U.S. District Court in Philadelphia to revoke the U.S. citizenship of Arnolds Richards Truscis, 70. It asked a U.S. Immigration and Naturalization Service judge in Los Angeles to deport Mike Pasker of Santa Monica, California, on similar charges.

According to the suit against Truscis, he served in the auxiliary police force of the Latvian security service from 1941 to 1943, during which time he allegedly assisted German forces by guarding, beating and tormenting unarmed Jewish civilians. He later served the German SS and SD organizations that persecuted Jews in Latvia, according to the suit. The Justice Department also charged that when Truscis entered the U.S. in 1951 he "willfully concealed his membership in Latvian groups that persecuted Jews." The Department said that "because his entry and his 1965 citizenship were both illegally obtained, the citizenship must be revoked."

In the Los Angeles suit, the Justice Department said that Pasker, who is also known as Mecys Paskевичius, entered the U.S. in 1950 and made "misrepresentations" saying he was a "displaced person." The suit said that in 1941-44, Pasker "helped German and Lithuanian forces who persecuted civilians in Lithuania." The Department added that he took part in hanging and shooting 100 Jewish civilians in Lithuania in July, 1941. In August, 1979, the U.S. District Court in Los Angeles ordered Pasker's citizenship revoked for concealing his "background" when he entered the U.S.

## CARTER, HUSSEIN REPORTEDLY 'CLEARED AIR' AT FIRST MEETING

By Joseph Palakoff

WASHINGTON, June 17 (JTA) -- American officials who attended the first of a series of meetings at the White House today between President Carter and King Hussein of Jordan, said that the discussions "cleared the air" between the two leaders who have not met for more than two years. But they stopped short of saying that the differences between them over the Camp David peace process have been bridged.

"While no one would claim there are still not differences in approach" toward resolving the Arab-Israeli conflict, the discussions "served to clear the air and place behind them what strains and difficulties had been occasioned by the differences of views," an official said.

One senior White House official, when asked if Jordan now shares the U.S. view of a comprehensive settlement in the Middle East, replied that "It

is our judgement that Jordan does and it makes eminent good judgement it should."

White House Press Secretary Jody Powell said that the initial Carter-Hussein meeting "contributed markedly" to easing the strains between the President and the King. Asked if the strains had vanished, Powell replied, "There was no evidence of strain in the conversations at all. It was a very open and frank discussion" and was held in "a very cordial manner and in good humor."

Powell opened his remarks to reporters by saying that "the objective of both countries is peace" and that "the focus is upon the ultimate objective by both sides which is a comprehensive peace settlement with dignity, security and justice for all parties."

#### Aid Not Discussed

Powell said there was no discussion of aid "military or otherwise" at this morning's meeting. At the State Department, however, officials said the discussions between Carter and Hussein would cover "a wide range of subjects of mutual interest and security."

State Department spokesman Thomas Reston noted "the long-standing military supply and training relationship" between the U.S. and Jordan's armed forces. He noted also that U.S. military leaders are in "continuing contact" with respect to Jordan's military needs. He pointed out that Jordan's military requirements were discussed last April in Amman by the Joint Military Commission. Reston described the commission as "the main forum for specific Jordanian requests."

He said the general situation in the Middle East as it may affect the security of the U.S. and its allies would be discussed during Hussein's visit to Washington which will continue through Saturday. But he did not know "what subjects in particular the King might wish to raise."

Hussein was greeted officially by Carter in a military ceremony on the White House lawn this morning. Carter's welcoming remarks were carefully worded and the response by Hussein, who was accompanied by his wife, Queen Noor, was even less specific. The impression was given that the groundwork for an agreement between the two on how to reach a peaceful solution to the Arab-Israeli conflict has yet to be established. Carter spoke of the "long years of consultation and co-operation" between the U.S. and Jordan. Hussein said "My government and my people are proud that we hold to the same principles and have always upheld the same ideas" that are maintained by the U.S. "the greatest nation in our time."

#### Saudis Seek New Equipment

At the last two meetings of the Joint Military Commission, Jordanian tank purchases from the U.S. were discussed. The State Department spokesman would not give details but said Congress would be consulted on Jordanian purchases. Reston's discussion of the U.S.-Jordanian military relationship followed his response to questions about reports today that Saudi Arabia is seeking bomb racks and fuel-extension equipment for the 60 F-15 jet fighters the U.S. sold to that country in 1978.

Sen. Frank Church (D, Idaho), chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, said today with respect to the reported Saudi request that the Administration had committed itself, when it first proposed the sale of F-15s to Saudi Arabia, that it would not sell equipment which would change the interceptor role of that aircraft. Ad-

ministration sources said that the F-15 is primarily designed for air defense missions and that its capabilities would not exceed its U.S. Air Force role at the time which was air-to-air combat.

Reston said today that "the ongoing dialogue concerning equipment appropriate to Saudi Arabia's defense needs is sensitive to changes in regional security." He spoke in that connection of the threat posed by the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan. Reston emphasized that no decision has been made on the Saudi request and that "we would consult closely with Congress on the appropriateness of the equipment."

Reston said he may comment later on whether Saudi Arabia would use its F-15s against Israel. He also said he may comment later on the view reportedly expressed by officials at the Jordanian Embassy here that King Hussein may raise with President Carter what the officials claimed were repeated violations of Jordanian air space by Israeli war planes. There have been no reports here of any such violations.

#### JACOB L. TALMON DIES AT 64

JERUSALEM, June 17 (JTA) -- Prof. Jacob L. Talmon, a world-famous historian and educator, died here today during open heart surgery at Hadassah-Hebrew University Hospital. He was 64.

Born in Rypin, Poland, he studied at the Hebrew University, where he later became Professor of Modern History in 1960, and at the Sorbonne, and at St. Catherine's College, at Oxford University. He had served as a visiting professor at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology.

During his studies at the London School of Economics, he served on the British Jewish Committee of Emigrants and in that capacity he often acted as a liaison between Dr. Chaim Weizmann and the then British Prime Minister Winston Churchill. He also served as secretary of the foreign affairs committee of the Board of Deputies of British Jews.

Talmon was a world expert on totalitarian regimes from the period of the French Revolution until the present time. Among his best known books are "The Origins of Totalitarian Democracy," "Political Messianism -- The Romantic Phase," and "Israel Among the Nations."

In recent years, Talmon became steadily more involved in political activities, siding with a dovish solution to the Arab-Israeli conflict. In his last article, published in "Haaretz" on Passover Eve, he called for the resignation of Premier Menachem Begin. The article was called "The Homeland is in Danger."

A member of the Israel Science Academy, he received the Israel Prize in the field of legal and social sciences.

#### ISRAELI PROFESSOR RECEIVES AWARD

WASHINGTON (JTA) -- The General Motors Cancer Research Foundation has announced that Isaac Berenblum, retired professor in the Department of Experimental Biology at the Weizmann Institute of Science in Rehovot, Israel, is one of four recipients this year of its cancer research awards. Berenblum is to receive the Alfred P. Sloan Jr. Prize here Wednesday for his discovery which opens new avenues for understanding what cancer is, how it works and suggests new approaches to cancer prevention, the Foundation said. The award consists of a gold medal and \$100,000.

JERUSALEM (JTA) -- The Central Bureau of Statistics published inflation figures for May which showed that the cost of living index rose by 9.5 percent.

## GOVERNMENT TRIES TO CONVINCE JERUSALEM SQUATTERS TO LEAVE

By David Landau and Yitzhak Shargil

JERUSALEM, June 17 (JTA) — Intensive efforts were being made today to avert a clash between police and several score poverty families who have established a tent city on unused State-owned land south of Jerusalem and refuse to leave until the government provides them with decent housing.

Negotiations between representatives of the tent city and Housing Minister David Levy broke down yesterday after the squatters had agreed tentatively to leave the site. This morning, some 1000 Jerusalem policemen and border police assembled at the Russian Compound in downtown Jerusalem awaiting orders to remove the squatters by force. Levy insisted on a radio interview today that their peaceful evacuation was a precondition for any further action by his ministry to alleviate their housing problems.

The squatters are Oriental Jews, mostly young married couples, many with children, who left their slum dwellings in the Katamon quarter and other depressed neighborhoods in Jerusalem to erect the tent city in protest against the government's failure to relieve the housing shortage. They call their tent community "Ohel Moreh," an allusion to Elon Moreh, the Gush Emunim settlement on the West Bank which was lavishly supported by the government until it was declared illegal by the Supreme Court last year. Subsequently the government built a new settlement for the Elon Moreh settlers. The squatters say they are resorting to the Gush Emunim's methods of militancy and defiance of authority because it seems to be the only way to stir the government to action.

### Gaon Tries To Mediate

The dispute seemed to have been resolved yesterday when Nissim Gaon, a Geneva-based millionaire and president of the World Sephardi Federation, pledged to raise \$600 million in the next few months for investment in low-cost rental housing for 40,000 young married couples unable to find homes they can afford.

Gaon, a personal friend of Premier Menachem Begin, flew here last Thursday and apparently was accepted by the squatters as a mediator in their dispute with the government. He and Levy met with representatives of the tent city yesterday when it appeared that the negotiations would succeed. They hit a snag, however, when Levy contended that a number of the families involved already had adequate housing and needed no extra help.

The squatters stormed out of the meeting, charging that it was "yet another attempt by the government to con us." Many of them marched through the city's poverty neighborhoods calling through bull horns for sympathizers to join them at the tent city. Although negotiations were resumed today, the squatters rejected Gaon's offer, declaring that the housing problem must be solved by the government, not by foreign philanthropists. Gaon returned to Geneva today.

A clash between the squatters and police could have serious political consequences for Begin's government. The votes of Oriental Jews were largely responsible for Likud's victory over the Labor Party in the 1977 elections.

Another source of controversy is the fact that the tent city was financed by independent

MK Samuel Flatto-Sharon, also a millionaire but with a tarnished reputation since he was accused of irregular practices in his campaign for a Knesset seat. Gaon denied that one of the reasons he entered the picture was because he did not want the slum dwellers to accept aid from Sharon. "If Mr. Sharon wants to help them — welcome," he said yesterday. Sharon who usually supports the Begin coalition in the Knesset, warned yesterday that if the housing problem is not solved quickly he would finance dozens of new "Ohel Morehs."

## NO BREAK IN KIDNAPPING

By Yitzhak Shargil

TEL AVIV, June 17 (JTA) — The police were reported today to be at a dead end in their search for eight-year-old Oran Yarden who was kidnapped 10 days ago but not released after his parents, Penina and Amos Yarden of Tel Aviv, paid the IL 2 million ransom demanded by his abductors.

The police reported yesterday that 12 persons had been arrested during the previous 24 hours for questioning in connection with the crime. They include two known prostitutes and their pimp who were remanded to jail for 10 days by a Tel Aviv magistrate today. According to the police, they have some knowledge of the kidnapping and may possess information as to the missing child's whereabouts. One of the prostitutes reportedly knew the boy. He was last seen on Sunday, June 8, in the wealthy Savoyon quarter of Tel Aviv where his parents live.

Massive searches by police, troops and civilian volunteers aided by helicopters and other aircraft began Tuesday night after the ransom was paid but the boy failed to appear. The searches centered on the coastal plain between Kfar Saba where the ransom money was dropped and Rishon LeZion. The first palpable clues were reported yesterday when police found photographs of the boy and some toys in a flat in Magdiel, near Kfar Saba, indicating that he had been held there.

Oron's parents made an impassioned appeal to the kidnappers on radio and television Monday to release their child unharmed. Premier Menachem Begin also made a personal appeal. Yesterday, Oran's mother went to Rachel's Tomb in Bethlehem to pray for her son's safe return.

The crime had shocked and shamed Israelis and even underworld elements are helping police with information gleaned from criminal sources. An IL 250,000 reward has been posted for information leading to the boy's recovery. Nothing has been heard from the kidnappers since their call for ransom last Tuesday. Israeli legal sources are said to be considering an offer of immunity to the kidnappers if Oran is returned unharmed.

Rabbis and yeshiva students are helping by reciting prayers and psalms at the Yarden home.

TEL AVIV (JTA) — U.S. Ambassador Samuel Lewis firmly denied Tuesday that there has been a "cover-up" of alleged irregularities at the two American-financed air bases being constructed for Israel at Ovdva and Ramon in the Negev. He conceded, however, that there might have been instances of "inefficiency, corruption or malfeasance" at the sites which, he said, was inevitable in a project of such size and complexity being undertaken with unprecedented speed. He said he wanted "to assure the Israeli public" that the bases would be completed on time and to the highest standards required by Israel's defense forces. They will be "an integral part of Israel's future security structure," Lewis promised.

## SPECIAL REPORT

**THOUSANDS OF JEWS, OTHERS ATTEND  
ROME'S THIRD ANNUAL 'GHETTO FESTIVAL'**

By Lisa Palmieri-Billig

ROME, June 17 (JTA) — Dreamt up by Rome's Jewish Cultural Center four years ago, the "Ghetto Festival" successfully went through its third edition Sunday. The "meeting at the Portico d'Ottavia" as it is officially called, drew thousands of Roman Jews, and other Italians plus wandering tourists into the Via Portico d'Ottavia and the three or four side streets surrounding Rome's main synagogue — an area inhabited by Jews for 2000 years.

This year the program was rich with features grounded in an historical awareness of the Rome Jewish community. An exhibition reconstructing the story of the five "scale" ("shuls") of various Jewish ethnic origins that were once housed where the main synagogue, currently under repair, now stands was put together on the basis of photographs and layouts that were gathering dust in the city's archives. The opening, in the basement of the synagogue, the area of the "Spanish Temple," was attended by Italian notables, the Chief Rabbi and head of the Rome Jewish community and the Ambassador of Israel in Rome.

Another highlight, truly unique both as a tradition and as a "happening" was the sign-off of the day: the "Mishmarah."

Dating back to the custom in Biblical times of gathering at the table with food, wine, prayers and songs the night before a circumcision was to take place, the "Mishmarah" in Rome was extended around the 16th Century, to include all-night joyous vigils before other main events in Jewish life such as weddings.

Sunday night, a U-shaped table was placed in a corner of the "ghetto's" main square, presided over by the Chief Rabbi, Prof. Elio Toaf, plus four other rabbis. The other places were occupied by whoever could get there first.

A young bride and bridegroom were introduced to the crowd of thousands eagerly waiting to participate and the ceremony proceeded. The sound of the voices of those seated, backed by the throngs of families standing around the feast table, singing prayers obviously as familiar to them as the ABC, were a moving experience especially to those in the audience who had never seen a similar event.

**Numerous Performances**

Many a three-or-four-year-old enjoyed the best view on the shoulders of a father or uncle, vociferously joining in the choruses.

Other "shows" consisted of performances of Bruch and Mendelssohn; dances; a recital by Hannah Roth who sang and told Yiddish jokes in an Italian as fluent as her Hebrew; a puppet show based on an original Jewish fable written by the Roman Giacometta Limentani with participation by the children of Rome's Jewish orphanage after-school groups; and an "audio-visual" entertainment center set up against a natural background landscape of Rome's "Teatro d'Marcella" ruins, which played off slides with comments on the Jewish home and the history of Roman Jewry.

There were beautiful street displays of children's three-dimensional "Porgi" pictures and ceramic baked sculptures showing aspects of Roman Jewish life, past and present. All the classes of Roman Jewish schools participated, even the nurseries. The usual stands of the Jewish National Fund, of WIZO, of the youth groups, and others were set up, plus stands that sold Jewish culinary

specialties.

The festival was largely financed by Rome's Town Hall, which also finances an extravagant series of city festivals throughout the summer with paid entertainers from Italy and abroad lighting up the lazy June-through-September evenings every year. These events have gone on for several years, no matter the current domestic and/or world crisis of the moment.

The Ghetto Festival took place this year two days after the European Economic Community (EEC) Venice summit declaration on the Mideast which shook Jews around the world. Nonetheless, everyone present, including practically the entire Israeli diplomatic staff in Rome, seemed relieved at this tangible manifestation of the surviving ocumen of the Jewish ethos which in Rome is a most singular combination of pagan-religiosity, assimilated non-assimilation, and a single-minded will to overcome the tragedy of the past; the majority of Roman Jews lost one or more family members during the Nazi occupation, with a truly Jewish celebration of life.

The festival was originally conceived as an occasion when Rome's Jewish community, harassed by a myriad of internal problems and a lingering sense of inferiority dating back to the not so far removed ghetto times, which ended only after Italy's unification in 1870, could get together and celebrate its uniqueness. This year, in particular, marked a real sense of participation by all strata of the 18,000 Jews currently living in "the Eternal City."

**HABIMAH TO STAGE YIDDISH PLAYS**

By Yitzhak Shargil

JEL AVIV, June 17 (JTA) — The Habimah Theater, in response to a request from the World Council for Yiddish, will present at least three Yiddish plays in the near future. This announcement was made last night by Yitzhak Koren, chairman of the World Council, at the opening of its annual meeting at the Sholem Aleichem House here.

Koren, who said that Israel is becoming a citadel for Yiddish, stressed that the revival of Yiddish here requires cooperation with the Hebrew world. He noted that Avraham Kagan, principal of the high school in Kiryat Chaim, near Haifa, is the first Israeli principal to introduce Yiddish into his school's curriculum.

Mark Turkow, chairman of the Argentine Committee for Yiddish, said Yiddish is dwindling in Latin America. No one uses it, it is not taught in schools and even in the yeshivot the Talmud is translated into Spanish, he said.

Dr. Max Warschawski, Chief Rabbi of Strasbourg, said there is a revival of Yiddish in France, with several thousand students studying the language.

Simon Weber, editor of the Jewish Daily Forward in New York, spoke at a dinner of the Presidency of the World Federation of Jewish Journalists at Beth Sokolow at which the Forward received the 1980 Prime Minister's Award for Yiddish. He said that although the number of Yiddish courses at American universities and colleges are increasing, the number of Yiddish newspaper readers is not growing.

He spoke of the difficulties of putting out a Yiddish newspaper when the readers are no longer concentrated in one neighborhood but are spread out throughout the country. He also mentioned the lack of Yiddish journalists and writers. Weber said that despite these hardships the Forward tries to maintain the size of its newspaper, especially on Fridays and the eves of holidays.

BRUSSELS (JTA) — Markus Pordes has been elected president of the Coordination Committee of All the Jewish Organizations of Belgium.