

IDF WITHDRAWS FROM NABATIYA

By Hugh Orgel

TEL AVIV, April 11 (JTA) — The Israel Defense Force withdrew Thursday from Nabatiya, a regional military and administrative center in south Lebanon long a hotbed of Shiite terrorist activities.

At the same time, Israel began the process of releasing prisoners it had transferred from the Ansar detention camp in south Lebanon a week ago to a prison camp inside Israel. Thirty were freed Thursday and returned to Lebanon. Israeli sources said more detainees would be released as the IDF withdrawal progresses.

The wind-up of the Ansar camp which was demolished as soon as the last prisoners departed, made possible the evacuation of Nabatiya and surrounding villages. The maneuver straightened out the IDF line which now runs more or less along the Litani River and relieved Israeli soldiers of the dangerous task of policing a volatile, violent and hostile population.

The building in Nabatiya which served as headquarters for the IDF liaison unit in south Lebanon was the target of more than 30 rocket-propelled grenade attacks in recent weeks. The villages around Nabatiya were regularly searched by the IDF for terrorists and weapons. This week alone, a large cache of rocket propelled grenades (RPGs), Katyusha rocket-launchers, Kalachnikov assault rifles and high explosives were found along with sabotage equipment and equipment for underwater demolition specialists.

IDF Will Not Maintain A Corridor

Defense Minister Yitzhak Rabin said Thursday that the IDF would not maintain a corridor from the area it now holds to Jezzine in the north, by-passing Nabatiya. Such a corridor was demanded by Gen. Antoine Lahad, commander of the Israel-backed South Lebanon Army (SLA). Israel also will no longer try to mediate or act as go-between among the various warring ethnic groups in this part of Lebanon, Rabin said.

He said he hoped the area would remain quiet now that the IDF is gone. But he warned that Israel would act firmly if attacks continued against the IDF or against Israeli villages across the border. The Defense Minister did not think Syria would try to occupy the regions evacuated by the IDF because that would require a major alteration of the present Syrian lines in Lebanon.

Two Danger Spots Eliminated

Within this past week, the IDF has eliminated from its area of responsibility, two of the most dangerous spots in south Lebanon — Ansar and Nabatiya. The Ansar camp, set up in 1982 in the early stages of the war in Lebanon, housed close to 2,000 prisoners.

About 1,000, known to have been directly implicated in attacks on the IDF were transferred to a camp in Israel, a move that raised problems of international law. Another 752 prisoners, members of hostile organizations but not known to have participat-

ed in attacks on the IDF, were freed on the spot and allowed to return to their villages in Lebanon.

It is not known whether all of the 1,000 detainees still held in Israel will be released. But the freeing of small groups, which began today, indicated that Israel intends to rid itself of these prisoners gradually, over a period of time. It may, however, hold on to a hard core of terrorists it considers too dangerous to remain at large.

JURY CHOSEN IN KEEGSTRA TRIAL

TORONTO, April 11 (JTA) — A jury of 10 men and two women was chosen Tuesday in the trial of Jim Keegstra, the former Eckville, Alberta, high school teacher accused of violating Canada's anti-hate laws. Keegstra was fired by the Alberta school board two years ago after parents complained he was teaching in his classes that Jews are the root of all evil and the Holocaust was a Jewish hoax.

His trial, the first test of Canadian anti-hate legislation, opened Tuesday in Red Deer, Alberta. It is expected to last at least two months. The Canadian Jewish Congress and B'nai B'rith have sent observers to monitor the proceedings.

PROBE BEGUN INTO NAZI WAR CRIMINALS LIVING IN CANADA

By Michael Solomon

TORONTO, April 11 (JTA) — A one-man federal commission consisting of Judge Jules Deschenes, former Chief Justice of the Quebec Superior Court, began its investigation in Ottawa yesterday of Nazi war criminals living in Canada.

The commission was set up on February 7 by the Conservative government of Premier Brian Mulroney in the wake of reports that Josef Mengele, the notorious Auschwitz death camp doctor, may have visited Canada in 1962.

It is mandated to determine whether there are war criminals presently living in Canada, how they entered the country and the best means to bring them to justice. The commission was given until the end of the year to complete its inquiry and present its report.

B'nai B'rith Authorized To Cross-Examine

One of Deschenes' first acts was to authorize B'nai B'rith to cross-examine witnesses during the open sessions of the proceedings. It is the only Jewish organization granted that right. The Judge acted against the advice of the commission's counsel, Yves Fortier, who contended that "the commission might degenerate into a vengeful exercise." His response was that "B'nai B'rith knows better than to try to indulge in that kind of exercise."

Its right of cross-examination is limited to open sessions. Much of the commission's work will be done in closed session because of the "fear of destroying innocent reputations," Deschenes said. Another Jewish organization, the Montreal-based North American Jewish Students Network-Canada, was denied the same status as B'nai B'rith because, Deschenes noted, they are the children and grandchildren of the Holocaust victims, not the victims themselves.

The first witness heard by the commission yesterday was Prof. Peter Hoffman of McGill University. He des-

cribed how the Nazis used "mobile killing squads" to exterminate non-Germans in Nazi-occupied countries.

BAVARIAN GOVERNMENT REJECTS DEMANDS THAT IT BAN RALLY OF EX-SS OFFICERS

By David Kantor

BONN, April 11 (JTA) — The Bavarian government has rejected mounting demands that it ban a giant rally of former SS officers due to take place in a Bavarian town next month, on the occasion of the 40th anniversary of the end of World War II in Europe.

Many organizations, Jewish and non-Jewish and Bundestag members of the Social Democratic Party (SPD) and the Green Party, have urged a ban and have threatened to mount protests at the time. Even the ruling Christian Democratic Union (CDU) which has shown unseemly tolerance toward SS veterans' rallies in the past, fears that this one will attract mass media attention unflattering to Germany's image.

Thousands of German and foreign journalists will be covering the economic summit meeting in Bonn and President Reagan's visit to West Germany next month.

But the Bavarian authorities say they cannot act. They point out that HIAG, the umbrella organization of SS veterans groups is not considered to be extremist and has no record of violating the law.

The rally is expected to attract more than 1,000 former SS officers — the largest of its kind ever held — who will meet in the context of their own observance of the end of World War II. The SS, which drew the most fanatic Nazis to its ranks, was one of the most hated and feared elements of the Third Reich, the defeat and destruction of which will be celebrated by the rest of the world next month.

FORMER AIDE TO BEGIN SAYS SHARON MUST BE REMOVED FROM PUBLIC LIFE

By Gil Sedan

JERUSALEM, April 11 (JTA) — A former close aide to Premier Menachem Begin and a key member of the Herut Party's young generation believes that Ariel Sharon must be removed from public life.

Now that the Israel Defense Force has almost completed its withdrawal from Lebanon, Sharon, the man who got Israel into that quagmire in the first place, has to go too, according to Arye Naor, who was Cabinet Secretary in Begin's first government — 1977-81.

Naor, writing in the weekly Koteret Rashit, maintained that Premier Shimon Peres owes it to his voters and Deputy Premier and Foreign Minister Yitzhak Shamir owes it to his conscience "to send Sharon home as the last boys come home from Lebanon." He characterized Sharon as "the architect of the war he promised to finish in two days."

Sharon, Minister of Commerce and Industry in the present national unity government, was Defense Minister in the Likud-led government when Israel invaded Lebanon in June, 1982. Early in 1983, the Kahan Commission found him indirectly responsible for the Shatila and Sabra refugee camps massacres the previous September and he was forced to resign.

Naor, a staunch Herut loyalist who served as liaison between Begin's Cabinet and the media, was himself forced to resign because of unauthorized links he had with a well known journalist. He wrote

in Koteret Rashit: "The IDF is withdrawing from Lebanon bruised and injured, not by terrorists and guerrillas but by Ariel Sharon who tricked the Premier and other ministers."

SCIENCE MINISTER FAVORS ISRAEL'S PARTICIPATION IN STAR WARS PROGRAM

By David Landau

JERUSALEM, April 11 (JTA) — Minister of Science and Industry Gideon Patt said yesterday that he favored Israel's participation in the Reagan Administration's controversial Strategic Defense Initiative (SDI), dubbed Star Wars by the media.

The Likud-Liberal's statement on a radio interview was the first public reaction by a Cabinet minister to U.S. Defense Secretary Caspar Weinberger's recent invitation to Israel to join in SDI research. The proposal was conveyed last week to Defense Minister Yitzhak Rabin and, officially, is under consideration by the government. Israel's response is also a lively topic of discussion in the Knesset.

The U.S. invited its NATO allies, Japan, Australia and Israel to participate. Patt made the point that this was "a significant compliment" to Israel inasmuch as Washington approached only those countries it believes have the scientific and technological know-how to contribute to the research.

The SDI, as envisioned by the Reagan Administration, would have the capability of destroying, from space, enemy nuclear missiles as soon as they leave their launching pads. According to Reagan, it would thus replace the stockpiling of nuclear warheads as a deterrent against nuclear war.

But many scientists in the U.S. and other Western countries believe a totally effective SDI is impossible to achieve while a partial deterrent would be no deterrent at all. Moreover, they say, the required technology does not now exist and the system, if ever developed, would not be put in place much before the turn of the century, by which time an enemy would have developed counter-measures.

Patt conceded that there would be political "connotations" for Israel if it joined the project, far exceeding any that may arise from the recent agreement to allow the U.S. to erect a Voice of America radio transmitter in Israel to relay broadcasts to the Soviet Union. Many Israelis opposed the transmitter on grounds that it would involve Israel in the propaganda war between the U.S. and the USSR.

Patt said that Israel should seek to become involved in "civilian aspects" of SDI research. He maintained that if Israel were "in on the ground floor" it could participate in projects involving "tens or hundreds of billions of dollars." He said that Premier Shimon Peres and Defense Minister Rabin were favorably disposed to the U.S. invitation.

STUDY SHOWS ISRAELIS ARE NICOTINE JUNKIES

By Hugh Orgel

TEL AVIV, April 11 (JTA) — A survey just released by the Health Ministry gives Israel the dubious distinction of having more compulsive smokers per capita than most countries, a large proportion of them teenagers and young adults.

According to the survey, at a time when other developed countries report a 60-75 percent decline in cigarette smoking by youths, 30 percent of Israelis between the ages of 13-18 are addicted to smoking and 60 percent of soldiers between 18-21, doing their compul-

sory military service, are habitual smokers. The survey also showed that most of the young smokers had tried but failed to give up the habit. About 68 percent expressed a desire to quit. The Health Ministry and the Anti-Smoking League are trying to help them.

Joining other countries in observing International Health Day, the beginning of International Youth Year, the Ministry and the League have set up open telephone lines in the largest cities.

Callers seeking advice on how to stop smoking will be counseled by physicians, psychologists and experts on various techniques to break the habit. There will also be a dietician on hand to advise smokers who fear that if they give up cigarettes they will over-eat in compensation.

The army is participating in the campaign. It has found that young recruits who began smoking before military age enter the army in much poorer physical condition than non-smokers.

Apparently, the strong statistical linkage between heavy smoking and cancer and heart disease, has little impact on the youths. The Anti-Smoking League is trying to combat the virile image used by cigarette advertisers to promote their product among young men. The League is citing recent research which indicates that cigarette smoking is a contributory factor in impotency.

NEW LOCATION APPROVED IN PRINCIPLE FOR NYC HOLOCAUST MUSEUM AND MEMORIAL

By Kevin Freeman

NEW YORK, April 11 (JTA) -- The New York City Holocaust Memorial Council's executive committee this week approved "in principle, subject to further negotiations" Governor Mario Cuomo's proposal to put a museum and memorial to the Holocaust victims in a new apartment building at Battery Park City.

David Blumenfeld, executive director of the City's Holocaust Commission, expressed enthusiasm over the Governor's proposals and noted that there are considerable advantages in having the museum and memorial in Battery Park City rather than at the U.S. Customs House in lower Manhattan, as had originally been proposed.

In an interview with the Jewish Telegraphic Agency, Blumenfeld said the immediate advantages of the Governor's proposal would be a savings of the expenses that would have been involved in renovating the Customs House. He estimated the cost at around \$5 million in an earlier JTA interview.

The Commission last October was granted use of space in the 77 year old Beaux-Arts landmark building from the General Services Administration. But it was suggested that the Customs House was too lavish, too ornate for a museum and memorial to the six million Jews who died in the Holocaust. This was acknowledged by the Governor in his announcement of the proposal.

Customs House Called Inappropriate

"Objections have been raised that this building," the Governor said in the announcement, referring to the Customs House, "is an inappropriate place to house the museum." Instead, Cuomo proposed that the 34-story Battery Park building -- which has always been part of the planned complex -- would be put up by a non-profit corporation, and what would have been profits would be used to underwrite the museum's operating costs.

According to the proposal, reportedly in the negotiating process for months, a group of developers would put up the tower at cost. In addition to the Holocaust museum and memorial, it would include a separate State museum "dedicated to the New York immigrant experience," according to Cuomo.

The site in Battery Park will provide the museum and memorial with some 100,000 square feet of space, as compared to the 85,000 that would have been used in the Customs House by the Commission. The rest of the Customs House was to have housed government offices, perhaps a bankruptcy court or national archives facility.

The museum, according to Blumenfeld, will, among other things, contain an auditorium for performances, library and archives facilities, and focus on three inter-related themes: Jewish civilization in Europe, the Holocaust and its aftermath, and Jewish immigration in New York.

Special Significance Of The Location

The location also has special significance. Blumenfeld noted that it will be just a few hundred feet from where the first Jews arrived from Europe in 1654. It also has a spectacular view of New York Harbor, including the Statue of Liberty and Ellis Island. The groundbreaking for the building is expected in the fall of 1986, Blumenfeld said.

Mayor Ed Koch established the City's Holocaust Commission, which has been in search of an appropriate site for a museum and memorial to the Holocaust for five years. Reports that the Holocaust Commission would be renamed the New York City/New York State Holocaust Memorial Commission, are premature, according to Blumenfeld. It has not been determined what the commission will be called under such a merger.

ISRAEL EXPORTING CHEESE AND GOOSE LIVER TO FRANCE

By Hugh Orgel

TEL AVIV, April 11 (JTA) -- Israel may not be sending coals to Newcastle, or selling refrigerators to the Eskimos, but it is exporting cheese and goose liver to France.

Daniel Rouach, an international business consultant and new immigrant, says his first trial consignment of 10 tons of Kosher Le Pesach Nuva cheese is already being sold in France. He plans to export pate de foie gras (goose liver) shortly.

Rouach says the French are very strict about cheese imports. The two cheeses he is selling there had to be re-named to distinguish them from French-made parmesan and roquefort. He said he hopes Nuva will be able to export \$150,000 worth of the cheeses this year.

Until now, Israel exported raw goose livers to France, where they were processed into pate de foie gras. French-born Rouach has advised a local goose slaughterhouse how to process the liver. It has hired a French expert and bought special machinery to produce the delicacy for export.

WASHINGTON (JTA) -- Richard Murphy, Assistant Secretary of State for Near Eastern and South Asian Affairs, left Wednesday night for the Middle East. He will visit Syria in addition to Egypt, Israel and Jordan. Neither the dates nor the itinerary of Murphy's trip was released by the State Department.

BEHIND THE HEADLINES LIFE IN OLD PALESTINE By Hugh Orgel

TEL AVIV, April 11 (JTA) -- A vivid picture of life in Palestine in the period from the seventh to the 11th centuries emerges from a three-volume work, "Palestine During the First Moslem Period (634-1099)," just published by Tel Aviv University and the Ministry of Defense.

Written and compiled by Prof. Moshe Gil, of TAU's Department of Jewish History, the book is based on an examination of 618 documents covering thousands of hand-written pages, from the 300,000 pages in 15,000 documents preserved in what is known as the Cairo Geniza.

They are a collection of papers dating mainly from the 11th century which had been stored in the Ibn Ezra Synagogue in Fustat, or old Cairo, the ancient capital of Egypt.

Prof. Gil took more than 600 of those documents, as well as Arab, Christian, Greek and Syrian sources, and put together his picture of life in Palestine some 800 years ago.

Said To Be Most Extensive Study

His work is said to be the most extensive study of the Geniza documents ever written. Volume one deals with the political and military events under the Moslem caliphates, from the conquest of Palestine by the Arabs to the Crusader conquest. It includes chapters on the legal status of Jews and Christians under Islam, and the treatment of the non-Moslem populations by the conquerors.

The two remaining volumes consist of translations of the 618 Geniza documents examined, from the original Judeo-Arabic to Hebrew, as well as commentaries on each.

Gil notes that "there is a certain lack of symmetry in the book, because we know almost nothing about Jewish life in the early period, while there are chronicles and church records of the Moslem and Christian communities. But thanks to the Geniza material, we have massive documentation on Jewish life in the 11th century.

The Geniza exists because of the Jewish belief that writing which contains the name of God should not be destroyed, but buried, like a human body. Thus, Sifrei Torah and prayer books are formally buried in special ceremonies till today.

Discarded writings were traditionally preserved in a Geniza (meaning a storehouse or archive) to await burial, which was usually carried out every seven years.

But for some reason, the writings in the Cairo Geniza were never buried. They accumulated some 900 years, until the late 19th century, when Judaica scholars discovered the material and began to buy portions of the collection.

Elements Of The Geniza

In 1880, Solomon Schechter, Reader in Rabbinics at Cambridge University and later president of the Jewish Theological Seminary of America, acquired most of the remaining documents and sent them to Cambridge. Today, the Geniza writings are scattered around the world in more than 20 collections. Some of the ancient papers have recently been discovered still in store in Cairo.

Most of the Geniza consisted of literary works, including the earliest known texts of the Bible, the

Talmud, and many prayer books. But there were also some 15,000 pages of letters, deeds, marriage certificates, and other legal documents which furnish the historian with a picture of daily life.

Many of these were community documents of the Yeshiva of Jerusalem, which had authority over the Jewish communities of Palestine, Egypt, North Africa, Syria and probably Sicily, south Italy, and the Byzantine lands.

They refer to conflicts in the community, appointments to public bodies, and financial aid to Jerusalem, which was dependent on aid from diaspora Jews.

In the 11th century, almost 90 percent of the Jews of the world lived in Moslem lands. As non-Moslems, neither Jews nor Christians enjoyed political rights, nor were they allowed to bear arms for their own defense.

Instead, they paid a poll tax to guarantee the security of their lives and property. All trades and professions were open to them, and Jews engaged in agriculture and in such crafts as weaving, dyeing and tanning. Others were secretaries and physicians.

Jews Had Strong Communal Organizations

The Geniza documents show that the Jews possessed a very strong communal organization. They had their own courts, and financed a wide range of community activities through a Jewish welfare system similar to the Moslem Waqf. Every Jewish community -- some 30 throughout Palestine -- owned properties that provided revenue for charity, education, and other social welfare activities.

Prof. Gil, who has been studying the Geniza for 15 years, sifted through all 15,000 documents to find the 618 on which he based his study. He is one of the very few scholars able to understand the language of the writings.

"Judeo-Arabic is an archaic language, closer to literary Arabic than to modern spoken Arabic," he says. "It took me years of immersion in the material to understand it." Gil is continuing his study of the Geniza documents and is now working on a history of the Jews in Babylonia during the early medieval period.

GYPSIES KILLED BY NAZIS WILL HAVE NICHE IN HOLOCAUST MUSEUM

TEL AVIV, April 11 (JTA) -- Gypsies, at least a half million of whom were killed by the Nazis, will have a niche at the Holocaust Museum at Kibbutz Lohamei Hageta'ot (the Ghetto Fighters Kibbutz) north of Acre.

Miriam Novich, a veteran member of the museum staff, has collected hundreds of documents and photographs attesting to the genocide of the Gypsies by the Nazis during World War II. They were rounded up from all over Europe. Many perished at Auschwitz, the most notorious of the Nazi death camps.

The museum will be the largest repository of this evidence. As a spokesperson explained, the Gypsies, whose origins as a people remain obscure to this day, were for many centuries transients in most European countries. They have no homeland of their own and no public body anywhere has documented Nazi crimes against them. The material collected by Novich includes orders signed by gestapo chief Heinrich Himmler for the destruction of the Gypsies and progress reports on how this was carried out. Relevant documents published since World War II will also be on display.