

MAY 14 1986

© Contents copyright: Republication only by previous arrangement.

PUBLISHED BY JEWISH TELEGRAPHIC AGENCY · 165 WEST 46TH STREET · NEW YORK, NY 10036-2574 · (212) 575-9370

Vol. 64 - 69th Year

Monday, May 12, 1986

No. 90

## ISRAEL SAYS IT HAS NO INTENTION OF ATTACKING SYRIA; PERES SENDS PRIVATE ASSURANCES TO ASSAD

By David Landau and Gil Sedan

JERUSALEM, May 11 (JTA) -- Israel has gone out of its way to assure Syria it has no intention of attacking that country. Premier Shimon Peres solemnly affirmed this to his colleagues at Sunday's Cabinet meeting and in extracts made public Friday of a radio interview to be broadcast next week on the occasion of Israel's Independence Day.

It was also learned that Peres sent a message to Damascus through high level American diplomatic sources over the weekend confirming privately to President Hafez Assad what he has been saying in public here.

Peres blames Palestine Liberation Organization chief Yasir Arafat for spreading false rumors in recent weeks that an Israeli attack on Syria was imminent. He also made clear that Israel does not expect to be attacked by Syria, though it remains constantly alert on its northern borders.

### Syria's Involvement In Terrorism

At the same time, Israel has continued to draw world attention to evidence of Syria's involvement in international terrorism. Syria is believed to have been behind the thwarted attempt last month to place a bomb aboard an El Al airliner at London's Heathrow Airport. Britain expelled three Syrian diplomats from the country Saturday after Syria refused to waive their immunity to questioning by Scotland Yard about the bomb attempt.

The U.S. as well as Israel has claimed a Syrian link to the bombing of a West Berlin discotheque last month where an American soldier was killed. That led to the U.S. punitive air strike on Libya April 14.

President Reagan, who branded Libyan leader Muammar Qaddafi the No. 1 supporter of international terrorism, has since turned his rhetoric on Syria, warning that it too could be the target of American retaliatory strikes if solid evidence emerged that it was behind terrorist acts.

In a speech in Tel Aviv Friday, Peres described Assad as "more subtle" than Qaddafi and more adroit in concealing his ties to terrorist groups. Now that he has been exposed, Assad must decide how to act, Peres said. He must decide if he wants to be lumped together with Qaddafi as a leader of international terrorism. Nevertheless, he said "I would recommend calming down the many disturbing reports ... There should be a de-escalation of rhetoric on both sides."

In his interview taped for broadcast on Independence Day, Peres dwelt at length on the situation with Syria, in response to recent developments and reports of tension along the Golan Heights where the Israel Defense Force has for years faced the Syrian army. "Judging coolly, I cannot see immediate indications of a Syrian attack on us and, as I have said, the Israeli position is clear -- we do not have any intentions of attacking Syria," Peres stated.

Meanwhile, U.S. Attorney General Edwin Meese is visiting Israel. He met with Minister of Justice Yitzhak Modai Sunday and is to call on Peres. His talks here are said to be focussed on international terrorism, an issue that he raised in several European capitals before coming to Israel.

### Syria's Internal Problems Assessed

Israel believes that Syria is capable of mischief. Its confidence that Damascus will not launch an attack stems from Syria's internal economic and political crises. That country's economy is in shambles and its ability to buy food and raw material abroad has been affected by its fast disappearing foreign currency reserves.

Assad himself, who belongs to the minority Alawite Moslem sect, is in personal peril from fanatics of the fundamentalist Moslem Brotherhood. There have been bombings inside Syria and other terrorist acts.

While those conditions bolster confidence here that Syria is in no position to make war on Israel at this time, especially since it has no allies, there is always a danger, according to some observers, that Assad might be tempted to launch a limited military foray to divert public attention from his country's mounting internal problems.

Israeli sources, accordingly, have warned that Syria cannot expect a limited adventure to remain isolated, and once embarked on such a course, it could escalate into a full-scale war that neither country wants and that Syria cannot possibly win.

## SHCHARANSKY ELECTRIFIES THOUSANDS AT SOLIDARITY SUNDAY FOR SOVIET JEWS

By Kevin Freeman

NEW YORK, May 11 (JTA) -- Natan (Anatoly) Shcharansky made an emotionally charged appearance before tens of thousands of demonstrators here Sunday, saying that their solidarity with the cause of Soviet Jewry was responsible for his release.

"All the resources of a superpower was not enough to isolate a Jew who hears the voice of solidarity with his people," Shcharansky told the huge mass of people gathered at the 15th annual Solidarity Sunday for Soviet Jewry rally in Dag Hammarskjold Plaza across from the United Nations. "All this has become possible because of you."

In a brief, 12-minute address, the recently released former Soviet Jewish Prisoner of Conscience said, "The solidarity of the people behind bars in the Soviet Union can be expressed only in spirit. But you, the people in the free world, can do much more."

The 38-year-old mathematician who now lives in Israel added that the Soviet leadership "who delude themselves into thinking they can keep as prisoners 400,000 of our brothers, must understand that they will never be able to destroy our solidarity."

The appearance of Shcharansky at the rally, sponsored by the Coalition to Free Soviet Jews, is

part of the former POC's 12-day visit to the United States, his first since his release from the Soviet Union last February as part of an East-West exchange of prisoners. He was imprisoned by the Soviets for nearly a decade on charges of treason.

The rally, under brilliant spring afternoon skies, took on almost a festive atmosphere, apparently boosted by the realization that the leading symbol of the Soviet Jewish emigration movement had finally been freed and reunited with his wife Avital in Israel. She did not attend the rally on her doctor's advice. She is in her second month of pregnancy.

The Solidarity Sunday demonstration began with the traditional march along Fifth Avenue, where thousands and thousands of people, wheeled baby carriages and others carried placards, urging freedom for Soviet Jews. Many chanted, "1,2,3,4 open up the iron door; 5,6,7,8 let our people emigrate." John Cardinal O'Connor greeted the marchers as they passed St. Patrick's Cathedral.

While the Soviets have released several well-known refuseniks and dissidents in the past months, Jewish emigration from the Soviet Union is under 100 per month. Last month only 72 Jews emigrated from the Soviet Union. Some 400,000 have begun the emigration process - and about 20,000 have been formally and repeatedly refused visas, earning the designation, "refuseniks."

The Reagan Administration's continued commitment to the easing of the plight of Soviet Jews was outlined at the rally by Deputy Secretary of State John Whitehead. Speaking on behalf of President Reagan and Secretary of State George Shultz, Whitehead said "We honor him (Shcharansky) as the incarnation of man's determination to be free."

Calling Shcharansky a "symbol ... a hero of our time," Whitehead added that "he is the first to remind us that others yearn to be free." He noted that Shcharansky will meet Reagan and Shultz on Tuesday in Washington. He is also scheduled to meet with Congressional members, and received the Congressional Gold Medal, according to Sen. Daniel Moynihan (D. NY).

O'Connor, the head of the Archdiocese of New York, told the demonstrators that "I pray each day that those who wish to remain in the Soviet Union remain culturally and religiously free, and that those who wish to leave" will be allowed to do so.

In addition, there was the theme stressed by at least two speakers that the Soviet Union needs to respect the human rights of its Jewish citizens if the United States is to enter into any new bilateral agreements with the Kremlin. Sen. Alfonse D'Amato (R. NY) said the Soviets must live up to their previous international agreements, such as the Helsinki Accords.

Governor Mario Cuomo spoke in a similar vein. "There can be no lasting trust ... no lasting basis of mutual agreement" until Jews are permitted to emigrate, practice their religion in the Soviet Union and all Prisoners of Conscience are released, he said.

But it was Shcharansky's appearance after most of the political speeches that energized the demonstrators. He arrived at the podium nearly three hours after the start of the march and rally, escorted by Binyamin Netanyahu, the Israeli Ambassador to the UN.

**SHCHARANSKY TELLS SYNAGOGUE AUDIENCE THAT THE STRUGGLE OF 'SOVIET JEWS IS YOUR STRUGGLE'**

By Susan Birnbaum

NEW YORK, May 11 (JTA) -- During the nearly 10 years that Natan (Anatoly) Shcharansky was in Soviet prison, a chair was reserved for him at the Hebrew Institute of Riverdale in The Bronx, whose rabbi, Avraham (Avi) Weiss, as chairman of the Student Struggle for Soviet Jewry, has worked ceaselessly on behalf of Shcharansky and the some 400,000 Soviet Jews who have applied to leave the Soviet Union.

Saturday night, before a packed house, Shcharansky himself removed the "reserved" sign from his chair and sat in it to the delight of the throngs of people in the synagogue and in a separate hall set aside with closed-circuit television to accommodate the additional hundreds who had assembled to hear him.

Addressing the crowd, Shcharansky related how, about a year after his arrest, when he was still in the dark about efforts in the outside world to secure his release, he was permitted to go through documents pertaining to his so-called "high treason" as an American spy.

Sifting through the papers, he was amazed to find footage from British television coverage of demonstrations on his behalf, including shots of his wife in front of the Soviet Embassy. Having been constantly told by his captors that the world had forgotten him, Shcharansky was astonished to find, and be able to view, this evidence to the contrary.

Annoying his prisoners by requesting for hours on end to review the tape again and again, he watched the scenes of demonstrations in his behalf while his irritated guards ironically advised him that these people could not help him. "What do you think, that these people can help you?" he quoted the KGB. "They are just students and housewives."

"And here you are," he told the crowd who had come to see and hear him, "students and housewives ... who together with teachers and rabbis, lawyers and presidents, were fighting against the KGB." The crowd cheered wildly.

**A Serious Question Is Posed**

"I came to America," he continued, "after Yom Hashoa, and I see a spiritual symbolism in it. Hashoa (the Holocaust) has put a serious question to all of the Jews: if we have enough strength to resist those who would seek to destroy us ... to remain Am Achad (one people), Yom Ha'Atzmaut (Israel's Independence Day) is our answer. The State of Israel gives us new hope and new strength. And so it is with Soviet Jews."

"The struggle of Soviet Jews is your struggle. It is the answer which you are giving today. This struggle takes place not only on the borders of Israel, not only in the challenges and the toll of assimilation ... It takes place in the hearts of each Jew." Shcharansky counseled his listeners to "reach the aim which is impossible. I understand from my own experience that there is nothing impossible even if you feel isolated."

**FOCUS ON ISSUES**
**JCCs: THE JEWISH CONNECTION**

By Murray Zuckoff

(Part One Of A Two-Part Series)

NEW YORK, May 11 (JTA) -- The Jewish Community Centers (JCCs) of North America are embarked on an ambitious and innovative plan to prevent ethnic amnesia from erasing the Jewish past and distorting the image of the Jewish future.

The JCCs are mobilizing their forces and resources to prevent the next generation of Jews from becoming "disappeared Jews," Jews for whom Judaism will no longer be a matter of pride and fulfillment and no longer a matter of concern in their daily lives; Jews for whom Judaism will be a matter of irrelevance and irreverence.

There is an imperative concern among Jewish communal leaders that meaningful and planned action must be taken now to reinforce and reinvigorate Jewish traditions, culture and values.

Jewish communal leaders involved in the JCCs are of the opinion that the continuity of Jewishness in an open democratic society which characterizes the United States and Canada is not automatic nor guaranteed. There are too many enticements to assimilation, too many inducements to ignore, if not to forget, the rich heritage that is Judaism. It is all too easy in an open society for the Jewish memory gears to be stripped and for ethnic amnesia to ensue.

**Assuring Jewish Continuity**

To assure Jewish continuity, JCC leaders interviewed in Toronto by the Jewish Telegraphic Agency at the recent biennial convention of the JWB, the continental association of JCCs, asserted that there must be a massive infusion of what several of them referred to as "Jewishkeit" into the bloodstream of the American Jewish community.

That objective, they said, can only be achieved by maximizing the effectiveness of Jewish education, and the place to do so is in the JCCs, the "home" of the Jewish community. The JCCs, they said, are the retaining walls of the Jewish community and the cement that holds the walls together is Jewish education.

The JCC leaders have, therefore, undertaken what amounts to a revolutionary effort to revamp and to restructure the JCCs in North America as institutions of intensive, all-pervasive Jewish education, not only for members but for professional staffs as well.

The JCCs must become more intensely the Jewish connection, linking the past with the future, JCC leaders told the JTA at the JWB convention which was attended by some 1,000 delegates from the United States and Canada and abroad, including Israel, many of them in their 20's, 30's and 40's.

The days when JCCs were primarily institutions of recreational activities with relatively incidental Jewish education qua Jewish education is no longer sufficient to meet the changing needs of today's Jewish communities in a world marked increasingly by the computerization of the human condition and the trivialization of the Jewish ethos. The old type JCC is obsolete and an albatross around the neck of the Jewish community, JWB leaders averred.

**Steps In Maximizing Jewish Education**

Thus, the JWB last year, after an 18-month study by a blue ribbon commission of lay and professional leaders experienced in Center work, Jewish education and Federations, representing a broad range of Jewish interests and ideologies, issued a report and recommendations on Maximizing Jewish Educational Effectiveness of Jewish Community Centers. It was presented to a special JWB convention in Miami in February 1985. The blue ribbon commission was chaired by Morton Mandel of Cleveland, a past president of the JWB and presently chairman of the Jewish Education Committee of the Jewish Agency.

The aim of the commission was "to examine the JCC role in the vital area of Jewish education, and to determine how the JCC can best use its unique capabilities to sustain and fortify Jewish education ... and to fine-tune and intensify Jewish programs and services," the commission stated in its report.

A Committee on Implementation was established to move the blue ribbon panel study from the drawing board into the Center field: to meet with JCC lay leaders and professional staffs in cities across the U.S. in order to exchange ideas, programs and activities and to coordinate and systematize ways to make JCCs more effective in contributing to the continuity of Jewish life. This committee was chaired by Lester Pollack, chairman of the Board of Associated YM-YWHAs of Greater New York and a vice president of the Federation of Jewish Philanthropies of New York.

The committee submitted a "Mandate for Action" to the JWB convention in Toronto. The mandate was described by Pollack as "a long-term commitment to help the Center movement realize its full potential, to continue to upgrade standards for practice, and to marshal the resources necessary to encourage Centers to see Jewish education as a vital priority."

To maintain and sustain the momentum gained in the period between the Miami and Toronto conventions, during which many of the 200 JCCs began to redefine and redirect their activities, a Committee on Jewish Educational Enhancement has been established. It is chaired by Ronald Leibow of Los Angeles, JWB vice president.

**Young Jews Have To Be Motivated**

The concern JCC leaders have about enhancing Jewish education is not rhetorical nor a matter of shibboleths. It is one of great urgency. This concern was dramatically described by Mandel in an interview with the JTA.

"In my judgement," he said, "the young people of tomorrow are not going to choose to be Jewish because of the Holocaust or because of anti-Semitism or because they grew up in a ghetto because they are not growing up in a ghetto and they don't remember the Holocaust except insofar as we keep reminding them of it, and they don't run into anti-Semitism. They're going to choose to be Jewish because they see some point, they see some values."

Continuing, Mandel said: "The ambience we grew up in is gone. Children don't grow up in homes filled with Jewishness. We therefore have to create an environment where people can connect with their Jewish past, and the Centers provide or must provide that kind of environment so that there will be a Jewish future. That's the

game, otherwise we're going to lose people." The old JCC model, Mandel observed, "where Jews came to but which was not a place of Jewish inculturation of Jewish history, Jewish tradition and Jewish thought, is not what we need today. The Center has to be the center of Jewishkeit, the place that strengthens the Jewish connection."

#### Touching The Issue Of Jewishness

The role of the JCCs as institutions of forging the links between the past and the future was also underlined by Pollack. "Throughout Jewish history, each generation has had to struggle with how best to sustain and invigorate Jewish life so that what is passed on to the next generation would be no less than what they received.

"The Jewish Community Center movement has played and is playing an important role in linking the Jewish past and the Jewish future. It's doing this because the Center is an open door to lots of different people who want the Jewish experiential activity, whether it's social, recreational, cultural or therapeutic."

Many marginal, uncommitted Jews, or even some who have dropped out find that they can "touch the issue of Jewishness" in a Center, Pollack said. But this assumes the JCCs are the fountainheads of Jewish education across the board for the young and the elderly; high income or low; jocks and scholars; Reform, Conservative, Orthodox and Reconstructionist; observant and secular, with no questions asked about one's religious or ideological orientation.

#### There Are No Quick Fix Schemes

The nature of the task facing the JCCs "is such that it precludes any quick fix schemes," Pollack observed. "To help the Center field meet its obligations will require a long-term, continuing commitment on the part of the JWB and the Jewish Community Center movement. A key element in this process is upgrading the Jewish education levels of the JCC professional staff by providing learning opportunities locally in North America and in Israel.

"Some of the larger Centers have hired rabbis and other Jewish education professionals to stimulate staff Jewish education and assist in program development," Pollack said. "Still others have made use of the scholar-in-residence concept to achieve the same end. The upgrading of professional staff Jewish education is a key component in optimizing Center Jewish educational potential."

Pollack also noted that the newly-established Committee on Jewish Educational Enhancement will hopefully develop "a series of five-year plans" to stimulate ongoing educational development.

Center educational activities, according to JCC leaders, should be geared to attracting and involving the unaffiliated, fortifying those who are already Jewishly committed, deepening understanding of Israel and its meaning for the Jewish people, developing future Jewish leadership, helping people learn to live fully as Jews in an open society, and helping people to articulate the meaning of being Jewish.

JCC leaders at both the Miami and Toronto conventions expressed unbridled enthusiasm for the new direction in which the JCCs are moving. They are convinced that the "Mandate for Action" is a mission possible. They are convinced that

the JCCs are and will become increasingly the foundries in which the chain of Jewish continuity is forged.

(Tomorrow: Part Two)

#### **THREE-JUDGE FEDERAL COURT PANEL UPHOLDS DEPORTATION OF WAR CRIMINAL**

NEW YORK, May 11 (JTA) -- A three-judge panel in federal court here has unanimously upheld the deportation order against Karl Linnas, an alleged Nazi war criminal who was sentenced to death in absentia in the Soviet Union for his part in the execution of 12,000 people, including 2,000 Jews at the Tartu concentration camp in his native Estonia during World War II.

Linnas, 66, was stripped of his U.S. citizenship in 1981 and was ordered deported to the Soviet Union in 1983 by the U.S. Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS). He lives in Greenlawn, L.I.

The deportation order was affirmed by the Board of Immigration Appeals last year. Linnas took his case to the Court of Appeals for the Second Circuit in Manhattan where it was rejected last Thursday by a 3-0 vote. He may still ask the full Second Circuit Court to reconsider the panel's decision or he could appeal to the U.S. Supreme Court. His attorney, Ivars Berzins, has refused to comment.

Linnas appealed against the deportation order on grounds that it deprived him of his constitutional rights of due process and equal protection under the law. But he lost his citizenship in 1981 after a federal court in Westbury, L.I., ruled that he had concealed his past activities when he entered the U.S. in 1951 and again when he was naturalized in 1960.

The court upheld government charges that Linnas served as commandant of the Tartu camp from 1941-43 and that he had personally participated in killing inmates.

#### **DEMJEANJUK REMANDED FOR 15 MORE DAYS**

TEL AVIV, May 11 (JTA) -- John Demjanjuk, the only suspected Nazi war criminal ever deported to Israel for trial, was remanded Friday to another 15 days in jail while the public prosecutor and police continued to collect evidence that he was the notorious Treblinka death camp guard known to inmates as "Ivan the Terrible."

The Ukrainian-born Demjanjuk, a former U.S. citizen, has been in custody for 75 days. He is confined to an isolation cell at Ayalon prison near Ramle. The periodic remands are a formality under Israel criminal law held over from British Mandate law.

Judge Aharon Simcha, who was assigned to the case, travels periodically to Ayalon to speak briefly to the prisoner and sign the remand papers. Demjanjuk, who will be defended in court by an American attorney, insists he is a victim of mistaken identity.

But according to Simcha, prosecutor Alex Ish-Shalom and his police investigators are amassing evidence to refute that claim. He said additional time, possibly another 15 days, will be required to build an airtight case.