

JURY IN ACHILLE LAURO TRIAL WILL BEGIN DELIBERATIONS ON MONDAY

By Edwin Eytan

GENOA, July 6 (JTA) — The jury in the Achille Lauro trial will begin deliberations Monday on the fate of 15 defendants, 10 of them still at large, accused of hijacking the Italian cruise ship last October and the murder of a passenger, Leon Klinghoffer, an American Jew.

The prosecution, summing up its case before the weekend, demanded life sentences for seven of the accused. They include Mohammed Abul Abbas, a Palestinian terrorist tried in absentia as the alleged mastermind of the hijack, and Youseff Magied Mulqui, who allegedly fired the shots that killed Klinghoffer in his wheelchair and then ordered crew members to throw his body overboard. Life imprisonment is the maximum penalty under Italian law.

State Attorney Luigi Carli told the jury, "This is not a trial against the PLO, the PLF or the Palestinian struggle ... We are dealing with the taking of hostages, one of whom was killed." The PLF or Palestine Liberation Front is the terrorist group headed by Abbas. The latter is also a member of the Palestine Liberation Organization.

Lawyer Says There Is No Evidence Against Abbas

Abbas narrowly escaped imprisonment after U.S. Air Force planes forced an Egyptian plane carrying him from the hijack scene to land in Sicily last October 12, four days after Klinghoffer was murdered. Italian authorities released him, explaining later that they had insufficient evidence to hold him at the time.

Defense attorney Luigi Bacherini argued that Abbas "could not have masterminded the plot and that no evidence to prove this was presented in court." He said the real objective of the hijackers was not to seize the Italian cruise ship but to take Israeli hostages at the port of Ashdod and hold them for release of 51 terrorists imprisoned in Israel.

Ashdod was the next port of call after Alexandria where the hijack took place. According to the defense, the accused were forced to take over the ship after crew members discovered weapons in their possession.

Bacherini described Abbas as "a prominent member of the PLO executive" who "would not have wanted to damage relations with the European country friendliest to the Palestinian cause (Italy). It just does not stand to reason," he said.

PLO USES EUROPEAN AIRPORTS TO SMUGGLE ARMS, NETANYAHU CHARGES

JERUSALEM, July 6 (JTA) — Binyamin Netanyahu, Israel's Ambassador to the United Nations, claimed that the Palestine Liberation Organization uses duty-free shops and stands at several European airports to pass along weapons, explosives, money and documents to terrorists for attacks on civil aviation.

Netanyahu made the charge in an interview published in Maariv. He said terrorists made use of the

PLO facilities to smuggle explosives into or out of the countries without having to pass through security checks. He did not name the airports or the countries.

According to Netanyahu, terrorist attacks on airlines have decreased sharply since the U.S. air strike against Libya last May 14. He said there has been a parallel improvement in airline security and that U.S. airlines were approaching Israel for help to improve security measures.

Netanyahu said the Western nations are beginning to understand that civil airlines are a link between all countries "and when the terrorist virus infiltrates one of them, it endangers all the airlines." (By Gil Sedan)

SHAMIR BREAKS SILENCE IN SHIN BET AFFAIR

By Gil Sedan

JERUSALEM, July 6 (JTA) — Deputy Premier Yitzhak Shamir broke his official silence on the Shin Bet affair to take the offensive against intimations that the events surrounding the capture and subsequent unexplained deaths of two Arab bus hijackers while in the custody of security agents in April, 1984 occurred with his direct knowledge and approval.

Shamir, who was Prime Minister at the time of the occurrences and therefore the authority to which Shin Bet was solely responsible, disavowed any knowledge of irregularities until eight months ago. In an extensive interview published in Yediot Achronot, Shamir who is Foreign Minister and leader of Likud, maintained that in the highest echelons of government "nobody knew."

His statements flatly contradicted the statement by former Shin Bet chief Avraham Shalom that he had acted with "authority and permission" in every aspect of the case. Shalom offered that defense in applying for a Presidential pardon when he resigned as head of Israel's internal security services two weeks ago, after being accused by former Shin Bet operatives of ordering the hijackers to be killed and engaging in an elaborate cover-up, including perjury at two subsequent quasi-judicial inquiries.

Shamir Has Been Implicated In Scandal

The a priori pardons granted by President Chaim Herzog to Shalom and three of his aides have been challenged before the Supreme Court. The court ordered the government last Wednesday to show cause within two weeks why a full scale investigation of the affair should not be undertaken.

Shamir has vigorously opposed any form of investigation on grounds that a probe of Shin Bet activities would seriously compromise State security. But the Foreign Minister has himself been implicated indirectly in the charges brought against Shalom because he headed the Likud-led government in April, 1984.

He told Yediot Achronot that he first learned of alleged irregularities in the handling of the bus hijackers last October 29 from Reuven Hazak, former deputy chief of Shin Bet. Hazak was one of three senior operatives dismissed by Shalom who filed complaints against him with former Attorney General Yitzhak Zamir. Asked how he as Prime Minister could not have known about such serious charges, Shamir replied, "I wasn't

the only one who didn't know. Nobody knew." The interviewer also confronted Shamir with a statement attributed to Premier Shimon Peres that "The head of the Shin Bet told me that he had general backing for all the events which had taken place during the raid on the bus. Regarding later events, which were the subject of the complaint to the Attorney General, the head of Shin Bet had informal backing."

When the interviewer observed that "This was not denied either by Peres or by the head of the Shin Bet" and asked Shamir for his reaction, the Foreign Minister replied, "I find it unacceptable that anyone said such things. It is simply impossible."

The bus was hijacked by four Arab terrorists and was intercepted by Israel Defense Force units in the Gaza Strip. Two of the terrorists were killed when the bus was stormed. The two captured alive were turned over to security agents for interrogation. They were killed before they could be transferred to jail.

Reportedly Did Not Approve Killings Or Cover Up

According to Yediot Achronot, sources close to Shamir said he had not ordered the two killed and attributed their deaths to "a local initiative by security men who were on the spot." Shamir did not approve of the killing, he did not support it retroactively and did not approve of any cover-up, the sources were quoted as saying.

Shalom has come under attack from Likud circles in recent days. They say that a person who misled two inquiries into the affair would not hesitate to level false charges against Shamir. According to those circles, Shalom's statement that he had acted with full authority is untrue.

While Likud is opposed to an investigation of Shin Bet, Shamir said last week that he would accept whatever the Cabinet decided. According to some reports, Attorney General Yosef Harish is expected to recommend the appointment of a single investigator to determine procedures and coordination in the future between Shin Bet and the political echelons. Most Labor ministers and the Labor Party's Knesset faction have demanded a full scale judicial commission of inquiry into the charges against Shalom.

Shamir has reportedly told his aides he believes the Attorney General's recommendations would coincide with his own view that what is needed now is the establishment of new rules to guide Shin Bet in the future. But Labor ministers maintain it would be unacceptable for the Attorney General to use his office to cover up the affair and extricate Shamir.

ACCUSED MURDERER OF ISRAELI GOES ON TRIAL ON LESSER CHARGES

PARIS, July 6 (JTA) -- The man accused of having masterminded the murder of an Israeli diplomat and an American military attache was tried last week on lesser charges of arms smuggling and using fake passports.

The prosecution asked for a four year prison term for Georges Ibrahim Abdullah, a 35-year-old Christian Lebanese believed to be one of the main leaders of a Lebanese Marxist terrorist organization.

The verdict will be announced July 10 and should Abdullah be sentenced to the requested four years, he might be set free at once and expelled from France as his pre-trial detention would cover his term.

Court sources in Lyon say that his expulsion would save the French government from having to try him for complicity in the murders of Israeli diplomat Yaakov Bar Simantov, who was murdered in April, 1982 outside his home in Paris, and that of the American Deputy Military Attache Lt. Col. Ray Charles Jr. on January 18, 1982.

Abdullah has been formally charged with complicity in these killings by a Paris investigative judge, but no date has been set for the trial.

Since Abdullah's arrest in 1984 some of his organization's terrorist activities in France have stopped and a French diplomat held as a hostage by his gang, the Lebanese Revolutionary Armed Factions, set free.

'Abdullah Is A Fighter, Not A Criminal'

Abdullah's lawyer, Jacques Verges, who is also counsel for Klaus Barbie, the Nazi war criminal, told the Lyon criminal court last Thursday "Abdullah is a fighter not a criminal." He also hinted at the possibility that "arrangements can be found."

Observers guessed he meant that Abdullah's release and expulsion from France might speed up the release of two French hostages, Marcel Fontaine and Marcel Carton, two diplomats who have been held for over two years.

NEW TECHNIQUE SEEKS TO DETECT RADIOACTIVITY IN RAIN WATER

By David Landau

JERUSALEM, July 6 (JTA) -- A sensitive new technique for detecting radioactivity in rain water has been developed by Hebrew University and Weizmann Institute scientists. Tests using the technique show that radioactive iodine in rainfall rose 30 times more in West Germany following the Chernobyl nuclear disaster than it did in Israel.

The new technique, developed by Dr. Michael Paul of the University's Racah Institute of Physics and his colleagues at the University and at the Weizmann Institute, is able to detect radioactivity in rainwater at concentrations one million times less than could be previously measured.

Paul, working at the I4 UD pelletron particle accelerator at the Weizmann Institute in Rehovot, has developed a method of measuring the tiny concentrations of radioactive materials created naturally in the atmosphere by cosmic radiation, for which no other method of measurement exists.

Following the Chernobyl reactor disaster, which released a quantity of radioactive isotopes into the atmosphere, Paul was able to measure the increase in concentration of a long-lived radioactive isotope of iodine (with a half-life of 16 million years) present in rain water samples from Israel and West Germany.

A control sample of rainwater collected in Israel in 1984 was used to measure the natural quantity of radioactive iodine. The results showed the effect Chernobyl had on rain water, and particularly on the German sample which contained 30 times more radioactive iodine than the Israel rain water from the same period.

JERUSALEM (JTA) -- At the end of last year there were about 776,000 vehicles on the roads in Israel. But Israel's motorization level was still low, with some 150 private cars per thousand residents as against 300-400 in other developed countries, according to figures released by the Central Bureau of Statistics.

FIRE DAMAGES ISRAELI CONTAINERSHIP

By Hugh Orgel

TEL AVIV, July 6 (JTA) -- The Israeli container ship Sigal was reported under tow to an Italian port over the weekend after an engine room fire spread and threatened to destroy the vessel. All 23 crew members and nine members of their families -- four women and five children -- were reported safe aboard rescue ships.

A spokesman for the Zim Lines of Haifa, owners of the Sigal, said Thursday that the ship was heavily damaged but the 560 containers she carried were not damaged by the fire. According to the spokesman, the blaze started in the engine room shortly after 6 a.m. Thursday and spread rapidly to the crew quarters and bridge which appear to have been destroyed. The Sigal was about 70 miles south of Sicily at the time.

Eighteen persons, including the women and children, were transferred to a Dutch vessel. The Captain and 12 crew members remained aboard for a time trying to fight the blaze. The wireless operator managed to send out a distress call before the wireless cabin was gutted by flames.

A special marine firefighting team summoned from Rotterdam, reached the Sigal Thursday evening and reportedly succeeded in bringing the fire under control. Italian air force helicopters hovered over the scene until ocean-going tugs arrived to take the burning vessel in tow.

PRaise FRENCH DECISION TO REVOKE CONTROVERSIAL DOCTORATE ON HOLOCAUST

LOS ANGELES, July 6 (JTA) -- The Simon Wiesenthal Center hailed the French government's decision last Thursday to revoke a controversial doctorate granted to Henri Roques last year by the University of Nantes.

The 371-page dissertation questioned the existence of gas chambers at Nazi concentration camps and argued that there is no conclusive evidence to prove that the Nazis had ever gassed their victims during the Holocaust.

"The Wiesenthal Center applauds the decision of French Education Minister Alain Devaquet to throw out this bogus doctorate," the Center said in a statement. "Further, we are pleased that French authorities have also ordered the suspension of Prof. Jean Claude Riviere, who headed the examining board which granted Roques the doctorate and who clearly failed to fulfill his basic responsibilities as custodian of a university's commitment to the pursuit of truth."

Last month, a delegation from the Wiesenthal Center protested the Roques Ph.D. thesis during meetings in Paris with French Prime Minister Jacques Chirac's advisor on human rights and diplomatic affairs, Jean Pierre Lafon, and other French officials.

APPEAL ISSUED FOR RELEASE OF BRAILOVSKY

MIAMI BEACH, July 6 (JTA) -- Some 150 delegates attending the recently concluded Computer Vision and Pattern Recognition Conference here issued an appeal to the Soviet leadership on behalf of Soviet Jewish refusenik Viktor Brailovsky.

Brailovsky, accomplished in the field of pattern recognition, has been denied access to normal channels of scientific communication ever since he applied to emigrate from the Soviet Union in 1972.

He was subsequently dismissed from his position at the Institute of Electronic Control Machines. He helped organize an informal forum for scientific exchange, popularly known as the Moscow Sunday Seminar in an effort to offset his isolation from the official scientific community.

Urge Soviets To Facilitate Brailovsky's Emigration

After repeated harassment by the Soviet police, he was arrested in 1980 and sentenced to internal exile for alleged "defamation of the Soviet state." He returned to Moscow in 1984, resuming his quest to emigrate. He has since been denied permission to emigrate.

Citing their "commitment as scientists to free scientific exchange," the signatories at the conference registered their regret that Brailovsky "is not able to join with us, colleagues in his field of expertise." They urged the Soviets "to do all in (their) power to facilitate his emigration."

Prof. Herbert Freeman of Rutgers University in New Jersey spearheaded the effort on behalf of Brailovsky. Freeman, who befriended Brailovsky while visiting Moscow in 1975, reported the conference action to the Committee of Concerned Scientists, a New York-based group of 5,000 American scientists dedicated to the protection and advancement of the human rights and scientific freedom of colleagues worldwide.

AJC OFFICIAL TELLS OF 'NEW PARTNERSHIP' BETWEEN BLACKS, JEWS

BALTIMORE, July 6 (JTA) -- A "new and mature partnership between Blacks and Jews is being forged at the local level, far from the harsh and often divisive glare of national media attention," Rabbi James Rudin of the American Jewish Committee told the annual convention of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People meeting here last week.

Rudin, the AJC's interreligious affairs director, said: "While the old coalition of the 1960s is over, Blacks and Jews in many American cities are today creating a new reality. Together they are actively engaged in many crucial issues, including human rights, quality education, economic opportunity, full and fair employment, and the countering of South African apartheid, political extremism, racism and anti-Semitism."

The AJC leader, a founder of the national interreligious task force on Black-Jewish relations, cited the Black-Jewish coalitions in Atlanta and Washington as examples of the "new reality." In both cities, Rudin said, the AJC and NAACP play key roles in "these constructive model programs."

Rudin also praised the NAACP for its efforts in combatting all forms of racial and religious bigotry. "Whatever the issues ... the extremism of Louis Farrakhan, the insensitivity of the Presidential visit to Bitburg, support for Soviet Jewry, solidarity with the State of Israel ... the NAACP is always there extending its hand in friendship to the Jewish community," said Rudin.

He added: "For too long extremists in both our communities have resorted to destructive rhetorical attacks and negative stereotypes, but Blacks and Jews deserve better. While as equal partners, we may disagree on some issues, we still remain prisoners of hope, and we still remain each other's best allies in the continuing effort to achieve a free, open, and just American society."

CANADA ACCUSED OF EARLY KNOWLEDGE OF WALDHEIM'S WAR-TIME ACTIVITIES

By Ron Csilag

MONTREAL, July 6 (JTA) — An international human rights activist has charged that Canada knew of war crimes allegations against Austrian President-elect Kurt Waldheim but still accredited him as Austrian Ambassador to Canada in the late 1950s.

Irwin Cotler, a law professor at McGill University and legal counsel to several refuseniks, dropped a bombshell in Montreal recently by stating the Canadian government signed a 1948 United Nations document giving Waldheim the highest classification as a suspected Nazi war criminal, then accredited him 10 years later as an Austrian envoy to Canada and soon after, as Ambassador.

Cotler, a former president of the Canadian Jewish Congress, released documents he said showed Canada was aware of the UN War Crimes Commission's findings against Waldheim and that there was sufficient evidence to try him for murder and "killing of hostages."

Canada Had At Least Three Documents

Cotler said Canada "was in receipt of at least three documents stating either Waldheim was a war criminal or there is prima facie evidence he was a war criminal. The Canadian government was therefore approving the credentials of Waldheim when it knew and had information in its possession that he was a war criminal," Cotler said.

Cotler said Canada may have known as early as 1947 that Yugoslavia had formally accused Waldheim of being a war criminal. "On the basis of this evaluation material submitted by Yugoslav authorities, the UN commission gave Waldheim its most serious suspect rating, the 'A' classification," Cotler told reporters. "Canada joined in a decision holding that there was sufficient evidence to prosecute Waldheim as a war criminal in 1948."

Waldheim was an Austrian envoy to Canada from 1956 to 1958 and was Austria's first Ambassador to Canada from 1958 to 1960. The UN dossier Cotler referred to, dated Feb. 19, 1948, says that between April, 1944 and May, 1945, Waldheim was responsible for putting hostages to death.

Canadian Action Is 'Inconceivable'

Documents approving of killings and deportations in the Balkans and bearing Waldheim's signature and his initials support allegations of war crimes, Cotler said. He said reference to Waldheim's war record was also made in the Central Registry of War Criminals and Security Suspects transmitted to Canada in 1948.

Cotler said he finds it "inconceivable" that Canada would accredit a foreign diplomat a person it agreed should be put on trial for war crimes.

Denys Tessier, an External Affairs Department spokesman, confirmed that Canada had signed the UN commission's findings in 1948. Tessier said the Department would not issue a comment but that it is investigating the matter.

AJC SUSPENDS AUSTRIAN TOURS

NEW YORK, July 6 (JTA) — The American Jewish Congress has announced that it is suspending all tours to Austria, saying the election of Kurt Waldheim as President "has made it impossible to feel comfortable in that country."

"We have taken this action ... because it reflects our dismay that a majority of Austrians should have made the dismal choice of electing Waldheim despite the revelations of his Nazi war-time record and his unrepentant efforts both to suppress the truth and to justify his action," the AJC said.

The announcement was made by Geoffrey Weill, director of the AJC international travel program, the largest Jewish group travel enterprise. Weill said: "The unprecedented implications of Waldheim's election by a majority of Austrian voters makes it entirely inappropriate for us to continue to include Austria in our travel itineraries." This year, Austria was scheduled as a major stop on 14 AJC tours.

CALL FOR JEWISH LAW TO BE PART OF THE BINDING LAW OF THE STATE

By David Landau

JERUSALEM, July 6 (JTA) — Jewish law should become part of the binding law of the State in order to bridge the gap between religious and secular Israelis. This is the view of State Comptroller Yitzhak Tunik, expressed in his speech at the opening of a Justice Ministry seminar on Jewish law recently.

The seminar, entitled "Coercion and Oppression," and attended by many judges and lawyers, was organized by Deputy Attorney-General Nahum Rakover. The keynote lectures were given by Supreme Court Justice Dov Levin, and leading lawyer Yitzhak Meron.

The State Comptroller maintained that the chasm that divides the religious and the secular today grew from the failure of the State of Israel to adopt Jewish law as the law of the land from the start.

'A Being From Another Planet'

The religious problem at the time of the establishment of the state was not nearly as serious as it is now, Tunik recalled, because both religious and secular Jews were nurtured by the same heritage. Even secular Jews, Tunik continued, "regarded the ancient Jewish heritage as the moral force behind the settlement of the land of Israel." Today the secular Jew looks on the religious Jew as if he is a "being from another planet."

"We related to Jewish law merely as a legal system, and neglected to emphasize the fact that Jewish law is a cultural heritage," Tunik charged. "We did not understand that we were abandoning 'the spring of life'."

The State Comptroller, himself a former leading lawyer, said he believed the solution lay in educating both sides of the religious conflict, and in recognizing that Jewish law is a "tremendous cultural asset" which is relevant today.

Tunik urged the courts to base their judgements on Jewish sources — the Mishna, the Talmud, and the Rabbinical responsa from the Middle Ages until today. He foresaw no difficulty in mastering these sources since Israeli lawyers had no trouble in learning Anglo-Saxon law which itself was based to some extent on Jewish law.

JERUSALEM (JTA) — U.S. Vice President George Bush sent a message to Premier Shimon Peres marking the 10th anniversary of the Entebbe rescue operation last week, saying the operation "was a blow to terrorism and a victory to civilized nations throughout the world."