

**ORTHODOX RABBI HINTS NON-ORTHODOX GROUPS MAY ULTIMATELY BE ACCORDED THE RIGHT TO PERFORM CONVERSIONS**

By David Landau

JERUSALEM, Jan. 26 (JTA) -- A leading Orthodox rabbi hinted Sunday night that some recognition might ultimately have to be accorded to institutions of the non-Orthodox trends in Judaism, particularly on the issue of conversion.

Rabbi Aharon Lichtenstein, head of a yeshiva in the Etzion bloc of settlements south of Jerusalem, suggested that Orthodox conversion courts might have their decisions formally approved by a Conservative institution as a way to break the present impasse. Israel's Orthodox establishment has always insisted that only conversions performed by Orthodox rabbis are valid. Conservative and Reform Judaism are demanding recognition in Israel.

Lichtenstein, who is the son-in-law of the American Orthodox scholar, Rabbi J.B. Soloveitchik, offered his proposal at a forum of the National Religious Party which is considering the problem posed by the case of Shoshana Miller, an American who immigrated to Israel but was denied citizenship because she was converted to Judaism by a Reform rabbi.

The Supreme Court, acting on Miller's appeal, ordered the Interior Ministry last month to issue her an identity card as a Jew, without qualification. Interior Minister Yitzhak Peretz of the ultra-Orthodox Shas Party, resigned rather than comply.

**Shas Threatened To Quit The Government**

Shas is now threatening to quit the unity coalition government. Premier Yitzhak Shamir, who took over the Interior portfolio temporarily, has postponed issuing an ID card to Miller as long as legally possible. The fact that she has gone back to the U.S. and is not certain when she will return to Israel to claim her card, gave Shamir time to seek a solution to the problem.

The Cabinet decided to convene a special ministerial panel to consider the matter of registering converts. It is chaired by Shamir and has given itself six months to consult with scholars and others here and abroad before it makes recommendations which, hopefully, will be unanimous.

Other members of the panel are Vice Premier and Foreign Minister Shimon Peres, Minister of Energy Moshe Shahal and Minister of Immigration Yaacov Tsur, all Laborites; Tourism Minister Avraham Sharir and Minister-Without-Portfolio Yitzhak Modai, both of Likud; and Religious Affairs Minister Zevulun Hammer of the National Religious party.

Peretz would be a member if he decides to return to the Cabinet. But Shas sources indicated Monday that the decision to set up the panel was not sufficient inducement.

Shas, which holds only four seats in the Knesset but is a political factor in the delicately balanced unity coalition, is demanding that labor and Likud support legislation that would permanently bar Reform converts from receiving status

as Jews. Such a law would, by passing the Supreme Court's decision.

**PLO MILITARY STRENGTH IN LEBANON RESTORED TO ITS PRE-1982 LEVEL**

By Gil Sedan

JERUSALEM, Jan. 26 (JTA) -- Almost five years after the Lebanon war, the military strength of the Palestine Liberation Organization in Lebanon has been restored to almost the same level as it was when the Israel Defense Force invaded that country in June 1982, a senior military officer told an audience in Tel Aviv Monday.

The officer, who holds the rank of Lt. Colonel but was not identified by name, said PLO terrorists were returning to their old bases in Sidon and Tyre and their presence can be felt by the increased incidence of attempted attacks on Israel.

The officer noted that Sidon and Tyre, on the Lebanese coast, provide the terrorists with bases for night attacks on Israel by sea. So far, the Israel Navy has successfully aborted such attacks, he said. But the sea cannot be totally sealed off.

He proposed that Israel initiate a strong international maritime intelligence force to interdict sea-borne terrorists and saboteurs. He said Israel could contribute considerable experience to such an undertaking.

**DEPORTATION OF GAZA STRIP PALESTINIAN SPARKS DEMONSTRATIONS**

By Gil Sedan

JERUSALEM, Jan. 26 (JTA) -- A resident of Kahn Yunis in the Gaza Strip was deported to Jordan Monday on grounds that he worked for El Fatah and incited armed action against Israel.

The expulsion of Mohammad Yushuf Dahlan, 26, triggered angry demonstrations in the Gaza Strip town. Security forces used tear gas to disperse the crowds. A commercial strike was declared by local merchants. Classes were disrupted in Gaza schools and a rock was thrown at an Israeli vehicle, bruising the driver.

Dahlan was the 15th Palestinian in the administered territories to be deported since August 1985 when Defense Minister Yitzhak Rabin renewed the policy of expulsion for alleged pro-terrorist activity.

The Israeli authorities charged that Dahlan, as head of Shabiba, the El Fatah youth movement, was behind political unrest in the territories for the past year and took his orders from terrorists in Lebanon. Disturbances began in the Gaza Strip when the deportation decision was announced three days ago.

**SPECIAL ANALYSIS  
ISRAEL AND SOUTH AFRICA**

By David Landau

JERUSALEM, Jan. 26 (JTA) -- The postponement of a quasi-academic panel discussion within the Foreign Ministry of Israel's policy towards South Africa highlighted the current concern and

sensitivity surrounding this issue here. The panel was to have been led by the Ministry's political Director-General, Dr. Yossi Beilin, who is the closest confidant of Vice Premier and Foreign Minister Shimon Peres. It was to include veteran Ministry staffers, officials of other government departments, and outside experts.

But Peres is in Europe and the acting Foreign Minister, Ezer Weizman, ordered Beilin to call off the conclave.

The Director-General had no choice but to obey. But he pointedly insisted, in interviews, that the discussion would take place "next week, when the Minister (Peres) returns."

#### A Strong Lobby Within Government Circles

Weizman, a former Minister of Defense and long-time Air Force officer, is one of a strong lobby within government circles -- the lobby is largely defense-oriented and crosses political party lines -- which is reluctant to suddenly sever Israel's long-standing ties with South Africa in the wake of American and Western European decisions to adopt sanctions against the apartheid regime in Pretoria.

Newsweek magazine reports this week that Defense Minister Yitzhak Rabin visited South Africa recently to warn the government there that a shrinkage in the relationship was inevitable.

#### Forces In Favor Of A Boycott

Beilin, for his part, has long led the forces -- mainly of the left and center -- which press for Israel to place itself solidly alongside the Western countries in their steadily increasing boycott of South Africa.

These forces put forward moral arguments, but also severely practical ones: they assert that the white supremacist regime is ultimately doomed, and it would therefore be as well for the Jewish State not to be seen, in Africa, as going down with the sinking ship.

The other group points to the cant and hypocrisy which sully the positions of many of the Western -- and indeed Black African--countries regarding South Africa.

They note that some of the most vociferous statesmen demanding sanctions represent states with much larger volumes of trade with South Africa (not to mention investments) than Israel. And they add that many states and firms that ostensibly adhere to boycott principles in fact circumvent them in myriad ways.

They add that for every South African weapons system that, according to foreign publications, have Israeli components or Israeli know-how, there are many much more crucial systems that are wholly supplied by the leading Western powers, especially France and Britain.

They assert, with much justice, that lumping together Israel and South Africa has been a deliberate Arab propaganda ploy which, unfortunately for Israel, has won much success over the years.

#### Extent Of Israel's Trade With South Africa

Israel's trade with South Africa includes the import of coal and raw materials, and some Israeli industrial exports. Israel gives no official information regarding military-related trade. And there are always firm and blanket denials to the repeated foreign media claims of a nuclear relationship between the two countries.

If the debate could remain in the realm of quasi-academic, Israel's concern would not be so deep. But the U.S. Congress has taken action that suddenly lifts this issue into the realm of immediate and painful decision-making.

The Congress has required of the Reagan Administration that it report by April on U.S. aid recipients that have military supply relationships with South Africa -- and the sanction could be a cut-off of military aid to such countries.

Israel, of course, with a \$1.8 billion per annum military aid package at risk, cannot afford to cross the Congress or embarrass the Administration in the eyes of Capitol Hill.

#### POC ZUNSHAIN TO BE RELEASED EARLY, GIVEN AN EXIT VISA

By Susan Birnbaum

NEW YORK, Jan. 26 (JTA) -- Prisoner of Conscience Zachar Zunshain is scheduled to be released from a Siberian labor camp, six weeks before his three-year term for "anti-Soviet slander" is completed, and allowed to leave for Israel three days later, according to the Union of Councils of Soviet Jews and the Student Struggle for Soviet Jewry (SSSJ).

Zunshain's wife, Tatyana, said last week that Soviet authorities told her she should submit an exit application for herself and her husband. The couple has been denied visas since 1980.

Zunshain's sentence to a labor camp followed his arrest March 6, 1984, for "circulation of fabrications known to be false which defame the Soviet state and social system." The charges were based on letters he himself wrote to Soviet authorities asking them to revoke his Soviet citizenship and allow him to leave for Israel with his wife.

According to the SSSJ, he was also arrested following a five-minute demonstration in front of the Boshoi Theater in Moscow asking for emigration visas.

Zunshain is a 35-year-old physicist from Riga who has been imprisoned in the Irkutsk labor camp in Siberia.

#### Other Releases Imminent

In a related development, the SSSJ reported that two refuseniks who are also involved in the unofficial peace movement in the Soviet Union are also said to be about to be released: Yuri Chekanovsky, 42, a five-year refusenik, married and the father of three children; and Yuri Rozenzweig, 40, refused seven years, also father of three. In May 1986, both families demonstrated in Red Square in Moscow for exit visas.

Another member of the unofficial peace movement, Vladimir Brodsky, was released in September 1986 after serving only one year of a three-year sentence for "hooliganism" and allowed to leave for Israel with his wife, Dina.

#### LEGAL ABORTIONS IN ISRAEL INCREASING

By Gil Sedan

JERUSALEM, Jan. 26 (JTA) -- Legal abortions increased by 15 percent in Israel since a law limiting the right to abortion was passed by the Knesset nine years ago.

According to figures released Monday, the Health Ministry approved 9,300 abortions in the first six months of 1986. Health authorities estimate that 10,000 abortions are performed illegally every year by private physicians.

The main grounds for approved abortions are pregnancies which endanger the lives of the mothers, physically deformed fetuses and pregnancies resulting from extra-marital relations by married women.

The latest figures on abortions were released after a 17-year-old girl from Safed died of complications during an illegal abortion. The incident prompted a delegation from Naamat, the Labor Zionist women's organization, to call on Education Minister Yitzhak Navon and the Knesset Education Committee Monday to urge sex education in school.

According to a Naamat survey, a third of Israeli parents refuse to educate their children about sex because they fear it would lead them to have sexual relations.

#### EXTREMIST PARTIES IN WEST GERMANY GOT ONE PERCENT OF TOTAL VOTES CAST IN SUNDAY'S GENERAL ELECTIONS

By David Kantor

BONN, Jan. 26 (JTA) -- West Germany's oldest established neo-Nazi political group, the National Democratic Party (NPD), won 0.6 percent of the popular vote in Sunday's general elections, enough to qualify for State financial aid but far below the five percent needed for representation in parliament.

Nevertheless, the NPD, which garnered about 250,000 votes, performed better than in the last Bundestag elections in 1983 when it drew only 0.2 percent.

The combined vote for the NPD and all other extreme rightwing factions Sunday amounted to one percent of the total votes cast.

"The Patriots," the European branch of the Lyndon LaRouche group in the U.S., the "Courageous Citizens" and similar groupings on the radical right drew 0.4 percent between them.

#### Not A Political Force Of Consequence

Although the NPD achieved one percent in the elections to the Strasbourg-based Parliament of Europe two years ago -- mainly because of a poor turn-out -- neither it nor any other faction on the far right has emerged as a political force of any consequence in West Germany.

One reason is that they are ideologically divided and split the extremist vote between them. Another is that the conservative Christian Democratic Union (CDU) headed by Chancellor Helmut Kohl and its Bavarian sister party, the Christian Social Union (CSU), made a strong bid for rightwing votes during the election campaign.

Franz-Josef Strauss, leader of the CSU, campaigned on the premise that it is time for Germans to "step out of Hitler's shadow" and develop "normal" national feelings. He also publicly supported the thesis of those historians who maintain that the Holocaust, as bad as it was, was no worse than other catastrophic events in recent history.

The CDU, and its junior coalition partner, the Free Democratic Party (FDP) won Sunday's elections with 53.4 percent of the popular vote which translates into 266 of the 496 seats in the Bundestag. But Kohl's party, which achieved 44.3 percent Sunday compared to 48.8 percent in the 1983 elections, registered its poorest performance since the Federal Republic was founded in 1949. The centrist FDP and the anti-NATO, environmentalist Green Party chalked up the largest

gains. The former increased its share of the vote to 9.1 percent, from seven percent in 1983. The Greens won 8.3 percent, up from 5.6 percent four years ago.

The Social Democratic Party (SPD) remains the largest opposition faction in parliament. It drew 37 percent of the popular vote, down from 38.2 percent in 1983, but better than predicted by the pre-election opinion polls.

#### Jewish Vote Is Marginal

It is not possible to determine how Jews cast their votes. There are 30,000 Jews in West Germany, more than 20,000 eligible to vote. Observers here assume they supported the CDU or the FDP. But the Jewish vote is too marginal to play any role in national politics.

The Jewish community is scattered, most living in West Berlin and Frankfurt. But West Berliners do not participate in the national elections because of the special status of the city which is governed by the three Allied powers.

#### BANK LEUMI HAS A NEW BOARD

By Hugh Orgel

TEL AVIV, Jan. 26 (JTA) -- The new Board of Directors of Bank Leumi was formally ratified Sunday by the members of the outgoing Board whose resignations became effective immediately. But controversy continued to simmer over the new chairman, Meir Heth, a former president of the Tel Aviv Stock Exchange.

One member of the new Board, Oded Winkler, quit even before it took over in protest against the choice of Heth. Winkler, director general of the Federation of Kibbutz Industries, announced his resignation saying he was dissatisfied with the selection of Heth who was reproved by the Beisky Commission last year in its report on the 1983 bank shares scandal and the stock market panic which ensued.

Heth, who replaced outgoing Board chairman Eli Hurvitz, replied to his critics at a press conference, noting that the Beisky Commission had not barred him from any future executive position with an Israeli bank. The heads of Israel's five largest banks were barred.

Heth was selected from a field of five candidates by the Board of the Jewish Colonial Trust, owner of the Bank Leumi by virtue of its founders shares and as majority stockholder. He maintained that mere mention of his name in the Beisky report did not disqualify him.

The report found that he was aware of the manipulation of bank shares by the country's leading banks but did nothing about it when he headed the Tel Aviv Exchange.

According to Heth, he had in fact warned against the practice and no longer headed the exchange when the scandal broke. He noted that he would receive compensation as chairman of the Bank Leumi Board but unlike his predecessors, it would be "within normal, acceptable Israeli standards."

The outgoing directors announced their resignations two weeks ago after a new scandal erupted over excessive compensation given Ernst Japhet, former chairman and chief executive officer of the bank, when he stepped down last spring in compliance with the recommendations of the Beisky Commission.

Japhet reportedly was given \$4.5 million in severance pay and a \$30,000 per month pension.

**TWO FORMER POCS WARN AGAINST GIVING USSR TRADE BENEFITS BEFORE THERE IS A MARKED INCREASE IN EMIGRATION**  
 By David Friedman

WASHINGTON, Jan. 26 (JTA) -- Natan Shcharansky and Yuri Orlov, the two leading human rights activists who were recently allowed to emigrate from the Soviet Union, warned Friday against granting the USSR trade benefits before there is a marked increase in emigration.

"First improvement of emigration, then improvement of trade," said Orlov, who was the founder of the Moscow Helsinki Monitoring Group. "But not in reverse order."

Orlov and Shcharansky, who were released from Soviet labor camps in apparent gestures to the Reagan Administration, testified before a Commission of Inquiry sponsored by the Union of Councils for Soviet Jews (UCSJ) on Capitol Hill to demonstrate the Soviet Union's violation of the Helsinki Accords.

They were questioned by Sens. William Armstrong (R. Colo.) and Charles Grassley (R. Iowa), former Sen. Richard Stone (D. Fla.) and Stuart Eizenstat, the UCSJ's legal counsel and a former special assistant to President Carter.

Both Orlov and Shcharansky said the West should not be taken in by gestures such as their release. Shcharansky said there is a "desire in the West to be deceived" by such gestures because of the fear of nuclear war.

**New Law, More Restrictions**

Both former Soviet prisoners said that Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev seems to placate the West with gestures such as the release of some Soviet prisoners and allowing emigration for the reunification of families, but he balances this with harsher restrictions at home.

Shcharansky noted that the new emigration law which went into effect January 1 starts by claiming a free emigration policy. But then, he noted, it makes emigration procedures more restrictive allowing emigration only for those who would be reunited with close relatives, defined as parents, children and brothers and sisters.

He said that as far as Soviet Jews are concerned, even if all 30,000 who fit the above category were allowed to leave, it would be only 10 percent of the 380,000 who have earlier received invitations from Israel and have been denied visas.

Shcharansky urged Congress not to continue with vague calls for increased emigration, which totalled only 914 in 1986, but to set fixed guidelines. He said if 20,000 Jews were allowed to emigrate, one concession could be made: if 50,000 left, another; and if all who asked to leave were allowed to go, the Jackson-Vanik Amendment could be lifted.

Eizenstat said that in 1979, after 50,000 Jews were allowed to emigrate, he brought Carter a proposal from then Rep. Charles Vanik (D. Ohio), the co-sponsor of the amendment that links trade benefits for the Soviet Union to increased emigration, to temporarily lift the restrictions. But nothing was done because Sen. Henry Jackson (D. Wash.) and most Jewish groups were opposed, he said.

He noted that the next year emigration dropped to 21,471 and has fallen yearly ever since. He wondered whether the Carter Administration had made a mistake. But Shcharansky said he believes the large emigration in 1979, at a time

when he was in prison, was an effort by the Soviet Union to clean house. He said that at the same time Moscow was restricting new invitations for those who wanted to leave.

**Says Neshira Is Not Cause For Emigration Drop**

Shcharansky rejected the charge that the large number of Soviet emigrants who go to the United States, instead of Israel, is the reason for the drop in emigration. He said that while as an Israeli citizen he would like to see more Jews, from the U.S. as well as the USSR, go to Israel, the large number of dropouts is only an excuse used by Moscow.

Meanwhile, Lynn Singer, executive director of the Long Island Committee for Soviet Jewry and a former president of the UCSJ, told the Jewish Telegraphic Agency that she learned Friday that Lev Blitshtein, a 56-year-old Moscow refusenik who had been denied an emigration visa since 1975, was told he could leave. Blitshtein's long-time refusal was based on his supposed knowledge of "secrets" regarding meat storage.

Blitshtein was forced to divorce his wife, Buma, so that she and their children, Boris and Galina, could emigrate. They have lived in the United States since 1976. Singer noted that Blitshtein has over the years been especially helpful to the families of Jewish Prisoners of Conscience.

**OVER 300 JEWISH SCIENTISTS IN THE USSR BEING DENIED EMIGRATION VISAS**

JERUSALEM, Jan. 26 (JTA) -- The Public Council for Soviet Jewry has charged that more than 300 Jewish scientists in the Soviet Union are being denied emigration permits. According to speakers at a press conference here, Jewish scientists suffer more than other refuseniks because they lose their jobs and are forced to take unskilled work.

The Council announced that an international meeting of scientists will be held in Vienna this week on their behalf. Vienna was chosen because it was the site of the recent Conference on Peace and Security in Europe.

Avraham Harman, president of the Council, said the campaign on behalf of the scientists was only part of a general campaign for all Jews seeking to leave the USSR. Israel will be represented at the Vienna meeting by several scientists who managed to emigrate. They include Prof. Iosif Irlin of the Weizmann Institute of Science who arrived in Israel two months ago after an eight-year quest for a visa.

**11% DROP IN IMMIGRATION TO ISRAEL**

JERUSALEM, Jan. 26 (JTA) -- Immigration to Israel totalled 9,500 in 1986, an 11 percent drop from the previous year according to figures released last week by the Central Bureau of Statistics. The decline was mainly in olim from the Soviet Union and Africa.

Of the 914 Jews reported to have left the USSR last year, only 202 came to Israel. Although 565 Jews arrived from South Africa, more than double the number in 1985, immigration from Africa as a whole fell by 58 percent.

About 2,000 American Jews immigrated to Israel in 1986, only 100 more than in the previous year. About 1,000 immigrants arrived from France, 800 from Argentina, 600 from the United Kingdom and the rest from other European and Latin American countries.