

ISRAELI AIR FORCE COLONEL ALLEGEDLY INVOLVED WITH POLLARD ESPIONAGE CAUSE OF US-ISRAELI DISPUTE
By Judith Colp

WASHINGTON, March 2 (JTA) -- The State Department said it expected Israel to "call to account" any individual involved in the case of Jonathan Pollard, an American Navy analyst who has confessed to selling U.S. military information to Israel. He and his wife Anne are scheduled to be sentenced here Wednesday.

The State Department issued its statement during a Monday press briefing when asked about the recent promotion of Col. Aviem Sella, an Israeli Air Force officer alleged to have supervised Pollard's activity. Sella has been named commander of Israel's second-largest air base.

"At the time Pollard's espionage was discovered, the government of Israel said it would take steps to prevent the recurrence of such unauthorized activity and any Israeli involved would be called to account," said State Department Deputy Spokesperson, Phyllis Oakley. "We expect the government of Israel to stand by these undertakings."

The Pentagon and U.S. Air Force have indicated that they will not cooperate with Sella, according to reports.

Small Rift Over Issue

Oakley did not indicate that the State Department had directly told Israel of its displeasure over Sella's promotion, but said that "the government of Israel is aware of our position on all the people involved in this case."

Some Israeli leaders have complained of U.S. intervention in Israel's affairs, and called it "unprecedented" for the American to declare a boycott against a senior Israeli officer.

EUROPEAN-ISRAEL CHAMBER OF COMMERCE URGES MEASURES AGAINST ARAB BOYCOTT
By Yossi Lempkowitz

BRUSSELS, March 2 (JTA) -- The European Economic Community-Israel Chamber of Commerce has called on the EEC to coordinate legislation against the Arab boycott of Israel.

The resolution reaffirmed the European Community's fundamental principle of condemnation of the unlawful Arab boycott of firms trading with Israel. The President of the Chamber, former French Minister Lionel Stoleru, said that while the practical effects of the Arab boycott are waning, it remains important to condemn this practice as discriminatory and a violation of free trade.

Although the EEC-Israel Chamber of Commerce has been placed on the Arab boycott black list, the Chamber will continue to promote economic cooperation between Europe and Israel, Stoleru said.

The meeting here was attended by senior EEC officials and representatives of bi-national chambers of commerce of 10 countries.

Also on hand was Israel's Minister of Commerce and Industry, Ariel Sharon, who met with his Belgian counterpart, Herman De Croo, and the European Commissioner of the EEC in charge of Mediterranean policy, Claude Cheysson.

The meeting reviewed commercial and economic relations between Israel and the EEC countries and called for promotion of technological and industrial cooperation between the Community and Israel.

This would include joint ventures in high technology, pre-investment assistance and risk capital. The participants emphasized Israel's close trade relations with both the EEC and the United States.

The resolutions approved Israel's recent linkage of the Shekel with a basket of European currencies, along with the U.S. Dollar.

The chamber will meet again in October.

'IVAN' TRIAL DEFENDANT CALLS WITNESS FOR PROSECUTION A LIAR

By David Landau

JERUSALEM, March 2 (JTA) -- A Treblinka survivor who identified John Demjanjuk as the brutal death camp guard known as "Ivan the Terrible" was called a liar by the accused as the trial of the 66-year-old Ukrainian born former automobile worker from Cleveland, Ohio entered its third week in Jerusalem district court Monday.

Eliahu Rosenberg, pointing at the accused last Wednesday, told the court, "That is Ivan, I have not a shadow of a doubt." He has relentlessly cross-examined by Demjanjuk's American attorney, Mark O'Connor. It was Rosenberg's third day on the witness stand, and Judge Dov Levin, president of the three-judge panel hearing the case, said it would be the last.

Rosenberg, who testified that he was a member of the prisoner squad forced to clean the gas chambers after each mass killing, was asked by O'Connor why he did nothing to warn his fellow Jews as they were driven to their deaths.

'How Could I Have Helped?'

"How could I have helped them?" was Rosenberg's anguished reply. "I had no contact with living people there . . . If I would have shouted to them I would have been thrown alive into a pit filled with blood."

At that point, Demjanjuk called from the prisoner's dock, "You are a liar." He hurled the epithet in Hebrew, which he was learned since he was extradited to Israel from the U.S. more than a year ago.

O'Connor's cross-examination is aimed at discrediting Rosenberg by demonstrating that his memory is faulty. He succeeded in finding discrepancies between Rosenberg's testimony in court and statements he signed at other times.

One related to the date he was brought to Treblinka. Was it during June 1942 or on the eve of Rosh Hashana that year; and how old was he when he gave testimony in the trial of Adolf Eichmann 25 years ago, 35 or 40?

GOVERNMENT DIVIDED ON HOSPITAL STRIKE

TEL AVIV, March 2 (JTA) -- Striking hospital workers demonstrated rabiously outside the Knesset Monday while the Labor and Welfare Committee discussed the worsening situation at 29 government hospitals hit by a walkout of 11,000 administrative and maintenance personnel.

The strike, now in its second week, has raised political passions. Health Minister Shoshana Arbelli-Almoslino, a Laborite, sharply attacked Likud Finance Minister Moshe Nissim for what she called mishandling the hospital crisis. She had harsh words too for Premier Yitzhak Shamir for not holding a Cabinet debate on the country's rapidly deteriorating health services.

Arbelli-Almoslino attacked Nissim for hinting Sunday that he would consider hiring private contractors to do maintenance work at the hospitals. Some hospitals have already engaged contractors or are using volunteers to collect soiled linen and provide fresh laundry.

The strikers retaliated by placing pickets outside kitchens and linen store rooms. At one point, their demonstration at the Knesset became disorderly, as strikers surged beyond police barriers. Welfare Committee chairperson Ora Namir sent word that she would adjourn the meeting unless the strikers withdrew immediately to the area where a police permit allowed them to demonstrate.

ISRAELI TOURISM MINISTRY PREDICTS
END TO SLUMP IN FOREIGN VISITORS

By David Landau

JERUSALEM, March 2 (JTA) -- The slump in tourism to Israel may be over, according to officials of the Ministry of Tourism here. They reported significantly improved figures for the last two months of 1986 and the beginning of 1987. In fact, the Ministry predicts a 20 percent rise in American tourist traffic this year, although tourism from the U.S. and Canada has always lagged behind Europe.

The officials admit that 1986 was a very bad year for tourist traffic in Israel, as in Europe. They attributed it to the rash of terrorist acts, particularly the hijacking of the Italian cruise ship Achille Lauro in 1985, in which American passenger Leon Klinghoffer was murdered.

Overall tourist arrivals to Israel in 1986 amounted to 1.2 million, down 17 percent from 1985, the all-time record year. The figures included passengers from cruise ships who generally spend no more than a day in Israel and sailors from the U.S. Sixth Fleet on shore leave.

Income from tourism is estimated at \$950,000 in 1986, a 15 percent drop from the previous year.

Good December

The optimism is based on tourism figures for December 1986, which exceeded 100,000. Arrivals from Europe were up 15 percent over December 1985 and arrivals from the U.S. also were higher. The most substantial increase was registered by the resort town of Eilat on the Red Sea, which recorded 63,000 arrivals on direct flights from Europe, 37 percent more than in 1985.

Much of the traffic to Eilat comes on charter flights from northern Europe and the Scandinavian countries, attracted by the warm, sunny climate. Europe is the main source of Israel's tourism, accounting for more than 60 percent of

the visitors annually. The U.S. supplies 22 percent. About 224,000 American tourists came to Israel in 1986, down 48 percent from 1985. Americans arriving in cruise ships numbered 1,800 last year, compared to more than 27,000 in 1985.

WEIZMAN AGAIN URGES TALKS WITH PLO;
CLAIMS UNITY GOVERNMENT IMPEDES PEACE

By David Landau

JERUSALEM, March 2 (JTA) -- Ezer Weizman, the only member of the government to publicly call on Israel to negotiate with the Palestine Liberation Organization, declared Sunday night that only talks with the PLO or an expressed readiness for such talks can expedite peace negotiations with Jordan.

Weizman, a Minister-Without-Portfolio who recently merged his Yahad Party into the Labor Party, addressed some 400 dovish members of the Labor Party's Central Committee in Tel Aviv. He expressed frustration with King Hussein of Jordan for insisting on keeping his relationship with Israel a deep secret.

Weizman's speech was viewed by political observers as part of his ongoing efforts to assume leadership of the moderates in the Labor camp. Another speaker at the meeting, MK Abba Eban, who heads the Knesset's Foreign Affairs and Security Committee, stopped short of calling for talks with the PLO. But Eban observed that any serious negotiators among the Palestinians were likely to have "distasteful biographies."

Weizman accused Likud Ministers of treating Foreign Minister Shimon Peres "shamefully" at Sunday's Cabinet meeting, when Peres reported on his meeting with Egyptian leaders in Cairo last week. According to Weizman, the Labor-Likud unity government has ended its usefulness and now impedes progress on the peace front.

POSSIBLE PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATE
PLEDGES FRIENDSHIP WITH ISRAEL

By Yitzhak Rabi

NEW YORK, March 2 (JTA) -- Sen. Dale Bumpers (D. Ark.), who is expected to soon announce his bid for the 1988 Democratic Presidential nomination, vowed Sunday night to continue his support of Israel.

"I am, and I will continue to be, a strong friend of Israel," Bumpers told more than 650 Jewish leaders and guests attending the 79th annual dinner of Bnai Zion, the American Zionist fraternal organization, at the New York Hilton Hotel.

Meir Rosenne, Israel's Ambassador to the United States, spoke of a close relationship between the peoples of America and Israel.

The diplomat also noted that "no state is more ready than Israel to sit down and negotiate peace," with its neighbors. He said that although the Jewish State has fought many wars, "We never saw victory on the battlefield as an end by itself."

Rosenne was given Bnai Zion's America-Israel Friendship Award. Bernice Tannenbaum, chairman of the World Zionist Organization-American Section, received the Harris J. Levine Memorial Award. Shortly after the affair began, the guests were evacuated to the lobby after a suspicious suitcase, thought perhaps to contain a bomb, was spotted by security officers in the VIP lounge. After police arrived, a man claimed the suitcase, which was harmless.

EXCLUSIVE INTERVIEW:

U.S. RABBI WHO MET WITH TOP KREMLIN OFFICIALS SAYS NEW INTERNAL OPENNESS COULD GREATLY BENEFIT SOVIET JEWS
By Margie Olster

NEW YORK, March 2 (JTA) -- An American rabbi who met last month with top Soviet officials said Sunday that he believes significant internal changes underway there will improve Jewish emigration and religious freedom.

Rabbi Arthur Schneier of New York, the president of the Appeal of Conscience Foundation, was the only Jewish leader invited to address the religious portion of Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev's February 14-16 international forum "for a nuclear-free world."

Schneier told the Jewish Telegraphic Agency that he formulated his views at the conference and from private meetings with leading government and religious officials.

They included Konstantin Kharchev, the chairman of the Council on Religious Affairs; Anatoly Dobrynin, Secretary of International Relations of the Central Committee; Georgi Arbatov of the USA Institute; and dissident scientist Andrei Sakharov, who also attended the forum. Schneier added that he spoke briefly with Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev at a reception.

"What is clear is there is presently a review of all refuseniks. This was told to me on the highest levels," Schneier said. The rabbi said officials also told him that the justification for refusal referred to as "state secrets" would now have to be substantiated by the local authorities. In the past, emigration officials did not have to prove possession of state secrets.

Schneier said he saw tangible evidence of the new "glasnost" (openness) during the visit. He received permission from the government to send in 5,000 bibles and 5,000 prayer books printed in Russian and Hebrew. The Soviet government also agreed to allow two young Jewish men to attend the Rabbinical seminary in Budapest, Hungary, the only such institute in Eastern Europe.

Schneier was asked to deliver his address to the religious section on Saturday morning. But because he observes the Sabbath, Schneier sent a colleague to read his speech. Instead, the rabbi gave a sermon at the Moscow Choral Synagogue.

He said his forum address touched on the Chernobyl nuclear reactor accident, the threat of nuclear Holocaust and his own experience as a Holocaust survivor. But it also called on the Soviet leadership to live up to its international obligations on human rights and encouraged the glasnost.

No Such Speech Several Years Ago

"A few years ago, I could never have delivered this kind of address," Schneier said. "I did not sanitize my speech. A few years ago, I wouldn't have been invited to give that talk."

A possible sign that the speech was well-received came in the final communique on the whole conference. It included the concluding passage of Schneier's address, quoted from Hillel: "If I am not for myself, who is for me? If I care only for myself, what am I? If not now, when?"

The forum ended in the Kremlin with Gorbachev addressing the entire plenum. "You can't help but sense more openness," Schneier said. "There is an open admission of mistakes."

Schneier said the open discussion of human rights is in itself a major advance. "There were

days of total denial of the Jewish problem. Today, you can talk about refuseniks, you can talk about emigration," he said.

Sees Deep Changes

While skeptics claim the new openness is simply cosmetic, treating only the most high-profile cases of dissidents, Schneier said he believes the changes will penetrate deeper in time.

"There is a realization of stagnation, both ideological and economical. Unless there is a new approach, the Soviet Union is just going to fall far behind as we enter the 21st century. His approach is much more pragmatic than ideological," Schneier said.

The rabbi's accomplishments perhaps may be attributed as much to his relationship with top Soviet officials as to glasnost. He is one of the few private American citizens, like industrialist Armand Hammer, who have developed over many years a rapport with the Soviet leadership. He has visited the Soviet Union 19 times in 21 years.

The Appeal of Conscience Foundation is an interfaith organization of business and religious leaders to promote religious freedom throughout the world, understanding and cooperation between religions.

POLAND OKAYS REMOVAL OF AUSCHWITZ CONVENT, BUT CARDINAL GLEMP PROTESTS

PARIS, March 2 (JTA) -- The Polish government has announced its formal approval of a plan to remove a Carmelite convent from the site of the Auschwitz-Birkenau death camp in Poland, the World Jewish Congress was informed.

The Warsaw government's decision was conveyed to WJC representative Gerhart Riegner Thursday by the European Office of the United Nations in Geneva. The plan was agreed to last week at a meeting in Geneva between European Jewish leaders and representatives of the Catholic Church, including the Archbishop of Cracow, Franciszek Cardinal Macharski.

But apparently, differences have arisen within the Church in Poland. Polish Primate Josef Cardinal Glemp indicated at a press conference in Brussels last Wednesday that he considers the matter unsettled.

"The dialogue between Jews and Catholics must be continued. This matter is not terminated. It is rather astonishing that the Jews are remembering this fact 40 years after the war," Glemp said in reply to questions.

Rebuke Of Jews?

Moreover, Glemp seemed to be rebuking Jews. "Jews must understand us as we are trying to understand them," he said. "For us it is essential to establish a place for prayer. But we fully support the project to create at Auschwitz, a place of so many atrocities, a multi-faith institute, not only with Jews and Catholics but also with Moslems, Orthodox and other religions."

The Cardinal was probably referring to the decision at the Geneva meeting to establish an interreligious center away from the camp site where Catholics and Jews could meet, pray, meditate, hold seminars and greet visitors.

But the agreement made it clear that the convent would be removed from Auschwitz within two years and the Carmelite nuns would move to a different site.

146 JEWS LEFT USSR IN FEBRUARY

NEW YORK, March 2 (JTA) -- Exit visas were granted to 146 Soviet Jews in February, compared to 98 in January, the National Conference on Soviet Jewry reported. Of these, 29 went to Israel, according to the Long Island Committee for Soviet Jewry.

NCSJ chairman Morris Abram expressed hope "that this slight increase could be the beginning of a series of steps that would lead to the release of the 11,000 long-term refuseniks, some of whom have been waiting for more than 15 years, as well as the processing of approximately 370,000 others who, we know, also seek to be repatriated to Israel.

"We also hope that the remaining Jewish Prisoners of Conscience will be freed and that they, and all former Prisoners of Conscience will be allowed to leave for Israel. Then, and only then, will we be certain that the oft-used word 'glasnost' (openness) has a literal meaning where human rights are concerned."

SOVIET JEWRY ACTIVISTS SPLIT ON SHAMIR'S POSITION ON SOVIET JEWISH 'DROP-OUTS'

By Susan Birnbaum

NEW YORK, March 2 (JTA) -- Two major Soviet Jewry activist groups have told the Jewish Telegraphic Agency that they do not support Israeli Premier Yitzhak Shamir's request that the United States stop granting refugee status to Soviet Jews, which allows them to come directly to the United States instead of Israel.

Shamir stated throughout his recent visit to the United States that with the existence of Israel, no Jew is a refugee.

Glenn Richter, national coordinator of the Student Struggle for Soviet Jewry, said Wednesday he agrees that Jews no longer may be considered refugees. But he presented a different explanation for "neshira" -- Soviet Jews "dropping out" from Israel and coming to the U.S. with their Israeli visas.

"I think that the statements (of Shamir) don't meet the problem," he said, "which arises out of frustration from the Soviets' deliberately releasing those who they know will go to America. The ratio of 'noshrim' (dropouts) has remained relatively constant for the last five years."

"If the Soviet government would permit direct flights from the USSR to Israel," added Richter, "then Soviet Jews could see Israel for themselves rather than being subjected only to the Kremlin's propagandistic view of Israel."

New Problem Foreseen

But there is another problem, Richter observed: "Soviet Jews who arrive in Israel cannot legally go to the U.S. if they ask to leave Israel, because they've lost their refugee status. However, a Soviet Jew arriving in the U.S. is always welcome in Israel."

"One must still retain an element of choice," Richter said. The issue, as it now stands, he said, creates a "no-win situation."

Lynn Singer, executive director of the Long Island Committee for Soviet Jewry and a past president of the Union of Councils for Soviet Jews, spoke for both organizations, the Long Island Committee being a member organization of the Union of Councils. The Union's position, Singer told JTA, is that "We do not agree that

neshira destroyed the opportunity for Soviet Jews to receive exit visas. We fully empathize with the State of Israel in its position that all Jews should make aliya. But realistically, the name of the game is free emigration, and this is how the Union of Councils understands it. Family reunification, repatriation, whatever nomenclature one chooses to give it, the energy is for emigration."

NCSJ Studying Issue

However, the National Conference on Soviet Jewry (NCSJ) is currently taking a more cautious position on the matter. Shamir spoke last week at a session convened by the NCSJ at which leaders of national Jewish organizations were present to discuss the issue of Soviet Jewry.

The NCSJ released a statement following the meeting saying that: "The matters the Prime Minister discussed have now been squarely placed on the agenda of the American Jewish community for careful consideration as an urgent item affecting the welfare of the Jewish people as a whole. The Prime Minister and the community are as one both on the need for substantial and sustained emigration from the Soviet Union to the State of Israel, and that the claim for repatriation to Israel is a valid and compelling argument. There was mutual agreement that issues delineated by the Prime Minister must be subjects for serious and ongoing deliberation."

Jerry Strober, a spokesperson for the NCSJ, told JTA that the matter of neshira would now be given priority for consideration, but no position one way or another would be taken at this time.

At the other end of the spectrum is Americans for a Safe Israel (AFSI), which supports Shamir's contention that "America's granting of refugee status to Soviet Jews is unjustified," and that the use by Soviet Jews of Israeli visas to then continue to the U.S. could be used by the Soviets to clip Jewish emigration.

Joseph Puder, AFSI executive director, stated that "Since reunification of families in Israel is the basis for Soviet emigration policy, any violation of this basic policy can be used as a pretext by the Soviets to cut off emigration."

SOVIET JEWS FREE TO BE JEWISH, CLAIMS CHIEF RABBI OF MOSCOW

By Tamar Levy

GENEVA, March 2 (JTA) -- Adolf Shayevich, the Chief Rabbi of Moscow, claimed here that Soviet Jews have complete freedom to practice their religion.

Shayevich replied to questions at a session of the United Nations Human Rights Commission devoted to human rights and the status of international human rights covenants. He was brought here from Moscow by the Soviet delegation to the Commission.

According to Shayevich, who heads Moscow's Choral Synagogue, the majority of the two million Jews in the USSR are non-believers by choice, not by force. He said that any Jew who wished to live by the laws of Moses and the Torah was free to do so.

The question of freedom of religion in his country is interlinked with questions of ethics and standards, Shayevich said. He urged everyone to cooperate in the matter of human rights, but with greater objectivity than has been shown until now.