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**DRUZE VILLAGERS CLASH WITH ISRAELI
AUTHORITIES OVER LAND DISPUTE**
By Gil Sedan

JERUSALEM, July 7 (JTA) -- A long standing land dispute erupted into violence Monday between Druze villagers in Galilee and Israeli police and park rangers. The incident has political ramifications and may open a rift between the authorities and Israel's 50,000 Druze, regarded as the most loyal of the country's minorities.

The clash occurred after a group of Nature Reserves Authority rangers with a police escort dismantled a tent encampment illegally erected in the heart of the Mt. Meron Nature Sanctuary by residents of the Druze village of Beit Jahn. As the authorities passed through the village, they were blocked by Druze in tractors, jeeps and private cars.

Several hundred Druze attacked with knives, steel chains and wooden clubs, and the authorities fled. The melee ended with 23 policemen, six rangers and six villagers injured. Twenty police vehicles were damaged and thrown into wadis. Police officers at the scene said they refrained from opening fire in order not to worsen the situation.

Demand For Land

The tent camp was established three weeks ago by the Beit Jahn villagers to press their demand for the return of about 3,000 acres in the nature sanctuary, which they claim to own. According to the authorities, the problem lies in small, privately owned patches of land in the nature preserve. They are too scattered to use efficiently for agriculture. The government recently released 500 acres, but the villagers demand the return of the rest.

The issue is delicate because a conflict with Beit Jahn might spread to the 18 other Druze villages in Galilee. Likud Minister Moshe Arens, who is in charge of Arab and Druze affairs, visited Beit Jahn recently and promised to work for the return of more of the land. Arens has been trying hard to win political support among minority groups, which traditionally favor the Labor Party.

Resolution of the Druze conflict with the Nature Reserves Authority is a political advantage for him because the Authority is an agency of the Agriculture Ministry headed by Laborite Arye Nehamkin.

Observers here say the Beit Jahn Druze reacted militantly because the Mt. Meron land dispute is only the latest of a number of conflicts with the authorities which have cast a shadow on the entire relationship between Israel and its Druze population.

The Druze and the tiny Circassian community are the only minorities allowed to serve in the Israel Defense Force. They have distinguished themselves in combat. Now Druze leaders complain their loyalty has not been rewarded.

They say the government has done little to develop their villages or provide sufficient housing. Even in the army they are barred from certain assignments as "security risks." A movement has developed inside the Druze community in

recent years to renounce the partnership with the Jews. Druze have lived in the country for centuries, and some say now they are Arabs and should reject military service. Many Israeli Druze have family ties with Druze on the Golan Heights who are loyal to Syria. Israeli authorities are therefore concerned that incidents such as the one that occurred at Beit Jahn could spread.

**TWO JEWISH GROUPS OPPOSE BORK
FOR SUPREME COURT, OTHERS QUIET**

NEW YORK, July 7 (JTA) -- Two national Jewish organizations have announced their opposition to President Reagan's nomination of Federal Judge Robert Bork to be an Associate Justice of the U.S. Supreme Court.

Irma Gertler, president of B'nai B'rith Women, said, "The appointment of Judge Bork would seriously jeopardize important gains made by women in recent years."

Theodore Mann, president of the American Jewish Congress, called Bork's nomination "an explicitly ideological decision" by the President.

He said the AJCongress opposed Bork "because of his stand on such issues as privacy, free speech, civil rights and church-state separation."

But two other major Jewish organizations contacted by the Jewish Telegraphic Agency declined to make a statement on Bork's nomination. The Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rith said it didn't know if it would comment. The American Jewish Committee said it would not comment.

Disagree With Decisions

Gertler noted that Bork "has spoken out publicly against abortion rights and laws against sexual harassment of women. His public position on public funding of religious schools threatens the separation of church and state, a matter of deep concern to our 120,000 members throughout the United States."

Mann said in a statement released Friday: "President Reagan's nomination of Judge Robert Bork...is regrettable. We urge the Senate Judiciary Committee to reject this nomination. Judge Bork obviously has the legal and intellectual qualifications to sit on the court."

"Nevertheless, in a series of law review articles and speeches over the years he has expressed disagreement with a long series of significant precedents which are now deeply embedded in American law and which have significantly expanded the rights of citizens with respect to such crucial areas as privacy, free speech, civil rights and church-state separation."

**U.S. BUSINESSMEN'S GROUP, INCLUDING
CYRUS VANCE, URGES U.S. TO BACK
INTERNATIONAL MIDEAST CONFERENCE**
By Yitzhak Rabi

NEW YORK, July 7 (JTA) -- A group of prominent American-Jewish and American-Arab businessmen and women urged the U.S. government Tuesday to support an international conference for Middle East peace because failure to grasp the current opportunity could endanger

world peace. That call was contained in a statement released by The Business Group for Middle East Peace and Development at a press conference at the Sky Club here. The group, whose members have close ties to Israel and the Arab world, has been working quietly for the past five years to advance the Middle East peace process and promote the economic development of the region, particularly the West Bank and Gaza Strip.

The members include Najeeb Halaby, former chairman of Pan American Airlines, whose daughter, Queen Noor, is the wife of King Hussein of Jordan; Howard Squadron, a New York attorney and former chairman of the Conference of Presidents of Major American Jewish Organizations; and former Secretary of State Cyrus Vance. Vance noted at the press conference that he is the only group member who is neither of Jewish nor Arab origin.

See Opportunity Now

He said the group is making its views public because developments in recent months have created an opportunity to bring together the parties to the Middle East dispute. "If this opportunity is not grasped, there is a danger that peace in the Middle East and the world will be shattered," he said.

The statement issued at the press conference said: "There appears to be serious consideration by the interested parties in a peace conference that could be convened under international auspices. The only role of the conveners would be to provide a forum for the commencement of bilateral negotiations between Israel and each of the other parties to the dispute. While we do not necessarily regard this method of getting 'to the table' as the best method, we believe our government should support the convening of such a conference.

"We recognize that Israel and each of the Arab negotiating parties are diametrically opposed on certain key issues and understand that those issues may prove to be difficult. It is clear, however, that such disputes will never be resolved peacefully in the absence of a negotiating process; we can only hope that such a process will succeed."

The group agreed that a peace conference should be convened without preconditions and that the Soviet Union should have a part in it. Vance and Squadron disagreed over participation by the Palestine Liberation Organization.

Vance, stressing that he spoke for himself, said the PLO should be included if it renounces violence and accepts United Nations Security Council Resolutions 242 and 338, which imply recognition of Israel.

Squadron, also speaking for himself, said that in view of the PLO's radicalization at the Palestine National Council meeting in Algiers earlier this year, its participation should be ruled out.

Halaby said it is important that the situation in the Middle East "will not be frozen." He said King Hussein "came forward with all the risks involved" in order to make progress toward peace.

Claim Ongoing Contacts

According to the statement, "The group has maintained political contacts with all the parties involved in the Middle East dispute with the limited goal of expediting the initiation of a meaningful peace process between Israel, on the

one hand, and each of the other interested parties."

The group said it was moved to speak out "because there seems at this time to be a possibility for progress in both of the areas that we have concentrated on" -- Middle East peace and economic development. With respect to the latter, the statement said: "We believe the proposal for major programs of economic development in the Middle East, particularly the West Bank and Gaza, deserve the widest possible international support. We believe that it is time for the Western European nations and Japan to join together with us to provide financial resources to make this progress a reality."

Squadron expressed concern that unless the Reagan Administration acts now, the opportunity for peace will be lost. He noted that foreign policy initiatives are not likely to be taken next year, an election year in the U.S., and the next Administration is unlikely to make any serious moves immediately after it takes office in 1989.

In addition to Vance, Halaby and Squadron, the statement was signed by Robert Arnow, Saul Cohen, Stephen Cohen, Lester Crown, Edith and Henry Everett, Philip Habib, (the former Middle East peace negotiator), Jerrier Haddad, Joseph Jacobs, Alfred Moses, Lewis Rudin, Donna Shalala, Stephen Shalom, Gerald Silbert and Albert Tahmouh.

NINE HEZBULLAH KILLED IN DAYLONG BATTLE WITH IDF, SLA IN LEBANON

By Hugh Orgel

TEL AVIV, July 7 (JTA) -- Units of the Israel Defense Force and the Israel-backed South Lebanon Army (SLA) engaged in a day-long running battle Monday with the extremist Shiite Hezbollah north of the south Lebanon security zone.

Nine Hezbollah fighters were killed. There were no IDF or SLA casualties. Israeli military authorities appeared to blame the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL) for allowing the Hezbollah to occupy UNIFIL territory. UNIFIL headquarters in Lebanon said Tuesday that the Hezbollah militia overran a UNIFIL position manned by Nepalese troops and that reinforcements from French and Irish contingents were unable to reach the position because of the intense fighting.

But officers of the IDF northern command denounced UNIFIL's actions as "shameful."

The battle involved Israeli helicopter gunships and artillery. It developed when IDF and SLA patrols, searching for the site of terrorist Katyusha rocket launchers aimed at Israeli territory, encountered the Hezbollah near Yaatar village just north of the security zone and about six miles from the Galilee village of Shuttula.

The Hezbollah troops used rocket-propelled grenades, mortars and machineguns when the IDF and SLA opened fire on them. Both sides brought up reinforcements. The battle lasted from dawn until nightfall.

DUTCH ORDERED TO RESUME PAYMENTS TO REMARRIED WOMAN, VICTIM OF NAZIS

By Henrietta Boas

AMSTERDAM, July 7 (JTA) -- The Central Appeals Council has ordered Dutch authorities to resume payments to a Jewish woman who suffered persecution as a child during the Nazi occupation

of Holland. The payments were halted when the woman, who had been divorced, remarried in 1982. The payments are an entitlement of persons whose wartime experiences at the hands of the Germans or Japanese reduced their earning capacity.

The woman, not identified, appealed on grounds that the stoppage of payments violated the United Nations anti-discrimination resolution of 1984. She contended that male recipients of the same compensation who marry wealthy women continue to receive their payments.

The Appeals Council ordered the payments resumed retroactive to 1984. The decision is expected to have far-reaching effects for Jewish and other women in similar circumstances.

KNESSET SET TO VOTE ON CONTROVERSIAL BILLS, INCLUDING 2 ON JEWISH IDENTITY

By David Landau

JERUSALEM, July 7 (JTA) -- Three fiercely controversial bills supported by the religious parties are due for a vote in the Knesset Wednesday with the potential of bringing down the Labor-Likud unity coalition government.

The Labor Party served notice Tuesday that it will leave the coalition if one of the measures, giving the Chief Rabbinate exclusive authority to approve conversions performed abroad, is adopted.

But a government crisis may be averted by the absence of Kach Party leader Meir Kahane, whose single vote could turn the tide in favor of the bill. The Knesset plenum has barred Kahane from attending the next five sessions of parliament as a disciplinary measure for insulting Knesset Speaker Shlomo Hillel.

The bills are: a private member's bill calling for pardons for the members of a terrorist underground, all Orthodox Jews, still serving sentences for violent crimes against Arabs in the West Bank; a bill to amend the Law of Return to invalidate conversions performed by non-Orthodox rabbis; and an amendment to religious regulations dating from the British Mandate in Palestine, which would serve the same purpose.

Shas Bill

The latter is sponsored by the ultra-Orthodox Shas Party, and Premier Yitzhak Shamir has pledged Likud "to do all in its power" to gain its passage. Labor Party leader Shimon Peres said "it endangers the unity of the Jewish people" and Labor will not be part of any government that must enforce it.

Labor and the left-liberal parties have called home all of their members abroad to help defeat it. Likud and the religious camp have done the same to ensure passage. Hadash Communist Party leader Meir Wilner, who is visiting the People's Republic of China, will not be able to return in time for the vote.

In his absence, Kahane would have the swing vote. But his offensive behavior toward Hillel will keep him from casting it. Hillel stripped Kahane of most of his Knesset privileges last month for refusing to take the required oath of allegiance to the State of Israel. Kahane complied last week after the Supreme Court rejected his appeal for reinstatement. But afterwards he made insulting remarks to the Speaker. Knesset sources said the other bills on the agenda are not certain of

passage since a number of Likud MKs might vote with Labor to reject them.

NORTH SAID HE TOLD ISRAEL THAT IRAN ARMS PROCEEDS WENT TO CONTRAS

By Judith Colp

WASHINGTON, July 7 (JTA) -- Lt. Col. Oliver North said under oath Tuesday that he told Israel in January 1986 that proceeds from Israel's sale of U.S. missiles to Iran were used to fund the Administration-backed Nicaraguan rebels known as Contras.

In his first day of testimony before the Senate-House select committee's hearing on the Iran-Contra affair, North described the Israeli role in November 1985 in selling I-Hawk missiles in its possession to Iran, which were later returned because they were the wrong type.

North said the Israelis later asked him what happened to the \$1 million they had deposited to cover the cost of transporting the arms with Lake Resources, the Swiss firm set up to handle the funds for the Contras.

The former National Security Council aide said he told the Israelis that the money was "used for the purpose of the Contras, and they acknowledged that."

"No one ever came and asked for it again," North added later in response to questioning by House counsel John Nields.

North, reiterating past testimony, said the Israelis "royally fouled up" in sending medium-altitude missiles to Iran instead of the high-altitude missiles the Iranians wanted to meet the threat of "high flying" reconnaissance plane and bombers.

"We were very concerned that they (the Israelis) were demonstrating a certain ineptness in trying to pull this thing off," North said.

UNCONFIRMED REPORT SURFACES THAT WALLENBERG IS ALIVE IN SOVIET PRISON

TEL AVIV, July 7 (JTA) -- A report surfaced here Tuesday that Righteous Gentile Raoul Wallenberg is alive and "reasonably well" in the Soviet Union and would be released from prison shortly.

Wallenberg, a Swedish diplomat on a mission to Hungary during World War II, is credited with saving the lives of thousands of Jews in Nazi-occupied Budapest by providing them with Swedish papers and shelter at the Swedish Embassy. He was arrested by Soviet authorities when the Red Army entered the city in 1945 and has not been heard from since.

The Soviets claim he died of natural causes in prison in 1947. Israel Radio on Tuesday quoted Yefim Moshinsky, who immigrated from the Soviet Union several years ago, as saying he had a letter from a "reliable source" in the USSR reporting that Wallenberg is alive.

Moshinsky, who claims he was the KGB officer who detained Wallenberg 42 years ago, said the man who delivered the letter was a family acquaintance and had received it from a "credible source." The letter said Wallenberg would be released shortly.

Moshinsky's story was not confirmed by any other sources.

ALABAMA JEWS UPSET OVER GOVERNOR'S DEROGATORY REFERENCE TO JEWS

By Margie Olster

"Do I dare to eat a peach?"

--T.S. Elliot

NEW YORK, July 7 (JTA) -- Although Alabama Gov. Guy Hunt said he jokes about it with his Jewish friends, leaders of Alabama's Jewish community said they found little humor in the Governor's remark at a local peach festival late last week that "I never tried to Jew" a peach farmer over the price of his fruit.

Immediately following the remark, a reporter asked Hunt if some Jews might be offended. Hunt replied, "I joke about that with my Jewish friends all the time."

"He stuck his foot in his mouth and then he kept chewing on it," said Rabbi David Nesson of Congregation Agudath Israel in Montgomery, Ala. Nesson was also referring to Hunt's apology--which many found as offensive as his original remark.

In it, Hunt said, "I have studied history and have great respect and regard for the business success of the Jewish people." He added that, "I was raised and taught and believe the people of Israel to be God's chosen and special people."

Met With Governor

Representatives of the Jewish community met with Hunt last week to express their concerns over his remarks. A spokesman for the governor said Hunt had apologized again, but the spokesman offered no further comment on the meeting. The Jewish leaders have been unavailable for comment.

Some members of the Alabama Jewish community told the Jewish Telegraphic Agency last week they believed Hunt's remarks were inadvertent and without malice. Ellen Loeb, spokesperson for the Jewish Federation of Montgomery, said the incident "has been blown out of proportion." The governor's statement was made unthinkingly and was certainly offensive, she said, "but it was not an intentional slur."

But Rabbi David Baylinson of Congregation Beth Or in Montgomery said, "He obviously has an ingrained stereotype about Jews ... it shows how 'backwoods' he really is."

In addition to protests from the Jewish community, the remarks have drawn scrutiny from the press on Hunt's background.

Elected in November 1986, Hunt is the first Republican Governor in Alabama in 112 years. Although he was the dark horse candidate, his campaign got a much-needed boost from an illegal vote crossing-over scandal in the Democratic primary which discredited the Democratic candidate, former Alabama Lt. Gov. Bill Baxley.

Hunt comes from the tiny northern Alabama town of Holly Pond, where he was a farmer and a fundamentalist lay preacher in a Primitive Baptist church where he continues to preach.

No Jews In Cabinet

There are no Jews among Hunt's cabinet or advisors, according to Baylinson. Alabama has an estimated Jewish population of about 9,400.

Although the Jewish leaders recognize that the expression 'to Jew someone out of something' -- meaning derogatorily to cheat or haggle over -- has been traditionally a part of the Southern vernacular that Hunt grew up with, they said this made his use of it no less offensive.

"We are hoping to sensitize the governor to the fact that this is very much an anti-Semitic expression," Nesson said before the meeting. Baylinson said other racial slurs -- once part of the everyday vocabulary in the South -- were found reprehensible by ethnic groups and eliminated from the vernacular.

"The cliché came out of a prejudice towards Jews in the South," Baylinson said.

ADL RIPS WORLD MUSLIM CONGRESS FOR SPREADING ANTI-SEMITIC CHARGES

NEW YORK, July 7 (JTA) -- The Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rith has accused the World Muslim Congress of spreading allegations that "international Jewish capital" is at the root of Western trade moves against Japan.

Abraham Foxman, associate national director of the ADL and head of its international affairs division, cited the May 23 issue of The Muslim World, the World Muslim Congress' weekly newsletter, which describes anti-Jewish books recently published in Japan.

"Despite the article's reportorial rather than polemical style, its message is clear: Jews are behind world economic problems and Jews are lying about the Holocaust," Foxman said.

The Muslim World, edited by Inamullah Khan, is published in English and mailed from Karachi, Pakistan to subscribers all over the world. Kahn is secretary-general of the World Muslim Congress. The Congress maintains consultative status as a Non-Governmental Organization at the United Nations.

Says It's Disqualified

Foxman said its dissemination of racist materials disqualified the Congress from UN affiliation. The front-page article in the May 23 Muslim World quoted from a book by Masami Uno alleging that Jews control the world economy. It cited another book by Toru Kawajiri, described as "a well known and highly respected psychoanalyst," which plays down the Holocaust.

Foxman recalled that in 1982 the ADL revealed that the World Muslim Congress was distributing anti-Semitic books by American neo-Nazi William Grimstad to members of the Senate and the British Parliament.

The Congress was founded in 1949, according to ADL, and was headed for 20 years by Haj Amin el-Husseini, the former Grand Mufti of Jerusalem who was an admirer of Hitler and fled to Berlin at the outbreak of World War II. His successor, Ma'ruf al-Dawalibi, who lives in Saudi Arabia has been quoted as saying "the Arabs would prefer a thousandfold to become a Soviet Republic than a prey to world Jewry."

WIESENTHAL CENTER PETITIONS URGE VATICAN TO RECOGNIZE ISRAEL

LOS ANGELES, July 7 (JTA) -- Six members of Congress and three mayors joined with eight Holocaust survivors last week to launch a national petition drive urging the Vatican to recognize the State of Israel and protesting Pope John Paul II's audience with Austrian President Kurt Waldheim on June 25.

The petition is addressed to the Pope, who will visit the U.S. next September. It was initiated by the Simon Wiesenthal Center here.