

**SOVIET CONSULAR TEAM IN ISRAEL
MAY BE FOLLOWED BY SECOND GROUP,
SAYS HEAD OF CURRENT DELEGATION**
By Gil Sedan

JERUSALEM, July 16 (JTA) -- Yevgeny Antipov, head of the three-man Soviet consular delegation that arrived in Israel last Sunday, indicated Thursday that the Soviet diplomatic presence in Israel, however low-level, may not end with his delegation's departure.

Antipov, who is deputy director of the Soviet Foreign Ministry's Consular Department, told the Jerusalem Post that the length of his group's stay in Israel would "depend on how soon we will accomplish our tasks." He said he was sure they would return to the USSR before their 90-day visas expire.

But he was also sure that they will be replaced by "other officials" of "a consular character."

Antipov insisted that the sole purpose of their visit, the first in 20 years by an official Soviet group, was to renew the passports of Soviet nationals living in Israel and to make an inventory of Soviet property here.

He also maintained that the description of his group as a "delegation" was a misnomer insofar as it implied diplomatic-political substance. But despite these disclaimers, speculation is rife that there is more to the visit than either Moscow or Jerusalem is ready to acknowledge.

Have Temporary Office

The Soviet visitors are staying at the Tel Aviv Hilton Hotel. They have rented a temporary office in suburban Ramat Gan to conduct their business. The newspaper Hadashot quoted Foreign Ministry sources Tuesday to the effect that the Ramat Gan office may become a permanent legation.

Haaretz quoted the Foreign Ministry's Political Director General, Yossi Beilin, Tuesday as saying, "Only a blind man can ignore the numerous signs indicating an important improvement in the Soviet attitude toward Israel."

Beilin suggested that the visit by the consular level officials was a test by the Kremlin of Arab reaction to a possible improvement in Soviet-Israeli relations. "If they see that they can live with this reaction it is conceivable that they will try to institutionalize the delegation and leave it permanently in Israel, perhaps as a base for a future embassy," Beilin said, according to Haaretz.

Beilin also made clear that when Israel agreed to grant visas to the Soviet officials, it was with the understanding that a similar Israeli delegation would visit the Soviet Union "within a reasonable period of time." Antipov told reporters Tuesday that there was no need for a reciprocal visit because there are no Israeli nationals or Israeli property in the USSR.

Some observers have pointed out that the three-man Soviet mission, accompanied by staff, is too large simply to look into the status of Soviet nationals and Soviet property in Israel. Most of the nationals are functionaries of the Russian Orthodox Church and Russian women who married Israeli Arabs who were students in the Soviet

Union. Most of the property is Church property. In addition to Antipov, an important member of the delegation is Alexei Chestyakov, described as a diplomat with expertise on the Middle East. The third member is Genryk Flachin, who attended a brief meeting with Israeli officials in Helsinki last August.

Chestyakov told the Jerusalem Post Thursday that the USSR did not regard the lack of diplomatic relations with Israel as an obstacle to Soviet participation in an international conference for Middle East peace. He recalled that both countries sent delegations to the peace conference in Geneva in October 1973 after the Yom Kippur War, despite the absence of relations.

Antipov was noncommittal on the subject when questioned by reporters earlier in the week. He would say only that as a permanent member of the United Nations Security Council "certainly our role should be taken into consideration." About the role of a conference, he said, "I believe it is too early to talk about it."

The Soviet delegation met briefly Tuesday with Yaacov Aviad, head of the Foreign Ministry's Consular Division, who described their talks as "extremely positive" and "a good beginning." He did not elaborate.

Foreign Minister Shimon Peres urged that the visit "not be blown out of proportion."

The Soviet visitors have not been disinclined to talk to Israeli reporters since their arrival here. Antipov was interviewed by the Army Radio Tuesday morning. The Army Radio opens its daily news program with greetings by a prominent personality, and on Tuesday it was Antipov who delivered a cheerful "Good Morning, Israel" in Hebrew.

Visit Protested

But the visit has not been without its tense moments. Soviet Jewry activists demonstrated outside the Foreign Ministry Tuesday while the Soviets were meeting with officials.

On Thursday evening, a group of 10 demonstrators, some of them relatives of imprisoned Soviet Jewish refuseniks, occupied the lobby of the Tel Aviv Hilton, carrying placards calling for the release of "Prisoners of Zion" and "Let My People Go." One demonstrator, Vladimir Magaryk, chained himself to a pillar.

Security guards forcibly removed them. An Associated Press photographer covering the event was locked in her room and her film was confiscated.

The Soviet delegates did not seem disturbed by the demonstration. "We are not afraid that something may happen to us. There are demonstrations everywhere," a spokesman for the delegation said.

**TRIP TO ISRAEL VIA RUMANIA OF
FORMER POC'S NOT SEEN AS PRECEDENT**
By Susan Birnbaum

NEW YORK, July 16 (JTA) -- Two prominent former Prisoners of Conscience who were released from a labor camp March 19 arrived in Israel Thursday via a direct flight from Rumania, according to the National Conference on Soviet

Jewry (NCSJ). Mark Nepomniashchy and Yakov Levin, father and son-in-law, were travelling, with their wives via Bucharest "on principle, to create a precedent," Levin told a New York Times Moscow correspondent.

The plans to travel the "new route" direct to Israel -- bypassing the traditional transit center in Vienna where the Jewish Agency and HIAS (Hebrew Immigrant Aid Society) register and process Soviet emigres and where most of these have been leaving for the United States -- are, however, nothing new. HIAS executive vice president Karl Zukerman told JTA: "To my knowledge, it has always been possible to fly from Moscow to Bucharest to Ben Gurion Airport. There has been a notice to that effect for years at the Dutch Embassy in Moscow, which handles Israeli interests in the Soviet Union."

'Always An Option'

Zukerman added that, "If Levin thought he was creating a precedent, okay. But it's always been an option."

The NCSJ said "it's been done before in a number of cases. But it's quite possible that Levin doesn't realize that."

Glenn Richter, coordinator of the Student Struggle for Soviet Jewry, said that "Soviet Jewish activists have not indicated to us any clear sense that direct flights through Rumania to Israel would begin either on a limited or on a widespread basis soon. There's no corroborating evidence that what is happening with the Nepomniashchy-Levin family would be duplicated."

Auguries of a change in the flight plans of Soviet Jewish emigres were presented in March in statements by prominent American Jewish visitors who met in Moscow with Soviet officials -- Rabbi Arthur Schneier, president of the Appeal of Conscience Foundation here, and Morris Abram, NCSJ chairman, who traveled with Edgar Bronfman, president of the World Jewish Congress.

They returned with tentative assurances that Bucharest was being substituted for Vienna as the first arrival point for emigrating Soviet Jews, ensuring direct routes to Israel and eliminating the opportunity for "neshira" -- dropping out of Soviet Jews who emigrate with Israeli papers and then register as refugees in Vienna and come to the U.S. and some other countries in the West. However, to date, no change has been made, and the Soviets never officially verified that such a substitution would be made.

AFTER DISCUSSING NETANYAHU BOOK WITH REAGAN, POINDEXTER SAID HE AVOIDED MENTIONING FUND FOR CONTRAS By David Friedman

WASHINGTON, July 16 (JTA) -- President Reagan was reading "Terrorism: How the West Can Win," the book edited by Israeli United Nations Ambassador Binyamin Netanyahu, at about the time his then-National Security Advisor considered telling the President about the diversion of Iranian arms sales profits to the Contra rebels, but decided not to.

The former Advisor, Rear Admiral John Poindexter, related the story Wednesday during his testimony before the Senate and House committees investigating the Iran-Contra affair.

Poindexter recalled the incident when asked whether he had ever come close to telling Reagan about the diversion of profits from the sale of arms to Iran to the Contras. He replied that he

had approved the diversion when it was suggested to him by Lt. Col. Oliver North in January 1986.

"I thought it was a good idea" and "consistent" with the President's policy to support the Contras, Poindexter said. He said he made a "deliberate decision" not to tell the President about the diversion to protect Reagan from any political embarrassment.

"I decided that the buck stops here, that I have the authority to do this," he said. However, he noted, "If the President had asked me I very likely would have told him about it. But he didn't."

Poindexter said he considered telling Reagan when, on the return flight from the May 1986 economic summit in Tokyo, Reagan asked him if there was anything the President "unilaterally" could do about supporting the Contras, despite the Congressional ban on providing funds to the anti-Sandinista group.

The President was concerned that Congress had not yet approved the \$100 million in aid the Administration requested for the Contras, which was appropriated later in the year.

This discussion occurred after Reagan and Poindexter had talked about the Netanyahu book. But Poindexter did not explain the connection.

Poindexter also said that until he spoke about the diversion of funds for the Contras with Attorney General Edwin Meese III in November 1986, he believed that he and North were the only members of the government who knew about it. North has testified that he discussed the diversion with the late William Casey, then director of the Central Intelligence Agency.

After the diversion was disclosed by Meese, Poindexter was allowed to resign from the NSC and North was fired.

BRITAIN, CANADA JOIN CALL TO OPEN UN WAR CRIMES FILES TO THE PUBLIC By Yitzhak Rabi

UNITED NATIONS, July 16 (JTA) -- Britain and Canada joined Israel and 11 other nations Thursday in requesting that the files on Nazi war criminals compiled by the United Nations War Crimes Commission be opened to the public.

The two countries informed UN Secretary General Javier Perez de Cuellar of the change in their position Thursday. Only four of the 17 former members of the defunct War Crimes Commission still oppose opening the files. They are France, Poland, Czechoslovakia and India.

Last week Belgium, China, Luxembourg, New Zealand and Norway joined Israel's request. It had been supported earlier by the U.S., Australia, Denmark, Greece, The Netherlands and Yugoslavia.

Israeli diplomats have noted that while a majority of the former members favors making the files public, final authority rests with the Secretary General. An archive containing 40,000 files on war criminals is stored in a building in midtown Manhattan. Israel has already inspected several thousand files. UN regulations allow member states to do this on a confidential basis.

ISRAELI PRINT JOURNALISTS STRIKE

TEL AVIV, July 16 (JTA) -- A strike by print journalists Thursday for higher wages is expected to keep most of the country's daily newspapers off the stands Friday. Radio and television were not affected.

AN ACTUAL WEEKEND? ISRAEL MULLS CUTTING WORK WEEK FROM 6 TO 5 DAYS

By Gil Sedan

JERUSALEM, July 16 (JTA) -- As the government and the Histadrut were haggling over a new general wage agreement this week, more Israelis discovered that the work week here could be shortened from six to five days, and the economy would survive.

One of those Israelis was Finance Minister Moshe Nissim, who at 2 a.m. Wednesday came out of seven-and-a-half hours of negotiations with the Histadrut, saying he would propose to the government to officially shorten the work week to five days.

The parties were still at odds regarding a wage agreement. The Treasury is willing to approve wage hikes, but only on condition that the new agreement be for two years. The Histadrut objected, but the negotiations are to continue. There is no immediate threat of a strike similar to the general work stoppage that the Histadrut organized Sunday.

Nissim's agreement in principle to shorten the work week was seen by the Histadrut negotiators as a gesture of good will.

According to government figures, some 300,000 Israelis already work only five days a week, about a third of them in industry. But each day has been extended to nine hours, meaning a 45-hour week.

So far, the industrialists have expressed opposition to shortening the week, fearing that productivity would decrease -- although studies in the West have shown the opposite.

The truth is that in practice, many Israeli employers, especially in industry, have already shortened their weeks to five days at their own initiative, partly to attract workers and partly after they realized that the shorter week brings about greater productivity.

"Productivity has nothing to do with the number of work hours a week, but is linked to the wages," said Haim Haberfeld, chairman of the Trade Unions Division of the Histadrut. The Histadrut has already presented the government with a formal proposal to cut the official work week to 40 hours spread over five days while cutting 10 percent of the manpower in the civil service. According to the Histadrut, the plan would be implemented gradually from April 1988 until 1991. The treasury has not yet reacted to the proposal.

Relatively Long Week

Israel has the longest work week among industrialized states, with an unofficial 45-hour average.

The longest work week in Europe is in Portugal, at about 43 hours. The shortest is in Belgium, which cut its work week to 35.7 hours. Some countries are considering cutting the work week to 35 hours over four days.

Moshe Katzav, Minister of Labor and Social Affairs, expressed support for Israel cutting the week short for laborers. Civil servants should continue working six days a week, he said, so that the industrial workers could use the extra day to get service.

Haberfeld of the Histadrut expressed confidence that even if the government rejects the proposal, by the time elections are held, no core will dare oppose the idea. "I am willing to wage my entire public career that by October 1988, at

the latest, we shall have a long weekend," he said.

To some Israelis, especially the religious population, this could mean a dramatic change in how free time is spent -- having an extra day of leisure, without the limitations of observance of the Sabbath.

BILL TO CLOSE PLO OFFICES IN U.S. CONSTITUTIONAL, SAYS AJCONGRESS

NEW YORK, July 16 (JTA) -- A study by the American Jewish Congress has determined that Senate Bill 1203, which would close the offices of the Palestine Liberation Organization in the U.S., is constitutional and protective of free speech.

The study noted that the U.S. Congress has recognized in past legislation that the PLO constitutes sufficient threat to international order to require special controls and limitations upon its activities in the U.S., including a ban on the entry of foreign members of the PLO.

"It would seem at least paradoxical that the same terrorist body whose members are barred from entering this country should continue to function freely, especially since (its) offices serve as the principal mechanism for the coordination, supervision and direction of PLO activities in the United States," the study said.

It stressed that SB1203 protects First Amendment rights. "It is only the PLO as a foreign entity which is prohibited from transacting business in this country and then only until it renounces the use of terrorism as a political method," the study said. Under the proposed legislation, American sympathizers with the PLO would be free to speak on its behalf and continue to be members of the organization and solicit money on its behalf.

The study, "An Analysis of Legislation Directed at Closing of PLO Offices in the United States," was prepared by Phil Baum, associate executive director of the AJC, and Marc Stern, co-director of its Commission on Law and Social Action. Both are attorneys who specialize in constitutional law.

PALESTINIAN TEAM SPITS ON ISRAELIS AT WORLD ATHLETIC COMPETITION

By Eli Kohen

COPENHAGEN, July 16 (JTA) -- The eighth Gymnastrada, the first international sports event in which both Israeli and Palestinian teams are participating, was marred by a minor but nasty incident and the intrusion of Middle East politics at its opening in Herning, Denmark Monday.

A police guard was ordered for the 41 Israeli gymnasts and folkdancers after they were cursed and spat upon by Palestinian team members outside the Herning stadium. The Palestinians were also forbidden, by order of the Danish Foreign Ministry and Justice Ministry, to display the Palestinian flag.

Teams from 25 countries are participating in the Gymnastrada. There were close to 17,000 spectators at the opening.

The Palestinians, mainly from Bahrain and Kuwait, complained that their flag was banned because of pressure from the Israel Embassy in Copenhagen.

The Embassy denied this, and Niels Nielsen, chairman of the Gymnastrada, said on a television interview that the games management acted on unequivocal orders from the Danish government.

COMMANDER CONCERNED THAT IDF COUNTER-TERRORISM IN LEBANON DETRACTS FROM DETERRING SYRIA

By Hugh Orgel

TEL AVIV, July 16 (JTA) -- The Israel Defense Force is waging a counterterrorist war in southern Lebanon for which it was not trained, which to some extent impinges on its main task -- facing the threat of war with Syria, Maj. Gen. Yossi Peled, commander of the northern sector, said in a frank interview broadcast by the Army Radio recently.

But he also made a strong case for the presence of IDF forces in the south Lebanon security zone, explaining that the Israel-backed South Lebanon Army (SLA) contributes much, but is not yet capable of performing all of the tasks required.

He stressed that the IDF deters any plans by Syria to go to war to retake the Golan Heights. But to remain a deterrent force, it must maintain its toughness and qualitative superiority and the Syrians must be kept aware of this.

Discussing counter-terrorist activities, he said: "The IDF can't fight in a routine manner within the framework of the war against terrorism -- maintaining outposts and patrolling. This is a very complex matter. It's not exactly the military method taught in military schools. It's a different form of combat. It must be a sophisticated way of fighting, not routine."

Peled explained, "We have to go to them (the terrorists) at an unexpected time, unexpected place, knock on their door and say 'we're here.'"

Asked why this kind of warfare cannot be waged from within Israel's border, the General replied: "Don't be naive. Ninety percent of the incidents in the security zone today occur at a distance of four, six or a few more miles from the northern settlements. If we weren't stationed inside the security zone, all of these incidents would be on the border, including Katyushas." Katyushas are rockets.

He said the SLA will eventually be able to perform more of the duties assigned to the IDF. "We need patience in this matter, I believe that if we give the SLA the correct support, we will be able to entrust it with most of the burden," he said, but it will be a long process.

Asked if day-to-day operations in south Lebanon reduced the IDF's ability to carry out its primary objective to prepare for a war situation in the north, Peled said, "In all sincerity, Lebanon certainly robs me of much time, but I am glad that we have found a way to balance these two matters, both with respect to time and to means." He added that something "urgent" must not become something "important."

"What is urgent is the daily confrontation with terrorism. I estimate that in the past year we have taken several steps forward regarding the Syrian front as well...It's a clear decision in which you tell yourself that you will handle both, because it is very easy to be swept away by Lebanon and deal with it 24 hours a day," Peled said.

He does not believe that threat posed by the Syrian army has lessened. "The Syrian army is a large army, equipped and equipping itself with very advanced combat material: on land, with advanced tanks; in the air, I estimate it's a matter of time until we see the MIG-29 flying in Syrian skies.

"The Syrian army trains, and I don't believe that they're maintaining this large army to hold parades in Damascus. I allow myself to assume that there are other reasons which prompt a country like Syria -- with its economic situation -- to maintain such an army," Peled said.

"I believe it is naive to think that the Syrians, because 20 years have passed, have gotten used to the fact, that we are on the Golan Heights...In their opinion, the Golan Heights is a strip of land which has been taken away from them and which has to be returned...," Peled said.

He stressed that the IDF must make its deterrent capacity evident in order to prevent war because casualties would be heavy if war broke out.

"Deterrence capability is what we demonstrate always," he said. "How we are viewed by the Syrians...is connected with our level of discipline. If we demonstrate confidence, if we demonstrate capability, if we demonstrate high standards, it's no secret that in some cases the Syrians simply sit and watch our training. There's little distance between us."

Peled added, "If we demand tough training of ourselves, they'll see, hear and know this; if we don't compromise on standards and we come across as a quality army, there's a chance that we can maintain our deterrent capability. If we maintain our deterrent capability, there's a chance that the other side -- despite its inability to accept to fact that we are on the Golan Heights -- will perhaps think twice whether it is worth clashing with us in a war.

"If we don't act this way and act instead like 'nebechs' and wretched souls, and demonstrate wretchedness and inability, I believe we'll bring war closer," Peled said. "Therefore we have to demand much from ourselves. Only through uncompromising demands from ourselves will we be able to maintain our deterrence capability."

AMIT WOMEN LEADER GOLUB DIES

NEW YORK, July 16 (JTA) -- Mollie Golub of New York, a lawyer and honorary national president of AMIT Women, died here Monday at the age of 87. She had been active in the religious women's Zionist movement for more than 40 years at the local, regional and national levels.

Golub served as national president of AMIT, formerly American Mizrahi Women, from 1949-51, and was elected again in 1956 to a one-year term.

She negotiated with governmental agencies in the U.S. and Israel on a variety of projects aiding children and new immigrants in Israel. She travelled extensively to rally support for her organization's work, aimed at creating a secure and religious Israel. Its projects expanded greatly during her terms in office.

LIFE SENTENCE FOR 2 MURDERERS

JERUSALEM, July 16 (JTA) -- Two Gaza Arabs were sentenced to life imprisonment by a military court Sunday for the murders of three Israelis during the past year and the attempted murder of others.

According to Col. Moshe Sheffi, president of the court, two members of the three-judge panel favored the death penalty, which the law allows military courts to impose. But they did not vote for it because capital sentences are rarely carried out in Israel.