

**1,483 IRANIAN JEWS REPORTED TO HAVE
IMMIGRATED TO THE WEST VIA AUSTRIA**
By Yitzhak Rabi

NEW YORK, Oct. 6 (JTA) -- In the first eight months of 1987, 1,483 Jews from Iran immigrated to the West through Austria, according to Austrian Foreign Minister Alois Mock.

In a press conference here Oct. 2, Mock disclosed that a total of 5,188 Iranian Jews immigrated via Austria between July 1, 1983 until August of this year.

Mock stressed that his government is proceeding "without asking too many questions of the Iranian refugees and without publicizing individual cases" in order not to endanger the flow of Jewish immigrants from Iran in the future and the remaining relatives of those Jews who were able to leave Iran. "It is Austria's consistent policy to help people in danger, wherever they are and who ever they are," Mock stated.

There are presently about 30,000 Jews in Iran and it is believed that most of them would emigrate to Israel and other countries in the West if they were allowed to do so by the Iranian authorities.

The Austrian official, who also serves as his country's Vice Chancellor, said Jewish emigration from the Soviet Union has increased considerably, with 5,003 Soviet Jews being granted exit visas in the first eight months of 1987, compared to a total of 901 persons in 1986. He pointed out that a total of 272,622 Soviet Jews passed through Austria between 1958 and August 1987 on their way to Israel or other countries.

"Austria continues to be committed to giving free choice as to where they want to eventually settle down," Mock declared, adding, "Austria will continue to act as a country of first asylum for refugees from all parts of the world."

**TWO-WAY TRADE BETWEEN CHINA AND
ISRAEL SEEMS TO BE IN THE OFFING**
By Hugh Orgel

TEL AVIV, Oct. 6 (JTA) -- Two-way trade between Israel and the People's Republic of China appears to have been advanced at several meetings held here recently between visiting Chinese businessmen and Minister of Commerce and Industry Ariel Sharon. Yediot Achronot reported Monday.

Sharon decided to change existing policy by allowing the import of goods from China. Israel already exports various items to China. Sharon confirmed the report but would not say what those items are. The visitors asked him to allow large-scale imports of Chinese goods but Sharon insisted that any imports must be "on reciprocal basis," the paper reported.

Some Israeli products are shipped directly to China in vessels sailing from Eilat. Others are sent via Hong Kong. A Hong Kong businessman in Israel recently expressed interest in importing clothing, particularly bathing suits.

One result of his visit is an "Israel Week" to be held in Hong Kong. Some of the items displayed there may well end up in China, Yediot Achronot said.

**ARGUMENTS ON NEW JERSEY MINUTE OF
SILENCE IN PUBLIC SCHOOL LAW
PRESENTED BEFORE THE SUPREME COURT**
By David Friedman

WASHINGTON, Oct. 6 (JTA) --The Supreme Court heard arguments Tuesday on whether a 1982 New Jersey law requiring a minute of silence in public schools "for private contemplation and introspection" violated the First Amendment prohibition on the establishment of religion.

The case, *Karcher v. May*, is an appeal of a decision by the Third U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals upholding a 1985 decision by the Federal District Court in New Jersey that the law was unconstitutional.

Norman Cantor, a Trenton, New Jersey, lawyer, representing Jeffrey May, a New Jersey teacher, who along with several parents and students challenged the law, argued that discussion in the New Jersey Legislature during the debate on the bill demonstrated that supporters wanted the legislation as a way to foster prayer in the classrooms.

Cantor said teachers could use the minute of silence to influence students to pray, particularly in the lower grades where pupils would not understand the meaning of "contemplation and introspection."

But Rex Lee, representing Alan Karcher, former Speaker of the New Jersey Assembly, said the minute of silence was a "legitimate secular" act designed to quiet down students as the school day began.

He said the law to set aside the minute was mandatory only for principals and teachers, not students, who could use it, or not use it, in any way they wanted.

The Law And A Question Of Jurisdiction

The law reads:

"Principals and teachers in each public elementary and secondary school of each school district in this state shall permit students to observe a one-minute period of silence to be used solely at the discretion of the individual student, before the opening of exercises of each school day for quiet and private contemplation and introspection."

While the Supreme Court in 1985 ruled unconstitutional an Alabama law providing for a minute of silence for "meditation and voluntary prayer," the Court may decide the latest case on the technical grounds that Karcher did not have the "standing" to file the appeal.

The Reagan Administration has filed a brief declaring that while it believes the law is constitutional, the appeal should be dismissed because Karcher has no jurisdiction.

The law was adopted in December 1982, when the Democratic-controlled Assembly overrode a veto by Gov. Thomas Kean, a Republican. May immediately filed a suit challenging the law in January 1983.

When neither Kean nor his attorney general would defend the suit, Karcher decided to defend it in his capacity as Speaker. But about the time the Court of Appeals gave its decision in 1985, the Republicans took over the Assembly, and the

new Speaker, Charles Hardwick, asked that his name, which had been substituted for Karcher's on the appeal to the Supreme Court, be withdrawn.

Karcher filed an appeal and Lee maintained Tuesday that he could do so since he was still a member of the Legislature.

Should the court reject the appeal on the ground that Karcher has no legal right to appeal, the lower court decision would stand and the New Jersey law would be stricken from the books.

If the court decides Karcher has the right to appeal and deals with the constitutional establishment of religion issue, some observers believe it would result in a 4-4 split, since the court is short one Justice. This too would uphold the Court of Appeals decision.

However, since half of the states have "minute of silence" laws, the issue is expected to come up again before the Supreme Court.

Among those filing briefs in support of May were: the Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rith, American Jewish Congress, American Jewish Committee, Union of American Hebrew Congregations, National Jewish Community Relations Advisory Council, New Jersey Association of Reformed Rabbis, New Jersey-West Hudson Valley Council of the Union of American Hebrew Congregations.

U.S. ENVOY TO UN OPTIMISTIC ABOUT EVENTUAL SUCCESS OF EFFORTS TO RESCIND INFAMOUS 1975 UN RESOLUTION By Yitzhak Rabi

NEW YORK, Oct. 6 (JTA) -- Vernon Walters, the United States Ambassador to the United Nations, expressed optimism Monday night that the efforts to rescind the 1975 UN General Assembly resolution equating Zionism with racism will eventually be successful. But he made it clear that more time is needed to achieve this goal.

Speaking with reporters at the Pierre Hotel, where he was attending the annual dinner of the Appeal of Conscience Foundation, Walters said: "I don't believe that we can rescind that infamous resolution today -- but we are certainly on our way." He likened the resolution to apartheid, stating: "This is a form of apartheid by itself."

Walters said that he sent this year, as he did last year, a letter to UN Secretary General Javier Perez de Cuellar protesting the anti-Zionist resolution and demanding that it be abolished. In his speech before the UN General Assembly two weeks ago, President Reagan sharply denounced the resolution.

Israeli diplomats at the UN told the JTA that although many countries which voted in 1975 for the resolution would vote against it today, there is still no majority among UN members to rescind the resolution.

The annual award of the Appeal of Conscience Foundation was presented during the dinner by Rabbi Arthur Schneier, president of the Foundation, to Dr. Rong Yiren, chairperson of the China International Trust and Investment Corporation, and American businessman Arthur Ross.

ISRAEL'S ECONOMY ON VERGE OF NEW PERIOD OF GROWTH By Gil Sedan

JERUSALEM, Oct. 6 (JTA) -- Israel's economy, stagnant for years, appears to be on the verge of a new period of growth. But it faces

severe difficulties, indicated by figures released this week by the Central Bureau of Statistics. The country's imports are up and so is its foreign debt while its foreign currency reserves have dipped for the second consecutive month, after a long period of rise.

During the first nine months of 1987, Israel paid some \$8.25 billion for imported goods -- \$1.5 billion more than in the same period of 1986. The level of imports this year has been higher than in any year from 1980-85. It includes all variety of goods. But the highest rise was in the import of consumer products, up 36 percent over last year.

The Bank of Israel announced Monday that the foreign debt now stands at \$25.7 billion, an increase of \$693 million. Theoretically, every Israeli owes more than \$5,000 in foreign debt.

Economists attributed the increase of the foreign debt to the rise in private loans taken overseas and the weakening of the U.S. Dollar against European and Japanese currencies. The Israeli Shekel is geared to the Dollar.

Meanwhile, Finance Minister Moshe Nissim has convinced a key American lawmaker, Sen Lawton Chiles (D. Fla.), chairman of the Appropriations Committee, to allow Israel to repay its U.S. debt in a manner which could save it some \$150 million in interest, Maariv reported Monday.

According to the report, Chiles, after talks with Nissim in Washington last week, reversed his earlier position and agreed to early repayment of the Israeli debt. Israel will take loans from American banks to make the repayment, but at the present interest rate of 10 percent instead of the 14 percent applicable when the loans were originally taken, and thereby profit from the difference.

Economists noted that last year the market interest rate stood at only seven percent and Israel lost some \$250-\$300 million because the U.S. refused to allow it to re-finance its debt.

STATUS OF CONVERT CITIZENSHIP SOUGHT

TEL AVIV, Oct. 6 (JTA) -- A confidential emissary was sent to the U.S. by the Director General of the Interior Ministry, Arye Deri, to determine whether Shoshana Miller, converted to Judaism by a Reform rabbi in the U.S. five years ago, intends to return to Israel to claim citizenship, Davar reported Monday.

Miller, who arrived in Israel in 1985 as an immigrant, was denied status as a Jew by the rabbinical authorities on grounds that her conversion was invalid. She appealed to the Supreme Court which ruled that she must be registered as Jewish and issued an identity card.

Miller subsequently returned to the U.S. to care for her ill father. Her future plans are not known. The Interior Ministry wants to prepare itself to deal with the matter should Miller return to Israel, Davar said.

According to Davar, the Interior Ministry confirmed the report but stressed that the unnamed envoy did not meet personally with Miller but sought to ascertain her plans through a third party. It said the envoy's mission included an examination of various legal matters pertaining to population registry.

TRAGEDY DELAYS U.S.-ISRAEL TALKS

TEL AVIV, Oct. 6 (JTA) -- The biannual meeting on strategic cooperation between Israel and the U.S. which was to have begun Monday in

Washington has been postponed because of a family tragedy. David Ivri, Director General of the Israel Defense Ministry, was in Washington Monday when he learned of the death of his son, Air Force Capt. Gil Ivri, 27, in the crash of his F-16 fighter bomber during a training exercise.

Ivri immediately joined his wife, Ofra, in New York and returned to Israel for the burial of their son Tuesday. The strategic talks will be held at a later date. Ivri, along with Maj. Gen. Danny Yotam of the Israel Defense Force planning branch, heads the Israeli delegation of ranking Defense Ministry personnel and IDF senior officers.

THE LAVI FIGHTER PLANE PROJECT REMAINS A CONTENTIOUS POLITICAL ISSUE By Gil Sedan and Hugh Orgel

JERUSALEM, Oct. 6 (JTA) -- The Lavi fighter plane project died before reaching the assembly line, the result of a government decision five weeks ago. But it remains very much alive as a political issue in the increasingly bitter conflict between the unity coalition partners, Labor and Likud.

The Cabinet vote on August 30 to shelve Israel's prestigious second generation combat aircraft because of excessive costs was split along party lines. Labor favored cancellation of the project. Likud was determined to preserve it. The outcome was the result of a defection by Likud Finance Minister Moshe Nissim who voted with Labor.

Now Likud politicians, notably Minister of Commerce and Industry Ariel Sharon, are claiming that so crucial a decision must not be allowed to hang on a single vote. "In my view, the Lavi is not yet dead," Sharon told cheering workers at Israel Aircraft Industries (IAI) at a rally Monday. It was music to their ears.

Some 3,000 IAI employees are expected to be dismissed as a result of the Lavi cancellation. Temporary workers will be laid off immediately after the Succot holiday. Afterwards, IAI will terminate some 300-400 employees a month.

Sharon Talks Tough

Sharon and Yitzhak Modai, a Likud Liberal Minister-Without-Portfolio, were the only Cabinet members at the rally. Modai, a former Finance Minister, warned the workers not to raise their hopes that the Lavi can be revived. But Sharon's tough talk inspired the crowd to chant "Yes and no, yes and no -- Peres is the son of a bitch," a reference to Foreign Minister Shimon Peres, the Labor Party leader.

Also attacked was Laborite Minister Ezer Weizman, a former Air Force commander who was one of the most outspoken opponents of the Lavi. Sharon, for his part was treated to shouts of "Sharon to Defense," a call for his return to the office of Defense Minister which he held in the Likud-led government of Premier Menachem Begin.

All of this did not sit well with the incumbent Defense Minister, Yitzhak Rabin, who told the Knesset's Foreign Affairs and Security Committee Monday that he knew of no precedent where a Minister publicly attacked the decision of a Cabinet of which he is a member.

"Those poor workers are being fed all kinds of nonsense," Rabin said with respect to Sharon's remarks at the IAI rally. He said he could not begin to work on alternatives to the Lavi until "all matters are resolved," meaning an end to

attempts to revive the ill-fated project. Moshe Arens, a Likud-Herut Minister-Without-Portfolio who resigned from the government in protest against the Lavi decision, is making such efforts. Maariv reported Sunday that he told an associate before he left for the U.S. last week that he would try to get the McDonnell Douglas Co., a leading American manufacturer of combat aircraft, to join IAI in the Lavi project.

Wide Support For Government Decision

IAI workers are hopeful that Arens, Sharon or someone will turn the tide. They are understandably anti-Labor. But their views apparently do not reflect those of the broader population. A poll conducted by the Pori organization, published in Davar Friday found that the Israeli public, by a 20 percent margin, supports the government's decision to scrap the project.

Of the 1,150 adults questioned between September 14-21, 54 percent believed the government's decision was "certainly correct" compared to 34 percent who thought "it was wrong" or "certainly wrong." The decision also raised public esteem for the unity government's ability to make hard decisions on important issues.

Meanwhile, the Government Employment Service is lining up new jobs for displaced Lavi workers. It has announced some 350 openings for engineers and 600 for technicians.

Nevertheless, David Mena, a senior official of the Employment Service, said Tuesday that he anticipated "grave difficulties" in absorbing 500 aeronautical engineers. He warned that many engineers dismissed by IAI and its subcontractors may head for the U.S. and Canada where there is a large demand for their experience and skills.

LIBERAL AND ORTHODOX CONGREGATIONS ISSUE JOINT STATEMENT OF RECONCILIATION

AMSTERDAM, Oct. 6 (JTA) -- The Liberal Jewish congregation and the Orthodox Ashkenazic congregation issued a joint statement of reconciliation here on Yom Kippur eve, deploring the recent media attention given to their ideological differences.

The statement noted that increasing polarization within the Dutch Jewish community is assuming disquieting proportions and therefore the two congregations want to emphasize what unites them rather than what divides them.

The most fundamental issue, the statement said, is to maintain a viable Jewish community in an increasingly secular society. Though the methods to achieve this may differ, there has been cooperation in many fields since the end of World War II in 1945 and this cooperation must continue.

The Yom Kippur eve statement was prompted by the extensive coverage by the Dutch media of a dispute arising from the admission policy of the Maimonides Lyceum in Amsterdam. The Jewish religious school refused to admit a pupil whose mother is non-Jewish according to halachic standards.

TEL AVIV (JTA) -- A majority of Israelis believe the Hebrew calendar year just ended was better than the previous year and are optimistic about the future, according to the results of a poll taken at Rosh Hashanah and published in Haaretz Friday.

5 RIGHTWING EXTREMISTS CONVICTED OF THREATS AGAINST IRS AGENTS

By Susan Birnbaum

NEW YORK, Oct. 6 (JTA) -- Five members of a rightwing tax-protest group with links to a violently anti-Semitic organization were convicted in Las Vegas Friday of threatening the lives of agents of the Internal Revenue Service and a Nevada state judge.

The five are members of the Committee of the States, a group affiliated with the Christian Identity movement, which espouses the belief that the Jews are the children of Satan and which calls the United States government "ZOG"--"Zionist-Occupied Government." The Committee was formed in 1984 in Mariposa, California.

Convictions Friday in Federal District Court in Las Vegas were meted out to Rev. William Potter Gale, who heads the Ministry of Christ Church in Mariposa and is founder of the Identity movement; Fortunato Parrino, an assistant at the church; Richard Van Hazel of Arizona; and Patrick McCray and his brother George McCray, of Nevada. A sixth defendant, Gary Dolfen of Nevada, pleaded guilty to lesser charges after the trial began.

In addition, two others named in the indictment, Angelo Stefanelli and Susan Kieffer of Nevada, pleaded guilty to reduced charges and agreed to cooperate with the government.

Those convicted face possible maximum sentences of 34 years' imprisonment and fines of \$250,000, according to assistant U.S. prosecuting attorney Richard Pocker.

A Warning To Extremists

The trial was monitored by the Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rith in Los Angeles, which has furnished information on the case to law enforcement agencies throughout the country. Betsy Rosenthal, ADL Western states civil rights director, called the verdict a "warning to extremists that the American people will not tolerate their threats of physical harm to our officials and government institutions."

The ADL had obtained documents from the Committee's first meeting, among which was a statement warning that any attempt to interfere with the group by any person or government agency would "result in the death penalty being imposed upon conviction by said Committee."

For many years, the ADL has been monitoring Gale, who has a solidly racist, anti-Semitic resume. According to Rosenthal, it was Gale who first introduced Rev. Richard Butler, leader of the Aryan Nations-Church of Jesus Christ Christian in Hayden Lake, Idaho, to the Identity movement.

In addition, Gale was long viewed as a leader of the Posse Comitatus, an organization of loosely affiliated bands of armed vigilantes. The Posse gained national recognition in 1983 when one of its members, Gordon Kahl, was indicted for killing two U.S. marshalls and later killed himself in a shoot-out with police in Arkansas.

Gale, as a Posse evangelist, supplied tapes for broadcast to radio station KTTL-FM in Dodge City, Kansas, in 1983. He, along with James Wickstrom, another Posse evangelist, also spoke at at least one meeting of local farmers stricken by the intense farm crisis and prone to scape-goating Jews and others in a conspiracy against them.

In his broadcasts, Gale espoused violence while invoking God's name, and urged the collection of dossiers on "every damn Jew rabbi in this

land, and every Anti-Defamation League leader or JDL leader in this land." He is alleged to hold paramilitary training operations, Rosenthal said, adding that Gale had written training manuals for the Posse. She said he is reportedly in poor health.

An assistant to prosecuting attorney Pocker said that Gale is currently free on bail, although Rosenthal said the prosecution had argued that he, and the others, were dangerous and should be imprisoned. Sentencing is scheduled for this week.

Other Trials Pending

Trials are still pending for other affiliates of the Identity movement, including 11 nationwide leaders of the Aryan Nations, who were indicted on charges of sedition by a federal grand jury in Fort Smith, Arkansas, about a half year ago and who are scheduled to stand trial in federal court there next year. Among that group is Butler, who is currently free on \$100,000 bail.

Also indicted for sedition was Robert Miles, a leader of the Aryan Nations and also involved in other neo-Nazi activities. Miles, who calls himself a minister, was originally convicted of burning school buses during integration of schools in Michigan in the 1960s, for which he served jail time. Miles' trial is scheduled for next year.

Other members of the Aryan Nations were convicted in recent months in Tucson, Arizona, on charges of counterfeiting and attempting to pass counterfeit notes at a state fair in Spokane, Washington. Trials are scheduled this week for Ed Hawley and David Dorr, implicated in the bombings of several locations in Coeur D'Alene, Idaho, in September 1986, including several federal buildings and the home of a Roman Catholic priest and human rights leader. The priest, Father Bill Wassmuth, was home at the time of the bombing and barely escaped with his life.

In addition, a trial is scheduled Oct. 26 in Denver for those accused of the murder of Jewish talk-show host Alan Berg in 1984. The perpetrators were members of The Order, an offshoot group of the Aryan Nations.

In July, the Aryan Nations held its annual conclave in Hayden Lake, which was, Wassmuth told JTA, "much more low-key and less attended" than in past years and primarily focused on fund-raising for the trials. "There was much less rhetoric than usual about taking over," Wassmuth said.

The Kootenai County Task Force on Human Relations, a grass-roots organization which Wassmuth chairs, held a rally as in the past two years to counter the Aryan Nations gathering, to which human rights activists from throughout the Northwest traveled.

TORONTO (JTA) -- Rabbi Erwin Schild of Adath Israel Synagogue here announced at a meeting of the Canadian Jewish Congress Ontario Regional Executive Committee that the Board of Governors of his congregation has voted to "adopt" the similarly named Adath Israel Synagogue of Havana, Cuba. What the adoption will consist of in practical terms has not yet been worked out, but it may include fraternal visits to Cuba as tourists, provisions of prayerbooks, prayer shawls and other synagogue needs and various other kinds of tangible assistance. The Cuban house of worship consists of an aging membership and has limited and diminishing financial resources.