

LIKUD ATTEMPTS TO BLOCK LABOR FROM MAKING DEAL ON WZO POSTS

By Gil Sedan

JERUSALEM, Oct. 27 (JTA) -- Likud is working strenuously to nullify an agreement worked out last week between the Labor Party and several major American constituents of the World Zionist Organization that would kill Likud's chances of electing a candidate to either of the two top WZO posts at the World Zionist Congress here in December.

The agreement assures that Labor candidate Akiva Lewinsky, presently the WZO treasurer, will be elected chairman of the WZO and Jewish Agency executives, succeeding Likud-Liberal Leon (Arye) Dulin.

In return for their support of Lewinsky, the office of WZO treasurer will go the Confederation of United Zionists, of which Hadassah is the largest component. Other top portfolios are slated for the Association of Reform Zionists of America and the Conservative Zionist organization, Mercaz.

According to a report in the Jerusalem Post, Labor, the Confederation, ARZA and Mercaz together control 320 of the 535 delegates to the forthcoming Zionist Congress.

Likud's main argument against the deal is that it is inconceivable that one of the two largest political parties in Israel will be frozen out of both of the highest WZO posts, chairman and treasurer. Likud believes, however, that Labor's new coalition with the American Zionists is on shaky ground and could be unravelled.

That opinion was expressed by Gideon Patt, a member of the Liberal wing of the Likud bloc whose name is the only one mentioned so far to challenge Lewinsky for the WZO chairmanship.

Patt, who is science and technology minister in the Cabinet, has not officially announced his candidacy for the WZO post. He met for consultations Monday with Premier Yitzhak Shamir and Knesset member Moshe Arens, both of Likud's Herut wing, to assess the situation.

So far, Likud has not been able to persuade the American factions to abandon their pact with Labor. Mattityahu Drobles, the Herut faction leader in the WZO, warned last weekend that the agreement threatens the very existence of the Zionist movement.

Drobles, who has been mentioned for the post of WZO treasurer, said if Labor does not agree to share the two top offices with Likud, "this will undermine all other aspects of our partnership in the Zionist movement."

ISRAEL WILL INSIST ON NO CUT IN U.S. AID, CABINET DECIDES

By Hugh Orgel

TEL AVIV, Oct. 27 (JTA) -- Reports that Israel is prepared to forgo \$80 million in U.S. military aid in recognition of U.S. efforts to cut the federal budget were officially denied Tuesday by the Defense Ministry.

There is no such intention and the issue was never discussed, a ministry spokesman said. "On the contrary, in the Cabinet's meeting on Sunday it was agreed in accordance with a proposal by

the defense minister that Israel will insist on receiving the aid in its entirety, especially in the face of the (Reagan) administration's commitment in writing on the issue to the ministers of defense and finance, after cancellation of the Lavi project," the spokesman said.

He added that the American administration has not approached Israel with respect to reducing aid, a direct contradiction of a report in Maariv on Monday that American officials are feeling out Israel on the matter.

The Cabinet dropped the Lavi jet fighter-plane project in the face of both U.S. and internal pressure that the plan was too expensive. The \$80 million constitutes 4.5 percent of the \$1.8 billion in U.S. military aid to Israel in the coming year.

Moreover, Premier Yitzhak Shamir and Foreign Minister Shimon Peres rejected a proposal Monday by Defense Minister Yitzhak Rabin to take preventive measures in the face of a cut in American aid, Haaretz reported Tuesday.

In this matter they joined Finance Minister Moshe Nissim, who proposed that the Cabinet wait until the state of the U.S. economy becomes more clear. Bank of Israel Governor Michael Bruno does not believe American aid will be affected by the economic uncertainties in the United States, according to Haaretz.

Shamir told the Knesset Security and Foreign Affairs Committee on Tuesday that to connect the stock market crisis with U.S. aid was "an immoral and brutal behavior, which contradicts our interests."

Peres said Monday that it is too early to judge the significance of the American stock market plunge of Oct. 19 on the American economy. He said, however, that U.S. aid already has been reduced in real terms as a result of inflationary trends. But "considering the rising demand for weapons, the U.S. will certainly not harm the defense aid," Peres said.

The Foreign Ministry meanwhile has instructed the Israel Embassy in Washington to refrain from any specific activities in Congress and the administration with respect to military aid, Haaretz reported.

SLEPAKS ARRIVE IN ISRAEL WITH DELIGHT AND A WARNING

By Hugh Orgel

TEL AVIV, Oct. 27 (JTA) -- Vladimir Slepak, a pioneer of the aliyah movement among Soviet Jews, arrived in Israel Monday night with a warning against being fooled by the apparent liberalization of Soviet emigration policies that allowed him and his wife, Maria, to leave the Soviet Union 17 years after they first applied for an exit visa.

The release of the Slepaks and a dozen other longtime refuseniks in recent weeks is "a well-known tactic, a concession to the West from which the Soviets want something," Slepak told the enthusiastic crowd that greeted the couple at Ben-Gurion Airport.

Wary from his long journey, which included a 24-hour wait in Vienna for a flight to Israel, Slepak spoke in Russian of his delight at being in

his homeland. "It's not for nothing that they say the Jews are an optimistic people. To dream 2,000 years for a homeland, and then to reach it, can be achieved only by people of great optimism, by a great people," Slepak said.

He seemed to be alluding to his own optimism as well. Asked how he managed to survive 17 years of struggle with Kremlin officials, including five years' exile in Siberia, the former radio engineer said: "I am a simple man with a simple strength. Many, many of us, in my place, would have done the same." Slepak will celebrate his 60th birthday Thursday.

His dogged determination to gain permission to emigrate for himself and other Soviet Jews began upon Israel's victory in the 1967 Six-Day War. Slepak was among the first group of Jews in the Soviet Union to petition the United Nations by letter for the right of Jews to emigrate.

'Won't Forget

"It is not my personal accomplishment that we are here," Slepak said. "It is the right of the Jewish people everywhere -- in Israel, in America, in the Soviet Union ... We won't forget those non-Jews who helped us." The emigration in this generation of 250,000 Soviet Jews "is an accomplishment of all of us," he said.

He added, "But friends, I want to warn you that while some Jews have left, that doesn't mean that there has been a change in Soviet policy."

The welcoming reception for the Slepaks was simpler than those organized for other prominent activists, such as last year's for Natan Sharansky and Ida Nudel's two weeks ago.

About 100 Soviet immigrants were waiting at the airport with an array of government and Jewish Agency dignitaries including Absorption Minister Yaacov Tsur; Jewish Agency Executive chairman Leon Dulzin; Haim Aharon, head of the agency's immigration department; and Fina Feinberg, chairperson of the Soviet Immigrants Association.

Asked if he would try to convince his sons Alexander and Leonid, who left the Soviet Union some years ago for the United States, to join him in Israel, Slepak replied that his sons "are adults and can make up their own minds. For me, I've made my decision -- to be here."

DEMJEANJUK TRIAL RESUMES

By Gil Sedan

JERUSALEM, Oct. 27 (JTA) -- The trial of suspected war criminal John Demjanjuk resumed here Monday after a two-month recess, with a determined effort by the defense to discredit a key document that could prove the 66-year-old, Ukrainian-born former automobile worker from Cleveland, Ohio is the brutal Treblinka death camp guard known as "Ivan the Terrible."

The defense, in fact, was in shambles when the trial adjourned last August. Demjanjuk fired his American attorney, Mark O'Connor, and hired an entirely new defense team after a succession of Treblinka survivors identified him as "Ivan."

Even more damaging was the testimony of experts that an SS identification card bearing a photograph of Demjanjuk at about age 22 was authentic. The ID card was issued to Ukrainians and other prisoners of war who volunteered for guard duty at Treblinka.

The prosecution obtained the original card from Soviet authorities. The defense insists it is a KGB forgery. The first defense witness Monday,

Avraham Shifrin, an expert on the KGB, tried to convince the court of this. His testimony at points bordered on the bizarre.

Shifrin spoke at length about the so-called "supernatural" powers of the KGB. He said the Soviet secret service recruited witches, "even from Africa," to control people. They also controlled peoples' minds with cosmic rays, he charged.

He said he was convinced that the document incriminating Demjanjuk was forged and that once the trial is over and the suspect is convicted, the KGB will admit to the forgery, making Israel's legal system a laughingstock throughout the world.

The defense contends the KGB wanted to incriminate Demjanjuk as a measure against Ukrainian nationalism. Shifrin said it forged thousands of documents accusing Russians and Ukrainians in collaboration with the Germans during World War II. He said the KGB regularly sends Christmas cards to famous people and when a polite thank-you note is returned, the signature is filed for future forgery.

The prosecution is not buying Shifrin's testimony. State attorney Yona Blatman accused the witness of seeking a platform to dramatize his opposition to the Soviet regime and the KGB.

The court overruled a prosecution objection but warned defense attorney Yoram Sheftel to ask only relevant questions. "Remember, it's not the Soviet system or the KGB that is on trial here," presiding Judge Dov Levin said.

THREE JDL MEMBERS SENTENCED FOR 'TERRORIST' BOMBINGS

NEW YORK, Oct. 27 (JTA) -- Three members of the Jewish Defense League were sentenced Monday for carrying out a series of "terrorist" bombings here aimed at protesting the treatment of Jews in the Soviet Union.

Victor Vancier, 30, of Queens, N.Y., a former chairman of the Jewish Defense League, was sentenced to 10 years in prison Monday by Judge I. Leo Glasser of the federal district court in Brooklyn.

In imposing the sentence, the judge told Vancier, "You don't go bombing innocent people to make a point."

At a separate session earlier in the day, Murray Young, 60, of East Meadow, N.Y., received a five-year term and Sharon Katz, 44, of Manhattan, was given a three-year suspended sentence and five years' probation, which includes six months of house arrest.

The incidents for which they were convicted included the firebombing at Avery Fisher Hall, Lincoln Center on Oct. 20, 1986, the day the Moscow State Symphony was scheduled to perform, and the tear gas grenade attack at the Metropolitan Opera House in September 1986, which injured 20 people among the audience attending a performance of the Moiseyev Dance Company.

Vancier, Young and another JDL member, Jay Cohen, 24, pleaded guilty last August to racketeering charges involving bombings, arson, extortion and fraud, for which they faced maximum sentences of 20 years. Katz pleaded guilty only to the Metropolitan Opera incident. Cohen was found dead of a drug overdose at a Catskills hotel last month. According to the authorities, Vancier served as JDL chairman from April 1985 to November 1986.

WOJAC CONFERENCE HEARS OF PLIGHT OF JEWS FORCED TO LEAVE ARAB LANDS

By David Friedman

WASHINGTON, Oct. 27 (JTA) -- Any negotiations between Israel and the Arab countries must include the issue of the some 800,000 Jews who were forced to leave the Arab countries after Israel was established, an Israeli diplomat stressed Tuesday.

"Their immense suffering and deprivation, their sacrifices and tragedies, must be at the center of negotiations," Binyamin Netanyahu, Israel's ambassador to the United Nations, told the third international conference of the World Organization of Jews from Arab Countries (WOJAC).

Some 300 Jewish leaders from North and South America, Europe and Israel are attending the three-day conference which began Monday night at the Omni Shoreham Hotel here. The Conference of Presidents of Major American Jewish Organizations is coordinator of the conference.

WOJAC was founded in 1975 to press the claims of Jews who were forced to leave Arab countries and whose plight had not received the attention given to Arabs who left at the establishment of the Jewish state, chiefly at the urging of the Arab countries.

Netanyahu's point was also made by Israeli President Chaim Herzog in a telegram to the opening session of the conference, read by Moshe Arad, Israel's ambassador to Washington.

Two Refugee Problems

"The world does not realize that two major refugee problems exist in the Middle East at the same time," Herzog said. "One of them has received the widest possible exposure in the public consciousness, while the other has been ignored.

"An understanding of the total picture...is vital as we move slowly, but surely, along the road toward peace in the Middle East."

Netanyahu said Israel has made a "mistake" in not stressing "the forced exodus of Jews from Arab countries" as a "top priority in our foreign policy." He said this has allowed the belief to exist that "we are the dispossessor, when in fact we are the dispossessed."

The majority of Israelis are not Western immigrants, but Jews born in the Middle East, Netanyahu said.

He said the reason for the misconception is that Israel did not put the refugees in camps, as the Arab countries did. "We didn't let them fester and rot, we didn't use them as breeding grounds for terrorists." The Jews who came to Israel were integrated and are "proud citizens of Israel."

A Call For Compensation

He said more Jews were forced to leave Arab countries than Arabs left Israel and they left behind five times the property the Arabs did. He said these Jews should receive compensation from the Arab countries.

Professor Ya'akov Meron of the Hebrew University of Jerusalem told the conference that when the United Nations Security Council adopted Resolution 242 after the 1967 Six-Day War, it rejected a Soviet-Arab demand that the Palestinian Arabs be specifically mentioned. Instead, the Security Council made it clear it wanted "all of the refugees of the Arab-Israel conflict" to be

justly considered "Jewish refugees from Arab lands, and Arabs who had left Israel," Meron said.

There must be "justice for the forgotten million -- the Jews of the Arab world who left their native lands a generation ago in flight from persecution, physical abuse, imprisonment and the confiscation of their property," said Leon Tamman of London, chairman of the WOJAC Presidium.

He said that as a result of this forced exodus there are only about 25,000 Jews left in the Arab world and, except for Morocco, these countries bar Jews from emigrating and do not allow those who fled to visit "the shrines and spiritual treasures they left behind."

The purpose of the conference is to make these facts known, said Kenneth Bialkin, the conference chairman.

SENATE URGES U.N. RESOLUTION ON ZIONISM BE RESCINDED

By David Friedman

WASHINGTON, Oct. 27 (JTA) -- A sense-of-the-Senate resolution urging the United States to support efforts to have the United Nations General Assembly rescind its 1975 resolution equating Zionism with racism was adopted last Friday night.

The resolution, introduced by Sen. Daniel Moynihan (D-N.Y.), declares that the U.N. resolution "has been unhelpful in the context of the search for a settlement in the Middle East; is inconsistent with the Charter of the United Nations; remains unacceptable as a misrepresentation of Zionism; has served to escalate religious animosity and incite anti-Semitism."

A similar resolution has been introduced in the House by Reps. Hamilton Fish and Benjamin Gilman (both R-N.Y.).

A spokesman for Moynihan said the senator hopes that the House resolution will be adopted before Israeli President Chaim Herzog arrives in Washington Nov. 10 for a state visit. It was Moynihan who introduced a resolution adopted by the Senate earlier this month urging President Reagan to invite Herzog for the first state visit to Washington by an Israeli president.

The resolution is similar to one adopted by the Australian Senate and House before Herzog's visit to that country, according to Moynihan's spokesman.

Moynihan and Herzog represented their countries at the United Nations when the General Assembly adopted the resolution. Moynihan said Tuesday that the resolution "was a direct attempt to delegitimize the State of Israel. This resolution was opposed by nearly every democratic nation on Earth and by many nations which are not so democratic. It is far past the time that we right this wrong."

TEL AVIV STOCK MARKET UP TUESDAY

TEL AVIV, Oct. 27 (JTA) -- The Tel Aviv Stock Exchange rallied Tuesday to recover 1-2 percent of losses sustained earlier in the week. The improvement was attributed to the re-entry into the market of a brokerage firm that had stopped dealing in shares several months ago. It placed large orders, apparently in search of bargains, pushing prices up.

Local investors have lost an estimated \$750 million in the value of their holdings since the Wall Street crash on Oct. 19.

RIGHT WING WINS IN FRENCH ZIONIST ELECTIONS; BELGIAN TALLY SPLIT

PARIS, Oct. 27 (JTA) -- French Jews who cast ballots Sunday for 25 delegates to the upcoming World Zionist Congress in Jerusalem clearly favored the right wing. In Belgium, where eight seats were at stake, the election Sunday underlined the sharp rift between the secular Jews of Brussels and the more traditional and Orthodox Jews of Antwerp.

The French Herut-National Bloc list representing Herut and Mizrahi (religious Zionists) and several allied lists won 14 delegates to the December Congress, according to figures which, however, are not final.

The Herut list itself won nine delegates. Siona, a list representing Jews from North Africa and which sympathizes with Herut, won two delegates. Among other pro-Herut groups, the Youth list won two delegates and the Union of Community Workers one.

The Avoda list won six delegates, the General Zionists and the Union of Jewish Students won two each, and the leftist Mapam either one or two. Of 35,000 eligible voters, 8,600 went to the polls, about 25 percent.

In Belgium, the Union for a Living Zionism, an alliance between the leftist Mapam, Hashomer Hatzair and independents -- headed by David Susskind, founding president of the Brussels Jewish Community's Secular Center -- emerged with three delegates. The Mizrahi-Hapoel Hamizrachi list garnered two.

In Belgium, 2,468 persons cast ballots out of 6,300 eligible voters, about 40 percent. The good showing by the secular groups was attributed to Susskind's ability to mobilize support around his community center. He has been critical of some Israeli policies, particularly with respect to the administered territories, and favors an international conference for Middle East peace.

Among the other lists, Herut, Hanoar Hatzioni, Confederation of Youth and Students and Avoda each won a single delegate.

ISRAEL TO STAGE LAVISH PRODUCTION OF VERDI OPERA

By Yitzhak Rabi

NEW YORK, Oct. 27 (JTA) -- The most lavish and costly project in operatic history, a \$11.5 million production of Giuseppe Verdi's "Nabucco" (Nebuchadnezzar), will be performed a dozen times in Jerusalem next May as the major attraction of Israel's year-long celebration to mark its 40th anniversary of independence.

First performed in 1842 at La Scala, in Milan, Italy, the four-act opera tells the story of Nebuchadnezzar, the Babylonian king who ordered the destruction of Jerusalem in 587 BCE, and the exile of the Jewish people to Babylon.

"The opera will have a magnificent setting at the Sultan's Pool, known formally as the Hassenfeld Amphitheater, just outside the city's walls, at a site originally selected by King Herod for Jerusalem's water supply," Mayor Teddy Kolek of Jerusalem told a crowded news conference at the Plaza Hotel here Tuesday.

"It was in Jerusalem that the massacre of the Jews took place when the city was overwhelmed by Babylonian forces headed by King Nebuchadnezzar," Kolek said.

Michael Ecker, president of Opera on Original Site (OOS), a Swiss-based company special-

izing in staging operas at their original location, is the producer of "Nabucco." He said at the news conference that 12 performances are planned from May 15-29, 1988 with the possibility of four additional performances through June 2.

Major opera stars will take part in the production, Ecker disclosed. Those already signed to head the four alternating casts include such luminaries as Grace Bumbry, Olivia Stapp, Ingvar Wixell, Renato Bruson, Kurt Rydl, Martti Talvela and Piero Capuccilli.

Enormous Cast

According to the producer, the 7,700-seat Sultan's Pool amphitheater will be transformed to accommodate a tremendous cast, including a chorus of approximately 250 singers (the Pro-Musica Chorus of London) and about 850 non-singing performers.

Italian artistic director Vittorio Rossi, who will direct the production as well as provide settings and costumes, introduced during the news conference Tuesday some of the elaborate costumes he already designed for the show. He said that he decided to get involved with "Nabucco" because the opera's message is that "victory is truly in the hand of spirituality and peace."

Moshe Shoshani, head of Israel's Tourism Ministry in the United States, said he expects close to 70,000 tourists from all over the world to come to Israel to attend the "Nabucco" performances.

Nabucco is produced and organized by Opera on Original Site, in cooperation with the Israel Festival, the Israel Ministry of Tourism and the Association for Promoting Tourism in Israel. Also assisting the project is Operation Independence, an international organization of businessmen dedicated to the support of Israel.

ULLMANN, HUSBAND TO FUND STUDENTS

By Hugh Orgel

TEL AVIV, Oct. 27 (JTA) -- Norwegian film star Liv Ullmann was awarded an honorary Ph.D. by Haifa University this week, her seventh honorary doctorate.

Ullmann pledged that "for as long as I shall earn money," she would finance the education of an Arab student at Haifa University, and her husband Donald Saunders, who is Jewish, would finance that of a Jewish student.

Ullmann dedicated the Ph.D. to the memory of Pavel Friedman, an 11-year-old Jewish boy murdered by the Nazis at Auschwitz. Two years previously, in the Theresienstadt ghetto, he wrote a poem about a yellow butterfly which survived him.

The award-winning actress said she often read the poem at fund-raising events.

Ullmann, who portrayed Soviet Jewish activist Ida Nudel in a recent film, met with Nudel, who arrived in Israel two weeks ago. She said Nudel had asked her, in her public appearances, to alert the world to the dangers of a new phenomenon in the Soviet Union -- the officially sanctioned existence of a far right-wing, promonarchist, anti-Semitic organization known as Pamyat.

The Soviet authorities point to Pamyat as an indication that they allow expressions of diverse opinion. Actually, the experts say, Pamyat is used as a safety valve to divert the criticism of the more liberal policies of Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev.