

**REAGAN SAYS HE AND GORBACHEV
WILL DISCUSS HUMAN RIGHTS**

By David Friedman

WASHINGTON, Nov. 1 (JTA) -- President Reagan said Friday that human rights will be on the agenda when he meets with Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev here Dec. 7.

Flanked by Secretary of State George Shultz and Soviet Foreign Minister Eduard Shevardnadze, Reagan announced the scheduling of the long-awaited summit after Shevardnadze had presented him with a letter from Gorbachev.

The White House meeting was held between day-long talks at the State Department by Shultz and Shevardnadze.

At the summit, the two superpower leaders are to sign a treaty to eliminate intermediate and short-range missiles, still being negotiated in Geneva, Reagan said. The president said he will discuss with Gorbachev a treaty to reduce strategic arms by 50 percent, which he hopes could be signed when he visits Moscow next year.

Reagan added that Shevardnadze and he agreed that his meeting with Gorbachev will also cover the "full range of issues" between the United States and the Soviet Union, "including bilateral, regional and human rights issues."

The summit was scheduled after Gorbachev had refused to set a date for the meeting when Shultz was in Moscow Oct. 22-23. But in a sudden about-face, Shevardnadze came to Washington, apparently bringing with him the summit date.

The National Conference on Soviet Jewry (NCSJ) immediately welcomed the summit and expressed the hope that human rights, including the issue of Soviet Jewry, would be high on the agenda.

Mass Demonstration Set

Morris Abram, chairman of the NCSJ and of the Conference of Presidents of Major American Jewish Organizations, has scheduled a news conference in Washington Monday to announce plans for a mass demonstration in Washington during the summit to express support for Soviet Jewry.

(NCSJ sources in New York indicated the demonstration would take place on the evening of Sunday, Dec. 6, shortly after Gorbachev arrives in Washington. Former prisoner of conscience Ida Nudel, recently permitted to leave the Soviet Union, will appear at the mass protest.

(On Tuesday, some 40 representatives of groups within and outside the NCSJ umbrella are to meet in New York to finalize plans for the demonstration. Nobel prize-winning writer Elie Wiesel is serving as honorary chairman of the summit task force.)

**WAR CRIMES COMMISSION AGREES
ON PLAN TO OPEN NAZI FILES**

By Mark Joffe

NEW YORK, Nov. 1 (JTA) -- The 17 former member states of the Allied War Crimes Commission have finally agreed to a plan to open its files on more than 40,000 Nazi war criminals to public inspection. Eyal Arad, a spokesman for the Israel Mission to the United Nations, said in a

telephone interview Sunday that the mission had not been informed of the news, but had been able to confirm reports about the commission's decision that appeared Saturday in the New York Times.

Arad said U.N. Secretary General Javier Perez de Cuellar will announce the decision when he returns from Europe this week and is virtually certain to authorize opening the files, which officially are under his jurisdiction.

"The secretary general is not bound by any recommendations" of the commission, Arad said. But he added that Perez de Cuellar "told us that he wants to open the files. There's no point in dragging his feet any further," he said, now that the commission has decided.

Until now, the files of the long-defunct War Crimes Commission have been accessible only to the governments of member states of the United Nations. Israel has been pressing for some time that they be open to scholars, researchers, writers and journalists.

Initially, most of the 17 former member states of the commission were opposed. One by one they fell in line, however, and after several meetings over the last two months unanimous agreement was reached on a formula for public access.

Under the reported plan, responsibility for granting access will be transferred from the secretary general to the United Nations member governments, which will be free to authorize their citizens to inspect the files, stored at the United Nations archives on Park Avenue South, Manhattan.

'Important Victory' For Israel

Commenting on the commission's decision, Binyamin Netanyahu, ambassador of Israel to the United Nations, said, "This is an important victory over those who would distort and deny the terrible truths mankind should never forget if it is to retain its humanity."

Arad said the decision is likely to enhance Israel's standing in the international community. "We showed the world we have the power to pursue goals we believed in" and that "we can get what we want." He added, "We were helped immensely in our campaign by many Jewish organizations."

Responsibility for the files was transferred to the United Nations in 1948, after the War Crimes Commission completed its investigations. Israel's campaign gained momentum when Kurt Waldheim, a former secretary general of the United Nations, was elected president of Austria in the summer of 1986, after a campaign during which Jewish groups, mainly the World Jewish Congress, exposed the Nazi past which he had concealed for 40 years.

Waldheim is one of the 25,000 names on the list of so-called Class A suspects in the war crimes file against whom the commission felt it had sufficient evidence to prosecute. The list provides one-line summaries of the background of the suspects and the accusations against them.

Arad said the opening of the files will facilitate the prosecution of wanted Nazi war criminal Alois Brunner who now lives in Syria. The Syrian government has refused to comply

with an extradition warrant issued by the West German government years ago.

"We want to revive the whole issue and hopefully bring international pressure on Syria to release Brunner," Arad said. He observed that it was "not surprising" that Brunner lives in Syria. Noting that Amnesty International recently released a report on the use of torture in Syria, he said, "Where else could he feel at home?"

Brunner, whose file is in the archives, reportedly told the Chicago Sun-Times in an interview that he doesn't regret anything. He still lashes out against Jews.

Commenting on the decision to open the files, Rabbi Marvin Hier, dean of the Los Angeles-based Simon Wiesenthal Center, called it "long overdue." He said the center has prepared a list of suspected war criminals still at large and would be asking for information about them when the files are opened.

ELECTION PROCEDURES WERE VALID, RULES WZO SUPREME COURT

By Andrew Silow Carroll

NEW YORK, Nov. 1 (JTA) -- The Supreme Court of the World Zionist Organization on Friday ruled in favor of two Zionist groups and against three others who contested the process by which American delegates were elected this spring to the 31st World Zionist Congress.

In ruling here Friday, the court accepted appeals of the election procedures brought by the Zionist Organization of America and Bnai Zion, but rejected appeals brought by the Religious Zionists of America, Americans for Progressive Israel and Students for Israel.

All five groups brought appeals against the Area Election Committee (AEC) of the American Zionist Federation, which conducted elections in May to determine representation at the Zionist congress, which convenes in Jerusalem on Dec. 6.

Some 210,957 American Jews participated in the May elections and on the basis of the returns, 152 mandates were apportioned to eight of nine competing slates representing various Zionist ideologies across the political spectrum.

The appellants were critical of a verification procedure adopted by the AEC which sought a more accurate count of eligible voters from the various ideological slates of the American Zionist Federation. In the process of tabulating votes, the AEC penalized organizations for voter eligibility discrepancies.

In their appeals, the RZA, API and Students for Israel maintained that they were each entitled to a larger share of the mandates than had been determined by the AEC procedure. (RZA received 14 mandates, API got one and the Students for Israel did not win any.) In addition, the RZA contended that the independent company hired to examine voter records, Equifax, collaborated with AEC officials in falsifying its findings.

In ruling against the appellants and for the AEC, the court said that it is the duty of a constituent body to attack election methods before the election, and not after.

Reading from the 19-page judgment, the court president, Justice Moshe Etzioni, said, "We would add that the conception of waiting for the results of an election before attacking the election method is, in our opinion, against public policy and inconsistent with the fair conduct demanded of a public voluntary body." Etzioni continued, "We are of the opinion that the elec-

tion method laid down by the AEC was sound and reasonable and constituted 'a method consistent with generally accepted democratic principles....'"

The justice also defended Equifax, saying its essential findings remain intact.

In the API appeal, the decision hinged on whether or not the court would accept the propriety of the organization's membership rolls at the time of the election. The court agreed with the AEC and Equifax, saying that API had turned contributions to the organization into "artificial memberships" for election purposes, thereby violating election rules and the spirit of a recent call to Zionist organizations to add new members to their ranks.

The appeal of the Students for Israel was dismissed after the court determined that a nominating petition signed by 4,500 students did not justify an additional slate, since the students were not Zionist organization members as spelled out in election rules.

The court, however, did accept the ZOA and Bnai Zion appeals and, without further comment, directed that they not be penalized by the AEC.

In his concluding statement, Etzioni said that the court expressed "the hope that after the coming congress the whole procedure for determining membership of all types will be thoroughly examined...."

Etzioni also urged that eight outstanding mandates be divided between the RZA and API slates. He did not specify how they were to be divided.

The original assignment of mandates to the various Zionist slates was: Mercaz (Conservative), 20; Hadassah-Bnai Zion-American Jewish League for Israel, 48; Zionist Organization of America, 12; Students for Israel, 0; Association of Reform Zionists of America, 33; Herut, 9; Americans for a Progressive Israel, 1; Religious Zionists Association, 14; and Labor, 15.

The two other justices serving on the Zionist Supreme Court were Judge Asher Felix Landau and Judge Zvi Cohen. The panel delivered its ruling at the headquarters of the American Zionist Federation.

REPORT FINDS SHIN BET USED COERCION TO EXTRACT CONFESSIONS

By Hugh Orgel

TEL AVIV, Nov. 1 (JTA) -- The Shin Bet, Israel's internal security agency has, since 1971, used psychological and "physical pressures" to obtain confessions from suspected terrorists and resorted to perjury to ensure convictions, according to the report of an investigating committee, made public, in part, on Friday.

The report is expected to trigger a flood of appeals to Israel's Supreme Court for new trials for terrorists and others convicted on the basis of confessions.

The report, nevertheless, recommends no criminal action against Shin Bet operatives who employed extra-legal methods and, in fact, sanctions such methods in some cases. The extent to which they may be permitted is specified in a section of the report submitted to Premier Yitzhak Shamir that remains secret.

The report was prepared by a government-appointed judicial commission headed by former Supreme Court President Moshe Landau, assisted by a former head of Mossad, the external secret service, whose identity is classified, State Comptroller Yaacov Maltz and Gen. Yitzhak Hafi,

former commander of the northern sector. The commission was set up as a result of two incidents that created turmoil in Israel and headlines around the world. One was the April 1984 killing of two Arab bus hijackers in the Gaza Strip after they were handed over to Shin Bet agents by the Israel Defense Force, which captured them alive.

The second was the case of former IDF Lt. Izat Nafsu, whom the Supreme Court earlier this year ordered released from prison after serving seven years of a life sentence for alleged spying and contact with terrorists. The high court found that Nafsu, a Circassian Moslem, was convicted on the basis of evidence fabricated by the Shin Bet.

Concern About Israel's Image

While Israeli officials have welcomed the report as a means to correct past failings, they have expressed concern that its publication could damage Israel's image abroad. Israeli officials had vigorously denied complaints of malpractice in the interrogation of suspects lodged by such highly respected groups as Amnesty International. The report now proves the complaints to have been well-founded, at least in part.

The commission absolved the country's political leadership, the judiciary and military authorities on grounds that they did not know of the Shin Bet's practices and could not be held responsible for them, even though Shin Bet reports directly to the prime minister, who has oversight over its operations.

It found that perjury was a matter of Shin Bet policy related to the inadmissibility of confessions since 1971, and was committed by Shin Bet officials to conceal their interrogation methods and ensure conviction. The report notes that in terrorist cases, confession is the main instrument to obtain conviction, but branded the perjury "ideological criminality."

The most serious instances of perjury involved the three men who headed Shin Bet since 1971, particularly the last two, Avraham Ahituv and Avraham Shalom. Shalom was forced to resign after the bus hijack affair, along with several other ranking Shin Bet officials. All received presidential pardons, although no formal charges were brought against them.

Euphemism For Torture

With respect to "physical pressure," believed to be a euphemism for torture, the commission noted in the published part of its report that normal police methods of interrogation and presentation to the courts of corroborative evidence could not always be applied to terrorism cases.

Such evidence was frequently impossible to find or present because it was obtained by undercover agents or by pressure exerted on witnesses. Therefore, psychological or physical pressure should be allowed within certain bounds, the report states. It proposes guidelines for the Shin Bet to follow in such cases. It also recommends that external supervision and control of Shin Bet by the Knesset, the prime minister, the Cabinet and the state comptroller be strengthened.

The commission rejected criminal action against Shin Bet operatives on grounds that they could plead justification in the fight against rampant terrorism and because prosecution would wreak havoc in the ranks of the Shin Bet.

It found that harsh interrogation methods and perjury were not employed to convict innocent persons. The report in fact repeatedly

praises the Shin Bet's efforts and success in fighting terrorism.

At the same time, it recommends that the attorney general and the military judicial authorities take steps to permit re-trials in response to all justified requests.

It also recommends that appropriate guidelines be issued to allow prisoners sentenced by military courts in the administered territories the right of appeal. At present there is no right of appeal against military court rulings.

UAHC PRESIDENT SAYS U.S. JEWS SHOULD TAKE PART IN PEACE DEBATE

CHICAGO, Nov. 1 (JTA) -- "The right and responsibility" of American Jews "to participate in Israel's peace debate" was strongly affirmed by Rabbi Alexander Schindler, president of the Union of American Hebrew Congregations, in his presidential address Saturday to 4,250 delegates attending the Reform congregational organization's national biennial convention at the Hyatt Regency Hotel here.

Schindler also urged Israel to "reject the status quo" in the West Bank and Gaza and "to relentlessly pursue all avenues to peace that will maintain the Jewish and democratic character of the state." He suggested in that connection that an international conference for Middle East peace would be "a lesser risk than stagnation" of the peace process.

Schindler also proposed that "a liberal version of Judaism" if introduced into the Soviet Union "could improve the prospects of Jewish survival" for those Jews who elect to remain in the USSR.

While asserting the right of Jews everywhere "to participate in the great moral debates of Israel," Schindler stressed that "in matters touching on state security, the final decision must rest with Israel, whose people live under the gun. But I also believe we owe Israel the truth as we see it. We do not serve her cause when we censor or sanitize or stifle our views," he said.

On the issue of achieving peace with Jordan, the Reform Jewish leader said, "I believe that the quest for an international umbrella as defined, as limited by agreements between Foreign Minister (Shimon) Peres and King Hussein, courts a lesser risk than stagnation."

Under that agreement, the Palestine Liberation Organization is excluded from the Jordanian delegation, and all prospective participants must first agree to recognize Israel. They would be barred from intervening in direct Jordan-Israel talks, or from imposing a settlement without the consent of all parties. "These terms cannot compel Israel to accept unsafe conditions," Schindler said.

He warned that "the prolongation of the status quo in Judea, Samaria and Gaza exposes Israel to infinitely greater risk than does any international umbrella for direct negotiations."

"The status quo," he said, "again sows the seeds of endless conflict. It corrodes the Jewish and democratic character of the state" and "is a demographic time bomb ticking away at Israel's vital center," because "sooner or later there will be an Arab majority in Israel, turning the Jewish state into a binational state."

If Israel tries to avert this "by either repressing the Arabs or driving them out, the Jewish and democratic nature of the state will be

disfigured and the Zionist dream will be betrayed," Schindler warned.

With respect to Soviet Jewry, Schindler said that "more significant" than the recent rise in Jewish emigration "are the severe restraints on Jewish identity in the USSR, the sharp pressures of assimilation on the vast majority of Jews who will opt to remain in the Soviet Union, no matter how liberal the Kremlin's policy might become."

He added, "I profoundly believe that a liberal version of Judaism could improve the prospects for Jewish survival in the USSR, just as Reform has played a preservation role in North America and throughout the world."

Schindler called for a program to translate Reform Jewish school texts, prayer books and other materials into Russian and "establishing and providing services for Jews in the USSR while we continue to press for emigration and religious rights."

The UAHC convention, its 59th General Assembly, opened Friday and will end Tuesday. Representatives of almost all of the UAHC's 810 member synagogues in the United States and Canada who are attending will elect a new chairman of the board of trustees and set policy on matters relating to Israel, Middle East peace, the AIDS epidemic and the struggle against apartheid in South Africa.

In addition to Schindler's address, which was given in the form of a Sabbath sermon, speakers at the convention include former Soviet Jewish dissident Natan Sharansky; the ambassadors to Washington of Israel and Egypt; Thomas Dine, executive director of the American Israel Public Affairs Committee (AIPAC); former U.S. ambassador to Moscow Arthur Hartman; Dr. C. Everett Koop, the surgeon general of the United States; and Sheena Duncan, past president of Black Sash, the white women's anti-apartheid organization in South Africa.

The National Federation of Temple Sisterhoods, the women's branch of Reform Judaism, is marking the beginning of its 75th year with its own biennial convention, parallel with the UAHC gathering. About 1,000 delegates are attending.

The convention will also mark the 25th anniversary of the Religious Action Center of Reform Judaism in Washington.

FORMER AMBASSADOR RECALLS DIFFICULT STINT IN VIENNA

By Susan Birnbaum

NEW YORK, Nov. 1 (JTA) -- "Austria is not a country, as people believe, made up just of anti-Semites. There are also good people," Ronald Lauder believes.

But the man who just returned from an 18-month tour of duty as American ambassador to Austria also says "not enough people spoke out forcibly" about the Kurt Waldheim affair.

Lauder, 43, was honored here Thursday night with B'nai B'rith's first Jacob K. Javits Leadership Award for his comportment during one of the most trying times for an American and a Jew to hold that post.

The keynote address was given by Jerusalem Mayor Teddy Kollek, a native of Vienna, who said of Lauder's Vienna stint, "To be an ambassador under such circumstances must have been one of the most difficult things... and he came out with flying colors.... Not everybody can go through

such an advanced course in all the problems of our time as he has done."

Lauder received his award from Nazi-hunter Simon Wiesenthal, who told the gathering at the Grand Hyatt Hotel that Lauder "separated the Waldheim affair from all other matters and concerns, and spoke to the government about the troubles of the Jewish community and the fight against anti-Semitism."

Wiesenthal, who said that Lauder looked him up just days after his arrival in the Austrian capital, spoke of Lauder's trips to Jewish communities in Eastern Europe and his particular devotion to the Dohany Synagogue in Budapest, which has been in great disrepair and is the object of an international campaign to raise funds for its renovation and revival.

Went To 'Every Synagogue'

During the year and a half that he spent in Vienna, Lauder made certain to be recognized as a Jew and to involve himself with the Jewish community. "I went to every synagogue there is in Vienna," he told the JTA.

He personally got interested in a school in Vienna for the children of Soviet Jewish immigrants, giving money to expand its program and include adults in religious, education and social activities. Lauder was drawn to the problem of assimilation of Soviet Jews living in Vienna, and spoke to teachers and rabbis there, Wiesenthal said.

Among them was the Vienna-based Lubavitcher rabbi, Jacob I. Biederman, who gave the invocation at the B'nai B'rith dinner.

Lauder has begun plans for a foundation to be based in Vienna for the education and preservation of the culture of Eastern and Central European minorities.

Wiesenthal said that Lauder also traveled to the cemetery where his grandfather is buried in Yugoslavia, and was "shocked" about the dilapidated state of the graveyard. Lauder asked the town's mayor for a promise to put the cemetery into a "respectable state again."

Lauder also visited Poland and has given money to the aged Jewish community of Krakow, Poland, for Jewish religious and cultural events there.

A tall man with a winsome smile, Lauder is friendly and easy to engage in conversation. He said before the dinner he believed that Waldheim is secure and that "if a new election were held tomorrow, he would be re-elected."

Lauder's grandparents had emigrated from within 150 miles of Vienna at the turn of the century, and he said he had come to Austria with a certain feeling of "coming home." He said he has returned here because "I felt I wanted to come back to the United States." However, when asked directly if the Waldheim affair colored his decision, Lauder told the JTA "yes."

Lauder is to be succeeded in this position by another prominent Jew, Henry Anatole Grunwald, former editor in chief of Time magazine, and an emigre from Vienna immediately preceding World War II.

Lauder described the current situation in Austria as "complicated." He admitted that although "many Austrians are anti-Semitic, many are not, many do not know the word bigotry. I have met some of the bravest, most courageous people in that country. I hope they can play a role in Austria's future."