

**COURT UPHOLDS STATE DEPARTMENT ORDER CLOSING WASHINGTON PLO OFFICE**  
 By David Friedman

WASHINGTON, Dec. 2 (JTA) -- The State Department was acting within its legal rights when it ordered the closing of the Palestine Liberation Organization's information office here, a U.S. District Court judge ruled Wednesday.

Judge Charles Richey said the claim by the Palestine Information Office and its director, Hasan Abdel Rahman, that the order violated the group's constitutional rights, including that of freedom of speech, was "utterly meritless."

Richey's ruling rejects a request by the American Civil Liberties Union for an injunction against the State Department order, which was issued Sept. 15.

The office must now close by midnight Thursday, although the ACLU plans to make another attempt for an injunction, this time before the U.S. Court of Appeals.

The move was immediately hailed by the American Jewish Congress, which had filed a brief in support of the government with the district court. This was the first time AJCongress had been on the opposite side of the ACLU in a lawsuit.

**Does Not Infringe On Rights**

The district court order "confirms that the closing of the PLO office in Washington in no way infringes on the protected rights of Americans or forecloses or even narrows debate on the Mideast policy," said Phil Baum, associate executive director of AJCongress.

"Americans remain free to consider or advocate any issue, including the claims of the Palestinians, without penalty or impediment," Baum said.

He said the State Department decision was an "expression of our country's resolve to go beyond preaching and rhetoric in the fight against terrorism. The action by the State Department effectively declares that all ideas are welcome in this country, but the operating centers of terrorist agencies will not be tolerated."

The court decision also was applauded by Abraham Foxman, national director of the Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rith.

The State Department order came in the wake of strong pressure from Congress to close both the information office here and the PLO's observer mission at the United Nations in New York. The department said it could close the Washington office, which it considered a foreign mission, but not the U.N. office, because of treaties with the United Nations.

**'Concern Over Terrorism'**

In announcing the order to close the office, the State Department stressed that "the action is being taken to demonstrate United States concern over terrorism committed and supported by organizations and individuals affiliated with the PLO."

The department stressed that the order does not violate the First Amendment protection of speech, since Rahman and other employees of the

Palestine Information Office, all American citizens, are free to continue advocating their cause. This argument was reiterated by Assistant U.S. Attorney Sharon Reich in district court.

But Steven Shapiro, the ACLU lawyer who represented the office, claimed that Rahman was being denied his right to advocate the Palestinian cause.

He also argued that the information office was not an arm of the PLO, but acted as a foreign agent for it, as do many other American groups for foreign countries. However, he conceded that the PLO provided the \$350,000 annual expenses for the office, while Rahman's salary was paid for by the Arab League.

The State Department originally ordered the office to close by Oct. 15, but then granted an extension to Dec. 1. Richey extended the stay until Thursday to give him time to study the various briefs after he was brought into the case suddenly last Friday when the original judge, Stanley Sporkin, withdrew.

Shapiro challenged Sporkin's right to hear the case since he may have received information on the PLO when he was general counsel for the Central Intelligence Agency.

The district court decision may increase congressional action to have the PLO's New York office closed too.

A Senate-House conference committee is considering the State Department budget authorization bill, which includes a provision requiring both the Washington and New York offices to be closed.

**DIASPORA LEADERS BACK SIMCHA DINITZ TO HEAD WZO-JEWISH AGENCY EXECUTIVE**  
 By Hugh Orgel (Tel Aviv) and Gil Sedan (Jerusalem)

Dec. 2 (JTA) -- Diaspora philanthropists on the Jewish Agency Board of Governors have given their unanimous support to Simcha Dinitz for the office of chairman of the World Zionist Organization and Jewish Agency Executive, the highest of several posts to be filled through elections at the World Zionist Congress, which opens in Jerusalem Sunday.

Their decision was announced in a letter sent Tuesday by Mendel Kaplan, chairman of the Board of Governors, to Foreign Minister Shimon Peres, leader of the Labor Party. Kaplan urged Peres to "take this into account in order to avoid the indignities of the recent past."

He was apparently referring to the bitter reaction in the Labor Party and the Labor Zionist movement over the diaspora philanthropists' unanimous rejection in October of Akiva Lewinsky, the man whom Labor had already chosen as its candidate for the WZO-Jewish Agency chairmanship. Lewinsky dropped out of the race last week amid protests against the "interference" of the overseas Jewish leaders.

Dinitz, 58, a Labor member of the Knesset who served as Israel's ambassador to the United States from 1973-78 and was a close confidant and political adviser to the late Premier Gold Meir, has not yet been formally nominated by his party.

## Two Other Labor Candidates

There are, in fact, two other contenders seeking the nomination when the Labor Party's 1,300 member central committee meets Thursday to select a candidate: Mordechai Gur and Nissim Zvilli.

Kaplan stressed in his letter to Peres that "only Simcha Dinitz has received the unanimous consent of our total leadership." He added that the philanthropists had been "reluctant to participate in the selection process of prospective candidates.

"Your decision to present several candidates has forced our leadership into a comparative analysis, which would have been avoided under previous practice," Kaplan wrote.

Sources close to Peres said Wednesday that he would not comment on Kaplan's letter, but made it public so that the central committee members could take it into account.

Gur was furious. The former Israel Defense Force chief of staff and former health minister claimed he was being undercut.

He accused the Labor Party leadership of caving in to pressure from Premier Yitzhak Shamir, the Likud leader, who oppose Gur's nomination. A spokesman for Shamir rejected Gur's charges that the premier had "incited" American Jewish leaders against him.

## Gur Threatening To Quit

Gur has threatened to quit all of his Labor Party posts. But speculation had it Wednesday that Gur would drop his candidacy before the Labor Party vote took place.

Zvilli, the other Labor candidate, who heads the WZO's settlement department, accepted the philanthropists' decision with equanimity. He even commended them for deciding "not to intervene in the legitimate selection process," adding that "the Zionist movement must now use its own discretion and choose its candidate."

Zvilli, however, said he still intends to seek the central committee's nomination.

Kaplan's letter also aroused the ire of the Likud bloc, which has already chosen Science and Technology Minister Gideon Patt, a member of its Liberal Party wing, as its candidate to head the WZO-Jewish Agency.

## Likud Is Backing Gideon Patt

Members of Likud's dominant Herut Party wing agreed Wednesday that Patt would remain their candidate for the WZO-Agency post. But they said they would review this decision after Labor selects its candidate.

For Labor and Likud each to present candidates for the chairmanship would be a departure from past practice, when deals were struck in which the party with the most votes at the congress got the chairmanship and the runner-up party got to fill the post of WZO treasurer.

It remains to be seen whether the philanthropists' move to back Dinitz will defuse the angry backlash that has been building up in Labor Zionist circles over the diaspora leaders' rejection of Lewinsky.

Yehiel Leket, chairman of the Labor Zionist movement, demanded Tuesday that the present electoral system be abolished in favor of a more democratic one.

He also called for an end to the owner-sharing arrangement between the Jewish Agency and the World Zionist Organization, which makes the outcome of WZO elections subject to the

"advice and consent" of the Jewish Agency Board of Governors.

According to the advice and consent rule, even if Lewinsky had remained in the race and went on to be elected WZO-Jewish Agency chairman, he could have been vetoed by the overseas philanthropists on the Jewish Agency board, 22 of whom are Americans.

## Policy Gone 'Bankrupt'

Leket charged at a news conference in Jerusalem Tuesday that the advice and consent arrangement "has gone bankrupt" and should be abolished. He said the way it was being manipulated yielded results opposite to the original intent.

The process was intended to "strengthen and deepen the partnership" between Israelis and Zionists in the Jewish Agency, on the one hand, and the diaspora leaders, on the other. Instead, Leket said, it is damaging relations and has resulted in "a war of the Jews."

He recalled that the process was established 16 years ago when then Premier "Golda Meir and Max Fisher used to sit tete-a-tete and agree between themselves on the candidate," but now times have changed. Fisher, a Detroit industrialist and leading Jewish philanthropist, was the first chairman of the Agency Board of Governors.

"No movement can agree that representatives of the fund-raisers in the United States (as the philanthropists are commonly referred to in Israel) will dictate the election of candidates and interfere in its (WZO's) election process," Leket said.

He suggested a democratization of the election process whereby Israelis would participate in the election of American representatives on the Jewish Agency board and vice-versa. The change, Leket said, would depoliticize the Jewish Agency and create a "new dialogue" between the Zionists and the philanthropists.

## ISRAELI AMBASSADOR CHOSEN TO HEAD UNESCO'S EUROPEAN GROUP OF NATIONS

By Edwin Eytan

PARIS, Dec. 2 (JTA) -- Israel was chosen Wednesday to head the United Nations Economic, Social and Cultural Organization's 24-member European Group of Nations at UNESCO's 24th biennial session, which opened here last month.

Yossef Amihud, Israel's ambassador to UNESCO, was elected by acclamation to serve as chairman of the group for one year, starting Jan. 1. It was the latest and most impressive gain by Israel in the traditionally anti-Israel world body.

UNESCO is divided into five groups of member states. The European Group consists of the 12 members of the European Economic Community, the four Scandinavian countries, plus Switzerland, Turkey, Malta, Cyprus and Israel. The United States and Canada have observer status.

The other groups are Asia-Pacific, Latin America, Eastern Europe, and Africa and the Arab states.

The group chairmen serve as liaisons between the director general, the highest executive of UNESCO, and the 158 member states comprising the organization.

This is the first time Israel was elected to head a UNESCO group. Diplomatic sources said, however, that there was no connection between

the election of Israel and the recent change at the top of UNESCO.

Federico Mayor Zaragoza of Spain was elected director general of UNESCO in October, succeeding Amadou-Mahtar M'Bow of Senegal, whose 13-year administration was marked by anti-Israel and anti-Western bias.

According to the observers, the selection of Israel was probably due to greater cohesion within the European Group itself, greater western solidarity with Israel and the personality of Ambassador Amihud.

Nevertheless, Israel has been making steady gains since the turnover. On Nov. 20, it was elected to the key 25-member Committee for Headquarters Affairs, which oversees UNESCO's budgetary and administrative activities. At the same time, Amihud was elected to the committee for sports and physical education.

Israel also managed to have toned down two Arab-sponsored resolutions on Jerusalem and the state of education in the administered territories. Both had been adopted by various subcommittees, but were deferred at the request of the Western European delegations.

Israel was also voted last month to head another United Nations agency. The Geneva-based Intergovernmental Committee for Migration elected Pinchas Eliav, Israel's ambassador to the U.N. in Geneva, as its president for one year. It was the first time an Israeli was appointed to preside over an international organization.

#### ISRAEL STRENGTHENED, BUT CONCERNED, BY U.N. VOTE ON TERRORISM CONFERENCE By Andrew Silow-Carroll

NEW YORK, Dec. 2 (JTA) -- Israel cast the sole vote in the United Nations General Assembly Tuesday night against an amended resolution on international terrorism.

But the resolution as adopted by the General Assembly is seen as a partial diplomatic victory for Israel.

It is also seen as a blow to the resolution's sponsor, Syria, which was forced to compromise on an initial proposal that called on the United Nations to convene an international conference to define the differences between terrorism and legitimate struggles for national liberation.

By agreeing Tuesday to submit a watered-down version of their proposal, the Syrians appeared to be giving in to pressure from the Soviet Union and Third World countries, who agreed with Israel and Western countries that Syria's original proposal would confer legitimacy on international terrorism.

The compromise resolution condemns terrorism and calls on member states to seek means to combat it. Yet it still includes the possibility of calling an international conference.

Voting in favor of the amended proposal were 128 members of the General Assembly. The United States abstained.

#### 'Killed, But Did Not Bury' Conference

Israel's chief representative to the United Nations, Ambassador Benjamin Netanyahu, explained Israel's opposition to the amended proposal by saying that the General Assembly "killed, but did not bury" the idea of an international conference on terrorism.

According to a statement released by the Israel Mission's press office, Netanyahu said that Syria was trying to use the international con-

ference to "justify terrorism by putting it under the banner of national liberation."

"The Syrians were caught and exposed in London and West Berlin for participating in terrorism. Now they want to say that those acts were not crimes, but acts of national liberation under the sponsorship of the U.N.," said Eyal Arad, the Israel Mission spokesman.

Israel contends that "the cause has no relevance to criminal means," said Arad.

The pressure put on Syria to amend its proposal is seen by the Israel Mission and others as a further strengthening of Israel's position within a body traditionally hostile to its interests. Just last month, the United Nations agreed to open its files on more than 40,000 suspected Nazi war criminals, capping a string of diplomatic victories for Israel.

Those include a failure this year by Iraq to introduce its annual resolution condemning Israel for the 1981 raid on its nuclear installation in Baghdad and the exclusion of Israel from a resolution condemning countries for their cooperation with the South African government.

#### WILLIAM NAKASH DEPORTED TO FRANCE, ENDING TWO-YEAR EXTRADITION BATTLE By Hugh Orgel

TEL AVIV, Dec. 2 (JTA) -- William Nakash, an Algerian-born Jew, was deported to France Wednesday after losing a two-year battle against extradition that raised the passions of nationalist elements in Israel and pitted the rabbinical authorities against the secular courts.

Nakash, under heavy guard, was taken handcuffed from prison to the ramp of an El Al plane at Ben Gurion Airport, where he was handed over to two French police officers sent to escort him to France.

He will stand trial there for the Feb. 22, 1983 murder of Abdelali Hakkar, an Algerian Arab in Besancon, a city in southern France near the Swiss border.

Nakash, 26, who fled to Israel nearly four years ago to escape an arrest warrant, was tried in absentia for the crime, convicted and sentenced to life imprisonment. The French authorities agreed recently to give him a second trial.

Although Israel's Supreme Court ruled last summer that Nakash should be extradited and the Justice Ministry signed the order, its implementation was delayed when the rabbinical court in Jerusalem banned his departure from the country.

The rabbis insisted Nakash could not leave unless he granted a divorce to his pregnant wife, Rina, who otherwise would become an aguna--abandoned woman -- prohibited from remarrying under religious law.

The rabbinical court withdrew its ban last month after Nakash signed a "conditional bill of divorce." His wife was not at the airport to see him off. She told reporters she does not intend to go to France for the trial.

#### Became A 'Baal Teshuvah'

Nakash came to Israel in 1983 under an assumed name and was granted automatic citizenship under the Law of Return. His identity was revealed when he was arrested here for armed robbery. In the interim he had become a baal teshuvah -- a Jew who returns to the religious fold -- and embraced Orthodoxy.

His cause was taken up by Orthodox leaders, notably Rabbi Yitzhak Peretz, head of the Shas

party. Right-wing nationalists opposed his extradition on the principle that no Jew should be extradited to a gentile country.

They maintained that Nakash had killed the Arab in self-defense and that his life would be endangered if he were forced to serve his sentence in a French prison. Appeals were made to France to allow him to do his time in an Israeli jail.

Liberal and left-wing circles noted that a French court found Nakash to have committed a criminal act that had no bearing on the fact that he is a Jew and his victim was an Arab. They argued that Israel should not be turned into a "haven for criminals just because they happen to be Jews."

Israeli jurists and reporters who studied the case in France agreed with the French authorities that the murder was the outcome of a quarrel between underworld elements in Besancon and had no political overtones. Nakash's accomplice in fact was another Algerian Arab, presently serving his sentence in France.

# EAST BERLIN'S JEWS KEEPING EYE ON TRIAL OF NEO-NAZI THUGS

By David Kantor

BONN, Dec. 2 (JTA) -- Western observers and East Berlin's small Jewish community are closely watching the trial in an East Berlin district court of neo-Nazi thugs accused of an anti-Semitic attack on a Protestant church that maintains friendly relations with Jews.

The trial amounts to the first acknowledgement by the (East) German Democratic Republic that neo-Nazis are indeed active in what the authorities like to call the "first anti-fascist state on German soil."

The accused are members of a "skinhead" group charged with storming the Zion Church in East Berlin last October, inflicting serious injuries on some members of the congregation. They broke into the church shouting "Jewish pigs" and "send the Jews to the chambers."

"Skinheads," youthful roughnecks who shave their heads, wear Nazi-like uniforms and wield chains and other weapons, are a phenomenon that has surfaced recently in the West, including the United States. Most of these groups are vocally and violently anti-Semitic.

The state prosecutor has demanded prison sentences of 14 months to two years for the neo-Nazis. A verdict is expected some time next week.

## Charges Never Heard Before

According to observers, the charges against the group have never before been heard in the East German courts. East Germany has repeatedly claimed that neo-Nazism and anti-Semitism are "capitalist" manifestations that do not exist in the communist Democratic Republic.

More recently, the authorities charged that East German youths were incited and "poisoned" by West German neo-Nazi activists. Western reporters say they have seen on many occasions East Berlin municipal workers rushing to erase swastikas on walls and buildings.

The Zion Church has been promoting Christian-Jewish dialogue and its leaders have warned of recent outbreaks of anti-Semitism in East Germany. The East Berlin Jewish community was seriously disturbed last week when the secret police, Stassi, arrested several church activists in East Berlin and elsewhere and confiscated books.

For a time it was feared the crackdown would extend to the Jewish community. But members of the community told the Jewish Telegraphic Agency Sunday there seems to be no immediate threat. The police action was seen as a warning to opposition groups in East Germany that enjoy some degree of support by the church.

## SYRIAN VETERANS ASK TO BE ON WATCH LIST By Reinhard Engel

VIENNA, Dec. 2 (JTA) -- Syrians who served in the German army during World War II have demanded that the United States place them on its "watch list" so that they can demonstrate their solidarity with Austrian President Kurt Waldheim.

The Syrian branch of the Oesterreichischer Kameradschaftsbund, Austria's largest veterans organization, sent a petition to the organization's headquarters in Vienna. It said that since they had been soldiers in the Wehrmacht, like Waldheim, they want to share his lot.

Waldheim was placed on the U.S. Justice Department's "watch list" of aliens denied entry into the United States because of evidence of his complicity in the deportation of Greek Jews and knowledge of other atrocities while serving as a German army intelligence officer in the Balkans during the war.

But the veterans organization, which has undergone a change of leadership and of politics recently, said it will not hand over the Syrian petition to the new American ambassador, Henry Anatole Grunwald, when he arrives here later this month. According to the veterans group, this is for "reconciliation reasons." Vienna-born Grunwald, who is Jewish, recently retired as editor in chief of the Time magazine.

## FORWARD EDITOR DEAD AT 76

NEW YORK, Dec. 2 (JTA) -- Simon Weber, a veteran Yiddish journalist who was editor of the Forward for 18 years until his retirement last May, died at Beth Israel Hospital of a lung ailment Tuesday. He was 76 and had been associated with the Forward for nearly 50 years.

At the time of his death he held the title of editor emeritus of the paper, which changed from daily to weekly publication in 1985.

Weber, born in Stasher, Poland, in 1911, wrote for Yiddish newspapers and periodicals in Warsaw before coming to the United States in 1928. He left almost immediately for South America to work for Yiddish newspapers in Buenos Aires.

Weber returned to the United States in 1936 and worked as city editor of the Freiheit, then the Yiddish language organ of the Communist Party. He quit after a year because he objected to its politics and went to work for the Yiddishe Welt, a daily published in Philadelphia.

He joined the Forward staff in 1939, working his way from reporter to assistant city editor, city editor and finally chief editor of what was then the largest Yiddish daily newspaper in the world.

Weber was a close friend of novelist Isaac Bashevis Singer. When Singer won the Nobel Prize for literature in 1986, Weber accompanied him to Stockholm.

Funeral services will be held Friday at the Plaza Memorial Chapel, 91st Street and Amsterdam Ave. in Manhattan.