

**MORE THAN 200,000 RALLY
ON BEHALF OF SOVIET JEWRY
IN MASSIVE D.C. GATHERING**

By David Friedman

WASHINGTON, Dec. 6 (JTA) -- More than 200,000 people packed the National Mall Sunday to demonstrate support for Soviet Jewry, in the largest Jewish rally ever held in Washington.

Jews and non-Jews, from throughout the United States and Canada, as well as Israel and other countries, urged Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev to allow all Jews who wish to leave the Soviet Union to emigrate.

The demonstration came just 24 hours before Gorbachev was due to arrive in Washington for a two-day summit with President Reagan.

"The human rights issue is now a permanent part of the U.S.-Soviet agenda," Vice President George Bush declared at the rally, which opened with the sounding of the shofar and Pearl Bailey singing "Let My People Go."

Human rights "will be high on the agenda for the summit," Bush promised. "I will personally raise it with Mr. Gorbachev. I will not be satisfied until the promise of Helsinki is a reality."

Bush like other speakers pointed to Gorbachev's policy of "glasnost" (openness). "But openness begins at the border," he said. "Let's see not five or six or 10 or 20 refuseniks released at a time, but thousands, tens of thousands -- all those who want to go."

Senate Minority Leader Robert Dole (R-Kan.) also stressed that "glasnost may be all the rage in the media, but freedom is still the real issue" that ties together all of the other issues including arms control.

A Long Waiting List

This view was echoed by House Speaker Jim Wright (D-Texas), who said that openness includes "the open door. We rejoice that the number of those permitted to leave has increased over this year over the very low level of 1986. We note that the need is great and the list is unbelievably long."

Morris Abram, chairman of both the National Conference on Soviet Jewry and the Conference of Presidents of Major American Jewish Organizations, also stressed that glasnost has not applied to Jews.

"We want to believe that the release of highly visible refuseniks is not a publicity stunt, but we observe that in 1979 (Soviet leader Leonid Brezhnev released six times as many Jews as Gorbachev in 1987," Abram said.

Many speakers noted that the Washington Mobilization was taking place 10 days before Chanukah. Israeli Ambassador Moshe Arad called the Soviet Jews fighting for emigration "modern day Maccabees."

Recently released refuseniks, such as Natan Sharansky, Vladimir Slepak, Yuli Edelshtein, Ida Nudel, Mikhail Kholmiansky and Felix Abramovich, lit candles on a giant menorah.

Sharansky stressed that the issue is not whether Reagan is strong enough to force Gorbachev to change policies or whether Gorbachev will be willing to allow emigration.

"It is we, it is our struggle which makes governments in the free world strong," he said. "It is our struggle which can make the Soviet government willing to open the gates of the Soviet Union."

Sharansky stressed the need to continue the effort, noting that if Soviet Jews are not free, then all Jews are not free.

Who's Who Of Organized Jewry

The demonstrators included a virtual who's who of organized Jewry. But the backbone of the demonstration was ordinary Jews, many carrying banners urging freedom for Soviet Jewry, as well as signs designating their local synagogues.

One prominent Jewish official noted that this was the first time that every Jewish organization had cooperated in a single effort.

Pamela Cohen, president of the Union of Councils for Soviet Jews, declared that "the Jewish people is a diverse people. . . Let all those who would oppress us know that there are issues on which we stand as one."

Nobel laureate Elie Wiesel, honorary chairman of the Summit Task Force, which organized the demonstration, said it took 20 years to bring about such a large gathering.

'Not Silent Today'

"It is now clear that had there been such a large demonstration of Jews and human solidarity of concern in 1942, 1943 and 1944, millions of Jews would have been saved," said Wiesel, a Holocaust survivor. "But too many were silent then. We are not silent today."

The distinguished novelist added that "some Jews are more famous than others, but all are equally worthy of redemption."

While Abram and others praised the "persistence" of the United States in pressing the Soviet Jewry issue, Yosef Mendelevich, a former prisoner of Zion, criticized the Reagan administration for arranging a meeting for Gorbachev with 60 American business leaders.

"We Soviet Jews Soviet Jews are outraged," Mendelevich declared. "The Soviets will get trade, loans, goods for nothing."

He urged "no trade, no aid. Until 60,000 each year will emigrate, each dollar sent to Russia is stamped with tears of Soviet Jewry."

100 Plan To Fast

It was announced at the rally that some 100 Jews throughout the Soviet Union plan to fast during the summit. Many speakers expressed outrage that Jews demonstrating in Moscow earlier in the day had been arrested.

"That's not glasnost, that's Joe Stalin," New York City Mayor Edward Koch declared.

The rally reminded many of the civil rights demonstrations of the 1960s. Mary Travers and Peter Yarrow of the group Peter, Paul and Mary sang freedom songs in Hebrew, as well as the civil rights anthem "We Shall Overcome," as the crowd joined in.

In addition to Bush and Dole, other presidential candidates who appeared included Sen. Albert Gore (D-Tenn.), Rep. Jack Kemp (R-N.Y.) and former Secretary of State Alexander Haig.

COLORFUL, DEDICATED THOUSANDS TRAVEL FOR SOVIET JEWRY RALLY

By Andrew Muchin

WASHINGTON, Dec. 6 (JTA) -- It looked like a cross between a football game and a political convention, what with thousands of enthusiastic souls dressed in bright winter clothing and crowded around banners announcing their home state.

But the massive national rally for Soviet Jews at the Ellipse here Sunday sounded more serious and dignified than other mass events.

Many of the more than 200,000 Jews and non-Jews attended because they thought the rally would help their common cause: to impress upon the superpowers the need to improve the conditions of Soviet Jews.

"This is a big deal," said Sen. Tom Harkin (D-Iowa), who was standing with the 75 Iowa ralliers, primarily from Des Moines. He asserted the rally would be noted by Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev and would demonstrate to the Soviet people "about our American system."

"We want to get Gorbachev to get the Soviet Jews free," agreed Am Cohen, 10, of Annapolis, Md.

"Ralliers" came from as far as Hawaii and as near as the neighborhoods of the nation's capital, which produced an estimated 50,000 people. The amplified sound of the rally didn't travel even that far, as the rear half of the crowd heard only the most loudly emphatic of the speakers' statements.

Four Jews flew from Winnipeg, Manitoba, each symbolizing 100,000 Soviet Jews unable to emigrate, according to Hillain Kroft.

Cleveland, Savannah and Tulsa

Cleveland sent 1,500 people, most by bus. Three hundred flew from Los Angeles, 85 from Savannah, Ga., and 30 from Oklahoma City and Tulsa, Okla.

The Savannah delegation included two non-Jews, among them Marie Daniels, director of the International Christian Embassy in Jerusalem. She said her presence fit in well with her organization's goals of support for distressed Jews. "They don't have any other voice but our voice," she said of the Soviet Jews.

Standing beside her in the dense but cheerful crowd was Steve Bieringer, who said he works for the AFL-CIO labor federation out of Colorado.

"The labor movement has a strong stake in the freedom of people around the world," he explained. "That includes Soviet Jews." He estimated that 500-600 union members were present.

He was holding a small union logo, but many other ralliers came with signs created especially for the day, most of them announcing support of a particular refusenik or of Soviet Jews in general.

First Rally For Some

Some of the signs were made by children. The four members of the Goldman family of Baltimore wore on their backs cardboard six-pointed stars that announced, "Free Soviet Jews." The stars were designed by 11-year-old Rachel. She noted that she was "happy" to attend her first rally, because "we might get people out."

Melissa Vigorito, 17, of Eric, Pa., wore on the back of her jeans jacket an elaborate magic-marker sign declaring, "You have the key, you

have the power."

Chaim Gartman of Rockville, Md., held a green-lettered sign that announced in Spanish, "Let the Soviet Jews leave." He didn't speak Spanish, he admitted, receiving help for the sign from his son's Spanish teacher.

His explanation? "So everyone could understand," he said. "I want everyone to know."

The white painter's caps worn by the Detroit delegation of hundreds sported a similar sentiment. The 119 people from Texas marched under the Lone Star flag, and dozens of others carried Israeli or American flags.

The rally was the first public demonstration for most of the thousands of children present. Ralliers older than age 50 acknowledged that they, too, had never participated in a mass event.

However, a few people said they had attended the 1963 civil rights march at the same site, featuring the "I Have a Dream" speech by the late Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.

And Lester Pines, one of about 80 people from Madison, Wis., said he had attended a mass protest against the Vietnam War in 1969, also at the Ellipse. He described the Sunday rally as less confrontational and more universally felt.

He also noted that "This demonstration shows there's more to the Jewish community than New York City."

Surveying the representatives of Syracuse, N.Y.; Palm Springs, Calif.; and Fort Wayne, Ind.; he said, "There are all these very active Jewish communities in smaller cities."

Sunday, at least, no one would disagree.

AT DEMONSTRATION IN MOSCOW, REPORTS OF ARRESTS AND BEATINGS

By Susan Birnbaum

WASHINGTON, Dec. 6 (JTA) -- A number of Soviet Jews were beaten and arrested, and an American correspondent was detained, when some 200 burly men calling themselves "peace protesters" disrupted a "Freedom Sunday" rally in Moscow, according to news sources and reports reaching the Soviet Jewry groups demonstrating here Sunday.

The specifics about the protest in Moscow were still sketchy at press time, but it was known that two Jewish activists were arrested, several beaten and 27 "unaccounted for" following the protest in front of the Soviet Foreign Ministry, according to former refuseniks as well as the Union of Councils for Soviet Jews.

The demonstrators not accounted for apparently "disappeared" en route to the demonstration on Smolensky Square and are presumed to have been detained by police or KGB, former prisoner of Zion Yuli Edelstein told the Jewish Telegraphic Agency at Sunday's rally.

Arrested by the KGB and detained for four hours was Cable News Network bureau chief Peter Arnett, an American citizen. Arnett and his camera crew were roughed up and their equipment damaged when they turned their cameras away from the "peace protesters" and on the handful of Jewish activists, according to CNN.

Arnett said his attackers were presumably plainclothes security police and "Muscovites holding peace signs." CNN and the State Department lodged protests.

The attack was "a warning signal to Western news organizations" that the Soviets "will not tolerate political dissidents on the streets," Arnett told CNN.

Asked about the arrests Sunday morning on NBC's "Face the Nation" program, the Soviet Union's foremost expert on America refused to provide details. But the expert, Georgi Arbatov, head of the USA-Canada Institute of the USSR, said the incident should not be used by Westerners to "throw sand in the face of the summit" meeting this week between President Reagan and Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev.

Edelshtein, 29, who arrived in Israel in July and is now working as a Hebrew teacher there, said the incident in Moscow "means that Gorbachev is testing us (to see) how far we can go without (making) real changes."

"It means a lot of people are not misled and not deceived. And our message to Gorbachev is that we won't let him get his place in the community of free countries without solving the problem of Soviet Jews for real."

Edelshtein said Soviet Jewry activists here who engage in peaceful protests "also help," because "our struggle is not one-colored. It is multicolored." He emphasized this was true "as long as the struggle stays nonviolent."

"I appreciate all the efforts" made by Soviet Jewry activists in the United States, said Edelshtein, referring to passive arrests and demonstrations in front of cultural events, as well as organized and sanctioned demonstrations by mainstream groups. "We must remind them all the time that we are not content."

(New York correspondent Andrew Silow Carroll contributed to this report.)

SUNDAY'S RALLY ONE OF A STRING OF PEACEFUL PROTESTS PLANNED

By Susan Birnbaum

WASHINGTON, Dec. 6 (JTA) -- Refusenik Sabbath preceded Freedom Sunday here.

It was a series of peaceful demonstrations and day-long prayers outside the Soviet Embassy and the offices of Aeroflot, the Soviet airline--two of the most visible properties of the USSR. The protests will continue for most of the week, while Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev is here for his summit conference with President Reagan.

The SSSJ along with the North American Jewish Students Network organized the events. They began at the embassy at 3:30 p.m. Friday with a refusenik kiddish, followed by a Sabbath eve service at 4 p.m. outside Aeroflot.

There was a Saturday morning minyan at the airline office and a day-long prayer vigil ending with a havdalah service 6:30 p.m. Saturday, which brought Refusenik Sabbath to a close.

'Refusenik Embassy' Planned

Plans call for setting up a "Refusenik embassy" at Aeroflot Monday, sponsored by Network and supported by the SSSJ. Former prisoner of Zion Yosef Mendeleovich will serve as "chief ambassador" and other former refuseniks as "consuls."

During Refusenik Sabbath, the demonstrators obeyed the local ordinance that prohibits demonstrations closer than 500 feet from a foreign mission. This Tuesday, however, a brief demonstration will be held inside the imaginary line. The demonstrators will submit to arrest, by prearrangement with the District of Columbia police.

The same groups plan to demonstrate Thursday while Gorbachev is speaking to 60 American business leaders at a meeting arranged by Secretary of Commerce C. William Verity.

BEHIND THE HEADLINES:

UPS AND DOWNS OF JEWISH EMIGRATION LINKED TO U.S.-SOVIET RELATIONS

By William Saphire

NEW YORK, Dec. 6 (JTA) -- For nearly two decades, Jewish emigration from the Soviet Union has risen and fallen -- not predictably like the tides, but in a discernable pattern of sharp ups and downs that seem to be linked to the state of relations between the United States and the Soviet Union.

Observers will argue whether the Nixon-Kissinger policy of detente was responsible for the highs of 1972 and 1973, when Jewish emigration soared to almost 35,000 a year, or whether passage of the Jackson-Vanik Amendment to the Trade Reform Act of 1974 caused it to drop to barely 13,221 the following year.

Jackson-Vanik, also known as the Freedom of Emigration Amendment, denies most-favored-nation trade status to the Soviet Union and the Communist bloc countries, which restrict the right of their citizens to emigrate.

But the amendment provides that the restrictions can be waived year-to-year if the president and Congress find there is a significant change in these restrictive policies.

More Jews left the USSR in 1976 than in 1975, and Jewish emigration again hit 16,736 in 1977 and nearly 29,000 in 1978. Supporters of the Soviet Jewry movement in the United States maintain that Jackson-Vanik was instrumental in the release of many tens of thousands of Jews, because it is the clearest and most effective expression of America's commitment to the fundamental principle of free emigration -- and the Soviets recognize this.

Peak Year Was 1979

The all-time peak year was 1979, when 51,320 Jews were permitted to leave the Soviet Union. But in 1980, the figure slumped below 22,000. Many attribute this to President Jimmy Carter's objections to the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan.

Relations between Washington and Moscow soured with the onset of the Reagan years. As the diplomatic temperatures approached freezing, the allowed departures of Jews from the Soviet Union fell dramatically.

In 1981, the total was 9,447. In 1982, only 2,688 Jews were permitted to leave. The nadir was reached in 1984, when only 896 Jews emigrated. In 1986, the number was 914, an improvement but hardly an upswing.

But the picture has brightened suddenly this year. So far, 7,250 Jews have left the Soviet Union since January, the most in any single year since 1981.

Again, the barometer appears to be the state of U.S.-Soviet relations. President Reagan and Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev will hold their third summit meeting -- the first in the capital of either superpower -- and this time they are to sign a treaty reducing intermediate range nuclear ballistic missiles.

The pact is earnestly sought by both leaders. Reagan has pledged that human rights, including the right to emigrate, will be high on the agenda of his two days of talks with Gorbachev.

The thousands of Jews and others who poured into Washington Sunday for the massive pre-summit demonstration hope to impress the Communist leader and bind Reagan to his commitment.

ISRAELI AND AMERICAN THINKERS DEBATE VIABILITY OF DIASPORA

By Andrew Silow Carroll

NEW YORK, Dec. 6 (JTA) -- Rephrasing a question put to American and Israeli scholars at a two-day conference held here last week, author Charles Silberman quoted the 137th Psalm: "How do I sing the Lord's song in a foreign land?"

Quite well, answered the author of last year's controversial "A Certain People," which argued that the American Jewish community has succeeded -- in terms of spiritual health and social and political acceptance -- as no diaspora community has succeeded before.

Not surprisingly, Israeli political scientist Shlomo Avineri had a very different answer to the same question.

"Off-key" best summarizes the response of the author of an equally controversial analysis of American Jewry. Last spring, Avineri's "open letter" in the Jerusalem Post, written at the height of the Jonathan Pollard spy case, accused American Jews of having a "galut mentality" as they "cringed in fear" of charges of dual loyalty.

Thus the battle lines were drawn, in a meeting sponsored by the B'nai Zion fraternal order and entitled "The Coming of Age of American Jewry -- A Zionist Perspective."

The conference, held Dec. 1-2, could as easily have been called "The Coming of Age of Zionism -- An American Perspective," since the speakers spent as much time debating the centrality of Israel as they did the vitality of the diaspora.

American participants included Silberman, former Brandeis University Chancellor Abram Sachar and sociologist Steven A. Cohen. The Israeli speakers were Avineri, novelist Amos Oz and Bar-Ilan University Chancellor Rabbi Emanuel Rackman.

Diaspora As Essential As Israel

Speaking at the Tuesday morning session on "Is America a Galut?", Silberman drew on theological and historical precedents to argue that diaspora Jewry is as essential a component of Judaism as is the Jewish state.

At the heart of the religion, he said, is the idea of dialectic and paradox. Conflict not only characterizes the relationship between Israel and diaspora Jewry, he argued, but provides the very rationale for the continued existence of the diaspora side-by-side with the Jewish state.

"The genius of our tradition is that these tensions are always perpetuated, never resolved," said Silberman. "Judaism is not an either/or religion, but requires both sides of the dialectic."

Silberman then quoted the morning blessing recited by religious Jews, in which God is blessed for creating in human beings "many passages and vessels," organs and ducts, all of which perform in inseparable harmony.

A new blessing is needed, said Silberman, to celebrate "the interconnectedness of the Jewish national body, the interdependence of Israel and the diaspora. We need each other, not to support Israel's military, not to make American Jews feel Jewish, but because we are of the same flesh."

Israel Not As Dependent As Believed

Responding to Silberman, Avineri did not deny the interconnectedness of the Israeli and world Jewish communities, but he did say that the perception of need may not be equal between the

two. Avineri maintained that whereas diaspora Jewry relies on support of Israel to unify its usually divided constituency, Israel is not as dependent on the largess of world Jewry as is often believed.

The former director general of Israel's Foreign Ministry drew gasps from the audience when he compared Israel's annual budget -- \$25 billion -- with the \$3 billion it receives in American foreign aid and the three-quarters of a billion dollars it receives from world Jewish philanthropy.

"Israel's three-and-a-half million Jews carry the burden of the remaining billions, while all of world Jewry represents only 2 percent of the budget," said Avineri.

He maintained that overemphasis of the financial link has added to the conflict between Israeli and diaspora Jews, and said the "cash nexus" needs to be replaced by a "people nexus." A "people nexus," he said, demands that aliyah becomes a priority in America and Israel, with Jewish students and families being encouraged to spend at least a year in Israel.

Avineri appeared forthright in describing Israel's drawbacks -- saying it was neither the safest nor the most pleasant place to live. But he said that Israel offered what no other country could: Jewish autonomy and a Jewish population "whose lives don't depend upon the goodwill of others."

"Jews in Israel have self-determination," he continued. "Whatever is wrong is wrong because of us. We have no one else to blame."

'Spiritually Disastrous' Diaspora

At the Tuesday afternoon session, novelist Oz echoed Avineri's words, but with a stern twist. "Yes, it may be dangerous to live in Israel, but to live in the American diaspora can be spiritually disastrous," said the author of "In the Land of Israel" and "A Perfect Peace."

Oz said that while American Jewry produced outstanding Jewish individuals -- writers, artists and scholars -- as a community it could not match the "collective creativity" of Israel, whose elements include the Hebrew language and the kibbutz.

In response, sociologist Cohen stood up for achievements by American Jews, including their political sophistication and influence on Washington's foreign policy.

But Oz, like the other Israelis at the symposium, remained firm. "Israel is the Jewish state, while the diaspora is the auditorium," he said.

(Yitzhak Rabi also contributed to this story.)

AN APPEAL FOR ANNE HENDERSON POLLARD

WASHINGTON, Dec. 3 (JTA) -- Three members of Congress have written to the director of the Federal Bureau of Prisons urging that an outside medical specialist be allowed to treat Anne Henderson Pollard, who is serving a five-year prison sentence as an accessory in the possession of classified information.

In their letter to the director, J. Michael Quinlan, the legislators note that Pollard "suffers from biliary dyskinesia, an extremely rare, painful and difficult-to-treat gastro-intestinal disease" which leaves her "almost constantly bent over with severe abdominal and chest pains."

The signatories are Reps. Charles Schumer (D-N.Y.), Bruce Morrison (D-Conn.) and William Hughes (D-N.J.).

HERZOG CALLS ON ZIONIST CONGRESS TO UNDERGO RADICAL 'SOUL SEARCHING'

By David Landau

JERUSALEM, Dec. 6 (JTA) -- President Chaim Herzog called Sunday for a radical "soul searching" on the part of the World Zionist Organization.

In a hard-hitting speech at the festive opening of the 31st World Zionist Congress here Sunday evening, the president gave voice to the widespread sense of dissatisfaction over the state and functioning of the Zionist movement.

He spoke of "duplication, narrow interests, and inefficiency" in the WZO.

The WZO and Jewish Agency are both non-governmental bureaucracies whose missions include encouraging aliyah, facilitating the absorption of new immigrants and the construction of settlements -- all tasks handled, in some measure, by various government ministries.

Israelis, more and more, are calling into question the real purpose of the WZO and Jewish Agency and in recent years have viewed World Zionist Congresses, which have been held in Jerusalem since the founding of the state, with apathy.

The mass-circulation daily Yediot Achronot seemed to sum up the public attitude in an editorial Sunday which suggested that if Israelis had their way, the first act of the new chairman would be to abolish the WZO and the Jewish Agency.

But Haaretz said Sunday that "even the fiercest critics of the WZO establishment acknowledge the need for a body which will foster ties between the diaspora and Israel."

The nature of the diaspora's relationship with Israel has surfaced as a major theme at this year's congress, in part because of the role diaspora philanthropists have played in the selection of the new chairman of the WZO and Jewish Agency Executive, who is to be elected Monday by congress delegates.

Dinitz Favored For Top Post

Simcha Dinitz, a Labor member of the Knesset and former Israeli ambassador to the United States, seems virtually assured of election to the powerful post, thanks mainly to a unanimous endorsement he received last week by a powerful contingent of American philanthropists on the Jewish Agency's Board of Governors.

Of the 538 voting delegates at the congress, 190 are from Israel, 152 from the United States and the remaining 196 are from other diaspora nations around the world.

The voting will take place by secret ballot, which means that party discipline cannot be monitored. But political observers say the Labor-led coalition at the congress is solidly behind Dinitz, who was formally nominated by the Labor Party's central committee last Thursday, by a plurality of only 27 votes.

Labor's allies are the powerful Confederation of General Zionists, dominated by Hadassah; the Conservative Zionist movement, Mercaz; and the Reform Zionist movement, ARZA. Together, they are said to command a majority of 16 among the 538 voting delegates.

The Likud candidate challenging Dinitz is Science and Technology Minister Gideon Patt, a member of the bloc's Liberal Party wing. He has been lobbying delegates vigorously over the weekend, citing his 10 years as a Cabinet minis-

ter, which, he maintains, makes him better qualified than his rival to carry the heavy administrative burden of running the WZO-Jewish Agency Executive.

But Labor's allies in the Conservative and Reform movements have noted pointedly that Patt has voted in the Knesset for the Orthodox-inspired amendment to the Law of Return that would invalidate conversions performed by non-Orthodox rabbis.

Following Labor's nomination of the popular Dinitz on Thursday, Likud sought a stronger candidate than Patt, who is relatively unknown in the diaspora.

A Likud ministerial caucus that met Friday under the chairmanship of Premier Yitzhak Shamir, tried in vain to persuade former Defense Minister Moshe Arens to enter the race for the WZO-Jewish Agency chairmanship.

Arens, an outspoken Herut veteran is also a former ambassador to the United States and is well known and well liked by the American Jewish community. But he declined to accept his party's offer, though he agreed to campaign for Patt.

Observers said Arens doubted he could overcome Dinitz and did not want to return to local politics with a defeat on his record.

Meanwhile, the outgoing WZO-Jewish Agency chairman, Leon (Arye) Dulzin, is waging what observers say is a losing battle for the title of president of the WZO, a largely honorary office that has not been conferred on any Zionist leader for 20 years.

The 31st Congress, which runs through Thursday, was formally opened at the Binyanei Haoma convention center here by the oldest delegate, 88-year-old Shneur Zalman Shragai, a religious Zionist thinker and writer.

ISRAELI STABBED TO DEATH IN GAZA, AS TENSIONS RISE IN TERRITORIES

By David Landau and Gil Sedan

JERUSALEM, Dec. 6 (JTA) -- An Israeli civilian was fatally stabbed in the center of Gaza Sunday afternoon. The victim, identified as Shlomo Takal, 45, was taken to a hospital by local Arabs. He was pronounced dead on arrival.

Police immediately clamped a curfew on Falastin Square, where the attack occurred, and began a house-to-house search for the assailant.

Takal, a plastics salesman from Bat Yam, a town south of Tel Aviv, frequently did business in Gaza. He was talking to a shopkeeper when he was stabbed from behind in the back of his neck.

The attack raised tensions among Jewish settlers in the Gaza Strip, already angered by the arrest over the weekend of Shimon Yifrah, a settler from Neve Dekalim, who has been charged by police with the fatal shooting last month of a 17-year-old Arab high school girl, Intissar Abdallah Al-Atar.

Yifrah, 30, allegedly opened fire when his car was stoned by schoolgirls outside a Gaza Strip refugee camp.

Temperals also boiled in the West Bank, where a roadside bomb damaged the car of Knesset member Eliezer Waldman on the Hebron-Jerusalem road, near the Arab town of Halhoul.

No one was hurt but the windshield of Waldman's car was shattered. Waldman, who represents the ultranationalist Tchiya party, was driving from his home in Kiryat Arba, near Hebron, on his way to a lecture in Jerusalem.

A curfew was imposed on Halhoul Saturday

while security forces searched the area. The incident was the second of its kind in two weeks in Halhoul. The earlier bombing caused no damage.

Meanwhile, a large explosive charge found in Rishon LeZion Sunday evening was safely dismantled by police sappers.

EUTHANASIA CASE BECOMES MOOT, BUT THE DEBATE GOES ON IN ISRAEL

By Hugh Orgel

TEL AVIV, Dec. 6 (JTA) -- The family of a terminally ill man who died Saturday morning will continue to press its appeal to Israel's Supreme Court for a ruling in principle that doctors may abide by a patient's request to be put to death.

The case of Gideon Nakash raised legal, moral and political questions as he lay dying at Kaplan Hospital in Rehovot, paralyzed in the final stages of multiple sclerosis. Kept alive by a respirator, he was able only to blink his eyes. With them, he repeatedly sent messages to his family, begging "let me die."

His family, appearing on radio and television, urged that his suffering be ended. Leaders of the medical profession discussed the issue in the news media and before Knesset committees. The talk focused not only on Nakash but on the idea of euthanasia in general.

The debate is similar to one under way in the United States for the last decade since the case of a comatose New Jersey woman named Karen Ann Quinlan first surfaced. But in Israel, the issue is complicated by Jewish ethics, which traditionally have urged that maximum efforts be taken to save a life.

In the Israeli case, the Nakash family and its attorney, Itshak Hoshen, who heads the Israel Euthanasia Society, appealed to the high court a month ago to override a Health Ministry decision to deny Nakash's request.

A five-member panel of justices was appointed last week to hear the case. But Nakash, 53-year-old father of two, died a natural death a few days before the panel was to convene.

Ruling Being Sought In Principle

The appeal thus became moot. But Nakash's wife instructed Hoshen to delete her late husband's name as the appellant and seek a declaration in principle. They want the court to rule that a request to die should be honored and if the patient is in a coma or otherwise unable to communicate, a court-appointed guardian may make the request.

Most physicians expressed the opinion that Nakash should be detached from his life-supporting breathing machine. None would comment, however, on the family's proposal that he be given a lethal injection or an overdose of sleeping drugs.

Nakash's daughter Tsila explained on Israel Radio Sunday that removal of the life-support system -- passive euthanasia -- would have caused her father to die slowly and painfully from suffocation. She said that was foreshadowed on several occasions when his air pipe loosened for a moment or two and he began to choke.

She and her mother praised the medical and nursing staff at Kaplan Hospital, who had done their best to keep Nakash as comfortable as possible.

Attorney Hoshen plans to employ a new appeals procedure that allows a member of the public to appeal to the Supreme Court for a

ruling on a matter of principle where no particular individual is involved.

POLL SHOWS LABOR LEADING LIKUD IN PUBLIC OPINION BY 7-VOTE MARGIN

By Hugh Orgel

TEL AVIV, Dec. 6 (JTA) -- The latest public opinion poll gives the Labor Party only a seven-seat edge over Likud if Knesset elections were to be held now. But Labor Party leader Shimon Peres seems to be the overwhelming choice of the electorate to head the next government.

Such polls are conducted several times a year to gauge the relative popularity of the various political parties. And with national elections slated for next fall, the results of these surveys are of more than academic interest.

The latest poll, conducted by the Modi'in Ezrachi organization during the second half of November, found that Labor would win 45 Knesset seats to 38 for Likud, according to the results published in Maariv Sunday.

This is far from sufficient for a governing majority in the 120-member Knesset. The outlook would be for another coalition regime, either a renewal of the present Labor-Likud power-sharing arrangement or a coalition formed by one of the major parties in alliance with the smaller parties.

In that case, Likud would stand the best chance of forming a coalition, because its loss of votes was not to Labor but to parties further to the right.

The poll found that the public, by a 43-18 percent margin, considers Foreign Minister Peres better suited than Premier Yitzhak Shamir, the Likud leader, to be the next prime minister. Peres led Shamir by 14.2-10.4 percent as choice for foreign minister.

Defense Minister Yitzhak Rabin, a Laborite, is far ahead of potential rivals for the office. He was selected over Likud's Ariel Sharon by a 49.7-17.1 percent margin. Moshe Arens of Likud, another former defense minister, was the choice of only 11.8 percent of the respondents.

TALK SHOW HOST'S KILLERS SENTENCED

DENVER, Dec. 6 (JTA) -- Two former members of a violently anti-Semitic neo-Nazi group were each sentenced to 150-year prison terms in federal district court here Thursday for the June 1984 murder of Denver radio talk show host Alan Berg.

The sentences were pronounced little more than two weeks after a jury found David Lane, 48, and Bruce Carroll Pierce, 33, guilty of violating Berg's civil rights by taking his life because he was Jewish.

Neither will be eligible for parole for at least 50 years. Pierce was convicted of shooting Berg 13 times with a submachine gun in the driveway of his home. Lane, who is already serving a 40-year sentence for federal racketeering violations, drove the getaway car.

Two other defendants in the case, Richard Scutari and Jean Craig, were acquitted. Scutari is serving 60 years and Craig 40 years on racketeering charges.

All four belonged to a group known variously as the Silent Brotherhood or the Order.

The leader of the Order, who allegedly masterminded the Berg murder, was killed in a shoot-out with federal agents near Seattle in December 1984.