

**MINE KILLS TWO IDF SOLDIERS
PATROLLING IN SOUTHERN LEBANON**

By Hugh Orgel

TEL AVIV, Feb. 24 (JTA) -- Two Israeli soldiers were killed instantly and two others were wounded when their tank struck a large mine near Barashit village in the southern Lebanon security zone Tuesday.

The dead soldiers were identified as Sgt. Gavriel Permuti of Herzliya and Cpl. Amir Zibner of Motza. Israel Defense Force sources said the mine appears to have contained 100 pounds of explosives, but could have been planted by one person.

The tank commander and the gunner, though wounded, extricated themselves from the crippled tank and reached an IDF infantry squad on routine patrol.

The incident occurred less than 300 yards from a position manned by the Irish contingent of the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon, on a dirt road frequently used by U.N. troops. A UNIFIL source explained that bad weather and high winds made it difficult to hear or see whoever planted the mine.

The Barashit region has been a hotbed of terrorist activity for some time. The village is known to be a haven for various Shiite Moslem extremist groups.

**LABOR, LIKUD MAINTAIN SPLIT ON
PEACE AS SHULTZ VISIT NEARS**

By Hugh Orgel

TEL AVIV, Feb. 24 (JTA) -- The Inner Cabinet met for two hours Wednesday without reconciling the sharp differences between its five Labor Party and five Likud faction members over the peace process.

The outcome was not unexpected, but it leaves the government without a unified position toward the new American peace plan that U.S. Secretary of State George Shultz is bringing here. Shultz is due in Israel Thursday evening.

The Inner Cabinet is the government's top policy-making body. Participants in Wednesday's meeting said it was "quiet... academic... without surprises... and inconclusive."

They indicated that the Likud ministers, led by Premier Yitzhak Shamir, and the Laborites, headed by Foreign Minister Shimon Peres, reiterated their respective positions. But the gap between the coalition partners was not narrowed.

Likud insists that Middle East peace talks must be based on the 1978 Camp David accords and wants direct negotiations on autonomy for the Arab population of the West Bank and Gaza Strip, but not the territories themselves. Likud rejects out of hand the idea of exchanging territory for peace, although Shamir reportedly wavered on that stand in a January letter to Shultz.

Labor is prepared to propose territorial concessions during direct peace talks to be preceded by some form of international conference that would serve as an umbrella for the peace process, but not determine its outcome.

Of the two positions, Labor's is closer to the American plan, which would accelerate the

timetable for autonomy and negotiations over the permanent status of the territories.

The Inner Cabinet is expected to hold further sessions during Shultz's stay in Jerusalem. According to some media reports, the secretary of state will use Jerusalem as a base for shuttle diplomacy, flying to a different Arab capital each day in an effort to sell his ideas for the peace process.

According to these reports, Shultz will hold separate meetings every evening with Shamir and Peres and their respective aides until the two Israeli factions reach some semblance of agreement in their approach to peace. There is no indication how long Shultz may be in the region.

**IDF BANS BEATINGS AS PUNISHMENT;
AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL URGES PROBE**

By Hugh Orgel

TEL AVIV, Feb. 24 (JTA) -- The Israel Defense Force has instructed its field commanders in the West Bank and Gaza Strip that force may not be used to punish the Palestinians there.

Force is permissible only to break up rioting crowds or in pursuit of suspects resisting arrest, and only at the specific time and in the place where disturbances occur, according to orders dispatched Tuesday by Chief of Staff Gen. Dan Shomron.

The orders explicitly define the IDF mission in the administered territories and make clear that no deviations will be tolerated.

Meanwhile, Amnesty International, the privately sponsored international human rights agency, has called on the Israeli government to establish a judicial commission of inquiry to investigate "the 62 killings in the territories," the policy of beatings and other alleged excesses by Israeli security forces to suppress the Arab unrest.

Clayton Yeo, a Canadian who heads Amnesty International's research department, told Israel Radio Wednesday that in some cases, the alleged behavior of IDF troops "amounts to murder."

Yeo is leading a four-person team visiting Israel and the territories. He said "Amnesty International is very concerned by the extent and seriousness of beatings which have been taking place in the context of the security forces' dealing with the disturbances, the beatings which appear, in many cases, to have been either punitive or deterrent."

He said his organization also is "concerned about the use of lethal force because, as is well known, 62 people, at our latest count, have been killed by firearms by the security forces during these events."

The human rights official added, however, that "There is no doubt about it that the Israelis -- at different levels, both government and military -- have taken positive steps, and we welcome this. Our concern is that the events have been such that there has to be a fundamental question -- what happened and why did it happen?"

The chief of staff's instructions on these matters were not related to the charges by Amnesty International or other foreign agencies.

They were issued by order of the Defense Ministry, which found as a result of its own

investigations and the reports of IDF psychologists sent into the trouble spots that many junior officers and their superiors in the field were misinterpreting orders with respect to use of force, particularly beatings of Palestinians.

The IDF conceded that some soldiers acted with excessive zeal on the mistaken notion that they were free to apply physical force at their own discretion.

Shomron's orders stated: "The IDF is faced with a task of unprecedented complexity and sensitivity -- to impose law and order and prevent manifestations of violence from attaining their objectives.

"The fulfillment of this task requires the use of force. IDF soldiers must act aggressively and decisively, but with self-restraint and sensitivity in accordance with the high behavioral norms demanded of the IDF's soldiers and commanders.

"I would like to clarify and emphasize that force is to be used only for the purpose of fulfilling our task according to law and orders of the army, from which there should be no deviation. Under no circumstances should force be used as punishment."

Shomron specified that "The use of force is permitted during a violent incident in order to break up a riot, to overcome resistance to legal arrest, and during pursuit after rioters or suspects -- all within the confines of the time and place where the incident occurs."

He stated explicitly that "Force is not to be used once the objective has been obtained -- for example, after a riot has been dispersed or after a person is in the hands of our forces and is not resisting."

He added that "In every instance, the use of force must be reasonable, and one should refrain as much as possible from hitting anyone on the head or on other sensitive parts of the body. No steps should be taken to humiliate or abuse the local population, nor should property be intentionally damaged."

Vital, 'Distasteful Task'

Shomron, interviewed on an army radio phone-in program Tuesday, agreed that maintaining law and order in the territories was a "distasteful task."

But he added that soldiers should not feel any moral confusion about their mission, which he called a "national objective of the highest order."

The chief of staff warned that IDF unilateral withdrawal from the territories, as some propose, would lead to the establishment of a Palestinian state.

Shomron also explained the IDF's attitude toward the news media. He contended that the media caused a "lot of damage" but that "the media is part of life, a part of us, and we have to live with it."

He opposed closing the territories to press and television coverage because that would mean closing out Israeli society. "In my opinion, it would be a retreat backwards of years," Shomron said.

Yeo of Amnesty International said on his Israel Radio interview that "We have no doubt that by generally accepted standards sometimes soldiers have found themselves in the immediate context where some force was necessary."

He said "the step toward firing a combat rifle against people who are not themselves armed with firearms is a very big step to take."

IDF REPORTS FACING BOMB, GUNSHOTS FOR FIRST TIME DURING UNREST

By Hugh Orgel

TEL AVIV, Feb. 24 (JTA) -- The Israel Defense Force disclosed Wednesday the first use of explosives and firearms against soldiers and Jewish civilians in the administered territories since the unrest began last Dec. 9.

A military spokesman said an explosive charge was detonated at a roadside near Gaza Monday, but there were no casualties.

Gunshots were fired at some military vehicles on a road that bypasses the city of Gaza shortly before midnight Monday. The fire was returned and no one was apprehended, the spokesman added.

Meanwhile, an investigation into the death of a Palestinian youth in Khan Yunis in the southern Gaza Strip last Friday indicated he was killed when a bomb he was preparing exploded prematurely. The youth's family had claimed he was electrocuted.

Virtually the entire West Bank and Gaza Strip was paralyzed by a general strike Wednesday, called for by the Palestine Liberation Organization in advance of the arrival of U.S. Secretary of State George Shultz, who is due in Israel Thursday evening.

Shops and offices were closed, stall owners abandoned their usual places on the streets, schools were shut down and only a few of the thousands of Arabs employed in Israel showed up for work.

The territories were relatively quiet, however there were scattered incidents of tire-burning and rock-throwing at passing vehicles and nails were strewn on the roads in some places.

Three residents of the Nuseirat refugee camp in the Gaza Strip were slightly wounded in skirmishes with security forces Wednesday. There were demonstrations in several other refugee camps during the day.

POLICE RAIDERS FACE DISCIPLINE

TEL AVIV, Feb. 24 (JTA) -- A police sergeant major will be dismissed and two police officers face suspension for an unauthorized raid last Friday on a Tel Aviv apartment, Police Minister Haim Barlev told the Knesset Tuesday.

The residence was occupied by eight Arabs employed at a local restaurant.

They were beaten and their property was vandalized. Barlev described the incident as "shameful and a serious breach of the norm."

Barlev said the sergeant major and six officers went to the flat in response to a complaint by a private security company alleging that the Arabs possessed inflammatory material.

Three police officers entered the apartment "without authority," Barlev said. He added that the police have initiated a criminal investigation of the incident.

The three officers charged will be given a hearing before the dismissal and suspensions take effect.

ISRAEL OUTLAWS SEXISM ON THE JOB

JERUSALEM, Feb. 24 (JTA) -- The Knesset enacted legislation Tuesday outlawing sexism at the work place and protecting women employees from sexual harassment.

The legislation, considered a landmark for

Israel in this field, also provides maternity leave for new fathers.

The bill was introduced by Ora Namir of the Labor Party, who acknowledged the support of Sarah Doron of Likud and Shulamit Aloni and Ran Cohen, both of the Citizens Rights Movement, who had submitted private-members bills on the subject.

The new law prohibits discrimination by sex in employment, work conditions, promotions, professional training, dismissal or compensation for dismissal.

A major provision states that men as well as women will be entitled to post-maternity leave with pay. In addition, a father may obtain paid leave to take care of a sick child. Similar laws exist in Sweden and several other European countries, but they are a rarity world-wide.

The law also makes sexual harassment on the job a criminal offense and will make available legal aid to assist a complainant to bring formal charges. Dismissal because of sex is outlawed and employees so dismissed must be reinstated.

FRENCH CARDINAL TO HELP FUND AUSCHWITZ INTERRELIGIOUS CENTER

By Edwin Eytan

PARIS, Feb. 24 (JTA) -- France's highest ranking Catholic prelate said he would use a \$35,000 human rights award to help establish an interreligious center at the Auschwitz death camp in Poland.

Cardinal Albert Decourtray, a noted friend of Israel and Jews, was awarded the French government's first "prize for the defense of human rights" Wednesday, which included the funds.

The award was announced a day after Decourtray publicly expressed his "sympathy to the Palestinian people" and support of "their right to a country of their own."

He made his declaration in a letter to the newly appointed Latin Patriarch of Jerusalem, Msgr. Michel Sabbah, an Arab. Decourtray explained Wednesday that it was based on "the concept of human rights in our civilization (which) is part of the Jewish-Christian tradition and common to both faiths."

The statement of sympathy for Palestinian aspirations had a powerful effect on Jews and non-Jews, not only because France is 90 percent Catholic, but because Decourtray represents the strongest pro-Jewish, pro-Israeli trend within the country's Roman Catholic hierarchy.

His sensitivity to Jewish concerns was demonstrated when he headed the Catholic delegation at two Jewish-Catholic meetings in Geneva last year on the issue of a Carmelite convent at Auschwitz. Jewish delegates to what became known as the "Auschwitz Conference" stressed that the cardinal was "highly sensitive to our feelings and receptive to our arguments."

Decourtray's intervention is credited for the Vatican's decision to remove the convent in recognition that the Jewish people were overwhelmingly the victims of the Nazi death machine at Auschwitz and that the camp site must remain forever linked to Jewish martyrdom.

Decourtray, a former archbishop of Lyon, is president of the French Catholic Episcopalian Conference and as such is titular head of the church in France. He has considerable influence in Vatican circles.

He was the only top-ranking Catholic cleric

to openly express "reservations" over Pope John Paul II's meeting with Austrian President Kurt Waldheim at the Vatican last June because of Waldheim's revealed Nazi past.

During the trial in Lyon last year of Nazi war criminal Klaus Barbie, Decourtray was the first visitor to the Jewish memorial for Holocaust victims erected near the courthouse. French Jewish leaders who know the cardinal well have always found him "personally involved with the Jewish people and highly sensitive to Jewish sensibilities and the aftermath of the Holocaust."

His letter to Sabbah supported both a Jewish nation and the right of the Palestinians to their own. He said "moderation and tolerances" are required in seeking a solution, not the recent unrest in the administered territories.

Copies of the cardinal's letter are being distributed to all sees and parishes in France, the Catholic newspaper La Croix reported, and will be read as part of sermons in many churches this Sunday.

Meanwhile, the Council of the French Protestant Federation, representing most of France's 800,000 Protestants, released a statement backing "the right of both peoples (Israelis and Palestinians) to live within their own independent countries."

FORMER REFUSENIKS DISPLAY ART TO BENEFIT SOVIET JEWRY CENTER

By Howard Rosenberg

WASHINGTON, Feb. 24 (JTA) -- Two former Soviet Jewish refuseniks are exhibiting their paintings around the United States with the hope selling them to raise funds for the Soviet Jewry Education and Information Center of Jerusalem.

Seventy of the paintings of the two artists, Eugene Abeshaus and Misha Taratuta, now both Israelis, are on display in the rotunda of the Russell Senate Office Building on Capitol Hill through Friday. Some 100 people attended a reception for the pair there Tuesday night. An additional 10 paintings are displayed at the nearby Hyatt Regency Hotel.

The exhibition is sponsored by the Union of Councils for Soviet Jews in cooperation with Sen. Lawton Chiles (D-Fla.), the South Florida Conference on Soviet Jewry and the District of Columbia Jewish Community Center.

The union of councils is sponsoring the national tour by the artists, which has already visited Miami and is scheduled to continue to New York, Boston, St. Louis, Dallas, Kansas City and Omaha, Neb. The artists reportedly sold six paintings each in Miami.

Julie Mendel, the union of councils' congressional liaison, said the exhibition represents a "gesture of trying to tie art and politics together."

Abeshaus was well-known in Leningrad as organizer of the avant garde art group Aleph. In 1976, Abeshaus was Taratuta's first art teacher. Abeshaus, in his early 50s, emigrated to Israel in 1977, while Taratuta, 28, left the Soviet Union last August.

Chiles "adopted" Taratuta during his struggle to leave the Soviet Union.

Taratuta said his art tries to express the "joy of life" and focuses on "all of the progress, the new creations of modern times." Taratuta said his work does not express "anger" about his past and often uses plastics or arranges concepts in a collage to describe "modern technology."

MOST ITALIAN JEWS BACK ISRAEL IN FACE OF CRITICISM, RABBI SAYS By Yitzhak Rabi

NEW YORK, Feb. 24 (JTA) -- The majority of Italy's 35,000 Jews is united behind Israel in the face of criticism of its tough measures to quell the continuing Palestinian riots, according to the chief rabbi of Rome.

He conceded, however, that a small minority of leftist Jews is sharply critical of Israel's policy, a position he disputes.

"I believe that as Jews we should keep our differences to ourselves," Rabbi Elio Toaff, 73, said in an exclusive interview last week during a U.S. visit. The interview was conducted in Hebrew at Diva Restaurant, the only dairy kosher Italian eatery in New York.

The chief rabbi said that a recent appeal criticizing the Israeli government and signed by 500 Italian Jews comprised only leftist Jews from Milan "who believe that the interests of the (the Communist Party) surpass the interests of the Jewish people."

But he noted that he banned a proclamation in support of Israel by the Rome Jewish community because of his belief that Jews should keep their opinions to themselves.

"In Rome most of the Jewish community is supportive of Israel," Toaff said.

The chief rabbi accused the Italian media of biased coverage of the disturbances and the Israeli counter-measures in the administered territories.

"The Italian media have grossly exaggerated the actions of the Israeli government. The reports lacked objectivity. After all, you can not blame only one side and accuse it with all that goes wrong while saying that the other side is blameless," Toaff said.

Said Average Italian Supportive

Despite the media barrage, the chief rabbi said, "the man in the street" is still supportive of the Jewish state.

Toaff acknowledged reports that anti-Semitism in Italy has increased as a result of the worsening image of Israel.

"Look, anti-Semitism has never completely disappeared in Italy. And whenever something happens in the Land of Israel -- there is an increase in anti-Semitism in Italy. After all, the extreme-right parties in Italy have always been anti-Semites, and they still are. And so is the extreme left," he said.

Italian Jewry is therefore "concerned, but not surprised" at finding "anti-Semitic slogans painted across walls in Rome, and especially on stores owned by Jews. Some of the slogans said 'Jews to the Ovens,' 'Let's make soap out of the Jews' or 'The Jews Must Die,'" he said.

According to Toaff, the current anti-Semitism is milder than the anti-Jewish and anti-Israeli feelings that prevailed in Italy during the Israeli war in Lebanon in 1982.

The chief rabbi said that he is concerned over the recent anti-Semitic mood in his country, but he said he does not fear violence against Italian Jews.

Toaff arrived in New York in connection with the publication of his book "Perfidious Jews, Elder Brother," his life story interwoven with that of his Jewish community. Few American publishers have expressed interest in publishing the book in the United States, Toaff said.

He also came here, he said, to introduce a new line of kosher Italian food prepared under his supervision on behalf of the municipality of Rome.

VOLUNTEERS FOR ISRAEL SETS 'UNITY FLIGHT' TO ISRAEL

NEW YORK, Feb. 24 (JTA) -- Volunteers for Israel, a New York-based organization that sponsors working visits to Israel, announced plans Wednesday to "demonstrate American Jewry's solidarity with Israel" by flying 450 volunteers there.

Passengers on the El Al Israel Airlines "Unity Flight" March 14 will spend two weeks working alongside Israelis in agricultural, hospital and warehouse jobs. Volunteers for Israel is subsidizing the program, which will cost participants \$275 for the flight, room and board.

"We shouldn't have to wait for wars before we give Israel our support," explained Sampson Giat, organization president.

Founded in 1982 in response to Israel's domestic manpower needs during the Lebanon war, Volunteers for Israel has since won the Chairman of the Knesset Prize for its contributions to immigration and immigrant absorption.

The organization worldwide has sent more than 13,000 volunteers to Israel, more than 7,000 of them from the United States, according to Giat. For more information, call (212) 608-4848.

TERRORIST ISSA AGAIN TO FACE CANADIAN DEPORTATION HEARING

By Michael Solomon

MONTREAL, Feb. 24 (JTA) -- Immigration Minister Benoit Bouchard announced Wednesday that the government will continue deportation proceedings against convicted Palestinian terrorist Mohammed Mahmoud Issa, who entered Canada a year ago with an immigrant visa he obtained under false pretenses.

Issa is due to appear before a federal court in Ottawa next Monday for a hearing. But for a time Tuesday, his deportation had seemed moot.

Instead of showing up at immigration court in Hamilton, Ontario, as scheduled, Issa declared he was leaving Canada voluntarily and he and his family boarded a flight to Algeria.

But when the plane landed in London, British authorities told him he could not proceed because he lacked the documents for entering Algeria, a fact confirmed by the Algerian Embassy in Ottawa. Issa was put aboard a flight back to Canada. He was not taken into custody when he landed.

Issa evaded arrest when he arrived at Toronto airport in February 1987 even though immigration authorities had been alerted that the visa he obtained from the Canadian consulate in Madrid a month before had been invalidated because of what was subsequently learned about Issa's past.

He was, and possibly still is, a member of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine, a terrorist group headed by George Habash, now based in Syria.

Issa was convicted in Greece for the 1968 bombing of an Israeli airliner at Athens airport in which one man was killed.

In 1970, a Greek court sentenced him to 17 years, five months in prison. He was released a year later in a hostage exchange and deported to Lebanon.