

**U.N., U.S. OFFICIALS CRITICIZE
ISRAELI OPERATION IN LEBANON**
By Yitzhak Rabi (United Nations)
and Howard Rosenberg (Washington)

May 3 (JTA) -- United Nations Secretary General Javier Perez de Cuellar deplored Israel's incursion into southern Lebanon, declaring Tuesday that it is a "further violation of Lebanon's sovereignty."

In Washington, the State Department and White House both deplored Israel's re-entry into southern Lebanon, but also criticized the presence of other foreign troops there.

In a statement issued through his spokesman, the secretary general said he "remained convinced that peace and security along the Lebanese-Israeli border, including an end to cross-border attacks in both directions, can only be attained through the full implementation of Security Council Resolution 425 (of 1978), which calls for withdrawal of Israeli forces from all Lebanese territory."

The secretary general acknowledged that he has received a letter from the permanent representative of Lebanon to the United Nations, Ambassador M.M. Rachid Fakhoury, about the Israeli invasion. Perez de Cuellar stated that he has frequently voiced his opposition to any acts that increased tension and violence in the area.

But as of midday Tuesday, Lebanon had not made any official complaint to the Security Council nor had it asked for a meeting to debate the situation.

However, diplomats here said Tuesday that it was likely Lebanon would ask for a Security Council meeting in the next few days, when more information is available about the scope of the Israeli incursion.

Removal Of All Forces Urged

In Washington, State Department spokesman Charles Redman said, "We have consistently supported Lebanon's unity, sovereignty and independence (as well as) the withdrawal of all foreign forces from Lebanon and the extension of central government authority throughout the country."

"This incursion and the recent infiltrations into northern Israel that preceded it do not advance that goal," he said. "We have long believed that agreed-on security arrangements would be the best means of assuring stability and security for the people of southern Lebanon and northern Israel," Redman said.

White House spokesman Marlin Fitzwater specifically acknowledged the presence of Syrian and Palestine Liberation Organization forces in Lebanon, as well as Israeli troops, and said all of them should be removed.

Redman said the State Department had "no advance word" of the action, but Fitzwater said the Reagan administration learned of military movements along the Israeli-Lebanese border "days ago," Fitzwater said, though, that no such

indications were received Monday, the day Israel invaded Lebanon.

He added that the administration had received no assurances from the Israeli government on how long the invasion would last.

At the State Department, Redman brushed aside questions about the possible use of U.S.-made weapons by the Israelis, and said it was hypothetical to speculate whether such actions would be in keeping with U.S. law. "I don't have any indication, for example, on the use of American equipment, to start with," he said.

Redman said Israel's action would not be a "determining factor" that could lead Secretary of State George Shultz to return once again to the Middle East. He explained that Shultz's chief concern is to advance the Arab-Israeli peace process.

**LARGE-SCALE IDF SEARCH OPERATION
CONTINUES IN SOUTHERN LEBANON**
By Hugh Orgel

TEL AVIV, May 3 (JTA) -- The Israel Defense Force continued its large-scale search-and-destroy operation in the southern Lebanon Tuesday. It is aimed against terrorist bases in the border security zone and an area just north of it, where infiltration attempts have been launched in recent weeks.

The operation, which began Monday night, involves infantry and tank forces estimated at between 500 and 2,000 troops.

The IDF is supported by units of the Israeli-backed South Lebanon Army. At the same time, Israeli air force planes have been flying low-level surveillance missions over Palestinian refugee camps in the Tyre and Sidon areas of southern Lebanon, and Israeli naval craft are patrolling off the southern Lebanon coast.

IDF artillery was reported to be shelling several points within the security zone and beyond it.

According to unofficial reports, the operation was expected to last from 24 to 48 hours. The first official announcement by the IDF at midnight Monday said that "the IDF action will end when the searches are concluded."

The area under search, called the Arkoub, is hilly, sparsely populated ground south of Lebanon's Bekaa Valley and near the Syrian border. The area, which has been used as a training ground for terrorist and guerrilla forces, extends from the security zone to the western slopes of Mount Hermon.

Known As 'Fatahland'

It was once known as "Fatahland" because of the massive presence in the early 1980s of fighters from the Al Fatah wing of the Palestine Liberation Organization. Now the terrorists appear to be returning. According to the Israeli authorities, 16 terrorist attacks have been launched from the area in recent months.

The IDF announcement on the maneuvers, considered unusual while an operation of this kind was still under way, came after NBC News reported Monday evening that 2,000 Israeli troops had entered southern Lebanon. It was not immediately known whether NBC had violated censor-

ship rules.

Although military sources admitted the operation was large scale, they stressed it was not as massive as foreign news reports suggested. Reports from the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon, which patrols a zone in southern Lebanon north of the security zone, seemed to confirm this.

A Norwegian UNIFIL officer was quoted as saying, "It appears to be a local operation and anticipated in view of recent infiltration attempts."

The IDF communique stated: "In the framework of ongoing security activity, the IDF is searching the security zone and its periphery following the recent increase in the number of attempts at infiltrating into Israel in order to kill and carry out bargaining for hostage operations."

A communique issued Tuesday morning said: "IDF forces are searching for terrorist squads and their accomplices on the western slopes of the Hermon in south Lebanon."

A 'Usual Operation'

Premier Yitzhak Shamir said Tuesday it was a "usual operation" and did not signal any new Israeli policy. Maj.Gen. Yossi Peled, commander of the northern region, said he did not anticipate any reaction from the Syrians.

According to some reports, the IDF forces were less than eight miles from Syrian positions in Lebanon at certain points. The Syrian army was said to have been placed on full alert.

Lebanese and UNIFIL sources said the operation included house-to-house searches in several villages on the lower western slopes of Mount Hermon.

These included the villages of Shouba, Shaya, Hasbaya and Kaukaba, the sources said. They said the IDF distributed leaflets warning the villagers not to support or lend aid to terrorists on their way to attack Israel.

As of Tuesday evening, the IDF was reported to have encountered no resistance in the villages or elsewhere in the search area.

Response To Infiltration

The operation followed a significant increase in terrorist attacks and infiltration attempts along the northern border.

The most daring and successful, from the terrorists' point of view, occurred last November, when a lone terrorist scaled the Israel-Lebanon border on a motorized hang glider and managed to kill six IDF soldiers and wound seven before he was killed.

More recent attempts have failed, but the IDF has sustained casualties. Two Israeli soldiers were killed in clashes with terrorist gangs last week. About 20 terrorists have been killed or captured in infiltration attempts in recent weeks.

But the aim of the current operation appears to be less to rout out terrorists than to demonstrate an IDF response and to warn villagers who may have sheltered terrorists. Most of the terrorists are believed to have fled the region in anticipation of an IDF move.

Defense Minister Yitzhak Rabin told Israel Radio Tuesday that the purpose was not to wipe out "nests of terrorists," but to search for arms caches and warn local residents against cooperating with the PLO.

He said there have been no casualties and no prisoners taken. Rabin declined to say if any weapons were seized.

NBC DEFENDS REPORTS ON INCURSION INTO LEBANON, BUT ABC, CBS DISAGREE

By Andrew Silow Carroll

NEW YORK, May 3 (JTA) -- An NBC news executive Tuesday defended his network's decision to interrupt Monday afternoon programming with a special bulletin on Israeli troop movements into Lebanon.

The urgency of NBC's treatment of the story, in which an estimated 500 to 2,000 troops crossed into Lebanon in search of terrorist strongholds, seemed at odds with the way the story was handled in subsequent reports by other networks and newspapers.

Unlike NBC, neither ABC nor CBS broke into regularly scheduled programming or ran the Israeli incursion as the top story on their nightly newscasts.

Lloyd Siegel, NBC's executive producer for special broadcasts, stood by the network's decision to interrupt programming.

"Given the information that we had then and that we received this morning, it was an important enough story to break in for a brief amount of time," said Siegel.

Executives at the other networks viewed and continue to view the story differently, however. "Our information was slightly different. We made an editorial decision not to interrupt," said Elise Adde, director of news information at ABC.

"We were aware that something was happening," said Lane Venardos, vice president in charge of special events at CBS. "The reading at the time, though, was that this was expected, wasn't a big deal and not unlike several others that happened previously."

'At Odds' With CBS Reports

Venardos said the NBC reports seemed "clearly at odds" with what was being reported by CBS sources in Tel Aviv, especially correspondent Bob Simon.

"The rule of thumb is that we go with people in the field if what they are saying is at odds with what's coming over the wires," said Venardos.

Network officials seem to agree, as Venardos put it, that special bulletins send "a clear signal that this is very to extremely important." In recent weeks, the networks have interrupted programming to report on U.S.-Iranian clashes in the Persian Gulf, U.S. troop movements in Honduras and the resolution of the Kuwaiti airliner hijacking.

Many Jewish groups and individuals have been highly critical of television network coverage of Israel since unrest began in the administered territories in December. Demonstrations and angry letters to editors have accused the networks of an anti-Israel bias.

Siegel called such charges "specious."

"Our interest in that region is not the result of any sort of bias," he said. "It is a region of continuing and possibly increasing importance to the government and our audience."

NBC's reportage from Israel on another story was called into question last week. The Israel Government Press Office suspended correspondent Martin Fletcher's press credentials April 26, after he allegedly violated censorship rules in reporting on the assassination of Abu Jihad, the second in command of the Palestine Liberation Organization.

The press office also suspended the credentials of Washington Post reporter Glenn Frankel.

THREE ARABS KILLED IN WEST BANK AS VIOLENCE IN GAZA STRIP RESUMES

By Gil Sedan

JERUSALEM, May 3 (JTA) -- Three Arabs were killed and two others were wounded Tuesday in renewed clashes with Israeli security forces in the West Bank.

Two of the fatalities occurred in Bani Naim village, near Hebron. Israel Defense Force soldiers opened fire on orders of their patrol commander when they were pelted with stones while trying to remove a roadblock of burning tires, military sources said.

The IDF sealed off the village and began an investigation of the incident.

Another Arab was killed during a clash at the Balata refugee camp near Nablus. Arab sources said IDF soldiers came under a hail of stones and other heavy objects.

Violence also erupted in the Gaza Strip on Tuesday. Youths tried to prevent Arab day laborers from traveling to their jobs in Israel by setting up roadblocks and stoning their vehicles. An IDF patrol arrived and opened fire, wounding an 18-year-old Arab in the chest. He was taken to Barzilai hospital in Ashkelon, where his condition was described as stable.

A partial commercial strike was in effect in the Gaza Strip in commemoration of the Battle of El Bader, a seventh-century battle led by the prophet Mohammed.

The Arab owner of a factory in the West Bank town of El-Birch was shot in the stomach Tuesday. Arab sources said the factory was raided by income tax inspectors, who were then attacked by local residents. The inspectors' car was burned.

In Nablus, IDF soldiers dispersed local youths who descended on the business district to force shopkeepers to observe a commercial strike.

Meanwhile, an Arab teen-ager was electrocuted in Wazan village in the West Bank Sunday night, while trying to hang a Palestinian flag on top of a high-tension electric pole, security sources said. The youngster, identified as 17-year-old Nidal Abu Shomar, died later at a hospital.

ISRAEL CLOSES DOWN PALESTINIAN WEEKLY

By Gil Sedan

JERUSALEM, May 3 (JTA) -- Israeli authorities closed down the Palestinian weekly Al-Awda Monday on grounds that it is guided and funded by terrorist organizations.

The magazine, published in East Jerusalem, is known to reflect the views of the mainstream Palestine Liberation Organization headed by Yasser Arafat. It appears in both Arabic and English.

Al-Awda is edited by the same people who ran the Palestinian Press Service, shut down by the Israelis last month.

Asked if the closure was not anti-democratic, the Jerusalem district commissioner who gave the orders said, "It is our duty to protect democracy against those who work against our democracy."

Several weeks ago, the Israeli authorities closed down the Hebrew periodical Derekh Hamitzot, which is known for its extreme left-wing views. Its editors were arrested on suspicion of security offenses.

One of them, Yaacov Ben-Efrat, in prison for the past 15 days, had his detention extended for another eight days by a Petach Tikva magistrate Monday.

RESERVATIONS OVER ISRAELI POLICIES WON'T STOP BALLET TROUPE'S PERFORMANCE

By Hugh Orgel

TEL AVIV, May 3 (JTA) -- Maurice Bejart and his world famous ballet company of Lausanne will be coming to perform in Israel this summer, despite strong reservations over Israeli policies toward the Palestinians in the administered territories.

The 59-member dance group will present Bejart's new ballet, "The Dybbuk," at the Israel Festival.

Bejart stated in large advertisements in Israeli newspapers Monday that he and his dancers had long discussions over whether to present their scheduled performances in Israel because of the current situation in the territories.

They decided to come here "in order not to add to the current feelings of intolerance," the advertisement said.

But it went on to quote a statement by Arian Menouchkin, whose Theatre du Soleil of Paris also cancelled and then re-instated its scheduled performances in Israel. The Paris troupe objected to the occupation of territory by force, to "the killing of children and unarmed civilians, and a nation that oppresses another."

Bejart and his company said they agreed with their actor colleagues that "the Palestinian people, whose cause is just, were right to revolt against the Israeli occupation, and has an unimpeachable right to self-determination and to a Palestinian state, just as the state of Israel also has an unimpeachable right to exist here, in peace and security."

By coming to Israel, the ballet troupe said, "we pay homage to all those in Israel -- members of the Knesset, intellectuals, writers, artists, lawyers, journalists and citizens -- who are tirelessly weaving, and have for decades been weaving, the fabric of peace which irresponsible leaders are bent on ripping apart."

LIKUD UNITES BEHIND SHAMIR

By David Landau

JERUSALEM, May 3 (JTA) -- Likud will enter the Knesset elections next November united behind Premier Yitzhak Shamir, party sources indicated Tuesday.

A divisive battle for leadership of Herut, the dominant faction in the Likud bloc, appears to have been averted. Deputy Premier and Housing Minister David Levy announced Tuesday that there will be "no confrontation."

That means that Levy and Ariel Sharon, the minister of commerce and industry, will support Shamir's re-election as Herut leader and his candidacy for the office of prime minister.

Shamir is expected to be endorsed by acclamation when the Herut Central Committee meets next month, and will head the party's election list to be announced in July.

Levy and Sharon have challenged Shamir in the past. Levy, who has made no secret of his ambition to be Israel's first prime minister of Moroccan origin, met Sunday with Shamir and his close associate Moshe Arens, a Herut minister without portfolio. They met again Tuesday.

Levy apparently sought to affirm his position as Herut's No. 2 man. Shamir reportedly acknowledged that status, though he did not make a commitment to offer Levy the foreign or defense ministries in a Likud government.

TED KOPPEL COMES TO JERUSALEM, BUT ISRAELIS ARE UNIMPRESSED By Gil Sedan

JERUSALEM, May 3 (JTA) -- Ted Koppel, host of ABC's "Nightline" program, came to Israel last week with a television summit in mind. What he got instead was Israelis and Palestinians facing his cameras in what turned out to be less than a dialogue. In fact, they didn't even shake hands.

If the five-part "Nightline" received good ratings at home while becoming a news item itself, it didn't generate much interest among ordinary Israelis.

"Frankly, I don't know who that Koppel is, and I don't give a damn," said Sammy, owner of a toy stand and presumably speaking for the Israeli "man-in-the-street."

Negotiations fell through to have "Nightline" appear on Israeli television. Yair Stern, head of Israel Television's news division, told the Jerusalem Post on Monday that the program did not have the same interest for Israelis as it did for American audiences.

"We have Shamir and Peres and the Palestinians on television all the time. For us, they are no novelty," he said, referring to Premier Yitzhak Shamir and Foreign Minister Shimon Peres.

Koppel apparently tried to follow in the footsteps of the dean of American TV newsmen, Walter Cronkite, whose interviews more than a decade ago generated the public momentum for Egyptian President Anwar Sadat's historic visit to Jerusalem.

Koppel envisioned a TV show that would bring together Hosni Mubarak, Egypt's current president, King Hussein of Jordan and Israeli Foreign Minister Peres.

No Success for 'Nightline'

ABC found out quickly that even Koppel could not succeed where Secretary of State George Shultz had so recently failed.

The highlight of the week's programming was the three-hour "Nightline" program beamed live from Jerusalem last Wednesday, featuring a debate between Palestinians and Israelis.

At the end, the Palestinian participants rushed to leave the stage, lest they be forced to shake hands with their Israeli counterparts.

Dedi Zucker, of the dovish Citizens Rights Movement, and Haim Ramon did in fact extend their hands to Dr. Haidar Abd A-Shafi of Gaza and Dr. Hanan Mikail-Mashrani of Ramallah. But they were ignored.

About 600 Israelis and Palestinians filled a Jerusalem theater early Wednesday to air their differences in front of American television cameras. The Palestinians repeatedly made the point, however, that they were not there for a dialogue but only to express their personal opinions to the American public.

At their insistence, a three-foot divider was erected on the stage, symbolically separating the Palestinians from the Israelis and emphasizing their rift.

The wall revived a memory of Hugh Orgel, the Jewish Telegraphic Agency's Tel Aviv correspondent:

"I remember that in 1956 or 1957, when I was press attache at the Washington Embassy (of Israel), I arranged a Sunday talk-show interview for the then ambassador, Abba Eban with the Syrian -- I believe -- ambassador, who demanded

a wall be built because he could not recognize an Israeli ambassador existed.

"A six-foot-high wall was built, and Eban referred sarcastically to the 'disembodied voice of my colleague, who cannot stand the proof that I exist, coming over this makeshift partition.'"

Koppel's show made an excellent documentary on the refusal of two peoples even to talk to each other. Among the Palestinians, only moderates showed up.

The Israeli panel was politically more diverse. In addition to Zucker and Ramon, it included Likud Knesset members Ehud Olmert and Eliahu Ben-Elissar, who was Israel's first ambassador to Egypt.

The Palestinian side included Mashrani, dean of the faculty of arts at Bir Zeit University, and Dr. Saeb Erakat, a professor of political science at Najah University in Nablus. Both universities are presently closed on orders of the Israel Defense Force.

Another Palestinian, Dr. Mamduh Al-Akar, a Nablus physician, cancelled at the last moment because he had the flu.

Koppel admitted it was extremely difficult to get the Palestinians to appear. Although he did not say so, it was clear that some who might have shown up were subject to pressure from within the Palestinian political community.

Even-Handed Coverage

"Nightline" was brought to Israel at a cost of hundreds of thousands of dollars -- some said \$1 million -- largely because of Israeli complaints that it was not getting a fair deal at the hands of the American electronic media. The Israelis have charged that coverage of the unrest in the administered territories was biased and tarnished Israel's image abroad.

Once Koppel and his team arrived here, he received maximum cooperation from the military authorities. The IDF arranged visits throughout the territories and a helicopter tour over the West Bank to point out the area's strategic importance.

The Israeli authorities appreciated the opportunity to present "the other Israel" to the American public, after four-and-a-half months watching the Palestinians in combat with Israeli soldiers.

One senior IDF officer said the Koppel undertaking was a worthwhile investment. He said the treatment, by and large, was balanced, and gave Israelis an opportunity to explain their views at somewhat greater depth than the usual 40 seconds allowed a regular TV news item.

The Israeli public did not share in the excitement. Israelis are as divided over the importance of a "good press" as they are on most other issues. Hawks are less sensitive about Israel's image overseas than doves.

PLO CARGO REJECTED

By Hugh Orgel

TEL AVIV, May 3 (JTA) -- Three cargo containers filled with food and medical supplies were returned to their countries of origin--Greece and Cyprus -- Tuesday because they were consigned to "PLO -- Gaza."

Transport Minister Haim Corfu ordered the containers sent back after they were off-loaded from a ship at the port of Ashdod. The cargoes originated in Iraq, Egypt and the Soviet Union. The forwarder was an Iraqi company.

CANTORS ASSEMBLY VOTES 97-95 TO REJECT WOMEN AS MEMBERS

By Andrew Silow Carroll

NEW YORK, May 3 (JTA) -- In a historic decision, the Conservative movement's Cantors Assembly voted Tuesday to reject a move to admit qualified women members.

The vote was 97-95 against admitting women awarded the degree of hazzan (cantor) by the Jewish Theological Seminary's Cantors Institute into the ranks of the world's largest professional body of cantors.

A two-thirds vote was needed for the measure to have passed.

The vote took place at the assembly's 41st annual convention at the Concord Hotel in Kiamasha Lake, N.Y.

Cantor A. Eliezer Kirshblum of Toronto led the forces opposed to women's membership. He called the vote "a victory for common sense, for halacha and for due process."

In a statement, he urged that JTS Chancellor Ismar Schorsch reconsider his February 1987 decision that qualified women graduates of the institute could be given the title of hazzan.

He also proposed that the halachic legitimacy of women cantors be referred to the law committee of the Rabbinical Assembly, the organization of Conservative rabbis, for study and an eventual recommendation that would require "a majority consensus rather than the opinion of one man."

In a statement of their own, the four women cantors who have been granted the title of hazzan, joined by 12 women currently enrolled in the Cantors Institute, said they were disappointed by the vote.

'Dedicated To Our Calling'

"The outcome does not surprise us," they said. "We understand that change is often difficult. But we are dedicated to our calling. . . We are devoted to the cantorate, proud to serve the Jewish community and optimistic about the future."

Two of the four women cantors, Marla Barugel, of Congregation B'nai Israel of Greater Red Bank, in Rumson, N.J., and Erica Lippitz, of Congregation Ohave Shalom, in Orange, N.J., are attending the convention. They serve in Conservative congregations, although they are not members of the assembly.

Cantor Abraham Lubin of Chicago, who presented the main argument in favor of the admission of women graduates, predicted that the matter would be presented to the body again at one or more future conventions and that "women will be accepted as members with all of the honor and respect due them."

The vote was taken after five hours of floor debate on the issue, the essence of which has divided the Conservative movement in one form or another for the past decade. Likewise, the movement has been divided over a decision by both the JTS and the Rabbinical Assembly to allow women to become Conservative rabbis.

The current debate pits members of the movement's traditional wing -- who accept change only according to a strict interpretation of halacha, or Jewish law -- and a larger mainstream faction the traditionalists consider overly liberal.

Led by Schorsch, the Conservative mainstream has argued for change from the standpoint of morality and ethics.

Jewish law is a process, said Lubin just prior

to the vote, "and when it loses that dynamism by denying norms and conventions of today, it is not in the spirit of Judaism."

Decisions by the movement to sanction women rabbis, the bat mitzvah ceremony for girls and the inclusion of women in the 10-person prayer quorum, or minyan, represent "a natural evolution and an inevitable consequence," he said.

'Complete Disregard' Of Halacha

Arguing the traditionalists' side, however, Kirshblum said that the original decision to graduate women cantors from the JTS was "disrespectful in our opinion and in complete disregard of the halachic process."

"Whether we want or don't want women cantors is secondary," said Kirshblum. "But it can only be so if the halacha provides for it."

Kirshblum maintained that the question of whether women could be prayer leaders appeared on the agenda of the Rabbinical Assembly's law committee only once, in 1974, and was opposed by a 3-1 margin.

"The inference by the chancellor that it is accepted is deceptive and totally inaccurate, and simply plays on the ignorance of the Conservative laity," he told the New York Jewish Week.

Proponents of women in the cantorate, however, cited the shortage of Conservative candidates and said that admitting women into the assembly would encourage more women to study and serve in the capacity of hazzan.

Cantor Samuel Rosenbaum of Rochester, N.Y., executive vice president of the assembly, said that currently more than 40 Conservative synagogues around the country were without cantors. In addition, more cantors retired this year than will graduate from the Cantors Institute.

Women are not allowed to serve as cantors in Orthodox synagogues. The Reform movement has accepted women cantors since 1975. The Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion has graduated about 45 women as cantors. Currently 25 to 30 women are enrolled in Reform's cantorial program.

HIGHER JEWISH EMIGRATION LEVELS MAY CONTINUE, SHULTZ INDICATES

By Howard Rosenberg

WASHINGTON, May 3 (JTA) -- Secretary of State George Shultz told 250 Jews attending Summit Action Day here Tuesday that the emigration of 1,088 Jews in April is a trend that "very well may continue."

Similarly, Richard Schifter, assistant secretary of state for human rights and humanitarian affairs, told the crowd that "it looks as if (visa) applications could be processed now fairly fast." He warned, though, that many Soviet Jews could still be deterred from applying to emigrate based on traditional Soviet rejection of such requests.

Shultz praised participants in Summit Action Day, which was organized by the National Conference on Soviet Jewry. "The dedication you have gives all of us in America the chance to see very vividly what are the values that our country stands for," he said.

He termed his meetings in Moscow last month with Foreign Minister Eduard Shevardnadze "the most searching set of discussions that we have ever had" on human rights.

He recalled how he met in Jerusalem recently with former refuseniks who he had seen in the Soviet Union and felt a "sense of accomplish-

ment." But he said he could not help but feel, "I am here, but what about my friends who aren't here?"

First Lady May Meet Refuseniks

Earlier in the day, participants in the National Conference mission were told that First Lady Nancy Reagan may meet with Soviet Jews in Moscow during President Reagan's fourth summit with Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev, scheduled for May 29 to June 3. The development was announced by Teresa Heinz, co-chairperson of the Congressional Wives for Soviet Jewry.

Heinz, the wife of Sen. John Heinz (R-Pa.), said Nancy Reagan has agreed to meet her later this week after the first lady listens to a tape of a conversation Mrs. Heinz had with a group of refusenik women known as Jewish Women Against Refusal.

Myrna Shinbaum, associate NCSJ executive director, said the group is expanding contacts with chief executive officers and stockholders of U.S. companies interested in closer economic ties with the Soviet Union.

U.S. business leaders were encouraged by their unprecedented trip to the Soviet Union last month with Secretary of Commerce William Verity. A few hundred corporate giants participated in meetings with Soviet officials.

Shinbaum said the NCSJ's position "has never been to boycott" U.S. companies that do business in the Soviet Union. "We are for business," she said.

The National Conference supported the trip after Morris Abram, its chairman, and Edgar Bronfman, president of the World Jewish Congress, gained assurances from Verity that the trip did not mark an end to the U.S. commitment to the Jackson-Vanik Amendment.

That amendment denies Communist countries special trade benefits that most U.S. trading partners enjoy, unless the president asserts that those countries are conducting satisfactory emigration practices.

Soviet Groups Opposed

Other Soviet Jewry groups, including the Union of Councils for Soviet Jews and the Student Struggle for Soviet Jewry, opposed the increased contacts in light of continued Soviet restrictions on emigration, and current U.S. private bank loans totalling billions of dollars annually.

Also briefing the NCSJ Tuesday were Reps. Ron Wyden (D-Ore.), who spoke about his recent trip to the Soviet Union; Steny Hoyer (D-Md.), who chairs the U.S. Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe, which is monitoring the current human rights talks in Geneva; and Rep. Gus Yatron (D-Pa.), chairman of the House Foreign Affairs Subcommittee on Human Rights and International Organizations.

Hoyer said the Geneva talks, which represent the third review of the 1975 Helsinki Accords, could be completed by the summer, but have yet to produce any proposed communiques. He said the United States must demand "no more, no less" than compliance with the 1975 treaty, which requires the 35 nations that signed it to meet basic human rights standards.

Wyden said Soviet human rights officials told him they are working on new policy guidelines on emigration, that could be completed in "months."

He said the officials told him that those who want to leave are viewed as "traitors." Wyden

said he was also told that emigration figures are hampered by lack of high-level Soviet-Israeli relations and by Arab objections that more Jewish emigration means more manpower for Israel's armed forces.

VANUNU'S LAWYER SAYS ISRAEL IMPOSED TOO HARSH A SENTENCE **By Yitzhak Rabi**

NEW YORK, May 3 (JTA) -- The attorney for Mordechai Vanunu, who was sentenced last month to 18 years in prison for leaking information about Israel's alleged nuclear capabilities, says that the sentence imposed is too harsh and without proportion to the magnitude of the offense.

Avigdor Feldman, a lawyer specializing in civil rights who took over Vanunu's case after the first lawyer, Amnon Zichroni, resigned, said in an interview here that in his view, the reaction of the Israeli government to the whole case was overblown.

"Israel exaggerated in the way it brought Vanunu to Israel, in accusing him with treason and severe spying," the 40-year-old Feldman contended.

Vanunu was kidnapped by Israeli agents and accused of spying and aiding the enemy in wartime, charges that he pleaded not guilty to in court.

Feldman admitted that his client breached the law, but he said passing information to a newspaper is not like passing it to an enemy of the state. He also claimed that sentencing the 39-year-old Vanunu to 18 years in prison is almost like sentencing him to life, because a life-in-prison sentence in Israel is equal to a 20-year sentence.

Feldman said that the sentence imposed on Vanunu is being appealed to Israel's Supreme Court.

Feldman, who is currently a visiting professor at Harvard Law School, has represented a number of Palestinians from the West Bank and Gaza who challenged the legality of actions taken by the Israeli authorities against them, including deportations and land expropriation.

He was sharply critical of what he termed the "zero human rights situation" in the West Bank and Gaza, saying that Israel is in violation of international law as applied to occupied territories in the Geneva Convention.

These violations of international law, Feldman said, include deportations, collective punishment such as the demolition of houses, and expropriation of land for governmental use.

Feldman warned that the denial of human rights to the residents of the territories might spill into Israel proper and have an effect on the human rights of the Arab minority, whose members are citizens of the state of Israel.

"This is like a contagious diseases," he said. "Once you deny human rights in the territories, it is bound to effect sooner or later Israeli society itself."

JOB ACTIONS HIT STATE-RUN HOSPITALS

TEL AVIV, May 3 (JTA) -- The union representatives of some 10,000 government hospital workers decided Monday night on a hit-and-run plan to deprive different hospitals of essential services on different days -- without advance warning.