

CONGRESS MAKES PHONE CALLS TO SOVIET JEWISH REFUSENIKS

By Howard Rosenberg

WASHINGTON, May 24 (JTA) -- Members of Congress dialed Soviet refuseniks from Capitol Hill Tuesday, in a gesture of support on the eve of the Moscow summit.

Yuli Kosharovsky, Irina Royak and Judith Lurie were treated to phone calls from Reps. Jack Kemp (R-N.Y.), Benjamin Gilman (R-N.Y.), John Porter (R-Ill.), and Sens. Christopher Bond (R-Mo.), Phil Gramm (R-Texas), Charles Grassley (R-Iowa), Dennis DeConcini (D-Ariz.), Frank Lautenberg (D-N.J.) and Paul Simon (D-Ill.).

Simon was noticeably upset when Abe Stolar, a U.S.-born refusenik, was not at home to receive a call. But Simon said President Reagan will be meeting with Stolar and other refuseniks Monday, the second day of the summit.

However, three refuseniks from Leningrad apparently are not being allowed to attend that meeting.

Mark Levin, Washington representative for the National Conference on Soviet Jewry, said that refusenik Igor Uspensky told him Tuesday that Roald Zelichonok, Evgeny Lein and Yosif Latinsky, who planned to attend the Reagan meeting, were told not to go to Moscow by Soviet officials, including the KGB.

Another refusenik, Elena Keiss-Kuna, was "pulled off the train" from Leningrad to Moscow by Soviet officials, Levin quoted Uspensky as saying. Keiss-Kuna was planning to participate in a hunger strike sponsored by a refusenik women's group during the summit.

Kosharovsky, who recently was on a hunger strike of his own, recalled that he had met Gilman in January.

When Gilman told Kosharovsky that Secretary of State George Shultz assured him that the administration will raise human rights cases at the Moscow summit, the refusenik said, "Without real trust in the human rights field, there may not be developed a trust in other fields."

"There is no question about it," Gilman concurred. "Whenever we have met with any of the Soviet leaders, we have indicated that in order to improve the environment . . . one of the first things they have to do is resolve all of the human rights problems that exist between both of our nations."

Gilman told Kosharovsky how he met with Soviet Embassy officials last week and argued that by issuing exit visas, U.S.-Soviet relations are improved.

"Exactly, exactly," Kosharovsky said.

Kosharovsky told Gilman that he knows of 1,200 people who have been denied visas. "Among them about 1,000 because of the secrecy" argument, he said. The Soviet government has refused to issue visas in many instances on the grounds that the refusenik is in possession of "state secrets."

"In this 1,000 people," Kosharovsky said, "more than 80 percent of them" have been denied visas because of "access to the so-called classified information more than 10 years ago." Kosharovsky noted that in his case, "it's 20 years."

After Gilman asked for the list of 1,200

refuseniks, Kosharovsky said, "If you don't mind, I hope tomorrow to file the list with the American Embassy just for you."

Kosharovsky said refuseniks have a "very warm attitude toward the United States" because of their pressure in pushing for their release.

The hour's worth of phone calls, sponsored by B'nai B'rith International, cost about \$9 a minute, as estimated by one of the group's staffers.

BEHIND THE HEADLINES:

MOSCOW SUMMIT UNLIKELY TO BRING AGREEMENT ON MIDEAST PEACE PROCESS

By David Friedman

WASHINGTON, May 24 (JTA) -- When Secretary of State George Shultz goes to the Middle East on June 3, after next week's Moscow summit, there is some hope, but little expectation, that the Soviets will have moved toward support of Shultz's peace initiative for that region.

The United States and the Soviet Union are at odds over the same issue that divides the Reagan administration and Israeli Premier Yitzhak Shamir: an international peace conference.

The Soviets want an international conference that would negotiate a settlement of the Arab-Israeli conflict. This is precisely the type of conference Shamir says he fears and it is why he opposes the conference idea.

Shultz, however, envisions an international conference that would only set the stage for direct negotiations between Israel and a Jordanian-Palestinian delegation, and perhaps between Israel and Syria. The conference would not dictate terms or veto any agreement reached by the parties.

In briefing reporters Monday on the Moscow summit between President Reagan and Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev, Michael Armacost, undersecretary of state for political affairs, said that there has been intensive talks on the Middle East with the Soviets.

"There's been a perception of some forward movement in the sense that the Soviets are now acknowledging that Israel's security concerns have to be taken into account," Armacost said.

'Very Deep' Differences

But, he added, when the discussion turns to the international conference, which has been the focus of much of the talks, "the difference between us as to the nature of that conference is very deep."

Armacost said the United States wants a conference that would be "a framework which permits the parties to negotiate directly with one another, but doesn't allow the conference to impose its solution or veto arrangements that are worked out between the parties."

He said that while "the Russians have an idea of a more authoritative conference . . . precisely how far they want the conference, the plenary, to go is not entirely clear."

Armacost said that the United States would consider progress has been achieved if the Soviets moved closer to Washington's position on the international conference.

But he stressed that it is not enough for the

United States and the Soviet Union to reach an agreement, since they also need the approval of the parties directly involved.

"So the progress, if there is progress, gets registered in adjustments and positions of other parties with whom we have influence or the Soviets have influence," Armacost said.

Israeli Foreign Minister Shimon Peres, who supports Shultz on the international conference as the only way to get Jordan to negotiate with Israel, was a bit more optimistic last week about the chances to achieve progress with the Soviets.

Peres Hopes For Progress

After a 30-minute meeting at the White House with Reagan, Peres said that while he did not expect an agreement to be reached in Moscow, he said the talks could move the Soviets toward cooperation.

Peres also said that Reagan will press the Soviets to restore diplomatic relations with Israel. He said that he and other Israeli officials have met with Soviet officials on this issue, but the talks have not progressed as far as the Israelis would like.

Reagan, in an interview with foreign television correspondents last week, stressed that if the Soviets want to participate in an international conference, "they have a step they have to take, and that is to resume diplomatic relations with the State of Israel."

Both Shultz and Peres have repeatedly made clear that restoration of diplomatic relations is the first requirement for Moscow's participation in the Middle East peace process.

But when Gennady Gerasimov, the Soviet Foreign Ministry spokesman, was asked Sunday on NBC-TV's "Meet the Press" program whether Moscow was ready to take this step, his reply was enigmatic. "We are saying that it's quite possible in the context of Middle East settlement," Gerasimov said.

GROUPS URGE MEESE TO DEPORT NAZI WAR CRIMINAL MAIKOVSKIS

By Susan Birnbaum

NEW YORK, May 24 (JTA) -- Eleven Jewish organizations joined Tuesday with Brooklyn District Attorney Elizabeth Holtzman in urging Attorney General Edwin Meese to immediately designate a country of deportation for accused war criminal Boleslavs Maikovskis.

Maikovskis, who served during World War II as a police chief in Latvia, was found in 1984 to be deportable for persecutions under the Nazis and for lying to gain entry into the United States.

But though he has exhausted all avenues of appeal in the American justice system, Maikovskis still resides at his home in Mincola, N.Y.

Holtzman and representatives of the Jewish groups held a news conference on the case Monday on the steps of the federal courthouse in lower Manhattan. They distributed a letter they had sent to Meese registering "dismay over the Justice Department's failure for the past two years to designate a country of deportation" for Maikovskis.

Holtzman called Meese's failure to act "the equivalent of giving sanctions to Nazi war criminals in the United States."

The Justice Department was charged with finding a country of deportation after the U.S. Supreme Court refused, in June 1986, to review

Maikovskis' appeal of a September 1985 deportation ruling. Switzerland, the country of Maikovskis' choosing, rejected his request for asylum in 1984.

Maikovskis entered the United States in 1951 under the Displaced Persons Act of 1948, stating on his application form that between 1941 to 1944 he was a bookkeeper for the Latvian Railway Department. He did not mention his stint as chief of police in the Latvian town of Rezekne.

Latvian Villagers Murdered

The U.S. Court of Appeals found that in December 1941, Maikovskis "ordered his Latvian police to join with German soldiers in arresting all of the Audrini (Latvia) villagers, totaling 200 to 300 men, women and children."

Ten days later, says the letter, under Maikovskis' orders, "his policemen assisted the Germans in burning the village to the ground" and subsequently shooting dead all the Audrini villagers.

Elliot Welles, director of the B'nai B'rith Anti-Defamation League's Task Force on Nazi War Criminals, said at the news conference that Maikovskis was sentenced to death in absentia in Riga, Latvia, in 1965.

The Soviet Union, of which Latvia is now part, has requested Maikovskis' extradition, but no extradition treaty exists between the United States and the Soviet Union.

"It's very sad that the U.S. judicial system is protecting such a man," Welles said.

The ADL wrote a letter to the Justice Department more than a year ago saying that "the courts have spoken, and we are waiting for an answer from the Justice Department," said Ruti Teitel, ADL legal counsel.

Menachem Rosensaft, founder of the International Network of Children of Jewish Holocaust Survivors and chairman of the World Jewish Congress Commission on Human Rights, said it was "simply outrageous that we find ourselves here, year after year, making sure that this country does not give haven to Nazi war criminals."

'Reluctant Attorney General'

Rosensaft, also recently elected president of the Labor Zionist Alliance, said, "In case after case, we have had to drag the attorney general kicking and screaming. Ed Meese is the most reluctant attorney general since the creation of the Office of Special Investigations," which investigates alleged Nazi war criminals living in this country.

Meese "has been notoriously unresponsive" to the call to deport Nazi war criminals, Rosensaft charged.

The Justice Department could not immediately be reached for comment.

Christopher Simpson, in his recently published book, "Blowback," an account of America's post-war recruitment of former Nazis, writes that Maikovskis was on the payroll of organizations of Nazi-dominated Baltic emigre groups financed by the Central Intelligence Agency.

In addition to ADL, the International Network, the Labor Zionist Alliance and WJC, groups signing the letter included American Jewish Committee, American Jewish Congress, the Generation After, Holocaust Survivors Association USA, Jewish Community Relations Council of New York, the National Jewish Community Relations Advisory Council and the Simon Wiesenthal Center.

ASSAULT CHARGES FILED AGAINST WOMAN FROM BEITA WHO INJURED ARMED ESCORT By Gil Sedan

JERUSALEM, May 24 (JTA) -- Assault charges were filed in a Nablus military court Tuesday against a resident of Beita village who severely injured an armed Israeli escort during an April 6 confrontation between villagers and Jewish teen-agers on a Passover hike.

Munira Salah Daoud of Beita was accused of hurling a large stone at the head of Romam Aldubi with the intention of injuring him. She was also charged with assault and grievous bodily harm.

Aldubi, a resident of the nearby Jewish settlement of Eilon Moreh in the West Bank, was hospitalized in critical condition.

The incident at Beita during the Passover week became a national tragedy because of the death of Tirza Porat, a 15-year-old from Eilon Moreh, who was on the outing with her schoolmates. Initial reports that she was stoned to death by Arabs in Beita infuriated Jewish settlers.

But an Israel Defense Force investigation promptly established that Porat was killed by a bullet fired from Aldubi's army-issue M-16 rifle. The investigation also found that he fired after being struck on the head.

For that reason the police asked for murder charges against Daoud on grounds that her act was responsible for the shot that killed Porat. But the chief military prosecutor decided Monday not to link her in any way with the girl's death.

Daoud is a mother of three. Defense appeals to release her from custody will be heard in court Wednesday.

Aldubi shot and killed two Palestinian youths during the encounter at Beita. He was reportedly beaten unconscious by the mother and sister of one of them.

LABOR PARTY AND LIKUD SKIRMISH OVER DATE OF KNESSET ELECTIONS By Gil Sedan and Hugh Orgel

JERUSALEM, May 24 (JTA) -- Labor and Likud have begun skirmishing for advantage in arranging the upcoming Knesset elections.

Labor has introduced a bill to separate the Knesset and municipal elections, which traditionally are held concurrently.

The Laborites argue that voters should not be required to decide weighty national issues, such as the future of the administered territories, while mulling over such mundane matters as "sewage and garbage collection."

Labor would postpone the elections for mayors and town council members for a half year. Likud, which believes it would benefit from simultaneous national and local elections, countered by proposing that the Knesset balloting, scheduled for Nov. 1, be advanced to this August.

Labor balked, because a good many of its voters vacation abroad in August. Observers note that for some reason, that is not the case with Likud supporters. In recent years, Likud has relied increasingly on the working-class vote. Israel has no absentee ballots.

As the fight shaped up in the Knesset this week, Labor's proposals were supported by the leftist Mapam and Citizens Rights Movement, as well as the more centrist Shinui party.

The National Religious Party, whose vote is often pivotal when the two major parties are

deadlocked, said it would back Labor against an advanced election date.

NRP spokespersons said they wanted to see the Labor-Likud national unity government serve out its full term, which expires Nov. 1.

Likud, for its part, has been unable to rally its traditional right-wing allies. The ultra-Orthodox Shas party was expected to vote against the Likud initiative. The far right-wing Tehiya party has delayed a debate on the matter, though it has been in favor of early elections.

Knesset observers predicted Tuesday that unless the coalition partners reach a compromise, the elections will be held Nov. 1, as scheduled.

But separating them from local balloting is another matter. A motion to postpone municipal elections would have to go through an arduous parliamentary process, giving Likud ample opportunity to delay or kill the motion.

AJCONGRESS LEADER MEETS WITH SHAMIR, SAYS THEY ARE AT ODDS ON POLICIES By Gil Sedan

JERUSALEM, May 24 (JTA) -- The new president of the American Jewish Congress emerged from a meeting Tuesday with Premier Yitzhak Shamir saying his organization is still at odds with Israel government policies, particularly in the administered territories.

Robert Lifton told reporters that the AJCongress still had its differences with the Likud leader, but described their meeting as "cordial."

AJCongress was one of the few American Jewish groups to publicly criticize Defense Minister Yitzhak Rabin's policy of using "force, might, beatings" against Arab rioters in the administered territories.

The organization also released a policy statement last Sept. 21, endorsing an international conference for Middle East peace to serve as the framework for Arab-Israeli negotiations.

Then, as now, the issue sharply divided Israel's unity coalition government.

Lifton told reporters Tuesday that AJCongress still maintains that American Jewish organizations have the right to speak out on issues that are subject to public debate in Israel, such as the way the government handles the present Arab uprising in the administered territories.

"I think a lot of people in the American Jewish community have come to the conclusion that the status quo cannot continue," Lifton said in a Voice of Israel Radio interview.

He noted that recent polls taken among American Jews showed that a majority believes territorial compromise is consistent with Israel's security needs.

HUMAN ERROR BEHIND FIRES IN ISRAEL

JERUSALEM, May 24 (JTA) -- The Jewish National Fund said Monday that the forest and brush fires that did extensive damage in Israel during last week's heat wave were mainly the result of human negligence.

Soldiers and farmers were the chief culprits, according to JNF officials. At least two of the fires were caused by Israel Defense Force training exercises. In one case, flares misfired during a paratroop drill, the officials said.

The JNF offered its critique during a fire-fighting exercise to test the preparedness of its own brigades for the summer season, when forest fires are a serious threat.

CATHOLIC CHURCH CONDEMNS RISE OF ANTI-SEMITIC ACTIVITY IN ITALY

By Ruth E. Gruber

ROME, May 24 (JTA) -- The Catholic establishment has responded to charges by Rome's chief rabbi, Elzio Toaff, that the Catholic press shares responsibility with the general news media for the recent wave of anti-Semitic incidents in Italy.

The Conference of Italian Bishops, after meeting on the issue Friday, released a statement Monday expressing deep concern over the incidents. It condemned anti-Jewish attitudes and warned Italians to beware of anti-Semitic feelings.

It urged Catholics to differentiate between Jews and the acts and policies of the Israeli government, and to reject simplified or distorted accounts of events in the Middle East.

The statement was issued less than a week after Toaff held a news conference in Rome's main synagogue to call attention to the rising tide of anti-Semitism in Italy. The rabbi displayed bundles of hate mail and photographs of anti-Semitic graffiti. He also spoke of Jews being accosted on the streets of Rome and receiving threats of violence.

The chief rabbi attributed this phenomenon to what he claimed was biased and distorted reporting by both the secular and church news media of Israel's handling of the Palestinian unrest. According to Toaff, this biased reporting in the Catholic press drew no reaction from the Vatican.

Italian readers and television viewers appear to be holding Jews generally responsible for Israeli behavior. The bishops' statement took cognizance of that fact.

'Our Older Brothers'

It stated that "Catholics should consider Jews our older brothers in the faith of Abraham" and warned that distinctions had to be made between Jews and the politics and policies of the Israel government.

Catholics were urged to "distinguish between love for our Jewish brothers and support of political attitudes for which are responsible not the Jewish people in its entirety, nor even the entire Israeli population, but the government of the State of Israel or some political parties."

The statement went on to say that "the persistent tensions between Palestinians and Israelis continues to provoke serious worries in the Italian and thus Catholic milieu concerning the risk of distortion of information and consequent emotional reactions, which, in the extremist fringe, may explode into violence."

"We appeal to our community to pay proper and responsible attention in reading about and confronting the difficult Palestinian-Israeli situation, rejecting simplifications and partial or distorted interpretations and getting rid of dangerous equivocalities," the statement said.

It concluded with a call for a dialogue among the three major religions to attempt to bring peace to the Middle East.

JEWISH CEMETERY DESECRATED IN FRANCE

PARIS, May 24 (JTA) -- Youthful vandals desecrated about 60 tombstones in the Saare-Union Jewish cemetery in eastern France last weekend.

There are only five Jewish families in Saare-

Union. Only a month ago, 90 tombstones were desecrated in the nearby Weiterswiller Jewish cemetery. The police arrested three teen-agers in connection with that incident. They were released after receiving what they called "a scolding."

According to Saare-Union police, the latest vandalism may have been the work of very young teen-agers.

Some observers pointed out that Jean-Marie Le Pen, leader of the far right-wing National Front, received more votes in eastern France during his recent presidential bid than anywhere else in the country.

RABIN DENIES ISRAEL HELPED CHINA MODIFY MISSILE LATER SOLD TO SAUDIS

By Hugh Orgel

TEL AVIV, May 24 (JTA) -- Defense Minister Yitzhak Rabin has flatly denied an American press report that Israeli technicians helped the Chinese modify and improve an intermediate range ballistic missile subsequently sold to Saudi Arabia.

"Israelis were never partners in the transfer of technology or anything related to ground-to-ground missiles to China," Rabin was quoted by Israel Television as saying on Monday night.

He was responding to a report Monday in The Washington Post that Israelis helped the Chinese develop the weapon, improve the accuracy of its guidance system and modify it to carry conventional instead of nuclear warheads.

The missile, known as the CSS-2, has a range of more than 3,000 miles. Its presence in Saudi Arabia poses a threat to Israel.

The Saudis purchased the weapon from China without the knowledge of the United States, which has been the main supplier of arms to that country.

Rabin was quoted as saying that "if anyone is looking for an alibi about how the United States was taken by surprise by a friendly nation, Saudi Arabia, and is trying to pin the blame on Israel, let him look elsewhere."

The Washington Post said its sources were divided over whether the Israelis knew of the impending sale of the missile to Saudi Arabia when they were helping the Chinese improve it.

JOURNALIST DAVID SCHOENBRUN IS DEAD

By Elli Wohlgelehter

NEW YORK, May 24 (JTA) -- Veteran journalist David Schoenbrun, who worked for CBS News and was a war correspondent for the Jewish Telegraphic Agency, died Sunday in Manhattan. He was 73.

Schoenbrun worked for JTA's Overseas News Agency during World War II, before being recruited by Edward Murrow for CBS in 1947. As CBS's chief Paris correspondent, Schoenbrun reported on France for radio and television in the 1950s, leaving CBS in 1964.

Born in New York City in 1915, Schoenbrun in recent years was a free-lance broadcaster and television writer, and the author of half a dozen books, many about France.

Daniel Schorr, a former reporter for JTA and now a commentator for National Public Radio, said this of his longtime friend:

"David Schoenbrun reported in an age, alas now gone, where a man could speak with such authority about a country to which he was assigned. Talking to him about France was better than talking to a high French official."