

ANXIETY OVER JORDANIAN MOVES SPARKS RIOTING, CONFUSION IN THE WEST BANK

By Gil Sedan

JERUSALEM, Aug. 2 (JTA) -- One Palestinian was killed and four injured in riots in Nablus and the West Bank village of Dura, as anxiety among Palestinians grew over Jordan's stated intention to sever relations with the West Bank.

Although a general strike was called Tuesday to protest recent arrests and deportations of key figures in the 8-month-old uprising, conflicting reports from Amman increased the scope of the rioting.

Tensions have been high since Jordan's King Hussein indicated, in a televised speech Sunday night, his intention to accept the secession of the West Bank from Jordan and to give the Palestine Liberation Organization full responsibility for administering an independent Palestinian state.

In a symbolic move, Jordan Television stopped screening weather forecasts from the territories, and took off the air a program of interviews with West Bank personalities.

Anxiety was shared not only by residents of the territories, but by the leadership of the PLO, which plans to convene the Palestinian National Council within the next few weeks to discuss the new situation.

Palestinian notables reportedly wanted to go to Amman and beg the Jordanian monarch not to take any drastic measures against the population. According to the reports, however, the Palestinians were warned that the time was not ripe for such an overture to the king.

Fear Of Salary Losses

The most immediate concern in the territories is Hussein's decision to cut economic aid and a five-year, \$1.3 billion economic redevelopment plan for the region.

A cut in Jordanian aid could mean a loss of monthly salaries for thousands of civil servants. Public institutions, particularly municipalities, would be deprived of a major source of income, and residents may have to give up their Jordanian passports.

Under present political realities, in which the PLO and its emissaries are given no legitimacy by the Israelis, the cuts would mean greater dependence on the Israeli administration.

Jordanian Information Minister Hani el-Hassawneh tried to calm fears in the territories Tuesday by denying that Jordan wanted to pull away from the territories. Hassawneh described the Jordanian measures rather as a "political step which was designed to serve the interests of the Palestinians."

In an interview in the Kuwaiti newspaper El-Kabas, Hassawneh stressed that his government is determined to continue economic support to the territories. He said Jordan from now on would transfer funds for "victims of the intifada" through the PLO, instead of directly to bereaved families.

Hassawneh also promised that wage earners who had worked for the Jordanian government before the Six-Day War would continue to receive salaries, and the justice system would continue to function according to Jordanian law. Bridges over

the Jordan River would remain open, he said.

A senior source in Amman said Jordan would not revoke Jordanian passports, unless asked to do so by the Palestinians.

But despite the assurances, Palestinians expressed fears that the king would take further measures to implement the severing of relations.

Rioting In Nablus, Hebron

Tuesday was the second consecutive day of a general strike, called to protest the deportation of eight Palestinian activists Monday and the detention Sunday of Faisal al-Husseini, a key Palestinian activist who directed the Institute for Arab Studies in East Jerusalem.

Rioting began in Nablus, where an 18-year-old boy was shot dead when he allegedly tried to hurl a brick at Israeli soldiers from a rooftop near the Nablus casbah.

His death touched off further rioting, which was dispersed by soldiers who wounded two other youths.

In the village of Dura, south of Hebron, two Arab youths were wounded by Israeli fire when they tried to prevent Arab workers from leaving for work in Israel.

APPEALS FOR HUSSEINI'S RELEASE ISSUED IN FRANCE AND HOLLAND JTA Staff Report

Aug. 2 (JTA) -- The names of two prominent European political figures have been tossed into the ring on behalf of Palestinian activist Faisal al-Husseini, who was arrested Sunday in Jerusalem and placed in administrative detention for six months.

In Paris, Marie-Claire Mendes-France, widow of France's late Jewish Premier Pierre Mendes-France, personally issued a statement Tuesday asking for Hussein's release.

In Amsterdam, the dovish Israeli group Peace Now petitioned Dutch Premier Ruud Lubbers to use his influence with Israeli authorities to release Hussein. Lubbers just returned from a trip to Israel during which he toured the Israeli-administered territories and spoke to Palestinians and representatives of Peace Now about conditions there.

Lubbers was accompanied on his trip by Dutch Foreign Minister Hans van den Broek. While Lubbers was meeting with Peace Now representatives, van den Broek was holding meetings with 18 private Palestinians, including Hussein.

Lubbers was on vacation when the petition was sent to him, and therefore has not replied to the request.

Mendes-France, who heads a committee for Israeli-Palestinian understanding and who is highly popular in French intellectual circles, cabled Israeli Foreign Minister Shimon Peres asking for Hussein's release.

"His liberation would be a sign of Israel's desire for peace," Mendes-France wrote, concluding, "I appeal to your conscience."

In France, intellectual circles have started circulating a petition in Hussein's favor that claims that if Israel had any proof against the Palestinian activist, he would have been brought

before a court of justice, rather than placed in administrative detention.

Hussein, arrested in pre-dawn hours Sunday, was described by Israeli authorities as a senior activist in Al Fatah, the military wing of the Palestine Liberation Organization.

Hussein has been arrested and held in administrative detention several times before, but reportedly has never been charged with anything. He is considered a senior proponent of West Bank Palestinian nationalism and is widely viewed as the senior PLO representative in the territories.

It was Hussein who met last year with Knesset member Moshe Amirav of the Likud bloc's Herut wing. Together they reportedly worked out a document on the governance of the West Bank. When news of the meeting became public, Amirav was drummed out of the party.

(Contributing to this report were JTA correspondents Edwin Eytan in Paris and Henrietta Boas in Amsterdam.)

\$2.3 MILLION PAID IN DAMAGES

By Cathrine Gerson

JERUSALEM, Aug. 2 (JTA) -- The costs of compensation for damage due to the Palestinian uprising have emptied the coffers of the Israeli Finance Ministry's compensation fund.

The ministry reports that since the so-called "intifada" began last Dec. 9, a total of about \$2.3 million has been paid to citizens whose property was damaged as a result of the disturbances in the Israeli-administered territories.

Damages calculated in this figure includes those caused by rocks thrown at automobiles, homes or businesses and acts of arson.

In the last three months alone, the cost of reimbursing Israelis for intifada-caused damage has been \$1.66 million.

These new financial drains only add to other financial losses incurred because of the uprising, including diminished income from tourism, export and other costs.

The compensation is paid out in accordance with the law pertaining to the victims of hostile activities.

MOROCCAN KING EXPRESSES DISMAY OVER DUKAKIS CAMPAIGN PROMISES

By Edwin Eytan

PARIS, Aug. 2 (JTA) -- King Hassan of Morocco expressed the hope Tuesday that Democratic presidential nominee Michael Dukakis "will have a lapse of memory should he be elected."

The monarch, in an interview with Le Monde, said, "I understand Mr. Dukakis' electoral considerations," but added that he hoped the Massachusetts governor, if elected president, would forget some of his electoral promises concerning the Middle East.

Dukakis has expressed unqualified support for Israel and has rejected a role for the Palestine Liberation Organization in peace negotiations until the PLO renounces terrorism and accepts Israel's right to exist under U.N. Security Council Resolutions 242 and 338.

The Democratic Party also rejected a platform plank at its recent national convention pledging support for a Palestinian homeland.

Hassan, who last year met with Israel's Foreign Minister Shimon Peres in Rabat, said in the interview that he fully backs the PLO as the representative of the Palestinians.

LAST-MINUTE TREASURY BAILOUT AVERTS MAGEN DAVID ADOM STRIKE By Hugh Orgel

TEL AVIV, Aug. 2 (JTA) -- A strike by the Magen David Adom was called off at the last moment Tuesday, after the Finance Ministry paid more than a half million dollars to the MDA management to enable it to pay July salaries.

The money was transferred to the MDA, Israel's first-aid and paramedic organization, literally a minute or two before noon, the time at which the organization's employees said they would walk off their jobs, if their salaries were not paid.

The strike would have halted ambulance services and closed blood banks and first aid stations nationwide.

The MDA workers used a similar tactic last month, when they halted all services for 36 hours, because of failure to pay their June salaries. Israelis customarily receive paychecks on the first day of each month for the previous month.

The Health Ministry protested the fact that the Treasury paid the money directly to the MDA management and then announced it was debiting the sum against the Health Ministry budget.

Health Minister Shoshana Arbeli-Almoslino, who has been feuding with Finance Minister Moshe Nissim over the health budget for some time now, protested that her ministry's budget is earmarked for other specific purposes, including nurses' salaries. She said the MDA budget should be a separate item for the Treasury.

Nissim has claimed that the MDA is inefficient and that its budget should not be covered until it dismisses many employees and reduces the number of first-aid stations by consolidating neighboring stations.

SHAMIR BACKS 'MASSIVE' JEWISH SETTLEMENT OF EAST JERUSALEM By Cathrine Gerson

JERUSALEM, Aug. 2 (JTA) -- Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir met Monday with members of a zealous Jewish nationalist group and told them "East Jerusalem should be massively settled with Jews."

Shamir told members of the Temple Mount Faithful that he respected the group's struggle and that "there is no disputing the need to preserve Jerusalem's safety and welfare, and its status as Israel's capital."

The premier added that actions to prevent attacks against Jews in the Old City must be stepped up, and that Jewish settlement of heavily Arab East Jerusalem should be "part of our settlement policy in this country."

The Temple Mount Faithful were among Jewish worshippers prevented from staging demonstrations in Jerusalem's Old City on Tisha B'Av. Police barred Jews from the Temple Mount on the holiday, where crowds of Arab worshippers also marked the first day of the Moslem feast of Id el-Adha.

Gershon Salomon, spokesman for the Jewish group, complained about the police action and expressed concern for the future of the Temple Mount and Jerusalem.

Shamir said that while he understood the group's struggle, "it must be conducted within the framework of the law. I am sure that many of your demands will be fulfilled in coming years. The issue of Jerusalem is uppermost in our mind."

U.S. JEWISH POPULATION UP SLIGHTLY; GROWTH REPORTED IN SOUTH AND WEST

NEW YORK, Aug. 2 (JTA) -- The Jewish population in the United States grew slightly last year, though world Jewry showed "zero population growth," according to figures published this week in the 1988 American Jewish Yearbook.

The yearbook, published by the American Jewish Committee, estimates there were 5.94 million Jews in the United States in 1987, representing 2.5 percent of the overall U.S. population.

The most significant trend confirmed by the updated figures is the continuing growth of the Jewish populations in the Sun Belt and West Coast regions of the country.

The largest Jewish population gain in absolute numbers over 1986 was reported in California's Bay Area, where the Jewish population increase in San Francisco, Oakland, San Jose and vicinity exceeded 50,000. Florida reported an increase in its Jewish population estimate of more than 30,000.

Symbolic of the South and West's growth was the "discovery" of six new Jewish communities in the regions. Communities reporting a Jewish population for the first time were Fairfield and Chico, Calif.; Naples, Pasco County and Stuart-Port St. Lucie, Fla.; and Medford, Ore.

Conversely, 15 states cited a drop in Jewish population since 1986. New York state reported the greatest absolute decline, with a loss of nearly 20,000 Jews. The greatest relative loss occurred in Mississippi, where the Jewish population fell from 3,005 to 2,400, a 20 percent loss.

Still, New York remained the state with the highest Jewish concentration, with 1,891,400 Jews, comprising 10.6 percent of its total population. New Jersey followed with 427,000 Jews, or 5.7 percent of the state's total population.

Massachusetts, which last year tied Florida for the third-place spot in percentage terms, this year edged out Florida and Maryland, with an estimated 286,600 Jews, or 4.9 percent of its total population. The District of Columbia, with 25,400 Jews, or 4.0 percent, had the fifth highest concentration of Jews.

Top 10 States

The top 10 states in terms of absolute number of Jews were New York, California (868,200, or 3.3 percent), Florida (549,200, or 4.8 percent), New Jersey, Pennsylvania (347,000, or 2.9 percent), Massachusetts, Illinois (259,800, or 2.2 percent), Maryland (209,700, or 4.8 percent), Ohio (136,000, or 1.3 percent) and Connecticut (113,300, or 3.6 percent).

Another trend noted by the study is the increase of Jewish population in college towns, state capitals, resort areas and "exurbs" -- small towns and rural areas just beyond the traditional boundaries of metropolitan areas.

The figures are contained in an article by Dr. Barry Kosmin, Dr. Paul Ritterband and Jeffrey Scheckner of the North American Jewish Data Bank.

The Data Bank, a joint effort of the Council of Jewish Federations and the City University of New York, derives its findings from local Jewish federation studies, United Jewish Appeal field reports and, occasionally, local rabbis and Jewish community leaders.

The authors warn that "population estimate is not an exact science," especially since there has never been a question on religion or ethnicity

in a U.S. census.

Among the methods used by communities to determine Jewish population are sample surveys, counting the number of children absent from school on Yom Kippur or the number of recognizable Jewish last names. Researchers also interpret census data on countries of origin, taking into account the massive Jewish emigration of the early part of the 20th century.

Worldwide Population

The American Jewish Yearbook also includes estimates of the world's Jewish population as of 1986. According to an article by U.O. Schmeltz and Sergio DellaPergola of Hebrew University, the estimated worldwide Jewish population is slightly below 13 million.

About half of the world's Jews live in the Americas, with 46 percent in North America. Twenty-one percent live in Europe, including the Asian territories of the Soviet Union and Turkey.

Twenty-eight percent live in Asia, nearly all of them in Israel. The study puts the number of Jews in Israel at 3,562,500 at the end of 1986, an increase of 1.3 percent annually over 1984.

The increases in Israel, however, are offset by demographic losses in the Diaspora. "Despite all the imperfections in the estimates, it is clear that world Jewry is in the state of 'zero population growth,'" write Schmeltz and DellaPergola.

'TEMPTATION' PROTEST LEADER LINKED TO JEWS FOR JESUS

By Tom Tugend

LOS ANGELES, Aug. 2 (JTA) -- Rev. Robert L. Hymers, the head of the Baptist Tabernacle of Los Angeles who has been instrumental in leading the anti-Semitic-tinged protests surrounding Universal Pictures' "The Last Temptation of Christ," has been running an active outreach conversion program targeting Jews, while also maintaining close links with Jews for Jesus.

In the July 29 issue of the Los Angeles Jewish Journal, reporter Leo Noonan, who interviewed Hymers at length, writes that the Baptist clergyman was married six years ago by Moshe Rosen, leader of Jews for Jesus, an organization Hymers admitted supporting financially.

Hymers gained sudden national prominence when he staged an updated Passion Play July 20 outside the home of Lew Wasserman, chairman of MCA, which owns Universal, charging him with responsibility for financing "Last Temptation."

During the street demonstration, Hymers proclaimed that "these Jewish producers with a lot of money are taking a swipe at our religion," while a dozen followers carried signs reading "Wasserman Fans Anti-Semitism" and "Wasserman Endangers Israel."

Rabbi Ben Zion Kravits, executive director of Jews for Judaism who has collected news reports on the 47-year-old clergyman over the years, said that Hymers used to hand out missionary fliers to Jewish UCLA students.

Kravits said that Hymers' support of Jews for Jesus has been detailed in a book on cults by Ronald Enroth of Westmont College, a small Christian institution.

Hymers and the Rev. Jerry Falwell, along with some other evangelicals and fundamentalists, maintain that the film -- which none of them has seen -- blasphemes Jesus, by portraying him as an indecisive man who has sex with Mary Magdalene in a dream sequence.

**HUNGARIAN JEWRY:
IN A TOWN SOUTH OF BUDAPEST,
A MOST BEAUTIFUL SYNAGOGUE
(Part 4 Of A Series)
By Susan Birnbaum**

SZEGED, Hungary, Aug. 2 (JTA) -- The road that leads south from Budapest is flat and dusty, with nary a promise that anything will arrive to catch the traveler's eye. But there is a feeling, like a magnet, of being pulled to Szeged.

Arriving in this city on the river Tisza, one pulls into an old square with graceful, variously colored municipal buildings and large outdoor cafes shaped neatly around a park.

As one waits for a cold drink, usually Schweppes, a casual question is thrown to the waiter. "Is there a Jewish synagogue here?"

"Oh, yes," the waiter shoots back immediately, "the biggest Jewish church in Europe, with a large basilica."

The reporter doesn't tell the waiter that Jewish synagogues aren't called churches, and that they don't have basilicas.

We leave and walk around the corner, where something so tall and so magnificent looms that one has to catch one's breath. It is a basilica, and on top, high in the sky, is a Magen David.

There are few sights in this world that bring forth instant gasps and tears. The synagogue at Szeged is one of these, a blend of the outstandingly beautiful and the overwhelmingly sad.

In Budapest, they say the Dohany Street Synagogue is the biggest. Let them argue. The synagogue in Szeged is perhaps the most beautiful synagogue in the world.

This synagogue on Josika Street has gables, buttresses, fleur-de-lis and trefoil stained-glass windows that rival those of any grand cathedral.

Its lofty dome, topped by a crown, a minaret and a Star of David, is repeated at nearly every peak and corner, like a tree gone wild, sending duplicate shoots in every direction.

Overgrown Weeds

This masterpiece sits silently now, surrounded by a forlorn yard a full city block long and wide. It is removed from the street by a high fence of iron poles, through which can be seen overgrown weeds amidst apple and almond trees, and the broken window panes of the synagogue itself, a desolate, deserted bride.

The Hungarian interpreter, Andrea, and the taxi driver, Laci, both non-Jews, stand transfixed, tears welling in their eyes. In all their years in Budapest, they have never seen the synagogue, nor have they heard of it.

Around the corner, at the entrance, an old man in a hat waits on the steps of the synagogue's portico to greet visitors. Within the enclosed court, the walls are marble, and on these walls, all around, are engraved in gold the names of the nearly 5,000 Jews who left and never returned.

The man, Marton Klein, sells postcards with a beautiful picture of the synagogue. He asks six forints for each card, but, seeing the tears, he waves his hand gently and says "put your money away." He fills the six hands with cards while answering the questions.

The synagogue was built between the years 1900 and 1903, designed by Lipot Baumhorn, who designed five synagogues: in Mako, Szolnok, Vasarhely, Szabadka and here in Szeged. This is the grandest of all.

The synagogue in Mako was similar, but smaller, Klein says, and made of red bricks. It was demolished in 1969.

The 5,000 Jews who once lived in this town engaged in "all kinds of work," before the Nazis took them away. Only 300 returned.

But wouldn't we like to see the inside now? Klein asks. Not quite sure we are ready yet, we nod hesitantly and enter.

The Interior Silences

Although the lofty exterior moves one to tears, the interior silences. In the front, at the bimah, before the ark, the exterior has been duplicated and reduplicated, like an Escher print. It was designed under the direction of Immanuel Loew.

Face-front, the full facade of the synagogue is redone in gold, up to its cupola-basilica, this time like open lace, capped, as outside, with a crown, and then a tall minaret topped with the Jewish star.

On the bimah are six seven-branch candelabras on three steps. The ceiling above the bimah is arched, embossed in gold on green, with the words, "Love thy neighbor as thyself" written in Hebrew and Hungarian. On each side are David's psalms.

On the back ceiling, by the entrance, is a frieze of the Creation, a copy of Michelangelo's Sistine Chapel ceiling.

And above all this is the coup de grace, the interior of the basilica, a sky-blue dome filled with gold stars. The dome is divided evenly by 24 columns, one for each hour of the day.

Inside the dome, a dove who had found its way in flies around.

Klein asks if we want to hear the acoustics, then proceeds to the exact center, beneath the dome, and sings, a cappella, two pieces from the Rosh Hashanah service. His voice is unflinching, like that of a young man. Klein is 76.

He remembers the 5,000 Jews who used to attend the Szeged synagogue. Now 15 men and 15 women come every Shabbat, but for such small numbers they don't open the synagogue, Klein says, they pray "somewhere else."

From Shul To Concert Hall

Klein says the city has bought the synagogue and will turn it into a concert hall. Later, we learn something kinder, that a Jew from Szeged now living in Florida has donated \$100,000 to the synagogue, to be given through the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee.

The JDC has made a "deal" with the government. They may hold concerts there, so that people can come to see the beautiful synagogue, on condition that it remain a synagogue in perpetuity.

Klein was in two labor camps during the war. Although he does not know about the ceremony to be held in Budapest for the new Holocaust memorial, Klein says he's "not angry or hurt that (he's) not invited to these places," that he loves his religion and he loves to sing.

Klein also remembers his mother and sister, who went to the gas chamber in Mako, Hungary. His wife and son died three years ago. He has a daughter in Szeged.

If he could have one wish, the reporter asks Klein, what would it be?

"I wish that they would have demolished the synagogue and left the people."

(Next: A Reporter's Notebook)