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TWO YOUTHS ARRESTED FOR ARSON AND DESECRATION OF BROOKLYN SHUL

By William Saphire

NEW YORK, Sept. 18 (JTA) -- Two youngsters, one 12 and the other 15 years old, were taken into custody early Sunday morning on suspicion of arson and vandalism against a Brooklyn synagogue.

Orthodox Congregation Rabbinical Institute Sharai Torah in the Midwood section was broken into about midnight Saturday by intruders who set a series of fires around the building and spray-painted 15 swastikas and obscenities on the walls.

Five and probably all six of the congregation's Torah scrolls were desecrated and burned. One may be missing.

The incident evoked memories of Nazi attacks on synagogues in Germany in the 1930s. It was swiftly denounced by national and local Jewish community leaders and city officials, including Mayor Edward Koch and Police Commissioner Benjamin Ward.

Rabbi Max Schreier, president of the Rabbinical Council of America and religious leader of the Avenue N Jewish Center, also in the Midwood section, declared, "This terrible act of ruthless vandalism, the likes of which have not been seen since the Holocaust, comes as a shock to a Jewish community which has tried to foster good community relations."

"It shows us the need for vigilance to safeguard religious freedom in this country," Schreier said.

A Vicious Attack

Police said the two suspects have been released in custody of their parents, pending an appearance in family court. Their identities were not revealed because of their age. The police would not say whether the youngsters were residents of the neighborhood or outsiders.

Rabbi Hillel David, religious leader of the congregation, could not be reached Sunday for comment.

The attack on the synagogue was ferocious, according to police and others at the scene. The charred remains of the Torah scrolls indicate they were pulled out of the cedar-paneled Ark, their ornamented velvet coverings ripped off and the scrolls unrolled on the floor, stamped on and set afire.

Fires were set on the main floor and spread to the second floor of the two attached buildings, once private residences which contain the sanctuary, classrooms and other facilities of the congregation.

No immediate estimate of the damage was available. There were conflicting accounts. One said the fire caused extensive interior structural damage. Another said it did little damage to the building, which has been closed.

According to some members of the congregation, the destroyed Torah scrolls represent a loss of \$25,000 each. City Councilman Noah Deer, who represents the district, said funeral services for the Torahs would be held Sunday afternoon. According to Jewish tradition, desecrated scrolls must be placed in a coffin and buried.

The attack on the synagogue, only a few

days before Yom Kippur, sent shock waves through the Jewish community in Midwood and the entire city.

Because a house of worship was the target, the attack was declared a bias incident, and a special police and fire department task force was set up to conduct the investigation.

Police said they were not aware of any previous incidents in the quiet middle-class neighborhood, which is heavily populated by Jews. But one member of the congregation claimed that unidentified people have pelted the synagogue buildings with eggs.

The fact that the synagogue buildings resemble two family homes common to the block and have no signs indicating they are houses of worship led some residents to believe the perpetrators are local people.

REPUBLICANS CALL ON DUKAKIS TO REMOVE PRO-ARAB DNC MEMBERS

By Howard Rosenberg

WASHINGTON, Sept. 18 (JTA) -- Three Republican lawmakers on Friday called on Democratic presidential nominee Michael Dukakis to remove three pro-Palestinian members of the Democratic National Committee.

Reps. Benjamin Gilman (R-N.Y.) and John Miller (R-Wash.), who are Jewish, and Rep. Norman Lent (R-N.Y.) asked Dukakis to "act at once to dismiss" the three. They are:

- The Rev. Willie Barrow, executive director of Operation PUSH, the Chicago-based organization founded by the Rev. Jesse Jackson. Barrow is considered a supporter of Nation of Islam leader Louis Farrakhan, who has made several disparaging remarks about Jews and Judaism.

- Robert Farrell, a Los Angeles city councilman, who in 1986 said that "Israel is treating West Bank Arabs the same way the Nazis treated European Jews."

- Ruth Ann Skaff of Houston, a spokeswoman for the pro-Palestinian Ad Hoc Committee on Lebanon.

The three were among ten Jackson supporters added to the Democratic National Committee as part of a unity agreement between Jackson and Dukakis at the start the Democratic National Convention in July.

'Pathetic' Charges

The presence of the three "raises questions about Dukakis' judgment and his submission to Jesse Jackson," the lawmakers said in a statement. "If Jackson has this much influence now, what kind of influence will he have in a Dukakis White House?"

Hyman Bookbinder, special adviser to the Dukakis campaign on the Middle East, human rights and the underprivileged, called the lawmakers' charges "pathetic."

"There is just no comparison between the two things they are trying to make similar," Bookbinder said.

He was referring to the resignations last week of allegedly anti-Jewish members of Vice President George Bush's Coalition of Ethnic Nationalities, an organ of the Republican nominee's presidential campaign.

TWO ARABS KILLED, AS AUTHORITIES GET TOUGH ON RADICAL ISLAMIC GROUP

By Gil Sedan

JERUSALEM, Sept. 18 (JTA) -- Two Palestinians were killed and at least 30 were wounded Saturday in one of the worst days of violence in the administered territories in weeks.

A Jewish settler from the West Bank was critically injured Friday during a rock-throwing melee. Another settler was hospitalized in Jerusalem on Saturday, after being struck by a gasoline bomb in Ramallah.

The Israel Defense Force arrested more than 100 Palestinians in massive sweeps through West Bank towns and refugee camps over the weekend.

About 400,000 Palestinians were under curfew, including half the residents of the Gaza Strip. Large areas of the West Bank were barred to journalists.

The IDF mounted its drive against Palestinian activists and local committees, which, according to Israelis, make up the unified underground command of the uprising. The intifada, as it is called, is now in its 10th month and shows no signs of abating.

But the situation has been complicated by the emergence of a new organization of Islamic fundamentalists in the territories, known as Hamas. The word means "zeal" and is an acronym for the Movement of Islamic Resistance.

Hamas is seen as a threat to the secular Palestine Liberation Organization, which has commanded the loyalty of most Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza Strip until now.

Challenging PLO Leadership

Its attitude toward Israel is uncompromising. It rejects any form of negotiation aimed at resolving the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and holds that all of Palestine, including the State of Israel, is land entrusted by God to Moslems.

Security sources said they had seized membership and contribution lists of the Islamic Resistance Movement during a week-long sweep through the West Bank town of Kalkilya earlier this month.

Video and audio cassettes were found, some of them produced in the Gaza Strip and in the Israeli Arab town of Umm el-Fahm.

The Islamic movement appears to be growing in strength. It is challenging the PLO for leadership of the uprising, exposing the first visible splits within the nationalist command.

In recent weeks, Hamas has called general strikes and protests on certain days. Previously, only the PLO issued calls for strikes and civil disobedience.

The Moslem fundamentalists have demonstrated their influence by the fact that the general population has not dared to disobey their orders. Strikes called by the PLO often have been less than fully effective.

There was a rare demonstration of unity on Saturday, however, when both Hamas and the PLO called a general strike and demonstrations. The occasion was the sixth anniversary of the massacres in the Sabra and Shatila refugee camps near Beirut.

During the violence that ensued, Imad Arkawi, 18, was killed by the IDF in Jenin, and Munjid Sarhan, 26, was killed in Lubban Sharkiya village, located between Ramallah and Nablus.

Heavy rioting was reported near Ramallah, in Kaikilya and in the Ein Beit Elma refugee camp.

The scenes were reminiscent of the early days of the uprising last year. Streets were blockaded, tires were burned and crowds of men, women and children pelted soldiers with stones.

Troops fired rubber bullets and tear gas to disperse the rioters. Eventually they opened fire with live ammunition.

Vardi Bamberger, 25, of Pesagot, a West Bank Jewish settlement near Ramallah, sustained serious head injuries when her car was hit by a barrage of rocks Friday afternoon.

She was traveling from Beersheba to Pesagot. The incident occurred as the car passed near Dhahiriya, about 20 miles south of Hebron.

Bamberger's husband, Shuki, who was driving, sped to a local military post from where the woman was rushed to Beersheba hospital. She underwent surgery for a fractured skull. Her condition was reported later to be improved.

She was attacked with rocks at the same site five years ago while riding with Ester Ohana of Beit She'an. Ohana was killed.

Israeli authorities, meanwhile, have banned distribution of the East Jerusalem Arabic daily Al-Fajr in the administered territories for 45 days. The ban was applied after the paper published a cartoon likening Zionism to Nazism. The ban does not apply to East Jerusalem or to Israel proper.

JEWISH GROUPS DEPLORE U.S. INQUIRY INTO CONDITIONS OF ARAB WORKERS

NEW YORK, Sept. 18 (JTA) -- An umbrella group of U.S. Jewish organizations has issued a statement expressing outrage at the decision of U.S. Trade Representative Clayton Yeutter to investigate Israel's treatment of Palestinian laborers.

The statement was issued in Washington on Friday by the Israel Task Force of the National Jewish Community Relations Advisory Council, which represents 11 national organizations and 114 community relations councils.

The task force criticized Yeutter for launching the investigation in response to a request from the American-Arab Anti-Discrimination Committee.

If Israel is found to have violated internationally recognized standards in its treatment of Palestinian workers, it could lose its ability to export products duty-free to the United States under the Generalized System of Preferences program.

The NJCRAC task force noted that this issue has been investigated for more than a decade by internationally respected organizations, including the International Labor Organization.

None of these organizations has ever found any basis in the allegations made by the American-Arab Anti-Discrimination Committee.

"It is incomprehensible to us how a democratic country such as Israel, with a strong tradition of trade union activity, should be put on a list along with countries that do not permit or severely restrict labor movements," said Michael Pelavin, national chairman of the NJCRAC.

The American-Arab group accused Israel of impinging on the rights of Palestinian workers to organize, to work under basic standards of health and safety, and to earn a reasonable minimum wage.

The NJCRAC statement expressed confidence that as the investigation goes forward, Israel would be vindicated. The Jewish Labor Committee will testify on behalf of NJCRAC.

SHULTZ SPEECH SEEN BY LIKUD AS BID TO BOOST LABOR'S STANDING

By Gil Sedan

JERUSALEM, Sept. 18 (JTA) -- Likud ministers urged U.S. Secretary of State George Shultz over the weekend of trying to influence the outcome of Israel's elections, to be held Nov. 1.

But the ministers declined to be quoted directly, and Premier Yitzhak Shamir made clear that he does not share that view.

They were reacting to a speech Shultz made Friday at a conference sponsored by the Washington Institute for Near East Policy, a research and study center.

Shultz firmly opposed a Palestinian state in the West Bank and Gaza Strip, but insisted that Israel must make territorial concessions to end the conflict.

In Shamir's opinion, Shultz's speech was intended to guide the next American administration on Middle East policy. Avi Pazner, Shamir's media adviser and spokesman, said Shultz's remarks simply reiterated the American views expressed in the peace plan Shultz has been trying to sell to both sides since last year.

With respect to the secretary's warning against right-wing proposals to "transfer" the Arab population from the Israeli-administered territories, the prime minister's spokesman said the government of Israel also opposes that idea.

Peres Finds Speech Constructive

Foreign Minister Shimon Peres, who heads the Labor Alignment, had a more positive reaction to Shultz's speech. He described it as "very responsible and constructive."

Peres noted that Shultz explicitly said there was no place for a Palestinian state and that there would be no return to Israel's pre-1967 borders. It was also important that the United States clarified its position against transfer of the Arab population, the foreign minister said.

He said he believed the speech did not only reflect Shultz's views, but was an indication of the positions that will be taken by the next administration, whether Democratic or Republican.

Shultz's remarks were no departure from past statements of American policy. But they were the first comprehensive update since King Hussein of Jordan divorced himself of responsibility for the Palestinians in the West Bank.

The secretary of state warned that the status of the territories could not be determined by unilateral acts of either Arabs or Israelis.

"A declaration of independent Palestinian statehood or government in exile would be such a unilateral act," Shultz stated.

He also said the latest proposal by Palestine Liberation Organization chief Yasir Arafat that Israel be made to return to the borders of the partition plan adopted by the U.N. General Assembly in November 1947, was out of the question.

"Israel will never negotiate from or return to the lines of partition," Shultz said. "But it must be prepared to withdraw, as Resolution 242 says, 'from territories occupied in the recent conflict.'"

The secretary said Israel must help the Palestinians achieve "rapid control" over their own affairs in the territories. "Israel must find a way to respond to expressions of Palestinian grievances," he said.

SHULTZ URGED TO LOBBY ALLIES TO REPEAL ZIONISM RESOLUTION

By Howard Rosenberg

WASHINGTON, Sept. 18 (JTA) -- Jewish leaders urged Secretary of State George Shultz on Friday to enlist the support of U.S. allies in working for the repeal of the 1975 U.N. General Assembly resolution equating Zionism with racism.

Preparing for the General Assembly session which begins Tuesday, Morris Abram, chairman of the National Conference on Soviet Jewry, and nine other Jewish leaders met with Shultz to raise their concerns prior to Shultz's meetings with Soviet Foreign Minister Eduard Shevardnadze here on Sept. 22 and 23.

"We urged him (Shultz) to make demarches to the various capitals with which we are allied to get them to support the repeal," said Abram, after the 30-minute meeting with Shultz at the State Department.

On the issue of Soviet Jewry, the group urged Shultz to focus on four individual cases: Boris Chernobitsky, Vladimir Kislik, Evgeny Lein and Roald Zelichonok.

There is also a fifth Soviet Jew, Dmitri Schiglik, who is a former prisoner but does not have a pending visa application, said Myrna Shinbaum, NCSJ national director, who was at the meeting.

Shultz should then ask for the release of those refuseniks waiting 12 years or more, and then the emigration of all others who wish to leave, said Abram, who also chairs the Conference of Presidents of Major American Jewish Organizations.

As of late Friday, Shinbaum had not received a visa for the Fourth General Chautauqua Conference on U.S.-Soviet Relations being held Sept. 19 to 23 in Tbilisi, in the Soviet Republic of Georgia.

At the State Department Friday, spokesman Charles Redman said, "we still do not have any reason as to why the delay."

Shinbaum, representing Soviet Jewry professionals at the conference, is scheduled to speak at a plenary session discussing religion, along with Daniel Bratton, Chautauqua president.

Others waiting for a visa are a Radio Liberty correspondent and a human rights attorney.

Also attending the meeting were Shoshana Cardin, Council of Jewish Federations; Carmela Kalmanson, Hadassah; Morton Kornreich, United Jewish Appeal; Ivan Novick, Zionist Organization of America; Alan Pesky, Coalition to Free Soviet Jews; Malcolm Hoehnlein, Conference of Presidents; and Mark Levin and Rabbi David Hill of the NCSJ.

THREE INFILTRATORS THWARTED

By Hugh Orgel

TEL AVIV, Sept. 18 (JTA) -- Three Palestinian terrorists were killed Friday in a clash with an Israel Defense Force patrol in the southern Lebanon security zone.

The encounter occurred on the northern Har Dov slopes of Mt. Hermon, an area where the IDF has standing orders to shoot anything that moves. There were no Israeli casualties.

According to the IDF, documents found on the bodies indicated the terrorists were affiliated with Al Fatah, the military wing of the Palestine Liberation Organization led by Yasir Arafat.

The gang, an IDF officer said, "was on its way to carry out an action against Israel."

SECURITY DISPUTE MAY DELAY TAKEOFF OF DIRECT HUNGARY-ISRAEL FLIGHTS

By Hugh Orgel

TEL AVIV, Sept. 18 (JTA) -- A dispute between El Al and Hungary's Malev airlines over airport security may delay the inauguration of direct airline service between the two countries.

A Malev plane had been scheduled to depart for Israel Monday, and an El Al flight had been scheduled for later in the week.

A Malev delegation is due in Israel later this week to discuss the dispute and examine the extremely strict measures demanded by Israel to ensure the safety of passengers, crew and aircraft.

According to Malev circles, the dispute involves the security arrangements for passengers leaving Budapest aboard Malev flights.

The Israelis' complaints were unclear, although they may involve security checks on the ground or the use of "shotgun-riders," or security personnel, who travel aboard the aircraft.

Similar disputes have surfaced in the past regarding service between Israel and both Romania and Poland. Flights to Romania were suspended at one time because of the security issue.

Some 150 passengers are booked for the first Malev flight to Israel.

If the dispute persists and flights are canceled or postponed, El Al will make arrangements to fly Hungary-bound passengers to a destination in Europe, where they can make connecting flights to Budapest.

MONTREAL NEWSPAPER'S PORTRAYAL OF HASIDIM SEEN AS ANTI-SEMITIC

By Michael Solomon

MONTREAL, Sept. 18 (JTA) -- Opposition to a local Hasidic community's attempts to build a second synagogue in the largely French-Canadian Outremont neighborhood of Montreal has led to charges of anti-Semitism against a major newspaper.

La Presse, the largest French language newspaper in North America, was accused of playing to racial prejudices and fears in a front-page story Sept. 13, headlined "Outremont Discovers a Jewish Problem."

The article, written by Roch Cote, defined the problem less in terms of the so far unsuccessful attempts by the Hasidim to obtain a zoning variance than by their appearance and large families.

Use of the phrase "Jewish problem," moreover, has ugly connotations for Jews here because of its Nazi coinage in the 1930s. Michael Crelinson, executive director of the Canadian Jewish Congress, called the article "the most serious example of hostility against Jews in years."

Cote was quoted later as saying he described the situation as a "Jewish problem" in order to inject a touch of "humor into an important local story." The story was accompanied by color photos of Hasidic women and children.

Cote described the Hasidic Jews as "this bizarre minority with its men in pigtailed, all in black like bogeymen, its women dressed like onions."

"Now Outremont is discovering that its minority has made little ones and with their families of often 10 or more -- they really make babies these peoples -- they will keep taking up more space," he wrote.

HIGH HOLIDAY FEVER GRIPS PARISIAN JEWISH QUARTER

PARIS, Sept. 18 (JTA) -- High Holiday fever has gripped the Rue des Rosiers, the main street of the old Jewish quarter, in the heart of the French capital.

Brisk sales of lulavim, etrogim and besamim were reported Sunday evening in the quarter, as Jews prepared for the joyous Sukkot holiday that follows this week's somber observance of Yom Kippur.

The lulav, a green bouquet of willow, palm and myrtle branches, and the etrog, a lemon-like fruit, are used in the synagogue service during Sukkot. Besamim are fragrant spices sniffed at the conclusion of Jewish holidays.

On the sidewalks of the narrow street, Lubavitch Hasidim were calling the attention of passers-by to the perfection of their lulavim. Complete Sukkot sets -- lulav, etrog and spices -- were selling for 80 francs, or about \$13.

Outside one of the kosher butcher shops, two exhausted shochets (ritual slaughterers) wore long white aprons stained from head to toe with blood. They stood smoking amid the piled up crates of squawking chickens.

By 7 in the evening, the bakeries were still churning out golden loaves of challah for their customers.

Said an old timer: "This takes me back 40 years ago, when the only language you could hear was Yiddish."

But times have changed on the Rue des Rosiers. The once mostly-Ashkenazic population is gone, replaced by Sephardic Jews who emigrated to France from North Africa. They too are giving way to a new population, including blacks from the French Antilles.

But for wide-eyed visitors, who tried in vain to fan away the overpowering aroma of poultry, the Rue des Rosiers is still, for now, a haven for Jewish tradition.

TWO MORE POLIO CASES REPORTED

By Cathrine Gerson

JERUSALEM, Sept. 18 (JTA) -- Two new cases of poliomyelitis (infantile paralysis) were confirmed by the Health Ministry Sunday. They brought to seven the total number of cases reported in Israel in the past several weeks.

The latest victims are an 18-year-old youth from Kibbutz Ein Shemer, near Hadera, and a 9-month-old baby from Ashdod.

The Health Ministry said its policy is "not to initiate reports about any new polio victims, but merely to confirm or deny reports from outside, as we do not want to cause any panic in the public."

The first two cases diagnosed were a 26-year-old teacher and a 3-month-old baby, both from Or Akiva near Hadera. They are still hospitalized, in serious but stable condition.

Medical specialists at the Health Ministry are said to be recommending a switch from the oral polio vaccines, which contain live viruses, to the older vaccines with dead viruses, which are administered by injection.

JTA will be closed for Yom Kippur and will not publish a Daily News Bulletin dated Thursday, Sept. 22. We wish our readers a Shanah Tovah.