

ATTORNEY FROM PHILADELPHIA BECOMES 15TH TO DIE FROM JULY 6 BUS ATTACK

By Cathrine Gerson

JERUSALEM, July 18 (JTA) -- Rita Levine, a 39-year-old attorney from Philadelphia, died here Tuesday of injuries suffered when an Egged bus plunged into a ravine and caught fire on July 6, after an Arab aboard grabbed the steering wheel.

Her death at Hadassah University Hospital in Ein Kerem brought the toll from the attack to 15 fatalities. She was the only one of seven Americans wounded in the crash to succumb to her injuries. Two of the dead were Canadians and the rest were Israelis.

Of the 27 injured in the bus crash, five are still hospitalized.

The Arab perpetrator, a resident of the Gaza Strip, was among the injured. Israeli authorities have branded his action a terrorist attack related to the 19-month-old Palestinian uprising.

According to Hadassah Hospital spokeswoman Ruth Mekel, Levine sustained severe spinal cord injuries. Her body was to be flown to the United States on Wednesday for burial.

A 1974 graduate of Temple University Law School, Levine was on a six-month leave from her job as a public defender and was believed to be contemplating aliyah.

She was studying Hebrew at Ulpan Akiva in Netanya and boarded the bus to Jerusalem on July 6 to take an Israeli bar examination in criminal law and criminal procedure.

Her sister, Joan Levine, said last week that "Rita wanted to combine her U.S. experience with an Israeli degree so she could practice law in both countries."

Levine was certified by the Israel Bar Association in two of the nine examinations she completed, at an awards ceremony July 12, six days before her death.

Another of her sisters, Helen Ross, said on the occasion: "Rita says, and everyone knows, the incident was one of terrorism."

"For us, however, this incident is not a political issue, but a family issue," she said. "It would be inappropriate to politicize such a case."

POPE STAYING OUT OF DISPUTE OVER CONVENT AT AUSCHWITZ

By Allison Kaplan

NEW YORK, July 18 (JTA) -- Pope John Paul II has removed himself from the dialogue over the controversial convent at Auschwitz, according to leaders of the Simon Wiesenthal Center who met with Vatican officials Tuesday.

"It is now clear to us that there is no progress, the convent is not going to move, and the pope is not interested in the matter," Rabbi Marvin Hier, dean of the Wiesenthal Center, said in a telephone interview from Rome.

The pope's refusal to get involved, Hier said, "apparently leaves the decision in the hands of local officials in Poland who, to date, have not shown the willingness to move quickly to resolve this crisis."

The Wiesenthal Center officials met with Monsignor Luigi Gatti, head of political external affairs at the Vatican, and Father Daucourt of

the Vatican Secretariat for Religious Relations With the Jews.

They also met with the Vatican's Polish ambassador, Josef Wiegacz.

The Wiesenthal Center is one of many Jewish organizations that have registered their objections to the continuing presence of the Carmelite convent on the grounds where millions of Jews were murdered.

Polish Catholic authorities had agreed to move the convent by February 1989, but did not honor that commitment.

Protest in the Jewish community has been heightened recently by the demonstration by seven New York Jewish activists, who entered the convent last Friday to protest the convent.

The group was beaten and dragged off the convent grounds by workers there, while Polish police reportedly stood by without intervening.

A protest over the treatment of the demonstrators was lodged Tuesday by the Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rith.

In a letter to Jan Kinast, the Polish ambassador to the United States, ADL National Director Abraham Foxman called for "the apprehension and punishment of those responsible" for the beating of the demonstrators.

Foxman described the incident as "an intolerable reversion to the old Poland of hatred, of pogroms."

In New York on Tuesday, there was a small demonstration in front of the Vatican's U.N. observer mission.

A group of 15 people, including relatives of those who protested Friday at Auschwitz, chanted, "Keep your promise, move the convent" and "Shame on the Vatican," as they marched outside the mission.

The protesters attempted to deliver a formal letter to Archbishop Renato Martino requesting the removal of the convent, but they were refused entry.

NEWS ANALYSIS:

PARTIES WORKING TO AVOID SPLIT, BUT COALITION CRISIS NOT OVER YET

By David Landau

JERUSALEM, July 18 (JTA) -- The political crisis threatening to bring down the Likud-Labor unity government continued to smolder this week and could flare up at any time.

It will persist as long as Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir is unable to overcome pressure from hard-line Likud ministers to impose preconditions and constraints on his peace initiative that make it unacceptable to the Labor Party and out of the question for the Palestinians.

Some observers here believe the United States, upset by recent events, is engaged in damage control, in cooperation with Shamir and his allies.

While powerful elements in both parties are working hard to avoid a split, there are determined, vocal minorities in each which, for various reasons, would like to see the seven-month-old Labor-Likud alliance brought to an end.

At the beginning of the week, expectations were high that the crisis would soon be resolved.

Shamir met early Sunday morning with Vice

Premier Shimon Peres, the Labor Party leader, and with Labor's No. 2 man, Defense Minister Yitzhak Rabin, who is co-author of the government peace plan.

Pundits assumed a search was under way for a face-saving formula that would save the coalition.

The need is to convince Labor -- or for Labor to pretend to be convinced -- that the Shamir plan remains unchanged, despite new conditions imposed on it at the Likud Central Committee meeting on July 5.

Shamir Outmaneuvered By Rivals

Those conditions were demanded by Likud hard-liners Ariel Sharon, David Levy and Yitzhak Moda'i, who have made no secret of their desire to abort the plan or alter it to the same effect.

A ploy by Shamir to outmaneuver his rivals failed at Sunday's Cabinet session.

By prior arrangement, Interior Minister Arye Deri of Shas, one of the three religious parties in the coalition, asked the prime minister a question about the peace initiative.

It was worded to allow Shamir to reply that "the initiative has not undergone any change or alteration, nor is there any intention to insert any change or alteration."

But an attempt to have the Cabinet affirm the prime minister's statement by vote was blocked.

Peres said he needed time to examine what precisely he was being asked to support.

Moda'i, who is minister of economics and planning and leader of Likud's Liberal Party wing, insisted that a counter-statement of his own be put to a vote.

Later in the week, Levy observed in a speech to the party faithful that a "planted question" and an artificial answer at the Cabinet were not acceptable.

He accused Shamir of arm-twisting younger Likud ministers who he claimed wanted to uphold "the party's principles" but were being threatened with sanctions.

Levy, who holds the rank of deputy premier, lashed out at attempts to "paper over" the differences between Likud and Labor, saying both parties were dishonored.

On the Labor side, there is an apparent split between Peres and Rabin. Peres, who is skeptical of Shamir's motives, is leaning toward the stance of a bloc of 18, mostly younger Labor Knesset members who think the coalition with Likud was a mistake from the start.

Rabin Taking Cues From Washington?

Rabin, who previously accused Likud of "throttling" the peace initiative, now clearly wants to save the coalition. He is prepared to accept Shamir's repeated assertions that "nothing has changed" about the peace initiative.

He may be taking cues from Washington, which is closely involved in the affair -- too closely for the taste of some Israelis.

As long as the U.S. State Department blamed the Likud amendments for killing the prospect of Palestinian elections in the West Bank and Gaza Strip, Rabin was prepared to quit the government.

But when Secretary of State James Baker indicated in a television interview Sunday that the United States accepts Shamir's assurances that the new Likud conditions mean nothing, Rabin's position also changed.

He is now Labor's firmest advocate of

continuing the unity government.

Those developments have raised speculation here that Shamir, Rabin and Baker are coordinating a joint strategy to contain the damage caused by the Likud rebels.

Each of them wants to keep the peace initiative on track, if at all possible, and they are cooperating to that end, observers believe.

One significant sidelight in the whole affair is the emergence of Interior Minister Deri as a mediator and go-between.

Deri, who is of Moroccan origin, is one of the dovish members of the ultra-Orthodox Shas party. He gained political status this week as one of three Orthodox Sephardic leaders to visit Egypt at the invitation of President Hosni Mubarak.

He was accompanied by Ovadia Yosef, the former Sephardic chief rabbi of Israel, and Immigration and Absorption Minister Yitzhak Peretz, also of Shas.

Deri had an unscheduled meeting Tuesday in Cairo with Egyptian Foreign Minister Esmat Abdel Meguid. He is believed to have been entrusted to convey a message from Shamir to Mubarak, with whom Deri was to meet Wednesday.

ARREST OF DANISH WOMAN IN ISRAEL SPARKS RUMORS, NEGATIVE FEELINGS

By Eli Kohen

COPENHAGEN, July 18 (JTA) -- The case of Ulla Lyngsby, a 25-year-old Danish schoolteacher arrested in Israel and allegedly harassed by security agents, is generating anti-Israel sentiment in the Danish news media and a swarm of rumors.

Donations are being solicited to pay for legal action charging Israel with violations of human rights.

Lyngsby may have been involved in a terrorist plot to assassinate the chief rabbi of Denmark. But little is known beyond what she told the media when she arrived at the airport here last Friday and said later in a television interview Sunday.

By her account, she was seized July 8 and taken to a secret location in northern Israel, where she was interrogated harshly by agents of Shin Bet, Israel's internal security service.

Lyngsby claimed they offered her drugs and threatened to kill her Palestinian boyfriend. She complained that she got no help from the Danish Embassy in Tel Aviv and was refused a lawyer.

An Israeli court ordered her detained for 14 days, but she was released after six.

Newspapers and radio stations here are speculating about the young woman, who teaches in a Copenhagen suburb.

One rumor said she was a courier for the Palestine Liberation Organization, carrying money to finance the uprising in the West Bank and Gaza Strip. Others said she belonged to a terrorist group in Denmark.

The Israeli ambassador, Amos Ganor, said in a television interview that Lyngsby signed a confession implicating herself in a terrorist plot to assassinate Danish Chief Rabbi Bent Melchior, when he visited Israel on its 40th anniversary last year. Melchior said he knew of such plots and has hired bodyguards.

Lyngsby said she is ready to stand trial in Denmark to prove her innocence. But Prime Minister Poul Schluter issued a statement saying she violated no Danish laws and could not be brought to trial.

U.S. SAYS NO JACKSON-VANIK WAIVER UNTIL THE SOVIETS IMPLEMENT REFORMS

By Andrew Silow Carroll

NEW YORK, July 18 (JTA) -- The Bush administration has given new assurances that it will not lift trade sanctions against the Soviets until they "codify their emigration law in accordance with international standards and implement their new law faithfully."

Only then will President Bush be "ready to work with Congress on a temporary waiver" of the Jackson-Vanik Amendment, Secretary of State James Baker pledged in a July 5 letter to Shoshana Cardin, chairwoman of the National Conference on Soviet Jewry.

The letter is the most explicit statement that the Bush administration has made so far on the 14-year-old amendment, which denies most-favored-nation trade status to the Soviets until they substantially increase emigration of Jews and other minority groups seeking to leave.

Bush had made similar statements in two previous public appearances, but the letter is the first instance of the administration committing the ideas to paper.

Bush's statements, wrote Baker, "constitute the administration's position."

As Baker notes in his letter, the administration's policy is closely aligned with that of the NCSJ, an umbrella organization of Soviet Jewry advocacy groups.

Baker Adds Stipulation

It refers to a June 13 meeting of the NCSJ Board of Governors, in which the organization voted to support a Jackson-Vanik waiver if the president received "appropriate assurances" that the Soviets have met four conditions.

To meet those conditions, the Soviets would have to work to sustain appropriate levels of emigration, set limits on who could be denied emigration on the grounds of having access to "state secrets," resolve the problem of relatives blocking people from emigrating and demonstrate progress on the cases of long-term refuseniks.

To these Baker adds a stipulation that the Soviets act to implement the commitments it made as a signatory to the concluding document of the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe, the so-called Helsinki human rights accords.

"I appreciate in full measure the gravity and moment of the deliberations that produced the conference's stance on the Jackson-Vanik waiver, and the mixture of hope and action which it embodies," wrote Baker.

ISRAELI JOURNALISTS OFF TO MOSCOW

By Hugh Orgel

TEL AVIV, July 18 (JTA) -- Nine Israeli journalists left Tuesday for a week-long visit to the Soviet Union, at the invitation of the Moscow Journalists Union.

The Israelis, all political correspondents, are members of the Israel Journalists Association. They will visit Moscow, Leningrad and Kiev.

They are scheduled to meet with Soviet officials and members of the local Jewish communities. Their trip was arranged by the Moscow correspondent of the Israeli Communist Party newspaper.

Soviet journalists have accepted an Israeli invitation for a reciprocal visit, which will probably take place at the end of the year.

ISRAEL FACING UNEMPLOYMENT RATE OF 10 PERCENT, HIGHEST IN 20 YEARS

By Hugh Orgel

TEL AVIV, July 18 (JTA) -- Unemployment in Israel is approaching 10 percent of the work force, the highest in 20 years. A total of 140,000 people are out of work, according to the latest figures released by the Labor Ministry.

The Histadrut labor federation calls the situation "catastrophic."

Some development towns are reporting 20 percent unemployment. The labor exchanges say as many as 10 technicians are applying for every vacant position.

The problem of joblessness has not reached such proportions since the 1965-67 economic recession. Government officials fear social unrest if the situation worsens.

Histadrut has reacted by calling a two-hour general strike next Sunday. Haim Haberfeld, head of its trade unions department, said the strike is intended as a warning.

"It's the first strike we have called that is not to demand higher wages or better working conditions, but to force the government to take immediate action to deal with a catastrophic situation of growing unemployment," Haberfeld said.

But some employers complain they cannot fill existing job vacancies. They are rejected by job-seekers who say "that is not work for a Jew" or who would rather collect unemployment benefits, which are not much lower than current wages.

STRIKE PARALYZING ISRAEL'S SMALL BUT VITAL RAIL SYSTEM

By Hugh Orgel

TEL AVIV, July 18 (JTA) -- A weeklong strike by Israel Railroad workers has paralyzed the country's small but vital rail system and is proving costly to the carrier and its customers.

The immediate cause is the proposed dismissal of 200 railroad employees.

But the dispute has its origins in the recent amalgamation of the state-owned railway administration with the autonomous ports authority to form the Ports and Railroad Authority.

So far, it has cost the railroad some \$750,000 in lost revenues.

The railway workers say they were promised originally that the merger would raise their wages to the level of port workers, who get four times as much.

They found out later they are still considered government employees bound by the national civil servant agreements and wage scales.

In addition, the new combined authority came up with an efficiency plan that calls for 200 dismissals.

The railroad workers committee responded by calling a strike seven days ago, which is continuing despite back-to-work orders issued by the Tel Aviv district labor court.

The court ordered contempt hearings against seven committee members. When they failed to appear, the police were asked to apprehend them.

Meanwhile, there have been no passenger or freight trains for a week. Hardest hit is Israel Chemicals, a government-owned company that moves about 20,000 tons of Negev-mined phosphates a day by rail.

Officials estimate the firm's loss at more than \$1.5 million a day.

NEW STUDY FINDS STRONG CONNECTION BETWEEN INTERMARRIAGE AND DIVORCE

By Andrew Silow Carroll

NEW YORK, July 18 (JTA) -- Marriages between American Jews and non-Jews are twice as likely to end in divorce as marriages between Jews, according to the results of a far-reaching study on intermarriage released Tuesday.

Nevertheless, Jews who remarry after a divorce are about three times as likely to intermarry as Jews marrying for the first time, the study says.

As a result, say the study's authors, the forces that are reshaping American Jewish family life -- intermarriage, divorce and remarriage -- are bound to increase over the coming years.

The study, conducted by the North American Jewish Data Bank of the Graduate Center of the City University of New York, is an examination of the marital histories of nearly 6,500 Jewish adults from nine cities throughout the United States.

"Intermarriage, Divorce and Remarriage Among American Jews, 1982-1987," was co-authored by Drs. Barry Kosmin, director of the Data Bank; Nava Lerer, a postdoctoral fellow with the Data Bank; and Egon Mayer, professor of sociology at CUNY and Brooklyn College.

They extracted their data from demographic surveys conducted by local Jewish federations since 1982.

If there is an overriding theme to the study, it is that any idyllic vision of the stability of the Jewish family is a thing of the past.

According to the study, among American Jews who are under the age of 40 and married at least once, 50 percent of the males and 38 percent of the females are currently either intermarried, divorced or both.

"One of the more dramatic findings is that people still have a nostalgic view of the traditional Jewish family," Mayer said in an interview. "But if you look at the modern Jews, they are as far from a traditional model as you can get."

Higher Rate For Men

The intermarriage rate among all American Jews, according to the study, is 14 percent for first marriages and climbs to 40 percent for the second marriage.

But when the study focuses only on the youngest generation of marriageable Jews, the intermarriage and divorce rates soar.

Thirty-seven percent of the Jewish men who are under 40 are intermarried, five times as many as those over 60. And 24 percent of young Jewish women are intermarried, 12 times as many as women over 60.

These findings show not only that intermarriage is increasing, but also that significant differences in the intermarriage rates for Jewish men and women persist.

"One implication of this growing gap," the researchers say, "is that there will continue to be a growing demographic pressure upon Jewish women to intermarry."

The researchers were most surprised to learn that intermarriages continue to be at a much higher risk of divorce than marriages between two Jews, in every age group.

For first marriages, the rate of divorce for Jews marrying Jews is 17 percent, but among the intermarried it nearly doubles to 32 percent.

"The thinking was that if intermarriage was on the increase, then Jewish families were making

peace with it and people were living with it much more comfortably," said Mayer, who is the author of "Love and Tradition; Marriage Between Christians and Jews."

"We figured that it was no longer much of a source of family disruption as it was in the past," he said. "The surprise is that on the divorce front, not much has changed."

Income And Friendships Are Factors

Another surprise, said Mayer, was that divorced Jews who had been involved in intermarriages tend to marry non-Jews again.

"We knew that previous divorce does lead to more intermarriage," he said. "The intriguing thing is that given that fact that intermarriage leads to a higher divorce rate, people are willing to go into a high-risk marriage, if I can use that term."

Even among the "inmarrieds," however, divorce rates are high compared to previous generations: The study says divorce rates among Jews between the ages of 40 and 59 who marry within the faith are double that of those over 60.

Some of the survey findings supply, at least by implication, prescriptions for reversing these trends, which have long been viewed negatively in the Jewish community.

"Having more Jewish friends and being older appear to be the strongest predictors" for Jews to marry Jews, according to the study.

In addition, the study notes that Jews with higher incomes and a higher level of education are somewhat more likely to marry Jews.

However, write the authors, "the effect of Jewish education appears to be quite small as compared to the other variables" in predicting marriage inside or outside the religion.

"Increasing the opportunities for socializing among Jews at every age level, but particularly in the young adult or singles groups, is absolutely critical" to preventing intermarriage, said Mayer.

The study did not attempt to treat differences among the various Jewish denominations.

The North American Jewish Data Bank was established by the Council of Jewish Federations and the Center for Jewish Studies of the Graduate School and University Center of CUNY.

Implications of its intermarriage study and similar studies will be the subject of a conference this fall at the CUNY Graduate Center in Manhattan.

Mayer called the study and conference "part of an ongoing commitment to deal with intermarriage in a systematic way."

ISRAELI NAVY FORCES A SYRIAN RETREAT

By Hugh Orgel

TEL AVIV, July 18 (JTA) -- Syrian warships blockading Christian ports in Lebanon turned tail last week when Israeli naval craft appeared off the coast of Beirut, Ma'ariv reported Tuesday.

The newspaper quoted a Radio Monte Carlo report as saying that the Israeli vessels were escorting ships carrying fruits and vegetables to besieged Christians in East Beirut.

According to the report, Syrian ships blockading the Christian ports of East Beirut, Jbail and Jounieh retreated northward after the Israeli boats appeared.

The Israeli-escorted ships picked up food in Nakoura, just north of the Israeli-Lebanese border, and successfully dropped anchor off East Beirut, according to Radio Monte Carlo.