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**ARENS PLANS VISIT TO WASHINGTON TO DISCUSS ISRAELI DEFENSE NEEDS**

By Gil Sedan

JERUSALEM, Sept. 11 (JTA) -- Defense Minister Moshe Arens will meet with leaders of the U.S. defense establishment next week to raise concerns that Israel's qualitative military edge over the Arab states is eroding.

Arens, who departs Saturday night for Washington, told the Knesset Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee on Tuesday that while Israel's strategic status in the world has improved, the gap between Israel and the Arab countries, as far as sophisticated weapons are concerned, has narrowed.

"The Arabs purchase everything," while Israel is hobbled by budgetary constraints, the defense minister said.

Although Israel has developed some sophisticated hardware, such as the Arrow anti-missile missile, financial pressures limit the Jewish state's ability to arm itself with weapons designed and manufactured at home, he said.

Arens said he planned to discuss that problem with Pentagon officials in Washington.

The issue has already been raised by the National Jewish Community Relations Advisory Council, in a statement adopted Monday during its executive committee meeting in New York.

The statement commends the Bush administration for its response to Iraq's aggression against Kuwait. But it expresses concern about the implications of the administration's decision to "invoke emergency authority in order to sell Saudi Arabia over \$2 billion of sophisticated military equipment."

NJCRC is "concerned about the impact this and other possible future arms sales to Saudi Arabia and other Arab states will have on the balance of power in the region," the statement says.

**U.S.-Syrian Rapprochement**

The umbrella group, which represents 13 national Jewish organizations and 117 local community councils, urged the administration "to develop controls and commitments associated with these arms transfers that will minimize the threats they may pose to important U.S. interests, such as the security of Israel and the stability of the region as a whole."

Arens, meanwhile, told reporters Tuesday he is not concerned by the rapprochement between the United States and Syria, including the visit of Secretary of State James Baker to Damascus this week, the first by a U.S. secretary of state since 1988.

"I believe this is part of the coalition built by the United States against Saddam Hussein, which includes an important Arab element," he said.

The Israeli defense chief sounded a note of caution with regard to the Palestinian uprising in the West Bank and Gaza Strip.

Although the intifada has subsided, it cannot be said that quiet prevails in the territories, Arens observed. "I suggest that we do not kid ourselves: The Palestinian problem will remain," he said.

**SHAS TO CONSIDER LEAVING GOVERNMENT, BUT DERI SAYS HE WON'T RECOMMEND IT**

By David Landau

JERUSALEM, Sept. 11 (JTA) -- Embattled Interior Minister Arye Deri denied Tuesday that he would try to influence his Shas party to quit the Likud-led coalition government, despite the political storm surrounding him.

Deri, who at 31 is the youngest Cabinet member, is under police investigation for alleged financial improprieties. He has been accused, among other things, of improper disbursement of public funds.

His closest aide, Zvi Jacobson, was ordered held in custody Monday on suspicion of fraud, theft and breach of trust.

The Council of Rabbinic Sages that runs the ultra-Orthodox party is expected to convene Wednesday night to consider the political fallout from the probe.

The investigation is being pursued by the Police and Justice ministries, both controlled by Likud. The Shas sages could order the party to pull out of the government, turning Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir's hairline majority into a minority regime.

But Deri said Tuesday that he would not recommend such a course.

"I don't believe that is what will happen, because in my opinion it is still too early. There is no reason because things can be returned to normal," he said in an army radio interview.

Nevertheless, an air of suspense will hover over the meeting of Shas elders because of reports from party sources that the movement's pre-eminent spiritual leader, Rabbi Ovadia Yosef, is furious over the investigation.

He was quoted Tuesday as accusing the police of conducting a campaign of character assassination against Deri, his young protege.

Aides to the interior minister called in for questioning by police Sunday included his private secretary, Yaffa Cohen, who happens to be Yosef's daughter.

Left-wing opposition parties, meanwhile, said they would not exploit a Shas defection to help the Labor Party unseat Shamir's government.

Labor itself is remaining out of the fray. Party leader Shimon Peres said Tuesday that the police investigation must continue untrammelled by any political considerations.

**JUDGE TURNS DOWN POLLARD'S MOTION TO WITHDRAW GUILTY PLEA FOR SPYING**

By Allison Kaplan

NEW YORK, Sept. 11 (JTA) -- A federal judge has turned down Jonathan Pollard's motion to withdraw the guilty plea that landed him a life term in jail for spying on behalf of Israel.

Pollard, who has served five-and-a-half years of the sentence, contends the government did not live up to its part of the plea bargain. If the judge had accepted his petition, a new trial would have had to be called.

Pollard's attorney, Hamilton Fox, said the former U.S. naval intelligence officer's family and supporters were "not surprised" by the ruling, which was issued by U.S. District Court Judge

Aubrey Robinson. Fox said the family plans to appeal the decision.

"The judge who denied the motion to withdraw the guilty plea was the same judge who had accepted the plea in the first place," the attorney said.

"By accepting the plea, he had necessarily determined that the plea was proper. We are hopeful that the Court of Appeals will view the issues we have raised from a different perspective," he said.

A motion to remove Robinson from the case, which was kept under wraps throughout the court's deliberations, was unveiled Tuesday.

The motion is based on an accusation by Harvard Law School Professor Alan Dershowitz that Robinson obtained out-of-court or "ex parte" information from the U.S. government.

The charge stems from a conversation Dershowitz had last autumn with former Supreme Court Justice Arthur Goldberg.

Goldberg, who died shortly after that conversation, reportedly told Dershowitz that Robinson had spoken of government evidence that Pollard had provided Israel with U.S. photographs proving Jerusalem had supplied Jericho missiles to South Africa.

But such evidence was never introduced in the court proceedings, Pollard's attorneys contend.

Pollard's attorneys argued that the only way to find out if information was inappropriately given to Robinson would be to question the judge himself. Therefore, they contended, Robinson would have to step down from the case.

Robinson denied this motion, in addition to a number of other charges suggesting that the government violated its plea agreement with Pollard.

He also denied a request to allow Pollard's lawyers access to classified portions of the sentencing memo written by former Defense Secretary Caspar Weinberger.

## ROMANIA WILL FIGHT ANTI-SEMITISM, ITS LEADERS TELL RABBINIC GATHERING

By Charles Hoffman

BUCHAREST, Romania, Sept. 11 (JTA) -- The president and prime minister of Romania have promised a delegation of leading European rabbis that their government will combat anti-Semitism and ensure equal rights for all minorities.

A 10-member delegation of the European Conference of Rabbis, headed by Lord Immanuel Jakobovits, chief rabbi of Britain, met for 45 minutes Tuesday with Romanian President Ion Iliescu and Prime Minister Petre Roman.

"The leaders of Romania made it very clear that they want their county to give equal rights and protection to all minorities," Jakobovits said at a news conference after the meeting.

"They spoke warmly and cordially with us, and understand our concern about anti-Semitism. They would like to see anti-Semitism defeated," he said.

The prime minister made similar assurances last week to Abraham Foxman, national director of the Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rith, who met with him here for 90 minutes Sept. 11.

Roman told Foxman he is committed to strengthening democracy in Romania and welcomes the Jewish community's participation in drawing attention to racist manifestations. He also spoke of new laws mandating punishment for incitement to hatred.

"While they may not be perfect, he sees no reason why the Jewish community should not utilize the legal and judicial system to protect itself," the ADL leader said in a phone interview with the Jewish Telegraphic Agency in New York.

Foxman is one of a number of Jewish leaders who have arrived here since the European rabbinic conference scheduled a meeting of its governing board here to express solidarity with the Romanian Jewish community.

## New Anti-Jewish Attacks Each Day

At the opening ceremony of the meeting Sunday, the chief rabbi of Romania, Moshe Rosen, sounded the alarm about the rise of anti-Semitism in Romania since the overthrow of dictator Nicolae Ceausescu late last year.

"Some very dangerous fascist and neo-fascist forces" have emerged, Rosen warned. "The democracy that has given us our freedom has also given freedom to our potential murderers."

"Each day there are new attacks on Jews and Judaism in the many new papers that appear here. I have also received threats on my life. We must not be silent, since our dignity and perhaps our existence is threatened," he said.

Jakobovits cautioned Tuesday, however, that "we have to keep a sense of perspective. Not every anti-Semitic outrage means that the country as a whole is anti-Semitic, or that pogroms are around the corner. To exaggerate the danger could create panic and undermine the confidence of the Jewish community here."

Chief Rabbi Joseph Sitruk of France said he believes most Romanians are not anti-Semitic. "There has been a 50-year vacuum here, and the young generation does not know anything about the Holocaust," he said. "Some marginal groups here are trying to take advantage of this by stirring up anti-Jewish hatred."

Rosen viewed the meeting of the rabbinical group as a personal triumph and as a needed boost to the morale of the community.

For the past six or seven months, no high-level Jewish delegations have visited Romania, apparently because of uncertainty about whether Rosen would continue in his post. He had come under fire after the revolution for his close ties to the Ceausescu regime.

## Other Leaders Arrive

Once the European Conference of Rabbis scheduled its meeting in Bucharest, then other Jewish organizations followed suit. The president of the European Jewish Congress, Lionel Kopelowitz, arrived here last weekend. And Rabbi Arthur Schneier, president of the New York-based Appeal of Conscience Foundation, was due here Tuesday.

Other participants in the rabbinic gathering included Chief Rabbi Elio Toaff of Italy, Chief Rabbi Meir Just of Holland, Chief Rabbi A. Guigui of Belgium, Chief Rabbi Chaim Eisenberg of Austria, Chief Rabbi Efraim Mirvis of Ireland, Rabbi Meir Lewinger of Basel, former French Chief Rabbi Rene Sirat, and Rabbi Moshe Rose of Jerusalem, secretary of the European Conference.

Also taking part in the meeting were Serge Cwaigenbaum, director of the European Jewish Congress; Leon Masliah, director of the Consistoire, the religious organization of French Jewry; and Zvi Fein, director of programs in Romania run by the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee.

(JTA staff writer Susan Birnbaum in New York contributed to this report.)

**NEO-NAZIS SKINHEADS IN SCUFFLE WITH JEWS, PRESS AT 'ARYAN FEST'**  
By Gary Pogrow

VANCOUVER, Canada, Sept. 11 (JTA) -- Neo-Nazi Skinheads, some carrying guns and wearing swastika armbands, scuffled Saturday with members of the Jewish Defense League of Canada and assaulted reporters during a white supremacist "Aryan Fest" at a farm near Provost, Alberta.

The Royal Canadian Mounted Police, who had described the event as peaceful, nevertheless have filed charges against members of the racist group for theft and pointing firearms at members of the media and the Jewish group.

The reporters were covering the annual racist gathering sponsored by Terry Long, leader of the Canadian Aryan Nations, and members of the Church of Jesus Christ Aryan, a camp of barbed wire and watchtowers which is headquartered in Caroline, Alberta.

The "fest," held at a location some 280 miles northeast of Calgary, Alberta, near the Saskatchewan border, also attracted delegates from Utah and Montana.

The Jewish communities of Calgary and Edmonton, both in Alberta province, did not organize counterdemonstrations because the gathering took place on Shabbat.

About a dozen people protested the gathered Nazis, who sang Nazi songs, chanted "Sieg Heil" and shouted, "Next time 12 million," in reference to the 6 million Jews killed in the Holocaust.

Among the protesters were three members of the JDL, represented by Harvey Kane, its national executive director in Canada; David Strauss; and Sigmund Sobolewski, a non-Jewish Auschwitz survivor who came with the JDL group.

According to Sheldon Alberts, a reporter for the Calgary Herald, "There were about seven or eight armed men at the gate entrance to the farm owned by Ray Bradley. Several were wearing Nazi uniforms with swastikas; others were in jeans."

Alberts reported that "the words got pretty heavy between Kane and the Skinheads. They taunted the protesters with 'You survived the Holocaust; see if you can survive me. Why don't you come closer?'"

"The JDL moved closer and the Nazis pushed them and some reporters away," Albert continued.

**Reporter Held At Gunpoint**

At that point, Aryan Nations leader Long appeared and challenged Kane to a public debate about the validity of the Holocaust. "So at the same time there were Skinheads with swastikas saying, 'We didn't get rid of all of you,' Terry Long was saying, 'It never happened,'" Alberts recounted.

Brad Clark, a freelance reporter for the Alberta Report, was grabbed from behind by some neo-Nazis and held at gunpoint while the film was removed from his camera and the tape from his recorder.

Kane was roughed up trying to help him.

According to Sobolewski, 67, a Catholic who was in Auschwitz for five years and bears a tattooed number on his arm, the neo-Nazis ranged from 16 to 30 in age.

According to Alberts, there was no police presence at the gathering.

He reported that at night, the Skinheads burned a cross while about 30 men circled it and gave the Nazi salute. He said he counted four wearing Klan-like white robes.

**SKINHEADS TIED TO VANDALISM OF A SYNAGOGUE IN MARSEILLE**  
By Edwin Eytan

PARIS, Sept. 11 (JTA) -- Swastikas, Nazi-style "SS" logos and anti-Semitic slogans were daubed on the outer walls of a synagogue in central Marseille on Sunday night.

Police say the graffiti were signed "Marseille Skinheads."

Racist Skinheads, who have proliferated in the last three years in far-flung corners of the world, are shaven-headed youths who work in gangs, affecting Nazi-like regalia, spouting extreme right-wing rhetoric and often harassing foreigners and minorities.

But the police investigation so far has turned up few clues.

Vandals recently desecrated some 43 tombstones in a Jewish cemetery in a small town near the German border in the province of Alsace. There, ornaments such as Stars of David were torn off. But no anti-Semitic graffiti were found at that site.

Local officials of Horbourg Wuhr, near Colmar, said the vandals might have been local hoodlums without any particular anti-Semitic leanings.

Several cemeteries, Jewish and Christian, have been desecrated in recent months, and some suspects have been arrested.

Most are youths who belong to no organized party or movement but have a bent for violence and notoriety.

**ISRAEL'S 100,000TH IMMIGRANT OF YEAR ARRIVES TO A TUMULTUOUS WELCOME**  
By David Landau and Gil Sedan

JERUSALEM, Sept. 11 (JTA) -- The 100,000th immigrant to arrive in Israel this year landed Tuesday evening at Ben-Gurion Airport and was surprised and touched by the effusive welcome he received.

As Yitzhak Ben Arieh Krasilchik, an 80-year-old Jew from Leningrad, stepped from the plane that brought him here via Poland, he was greeted by a reception committee headed by Absorption Minister Yitzhak Peretz.

Peretz recited the Shehecheyanu blessing for a new or special event, to which Krasilchik responded emotionally in Russian, wishing himself and all other newcomers a swift, easy absorption.

Peretz told reporters he expected another 100,000 immigrants to arrive by year's end.

Jewish Agency spokesman Gad Ben-Ari told the Jewish Telegraphic Agency that at the present rate, immigration from the Soviet Union and other countries will top 20,000 for September alone. In August, it approached 19,000, the highest monthly influx since 1951.

Of the 100,000 new arrivals so far in 1990, 90,000 are from the Soviet Union.

Meanwhile, members of the Jewish Agency Executive will meet Thursday in Geneva to discuss how the costs of massive aliyah will impinge on other Jewish Agency activities.

According to Ben-Ari, the meeting will be the first at which the relationship between aliyah and other commitments will be examined.

The agency is solely responsible financially for the immigration process. So far it has not affected the budgets of the Jewish Agency Settlement Department, Project Renewal and the World Zionist Organization.

**BEHIND THE HEADLINES:  
JEWISH GROUPS HAVE EYE ON CONGRESS  
AS LAWMAKERS RUSH TO COMPLETE WORK**  
By Howard Rosenberg

WASHINGTON, Sept. 11 (JTA) -- Lawmakers have returned from their Labor Day recess raring to tackle a heavy legislative agenda before the 101st Congress adjourns less than a month from now in early October.

Jewish groups are eyeing developments on Capitol Hill cautiously as legislators rush to complete business so they can campaign full-time for re-election in November.

The biggest single issue facing Congress is how to bridge an \$85 billion shortfall in the government's projected 1991 deficit to avoid massive across-the-board budget cuts that will take effect Oct. 1 if a solution is not found.

While a number of other pieces of major legislation are pending, there appears to be little time for issues not germane to the 13 appropriations bills that must still be approved before the start of the new fiscal year.

That means such major legislation as a landmark child-care bill and one reforming campaign financing are safe bets for the back burner, barring a rare "lame-duck" session in December, which has not occurred since 1982.

The Senate also will be preoccupied, beginning Thursday, with confirmation hearings for New Hampshire Supreme Court Justice David Souter, who has been nominated to fill the vacancy on the U.S. Supreme Court created when Justice William Brennan Jr. suddenly resigned in July.

The American Jewish Congress has submitted 10 sample questions for the Senate Judiciary Committee to ask Souter, covering a number of issues, including church-state concerns and reproductive freedom, otherwise known as abortion rights.

**Floor Fights On Abortion**

Abortion battles are also expected to erupt on the floors of the respective chambers, when three separate bills are debated:

- \* The District of Columbia spending bill. Congress will consider allowing locally, as well as federally, raised funds to pay for poor women's abortions in cases of incest, rape or certain health reasons. Current law allows both types of funds to be used only for abortions in instances where the mother's life is imperiled. President Bush successfully vetoed the bill last year after Congress tried to enact the broader language.

- \* The labor, health and human services, and education spending bill. Most Jewish groups favor a proposal to allow Medicaid to be used to finance abortions in cases of incest or rape, as was the case between 1973 and 1981. Under current law, Medicaid can be used to pay for abortions only when the mother's life is endangered.

- \* The foreign operations spending bill, also known as the foreign aid bill. The House of Representatives voted earlier this summer to bar Planned Parenthood and the U.N. Population Fund from distributing \$3 million in Romania for family planning. The Senate may also vote on the matter.

An estimated \$220 million in U.S. funds were spent last year by the State Department's Agency for International Development for family planning, but those funds are used to educate foreigners only about natural forms of childbirth, such as the "rhythm method."

Sammie Moshenberg, Washington representa-

tive of the National Council of Jewish Women, said Third World countries are in dire need of assistance for more "viable" means of birth control.

**Child-Care Bill Stalled**

Both chambers of Congress have already adopted a landmark civil rights bill, which would overturn a string of recent Supreme Court rulings by making it easier for victims of employment discrimination to win legal relief.

President Bush will likely veto the bill, which has the support of most Jewish groups, because he contends it will lead employers to resort to quotas to avoid litigation.

The multibillion-dollar child-care bill, though, may not reach the president's desk, as it has been stalled for months in a House-Senate conference committee.

The bill has been opposed by several Jewish groups, because it would provide federal funds to sectarian child-care programs and allow them to use religious preferences in hiring workers and enrolling children.

The campaign-finance overhaul bill may also die in conference committee. The Senate version would eliminate all political action committees, including pro-Israel PACs, while the House would cap the PAC contributions a lawmaker could receive at \$275,000.

Two bills of particular interest to the Jewish community may never get to the floor for debate:

- \* The Public Disclosure of Religious Dietary Certification Act would require firms to be filed with the Food and Drug Administration for products labeled as kosher that are shipped through interstate commerce.

- \* The Religious Freedom Restoration Act would reverse the Supreme Court's newly enunciated test of deferring to state statutes that collide with religious liberties. Its supporters may have to be content with a Sept. 27 hearing of the House Judiciary subcommittee on civil and constitutional rights.

Complicating the budget picture is the enormous cost of the Persian Gulf crisis. Aside from the billions of dollars it is costing the armed forces to send troops and military equipment to the Gulf, there is President Bush's recommendation that Congress forgive Egypt's \$7 billion debt for military aid. And Israel has hinted it wants equal treatment of its \$4.5 billion debt.

**Refugee Aid On The Agenda**

Other major budget items to be tackled during the coming weeks include the \$3 billion in foreign aid for Israel and funding for the 40,000 Soviet Jewish refugees expected to gain entry to the United States next year.

Sen. Frank Lautenberg (D-N.J.) may amend the foreign aid bill to include language directing the Immigration and Naturalization Service to grant Soviet Jews and others a presumption of eligibility for refugee status, on the basis that they have historically faced a "well-founded fear of persecution."

The budget summit has Jewish groups concerned, because one option on the table is capping at \$50,000 the deductions that can be taken on federal income tax returns, including deductions for charitable contributions.

Without a budget summit agreement or a waiver of the Gramm-Rudman-Hollings deficit reduction act, across-the-board cuts could exceed 30 percent for most domestic programs.