

**FAR-RIGHT PARTY JOINS COALITION
OVER OBJECTIONS OF LIKUD MODERATES**

By David Landau

JERUSALEM, Feb. 3 (JTA) -- Brushing aside vocal opposition from his most powerful Cabinet colleagues, Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir named Rehavam Ze'evi, leader of the far right-wing MoleDET Party, to the government Sunday as a minister without portfolio.

MoleDET's two seats will give the government a more comfortable majority of 66 in the 120-member Knesset.

The 64-year-old Ze'evi, an Israel Defense Force reserve major general, has publicly and repeatedly called for Israel to enter the Persian Gulf war and strike back at the Scud missile sites in western Iraq.

Contending that the government's policy of restraint, urged by the United States, has gravely eroded Israel's deterrent credibility, Ze'evi declared Sunday that he would continue fighting for his view "from within."

The fact that he will have a seat on the policy-making Inner Cabinet heightened fears from his opponents in that regard.

But the right-wing militant achieved notoriety at home and abroad long before the Gulf war by his advocacy of "voluntary transfer" of the Palestinian population out of the West Bank and Gaza Strip, a proposal sharply at odds with Likud policy and widely regarded as a euphemism for expulsion.

Opponents of Ze'evi's appointment expressed serious concern that it would jeopardize Israel's newly won international good will and impair any future peace efforts with the Palestinians.

But Shamir assured the Cabinet on Sunday that the government's policies on both the war and the Palestinians would remain intact and unaffected by Ze'evi's joining it.

Shamir, nevertheless, had to face down a near revolt in his 19-member Cabinet.

In a rare split with Shamir, his closest ally, Defense Minister Moshe Arens, spoke strongly against Ze'evi's appointment and abstained in the Cabinet vote.

'Totally Abhorrent' Ideas

In an interview later with the NBC-TV affiliate in New York, Arens described Ze'evi's ideas as "totally abhorrent to the vast majority of Israelis." He said if Ze'evi wants to be part of the government, "he will simply have to leave these ideas behind."

Joining Arens in abstaining was another senior colleague, Finance Minister Yitzhak Moda'i.

Foreign Minister David Levy was the most senior member of the government to vote flatly against Ze'evi's appointment. He warned that this Cabinet reshuffle at this time would weaken rather than strengthen the governing coalition.

Justice Minister Dan Meridor and Health Minister Ehud Olmert, veteran Likud loyalists, also voted against Ze'evi. Both made statements calling his "transfer" policy "morally wrong" as well as politically impractical.

Meridor was quoted as terming Ze'evi's ideas "a moral abomination," and Olmert stressed to the media that "transfer" is opposed to every-

thing Likud traditionally has stood for and believed in.

Ze'evi's joining the government gives "transfer" a certain legitimization and brings the idea into the political mainstream, despite the prime minister's and the Cabinet's disavowal, Olmert said.

Shamir was quoted as telling his young Cabinet proteges: "Do not grieve; that's politics."

Education and Culture Minister Ze'ulun Hammer of the National Religious Party supported Shamir. He explained to reporters later that he did so only because the prime minister had made an unequivocal statement at the Cabinet meeting that the government would never discuss, let alone endorse, the idea of "transfer."

Concern About Impact Abroad

Centrist and left-wing politicians, who only last week were praising the prime minister for his policy in the Gulf war, say they feel betrayed.

They maintain that by appointing Ze'evi to the government, Shamir has squandered much of the political success that his war policy has earned him abroad and has also undone the national consensus around that policy.

Media reports said Shamir was approached by key Diaspora Jewish leaders after the plan to appoint Ze'evi was leaked Friday to the Israeli daily Ha'aretz. They urged him to think again and warned him of the likely damage to Israel's standing overseas.

Some political observers said Shamir's move was aimed principally at liberating him from dependency on any one small faction. Those observers suggested that he is chafing at his abrasive relationship with Moda'i and the finance minister's small Zionist Renewal Faction.

Other theories linked the move to future diplomatic pressures on Israel. According to those theories, Shamir is positioning himself to stand up to U.S. or international demands after the war to negotiate a compromise with the Palestinians.

Ze'evi himself spoke of "the real war" that would face Israel in the future, which he called the war over Eretz Yisrael (the biblical Land of Israel). He said he would strengthen the government's "patriotic stand."

He dismissed his critics at home and abroad with a local aphorism: "The dogs bark -- and the caravan moves on."

**TWO MORE MISSILES FIRED AT ISRAEL,
BUT THEY FAIL TO CAUSE ANY DAMAGE**
By Hugh Orgel

TEL AVIV, Feb. 3 (JTA) -- Two Scud missiles were fired toward Israel from the western Iraq about five hours apart Saturday night and early Sunday morning, causing neither casualties nor damage, an Israel Defense Force spokesman said.

Alerts were sounded at 8 p.m. and 1:30 a.m. local time.

The missiles, carrying conventional warheads, apparently landed in open areas away from towns or villages. They brought to 30 the number of Scuds fired at Israel since the first slammed into a Tel Aviv slum on Jan. 18.

According to the IDF spokesman, Gen.

Nachman Shai, they were the ninth and 10th Iraqi missile attacks on Israel.

The IDF refused to say whether Patriot anti-missile batteries were fired or to pinpoint the area of impact of the overnight missiles. U.S. military officials in Saudi Arabia indicated that the Patriots had not been fired.

The IDF spokesman did say, however, that the Scuds landed in what the civil defense authorities designate "Area 5." The area extends north and east of Greater Tel Aviv and includes part of the Samaria region of the West Bank.

The last two missiles, fired Jan. 28 and 31, landed in the same general area near Palestinian villages without causing casualties or damage.

There were unconfirmed reports in the foreign news media Sunday that the second of the two missiles actually landed in Jordan. That would be ironic inasmuch as Jordan, while officially remaining neutral, has been supportive of Iraq.

Chemical Arms Capability Assumed

Jordan Television quoted denials by Palestine Liberation Organization sources that any Iraqi missiles had landed in the administered territories.

According to those sources, Saddam Hussein would not allow his missiles to harm Palestinians.

The latest Scud attacks followed a warning Friday by IDF Chief of Staff Dan Shomron that although greatly impaired by allied bombing, Iraq still has the capability to fire missiles into Israel.

Shomron, interviewed on radio and television, responded to public criticism of the IDF's insistence that civilians take shelter in gas-proof rooms in their homes when an air raid alert sounds, instead of in underground bomb shelters.

Although the underground shelters offer better protection against the high-explosive conventional warheads the Iraqi Scuds have carried so far, a poison gas attack would pose much greater danger, Shomron stressed.

He said Israelis will have to live with the uncertainty about Iraq's chemical weapons potential until the end of the war.

He said the IDF's assumption is that Iraq may have succeeded in developing chemical warheads for its missiles. "Inefficient and primitive as they may be, they must be taken seriously."

IDF SHELLS PLO BASES IN LEBANON

By Hugh Orgel

TEL AVIV, Feb. 3 (JTA) -- The Israel Defense Force and its allied South Lebanon Army continued to shell Palestinian bases in southern Lebanon over the weekend.

The continuous pounding with heavy artillery was in response to intensified Katyusha rocket fire almost every night last week.

The IDF and SLA shelling reportedly created havoc near Iklim al-Toufik village and at Palestine Liberation Organization bases inside the Rashidiya refugee camp east of Tyre. Some 6,000 refugees were reported to have fled the camp.

Reports from Beirut said the PLO suffered five dead and dozens wounded over the weekend.

No Katyushas were fired Saturday night. IDF sources expressed hope that the people in the path of the artillery barrages prevailed on the PLO to cease its hostile activities.

According to the Israelis, the PLO initiated the Katyusha attacks after Saddam Hussein appealed to Yasir Arafat to attack Israel in support of Iraq in the Gulf war. But the rockets fell short of Israel.

SOLIDARITY MISSIONS ARRIVING IN ISRAEL FROM AROUND THE WORLD

By Gil Sedan

JERUSALEM, Feb. 3 (JTA) -- Despite the ongoing Iraqi missile threat, Jewish leaders and non-Jewish politicians have been arriving here in recent days to demonstrate solidarity with Israel.

President Chaim Herzog met here Sunday with a delegation of 1,300 French Jews who arrived last Thursday on five flights from Paris and Nice. They were by far the largest group from any country to arrive here since Israel came under Scud missile attack two weeks ago, but they were no means the only group.

Herzog also met Sunday with Mayor David Dinkins of New York, who flew to Israel on a personal mission of good will and solidarity.

Dinkins, New York's first black mayor, was accompanied on his three-day visit by Rep. Charles Rangel (D-N.Y.), a prominent member of the Congressional Black Caucus.

A number of Jewish groups have been arriving regularly for meetings with Israeli leaders and tours of missile damage sites.

A 42-member Hadassah delegation, led by Carmela Kalmanson, president of the women's Zionist organization, wound up a four-day visit over the weekend. Hadassah held its midwinter board meeting in Jerusalem instead of Washington, where it had been scheduled originally.

Kent Schiner, president of B'nai B'rith International, arrived in Israel on the last leg of a 17-day B'nai B'rith mission that included stops in Eastern European capitals.

A delegation of nine public figures from Czechoslovakia arrived Sunday on a solidarity visit. It included members of Parliament, the chancellor of Prague University, the president of the Writers Association and several members of the clergy.

30 Rabbis From A Dozen Nations

An international group of 30 rabbis from nearly a dozen countries was expected Monday on a visit organized by the World Zionist Organization's Bureau for Spiritual Services.

Among them are the chief rabbis of communities in Argentina, Uruguay, Ecuador, Colombia, Britain, Austria, Italy, Sweden, Greece, Turkey and South Africa.

They will hold several sessions on the subject of "spiritual leadership at a time of crisis" and will outline their individual communities' plans to assist Israel.

The mass delegation of French Jews has experienced three air raid alerts since its arrival on a five-day visit. The group is led by the chief rabbi of France, Joseph Sitruk, and Paris Chief Rabbi Alain Goldmann.

A week earlier, Jean Kahn, president of CRIF, the representative body of French Jewish organizations, led a group of French political figures on a goodwill visit to Israel.

Another solidarity visit was made by a group of French Socialists, led by former Prime Minister Pierre Mauroy.

Top Anglo-Jewish fund-raisers and religious leaders were in Israel last week on a five-day solidarity mission led by Sir Trevor Chinn, president of the Joint Israel Appeal.

Chinn was accompanied by Britain's chief rabbi, Lord Immanuel Jakobovits, Chief Rabbi-elect Jonathan Sacks and the Israeli ambassador to London, Yoav Biran.

JERUSALEM COURT CUTS DETENTION OF PALESTINIAN ACTIVIST BY HALF

By Gil Sedan

JERUSALEM, Feb. 3 (JTA) -- The Jerusalem District Court on Sunday reduced by half the six-month administrative detention order against Dr. Sari Nusseibeh, a leading Palestinian nationalist alleged by the Israeli military authorities to have passed intelligence to Iraq.

The move took the security establishment by surprise inasmuch as Israeli jurists have rarely intervened against military decisions to exercise punitive measures against Palestinian activists.

But the authorities apparently will not appeal the court's ruling.

Sympathizers with the 41-year-old academician seized upon the court's action as proof that Nusseibeh was detained Jan. 29 for political not security reasons.

A statement issued by the Israeli movement Peace Now noted that the court reduced Nusseibeh's detention after studying the classified material alleged to incriminate him.

The fact the authorities accepted the decision without appeal proved they had no "substantive case" against Nusseibeh, Peace Now said.

But Danny Naveh, media spokesman for Defense Minister Moshe Arens, who signed the detention order, said the defense authorities stood by their charge that Nusseibeh maintained contact "with an official Iraqi element and with Palestine Liberation Organization activists who were trying to obtain intelligence information for Iraq."

He said in the course of those contacts, Nusseibeh passed on war-related information.

The Oxford-educated lecturer at Bir Zeit University in the West Bank, which has been closed since the intifada began three years ago, was accused by Israel of letting the Iraqis know where their Scud missiles landed.

Police Question Another Activist

Naveh said the defense authorities would now review the feasibility of pressing formal charges against Nusseibeh while he is serving his three-month detention.

According to Naveh, the decision not to try him for his alleged contacts with "hostile elements" was made for security reasons. A trial might have exposed "legal sources," he said.

Administrative detention, a holdover from the emergency regulations of the British Mandate, permit a suspect to be kept in custody for up to six months at a time with neither trial nor specific charges.

Justice Vardi Seiler, president of the court, did not comment on the quality of evidence against Nusseibeh. He expressed hope, however, that the Persian Gulf war would be over by the time the Palestinian activist completed his term and therefore "the purpose of the detention would be achieved."

Jerusalem police, meanwhile, questioned another prominent Palestinian activist, Faisal Husseini, for two hours Friday. They said it had nothing to do with Nusseibeh's arrest.

Husseini was grilled for allegedly trying to bribe and pressure witnesses to the Oct. 8 Temple Mount riots, when Israeli border police killed at least 17 Palestinian rock-throwers. The police said he is suspected of having used "threats and extortion" to influence the testimony of Arab eyewitnesses. They said witnesses admitted giving false testimony under threats.

ISRAELI CONDUCT IN TERRITORIES CRITICIZED BY U.S., BUT IMPROVED

By David Friedman

WASHINGTON, Feb. 3 (JTA) -- The State Department's annual report on human rights has again criticized Israel's handling of the unrest in the West Bank and Gaza Strip.

Specifically, the report faulted Israel for travel bans, deportations of Palestinian leaders, administrative detention, the prevention of family reunions, and the closing of Palestinian universities and businesses.

But Richard Schifter, assistant secretary of state for human rights and humanitarian affairs, told reporters Friday that there had been a decrease in clashes between the Israel Defense Force and Palestinians because last spring the IDF began limiting its patrols to major roads.

These improvements deteriorated during the last three months of 1990 because of increasing violence.

The report pointed out that 165 Palestinians were killed by other Palestinians as compared to the 130 Palestinians killed by Israeli forces.

The survey of 168 countries, which was submitted to Congress on Jan. 31, found Iraq to be one of the worst human rights abusers in the world, Schifter said. Its poor record was compounded by atrocities committed after Iraq invaded Kuwait, the report said.

But the report also cited Syria, one of the U.S. Gulf allies, as a major abuser of human rights, with such practices as "torture, arbitrary arrest and detention, and denial of freedom of speech, press association and the right of citizens to change their government."

In Saudi Arabia, the study found discrimination against women and foreign workers, torture and mistreatment of prisoners and restrictions on freedom of religion, press and political practices.

The report also found abuses in Kuwait before the Iraqi invasion, including "restrictions on freedom of assembly and speech, the rights of citizens to change their government, women's and workers' rights, and instances of arbitrary arrest, mistreatment of prisoners and lack of due process in trials of security cases."

While Egypt has a better record than most Arab countries, the report does cite its holding of political prisoners, the torturing of detainees and the persecution of Islamic fundamentalists.

U.S. WARNS U.N. HUMAN RIGHTS PANEL

By Tamar Levy

GENEVA, Feb. 3 (JTA) -- The United States has warned the U.N. Human Rights Commission it will not support "one-sided resolutions which single out the policies of Israel in the occupied territories and fail to call for equal restraint by other parties in respecting the personal safety and other human rights of Israeli citizens."

But Kenneth Blackwell, U.S. representative to the commission, now holding its annual six-week meeting here, reiterated the American belief that "settlement activity in the occupied territories is an obstacle to the achievement of a just and lasting peace."

"We have repeatedly urged the government of Israel to refrain from establishing more settlements or expanding existing settlements," he said.

The American delegate nevertheless called attention to the "very real and serious security concerns which Israel faces."

THE JEWS OF ETHIOPIA

RESUMPTION OF RELATIONS WITH ISRAEL HAS BROUGHT NEW HOPE, NEW HARDSHIPS [Part 2 Of A Series]

By Gil Sedan

ADDIS ABABA, Ethiopia -- Parallel lines run between the Exodus of the Children of Israel from Egypt 3,300 years ago and the exodus of their descendants from Ethiopia.

Like their forefathers, the Ethiopian Jews left their homes for the Promised Land with the belief that there they would find the remedy to all their troubles. Jewish advocacy groups and humanitarian organizations from the United States urged them to rush, pack their belongings and hit the road.

The road has proved harder than expected. Some long for the fleshpots of the old country. But it is too late. The old days of the Jewish presence in Gondar province are gone forever. There is only one destination now: Israel.

History will judge whether Ethiopia's Jews were rushed out of their native villages too early, whether they should have waited until their departure could have been coordinated better with the Ethiopian authorities.

For years, the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee has operated in Gondar on a non-sectarian basis, extending help to the Jews as well as to the local non-Jewish population.

Ideally, the organization -- which has enjoyed the full trust of the Ethiopian authorities throughout the eight years of its work in Gondar -- would have continued its work in the region.

But reality has dictated otherwise. In November 1989, Ethiopia and Israel re-established diplomatic relations, which had been severed in 1977. The Israeli flag was once again raised on top the embassy in the Shola neighborhood of Addis Ababa.

The reopening of the embassy speeded up the influx of the Ethiopian Jews into Addis Ababa. The refugees thought that within a matter of days they would continue on to Israel.

Hundreds Became Thousands

But when the Ethiopian government did not rush to open the gates, the refugees from Gondar were stuck in the capital. From hundreds they became thousands, and soon there was a housing shortage. They chose to settle wherever they found a roof over their heads. The overcrowding, poor sanitary conditions and hardships of the road have caused illness.

A small team of experts from the Joint has met the challenge. They established a medical program which within months cut the mortality rate from 39 deaths last July to 13 in November.

JDC also runs workshops to keep adults busy. One involves taking empty food bags and converting them into mattresses. And an Israeli non-profit organization called Almaya, which receives United Jewish Appeal funds through the Joint, has set up a community center on the grounds of the Israeli Embassy.

The story of Halen Genatu Mola is the story of one person who was seeking help and found it on the grounds of the Israeli Embassy.

Halen, 16, showed up at the embassy wrapped in a white shawl and said she had just come from Gondar, with no relatives whatsoever. Her parents had left three years ago and gone to Israel, she said. They left her behind, instructing her to set out on the road a few weeks later.

But when she showed up at Gondar airport, she said, she was arrested and put in jail for an entire year. She was released as unexpectedly as she was arrested and had been on the road ever since, until arriving in Addis Ababa.

Her story sounded so incredible that Malka Shabtai, in charge of an outreach program run by Almaya, was sent to check it out. There had been others who had falsely claimed to have relatives in Israel.

A Telephone Call And Tears

It was difficult to get information out of Halen. She seemed to want to conceal who had helped her out in the difficult times she had endured.

But as she pulled out letters her mother, Woynichet Genatu Mola, had sent her from the Kiryat Gat immigrant absorption center in Israel, her story suddenly became more credible.

Though Halen's mother was not Jewish, she had gone to Israel with her husband. Why they had left the girl behind was unclear.

While much remained shrouded in mystery, the fact that Halen had a family member at an absorption center in Israel was the only thing that mattered.

The circle was quickly closed. Malka spoke to Benny, an official at the Israeli Embassy who had worked at the Kiryat Gat absorption center. Yes, he knew the mother. Yes, he knew that her daughter Halen was left behind in Ethiopia.

The next morning Halen turned up at the embassy, where she received a surprise. Benny picked up the phone and dialed Israel. Within minutes, Halen's mother was on the other line, speaking to her daughter.

When the telephone conversation was over, Halen's frozen face was changed. Suddenly the young woman who had tried so hard to impress the Israeli authorities with her maturity burst into tears. She was herself again: a frightened, lonely little girl.

Malka promised her that soon she would be on the plane to Israel.

An Uncertain Future

But unfortunately it is not up to Malka to decide. That is the prerogative of the Ethiopian authorities, who are presently engaged in intensive negotiations with Israel and the United States to work out a deal in which Ethiopia would allow more Jews to join families in Israel, in exchange for increased Israeli and American aid to Ethiopia's ailing economy.

Whether those talks will produce more exit visas remains an open question.

The political uncertainties are plenty. Officials at the embassy and at the clinic work around the clock to achieve as much as possible, as fast as possible. Past experience has shown that suddenly, without prior warning, everything can come to a standstill.

The good news is the knowledge that even if all hell breaks loose, the JDC -- with its excellent record of good relations with the Ethiopian government -- will remain in the area, to deal with whomever is left behind.

The sad ending to this story is the illusion so widely spread among the people stranded in Addis Ababa that once they come to Israel, all problems will be solved. The difficult truth is that they will merely enter a new phase. It will take years, not merely a four-hour flight, before the Ethiopian Jews make the perfect landing in Israel.