

**U.S. DEPLORES ISRAELI DECISION
TO DEPORT PALESTINIANS FROM GAZA**

By Howard Rosenberg

WASHINGTON, March 25 (JTA) -- As expected, the State Department on Monday deplored Israel's plans to deport four Palestinians from the Gaza Strip and urged it to rescind the order.

Such deportations "cannot possibly contribute to the development of a peace process," said State Department spokeswoman Margaret Tutwiler.

But she added that, based on the deportation plans alone, she could not draw any conclusions about Israel's receptivity toward new U.S. peace efforts.

The four Palestinians, all residents of the Gaza Strip, have been described by the Israel Defense Force as hard-core terrorists involved in Al Fatah, the military faction of the Palestine Liberation Organization controlled by Yasir Arafat.

"Deportations are a violation of the Fourth Geneva Convention as it pertains to the treatment of inhabitants of the occupied territories," Tutwiler said. "The United States believes that charges of wrongdoing should be brought in a court of law, based on evidence to be argued in a public trial."

The United Nations also urged Israel on Monday to reconsider its deportation decision. Secretary-General Javier Perez de Cuellar "hopes that all sides will refrain from acts that can serve only to heighten tension in the area" and undermine confidence, said a statement issued by his spokesman.

The United States protested the decision in a conversation between John Kelly, assistant secretary of state for Near Eastern and South Asian affairs, and Zalman Shoval, the Israeli ambassador. In addition, William Brown, the U.S. ambassador to Israel, spoke with Israeli Foreign Ministry officials.

Report On Settlements Issued

But deportations are by no means the only grip the United States has with Israeli policy in the administered territories. It also considers Israeli settlement growth beyond its pre-1967 borders as "an obstacle to peace."

Last week, the State Department issued a report saying there had been a 10 percent increase in each of the last few years in the number of Jews settling in East Jerusalem, the Gaza Strip, the Golan Heights and the West Bank.

The report was mandated in last year's foreign aid bill by Rep. David Obey (D-Wis.), chairman of the House Appropriations subcommittee on foreign operations.

But it is expected to be "kept on the shelf" until Israel makes a formal request to the Bush administration and Congress for more U.S.-guaranteed loans for Soviet Jewish housing, which it has agreed not to request until September at the earliest.

In the interim, one of the report's eye-catching figures is that in 1990, 5,830 newly arrived Soviet Jewish emigres elected to reside in East Jerusalem, compared with 3,000 others who chose to live in the West Bank or Golan Heights.

The United States does not recognize Israeli sovereignty over East Jerusalem, which Israel annexed shortly after its capture from Jordan in the Six-Day War of 1967.

The report also says that "while the immigrants going to the territories other than East Jerusalem constitute only 1.2 percent of the 1990 immigration flow from the Soviet Union, they represent approximately 20 percent of the 1990 growth in settlement population there."

The report estimates the Jewish settlement population at 90,000 on 150 settlements in the West Bank, 12,000 in 30 settlements in the Golan Heights and 3,000 in 15 settlements in the Gaza Strip.

It says that 120,000 Jews live in 12 "settlements" or "neighborhoods" in East Jerusalem and its expanded municipal boundaries.

The report observes that while "the increase in the number of new settlements has fallen off substantially since 1984," the "expansion of the Israeli presence in the occupied territories continues to grow at a faster rate than the number of new settlements would otherwise indicate."

**ISRAEL TELLS U.N. IT OPPOSES MEETING
OF SIGNATORIES TO GENEVA CONVENTION**

By Aliza Marcus

UNITED NATIONS, March 25 (JTA) -- Israel has informed the United Nations that it "categorically objects" to the idea of convening a meeting of signatories to the Fourth Geneva Convention of 1949 to discuss the treatment of Palestinians in the administered territories.

In a letter to U.N. Secretary-General Javier Perez de Cuellar, Israeli Ambassador Yoram Aridor said there is no precedent for calling such a meeting and charged this is a case of "singling out Israel."

"There is no basis in the convention for convening such a meeting, and the convention makes no reference to such proposed actions," wrote Aridor.

His letter came in response to a note Perez de Cuellar sent out earlier this month to the 164 signatories to the convention, soliciting their opinions on the feasibility of calling such a meeting.

Perez de Cuellar's action follows the unanimous adoption on Dec. 20 of a U.N. Security Council resolution calling on signatories to the convention "to ensure respect by Israel" for its "obligations under the convention."

In the same resolution, Perez de Cuellar was asked to follow up on an earlier proposal he made that the signatories to the convention meet to discuss possible action concerning Palestinians living in the territories.

Although the United States supported the resolution, U.S. officials have nonetheless expressed strong reservations with the idea of holding such a meeting.

The Fourth Geneva Convention regulates the treatment of civilians living under occupation. Although Israel has not accepted formal application of the convention to the Palestinians living in the administered territories, Israeli officials say they apply the humanitarian provisions of the convention in principle.

Last fall, Israel came under repeated criticism in the Security Council, with U.S. backing, after 17 Palestinians were fatally shot by Israeli border police during rioting on Jerusalem's Temple Mount on Oct. 8.

Three resolutions and one non-binding council statement were passed during that period, as the United States struggled to keep the focus on the Gulf crisis.

New Mideast Envoy Appointed

Aridor's letter pointed out that since the end of World War II, millions of civilians have been killed, and millions more wounded and forced to flee their homes, but the contracting parties have never met to discuss "what amount to genuine breaches" of the Geneva Convention.

"The unprecedented call to convene the contracting parties of the convention is a dangerous move to politicize an international humanitarian law instrument and severely undermines its effectiveness," he wrote.

"Israel is in regular contact with the International Committee of the Red Cross personnel on an ongoing basis to enable them to fulfill their functions under the Fourth Geneva Convention."

Meanwhile, Perez de Cuellar has appointed Edouard Brunner as the new special representative to the Middle East. Brunner, who will continue serving as Switzerland's ambassador to Washington, replaces veteran Swedish diplomat Gunner Jarring, 83, who was originally appointed to the post in 1967.

Brunner's mandate, like Jarring's, falls under Security Council Resolution 242. This oft-cited resolution, passed shortly after the 1967 Six-Day War, called for the withdrawal of Israeli forces from occupied territory and affirmed the right of every state to live in peace within secure and recognized borders.

This was later reaffirmed after the 1973 Yom Kippur War, when the Security Council passed Resolution 338, which calls for the implementation of Resolution 242 and negotiations for a lasting peace in the region.

Since then, the only formal peace reached was between Israel and Egypt, which signed a peace treaty under U.S. guidance in 1979.

How active a role Brunner will take in the peace process remains to be seen, given the current involvement of the United States in trying to promote a solution.

IDF KILLS THREE ARMED INFILTRATORS PLANNING ATTACK IN NORTHERN ISRAEL By Hugh Orgel

TEL AVIV, March 25 (JTA) -- Three heavily armed Palestinians planning a terrorist attack on Israeli settlements were killed in the southern Lebanon security zone Sunday during a clash with soldiers of the Israel Defense Force's crack Golani Brigade.

There were no Israeli casualties.

The encounter occurred in the western sector of the zone, just a mile north of Moshav Zar'it in Upper Galilee.

A Palestine Liberation Organization spokesman in the Lebanese port city of Sidon admitted that the heavily armed infiltrators planned to attack an Israeli settlement.

They were identified as members of the Palestine Liberation Front, a component of the PLO led by Mohammed (Abul) Abbas.

The IDF said its patrol spotted the three

gunmen and opened fire, killing one with the first burst. The second gunman fired a hand-held LAW missile at the patrol before he was killed.

The third took cover and fired another LAW missile but was killed when the Israeli soldiers charged his position.

The patrol was personally congratulated by Maj. Gen. Yossi Peled, commander of the northern sector, for the exemplary manner in which it executed its mission.

Peled, who announced his retirement over the weekend after 30 years in the IDF, said the clash cast doubts on the veracity of PLO leader Yasir Arafat.

Arafat, who lost credibility by backing Saddam Hussein of Iraq, announced that he had ordered his men to cease attacking Israel from Lebanese soil after the Persian Gulf war ended with Hussein's defeat.

But Sunday's encounter means either that Arafat's statement was untrue or that he can no longer control his own people, Peled said.

VETERAN IDF COMMANDER TO RETIRE

By Hugh Orgel

TEL AVIV, March 25 (JTA) -- Maj. Gen. Yossi Peled, a veteran of 30 years of military service, announced over the weekend that he will retire from the Israel Defense Force next month.

Peled, who commands the northern sector, covering Israel's borders with Lebanon and Syria, rejected an offer to become commander in chief of the IDF's ground forces.

He wrote to Defense Minister Moshe Arens and the IDF chief of staff, Lt. Gen. Dan Shomron, that the time has come to appoint younger officers to the higher ranks.

But Peled was believed to be irked for being passed over to succeed Shomron, whose tenure as chief of staff expires April 1.

Peled said he plans to study abroad for a year and take a job in private business when he returns to Israel.

He will be replaced as commander of the northern sector by Maj. Gen. Yitzhak Mordechai, who presently commands the central sector, which includes the West Bank. Mordechai's successor there will be Maj. Gen. Danny Yatom.

STREET TO COMMEMORATE 'DESERT STORM'

By David Landau

JERUSALEM, March 25 (JTA) -- The Jerusalem municipality has decided to name a street or square in the city after Operation Desert Storm, the code name for the U.S.-led military operation that drove Iraqi forces out of Kuwait.

The decision was made unanimously by the City Council's names committee over the weekend. The full council is expected to approve without dissent.

The street or square selected has not been announced, but a naming ceremony is expected to be held in the next few weeks.

The original proposal to name a Jerusalem site after Lt. Gen. H. Norman Schwarzkopf, the commander in chief of U.S. forces in the Persian Gulf, was abandoned when city officials pointed out it was not a custom to name streets after living persons.

"Desert Storm" was proposed instead by Nissan Harpaz, chairman of the names committee. The suggestion was enthusiastically accepted by the other members.

GERMANS AND JEWS ARE IN DILEMMA OVER SOVIET JEWS WHO LEFT ISRAEL

By David Kantor

BONN, March 25 (JTA) -- German officials are in a dilemma and the Jewish community has been embarrassed by some 300 Soviet Jews who came to Berlin from Israel and refuse to return there.

They cannot claim refugee status, because they carry Israeli identity papers and, for all practical purposes, are citizens of Israel, where they immigrated last year from the Soviet Union.

Municipal officials are saying they have no choice but to take care of them, because they will not change their minds.

But Jewish community leaders say allowing them to stay would set a dangerous precedent.

For one thing, it could prejudice the visa applications other Jews are making at German consulates in the Soviet Union, they told a local radio station over the weekend.

Heinz Galinski, leader of the German Jewish community, has tried to convince them to return to Tel Aviv. He said their behavior is jeopardizing German-Israeli relations and doing harm to the German-Jewish community, but to no avail.

The Soviet Jews say they left Israel when the Persian Gulf war started in January to escape Iraqi missile attacks. Beyond that they have complaints about Israel and say they will not return.

Some members say they were mistreated. Some accuse the Israeli authorities of forcing newcomers to settle in the administered territories. Others say Israel did not offer job opportunities for them and their families.

One woman said she spoke a little German and could master the language quickly, whereas she had no desire or ability to study Hebrew, which is completely unfamiliar to her.

Some members of the group expressed an affinity for German culture. Others said they were used to Europe's temperate climate and could not take Israel's hot weather.

Galinski angrily dismissed the complaints and called their accusations unjustified.

Strain On Israeli-German Ties

The situation presents a delicate issue for German-Israeli relations. At Israel's prodding, Germany has adopted a restrictive immigration policy toward Soviet Jews.

While those who arrived here up to last month will be allowed to remain, no more will be admitted unless they formally apply for visas at German consulates in the Soviet Union. Only applicants who can prove German ethnic background or who have relatives in Germany will be accepted.

The policy was affirmed with Israeli Foreign Minister David Levy when he visited Bonn a week ago.

The Israelis are touchy about Soviet Jews who show preference for other countries. They blame those countries for offering inducements.

The Israelis reportedly advised the Germans to make clear to the Soviet Jews that they have no chance for legal status in Germany or access to financial or social assistance.

"This in itself would convince them to board planes to Tel Aviv," an Israeli official was quoted as saying.

But according to German diplomatic quarters here and in Berlin, there are no plans to evacuate the 300 Jews by force.

ISRAELI AUTHORITIES ARREST COUPLE LONG WANTED IN U.S. FOR BOMBINGS

By David Landau

JERUSALEM, March 25 (JTA) -- Israel may finally comply with a longstanding U.S. request for the extradition of Rochelle and Robert Manning, an American Jewish couple suspected in the mailbomb killing of an employee of a Los Angeles computer firm.

The Mannings, who are active in Kach, the anti-Arab movement founded by the late Rabbi Meir Kahane, were arrested Sunday at their home in the West Bank settlement of Kiryat Arba and will be extradited soon to the United States, Israel Radio reported.

The couple is wanted for the killing of Patricia Wilkerson, a secretary for Prowest Computer Corp. of Los Angeles. Wilkerson was killed in July 1980 when she plugged in a device that had been described as a new invention but was actually a bomb.

No motive was given for the bombing at the time. But it was reported here Monday that the company was in competition with the firm with which Rochelle Manning was then associated.

The couple has also been linked to the unsolved murder case of Arab-American activist Alex Odeh, the regional head of the American-Arab Anti-Discrimination Committee who was killed in October 1985 when a bomb exploded in the group's Santa Ana, Calif., office.

The Mannings have also been tied to the bombings of suspected Nazi war criminals in New Jersey and New York.

One of the men, Tscherim Soobzokov, died of his wounds. The other, Elmars Spogis, an alleged wartime police chief in Latvia, escaped injury when a bomb exploded outside his house in Brentwood, N.Y. Another person was injured.

In Washington, however, the State Department said Monday that the United States was seeking the Mannings' extradition in connection with Wilkerson's death. Department spokeswoman Margaret Tutwiler said the United States was working closely with Israel on the case.

Kach Movement Picks New Leader

Michael Ahern, assistant inspector at the Los Angeles division of the U.S. Postal Service, said the extradition request had been made in July 1980. The request "is for the homicide of Wilkerson," Ahern said in a telephone interview.

The Israeli Justice Ministry was reported to be examining the extradition request, based on new evidence. The Mannings were due for a court hearing later this week over whether Israel could retain them in custody.

The Kach movement said it would try to block the extradition.

Israel normally resists extraditing Jews for criminal activity abroad. But the Mannings' alleged offenses occurred before they became citizens of Israel.

Meanwhile, the Kach movement has announced the election of a new chairman to replace Kahane, who was assassinated in New York last Nov. 5.

He is Avraham Toledano, a 33-year-old engineer from Kiryat Arba who says he could never fill Kahane's shoes but will be an organizer for the movement.

(Contributing to this report were JTA correspondent Howard Rosenberg in Washington and staff writer Susan Birnbaum in New York.)

WALESA WILL FIGHT U.N. RESOLUTION BUT IS VAGUE ON ANTI-SEMITISM BATTLE

By Debra Nussbaum Cohen

NEW YORK, March 25 (JTA) -- Polish President Lech Walesa pledged Monday to work to overturn the infamous 1975 U.N. General Assembly resolution denigrating Zionism as a form of racism.

He also vowed to extend government protection to Jewish sites in Poland.

Walesa said he would raise the issue of overturning the Zionism resolution with U.N. Secretary-General Javier Perez de Cuellar, with whom he met following a gathering here with several dozen American Jewish leaders under the auspices of the World Jewish Congress.

Poland joined those supporting the resolution when it came up for a vote on Nov. 10, 1975.

Walesa also said that a law to protect Jewish sites, including synagogues and cemeteries, is currently being considered by the Polish parliament.

"If I had it in front of me, I would sign it (into law) right now," he said.

Walesa, the Solidarity trade union leader who got his start in the Gdansk shipyards, arrived here on the last leg of his first trip to the United States as a head of state.

On Sunday, he was in Chicago, where he met at the Polish Consulate with a delegation of American Jewish Committee leaders. He invited the group's president, Sholom Comay, and its director of interreligious affairs, Rabbi A. James Rudin, to Warsaw to begin a more extensive exchange of concerns.

The group hopes to discuss the findings of a survey it has just completed on Polish attitudes toward Jews and Judaism.

'If I Could Be A Jew'

Walesa also met last week in Washington with a group of Holocaust survivors at a meeting arranged by the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Council.

At his appearance here, the Polish president asked American Jews to "go forward, do not look back into darkness" in their relationship with Poland.

Sam Bloch, senior vice president of the American Gathering of Jewish Holocaust Survivors, urged Walesa to "personally speak out to the Polish nation about repeated acts of bigotry," and "to teach them that hatred of Jews is un-Christian in the spirit of Vatican Council II."

Walesa dismissed Bloch's suggestions as "a politician's slogans" and then asked the Jewish leaders to "give me ways of solving this, and I will do it, I promise you."

While Walesa recently announced the creation of a presidential task force to combat anti-Semitism, he did not answer a question about what specific first steps it will take.

He promised to "oppose anti-Semitism with all my authority," but was clearly frustrated when several American Jewish leaders asked for a more concrete illustration of his plans.

"I will be where anti-Semitism is. I cannot give you more," the Polish president said. "If I could be a Jew, frankly, I would, and I would shout to all the world, 'I'm proud to be from the chosen people.'"

To that, one Jewish leader said, "You wouldn't want to. It's not easy to be a Jew."

"It's not easy to be a Pole either," Walesa shot back.

A DETERMINED GERMAN PROSECUTOR ASKS COURT TO RESUME NAZI TRIAL

By David Kantor

BONN, March 25 (JTA) -- A tenacious prosecutor in Hanover has asked the court to resume the trial of a former SS officer accused of murdering Jews.

The decade-long proceedings were suspended March 18 on grounds of an alleged technical error in jury selection when the trial started in 1981.

The prosecutor, Manfred Endler, said Monday that his office asked that the trial be continued because of the importance of the issues involved.

The defendant, Heinrich Niemeyer, 70, who led an elite SS unit during World War II, is charged with shooting 15 Jews to death while they were being transferred to Auschwitz from another concentration camp in January 1945.

Niemeyer was convicted of murder in 1979 for 10 of the killings. But the verdict was overturned by the appeals court in 1980 on grounds that the trial judges failed to prove the shootings were murder rather than manslaughter.

The new trial, one of the longest Nazi trials in history, was called off after 331 days of proceedings.

The reason was the discovery that some courts in the Hanover area once failed to follow legal guidelines for the selection of jurors, known as assessors under the German legal system.

The assessors are chosen at random from the electoral lists to sit alongside the judges as a form of jury.

Until Endler's request, legal sources were convinced that the proceedings against Niemeyer would never resume because of his failing health.

FIGHTS ERUPT IN PARIS COURT WHERE REVISIONIST TRIAL HELD

PARIS, March 25 (JTA) -- Pandemonium broke out in the Paris Court of Justice last Friday where Holocaust revisionist Robert Faurisson is being sued for falsifying history and inciting racial hatred.

The self-styled historian, who is in fact a lecturer in literature, drew shouts of "liar" and "bastard" from spectators when he claimed that gas chambers never existed.

Fistfights broke out. A man shouted that his whole family had been gassed and demanded to testify. He was removed by order of the judge.

Faurisson is being sued by several organizations of wartime deportees because of an interview published in an extreme right-wing monthly last September.

He contended in it that the gas chambers were used for "disinfection" and that the Final Solution, the Nazi plan to exterminate Jews, Gypsies and other minorities, did not exist.

The plaintiffs charged Faurisson was using the court as a forum to propagate his views. They walked out when the judge ruled he had the right to state his case.

Faurisson wrote the foreword to the "Leuchter Report," a revisionist polemic by Fred Leuchter, a Boston-area man on trial in Massachusetts for practicing engineering without a license.

Leuchter, whose business is selling execution machinery, including gas chambers, to states with capital punishment, was commissioned to visit certain death camp sites and write a report in support of Ernst Zundel, a German-born Canadian convicted in 1988 for spreading "false news."