

**MURDER OF SETTLER IN THE WEST BANK
HEIGHTENS ISRAELI SECURITY CONCERNS**
By Gil Sedan

JERUSALEM, March 27 (JTA) -- The murder of a Jewish settler Tuesday night by Arab gunmen in the West Bank has heightened concern here about the rising level of random violence perpetrated by Palestinians against Jewish civilians.

It has also enraged Jewish settlers, who contend the Israel Defense Force is doing little to rectify the deteriorating security situation. They favor swift expulsion of Palestinian leaders.

The victim of Tuesday's attack was Yair Mendelsohn, a 30-year-old father of three who lived in the West Bank settlement of Dolev, near Ramallah.

Mendelsohn was driving home from Jerusalem when his car was ambushed with a spray of bullets. He lost control of the vehicle, which crashed into a rock, killing him instantly. Rumors that he was dragged from the car and beaten to death were proved untrue upon investigation.

The incident was the first since the Persian Gulf war ended in which Palestinians attacked Jews with firearms.

But the IDF chief of staff, Lt. Gen. Dan Shomron, said he did not consider it a new phase of the intifada, the Palestinian uprising in the territories that began in December 1987.

An IDF dragnet Tuesday night combed the countryside around the Ramallah-Dolev road and the nearby Arab village of Ein Kiniya. The search for the killers, believed to be two men, continued Wednesday. But no arrests were reported.

Ramallah, one of the largest Arab cities in the territory, was put under a general curfew, as were the surrounding Arab villages.

But Jewish settlers were not satisfied.

Yehiel Leiter, head of the Judea and Samaria Settlers Council, demanded stronger security measures, beginning with the deportation of the intifada leadership.

Preparations For Land Day

The IDF rejected settler complaints that the latest killing was the result of inadequate security in the territory.

Maj. Gen. Danny Yatom, the newly appointed commander of the central region, pointed out that the dozens of roads in the West Bank cannot all be patrolled by soldiers at all times.

According to Leiter, the only proper response to the murder is to expand the number of settlements in the territories and increase the number of settlers.

Meanwhile, tension rose as Arabs in the territories and Israel proper prepared to observe Land Day this Saturday. The occasion is the anniversary of the forcible seizure of Arab land in Galilee by the IDF in 1975, in which a number of Arabs were killed.

The observance has been non-violent in recent years, and Israeli police maintained a low profile on the outskirts of Israeli Arab villages.

This year, however, Police Inspector General Ya'acov Turner reserved the right to send his men into the villages. He dismissed Arab arguments that the change of policy would cause needless friction.

**NEWS ANALYSIS:
DEMAND FOR TOUGH SECURITY MEASURES
TEMPERED BY U.S. PUSH FOR 'GESTURES'**
By David Landau

JERUSALEM, March 27 (JTA) -- The Israeli government is facing seemingly irreconcilable pressures as it attempts to deal with the rapidly deteriorating security situation in the administered territories and Israel proper.

While its own increasingly vocal right wing is demanding tough new measures against Palestinian troublemakers, the Bush administration in Washington is urging Israel ever more forcefully to extend "confidence-building" gestures to the Palestinians to advance the peace process.

The policy-making Inner Cabinet met for three hours Wednesday to discuss possible new measures, but it reached no decisions.

Defense Minister Moshe Arens and Police Minister Ronni Milo were instructed to draft a joint set of proposals to deal with the latest spate of Arab violence against Jews, to be submitted to the Inner Cabinet for consideration at its next session.

The ministers met Wednesday under the additional strain of Jewish settler rage at the ambush murder of a 30-year-old settler, Yair Mendelsohn, whose car was riddled with bullets Tuesday night near Ramallah, in the West Bank.

That outrage followed a wave of knife attacks by Arabs on Jews in Israel proper, which has resulted in five fatalities this month alone.

The most recent of the fatal attacks occurred March 21, when Mordechai Reuchman, a 70-year-old furniture dealer in Hadera, was stabbed to death in his shop.

Arens And Milo At Odds

The spate of violence has prompted demands for tough new security measures from right-wing Cabinet ministers.

At Wednesday's meeting, Yuval Ne'eman of Tehiya and Rehavam Ze'evi of the Moledet party demanded the immediate expulsion of 1,000 Palestinians suspected of violence, along with their families and all known leaders of the intifada.

Ne'eman, who is minister of science and energy, referred specifically to Faisal Husseini, the East Jerusalem activist who headed a delegation of 10 local Palestinian leaders at a March 12 meeting in Jerusalem with U.S. Secretary of State James Baker.

Ze'evi, who holds no portfolio, delivered a scathing attack on government security policy. His party's platform favors expelling the 1.75 million Palestinians from the territories.

Housing Minister Ariel Sharon of Likud took the occasion to lambast Defense Ministry policy, with the clear implication that Arens should resign.

The outspoken Sharon, who was himself forced to resign as defense minister in 1982 during the Lebanon war, has made no secret that he aspires to Arens' job.

Arens, meanwhile, is reported not to see eye-to-eye with Police Minister Milo on how to protect Israeli citizens inside their own country.

Milo has proposed that all unmarried Palestinian males under 30 be barred from working in

or entering Israel proper from the administered territories.

According to Milo, most of the assailants in the recent knife attacks fit that category. He has the backing of Police Inspector General Ya'acov Terner.

But the Defense Ministry and other security agencies oppose the idea.

IDF officers propose a drastic tightening of controls at crossing-points on the "Green Line" and a concomitant crackdown on Palestinians working inside Israel without the requisite IDF-issued passes. They would also crack down on Israeli employers who persist in ignoring the requirement for work passes.

But restrictions that would emphasize the separateness of Israel and the territories make many coalition politicians uncomfortable, particularly the Greater Israel advocates, who believe the West Bank and Gaza Strip are as much part of Israel as Tel Aviv.

'Confidence-Building Steps'

Israel's internal conflict is overshadowed by a larger one involving the United States, its primary source of political and economic support, which has a Middle East agenda of its own.

Shamir irritated Washington when he dismissed Faisal Husseini and his colleagues, the group received by Baker, as creatures of the Palestine Liberation Organization unfit to talk to Israel.

That triggered an angry private responses from the Bush administration. The American attitude was very much in evidence, according to Israeli media reports of a conversation Tuesday between Baker and the Israeli ambassador, Zalman Shoval.

According to the reports, Baker and his aides indicated they saw the Palestinian group as suitable future negotiators with both the United States and Israel.

The media reports said Baker is pushing, through Shoval, for significant Israeli "confidence-building steps" toward the Palestinians -- precisely the reverse of the kind of steps that the Cabinet ministers were contemplating at their meeting here Wednesday.

Shoval, on home leave for Passover, was non-committal. The Israeli media nevertheless quoted U.S. officials in Washington to the effect that Baker's meeting with him was one of the opening shots in the administration's diplomatic effort to revive the peace process in the wake of the Gulf war.

U.N. BODY DISCUSSING STATEMENT DEPLORING ISRAELI EXPULSION ORDER By Aliza Marcus

UNITED NATIONS, March 27 (JTA) -- Israel's decision to deport four Palestinians from the administered Gaza Strip is expected to come under criticism from the Security Council, which held meetings this week to discuss issuing a non-binding statement on the action from the council president.

The deportation order, which is being appealed by the four, was also criticized by the U.S. State Department, which said Wednesday that the United States would be willing to support a non-binding U.N. statement, depending on the exact wording.

During informal Security Council consultations Tuesday, the 15 member states were unable

to agree upon a statement, and further consultations were scheduled for late Wednesday. Austrian Ambassador Peter Hohenfellner is serving this month as president of the council.

An initial draft copy of a proposed statement deplores the deportation order, calling it "a violation of the Geneva Convention Relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War of Aug. 12, 1949."

The proposed statement also calls on Israel to halt deportations and to ensure the return of people who already have been deported.

If the deportation of the four men is carried out, Israel will have expelled 66 Palestinians since the start of the intifada, or Palestinian uprising.

Israeli officials have described the four men as hard-core terrorists involved in the Palestine Liberation Organization's Al Fatah movement.

Although they did appeal, Israeli courts have rarely quashed a deportation order.

The proposed U.N. statement adds that "Israel's decision to deport Palestinians at this time cannot possibly contribute to the achievement of a comprehensive, just and lasting peace in the Middle East."

Similar wording was used Monday by U.S. State Department spokeswoman Margaret Tutwiler.

JERUSALEM MAYOR WRITES TO BUSH ABOUT SOVIET JEWS LIVING IN CITY By David Landau

JERUSALEM, March 27 (JTA) -- Mayor Teddy Kollek is trying to convince the Bush administration that Soviet Jews moving into Jerusalem's new suburbs are not being "settled in the occupied territories."

Kollek disclosed Wednesday that he has written to President Bush and Secretary of State James Baker, stressing that the newcomers in Jerusalem get none of the cash incentives and other inducements the government offers Israelis to settle in the territories.

To obtain a \$400 million U.S. loan guarantee for immigrant housing, Israel pledged not to direct or encourage Soviet immigrants to settle in the territories.

But according to the U.S. government, they are settling there anyway.

The administration reported to Congress recently that 4 percent of the immigrants are settling across the "Green Line," the boundary separating the territories from Israel proper.

The figures are from Israeli government sources. Broken down into component parts, they show that 3 percent of immigrants settled in the Jerusalem suburbs.

The discrepancy lies in conflicting Israeli and American conceptions of Jerusalem's status.

Israel annexed East Jerusalem in 1967, uniting the city and incorporating it, under Israeli law, as part of Israel. But neither the United States nor any other country has recognized the annexation. Washington insists that the status of Jerusalem has to be settled in future negotiations.

Kollek said he did not dwell on their conflicting views in his correspondence with the president and secretary of state.

He said he pointed out, instead, that whereas settlers in the West Bank and Gaza Strip receive loans, grants, low-interest mortgages and significant tax breaks, residents of Jerusalem, in whatever part of the city they live, are considered under Israeli law to be living in Israel proper and get no special benefits.

SOVIET JEWS WHO CAME FROM ISRAEL ARE PERMITTED TO STAY IN BERLIN

By David Kantor

BONN, March 27 (JTA) -- The Berlin municipal authorities have decided that 300 Soviet Jews who arrived there from Israel and refuse to return may stay permanently in Berlin.

The local authorities asked Interior Minister Wolfgang Schauble to issue special permits for their absorption in Germany. The minister is expected to comply.

The Jews, who immigrated to Israel from the Soviet Union last year and lived there, some as long as 10 months, carry Israeli documents and are for all practical purposes Israeli citizens.

They arrived in Berlin in January saying they sought temporary refuge from Iraqi Scud missile attacks.

The group was supposed to return to Israel by the end of this month at the latest, when their temporary qualification for financial assistance would have expired.

But they balked, saying their experience in Israel had been unpleasant, that they were mistreated, could not find jobs, found the language too difficult and the climate too hot.

The unusual situation embarrassed German officials, since the Bonn government, prodded by Israel, recently put tight restriction on the admission of Soviet Jews.

Israel argues that no Jews are homeless because Israel is willing to absorb them.

The German Jewish community was angered by the situation. Its chairman, Heinz Galinski, rejected the complaints of the Soviet Jews and urged them to return to Tel Aviv.

He said their insistence on remaining in Germany could prejudice the chances of other Jews hoping to enter the country according to the rules.

Officially, the Bonn government will not accept Soviet Jews who come here via a third country. Those wishing to enter Germany must apply for visas at the German consulates in Soviet cities.

Germany accepts those applicants who have relatives in Germany or can prove German ethnic origin.

Until this week, the Berlin authorities said they would have no choice but to send their Soviet guests back to Israel. At the same time, they insisted their forcible expulsion was never contemplated.

SEDER PLANNED FOR IMMIGRANTS AND THOSE EN ROUTE TO ISRAEL

By Gil Sedan

JERUSALEM, March 27 (JTA) -- The seder will become an integral part of the aliyah experience for thousands of new immigrants in Israel this Passover and for others waiting at transit centers in Eastern Europe.

The Jewish Agency will hold 30 community seders all over the country for about 6,000 recent arrivals when Passover begins Friday night. Other olim will attend seders at military bases.

President Chaim Herzog on Wednesday urged Israelis to open their homes to immigrants for the seder. So far, the general public's hospitality has fallen short of expectations, according to Housing Minister Ariel Sharon, who heads the Cabinet's committee on absorption.

Herzog will personally host a Soviet immi-

grant family at his seder in the presidential residence here. His guests will be 42-year-old Boris Meusermann and his wife, Larissa, 41, both doctors; and their sons, Yevgeni, 19, a pre-college student in Jerusalem, and Alexander, 8, a second-grader at the Mevasseret Zion school.

The family has been living at the Mevasseret Zion absorption center since arriving in Israel last August.

The majority of new olim are from the Soviet Union. But the Jewish Agency has published haggadahs in eight languages.

About 2,000 of them, in Hebrew and Amharic, the language spoken by Ethiopian Jews, will be sent to Addis Ababa, to be distributed among the estimated 17,000 Jews waiting there for flights to Israel.

The Jewish Agency also plans communal seders for Israel-bound olim at transit centers in Warsaw, Budapest and Bucharest.

FORMER AIR FORCE GENERAL GETS 13-YEAR TERM, IS STRIPPED OF RANK

By Hugh Orgel

TEL AVIV, March 27 (JTA) -- A 46-year-old former Israeli air force general, Rami Dotan, was sentenced Wednesday to serve 13 years in prison, stripped of rank and dishonorably discharged under a plea bargain reached with a special Israel Defense Force court-martial at General Headquarters here.

The three senior officers who comprised the court, presided over by Brig. Gen. Nili Peled, said they signed the agreement "with a heavy heart."

They believed Dotan, whom they called a "leviathan of a criminal," deserved a much more severe punishment.

He is the highest-ranking IDF officer ever sentenced to prison.

He performed his illegal activities over a long period without regard for the public harm he was causing or the damage he was doing the reputation of the IDF, the court said.

Dotan, who held the rank of brigadier general, headed the air force purchasing branch at General Headquarters until his arrest last October.

He subsequently pleaded guilty to 12 counts of corruption, bribery, illegal acquisition of \$12 million in Defense Ministry funds and conspiracy to murder a former civilian employee of the air force procurement branch who could serve as a witness against him.

Dotan's misdeeds stemmed from his duties as chief of the air force purchasing mission in New York in the mid-1980s.

Under the plea bargain, he received a five-year suspended sentence in addition to the 13 years behind bars. He agreed not to appeal the sentence.

Another condition was the prosecution's agreement not to take legal action against Dotan's wife, who was reportedly privy to some of his illegal acts.

The deal drew public criticism. But the prosecution said it was the only way to get a secure case against Dotan, who promised to cooperate, name his accomplices and return the embezzled funds.

He is said to have returned about \$10 million. U.S. authorities are reported to have seized another \$2 million. They are reported to be investigating American contractors who allegedly took bribes from Dotan and gave kickbacks.

**BEHIND THE HEADLINES:
COMMON CONCERNS BRINGING TOGETHER
JEWS AND AN ARRAY OF ETHNIC GROUPS**
By Debra Nussbaum Cohen

NEW YORK (JTA) -- When Stephanie Gurwitz became director of the Rhode Island Jewish Federation's Community Relations Council five years ago, she never imagined she would be working to defend the rights of Hmong refugees from Southeast Asia.

But when the Rhode Island state coroner performed an autopsy on a dead Hmong man against his family's wishes in 1987, the CRC joined the Hmong community, the American Jewish Congress and the American Civil Liberties Union in supporting a suit against the state asserting a violation of the family's civil rights.

The CRC's interest was twofold: It was generally concerned about the violation of an ethnic minority's civil rights, and it was specifically concerned because traditional Jewish observance prohibits autopsy in most circumstances.

The Providence coalition won the court case. But the victory was shortlived.

After the Supreme Court ruled last June that states need not prove a compelling state interest before infringing on certain religious liberties, the federal district court judge who heard the Providence group's case took the unusual step of reversing his earlier ruling.

Tackling the problem another way, Gurwitz and the ACLU, along with Hmong, black and Jewish groups, successfully lobbied last year for a state law prohibiting autopsy against a family's wishes except under certain circumstances.

Providence is one of many illustrations that Jewish community relations professionals and religious leaders across the country are living out Shakespeare's truism "Misery acquaints a man with strange bedfellows," as they forge relationships with ethnic and religious groups that would have been unlikely, even impossible, a short time ago.

Battling Budget Cuts Together

While coalition-building has always been a strategy used by American Jewish organizations, new groups, most notably Asians and Hispanics, as well as Moslems in some areas, are emerging as important partners.

Joint action on such local issues as municipal budget cuts and intergroup tensions presents a stronger, united front to protect minority interests and is "becoming a necessity rather than stylish," said David Nussbaum, executive director of the Flint (Mich.) Jewish Federation and executive vice president of its social service agency, Jewish Social Services of Flint Inc.

Citizens in Flint are facing 17 percent across-the-board cuts in city spending; \$40 million has been cut from the welfare budget alone.

"It will affect the federation campaign and Jewish Social Services, which will face more demand (for services) from Jews and non-Jews. And it drives up the need for private dollars as public resources dry up," Nussbaum said.

Flint's crisis has galvanized groups which in other times viewed one another with suspicion.

"Native Americans, Hispanics, even the business community has gotten involved, suddenly realizing it's not just the liberal bed wetters who are getting hurt," Nussbaum explained.

"It has broken down some of the insular behavior of some of the ethnic groups when they

understand that this crisis is too big to deal with by themselves."

In New York, perhaps the most diverse and complicated community relations mosaic in the country, black-Jewish cooperative efforts have paid off for both groups.

Accommodation, Not Compromise

When Nelson Mandela, leader of the African National Congress, was planning to come to New York last summer after being released from three decades of imprisonment, the city's black community was jubilant.

But American Jewish leaders, national and local, had doubts about supporting the visit. While Mandela's importance as a symbol of freedom and hope was clear, the ANC's backing of the Palestine Liberation Organization made it difficult for many American Jews to support him openly.

Just before the trip to the United States, a group of Jewish leaders met with Mandela in Geneva, where they had the chance to share concerns and points of view.

Had the Geneva meeting not occurred, there would have been a demonstration against Mandela, which would have undoubtedly created more friction between New York's blacks and Jews, said Michael Miller, executive director of the New York Jewish Community Relations Council.

"Many people view coalitions as compromises for the Jewish community," said Miller. "One does not compromise principles; one accommodates for the sake of moving the community forward."

Many successful connections between blacks and Jews are made through interreligious efforts.

A long-running Jewish Theological Seminary program called the Louis Finkelstein Institute for Religious and Social Studies brings Conservative rabbis together with leaders from black and Hispanic churches in Harlem and the Bronx. Along with representatives of Orthodox and Quaker churches, they engage in theological discussion.

The friendships that form from these Tuesday breakfasts are valued even after participants leave the grounds of the Conservative seminary.

"It's extremely important in this metropolitan area with so many ethnic tensions," said Rev. Carl Flemister, chair of the American Baptist Churches of Metropolitan New York and chair of the JTS institute's breakfast discussions.

"We get invited to preach in each others' churches and synagogues, to participate in community programs," he said.

Working With Evangelicals, Too

Interreligious coalitions can create interesting paradoxes, as in the case in Orange County, Calif., where there is a large community of Evangelical Christians.

While the Jewish community finds itself working against attempts by the "born again" groups to change public school curricula and defeat city resolutions relating to the civil rights of gays and lesbians, it does cooperate with the staunchly pro-Israel Christian groups on Israel-related issues.

One cooperative effort is called "Orange County Loves Israel," an annual festival celebrating the Jewish state.

"The difficulty is getting other mainline church leaders to join us because of how they feel about Evangelicals, not Israel," according to Chelle Friedman, director of community and public relations for the Community Relations Council of the Jewish Federation of Orange County.