

ISRAEL, PRESSURED TO FREE PRISONERS, INSISTS ON KNOWING FATE OF ITS MIAs

By Hugh Orgel

TEL AVIV, Aug. 11 (JTA) -- Israel welcomed the release Sunday of two more Western hostages from captivity in Lebanon and stood by its offer to enter negotiations for a prisoner swap.

But Israel is insisting that such a deal must include either the release of seven Israelis missing in Lebanon or a full accounting of what happened to them.

Officials here have rejected suggestions that Israel unilaterally release some of the Lebanese Shi'ites it and allied forces are holding in prison for security offenses.

They are pointing out that Syria and Iran have the clout to effect the release of all Western hostages without Israel's contribution to the complicated procedure, and that the United States now has a good enough working relationship with both these countries to persuade them to do so.

The Israelis are pointing to the speedy release Sunday of Jerome Leyraud as ample proof that Syria and Iran have the power to release all hostages held in Lebanon.

Leyraud, a French medical worker, was seized Aug. 8 after the release of British hostage John McCarthy, by kidnappers who threatened to kill him if another Westerner was freed. He had been held by a previously unheard-of group calling itself the Organization for the Defense of Prisoners' Rights.

The other hostage released Sunday was Edward Tracy, a native of Vermont, described variously as a writer, bookseller and adventurer. He had been a captive of the so-called Revolutionary Justice Organization, a pro-Iranian group.

Bush Urges Release Of 'Innocents'

McCarthy, a British journalist, was held for five years by Islamic Jihad, which also swears allegiance to the Shi'ite regime in Iran.

He was released as an emissary bearing a letter from the hostage-takers to U.N. Secretary-General Javier Perez de Cuellar, which he delivered personally Sunday at an air strip in Lyneham, England. The letter is believed to spell out Islamic Jihad's stipulations for freeing the remaining hostages.

There are now at least 10 Western hostages still believed held in Lebanon, including Americans, Britons and Germans.

Perez de Cuellar spoke last week of the need for all parties, including Israel, to release their hostages.

And in Washington, President Bush remarked over the weekend that Israel should now be willing to release the "innocents" it holds for so-called political purposes.

Israeli Deputy Foreign Minister Binyamin Netanyahu on Sunday vigorously rejected any comparison between Lebanese prisoners Israel is holding for security offenses and hostages held by terrorist groups.

"Hostages are innocent people yanked off the streets," he said in an appearance on the ABC News television program "This Week With David Brinkley."

The Lebanese prisoners, on the other hand,

are people who were captured trying to infiltrate into Israel, whom Israel is willing to exchange for the seven Israeli soldiers believed held in Lebanon, he said.

Netanyahu admitted that Israel did indeed seize Sheik Abdul Karim Obeid in July 1989 to use as leverage to get its soldiers back. However, he stressed Obeid was not an innocent cleric, but the "godfather of the mafia that takes hostages."

"If we release Sheik Obeid, I believe it would kill any possibility of a deal that includes Western hostages," he said.

Unilateral Release Rejected

He also rejected British Prime Minister John Major's call last week for Israel to unilaterally release Lebanese prisoners as a goodwill gesture.

Netanyahu said that Israel had, in fact, released 40 Lebanese Shi'ite prisoners in such a gesture nine months ago, and that nothing had happened as a result.

Here in Israel, Uri Lubrani, the Defense Ministry's coordinator of affairs in Lebanon, expressed disappointment with the increased world pressure on Israel to release prisoners it holds.

He emphasized that until Israel is provided with proof of where the Israelis are being held, and details of their state of health, there is nobody who could persuade Israel to take part in any prisoner exchange.

He and other Israeli officials urged Bush to use the "new world order" he proclaimed after the Persian Gulf War to persuade Syria and Iraq to get the hostages released.

Both Netanyahu and Defense Minister Moshe Arens pointed out that the Shi'ite groups holding the hostages operate on Syrian-controlled territory in Lebanon, and that Iran controls and finances the terrorists.

"It is within the capacity of the United States to now tell these governments it's over, it's a different world, a new world order," Netanyahu said on the NBC program "Meet the Press."

Arens, appearing on CBS-TV's "Face the Nation," said, "There is an indication that the Syrian and Iranian governments want to mend their fences with the Western world and with the United States in particular."

"It has been demonstrated that when these countries wanted, they could bring about the release of hostages, whether they were Frenchmen, British, U.S. or Israeli."

Israeli Families Are Hopeful

Former U.S. Secretary of State Henry Kissinger, appearing on the same CBS program, warned against any U.S. pressure on Israel to release its prisoners.

"We cannot permit innocent Americans to be put in the middle of every dispute between Middle East nations and Israel," he said.

Israeli Defense Ministry spokesman Danny Navch said Israel is appealing to all countries, including Iran and Syria, and all organizations holding Western hostages and Israeli prisoners, to release their captives or show evidence about them. Such evidence would enable the start of negotiations for the release of all those held in Israel, he underscored.

There are seven Israelis missing in Lebanon,

and several of them are feared dead. One of them is Sgt. Samir Assad, a Druse captured by Syrian troops eight years ago during the Lebanon war.

But his family, which lives in the Israeli Druse village of Beit Jann, said Sunday that they do not accept the terrorists' claim that he was killed during an Israeli air force raid on Lebanon seven years ago. They are convinced he is alive and hope he will be included in any exchange.

Nothing has been heard about Zacharia Baumel, Yehuda Katz and Avi Feldman, who disappeared in a tank battle during Israel's 1982 invasion of Lebanon.

Yona Baumel, father of the Brooklyn-raised young man who made aliyah and joined the Israel Defense Force, called on the Israeli government not to release Palestinian and Shi'ite detainees until signs of life are received concerning the Israelis held captive.

In addition, Israel is seeking Rachamim Alsheikh and the English-born Yossi Fink, or word about what happened to them. It is believed they were captured by the Shi'ite fundamentalist Hezbollah, or Party of God, during a 1986 raid.

An air force navigator, Ron Arad, who was shot down in 1986, is also believed to be in the hands of Hezbollah, and is thought to have the best chance of the seven of being alive.

(JTA correspondent David Friedman in Washington contributed to this report.)

ARAFAT ASKS FOR POPE'S INTERVENTION TO PREVENT 'JUDAIZATION' OF JERUSALEM By Ruth E. Gruber

ROME, Aug. 11 (JTA) -- Yasir Arafat has sent a letter to Pope John Paul II, asking the pope to intercede with the United States to prevent the "Judaization" and Israeli annexation of Jerusalem in any Middle East peace settlement.

In the letter, sent last week, the leader of the Palestine Liberation Organization impugned the Jewish religion as a usurper of Jerusalem, playing up to issues that have impeded the Vatican from establishing ties with the Jewish state.

He accused the Jews of trying to remove all but Jews from Jerusalem.

Arafat also asked the pontiff's help in overcoming Israel's refusal, with U.S. backing, to allow PLO representatives to attend the Middle East peace conference the United States and Soviet Union hope to host in October.

"Your Holiness, we find ourselves facing an attempt to impose Judaism and the annexation of Jerusalem with the exclusion of any representative of East Jerusalem in the negotiations of the peace conference set for October," he wrote.

Dwelling on inflammatory concerns between Rome and Jerusalem, Arafat wrote that an imposition of Judaism "on the holy places without their community of faithful would be reduced merely to the status of museums and tourist attractions."

He appealed to the pope's "high prestige the world over," to "intercede with the administration of the United States so that President George Bush does not become responsible in the eyes of history for the Judaization of Jerusalem and for the resulting evacuations of its Christian and Moslem inhabitants."

He wrote that this "would be a step toward emptying out the entire Holy Land."

The pope has met more than once with Arafat, much to the dismay of Jewish groups and Israeli officials.

GENEVA PAPER SUGGESTS ISRAEL TO BLAME FOR ASSASSINATION OF EX-IRANIAN PREMIER By Tamar Levy

GENEVA, Aug. 11 (JTA) -- Members of Geneva's Jewish community have expressed concern about an editorial in a highly regarded Swiss newspaper that suggests Israel might have been responsible for the assassination last week of former Iranian Prime Minister Shahpur Bakhtiar.

Antoine Bossrad, editor of the daily *Journal de Geneve*, wrote that, among other possibilities, "Israelis might have been behind the assassination," in order to damage the "new image of a moderate Iran."

Bakhtiar, appointed premier by Shah Mohammed Riza Pahlavi in 1979 to try to fend off the approaching revolution, was knifed to death Aug. 7, at his home in exile in a Paris suburb. His chief aide also was killed.

After serving as premier only 39 days, Bakhtiar went into hiding in February 1979, when Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini returned to Iran from Paris and assumed power. Bakhtiar took refuge in Paris in July 1979, from where he operated the National Iranian Resistance Movement.

There was speculation last week that he had been killed by the Teheran government, or that his killing had something to do with Iran's attempts at rapprochement with the Western world.

At least 30 opponents of the Teheran regime have been killed in Western Europe since 1979.

6,000 OLIM APPLIED TO TRAVEL ABROAD By Hugh Orgel

TEL AVIV, Aug. 11 (JTA) -- Some 6,000 new immigrants applied for Israeli passports during the first six months of this year, and immigration officials are concerned that many of them may leave the country for good.

Eighty-six percent of the applicants were newcomers from the Soviet Union, and most were people between the ages of 21 and 40, the Interior Ministry, which is responsible for issuing the travel documents, disclosed Sunday.

Uri Gordon, head of the Immigration and Absorption Department of the Jewish Agency for Israel, said the applications are a clear indication that the new immigrants plan to leave Israel, either because of failure to obtain work or out of general disillusion with their absorption here.

NO LEAVENING AND NO LEVY By Tom Tugend

LOS ANGELES, Aug. 11 (JTA) -- Ever since California last month extended its sales tax to include snack foods, state officials have been wrestling with which food items fall under the country's first and only "snack tax."

Jewish consumers soon began wondering how Passover matzah would be classified. Last week, Brad Sherman, chairman of the State Board of Equalization, issued his ruling:

"Our staff has reflected Solomonic wisdom in determining that regular matzah, your full-size bread of affliction as mentioned in the Torah, is not a cracker, which is taxable," he said.

However, he added, "matzah miniatures have been determined to be crackers, since there's no evidence when the people of Israel left the land of Egypt that they were popping bite-size matzahs into their mouths."

JEWES IN GERMANY PROTEST MINING AT SITE OF A FORMER LABOR CAMP

By David Kantor

BONN, Aug. 11 (JTA) -- Jews and Gypsies are protesting a gypsum-mining project under way at the site of the former Dora-Nordhausen slave labor camp in eastern Germany, arguing that the area should be preserved as a memorial to victims of the Holocaust.

But the company that extracts gypsum in that area, Harzer Anhydritwerke, vowed to continue, saying that 300 jobs are at stake.

A Nordhausen town official, Joachim Claus, said last Friday that the company is all but demolishing the site of the concentration camp and former Nazi factory, which was hidden deep within a hill called Berg Kohnstein.

"We told them to stop, but they just won't listen," Claus said.

The dispute is the latest of a series of battles that have been waged over plans to make commercial use out of concentration camp sites in what was formerly East Germany.

A similar scenario arose recently with plans to erect a shopping mall next to the site of the former Ravensbruck concentration camp. Likewise, the issue was the creation of jobs in an area of eastern Germany that suffers from a sluggish economy and a paucity of jobs.

Following a protest by Holocaust survivors that gained world attention, local German authorities agreed to scrap the shopping mall project.

Similarly, the state of Brandenburg decided last Friday to drop plans to house its central tax collection office in what had been the SS administration building of the former Sachsenhausen concentration camp.

A government spokesman, Heinrich Enderlein, said the building will become the office of a new agency whose task will be to design and run memorials throughout Brandenburg.

Gypsies Also Protesting

When the East German Communist regime was in power, it erected a small plaque outside the Dora camp site but allowed mining to take place. Harzer Anhydritwerke, a western German firm, is now seeking to expand the work there.

Heinz Galinski, head of the German Jewish community, lodged a protest over the plans with Josef Duchac, prime minister of the state of Thuringia, where the labor camp site is located.

Galinski, who was himself an inmate at the Dora camp, described the terrible conditions under which Jewish inmates were forced to work for the Nazi missile program there. He demanded the site be preserved as a memorial and a center for educational programs.

Duchac did not respond, but his spokesman said Friday that he was still studying the matter.

The Central Council of Gypsies in Germany, which is also protesting, said both Jews and Gypsies worked in terrible conditions at the camp and comprised the majority of its victims.

According to various experts, the site is also important for possible research into the methods used by the Nazis for the V-2 rockets.

At the Dora camp, slave laborers, most of them Jews, were used to work on the ambitious Nazi program to produce the V-2 rockets, which were used against Britain toward the end of the war. One-third to one-half of the 60,000 prisoners at the camp died because of inhumane working conditions.

TRIAL OF WHITE SUPREMACIST METZGER GETS UNDER WAY AFTER YEARS OF DELAY

By Tom Tugend

LOS ANGELES, Aug. 11 (JTA) -- The trial of white supremacist Tom Metzger got under way in Los Angeles County Superior Court last week, after a full week of jury selection and almost eight years after he and three other defendants joined in a cross-burning ceremony, allegedly to provoke a violent clash and intimidate blacks in a racially mixed community.

Although the charges against Metzger consist only of one felony and two misdemeanor counts of violating the municipal fire code, unlawful burning and unlawful assembly, the trial of the former Ku Klux Klan grand dragon and current leader of the White Aryan Resistance movement is receiving widespread media coverage.

The case has taken an unusually long time to come to trial, in part because the charges were first dismissed, then reinstated on appeal.

Originally, 15 men were arrested for participating in the burning of three 15-foot-high crosses, but charges against several were dropped.

The cross-burning took place in a canyon overlooking the community of Lake View Terrace, in the foothills of the San Fernando Valley, adjoining Los Angeles. An otherwise little-known town, Lake View Terrace has also been in the news as the site of the videotaped beating by white policemen of black motorist Rodney King.

As it happened, the cross-burning was also videotaped, in this case by a free-lance journalist who had infiltrated the Aryan warriors. The tape, to be introduced into evidence later in the trial, shows robed participants raising their arms in Nazi salutes, as one of their leaders intones:

"So long as the alien occupies your land, hate is your law, and revenge is your first duty. We light these crosses in the name of God, over the luciferin scum of the earth."

JDL Member Interferes

Jury selection was a dragged-out process, as scores of prospective jurors were eliminated because of their stated revulsion of the KKK.

Attorneys traded charges of trying to racially tilt the makeup of the jury, with the defense accusing the prosecution of arbitrarily removing whites, while prosecutors charged that the defendants were attempting to keep minorities off the panel.

One question submitted by a defense attorney asked: "A belief held by some people in this country is that there was no deliberate and systematic killing of Jews by the Nazis during the 1930s and World War II. Do you agree or disagree with this belief and why?"

Final selection yielded a jury of six white women and six members of minority groups.

One uninvited participant in the proceedings was Irv Rubin, head of the Jewish Defense League, who got into a shouting match with one of the defendants outside the courtroom.

Just before the start of the trial on Aug. 7, Judge J.D. Smith was asked to investigate an accusation that Rubin had biased jury members.

A prospective juror told the court that he observed Rubin, in a courthouse elevator, talking to a juror about the criminal record of one of the defendants.

The juror was called into Smith's chambers, but was allowed to stay on the panel after stating that he was not influenced by Rubin's statements.

**WOMEN IN THE RABBINATE:
MEETING THE NEEDS OF THEIR FAMILIES
MAY COME AT EXPENSE OF THEIR CAREERS**
[Part 2 Of A Series]

By Debra Nussbaum Cohen

NEW YORK, Aug. 7 (JTA) -- Many women in the rabbinate are having to make difficult choices between meeting the needs of their families and advancing their professional careers.

Rabbi Beverly Magidson, for instance, has reached a point in her career where she is ready to leave the 150-member congregation she has served for eight years and move on to a synagogue in a larger community.

But leading a larger congregation would mean "more Sundays where I'm not home at all and more nights out, and I'm not willing to make that tradeoff," she said.

In order to spend more time with her two children, Magidson is leaving the pulpit for two part-time jobs, as a hospital chaplain and a day-school teacher. She hopes to return to the pulpit within a few years.

Magidson is not alone. More and more women rabbis are choosing positions as chaplains, Hillel rabbis, educators and administrators, rather than take on the arduous responsibility of running a synagogue.

Rabbi Amy Eilberg, the first woman ordained by the Conservative movement and now a chaplain at Stanford University Hospital, worked at a synagogue for a year when she started her career in the rabbinate.

"Chaplaincy is particularly attractive to rabbis who are mothers, because it wreaks less havoc with your personal life than the pulpit," she explained.

'The Parent Who Was Always Leaving'

Her 5-year-old daughter is one of the reasons she prefers the chaplaincy. When her daughter's first sentence was "Bye bye, Eema -- shul," it struck a chord, Eilberg recalled. "My daughter's expectation was that I was the parent who was always leaving. And that was untenable to me as a mother."

But, like Magidson, most women rabbis who have left the pulpit hope to return someday.

"Re-entry will be a big issue" for the rabbinical organizations in a few years, as increasing numbers of women come back to congregational life after a hiatus, said Rabbi Jody Cohen, a solo pulpit rabbi in South Windsor, Conn., and co-coordinator of the Women's Rabbinic Network.

Benefits are an important consideration for women rabbis, especially those who are parents.

They are often willing to trade time for money, according to Rabbi Margaret Wenig of Beth Am, the People's Temple, a 200-member Reform congregation in New York.

"We are often interested in negotiating more vacation time than substantial salary increases," she said.

Maternity leave has been a contentious issue for women rabbis in both the Reform and Conservative movements.

The Reform movement's Central Conference of American Rabbis suggests to its rabbis that they include two months of maternity leave in their contracts, but congregations are not bound by the CCAR's guidelines.

The Conservative movement's Rabbinical Assembly is in the process of codifying its place-

ment policies, which will for the first time include maternity leave.

At present, some women rabbis do not have maternity leave written into their contracts and are in the uncomfortable position of having to negotiate it when they become pregnant.

Others have had congregations limit their maternity leave to shorter periods, and some have even been asked to pay for the cost of hiring replacements if they give birth at an inopportune time, like just before the High Holy Days.

Day Care A Consideration

Another consideration for women in the rabbinate who are also parents is the availability of good day care for children. This is sometimes as important as the dollar amount of the salary, said Rabbi Arnold Sher, director of placement for the Reform movement.

A handful of women rabbis have developed a solution to the day care quandary by starting their own programs.

Cohen of the Women's Rabbinic Network, who has a 7-year-old son, began one at her first congregation, a 1,400-family synagogue where she served for five years as assistant and then associate rabbi.

She found that the program had an "incredibly positive" effect on the whole congregation. It brought many young families to the synagogue and Hebrew school enrollment swelled by 100 children.

But strangely, "very few congregations have followed suit," Cohen said. "It's been slow to catch on. It's considered a women's issue."

Now that Reform women rabbis have been working for nearly two decades, more than 100 are eligible for the largest size congregations, which are classified by letter, with "A" being the smallest and "E" the largest.

But only four women rabbis hold positions in the medium-size "C" congregations, which have up to 600 members.

In the Conservative movement, women only serve in "A"-level congregations, with two or three exceptions in "B"-size congregations of up to 500 families, which require two years of experience. No women are in "C"-level congregations of up to 750 families, which require at least five years of experience.

Alternatives To Career Ladder

Is it because "women really believe we can go so far and no further?" Cohen asked. "Is it the perception that congregations are not ready for a woman in this position of authority, and we don't want to put ourselves in the position of being the 'korbana,' the sacrifice?"

"Or does it have more to do with the fact that many of the women in the rabbinate are in their child-bearing years, and some are working part time, which is absolutely appropriate?"

Creative alternatives to the traditional rabbinic career ladder, such as job-sharing and taking frequent sabbaticals, are of great interest to many of the women in the rabbinate rearing families. But they have found that few congregations are interested in working out schedules that deviate from the norm.

Paradoxically, women may have a difficult time transforming the nature of the rabbinate precisely because they are not climbing the long-established ladder of success to qualify for leadership positions in the Reform and Conservative movements' rabbinical and congregational organizations.