

**LETTER FROM HOSTAGE-TAKERS BRINGS  
NO NEWS ABOUT SEVEN MISSING ISRAELIS**  
By David Landau

JERUSALEM, Aug. 12 (JTA) -- A sense of gloom appeared to settle over Israel this week, as it became known that Shi'ite captors in Lebanon had not provided any information or even a hint as to the welfare and whereabouts of Israeli soldiers missing in action there.

Seasoned observers cautioned, however, that appearances could be deceptive. Negotiations surrounding hostage exchanges are necessarily conducted far from the eyes of the media, and sometimes involve a deliberately misleading smokescreen.

The discouraging tidings came from Geneva, where two Israeli officials met Sunday night with U.N. Secretary-General Javier Perez de Cuellar. While the U.N. chief later characterized the meeting as positive, reports reaching Israel were described by officials as "disappointing."

In Geneva, well-informed diplomatic sources said Perez de Cuellar asked the Israelis to release some 300 Lebanese prisoners it holds, as a goodwill gesture.

Israeli officials have ruled out a unilateral release. But Foreign Minister David Levy told reporters Monday afternoon that Israel stands ready "to pay a price" for the return of its missing men.

There was no specific reference to the Israeli MIAs in the letter conveyed by former British hostage John McCarthy from his Islamic Jihad captors to Perez de Cuellar. The two met Sunday on the tarmac of an airfield in Lynham, England.

The letter that McCarthy brought with him was, however, fraught with damning references to the Israelis as usurpers of the Holy Land and oppressors of "downtrodden people."

Nor did the communication flatter the United States, which it called "the Great Satan" and the "mother of iniquity throughout the world and its offspring, Israel."

Still, Washington was saying Monday that there are some "positive aspects" to the letter.

And Perez de Cuellar said a resolution is "nearer than before."

**Complaints About 'Zionist Enemy'**

The Islamic Jihad letter complained about the approach the United Nations has taken on "the Moslem people of Palestine, the usurpation of their land from which they have been evicted, the attempts of the Zionist enemy to exterminate them, the question of the occupied territories in Jordan, Syria and Lebanon, and subsequently the Gulf crisis."

But it also called on Perez de Cuellar to "make a personal endeavor, within the framework of a comprehensive solution, to secure the release of all detainees around the world."

The letter said Islamic Jihad "would be perfectly willing to complete the process that we began today and to release the persons whom we are detaining within 24 hours," if the United Nations is able to "secure the release of our freedom-fighters from prisons in occupied Palestine and Europe."

The two Israeli officials sent to negotiate with Perez de Cuellar were Uri Lubrani, coordinator of Israeli affairs in Lebanon, and Yohanan Bein, head of the international organizations division of the Foreign Ministry.

Bein, who is former acting ambassador to the United Nations, has a long working relationship with the secretary-general. Both men returned here Monday to report on their talks, but were scheduled to head back for Geneva.

The Israelis made clear to the secretary-general that Israel will not agree to any release until it gets some information concerning its missing men, according to Yitzhak Lior, the Israeli ambassador to the United Nations in Geneva.

**Israel Ready To 'Pay A Price'**

In Jerusalem, Foreign Minister Levy told reporters Monday afternoon that his ministry and the Defense Ministry are preparing a report-and-assessment paper for Cabinet policy-makers.

"In the cruel world in which we live," Levy said, Israel would plainly have to "pay a price" to get its men back.

But the minister, like other Israeli policy-makers, insisted that the first step must be word from or access to the Israeli MIAs. A unilateral Israeli release of prisoners would represent "abandonment" of the Israelis, he said.

Officials here said that as soon the International Red Cross is given access to the Israeli captives, Israel will gladly allow the Red Cross to visit Sheik Abdul Karim Obeid.

Israeli commandos seized the Shi'ite fundamentalist cleric from his home in southern Lebanon in July 1989, and he is now being held in a jail inside Israel, presumably as a bargaining chip.

Israel is placing the same conditions on allowing Red Cross access to the El-Khiam prison, where the Israeli-backed South Lebanon Army is holding some 375 prisoners, arrested for security offenses.

Islamic Jihad made mention of this and other detention centers in its letter to Perez de Cuellar. The group wants these men released as part of the exchange for Western hostages.

Israeli officials have acknowledged mounting pressure from some Western governments for a unilateral gesture from Jerusalem. Britain made its demand to this effect public.

But Israeli officials feel that other nations are failing to take account of Israel's interest in its own MIAs.

(JTA correspondent Tamar Levy in Geneva contributed to this report.)

**AIR FORCE NAVIGATOR HAS BEST CHANCE  
AMONG SEVEN ISRAELIS OF BEING ALIVE**  
By Hugh Orgel

TEL AVIV, Aug. 12 (JTA) -- Little is known about the fate of the seven Israeli servicemen missing in Lebanon. But there is firm belief that at least one of them, air force navigator Ron Arad, is alive and well.

An air force jet carrying Arad and a pilot was shot down over Lebanon in October 1986. The two parachuted safely to the ground.

The pilot was picked up shortly after his

landing, in a daring helicopter rescue operation. But the rescue squad failed to find Arad, who was captured by a Shi'ite group and has been held prisoner ever since. Reports received in recent months said that he was alive and well.

The other six are listed as "missing in action."

Sgt. Zacharia Baumel, Sgt. Zvi Feldman and Cpl. Yehuda Katz are the longest held in captivity. They were members of a tank crew hit during a battle with Syrian forces in the Bekaa Valley in 1982, in the early stages of the Lebanon War.

Samir Assad, an Israeli Druse, was captured by terrorists in Lebanon eight years ago. His family and the defense establishment do not accept a terrorist claim that he was killed seven years ago in an Israeli air force raid.

Yossi Fink and Rachamim Alsheikh were members of a Givati Brigade unit engaged in military activities in Lebanon when they were captured in February 1986.

In addition, the commander of the South Lebanon Army, Gen. Antoine Lahad, disclosed Sunday that seven of his soldiers are currently being held by terrorist forces in Lebanon.

#### **SERIOUS SPLITS WITHIN HEZBOLLAH MAY COMPLICATE RELEASE OF HOSTAGES** By Hugh Orgel

TEL AVIV, Aug. 12 (JTA) -- Conflicting actions taken by various groups holding Western hostages in Lebanon point to serious splits within the Hezbollah, or Party of God.

Iran may no longer be able to control certain factions in the Shi'ite fundamentalist movement, according to an analysis in Ha'aretz.

The rifts may delay the start of negotiations for the release of all foreign hostages, including the Israeli prisoners, the Israeli daily warned.

Some new branches of the Hezbollah have chosen to ally themselves with Damascus, in light of the deployment of the Syrian-backed Lebanese army in southern Lebanon. Others have actually established contacts with Western capitals.

Concerned over the implications of such factionalism, the Iranian government, which exerts considerable leverage over the Shi'ite groups, last month summoned a delegation of Hezbollah leaders to Teheran.

An Iranian source reported that the dispute within the Hezbollah leadership has been raging for more than a year. Teheran succeeded in freezing the dispute by appointing Sheik Abbas Musawi as the organization's secretary-general, replacing Subachi Tufeili.

Nevertheless, the tensions did not abate. While Musawi was busy with organizational matters arising from the Syrian-Lebanese Brotherhood Treaty signed in May, some groups, encouraged by former Iranian Interior Minister Sayed Mohtashemi, attempted to form a radical group within the organization.

On the other side, a moderate group, known as the Damascus Men, has been formed. This group includes the leader of the Shi'ite Amal movement, Hussein Musawi.

This group began pressuring for the gradual release of the hostages.

According to Ha'aretz, the more radical group is responsible for the kidnapping last week of French medical aid worker Jerome Leyraud, who was freed Sunday.

The abduction and threats to kill him if other hostages were released was an aborted

attempt to slow the efforts of the moderate Damascus Men group, which may have set in motion the Aug. 8 release of British hostage John McCarthy.

#### **GERMANS REJECT INCLUDING IN EXCHANGE PALESTINIANS IMPRISONED FOR TERRORISM** By David Kantor

BONN, Aug. 12 (JTA) -- German authorities have rejected out of hand the suggestion that Palestinian terrorists held in German prisons be included in any global prisoner swap arranged to win the freedom of Western hostages held captive in Lebanon.

Rumors are circulating here that the Iranian-backed Shi'ite groups holding the Western hostages are demanding not only the release of Arab prisoners in Israel but also freedom for two Palestinian brothers imprisoned in Germany for terrorist activities.

A letter that one of the terrorist groups, the Islamic Jihad, sent to U.N. Secretary-General Javier Perez de Cuellar said it would free all hostages in exchange for the "release of freedom fighters held in occupied Palestine and Europe."

But German officials said the Palestinians imprisoned here would not be part of any deal. "We can't compromise on murder," one high-ranking official said, referring to one of the imprisoned brothers, Mohammed Ali Hamadei.

Hamadei was sentenced to life imprisonment here for his role in the 1985 hijacking of a TWA jet and the killing of one of its passengers, U.S. Navy diver Robert Stethem.

His brother, Abbas Ali Hamadei, was later sentenced to 13 years in prison for complicity in the kidnapping of two German businessmen in Beirut, who were taken in an attempt to bring about Mohammed Hamadei's release.

The two businessmen, Alfred Schmidt and Rudolf Cordes, who were kidnapped shortly after Mohammed Hamadei's arrest in January 1987, have since been freed.

#### **Pressure From Washington**

Kidnapped in Beirut at about the same time were four teachers: three Americans and an Indian who had been living in the United States.

Two of those hostages, Robert Polhill and Mithel Eshwer Singh, have since been released. The other two, Alann Steen and Jesse Turner, are still held captive by Islamic Jihad for the Liberation of Palestine.

Germany has come under strong pressure from Washington not to make any compromises on the Hamadei case.

The United States originally asked that Mohammed Hamadei be extradited to stand trial in America. The Germans rejected the request because the United States has the death penalty, which Germany has banned.

But in refusing to turn him over, the Germans also made a firm commitment to Washington that Hamadei would be treated as a criminal and accordingly punished.

Two German humanitarian aid workers also remain in captivity. Heinrich Strubig and Thomas Kempfner were kidnapped in Beirut in May 1989, on the eve of Mohammed Hamadei's sentencing.

At the end of July, their kidnappers threatened that the two Germans would be mistreated if anything happened to Mohammed Hamadei. The German government said it would not be blackmailed and would not agree to a swap.

## AS MIDEAST PEACE EFFORTS ACCELERATE, VIOLENCE RETURNS TO EAST JERUSALEM

By Gil Sedan

JERUSALEM, Aug. 12 (JTA) -- Palestinian violence is on the rise in Jerusalem, and ironically, the stepped-up diplomatic activity on the Middle East peace process may be responsible.

Several weeks ago, Police Minister Ronni Milo boasted that Jerusalem police had succeeded, in a short period, in effecting a 50 percent drop in violence in East Jerusalem.

It seems he spoke too soon. Or perhaps his words invited trouble.

Within weeks, as it became increasingly likely that Israel would enter peace talks with the Arab states and the Palestinians, the streets of the eastern part of the capital once again became the scene of Palestinian violence.

Until two weeks ago, Jerusalem police were registering some 60 incidents of intifada violence per week. The number then escalated to 80 such incidents, and in the past week more than 100 incidents of violence have been recorded.

As Israeli leaders insist that they will not negotiate on the status of East Jerusalem, the Palestinians appear to signal that there will be violence if peace talks do not include discussion of Jerusalem.

On Sunday, Police Minister Milo called a special session to review the growing violence and to discuss ways and means to decrease it.

Jerusalem's district police commander, Haim Albaldes, has already issued orders to increase police presence in East Jerusalem, with a special emphasis on weekend activities.

## ANNE POLLARD IN PSYCHIATRIC HOSPITAL IN ISRAEL AMID DOUBTS ABOUT HER HEALTH

By Hugh Orgel

TEL AVIV, Aug. 12 (JTA) -- Anne Henderson Pollard, ex-wife of imprisoned American spy Jonathan Pollard, has been admitted to the Abarbanel psychiatric hospital in Bat Yam, amid contradictory reports about the reason for her hospitalization and her physical and mental state.

According to the deputy director of the institution, Dr. Moshe Zohar, she applied voluntarily for physical and mental treatment on Aug. 8, on the advice of friends. He denied reports that she is being forcibly held in the hospital.

Zohar declined to comment on reports that she would be treated for drug addiction, saying that observations of only a day or two are insufficient to draw any conclusions about a patient's physical or mental condition.

Pollard, who was divorced from her husband this spring, was paroled in April 1990 after serving 40 months of a five-year jail term in the United States in connection with his espionage activities for Israel.

U.S. authorities permitted her to come to Israel to receive medical treatment for a painful digestive disorder.

Spokespersons for the Public Committee for Jonathan Pollard rejected accusations by Anne Pollard's father, Bernard Henderson, that his daughter is not being properly looked after in Israel and is now held against her will.

Amnon Dror, a committee member, disputed Henderson's charge, saying, "If he would only come to Israel, he would see and appreciate the loving care and treatment she is being afforded here."

## EZER WEIZMAN MAY HEAD ALLIANCE OF LEFT-WING OPPOSITION PARTIES

By David Landau

JERUSALEM, Aug. 12 (JTA) -- Ezer Weizman, a former Likud minister of defense who is now a Labor Party member of Knesset, may soon embark on yet another political career: head of a left-of-Labor alignment of peace-oriented parties.

Speculation about this mounted after Weizman gave notice in a television interview last week that he sees himself drifting ever farther from Labor's policies.

On the left, key figures in the Citizens Rights Movement, the Center-Shinui Movement and Mapam have been assiduously wooing Weizman as a potential vote-getter. He is one of the few men centrally involved in the Camp David accords who are still active in politics.

Weizman, 67, resigned as minister of defense in 1980, charging then Premier Menachem Begin, his fellow Likudnik, with failing to implement Israel's commitment under the Camp David accords to negotiate for Palestinian autonomy.

After that, he headed his own centrist party, Yahad, which joined the Labor Alignment to try to block Yitzhak Shamir of Likud from getting the premiership.

Last month, his only son, Shaul, and daughter-in-law, Rachel, were killed in an automobile accident. The episode received widespread publicity because of Shaul's two-decade fight with serious head injuries sustained at the Suez Canal during the War of Attrition.

His son's injury had been seen as an important element in the former air force commander's "conversion" from ultra-hawk to outspoken dove.

Weizman made it clear to television interviewers last week that the personal tragedy has not blunted his determination to contribute to the cause of peace, as he sees it.

## Urges Peres, Rabin To Step Aside

Specifically, he spoke out unequivocally in favor of Israel's withdrawal from the Golan Heights, within the context of far-reaching arrangements for demilitarization and limitation of forces, if needed to achieve full peace with Syria.

Labor Party Chairman Shimon Peres and his traditional challenger for the party leadership, Yitzhak Rabin, have both spoken against Israel "descending from" the Golan, and other Labor members of Knesset have signed a petition opposing any territorial concession there.

Weizman reiterated his longstanding view that both Peres and Rabin should step aside, but he did not indicate his own preferred candidate for the leadership of the party. A number of Laborites have announced their candidacy.

Weizman hinted broadly that he is considering quitting Labor. A political party, he explained, is only an instrument for achieving or promoting one's beliefs. If he felt another framework would be more effective, he would consider moving to it, he said.

The three left-of-Labor Zionist parties have been holding talks among themselves for some months with a view to running in the next elections on a joint ticket. Predictably, personality clashes have arisen, and bringing in an outside figure could conceivably help overcome them.

Alternatively, Weizman might be projected not as the head of a joint list but as a person acceptable to all three parties as their government representative.

**SOVIET RECOGNITION A MIXED BLESSING  
FOR B'NAI B'RITH UNIT IN LENINGRAD**

By David Friedman

WASHINGTON, Aug. 12 (JTA) -- When the Leningrad unit of B'nai B'rith International opened an office there last October, it became the first Jewish cultural institution to be officially recognized in the Soviet Union.

Official recognition has made it easier for the 150-member unit to conduct its programs, said Grigory Vilenchik, the chapter's president. At the same time, however, "it is more dangerous for us" because anti-Semitic groups "now know about us, know our address."

Anti-Semitism has come out into the open in Leningrad, as it has across the Soviet Union, because of the country's move to a more open, democratic society, Vilenchik said in an interview at B'nai B'rith International headquarters here.

But the same process has allowed B'nai B'rith to emerge from underground into a legitimately recognized organization in Leningrad, he said.

He noted that frequently, in the streets of Leningrad, a member of the anti-Semitic group, Pamyat, will be handing out leaflets, while nearby a member of B'nai B'rith or some other Jewish group is doing the same thing.

As in other countries, B'nai B'rith in the Soviet Union has become a symbol for those attacking Jews, with articles in the newspapers accusing the international organization of all kinds of crimes, particularly economic ones, Vilenchik said.

To neutralize such threats, the unit has sought to establish close contacts with Leningrad municipal officials, Vilenchik said.

"We realize that at any moment we can be closed," he said. "We have to be very careful in our work to know the laws."

Vilenchik was in Washington under the auspices of B'nai B'rith's international department to pick up some pointers on programs and to meet with the organization's officials and representatives of other Jewish organizations.

Other members of the Leningrad unit are currently visiting Israel, Britain and Finland.

**400 People Taking Hebrew**

The organization seems off to a good start since its founding in 1989. Vilenchik, a 37-year-old building engineer, was one of the original organizers and became the unit's president when the former president emigrated to Israel.

Vilenchik said that Jews in Leningrad want to know more about Jewish history and culture. He said that while there are many Jewish organizations in the city, the B'nai B'rith unit has been able to provide a broader program because of its assistance from B'nai B'rith's international department in Washington.

Hillel Kuttler, the international department's Soviet unit coordinator, keeps in touch with the Leningrad group weekly by telephone.

But he stressed the growth of the unit has been largely due to the initiative of the leaders in Leningrad.

The membership is mainly made up of men and women 25 to 45 years old, Vilenchik said. Many plan to emigrate to Israel, but others want to remain in the Soviet Union.

The unit's success is due to a core group of 15 to 20 people, whose personal and professional skills fuel the chapter's programs. For example,

teachers provide English and Hebrew lessons and doctors contribute to the medical program.

The most popular program is Hebrew, with classes on various levels held throughout Leningrad. Some 400 people are taking Hebrew classes, mostly adults planning to make aliyah. Children learn Hebrew outside the B'nai B'rith program in classes held at the Leningrad synagogue either after school or on Sundays.

The unit does, however, have several sports programs for the youth. Among them is a class in the martial arts. Students in that program provide security at the unit's meetings, Vilenchik said.

After Hebrew classes, the most popular program is a sort of medical "hot line," in which people with medical problems call B'nai B'rith and are referred to the proper specialists.

There is also a program for older people living alone, who receive food, medical help, clothes and other necessities.

Exhibitions of Jewish artists are scheduled in private homes, and a new program has been organized for visiting tourists, offering tours of Leningrad highlighting sites of Jewish interest.

There are also lecture programs which serve to introduce many non-members to B'nai B'rith.

The Leningrad chapter even follows members who have left for Israel. Two members now in Israel have opened an office in Ramat Gan to help new immigrants from Leningrad.

Vilenchik invited former Leningrad residents now living in Israel, the United States and elsewhere to join the Leningrad chapter, which is allowed to have foreign members.

**DOUBTS ABOUT 2 POLISH INVESTORS  
PREVENT SALE OF ISRAELI OIL FIRM**  
By Gil Sedan

JERUSALEM, Aug. 12 (JTA) -- Two Polish investors have failed so far in their attempt to purchase a controlling interest in the Paz oil company, partly because the Israelis are not sure just who the investors are.

A Polish group, represented by Bogoslaw Bagszik and Andrzej Gozirowski, approached Australian Jewish entrepreneur Jack Liberman with an offer to purchase, for \$85 million, what local reports are saying is half the Israeli firm's stock.

The Poles reportedly turned the money over to an Israeli trustee, but the deal was put on hold because the authorities were reluctant to approve a transaction that would transfer part of Israel's oil reserves to a company whose background is not clear.

Both the sellers and Israeli authorities voiced doubts about the transaction.

The Liberman group is allowed to sell shares in Paz so long as it does not sell to "hostile elements" or endanger Israel's security.

In an attempt to clear things up, Bagszik said he is Jewish and that he received Israeli citizenship under the Law of Return. But the Interior Ministry has doubts about his Jewishness.

Israel's daily Yediot Achronot reported Monday that only a year ago, Bagszik introduced himself as a "genuine Christian" at a meeting of Polish businessmen. But last week, he told reporters that his Jewish parents died when he was 4 years old, and therefore he is Jewish, as are his four children.

His partner has also submitted a request for Israeli citizenship.

The Interior ministry said Monday it would check the backgrounds of both men once again.