

75th ANNIVERSARY YEAR**MONDAY, JANUARY 6, 1992****VOL. 70, NO. 3****OVER WORLDWIDE CHORUS OF PROTESTS,
SHAMIR INSISTS ISRAEL MUST DEPORT 12**
By David Landau

JERUSALEM, Jan. 5 (JTA) -- Despite a cacophony of international protests, warnings by Arab delegations that they might not show up for the resumption of peace talks in Washington and the possibility of U.N. censure, Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir said Sunday that Israel must deport 12 Palestinian activists, as an action "against those who encourage violence and terror."

In an hour-long meeting Sunday with Cardinal John O'Connor of New York, Shamir defended the deportation order, which was issued by Defense Minister Moshe Arens last Thursday, a day after the murder of a Jewish settler in the Gaza Strip.

O'Connor, who has traveled here to feel out the possibility of establishing Vatican ties with Israel, told reporters that when he asked about the deportations, he received Shamir's interpretation and had not pursued the matter further.

On Saturday night, Shamir gave the same explanation to Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak, who placed a rare telephone call to the Israeli premier to counsel him against the deportations.

The Egyptian leader said he was not "pressuring" the Israeli premier but advising him to avoid placing obstacles in the path of the peace process.

Shamir pointed out in the telephone conversation that the 12 could appeal to the Israeli courts against their deportation. But the Israeli courts have rarely, if ever, overturned an expulsion order.

On Sunday, Mubarak received Palestine Liberation Organization chief Yasir Arafat in Cairo. It was the first meeting between the two since the Persian Gulf War, when they took opposing sides.

Security Council Debate Requested

According to initial reports, they discussed Arab and world reactions to the Israeli decision. But Mubarak made a point of urging the Palestinian leader not to derail the peace talks, scheduled to resume Tuesday, because of the Israeli move.

Arafat said at a news conference Sunday that the Palestinians had not yet decided whether to show up for the talks.

Syria, Lebanon and Jordan have put off the departures of their delegations to Washington.

On Sunday night, the Israeli negotiators were preparing to depart on schedule, reversing the scenario that took place last month, when it was the Israelis who put off their arrivals because of disagreement over the Washington venue.

The assessment here in Jerusalem was that the talks would get under way following a U.N. Security Council debate of the deportation orders.

The request for a debate on the floor of the Security Council is being presented by the non-aligned nations, at the behest of the PLO. So far, no draft resolution has been released.

But if an anti-Israel resolution is introduced, sources say Israel cannot rely on the United States to veto it.

In Washington, the U.S. State Department strongly condemned Israel for the decision to

deport the Palestinians. At a briefing Friday, State Department spokesman Richard Boucher said, "We have urged Israel at the highest levels to reconsider and to rescind this decision."

He said the opposition was based on the Fourth Geneva Convention, which governs the conduct of occupying powers.

Another Threat To Coalition

At Sunday's Cabinet meeting, the decision to deport the 12 Palestinians from the West Bank and Gaza Strip was supported by Likud ministers. But it was criticized by the ministers of the far-right Moledet and Tehiya parties as "too little, too late."

These two parties also raised the political temperature by issuing another public threat to Shamir: that they would quit his coalition the moment the subject of autonomy for the Palestinians was discussed by the Cabinet, let alone during the peace talks.

The Inner Cabinet is due to hold such a discussion Wednesday, and the negotiators going to Washington are reportedly empowered to propose autonomy, within the framework of the Camp David accords, to which the government is formally committed.

"If it happens, it will happen this week," said Moledet's minister without portfolio, Rehavam Ze'evi.

Without the Tehiya and Moledet votes to bolster it, the government would lose its majority in the Knesset.

Meanwhile, after separate meetings with Shamir and President Chaim Herzog, O'Connor told reporters that he could "certainly see a warming" of relations between the Vatican and the Jewish state, though "many things would have to be worked out."

He described Shamir as "optimistic and realistic" regarding the peace process. "He knows, as we say in our church, that Rome wasn't built in a day," O'Connor quipped.

**LIKUD AND LABOR JOCKEY FOR SUPPORT
AS ELECTORAL REFORM BILL NEARS VOTE**
By David Landau

JERUSALEM, Jan. 5 (JTA) -- On the eve of a scheduled vote to reform Israel's political system, the ruling Likud bloc was working furiously to ensure its defeat, reportedly through the same sort of haggling with the smaller parties that has fueled demands for electoral change.

The proposed measure would institute direct elections for the prime minister and make it more difficult for the Knesset to topple the government with a no-confidence measure.

Debate on the bill was held over from late last Thursday night by unanimous agreement, and a vote was expected either Monday or Tuesday.

Over the weekend, Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir met with key figures in his Likud bloc to exhort them to bring about defeat of the measure, which he fears could endanger Likud's continued control of the premiership.

Labor is likewise investing massive efforts to ensure that the bill passes.

If the bill goes through this week, the Labor Party leadership reportedly has decided to seek

support for the dissolution of the Knesset and the holding of early elections -- including direct elections for prime minister.

Under Israel's current system of proportional representation, voters cast ballots for parties, rather than politicians. Parties are awarded Knesset seats based on the percentage of votes they win, and the leader of the party with the most votes usually becomes prime minister.

The two big parties, Likud and Labor, have been courting the smaller parties, which are wavering on electoral reform, with various pressures and incentives.

According to sources quoted Sunday by army radio, the Sephardic Orthodox party Shas was told by Likud figures that its votes on the reform measure would affect the ongoing police investigations of their leaders for fiscal malfeasance.

Despite repeated reports of criminal activities by Shas Knesset members and Cabinet members, the Likud-led Justice Ministry has yet to pursue an indictment.

For their part, Likud officials claimed it was Shas politicians who first proposed this linkage.

Splits In Shas, NRP

Quite apart from this, Shas had its own internal tensions over the electoral reform.

Rabbi Eliezer Schach, leader of the ultra-Orthodox Degel HaTorah party and traditionally an influential voice within Shas, came out forcefully against the reform bill. But Shas's patron, Rabbi Ovadia Yosef, was inclined to support it.

This dispute mirrored their disagreement over supporting the formation of the present Shamir government, a dispute Schach decisively won in 1990.

Another small party straddling the fence was Finance Minister Yitzhak Modai's tiny Party of the Zionist Ideal. Political insiders said Modai's vote alongside the Likud could be secured in return for measures by the Likud to ensure his political future -- whether as a separate party or back inside the Likud.

The National Religious Party, with its five critical seats, was expected to split 3-2, with Education Minister Zevulun Hammer and party Secretary Yitzhak Levy intending to support the reform bill.

The bill's advocates were busy over the weekend trying to persuade supportive Knesset members to withdraw their various proposed amendments. In this way, they hoped, the chairman of the Law Committee, Uriel Lynn of Likud, would have no reason to try to withdraw the bill from the floor of the house back to his committee, thereby effectively burying it.

While Lynn has that power under the rules, the tactic is rarely used and has earned the opprobrium of legal academicians and jurists in recent days.

Last Thursday afternoon, the entire opposition walked out of the Knesset chamber to protest what it charged was Likud filibustering to avoid a vote on electoral reform.

Shamir at one point supported the reform bill. But the Likud leader later reversed himself, apparently after polls showed him losing a head-to-head election against Laborite Yitzhak Rabin.

Under Shamir's prodding, the huge Likud Central Committee voted almost unanimously last month to oppose the reform measure. The bill was thus doomed, according to political observers. But Laborites were said this week to be still hopeful of a narrow victory.

MOVE TO PRIVATIZE ISRAELI HOSPITALS PROVOKES A CRIPPLING ONE-DAY STRIKE

By Hugh Orgel

TEL AVIV, Jan 5 (JTA) -- Israel's public health services were virtually paralyzed Sunday by a one-day strike called to protest a government order privatizing six government hospitals.

The job action, which shut down 44 government hospitals and 1,200 Kupat Holim clinics run by the Histadrut labor federation, was taken by some 25,000 nurses, laboratory technicians, paramedics and support personnel, who claim their futures have been placed in jeopardy by the move.

But the strike did not enjoy the support of physicians, many of whom stand to benefit if public service hospitals become semi-independent corporations.

Despite the overwhelming shutdown, services continued in critical hospital departments, such as maternity wards, cancer wards and dialysis units.

The strikers said they were not fully consulted by Health Minister Ehud Olmert before the privatization order went into effect Jan. 1.

Olmert, rebutting the charge, said he had been discussing the plans with the health care workers and others for more than a year. He said the strikers had failed to attend many crucial meetings about the privatization.

The Labor-dominated Histadrut sees the Health Ministry move as an attempt by the Likud health minister to break Kupat Holim's power and replace it with a general public health system.

Histadrut announced Sunday evening that unless Olmert agrees to change the plans to incorporate the six government hospitals, it will call a general strike of all industries "at a time to be determined."

'Health For The Rich'

Not all the strikers are opposed in principle to the idea of privatization. But they want to ensure their pensions and working conditions within the future independent health centers.

Doctors stand to benefit, because under the new system, the individual managements of the six hospitals concerned would be able to offer more money to physicians who work second and third shifts.

The government has been opposed to paying for extended schedules. Instituting them would cut down the substantial waiting periods for elective surgery, which can take more than a year.

Opponents of hospital incorporation fear the new system will harm the public health infrastructure and encourage establishment of a "health for the rich" system, with more affluent patients paying extra for "black market" or "under the counter" treatment or operations at public facilities.

Some public health experts are not opposed to incorporation as such but feel that individual hospitals will be too small to operate efficiently. They have proposed that hospital services as a whole be peeled away from government control and incorporated into an overall hospital authority, akin to Bezek Telephone or the port and railroad authorities.

Experts are pointing out that Israel has built a world reputation for medical and health innovations, a result of research and development that has been enabled only by the existing large-scale system. They say that individual, privately run hospitals will not be able to invest in such research, since they will be watching their budgets.

ISRAEL'S HEAVIEST SNOWSTORM LEAVES JERUSALEM IN THE DARK

By David Landau

JERUSALEM, Jan. 5 (JTA) -- The snow that blanketed Jerusalem last week delighted children of all ages, but it also left the holy city in darkness and created numerous inconveniences for its residents.

Tens of thousands of Jerusalemites were without electricity for up to four days following power outages created by the snowstorm and the floods that occurred elsewhere in the country after torrential rains.

On Sunday night, 96 hours after the initial blizzard struck high ground throughout the country, several thousand Jerusalem homes were still without heat or light.

Dozens of emergency teams were sent to Jerusalem from other parts of the country following a major outcry from the public.

The extraordinary blackout prompted Israel's energy minister, Professor Yuval Ne'eman, to announce on Sunday the creation of a special commission of inquiry, under the aegis of Brig. Gen. Doron Rubin.

Ne'eman instructed Rubin to convey findings and recommendations within 10 days.

The Israel Electric Corp. vowed to have every home rigged up again by Monday.

The company, which has a nationwide monopoly on electric power, has been under the gun for its poor performance during and following the storm, which tossed 18 inches of wintry magic on an astounded city.

But the utility company's chairman, Silvan Shalom, said Sunday that the storm had simply been an unforeseeable natural disaster, in fact the worst the Holy Land has seen in the entire 130 years of recorded readings.

Dispensation For Work Crews

Silvan said the power company had fulfilled its duty to prune and trim trees within six yards of electricity pylons and should not be held to account for the trees that fell onto power lines. The severity of the storms, particularly in and around Jerusalem, could not have been predicted, Shalom said.

The rarity of the storm and the necessity to restore life-sustaining power largely outweighed religious strictures in this holiest of cities.

Jerusalem Chief Rabbi Yitzhak Koltitz gave the electric workers special permission to work through Shabbat, because elderly people were literally in danger of their lives in cold and damp apartments.

Despite this ruling, however, in some haredi or ultra-Orthodox areas, repair crews were not permitted to get on with their work until after nightfall Saturday.

Meanwhile, Israelis braced for more natural hardships. Weather forecasters were warning Sunday of nights of dangerous frost -- perilous for crops, as well as for drivers and pedestrians out on slippery roads.

There is one bright side to the foul weather: Israel's most visible victim of two years of drought, Lake Kinneret, is creeping back across stretches of land that had become exposed. The water level rose 5 inches in 24 hours.

Still, the Kinneret, also known as the Sea of Galilee, must rise another 9.5 feet before Israel's largest natural reservoir will be considered within normal range.

SCHWAMMBERGER'S ALLEGED BRUTALITY CORROBORATED BY TWO MORE WITNESSES

By David Kantor

BONN, Jan. 5 (JTA) -- Two more Holocaust survivors have accused Josef Schwammberger, a 79-year-old former SS official on trial in Stuttgart, of having shot Jewish inmates at concentration and slave labor camps that were under his supervision.

In testimony taken last year in Paris and read aloud in court, the late Markus Wolfshau said that at the beginning of 1943, Schwammberger ordered the arrest of 50 camp prisoners to serve as hostages for three inmates who had fled. When the three returned, they were promptly hanged by Schwammberger.

But the commander also ordered the shooting of 25 of the 50 hostages, all of whom were Jews.

From 1943 to 1944, Schwammberger was in charge of labor camps in Przemyśl and Mielec.

He is also charged with torture and killing in the Rozwadow ghetto, all in German-occupied Poland.

In other testimony read aloud in court, an 80-year-old witness, Salomon Tur of Tel Aviv, said his entire family was killed by Schwammberger after being held in a camp prison.

In testimony taken in Israel, the witness said he had been forced to clean up the mess left after the executions and could identify the blood-stained clothes of his relatives.

Schwammberger has been charged with killing 45 Jews and complicity in the killing of some 5,000 others. He was extradited from Argentina to Germany nearly two years ago.

The entire court personnel in the Schwammberger case have come to New York to take additional testimony from people unable to travel to Germany, according to Elliot Welles, head of the Nazi Task Force of the Anti-Defamation League.

When the trial resumes Jan. 13, more witnesses are expected from abroad, most of them Jews who were among inmates held in the two concentration camps run by Schwammberger.

It is believed here that the Schwammberger trial could be the last of a Nazi criminal in this country.

In dozens of other cases, the prosecution has been hesitating to charge or has given up altogether, because of legal or other problems.

MATZAH BALLS ON MAUI?

By Tom Tugend

LOS ANGELES, Jan. 5 (JTA) -- With the opening of the Shaloha Restaurant in Honolulu, Hawaii now has what is reportedly its first-ever certified kosher eatery.

One is not likely to find luau-roasted pig there, but the new facility promises that customers "will always be greeted with 'Shalom' and 'Aloha,'" which accounts for the restaurant's name.

The glatt kosher restaurant is located on the ground floor of the Island Colony Hotel, in the Waikiki area of Honolulu.

Offering seating for 45, a catering facility and take-out food, the Shaloha is also ready to send freshly prepared meals to major hotels on the islands of Hawaii, Maui, Kauai, Molokai and Oahu.

The restaurant is under the certification of the Rabbinical Council of California.

BEHIND THE HEADLINES: MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES SET UP TO PREVENT SUICIDE AMONG OLIM

By Yehonathan Tommer

JERUSALEM (JTA) -- Suicide, murder, prostitution, petty crime and hunger -- they are problems Natan Sharansky's Soviet Jewry Zionist Forum does not like to talk about.

But experts say these problems have all afflicted the emigre community here and are bound to worsen unless conditions improve for the thousands of newcomers streaming into the country each week.

"Unless adequate measures are taken to provide uprooted Soviet families with appropriate psychological tools to function normally under severe conditions of financial stress, temporary housing and professional unemployment, the pressures of social disintegration will deepen," said Dr. Ya'acov Shultz, a consulting psychiatrist to the Zionist Forum.

"Suicide is seized on as a simple personal answer to seemingly intractable problems," explained Shultz, who made aliyah from Minsk 20 years ago.

According to Israel's Health Ministry, there were 31 attempted suicides by Soviet olim in 1990, the first complete year of massive immigration, and eight of those cases ended in death.

While 11 percent of all suicide attempts by Jews in Israel were made by Soviet olim, Soviet Jews accounted for 26 percent of all Jewish suicide attempts that ended in death.

But the situation is even worse in the Ethiopian immigrant community, where suicide is said to be five times the Israeli national average.

Among the factors cited by Jewish Agency counselors and corroborated by at least one psychiatric study of hospitalized Ethiopians, are a compendium of family traumas, acute cultural dislocation, unemployment and overcrowded, temporary living conditions.

'A Population In Distress'

Jewish Agency officials are now hopeful that by March, bureaucratic entanglements will be resolved so that the 9,000 Ethiopian olim still living in hotels and absorption centers around the country can be transferred to mobile home sites, where families can function more normally.

Months before the mass influx of Soviet olim, Shultz urged the Soviet Jewry Zionist Forum to prepare psychiatric counseling services to help olim cope with inevitable "cultural decompensation," especially among olim above the age of 45.

"The current Soviet aliyah wave is a population in distress," explained Shultz. "Thousands of olim are coming to Israel because they have nowhere else to go."

To help them adjust, Shultz proposed the establishment of mental health centers.

Last August, with the assistance of \$150,000 in seed money contributed by the Legacy Foundation of the New York UJA-Federation of Jewish Philanthropies, the Zionist Forum initiated a pilot group therapy project for 130 Soviet olim in Jerusalem and Tel Aviv.

Therapy consists of three, five-hour meetings each week, led by trained psychologists, during which olim are asked to verbalize their fears and anxieties about Israel and Israelis.

The therapist's task is to present Israeli perspectives and to mediate between exaggerated Soviet expectations and deep-set misconceptions.

Group participation is intended to demonstrate that individual problems are shared and, through group discussions, Soviet olim are taught self-help in searching for practical ways of coping with their personal situations.

Wary at first, Soviet olim have responded well to this program, said Shultz, who is project coordinator. Individual therapy has recently been introduced for some 140 people.

'We Are With You' Hotline

Meanwhile, negotiations will be initiated with the Health Ministry to persuade hospitals, medical funds and municipal social services to train and employ some of the 9,000 Soviet doctors who have immigrated since late 1989 to administer psychological and psychiatric treatment to Soviet olim.

Given the success of group therapy, parent-child counseling groups are currently being organized to assist youngsters and their families cope with social adjustment to Israeli schools, said Yona Frankel, the Zionist Forum's coordinator of olim support services.

A telephone hotline, called "We Are With You," has also been operating since early 1990 through the Jerusalem municipality's volunteer organizations department, to strengthen the morale of anonymous callers.

In addition, 300 families and dozens of individuals have benefited from 12 weekly group counseling sessions offered by the department's Crisis Intervention Center, according to Batia Vashik, the service's director.

Some 50 Soviet olim from different professional backgrounds have completed three-month retraining courses and are employed as backup counselors leading group discussions to strengthen olim self-esteem, deal with depression and guide role simulations designed to assist job-seekers with employment problems.

Assistance to Ethiopian olim often takes a different form.

"The sediments of physical hardship and psychological stress experienced in Ethiopia have produced medical ailments and psychosomatic disorders, requiring a combination of traditional healing practices and formal clinical and psychiatric methods," said Ora Donio, director of Jewish Agency counseling for Ethiopian olim.

Videotapes For Ethiopians

Because many Ethiopian olim are illiterate, even in their native Amharic, systematic information is transmitted in an outreach program led by Israeli social workers twinned with veteran Ethiopian translators.

Olim are taught verbally and in simulated situations about Israeli daily life, and health, hygiene and birth control practices. Veteran Ethiopians, capable of mediating between Israeli and traditional Ethiopian mind-sets, are also being trained as absorption counselors.

In response to the rising suicides and homicides, a crisis situation center is being established, staffed by trained veteran Ethiopians. Prepared videotape films presenting Ethiopian families in everyday family and social conflict will be screened to small olim groups, followed by discussions guided by ethnic Ethiopian counselors.

"Their purpose will be to explain to them, that in the absence of traditional authority figures, Ethiopians can legitimately turn for help to appropriate Israeli psychologists, psychiatrists and welfare counselors," said Jewish Agency consultant Ya'acov Elias, a veteran Ethiopian olim.