

**ISRAEL SAYS U.N. EXCEEDING ROLE
BY ACCUSING IT OF RIGHTS ABUSES**

By Tamar Levy

GENEVA, June 4 (JTA) -- Israeli Ambassador Yitzhak Lior has accused the United Nations of overstepping its role by issuing a communique that supports Palestinian charges of human rights violations by Israel.

Lior, who represents Israel at the United Nations in Geneva, protested directly to the U.N. undersecretary-general for human rights, Antoine Blanca, at a meeting here Wednesday hours after Blanca released the communique.

It is the first time a high U.N. official has ever made such a political statement, Lior told the Jewish Telegraphic Agency.

It is not the role of the United Nations to make political statements, the envoy said, adding that it was "bad enough" that such U.N. agencies as the World Health Organization, the International Labor Organization and the U.N. Human Rights Commission were "politicized."

The U.N. communique followed charges made by the International Committee of the Red Cross that Israel was mistreating Palestinian prisoners, especially while under interrogation.

Cornelio Sommaruga, president of the ICRC, issued a public statement on May 21 calling on Israel to halt what it called the ill-treatment of prisoners and to improve the conditions of detention generally.

Sommaruga accused Israel of violating the Fourth Geneva Convention, which forbids physical or mental coercion of prisoners.

Followed Arab League Meeting

Blanca's communique was issued following the undersecretary-general's meeting with an Arab League delegation composed of representatives of Egypt and Oman, who were accompanied by Palestinian observers.

The Arab League had requested the meeting to complain about the alleged worsening of human rights violations in the Israel-administered territories, particularly the treatment of civilians and detainees.

The delegation called for action by the international community.

According to the communique, Blanca advised the Arab delegation that the appropriate U.N. organ in this case was the Special Committee to Investigate Israeli Practices Affecting the Human Rights of the Palestinian People and Other Arabs of the Occupied Territories, which derived its mandate from the General Assembly in 1968.

Blanca said, however, that the Special Committee was unable to exercise its mandate to date because of Israel's refusal to cooperate.

"It has been obliged to visit neighboring countries in order to hear testimony from witnesses coming from the occupied territories," the communique said. The last such visits were to Syria, Jordan and Egypt from April 29 to May 10.

Blanca's communique said that he called the attention of the Arab League delegation to the Special Committee's report of May 10 which expressed concern over "the persistence of serious human rights violations in the territories, despite Israel's declared policy of reconciliation."

**PALESTINIANS LAUNCH A CAMPAIGN
TO WIN SYMPATHY, BACKING FROM E.C.**By Bernard Joseph
London Jewish Chronicle

LONDON, June 3 (JTA) -- Palestinian diplomats have embarked on an all-out campaign to win sympathy and political backing from the European Community.

The campaign, which was launched here this week, was spearheaded by Palestinian spokeswoman Dr. Hanan Ashrawi, who is a chief adviser to the Palestinian delegation to the Middle East peace talks.

On Tuesday, she told a packed meeting in Parliament, "For 40 years, we were silent. Now we are speaking out.

"We are going to challenge not just your minds but your hearts as well. We'll win the world over," she said.

The meeting following a daylong lobby of members of Parliament by Palestinian sympathizers, timed to coincide with the 25th anniversary of the Israeli capture of the West Bank and Gaza Strip during the Six-Day War.

But pro-Palestinian sources in the House of Commons stressed that it was also aimed at influencing British politicians just a month before the United Kingdom assumes the presidency of the E.C., which is Israel's biggest trading partner.

In an interview, Ashrawi made it clear that enhancing the E.C.'s role in the peace talks is a Palestinian priority.

"The E.C. is more evenhanded than the Americans, and it recognizes our right to self-determination," she said. "We think that while they have not so far been creative enough, they have the will and the means to make a major contribution to the peace process."

'Just A Few Hundred' Lobbyists

Ashrawi has recently traveled to several key E.C. member countries, including Holland and Portugal, from which Britain will take over the E.C. leadership in July.

Ashrawi, who visited the Netherlands last week, told a Dutch newspaper that Holland may contribute its know-how to build a seaport in the Gaza Strip.

Ashrawi and Nabil Sha'ath, political adviser to Palestine Liberation Organization chief Yasir Arafat, said a deep-sea port would enable Palestinian exporters to ship their products directly to the European market, bypassing Israel. They said a Palestinian export office would be opened for that purpose, to be run by two Palestinians being trained in Holland.

And a Palestinian source has said that Ashrawi has also been invited by German Chancellor Helmut Kohl to visit Germany.

The Palestinian move to win favor in Europe follows tensions between Israel and the E.C. over the E.C.'s policy of linking trade relations with its settlement policy in the territories.

There was also a sharp disagreement over Jerusalem's reluctance to see the E.C., some of whose members are major arms suppliers to the Arab countries, take part in multilateral talks over Middle East arms control.

Pro-Israel sources in Parliament said they

were pleased that "just a few hundred" people went to lobby their members of Parliament on behalf of the Palestinians. There was also satisfaction that an early motion broached to coincide with the lobby had been supported by only 32 members of Parliament.

However, there was concern about a turnout estimated at about 500 for a public meeting held Tuesday in the House of Commons grand committee room. Hundreds more, including a large number of MPs and diplomats, were unable to enter.

Ashrawi, introduced by the meeting's chairman, Liberal Democrat foreign affairs spokesman Sir David Steel, described the Israeli administration of the territories as "brutal."

Ashrawi accused Israel of trying to sabotage the peace process and repeated accusations that the Israelis are employing plainclothes "death squads" to kill Palestinian activities.

But she said the Palestinians are determined to continue the peace talks, which she characterized as "flawed, unfair, unjust but the only peace process we have."

She clashed several times with Moslem fundamentalists in the audience, one of whom called for "a relentless jihad (holy war) against Israel," rather than peace negotiations.

E.C. PRESSES FOR LARGER ROLE IN MIDEAST MULTILATERAL TALKS

By Yossi Lempkovic

BRUSSELS, June 4 (JTA) -- The European Community is pressing for a larger role in the multilateral talks on Middle East regional issues.

The pan-European body views them, foremost, as "confidence-building measures" aimed at getting the Middle East antagonists to think in terms of cooperating. They complement the bilateral political talks between Israelis and Arabs and Israelis and Palestinians that are the core of the peace process launched in Madrid last October.

The E.C. made its points at a steering committee meeting in Lisbon last week convened to assess what progress the multilaterals made in their first round last month.

"The idea of bigger participation by Europe in the peace process was an integral part of all my speeches in Lisbon and it was very positively received by most of the participants," said Leonardo Mathias, Portugal's ambassador to the E.C.

Mathias headed the E.C. delegation at the Steering Committee meeting because Portugal currently chairs the E.C. Council of Ministers.

The Steering Committee consists of senior officials from the more than 30 countries participating in the multilateral phase. They are not confined to the Middle East parties but include the United States, Russia, Canada, China and the 12 E.C. member states.

Five multilateral working groups met in several capitals last month. The E.C. chaired the group on economic development, which met in Brussels and is to meet in Paris later this year.

Also to meet again are the water resources group, in Washington; refugees, in Ottawa; arms control, in Moscow; and environment, in the Netherlands.

The steering committee apparently has not reached a consensus on Arab demands to establish two more working groups, on Jerusalem and on human rights.

The committee, meanwhile, has appealed to Syria and Lebanon, which boycotted the first round of multilateral talks, to join the next.

NEW CONTRACTS WITH G.E. BARRED AS RESULT OF ISRAELI FRAUD CASE

By Cynthia Mann
States News Service

WASHINGTON, June 4 (JTA) -- The Pentagon said this week it was barring the aircraft engines division of General Electric from competing for U.S. government contracts because of allegations of fraud involving a former Israeli air force brigadier general.

Israel announced that it, too, has halted future business with the division, at the request of the United States. Complying with the request is a condition of Israel receiving U.S. military aid, said Ruth Yaron, the spokeswoman at the Israeli Embassy here.

But the ban will have little if any effect on the Israel Defense Force, according to senior IDF officers in Tel Aviv.

They pointed out that existing contracts for G.E. engines are not covered by the Pentagon order. Moreover, the jet engines are purchased by the Israeli Defense Ministry from the U.S. government, not the supplier.

Israel, in any event, has a sufficient reserve of engine units and spare parts to cope with any delays in deliveries, the IDF sources said.

The suspension was imposed by the Pentagon's Defense Logistics Agency following a Justice Department complaint against G.E. charging the aircraft engines division fraudulently diverted \$40 million in foreign military sales funds.

The complaint, scheduled for trial in Cincinnati in November, alleges that as part of the scheme a high-level G.E. employee made \$11 million in unauthorized payments to Brig. Gen. Rami Dotan, who was then the Israeli air force's chief procurement officer in the United States.

Dotan, tried in Israel, was reduced in rank to private and given a 13-year jail sentence.

Israel Says It's Cooperating

Israeli officials, meanwhile, have denied reports that Jerusalem has been faulted for failure to cooperate in the investigations. Israel has given the United States every facility in its investigation of the bribery scandal here and in the United States, officials in Israel said Thursday.

They said that Washington has in fact expressed appreciation to Israel for opening its files and documents to U.S. investigators.

The indefinite suspension on G.E. bids was imposed to protect U.S. government interests, said Larry Wilson, public affairs director for the Defense Logistics Agency.

Wilson said the suspension would be lifted if G.E. "takes appropriate disciplinary action" against the employees involved and if it strengthens internal controls to prevent more fraud.

The engines division is currently under obligation for 2,600 Defense Department contracts, with a total face value of \$23.5 billion, said Wilson. These contracts will be unaffected by the suspension.

The engines division employs 32,000 people and is concentrated primarily in the Cincinnati area and in Lynn, Mass.

General Electric is appealing the suspension, said Jane Juracek, a company spokeswoman in Ohio. She said G.E. officials believe the Pentagon action is unfair and "hope it is of short duration and of limited scope."

(JTA correspondent Hugh Orgel in Tel Aviv contributed to this report.)

**NEWS ANALYSIS:
OLIM MAY DECIDE ELECTION OUTCOME,
BUT RELIGIOUS BLOC TO HOLD BALANCE
By Hugh Orgel**

TEL AVIV (JTA) -- The outcome of Israel's June 23 elections will likely be determined by the votes cast by recent immigrants from the former Soviet Union, since veteran Israelis are expected to vote much as they did in 1988.

But according to a leading Israeli pollster, the strictly Orthodox parties are likely to retain the balance of power when it comes to forming a new government.

The result of the elections will be a hung parliament, according to Dr. Aharon Fein, director of the Tazpit Research Institute, who gave an election briefing for foreign correspondents arranged by the Government Press Office.

Fein, an expert on the voting patterns of emigres from the newly independent republics of the former Soviet Union, said that for the past two years his institution has done almost monthly surveys among the newcomers.

The recent immigrants, who have increased Israel's population by about 7 percent, are overwhelmingly secular, tend to be highly educated and generally identify themselves with Israel's Ashkenazic population, Fein said.

That could spell trouble for the religious parties and for the Likud.

Likud's strongest support has always come from the Sephardic population, Jews whose origins are in North African or Middle Eastern countries.

Labor Party supporters, on the other hand, come mainly from European backgrounds and tend to be more educated than Likud followers.

A survey carried out last year right after the Persian Gulf War indicated that 46 percent of the immigrants supported the right wing, probably out of a sense of support for the government at a critical time. General population surveys at that time also showed an upsurge of support for the establishment.

But subsequent surveys of new immigrants, taken in June and October 1991 and in January, March and April 1992, found a decrease in support for Likud and the right-wing parties, and conversely, a rise in support for Labor.

35 Percent Unemployment Rate

Fein attributed the rapid decline of support for the governing parties among olim to the fact that they are now facing harsh facts of life in Israel. For many, the basket of subsidies and services that cushioned their first year of life in the country has been exhausted.

The surveys showed that the immigrants, on their own for the first time, are disappointed by the lack of adequate housing and jobs. The unemployment rate for olim is 35 percent, compared to 11 percent for the country as a whole. And the immigrants consider the few jobs that are available beneath their training and abilities.

Some 240,000 immigrants from the former Soviet Union are eligible to vote out of an overall Israeli electorate of 3.4 million.

If the usual 80 percent turnout rate among veteran Israelis holds true for the immigrants, they are likely to decide the composition of 8.5 Knesset seats, Fein calculated.

The immigrant vote could therefore determine which of the major parties gets the first crack at forming a government.

The Tazpit director found little support

among newcomers for the new, specifically Russian-based parties. About 10 to 11 percent said they would vote for these parties, but Fein does not expect them to surpass the 1.5 percent threshold parties need to win a Knesset seat.

About 42 percent of the immigrants said in the last week of April that they would vote for Labor; 14 percent for Likud; 6 percent for the left-wing Meretz bloc; and 6 percent for the right-wing Moledet, Tsomet and Tehiya parties.

Only 1 percent said they would vote for the religious parties. And about 20 percent could not or would not disclose their voting plans.

Labor Would Gain More Seats

Citing these preferences, Fein predicted that Labor would gain three or four Knesset seats from the new voters, while Likud would gain one.

He predicted that Meretz would gain about one seat and the right-wing Moledet, Tehiya and Tsomet parties would gain one among them.

"When we add the immigrant factor, we expect that Labor will get 43 seats; Likud, 37; the three small parties of the right, eight seats among them; Meretz, 11; the religious parties, 16 and the Arab parties five," Fein said.

If he is correct, Labor and the left-wing bloc will gain 54 seats in the 120-member Knesset, while Likud and the right-wing bloc will gain 45 seats.

If Labor wins tacit support from the Arab parties but no support from the religious bloc, it would only be able to muster 59 votes, two less than a majority.

If, on the other hand, the religious parties support Likud, a Likud-led coalition would hold a precarious majority of 61 in the 120-seat Knesset.

Such a government would likely be held ransom to stiff demands from the religious parties. And it would be a Knesset in which no party could allow a single member to be absent -- away from the country or even away from the Knesset building -- for a single day in case there were a snap vote that might bring down the government.

**STABBING, ARSON MAR ANNIVERSARY
By Gil Sedan**

JERUSALEM, June 4 (JTA) -- A series of terrorist acts against Israelis on the eve of the 25th anniversary of the Six-Day War left a young border policeman seriously injured and several cars burned out by an arsonist in Jerusalem.

The police officer, 20-year-old Shimon Hayoun, was attacked from behind in Bethlehem's Manger Square on Thursday. He suffered deep stab wounds in his neck, just above his protective vest.

His assailant, fatally wounded by another policeman, was identified as Jawad Ja'abary, 28.

It was a close call for Hayoun, who was hospitalized for surgery Thursday night. The knife barely missed his spinal cord, doctors said.

Meanwhile, four cars were set on fire in the Baka neighborhood of western Jerusalem. The arsonist inscribed the word "Hamas" nearby. Hamas is the Moslem fundamentalist group responsible for much of the intifada violence in recent years.

Police say 15 cars have been torched in the past three weeks, all in neighborhoods bordering East Jerusalem.

REMINDER: The JTA Daily News Bulletin will not be published on Monday, June 8.

MASORTI MOVEMENT IN ISRAEL LOSES FUNDING FROM SEMINARY

By Debra Nussbaum Cohen

KIAMESHA LAKE, N.Y. (JTA) -- The Masorti movement, the Israeli branch of Conservative Judaism, has lost the large chunk of its funding that came from the Jewish Theological Seminary and is now looking elsewhere for support.

JTS, which had agreed to raise money on behalf of Masorti two years ago, cut off funding in order to balance its own budget, say seminary officials.

As a result, Masorti is putting together a staff of Washington-based paid fund-raisers who, supplemented by volunteers, will canvass individuals and congregations within the movement to try to make up the shortfall.

"We're going to become closer to America now," Rabbi Philip Spectre, executive director of Masorti, said in an interview during the annual gathering of Conservative rabbis, held at the Concord Hotel here May 17-21.

"Our rabbinic colleagues are very supportive. They have realized that they have the responsibility of funding us," he said.

And the United Synagogue of Conservative Judaism, the movement's congregational arm, "has embraced us in a closer way. We're planning joint fund-raising efforts," Spectre said.

But Masorti may have a difficult time raising all that it requires because of the confusing multiplicity of Conservative groups targeting the same population. That, in fact, is one of the primary reasons why Masorti and JTS agreed to join fund-raising forces in the first place.

The organizations signed a three-year contract two years ago that was supposed to provide the Israeli movement with \$565,000 annually, said Masorti President Allan Warshawsky.

That sum would have equalled just over a third of Masorti's \$1.5 million 1992 budget, according to Spectre. The rest comes from foundations, synagogues and individual contributors in North and South America.

The seminary was unable to raise the amount for Masorti that it was supposed to, said Spectre, because "JTS never emphasized the Israel component of the campaign properly."

Funding For Beit Midrash Intact

The Masorti movement helps fund the 40 congregations under its aegis, as well as a kibbutz, a moshav and a Nahal program, or training program for young Israelis in the army.

Masorti also lobbies the Knesset on behalf of religious pluralism and is currently suing two municipal religious councils in order to get them to allow Conservative Jews to participate.

While cutting off all funding to Masorti, JTS will continue to help support the movement's Beit Midrash. It will receive \$375,000 in fiscal 1993.

It will ordain four Israeli Conservative rabbis this year and has a total of about 60 rabbinic, graduate and other students pursuing degrees.

"JTS is, by definition, pushing a wedge between the Beit Midrash and the rest of the movement in Israel," said Warshawsky. "It's extremely unhealthy."

Said Rabbi Michael Greenbaum, vice chancellor and chief administrative officer at JTS, "We regret deeply the tensions that this has brought about. But I don't think that this funding decision is the source of tension between the Beit Midrash and Masorti.

"There were always limited resources, and that fact was, in itself, a cause for tension," he said. "The seminary's commitment to Masorti is unchanged. We are simply unable to continue the funding we were doing."

The seminary itself, like many Jewish organizations, has been grappling with a serious budget crisis. Its own projected budget deficit for fiscal 1992, which ends June 31, nearly equals Masorti's entire operating budget.

The seminary, whose 1993 budget total \$14.5 million, according to Greenbaum, has trimmed \$6 million off of its expenditures over the past three years, laid off 15 of its approximately 250 staff members in the last year and cut back on the financial aid it offers students.

"It's been a very difficult time," said Greenbaum. "But there hasn't been a balanced budget in anyone's memory, and it's important for us to have our fiscal house in order."

HOUSE PASSES A PRO-CHOICE BILL WITH BACKING FROM JEWISH GROUPS

By Cynthia Mann

States News Service

WASHINGTON, June 4 (JTA) -- With help from Jewish groups, women in the military have won one round in their battle for equal access to abortion, but the rest of the fight will be uphill.

The House of Representatives on Thursday narrowly approved an amendment to the defense authorization bill that would restore the right of enlisted women and the wives of men stationed overseas to use private money to pay for abortions at military facilities.

That right, which military women had throughout the Reagan years, was rescinded in 1988.

Jewish groups that campaigned to overturn the ban welcomed Thursday's 216-193 vote in the House. But they conceded that the measure is likely to be vetoed by President Bush if it remains in the final version of the defense bill that emerges from the House-Senate conference.

Last spring, a similar measure passed the House by a vote of 220-208, also as part of the defense authorization bill, but it was stripped out under the threat of a presidential veto.

But Jewish groups supporting the amendment hope that, with abortion rights emerging as a major concern in this year's election campaign, the bill will remain intact.

"We applaud the House for carrying out the will of the majority of the American people," said Judith Golub, legislative director of the American Jewish Committee. "And we hope this will be the year Congress will end this discriminatory policy that prohibits women in the service of their country from having the same rights as all other American women."

"We are very happy," said Julie Nusbaum, legislative coordinator for the National Council of Jewish Women. "We see this as a real fairness issue and a simple question of access."

Nusbaum said the amendment faces an "up-hill battle" and that the council plans to lobby the Senate in the coming weeks as it prepares to draft its authorization bill.

Mark Pelavin, Washington representative of the American Jewish Congress, said he is not particularly optimistic about the measure's survival. But he said there is a slim chance Bush could be persuaded not to veto the bill by the buildup of pro-choice pressure within the GOP.