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NO. 2

**BLOODY MURDER OF SHIN BET AGENT
SEEN AS ANOTHER VICTORY FOR HAMAS**
By Gil Sedan

JERUSALEM, Jan. 4 (JTA) -- The bloody murder this week of a Shin Bet agent was a double blow for the Israeli security agency.

Not only did it lose one of its rising stars, but it meant yet another victory for Hamas only two weeks after Israel expelled most of the Islamic fundamentalist group's leadership to Lebanon.

In a somber day for the General Security Services, as the agency is formally known, Haim Nahmani, 25, was laid to rest Monday on Jerusalem's Mount Herzl, in a state funeral attended by hundreds.

Only the morning before, Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin was telling a student audience here that Israel was a safer place since the Dec. 17 deportation to Lebanon of 415 activists of Hamas and another fundamentalist group, the Islamic Jihad.

A few hours later, Nahmani was brutally murdered in an apartment in Rehavia, Jerusalem's most prestigious neighborhood.

In separate incidents the same day, a Jewish carpenter was seriously wounded in a knife attack by an Arab laborer at a construction site in Holon, and a pipe bomb exploded in the luggage compartment of an Egged passenger bus, luckily causing no casualties and little damage.

The murder in Jerusalem took place shortly after 4 p.m. Sunday. A neighbor at 14 Hatibonim St. reported hearing a loud noise from the first floor. Going down to check it out, he found an apartment door open.

Inside, water flooded the floor from a running shower. In one room, he discovered a man lying in a pool of blood and water. Blood stains smeared the wall and several armchairs were overturned. A hammer, later identified as one of the murder weapons, lay near the body.

When police arrived, the victim was identified as Nahmani, a Shin Bet field operative. He had been bludgeoned with a hammer and repeatedly stabbed.

Arab Collaborator Suspected

Police have no doubt about the identity of the murderer: an Arab collaborator who had been supplying information about Hamas. Police launched a manhunt for him as they pursued leads about a possible accomplice.

Nahmani apparently received the collaborator in the apartment, which was most likely a safe house for meetings between agents and their informers. From the disorder in the apartment, investigators surmise Nahmani struggled with one or two attackers but did not manage to draw his pistol.

The pistol was gone, but a file of documents was not taken by the murderer or murderers.

Several possible motives are being considered:

The collaborator may have been exposed by his sources and forced to assassinate his operator, lest he be killed himself.

Alternatively, he may have acted at his own initiative, either in revenge for the deportations,

or as a double agent who had finally decided to take the Arab side.

This was the first time in nearly 13 years that a Shin Bet agent was murdered by his informant. The last person to be killed under similar circumstances was Moshe Golan in 1980.

Golan met an informant from Nablus in an apartment in Netanya. The informant threw pepper in his eyes and stabbed him to death. The murderer was tracked down four days later in the heart of Nablus and killed.

Paying homage to Nahmani at the funeral Monday were senior army officers, heads of the security services, Knesset members and other public figures.

"Your fate has destined you to be one of the unknown soldiers who stand in the first line of fire," a Shin Bet commander said in a eulogy.

"True, there is a rise in terrorism," said the officer, "but only you knew, only your friends know how many tragedies have been prevented."

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In Tel Aviv, Maj. Gen. Danny Rothschild, coordinator of government affairs in the administered territories, said Israel did not expect terror activity to cease altogether as a result of the deportation.

But he said that in the long run, fighting terrorism and combating the organizational structure of the Islamic fundamentalist movement would reap benefits.

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The troops opened fire only after making certain there was no connection between the movements and the deportees, the sources said.

The deportees themselves have reportedly appealed to sympathizers in Lebanon to stop smuggling food to them because it drew Israeli fire.

News reports from Lebanon say the Arab states are planning to request the United Nations come up with a timetable and mechanism for Israel's return of the deportees under a Security Council resolution.

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The exercise, which, it later emerged, had been observed by the Israeli army chief of staff, triggered what has been called a war of the generals over responsibility for the mishap.

A preliminary inquiry panel singled out three officers for responsibility in the fatal accident, which is under ongoing investigation by the military police.

The suspension of the press credentials of the two foreign correspondents by the Israel Government Press Office was widely condemned by the media worldwide and led to calls by Israelis for review of censorship procedures.

The Government Press Office decided to return the cards because it was "favorably impressed" with the behavior of the two journalists concerned, said the office's director, Uri Dromi.

Both reporters said withdrawal of their credentials had not affected their work, although Black described the move as "unpleasant and manipulative."

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FORMER SHAS KNESSET MEMBER PLEADS GUILTY TO EMBEZZLEMENT

By David Landau

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Under the terms of the plea bargain, Geula Levy will get a suspended sentence.

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A venerable leader of the rigorously Orthodox Ashkenazic community, 95-year-old Rabbi Eliezer Shach, offered to give character testimony if the court would come to his home, but the judge declined the offer.

Levy himself showed emotion, for the first time during the trial, when the court was told of his adoption and rearing of a young, homeless boy.

Levy was due to be sentenced Tuesday, and his wife at a later date.

Under Israeli law, a judge is not required to hand down his sentence in conformity with the terms of a plea bargain. In practice, though, the vast majority of such bargains are indeed mirrored in the court's verdict.

Sixteen people called by the prosecution during the trial were declared hostile witnesses when they backtracked from statements made earlier to the police.

Levy, who now ranks seventh on the Shas party slate, missed out on a seat in the current Knesset by a couple of hundred votes.

Shas-linked legal tribulations are not over. The party's lone member of the Cabinet, Interior Minister Arye Deri, is also under investigation for financial improprieties allegedly involving the illegal transfer of public funds, though he has not been indicted.

LABOR PARTY HAWKS URGING RABIN TO BRING IN RIGHT-WING PARTIES

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For different reasons, the left-wing Meretz bloc and the fervently Orthodox Shas party have both voiced strong objections to the idea of broadening the coalition by bringing in the right-wing Tsomet party and the National Religious Party.

Meretz leaders are still smarting over rank-and-file unhappiness at their support for a Dec. 16 Cabinet decision to deport 415 Moslem fundamentalist activists to Lebanon.

At a party meeting Sunday night with Meretz Ministers Shulamit Aloni and Amnon Rubinstein, a significant number of members reiterated the party's right, enshrined in the coalition agreement, to veto the accession of any other party to the government.

As for Shas, its leader, Interior Minister Arye Deri, is implacably opposed to turning over the Religious Affairs portfolio to the National Religious Party.

The NRP "held it for four decades, and we were discriminated against," said Deri. "We are not going to let that happen again."

Rafael Pinhasi of Shas was last week appointed deputy minister of religious affairs, with formal responsibility for the ministry remaining in Rabin's hands.

ISRAEL OFFERS ARAB OIL A TRANSIT POINT IN GAZA

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TEL AVIV, Jan. 4 (JTA) -- In a peaceful bid to foster economic cooperation with the Arab world, Israel is offering transit facilities for European-bound Arab oil at a projected terminal in Gaza.

Under an Israeli plan submitted to a team of World Bank experts, Saudi Arabia and Kuwait would pump oil overland to the Mediterranean port of Gaza, where it would then be shipped to European destinations.

Such an arrangement would save the two nations an estimated \$240 million annually by enabling them to bypass more expensive transit through the Suez Canal or around Africa.

The plan would also help boost employment in economically depressed Gaza, a center of anti-Israel intifada turbulence.

The blueprint is to be reviewed by the World Bank panel in the context of the multilateral talks on economic development that are part of the Middle East peace process.

The proposal is based on a study by Professor Gideon Fishelson, scientific coordinator of Tel Aviv University's Armand Hammer Fund for Economic Cooperation in the Middle East.

Fishelson, a professor of economics, reckons it costs \$18 to ship one ton of oil from the Persian Gulf to Western Europe through the Suez Canal; the cost rises to \$20 in shipment by supertankers around Africa.

Savings of \$3 to \$6 per ton of crude oil could be achieved by piping the oil from the Arabian Peninsula to the Mediterranean coast and then loading it on tankers bound for Europe, he said.

Urges Closing Of Eilat Terminal

The Middle East supplies the world with some 600 million tons of oil a year, says Fishelson. Hence the suggestion that about 60 million to 70 million tons will be exported via Gaza "is reasonable," he said.

Potential savings would more than cover the cost of constructing and maintaining the pipelines and an oil terminal in Gaza, and still leave a surplus, he said.

At the political level, the plan would have no impact on Arab national pride since "Arab oil would continue to be exported via an Arab oil terminal."

Moreover, the pipelines would physically link Israel and three or four Arab countries, "making them interdependent" and thus cementing the peace.

The Israeli economist recommended that Israel shut down its oil terminal at the southern port of Eilat. Originally built to pipe Iranian oil to refineries in Ashdod and Haifa, it now funnels oil imports from Egypt.

But Fishelson said the terminal poses "a major environmental" hazard.

"The delicate environmental balance in the Gulf of Eilat and the uniqueness of its aquatic life are sufficient arguments for not taking any additional risks," he wrote in the study.

He suggested that Israel buy its oil instead from supplies pumped through the proposed overland pipeline, which could be linked to an existing Eilat-Ashdod system in the desert north of Eilat. The danger of an oil spill in a "closed oil-transfer system" would be minimal, he said.

NEW RABBI IN SLOVAKIA DENIES THERE'S ANTI-SEMITISM THERE

By Josef Klansky

PRAGUE, Jan. 4 (JTA) -- The only rabbi in newly independent Slovakia says "there is no anti-Semitism" in the country, according to a Slovak daily.

Rabbi Lazar Kleinman says anti-Jewish sentiment is a thing of the past in Slovakia, whose separation from the Czech Republic on Jan. 1 has given rise to concern over the future of the 3,000-member Jewish community there.

His comments fly in the face of many reports of anti-Semitic incidents and sentiment in Slovakia that arose with its nascent nationalism in early 1990 and has been felt since.

An interview with the Romanian-born rabbi was published in the Bratislava newspaper Pravda, three days before the official breakup of the 75-year old Czechoslovak federation.

Kleinman, 53, was installed four months ago as rabbi in Kosice, in eastern Slovakia. He is an Australian citizen who studied in Israel and came to his present post from a rabbinic position in Helsinki, Finland.

The front-page display given the interview with him appeared to reflect Slovak concern that Western aid for its struggling economy might be threatened by perceived anti-Semitic and nationalist coloration of political developments there.

A spokesman for the Jewish community said a day after the interview appeared that Slovak Jews expect leaders of the newly independent country to emphatically dissociate themselves from any act reminiscent of the Slovak Nazi puppet state of World War II.

The Dec. 30 statement by Jaroslav Franek, spokesman of the Union of Jewish Communities in Slovakia, came on the eve of formal independence for the republic, which is headed by Prime Minister Vladimir Meciar.

Rabbi Kleinman said the rapprochement between Israel and the Vatican had diminished anti-Semitism in such Catholic countries as Poland, Hungary and the two components of former Czechoslovakia.

Kleinman was asked about "political forces trying to convince the world there is an acute danger of anti-Semitism in Slovakia."

He replied that his four months in Slovakia had persuaded him there is less anti-Semitism in that country than in many democratic lands of the West. He told Pravda a distinction has to be drawn between anti-Semitism and hooliganism.

ISRAELI ARMY BRASS TO VISIT U.S.

TEL AVIV, Jan. 4 (JTA) -- The Israel Defense Force chief of staff, Lt. Gen. Ehud Barak, is coming to the United States for a working visit next week.

He will be the guest of his American counterpart, Gen. Colin Powell, head of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, according to an announcement by the IDF spokesman.

It will be Barak's first visit to the United States since his appointment as chief of staff.

The visit, at Powell's invitation and paid for by the United States, is designed to strengthen military and strategic cooperation between the two countries.

During his 10-day stay in the United States, Barak will meet with outgoing Defense Secretary Dick Cheney and other Pentagon officials.

LEADERS OF 3 FAITHS LEARN NUANCES OF MIDEAST AFTER JOINT TRIP THERE

By Debra Nussbaum Cohen

NEW YORK, Jan. 4 (JTA) -- Christian, Moslem and Jewish religious leaders returned recently from a first-ever joint trip to the Middle East confident that they gained a newly nuanced understanding of complexities involved in the peace process.

According to Al Vorspan, the recently retired senior vice president of the Reform movement's Union of American Hebrew Congregations, "We knew each other before from public stereotypes and now we know each other personally. Before this trip I would not have made the distinctions I make now," he said.

The trip to the Middle East, which took place Nov. 29 through Dec. 11, was organized by the U.S. Interreligious Committee for Peace in the Middle East, a Philadelphia-based group.

The 24 participants visited Israel, the West Bank, Egypt, Jordan and Syria, meeting with government officials at each stop. Their reactions to Israel's recent expulsion of 415 Moslem fundamentalists reflected their new-found insight into the complexities of the Middle East.

The National Council of Churches' General Secretary Rev. Joan Brown Campbell and its Middle East director, Dale Bishop, both participated in the 24-member delegation.

The NCC is an umbrella group representing 32 Protestant and Orthodox church denominations.

NCC Letter Reflects New Balance

In a letter to negotiators in the peace talks and to President-elect Bill Clinton shortly after returning, the NCC called on the Palestine Liberation Organization to "unambiguously condemn violent acts by extremists," and on Israel to "revoke its expulsion of Palestinians."

The NCC letter also urged direct talks between Israel and the PLO, "thus stripping away the facade of non-recognition."

The letter contained understanding of the Israeli desire for official Palestinian condemnation of the violence, reflecting a balance that had not generally found its way into NCC statements about Arab-Israeli problems in the past.

"The trip made a big difference in how we'll approach" a statement about the deportations, said Campbell several days before issuing the letter. She pledged that it would not be "a knee-jerk reaction to headlines."

"NCC's was a very balanced announcement," said Avi Granot, the Israeli Embassy's counselor for church affairs.

He met with representatives of several church groups before they issued statements.

"We appreciate that they are committed and concerned about the peace process. It is not the criticism we are concerned with, but it is when the criticism is off-balance that we start to worry about it," said Granot.

Rabbi A. James Rudin, director of inter-religious affairs at the American Jewish Committee, also applauded the fairness of the NCC letter.

"There is some clear attempt at balance," he said. "It's encouraging to see this, despite the sharp attacks against Israel."

This country's 57 million Catholics were represented on the trip by Rev. Raymond Helmick, who was sent by the U.S. Catholic Conference's Office of International Justice and Peace.

On his return, Helmick said that " Hamas and rejectionist factions are interested in preventing settlement.

"We need to develop a process in which the parties can express their common, practical opposition to the violence. It's in the interests of the U.S. to promote that."

The U.S. Catholic Conference opted not to issue an official statement about the expulsions, but referred to the issue in a general fashion in the Christmas statement of Archbishop John Roach, chair of the Catholic Conference's Committee on International Policy.

"We earnestly pray for a speedy and just conclusion to the Arab-Israeli peace talks," said his statement. "With close ties to the Jewish community and with our Arab Christian brothers and sisters in the Holy Land, we are eager for the day" when Arabs and Israelis "alike will be able to celebrate without fear."

The statements from these groups stood in marked contrast to those issued by other Christian groups that did not participate in the trip to the Middle East.

The Geneva-based World Council of Churches was sharply critical of the Israeli action and did not mention the Hamas terrorism that prompted the Israeli move.

Todor Sabev, the WCC's acting general-secretary, said in a cable sent to Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin that "collective punishment is gravely detrimental to the pursuit of peace and severely compromises the continuation of the peace negotiations."

Perhaps the sharpest criticism of Israel came from Rev. Mark Brown of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, which claims more than 5 million members.

Brown, who is also a spokesman for Churches for Middle East Peace, termed the deportations "one of the most inhumane forms of punishment" and "a violation of international law," citing both the Geneva Convention and the Charter of the Nuremberg Military Tribunal.

ISRAEL TO EXTRADITE 'CRAZY EDDIE'

By Hugh Orgel

TEL AVIV, Jan. 4 (JTA) -- Eddie Antar, known in the United States as the electronics cut-rate entrepreneur "Crazy Eddie," is to be escorted back to the United States shortly to face fraud charges, under an extradition order signed Sunday by Israeli Justice Minister David Libai.

The order was signed only after Antar's American lawyer, Jack Arsenault, reached an agreement with the U.S. Justice Department stipulating that he will only be tried for offenses committed prior to 1988, when he became an Israeli citizen.

Under the deal, Antar will not be tried for fleeing America while due to stand trial, or being in possession of forged documents.

He left the United States after he was ordered in June 1990 by the Justice Department to pay somewhere between \$50 million and \$83 million he allegedly obtained by defrauding customers and illegally transferred to Bank Leumi in Israel.

He was captured in June living in Yavneh, Israel, under the false identity of David Cohen from Brazil. Antar, whose age has been reported between 44 and 46, is reportedly suffering from liver and kidney disease.

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The blueprint is to be reviewed by the World Bank panel in the context of the multilateral talks on economic development that are part of the Middle East peace process.

The proposal is based on a study by Professor Gideon Fishelson, scientific coordinator of Tel Aviv University's Armand Hammer Fund for Economic Cooperation in the Middle East.

Fishelson, a professor of economics, reckons it costs \$18 to ship one ton of oil from the Persian Gulf to Western Europe through the Suez Canal; the cost rises to \$20 in shipment by supertankers around Africa.

Savings of \$3 to \$6 per ton of crude oil could be achieved by piping the oil from the Arabian Peninsula to the Mediterranean coast and then loading it on tankers bound for Europe, he said.

Urges Closing Of Eilat Terminal

The Middle East supplies the world with some 600 million tons of oil a year, says Fishelson. Hence the suggestion that about 60 million to 70 million tons will be exported via Gaza "is reasonable," he said.

Potential savings would more than cover the cost of constructing and maintaining the pipelines and an oil terminal in Gaza, and still leave a surplus, he said.

At the political level, the plan would have no impact on Arab national pride since "Arab oil would continue to be exported via an Arab oil terminal."

Moreover, the pipelines would physically link Israel and three or four Arab countries, "making them interdependent" and thus cementing the peace.

The Israeli economist recommended that Israel shut down its oil terminal at the southern port of Eilat. Originally built to pipe Iranian oil to refineries in Ashdod and Haifa, it now funnels oil imports from Egypt.

But Fishelson said the terminal poses "a major environmental" hazard.

"The delicate environmental balance in the Gulf of Eilat and the uniqueness of its aquatic life are sufficient arguments for not taking any additional risks," he wrote in the study.

He suggested that Israel buy its oil instead from supplies pumped through the proposed overland pipeline, which could be linked to an existing Eilat-Ashdod system in the desert north of Eilat. The danger of an oil spill in a "closed oil-transfer system" would be minimal, he said.

NEW RABBI IN SLOVAKIA DENIES THERE'S ANTI-SEMITISM THERE

By Josef Klansky

PRAGUE, Jan. 4 (JTA) -- The only rabbi in newly independent Slovakia says "there is no anti-Semitism" in the country, according to a Slovak daily.

Rabbi Lazar Kleinman says anti-Jewish sentiment is a thing of the past in Slovakia, whose separation from the Czech Republic on Jan. 1 has given rise to concern over the future of the 3,000-member Jewish community there.

His comments fly in the face of many reports of anti-Semitic incidents and sentiment in Slovakia that arose with its nascent nationalism in early 1990 and has been felt since.

An interview with the Romanian-born rabbi was published in the Bratislava newspaper Pravda, three days before the official breakup of the 75-year old Czechoslovak federation.

Kleinman, 53, was installed four months ago as rabbi in Kosice, in eastern Slovakia. He is an Australian citizen who studied in Israel and came to his present post from a rabbinic position in Helsinki, Finland.

The front-page display given the interview with him appeared to reflect Slovak concern that Western aid for its struggling economy might be threatened by perceived anti-Semitic and nationalist coloration of political developments there.

A spokesman for the Jewish community said a day after the interview appeared that Slovak Jews expect leaders of the newly independent country to emphatically dissociate themselves from any act reminiscent of the Slovak Nazi puppet state of World War II.

The Dec. 30 statement by Jaroslav Franek, spokesman of the Union of Jewish Communities in Slovakia, came on the eve of formal independence for the republic, which is headed by Prime Minister Vladimir Meciar.

Rabbi Kleinman said the rapprochement between Israel and the Vatican had diminished anti-Semitism in such Catholic countries as Poland, Hungary and the two components of former Czechoslovakia.

Kleinman was asked about "political forces trying to convince the world there is an acute danger of anti-Semitism in Slovakia."

He replied that his four months in Slovakia had persuaded him there is less anti-Semitism in that country than in many democratic lands of the West. He told Pravda a distinction has to be drawn between anti-Semitism and hooliganism.

ISRAELI ARMY BRASS TO VISIT U.S.

TEL AVIV, Jan. 4 (JTA) -- The Israel Defense Force chief of staff, Lt. Gen. Ehud Barak, is coming to the United States for a working visit next week.

He will be the guest of his American counterpart, Gen. Colin Powell, head of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, according to an announcement by the IDF spokesman.

It will be Barak's first visit to the United States since his appointment as chief of staff.

The visit, at Powell's invitation and paid for by the United States, is designed to strengthen military and strategic cooperation between the two countries.

During his 10-day stay in the United States, Barak will meet with outgoing Defense Secretary Dick Cheney and other Pentagon officials.

LEADERS OF 3 FAITHS LEARN NUANCES OF MIDEAST AFTER JOINT TRIP THERE

By Debra Nussbaum Cohen

NEW YORK, Jan. 4 (JTA) -- Christian, Moslem and Jewish religious leaders returned recently from a first-ever joint trip to the Middle East confident that they gained a newly nuanced understanding of complexities involved in the peace process.

According to Al Vorspan, the recently retired senior vice president of the Reform movement's Union of American Hebrew Congregations, "We knew each other before from public stereotypes and now we know each other personally. Before this trip I would not have made the distinctions I make now," he said.

The trip to the Middle East, which took place Nov. 29 through Dec. 11, was organized by the U.S. Interreligious Committee for Peace in the Middle East, a Philadelphia-based group.

The 24 participants visited Israel, the West Bank, Egypt, Jordan and Syria, meeting with government officials at each stop. Their reactions to Israel's recent expulsion of 415 Moslem fundamentalists reflected their new-found insight into the complexities of the Middle East.

The National Council of Churches' General Secretary Rev. Joan Brown Campbell and its Middle East director, Dale Bishop, both participated in the 24-member delegation.

The NCC is an umbrella group representing 32 Protestant and Orthodox church denominations.

NCC Letter Reflects New Balance

In a letter to negotiators in the peace talks and to President-elect Bill Clinton shortly after returning, the NCC called on the Palestine Liberation Organization to "unambiguously condemn violent acts by extremists," and on Israel to "revoke its expulsion of Palestinians."

The NCC letter also urged direct talks between Israel and the PLO, "thus stripping away the facade of non-recognition."

The letter contained understanding of the Israeli desire for official Palestinian condemnation of the violence, reflecting a balance that had not generally found its way into NCC statements about Arab-Israeli problems in the past.

"The trip made a big difference in how we'll approach" a statement about the deportations, said Campbell several days before issuing the letter. She pledged that it would not be "a knee-jerk reaction to headlines."

"NCC's was a very balanced announcement," said Avi Granot, the Israeli Embassy's counselor for church affairs.

He met with representatives of several church groups before they issued statements.

"We appreciate that they are committed and concerned about the peace process. It is not the criticism we are concerned with, but it is when the criticism is off-balance that we start to worry about it," said Granot.

Rabbi A. James Rudin, director of inter-religious affairs at the American Jewish Committee, also applauded the fairness of the NCC letter.

"There is some clear attempt at balance," he said. "It's encouraging to see this, despite the sharp attacks against Israel."

This country's 57 million Catholics were represented on the trip by Rev. Raymond Helmick, who was sent by the U.S. Catholic Conference's Office of International Justice and Peace.

On his return, Helmick said that " Hamas and rejectionist factions are interested in preventing settlement.

"We need to develop a process in which the parties can express their common, practical opposition to the violence. It's in the interests of the U.S. to promote that."

The U.S. Catholic Conference opted not to issue an official statement about the expulsions, but referred to the issue in a general fashion in the Christmas statement of Archbishop John Roach, chair of the Catholic Conference's Committee on International Policy.

"We earnestly pray for a speedy and just conclusion to the Arab-Israeli peace talks," said his statement. "With close ties to the Jewish community and with our Arab Christian brothers and sisters in the Holy Land, we are eager for the day" when Arabs and Israelis "alike will be able to celebrate without fear."

The statements from these groups stood in marked contrast to those issued by other Christian groups that did not participate in the trip to the Middle East.

The Geneva-based World Council of Churches was sharply critical of the Israeli action and did not mention the Hamas terrorism that prompted the Israeli move.

Todor Sabev, the WCC's acting general-secretary, said in a cable sent to Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin that "collective punishment is gravely detrimental to the pursuit of peace and severely compromises the continuation of the peace negotiations."

Perhaps the sharpest criticism of Israel came from Rev. Mark Brown of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, which claims more than 5 million members.

Brown, who is also a spokesman for Churches for Middle East Peace, termed the deportations "one of the most inhumane forms of punishment" and "a violation of international law," citing both the Geneva Convention and the Charter of the Nuremberg Military Tribunal.

ISRAEL TO EXTRADITE 'CRAZY EDDIE'

By Hugh Orgel

TEL AVIV, Jan. 4 (JTA) -- Eddie Antar, known in the United States as the electronics cut-rate entrepreneur "Crazy Eddie," is to be escorted back to the United States shortly to face fraud charges, under an extradition order signed Sunday by Israeli Justice Minister David Libai.

The order was signed only after Antar's American lawyer, Jack Arsenault, reached an agreement with the U.S. Justice Department stipulating that he will only be tried for offenses committed prior to 1988, when he became an Israeli citizen.

Under the deal, Antar will not be tried for fleeing America while due to stand trial, or being in possession of forged documents.

He left the United States after he was ordered in June 1990 by the Justice Department to pay somewhere between \$50 million and \$83 million he allegedly obtained by defrauding customers and illegally transferred to Bank Leumi in Israel.

He was captured in June living in Yavneh, Israel, under the false identity of David Cohen from Brazil. Antar, whose age has been reported between 44 and 46, is reportedly suffering from liver and kidney disease.