

VOL. 71 - 76th YEAR

THURSDAY, JANUARY 28, 1993

NO. 18

**ISRAEL WINS REPRIEVE TILL MONDAY
ON U.N. DISCUSSION OF SANCTIONS**

By Larry Yudelson

UNITED NATIONS, Jan. 27 (JTA) -- Israel has managed to stave off until Monday a Security Council debate that could lead to the first-ever U.N. sanctions against the Jewish state.

The council's planned discussion of further measures against Israel follows a harsh report issued Monday by U.N. Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali.

The report criticized Israel for failing to accede to the demands of two of his envoys that the Jewish state comply with Security Council Resolution 799, which called on Israel to take back some 400 Moslem activists it expelled from the administered territories last month for terms of up to two years.

The decision to postpone formal discussion of the matter until Monday was conveyed by Japan's Ambassador Yoshio Hatano, who this month holds the rotating post of Security Council president, in a letter to Israeli Ambassador Gad Yaacobi.

The council president cited Israel's request that all discussion of the matter wait until Israel's High Court of Justice rules on the legality of the deportations. That ruling will be handed down early Thursday morning in Jerusalem.

Israel has argued that it could take no action regarding the deportees until the legal proceedings were concluded.

Observers in Israel have speculated that if the court upholds the deportations in principle, Rabin will respond with a proposal to significantly ease the terms of the expulsion orders. This might allay the buildup of international concern and criticism as manifested in the Security Council.

No Agreement On Resolution

Among the possible scenarios suggested in the Israeli press are a blanket reduction in the duration of the deportation orders, which presently run from 18 to 24 months; a liberal process for reviewing individual appeals from the deportees; and a deal in which deportees would be allowed to come back to the territories if they agree in writing to desist from hostile activities against Israel.

But waiting for such an Israeli move was not the only motive for the Security Council delay. In his letter to Yaacobi, the council president alluded to the lack of agreement on a draft resolution.

One put forward Tuesday by the PLO calls for limited sanctions against Israel.

Arab diplomats must balance their desire to embarrass Israel with the possibility of an American veto.

While the United States is loath to exercise its veto prerogative for the first time in more than two years, it would also have difficulties accepting sanctions against Israel.

One proposal under discussion would have the United States support a resolution again condemning Israel and putting forward a specific timetable for Israel to implement Resolution 799.

(Contributing to this report was JTA correspondent David Landau in Jerusalem.)

**MAJOR CHURCH GROUP URGES CLINTON
TO PUSH ISRAEL TO REVERSE EXPULSIONS**

By Debra Nussbaum Cohen

NEW YORK, Jan. 27 (JTA) -- A major church group has sent a letter to President Clinton urging him to press Israel to reverse last month's deportation of more than 400 Moslem fundamentalists.

The Jan. 15 letter from the Churches for Middle East Peace, a consortium of 16 Protestant and Catholic agencies, urged Clinton to "pursue actively a policy that will induce the Israeli government and people to accept the return of the Palestinians.

"We recognize that the cycle of violence in Israel and in the occupied territories has provoked new fears among Israelis and Palestinians alike. That violence, however, does not relieve Israel of its responsibilities as the occupying power."

Avi Granot, counselor for church affairs at the Israeli Embassy in Washington, said that he is "not surprised to see Churches for Middle East Peace again taking a very biased view and disregarding completely the necessity to fight Islamic fundamentalism, which threatens not only the peoples in the Middle East, but the peace process itself."

The umbrella group represents American Baptists; American Friends Service Committee, also known as Quakers; Episcopalians; Evangelical Lutherans; Presbyterians; Unitarians; United Church of Christ; United Methodists; and the National Council of Churches' Washington and Middle East affairs offices.

It also includes two Catholic groups, the Conference of Major Superiors of Men and the Maryknoll Fathers and Brothers.

A statement which Granot considered more evenhanded, however, was issued by Archbishop John Roach, chairman of the Committee on International Policy of the U.S. Catholic Conference.

Roach urged all parties to resolve the crisis over the Israeli deportations "in a manner that does not jeopardize the peace process."

While Catholics are "opposed to all forms of terrorism" and "likewise reiterate our strongly held view that pre-emptory, collective punishment is unjust," Roach said that "disengagement from the peace talks in protest of actions by any side serves only the interests of extremist elements opposed to all peaceful resolution of the Middle East conflict."

**ALONI AGAIN ROCKS RABIN COALITION
WITH REMARKS OFFENDING ORTHODOX**

By David Landau

JERUSALEM, Jan. 27 (JTA) -- A new wave of infighting has swept over Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin's governing coalition in the wake of comments by his ever-controversial education minister, Shulamit Aloni.

Accusing the stridently secular Aloni of once again insulting religious Jews, Israel's Orthodox parties, including the Shas party within the ruling coalition, are now demanding that she be dismissed from her post.

Aloni, whose rhetoric precipitated a coalition

crisis three months ago, stirred up controversy again during a speech to hundreds of Jerusalem high-schoolers Tuesday, in which she referred to the reputed grave in Nablus of the biblical Joseph as "the cave of some sheik Yosef."

Aloni also referred to the chief rabbis of Israel as "two popes" and said the vast majority of the nation, Orthodox as well as secular, paid little attention to them.

In reply to another question, the minister, who heads the left-wing Meretz bloc, said the Jewish dietary laws of kashrut were originally designed to create a separation between Jews and gentiles. She implied they were no longer relevant or needed in the modern Jewish state.

The Orthodox opposition parties, the National Religious Party and United Torah Judaism, issued blistering attacks on Aloni, but the main threat to the government's stability is coming from one of its coalition partners, the Shas party.

Shas' Knesset faction has sent Rabin a letter asking him to transfer Aloni out of the Education Ministry.

The faction chairman, Shlomo Benzeri, blamed Aloni for doing precisely what she has in the past accused prominent Orthodox leaders of doing: "creating hatred and division within the nation."

Shas nearly left the government in October after Aloni made a series of similarly controversial remarks. Rabin promised at the time to "take action" if such incidents recurred, and Shas leaders reminded the premier of that commitment this week.

No-Confidence Motion Possible

Further exacerbating the rift between Shas and its coalition partners was a ruling Wednesday by the High Court of Justice that construction on a road affecting ancient Jewish burial caves should proceed.

If tension between religious and secular forces heat up over both these issues, the Shas party will find itself under increasing pressure within the Orthodox camp to break ranks with its two coalition partners, Labor and Meretz.

The United Torah Judaism party has threatened to submit a no-confidence measure in the Knesset over Aloni's comments.

Aloni tried to defuse the crisis by claiming she was being quoted out of context by reporters seeking to stir up conflict. She charged she is the victim of a McCarthy-style campaign against her and that, while she respects religious freedom, she also wants to be granted freedom of speech.

Energy Minister Amnon Rubinstein of Meretz defended Aloni, saying her comments about the Nablus tomb were not anti-Orthodox since there was no Orthodox tradition identifying the site with Joseph.

Rubinstein explained that Aloni had been attacking not the fervently Orthodox haredim, but the nationalist-Orthodox circles of Gush Emunim for instigating trouble in the administered territories. Shas is a haredi party that is dovish on the territories, whereas the opposition NRP is closely identified with Gush Emunim.

In her speech, Aloni noted that a celebration at the Nablus site in the West Bank had caused a 24-hour curfew to be imposed on some 120,000 local Palestinians. "Is that human rights?" she asked rhetorically.

Knesset member Ran Cohen of Meretz said his party would oppose removing Aloni from her post at any cost.

HAREDIM PROTEST COURT DECISION TO APPROVE HIGHWAY CONSTRUCTION

By Gil Sedan

JERUSALEM, Jan. 27 (JTA) -- An Israeli court decision clearing the way for highway construction at a Jerusalem road junction where ancient burial caves are located has triggered mass protests by Orthodox Jews here.

Crowds of haredim, or fervently religious Jews, converged at the intersection Wednesday and threw stones at police officers called to the scene. Several people were slightly wounded.

The protesters flocked to the scene when archaeologists began excavation work at one of the caves immediately after Israel's High Court of Justice handed down its decision. The archaeologists are to remove the cave's contents before the road construction.

Orthodox leaders decried the court decision, with Knesset member Avraham Ravitz of the United Torah Judaism bloc describing the decision as "scandalous."

The long-running conflict stems from the city of Jerusalem's plan to build a new highway passing through the French Hill junction.

However, five ancient burial caves thought to contain Jewish graves were discovered along the road's path, and haredi groups have bitterly opposed disturbing the graves, saying it would contravene Jewish law.

A three-justice panel Wednesday rejected five separate petitions filed by haredi groups in an attempt to block any construction or archaeological excavations at the site.

Under a compromise plan proposed by the government, the original path of the road would be shifted to avoid four of the burial caves but would still run over one of them. The plan would also cost the city significantly more money.

Garbage Bins Set On Fire

Haredi opponents have said they would not be satisfied with the alternate plan, insisting any desecration of any burial site was unacceptable.

After the court decision was announced, there was unrest in the Orthodox neighborhoods of Jerusalem. In Mea She'arim, local youths turned over garbage bins and set them on fire. Shabbat Square in the neighborhood was blocked to traffic, with youths throwing stones at police.

During incidents in Mea She'arim and at the construction site, at least one policeman, a photographer, and a protester were hurt.

The court ordered that if the compromise plan is pursued, the Israel Antiquities Authority should be authorized to excavate the one cave and that the bones should be reburied by the Chief Rabbinical Council.

Although the court opinion seemed to express a preference for the alternate plan, the justices also said the city was entitled to excavate all five caves and go back to the original proposal if forced to do so for financial reasons.

The court said the four other caves were not to be considered a "holy site" and that the Antiquities Authority would be entitled to do whatever it chose with the sarcophagi and other objects found inside.

Jerusalem Mayor Teddy Kollek said the city was ready to work on the alternative site if completion of the interchange would not be delayed by more than three or four months.

The road will be paved, he promised, "and if the haredi Jews want war, they will get war."

ISRAEL AND U.S. SIGN ACCORD PREVENTING ANY DOUBLE TAXES

By Hugh Orgel

TEL AVIV, Jan. 27 (JTA) -- After 27 years of negotiations, Israel and the United States have finally signed an agreement protecting individuals from being taxed by both countries on the same income.

The treaty still requires ratification by the U.S. Senate and the Israeli Cabinet and Knesset, but approval appears likely, since the problems that doomed earlier versions have finally been resolved.

The document, signed Tuesday in Jerusalem by Foreign Minister Shimon Peres and the U.S. ambassador to Israel, William Harrop, was actually a protocol amending a 1975 treaty and a 1980 protocol that was never implemented.

The double taxation treaty ensures that individuals and corporations will not be forced to pay taxes in both countries on the same income, and also prevents foreigners from being taxed at a higher rate than citizens.

The current agreement extends the protection to state and local taxes as well as national taxes.

The previous treaty was never implemented because Israel rejected U.S. demands that the General Accounting Office and congressional oversight committees have access to any information that U.S. tax authorities requested from Israel.

Israel originally feared that this requirement would frighten away Jewish investors, but has now given in on this issue.

MOYNIHAN SUBCOMMITTEE APPOINTMENT VIEWED AS A POSITIVE STEP FOR ISRAEL

By Deborah Kalb
States News Service

WASHINGTON, Jan. 27 (JTA) -- Sen. Daniel Patrick Moynihan (D-N.Y.), a favorite of many in the Jewish community for his longtime support of Israel, has been named chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations subcommittee on Near Eastern and South Asian affairs.

In that position, Moynihan, a third-term senator who is also the new chairman of the Senate Finance Committee, could be a major figure in U.S.-Israel relations. The Foreign Relations committee plays an important role in authorizing foreign aid.

Tom Dine, executive director of the American Israel Public Affairs Committee, proclaimed himself delighted with the selection of Moynihan.

"He's a man who understands international relations, particularly the Middle East, and he has been a true friend" in maintaining strong U.S.-Israel relations, Dine said. "I look forward to working with him."

"It's important that Senator Moynihan will assume the chairmanship at this time," said Mark Pelavin, Washington representative for the American Jewish Congress. "He has long been a leading pro-Israel voice in the Senate, and has provided important leadership on a variety of issues for the pro-Israel community."

As a senator from New York, a state with a substantial Jewish population, Moynihan could be expected to take a strong interest in matters of concern to his constituents.

But Moynihan's sympathy for Jewish concerns stretches back through his years of gov-

ernment service. He is perhaps best remembered in the Jewish community for his tenure as the U.S. ambassador to the United Nations in 1975-76, when he fought vigorously against the international body's resolution equating Zionism with racism. That resolution was repealed in December 1991.

Moynihan is "a person who just seems magnetically drawn to the Jews," said Stephen Hess, a senior fellow in governmental studies at the Brookings Institution who is an old friend of the senator's.

Hess explained that Moynihan grew up in New York City and was active in city politics. "Being involved in New York politics," Hess said, "it would be hard not to have been closely identified with Jewish groups and causes."

Moynihan served in Cabinet-level or sub-Cabinet-level positions in the Kennedy, Johnson, Nixon and Ford administrations before winning his Senate seat.

Among the other senators named to the Near East subcommittee were newcomers Harlan Matthews (D-Tenn.) and Paul Coverdell (R-Ga.).

Assignments are expected to be made soon to the Senate Appropriations subcommittee on foreign operations, another key subcommittee dealing with aid to Israel.

TROUBLESOME ARAB POETRY BOOK BOUND FOR FINAL COURT BATTLE

By Gil Sedan

JERUSALEM, Jan. 27 (JTA) -- A book of Arabic poetry that the government wants to ban because it praises anti-Israel violence will enter its third and apparently final court battle before the state's High Court of Justice.

The poems attack the Israeli army and its soldiers, urging continued violent struggle against "the occupiers."

Arab poet Shafik Habib, a resident of the Galilee village of Deir Hanna, was initially convicted by a local court in Acre for publishing writing that constituted incitement to terrorism.

The Haifa District Court, however, later acquitted the poet and permitted the book under rights guaranteeing freedom of speech.

The government has now petitioned the High Court, arguing that the district court did not properly interpret the anti-terrorism ordinance.

The district court acquitted Habib, reasoning that the poetry could not "directly cause the death of human beings."

The state argued that the poems' praise for acts of violence could lead to the death of human beings and did satisfy the standard required to ban it under existing law.

One of his poems praises Palestinian youths fighting Israeli soldiers: "The occupier, armed from head to tail with all sorts of American weapons, stands helplessly against an angry stone, thrown by the hand of a small child," he wrote.

"Therefore, stone, crush the heads of those fools, whose hands are smeared with blood," Habib wrote.

Another poem reads: "You were standing against the occupier bare as the sun, but protected like the night; not afraid of death, ridiculing the army by means of explosives and sub-machine guns."

The state argues that these poems should not be protected by the right to free speech, since they amount to direct incitement for terrorist acts.

'MASHIACH MADNESS' REACHES FRENZY AS LUBAVITCH 'ANOINT' THE REBBE

By Debra Nussbaum Cohen

NEW YORK, Jan. 27 (JTA) -- "Mashiach madness" is reaching a feverish pitch.

Billboards in Jerusalem and Tel Aviv herald the arrival of the Lubavitcher rebbe, who has said that he would not go to Israel until the messianic age arrives.

A 40-foot banner announcing his status as the Messiah sweeps across the Lubavitchers' synagogue at their Brooklyn headquarters. Believers are taking out ads in newspapers announcing the fact that their rebbe is the Messiah.

And now, the Lubavitch leader is scheduled to be "anointed" on Sunday, Jan. 31, when his followers in more than 25 locations around the world will be hooked up by satellite to the movement's international headquarters in Brooklyn to chant simultaneously, "Our master, our rabbi, our teacher, King Messiah, live forever!"

"This will be the coronation of the rebbe as Melech haMashiach (King Messiah)," said Rabbi Shmuel Butman, chairman of the International Campaign to Bring Moshiach.

His campaign, once considered marginal within the Lubavitch community, has moved steadily into the mainstream since the 90-year-old rebbe suffered a debilitating stroke last year and has been unable to contain the growing zealotry over his status as the Messiah.

The fervor is causing tension among the Lubavitch and between the Hasidic movement and other Jewish groups, as an increasing number of Lubavitchers cross the delicate but critical line between stating that their rebbe has the potential to be the Messiah and stating that he is, indeed, already anointed by God to redeem the world.

A Leadership Vacuum

In the leadership vacuum that followed the rebbe's stroke, the messianic movement has also laid bare the factiousness among the heads of Lubavitch organizations who are each claiming to be the interpreter of the rebbe's wishes.

According to the office of Rabbi Yehuda Krinsky, a member of the rebbe's official secretariat, "Butman does not speak for the Lubavitch movement."

That may be true, but it is no secret that an overwhelming majority of Lubavitchers believe that their rebbe is the Messiah.

Rabbi Leib Groner, one of the rebbe's closest aides, estimated that "99.9 percent of all Hasidim, if not 100 percent," agree.

But no matter how widespread the belief, the Mashiach fever has worried at least a few of the rebbe's aides and many non-Lubavitchers, who say it is costing the movement its credibility in the larger Jewish community.

It is there, in the non-Orthodox Jewish community, that the group has focused its work on outreach and has gained the appreciation of many Jews whose lives have been touched by the Lubavitch emissaries who bring Yiddishkeit to far-flung places.

According to Krinsky, the public pronouncements proclaiming the arrival of the Mashiach do damage to the movement's ability to reach unaffiliated Jews by making Lubavitch seem bizarre.

"When a person hears that the rebbe is Mashiach and they can't comprehend it, they tend to shun it, to look upon it derisively, to scoff at it. To present the rebbe that way is terribly

unfair, terribly irresponsible and destructive," he said.

Clearly, the ability to control how the rest of the world views their rebbe is slipping away from Krinsky and other Lubavitchers who regard themselves as custodians of the rebbe's intentions.

"These overzealous pronouncements are in no way an official expression, but we have no way of controlling what people think," said Krinsky.

Efforts to quell the fervor have gone unheeded. "People are going their own way. There's not much anyone can do about it," said one Lubavitch insider.

The latest to proclaim the rebbe's status as Messiah was Rabbi Yitzhak Springer, an administrator at the Lubavitch yeshiva located at the movement's headquarters, who placed advertisements trumpeting the fact in New York-area Jewish newspapers during January.

Springer ran ads in English, Yiddish and Hebrew-language Jewish weeklies in New York proclaiming the rebbe to be "the King Messiah."

Rebbe's Aides Issue Disclaimer

The rebbe's aides responded to the ads by issuing a disclaimer stating that "no organization, group or individual may purport to reflect the official policy of the Lubavitch movement without permission."

They requested that anyone doing so "cease and desist from such activities and/or pronouncements which are misleading and create serious confusion."

The ads have also sparked passionate response from prominent non-Lubavitchers, all of whom find odious the Lubavitch movement's claims to the Messiah.

Rabbi Marc Angel, immediate past president of the Rabbinical Council of America, a mainstream Orthodox rabbis group, circulated a news release calling the messianic claims of the Chabad movement "horrifically and dangerous."

"Public proclamations by Chabad discredit the rebbe and the entire movement. It should put all Jews on guard concerning the true nature of the Lubavitcher movement," said Angel.

Rabbi Binyamin Wallfish, executive director of the RCA, said that the current "Mashiach madness," as some have called it, "makes the movement look kind of silly. I have very grave doubts that these people understand what they're saying. They would be better off if they stopped talking about it."

And Rabbi Alexander Schindler, president of the Reform movement's Union of American Hebrew Congregations, said that "when he was well, the rebbe discouraged people calling him the Messiah."

"Now some of his devotees are taking advantage of his ill health. It seems very dangerous. Jewish history has a history of messianic pretenders, and once they died or did something wrong, it proved to be the downfall of that particular movement."

Rabbi Jerome Epstein, executive director of the Conservative movement's congregational arm, the United Synagogue, said that the current frenzy "certainly causes tension between people who would like to support Lubavitch and those who find calling the rebbe Mashiach offensive."

When asked if the incapacitated rebbe is aware of the current frenzy, Krinsky said, "He is not aware of the chaos going on in the streets and the splintering of opinion."