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**200 YEMENITE JEWS MADE ALIYAH  
IN THE PAST YEAR, ISRAEL CONFIRMS**

By David Landau

JERUSALEM, July 14 (JTA) -- About 200 Yemenite Jews have secretly immigrated to Israel during the past year, the government publicly disclosed for the first time this week.

The Yemenites, most of whom have close family relatives already living in Israel, are presently housed in absorption centers in Rehovot and Ashkelon.

The government had until now kept the operation secret out of fear that disclosure would jeopardize the welfare of Jews remaining in Yemen as well as the chances of bringing more of them here.

The chairman of the Jewish Agency's Immigration and Absorption Department, Uri Gordon, visited the newcomers in Rehovot on Wednesday and said at a news conference that some 900 Jews remain in Yemen, most of them in the capital of Sa'ana. He said they are not in any danger.

Other reports put the number of Jews remaining in Yemen at close to 1,500.

The newcomers have retained their traditional garb and appearance: the men with long curled sidelocks, beards and big colorful yarmulkes, and the women in long dresses.

In deference to their traditions, they are being taught Hebrew in segregated ulpan classes.

The absorption of the Yemenite Jews has been the subject of bitter controversy between fervently Orthodox parties inside and outside the government.

Degel HaTorah, a faction of the opposition United Torah Judaism Front, claims the immigrants are being deliberately stripped of their Orthodoxy by exposure to the secular side of Israeli life.

Degel HaTorah blames the Sephardic Orthodox Shas party, a member of the governing coalition, for these supposed problems.

But a Shas party official directly involved in the Yemenites' absorption, Deputy Housing Minister Aryeh Gamliel, hotly denied these accusations -- as do government and Jewish Agency officials.

**ISRAEL STAGES MOCK RAIDS ON LEBANON  
AS LEADERSHIP REVIEWS MILITARY OPTIONS**

By Hugh Orgel

TEL AVIV, July 14 (JTA) -- Israeli jets and helicopters staged mock raids over Lebanon on Wednesday, as Israeli military and political leaders continued to consider options for responding to attacks last week that left five Israeli soldiers dead.

Israeli officials declined to comment on reports from Beirut of a continued massive buildup of Israeli troops and military equipment in the border security zone Israel maintains in Lebanon.

Lebanese reports described the Israeli mock raids, in which illuminating flares were dropped over Palestinian refugee camps, as "dummy bombings designed to panic the local population."

Israeli officials did note with satisfaction media reports that the Lebanese government, in agreement with Syria, had ordered Palestinian leader Ahmed Jabril of the Popular Front for the

Liberation of Palestine-General Command to leave the country immediately and that he had, in fact, already returned to his headquarters in Damascus.

His group claimed responsibility for at least one of two attacks on Israeli troops last week that together left five Israeli soldiers dead and eight wounded.

Jabril, dressed in an army uniform and armed with a Kalachnikov rifle, met with his supporters at a base in the Ein Hilweh refugee camp near Sidon and later spoke with reporters.

Lebanese papers said it was the first overt public appearance by a senior Palestinian leader on Lebanese soil since the 1982 war in Lebanon, when Palestinian guerrillas were driven out of the country.

According to Lebanese newspapers, authorities there are pressing the "Palestinian leadership" in Lebanon to prevent an escalation in attacks against Israeli targets.

The papers said the struggle to get Israel out of Lebanon should remain a "local Israeli-Lebanese dispute" and not be complicated by "foreign terrorist fighting."

**RABIN, PERES REPORTEDLY AT ODDS  
OVER HOW TO BREAK PEACE DEADLOCK**

By Gil Sedan

JERUSALEM, July 14 (JTA) -- Differences have emerged between Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin and Foreign Minister Shimon Peres over strategy in the Middle East peace process, with Rabin preferring that an Israeli-Palestinian declaration of principles be specific and Peres favoring a vaguer formulation.

The differences in emphasis became apparent during the visit this week of American emissary Dennis Ross, whose aim was to bridge the gaps between Israelis and Palestinians on a joint declaration.

Rabin's office pressed for precise wording, while the Foreign Ministry preferred more flexible language that could be agreed upon by both sides more easily.

Ross, the U.S. coordinator of the Middle East peace talks, left Israel for the United States on Wednesday after a weeklong tour of the region that included stops in Egypt, Syria and Jordan produced few tangible results.

Peres expressed the view that the potential bones of contention in the negotiations should be left to the end. In the meantime, he suggested, the differences should be bypassed by concentrating on issues for which agreement could be reached.

Peres said that a written document on delicate issues such as Jerusalem and the jurisdiction over the proposed autonomy could widen the gap instead of narrowing it.

Rabin's office, on the other hand, wanted more precision in the wording of the negotiated document to prevent "unpleasant surprises in the future."

The Palestinian delegation appeared to agree with Rabin in wanting clarity.

"If you have a clear set of principles," said Palestinian spokeswoman Hanan Ashrawi, "then it becomes easier to talk about modalities."

Failure to reach an understanding on the

declaration of principles, said Ashrawi, would mean there could be no agreement on a starting point. In that case, she suggested, the present framework of the peace process would come to an end and one would have to think of alternatives.

Alternatives, she suggested, could involve "higher leadership contacts on both sides" or perhaps discussion of the permanent status of the territories rather than merely the interim status.

Ashrawi hinted at two developments this week. One was the possibility of pushing up the level of negotiations to direct talks between the Israeli government and the leadership of the Palestine Liberation Organization.

The other was the accelerated negotiations between Jordan and the PLO on establishing a confederation between Jordan and the territories.

According to reports from Amman, high-level officials of Jordan and the PLO met Monday and established six working committees to strengthen ties between Jordan and the administered territories and explore the possibility of a future confederation.

Palestinian sources in eastern Jerusalem said such a confederation could offer a solution to the differences between the Palestinians and Israel over the future fate of the territories.

#### PERES SAYS EILAT EMBARGO CRISIS IS ON ITS WAY TO BEING RESOLVED

By Gil Sedan

JERUSALEM, July 14 (JTA) -- Foreign Minister Shimon Peres said this week that a dispute with the United Nations over Israeli shipping through the Straits of Tiran to the port of Eilat would be resolved within a few days.

The blockade, under the auspices of the U.N. Security Council, was put into effect to prevent the supply of war materiel and commercial goods to Iraq via the Jordanian port of Aqaba, located a dozen miles from Eilat.

But Israel has protested that it is absurd to presume that Israel, a longtime foe of Iraqi President Saddam Hussein and a victim of Iraqi Scud missiles during the Persian Gulf War, would be shipping goods of any kind to Baghdad.

Peres suggested that one possible solution of the crisis would be for Israelis to check the Israeli ships, instead of the American troops now in charge who check all vessels.

Peres was speaking to the Knesset, whose members submitted a number of motions on the agenda to discuss the crisis.

So far, Israeli protests and explanations that Israel has no intention of smuggling supplies to Iraq have not convinced the U.N. authorities, creating an absurdity by which Jordanian ships are allowed through, while Israeli cargo boats are forced to turn around and travel through the Suez Canal to its Mediterranean ports.

This has caused angry protests by Eilat port workers and others whose lives depend on the harbor traffic.

Knesset member Rafael Eitan, head of the right-wing opposition Tsomet party, blamed U.N. Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali for the crisis, saying he wanted to prove to the Arabs how he "takes care" of the Jews.

But Peres ruled out the notion that Boutros-Ghali was behind the problem. He said Israel was told the matter was being handled by the U.S. Defense Department and the United Nations, and that Israel had been promised a response as soon as possible.

#### SEARCHERS IN JUDEAN WILDERNESS FIND BODY OF 1 OF 2 LOST BROTHERS

By Hugh Orgel

TEL AVIV, July 14 (JTA) -- The body of one of two missing Israeli brothers, who disappeared a week ago on a hike in the Judean wilderness, has been found at the bottom of a steep cliff.

It is believed that Ophir Leibowitz, the elder of the two brothers, slipped and fell some 300 feet down the side of a steep wadi. His brother Nahshon presumably tried to help Ophir using a first-aid kit and then continued on to seek outside help.

The elder brother's army-issue rifle, which he had taken with him on the hike, was not found. The search continues for Nahshon.

Hundreds of soldiers, police and Nature Society volunteers have been carrying out extensive searches since the brothers left their Haifa home.

Their parents, Yisrael and Tzipporah Leibowitz, said Ophir, 21, was soon to complete his army service.

A keen and experienced hiker, Ophir said he was taking Nahshon, 18, who was just about to start his army service, on a map-reading and desert navigation exercise to prepare him for the army.

A canvas bag containing their maps and compasses was found shortly after the search began, showing where they had been.

In the following days a half-filled bottle of mineral water was found and an empty infusion bag, indicating that one of them had required medical treatment.

#### ISRAELI DIPLOMAT SAYS RELATIONS WITH U.S. HAVE NEVER BEEN BETTER

By Tom Tugend

LOS ANGELES, July 14 (JTA) -- Israel's relationship with the United States has never been better, the Israeli ambassador to Washington assured 2,500 Hadassah delegates in an upbeat report on his country's accomplishments during the first year of the Rabin administration.

"It is hard to remember when the White House, Congress and the American media were so friendly to Israel," Ambassador Itamar Rabinovich said in an address to the national convention of Hadassah, the Women's Zionist Organization of America.

He credited a new "mind-set of peace" in the Middle East for improvements in Israel's overall international posture. Rabinovich, who also heads the Israeli negotiating team in peace talks with Syria, cited new or stronger ties with India, China and the republics of the former Soviet Union, as well as the stand taken in Tokyo last week by the Group of Seven leading industrialized nations against the Arab economic boycott of Israel.

Although there has been no breakthrough in Middle East peace negotiations, Rabinovich said that there was an obvious change of attitude, "when a conference on environmental change in the Mediterranean region is held in Morocco and Israel's environment minister is invited as a matter of course."

The 79th annual convention of the world's largest women's Zionist organization also launched a national campaign to gain the release of four Israeli soldiers who have been missing in action for up to 11 years and are believed held in Muslim countries.

## FOR 1ST NATIVE ISRAELI WOMAN RABBI, QUEST FOR ACCEPTANCE IS NOT SO EASY

By Michele Chabin

JERUSALEM, July 14 (JTA) -- A Jerusalem mother of four made history Wednesday, when she became the first Israeli-born woman to receive rabbinical ordination.

Maya Lebovich's ordination at the Reform movement's Hebrew Union College is "a landmark," said Michael Klein, dean of HUC's Israeli campus.

"While the Reform movement in the U.S. has ordained more than 200 women during the past 20 years, Israeli women have been fighting a great struggle for equality," he said.

This is "a unique opportunity to change the world of the rabbinate by bringing a new perspective, a new angle of vision," said Rabbi Alfred Gottschalk, president of HUC, which is based in Cincinnati.

Lebovich, 46, admits that the road to the rabbinate has not been easy.

To begin with, the Orthodox rabbinic establishment in Israel takes a dim view of women who want to assume religious leadership positions.

"Four years ago, I applied for a position on the Jerusalem Religious Council," Lebovich said in an interview. "The council flatly refuses to even consider women as members, and the case is now in court."

But her status as a rabbi is also complicated by the fact that she is receiving smicha from the Reform movement. According to Israel's rabbinical establishment, the Reform movement is "muktsah," or outside of mainstream Judaism, Lebovich explained.

As a result, Reform rabbis are not able to perform many of the functions that Orthodox rabbis can, such as officiating at marriages.

A teacher by profession, Lebovich was brought up in a completely secular household in the Tel Aviv suburb of Ramat Gan.

"My parents were Holocaust survivors and turned their backs on Judaism," she said. "They lost all their family, and below the surface there was a lot of anger about what Judaism symbolized."

### 'They Wanted To Shield Us'

Her parents, she said, "were doing what many people of their generation did. They wanted to shield us from bad memories, from being ashamed to be Jewish. They thought, wrongly, that being Israeli was enough."

"It isn't," she said. "I grew up with the need to fill an emotional and historical gap."

Even today, she said, "people often think that if you live in Israel you internalize being Jewish. That's not true. In order to lead a Jewish life you have to consciously make your life Jewish, through study, through mitzvot."

"But first and foremost, all Jewish children need a good Jewish education," she said. "You can't expect an 18-year-old to feel a natural love of country and religion if no one has prepared him to do so."

Lebovich is critical of Israel's secular school system, where, she said, "children learn Judaism from a historical and archeological point of view, but not from the standpoint of faith or belief."

She hopes that the hoopla surrounding her ordination will show the Israeli public that the Reform movement "isn't a foreign entry. It isn't just an import brought to Israel by American

immigrants. It's an Israeli movement with Israeli rabbis and values."

Lebovich pointed out that there are sometimes differences between the American and Israeli brands of Reform Judaism. One example, she said, is in their approaches to intermarriage.

"While American Reform rabbis often perform mixed marriages, we have taken a stand here in Israel not to perform mixed marriages," she said.

Despite some differences, "there is so much the two branches of Reform give each other," she said.

### Many Orthodox Women Open-Minded

Asked whether Israel is ready for a sabra woman rabbi, Lebovich shrugged her shoulders.

"That depends," she said. "Over the past few years, an increasing number of women are calling for changes in halachah (traditional Jewish law) that will include women in Jewish study. Many women's prayer groups have sprung up, something we didn't have 20 years ago."

"In my encounters with Orthodox women, many have told me that they accept the notion that a woman might want to be a rabbi, or at least to participate more fully in prayer and ritual. Some are very open-minded to the concept, although they themselves maintain a traditional role."

Though she is only the second woman to receive rabbinic ordination in Israel -- the first was American-born Naamah Kelman -- Lebovich is hopeful that more women will follow.

"There is an entire generation of young men and women who are ready for a more active part in Jewish life, but they will meet resistance from the older generation," she said.

As an example, she recalled a family that attended her son's bar mitzvah.

"The father, a neighbor of ours, was rather shocked when he saw me standing on the bimah with my son, wearing a tallit and carrying the Torah," she related. "He told me he was uncomfortable with it all, but that the food was delicious."

"Five minutes later," she said, "his 18-year-old daughter came up to me and said, 'The best part of the bar mitzvah was when you stood on the bimah and held the Torah.'"

"I'd say that describes Israeli society in a nutshell."

### UNEMPLOYMENT DOWN, BUT CARES REMAIN

By Gil Sedan

JERUSALEM, July 14 (JTA) -- The number of job-seekers in Israel dropped last month another 3.7 percent, down to 118,000, continuing the trend of decreasing joblessness seen in the last few months.

But despite the positive figures, Labor and Social Affairs Minister Ora Namir expressed concern Wednesday that the overall unemployment situation was not getting any better.

There is still a high rate of unemployment in the development towns. Many unemployed found government-created jobs, and their employment does not reflect a real change in the employment scene.

Namir noted a decrease in the number of job offers. She pointed out that only some 20,000 unemployed have found jobs since the closure of the territories imposed three and a half months ago. "I am very disturbed," she said.

## HIDDEN CHILDREN HOLD SECOND PARLEY, MEETING TO FILL IN GAPS IN THE PAST

By Michele Chabin

JERUSALEM, July 14 (JTA) -- The handwritten note tacked to the bulletin board said simply:

"My name is Walla Fried. I was born in Tashkent, where I lived from 1942 to 1945. I was then sent to Buchenwald. I came to Palestine on the Exodus. Beyond my name, I know nothing of my background. Do you?"

Fried, who now goes by the name Shulamit Yardeni, was one of the more than 1,000 Holocaust survivors hoping to find some answers at the second International Hidden Child Conference sponsored by the Anti-Defamation League.

Now in their 50s and 60s, these survivors spent much of their childhood in hiding. Fifty years later, they are still suffering the consequences.

Most of these survivors were taken in by Christians, many of whom risked their own lives in the process. Often, however, the children were treated with cruelty and neglect.

Yet according to mental health professionals at the conference, virtually all hidden child survivors were severely traumatized by the Holocaust, regardless of how well they were cared for. It is only now, five decades later, that many are coming to terms with their feelings.

The goal of the conference, said conference chairwoman Ann Shore, was "to encourage the participants to share, rather than repress, their experiences" through a series of workshops on such topics as "How to Discuss the Holocaust with Your Children" and "What Am I, a Christian or a Jew?"

A room was set aside where the survivors could record their personal histories on videotape.

"For many years we were a generation of silence," said ADL National Director Abraham Foxman, who spent the war in hiding with his Polish Catholic nursemaid.

"Silence was the key to our survival," he said. "We were told to never reveal our real names or the fact that we were Jewish."

"Even after the war years, the trauma was so great that we repressed our feelings. I suppose we were trying to protect ourselves and our children," Foxman said.

### 'Anger Among Hidden Children'

"There's an anger among hidden children, not only because there are those who say the Holocaust never happened, but because so many people regard it as history. It is not history. It is here, alive -- the scars, the tears, the pain, the anguish," he said.

Some of the people in this group, including Foxman, had just attended a first-ever gathering in Poland of Jews and their Christian rescuers.

For Pola Jasphy, who now lives in Hillside, N.J., the scars have never healed. Born in Rovno, Poland, Jasphy went into hiding at the age of 14.

"Between 1941 and 1944, when I was liberated by the Russians, I lost everyone I loved. My mother disappeared one day after bringing food to some cousins. It still don't know exactly what happened to her."

"Soon after, my father took my brother, my aunt and me into hiding in the forest nearby. My father paid a Polish peasant to give us shelter, and we lived in an underground storage bin for four months.

We had to move to the pigsty after snakes entered the storehouse," Jasphy recalled.

In March 1943, the German army entered the farm where Jasphy was hiding.

"They shot my father and brother, and were about to walk into the sty when another soldier called them away. The farmer told me and my aunt we had to leave that evening. My aunt was killed a few months later," Jasphy said.

Fifty years later, Jasphy still suffers from nightmares. "It was difficult for me to describe how I was feeling to others so I internalized everything," she said. "I was a fearful, over-protective mother and I always felt that I had to be an overachiever."

At the conference, she said, "I can share these feelings with others who experienced similar things. After the war, every one of us asked, 'Should I pretend that I'm a gentile, to camouflage myself and be safe?'"

"Every person here has asked himself, 'Why did I survive, and what was the purpose of my survival?'" Jasphy said.

Glancing at the bulletin board, with its pleas for information about lost relatives and friends, Jasphy said, "It's good not to be alone."

## NEO-NAZIS ON TRIAL RECAP CONFESSION THEY TORCHED SACHSENHAUSEN MUSEUM

By Igal Avidan

BERLIN, July 14 (JTA) -- Two German neo-Nazis accused of setting fire to the Jewish museum in the former Sachsenhausen concentration camp last September have gone on trial and recanted a confession given to police.

The two men, Ingo Kehn, 19, and Thomas Haberland, 22, said police forced them to admit their guilt and now claim they had nothing to do with the attack.

The two went on trial Tuesday in Potsdam in eastern Germany. The arson caused an uproar at the time because it was the first attack directed against a Jewish institution in the recent wave of neo-Nazi violence.

About 20 neo-Nazis took part in the attack, throwing Molotov cocktails against the wooden barracks, which was burned to the ground. Another adjacent barracks was only partially damaged.

Police are still looking for the others.

Meanwhile, a regional court in Schwerin in northern Germany handed down sentences to 10 rightists convicted of attacking a refuge for asylum-seekers at Bahlen an der Elbe that were well below the district attorney's request.

The highest penalty was three years in prison for Rudiger Klasen, the man who organized the attack. The others, ranging in age from 15 to 21, were sentenced to a maximum penalty of two years in prison.

On July 31, 1992, the group attacked the building with clubs, firebombs, slingshots and other weapons. Police quickly arrived at the scene and managed to prevent any injuries.

In related news, the internal security service in the state of Brandenburg issued a report stating that neo-Nazi groups have increasingly been forced to resort to acting undercover and using conspiratorial methods.

The report cited instances of neo-Nazi groups publicizing rallies and protests by using innocent-sounding catchwords and phrases understood by their followers.

(Contributing to this report was JTA correspondent David Kantor in Bonn.)