

**ISRAEL CLOSES TERRITORIES, THREATENING STATE'S ECONOMY AND ARABS' LIVELIHOODS**
By Dvorah Getzler

JERUSALEM, April 10 (JTA) -- The closure of the territories, announced here last week after a series of terror attacks on Israeli civilians, threatens to cripple sections of Israel's economy and the livelihoods of tens of thousands of Palestinians in the Gaza Strip and the West Bank.

Such were some of the assessments made at Sunday's weekly Cabinet meeting about the implications of sealing off the territories.

But Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin told his Cabinet that the closure "must reaccustom the country to being independent of the territories for its labor force."

Communications Minister Shulamit Aloni, of the Meretz bloc, warned that the closure could bring the territories' 2 million people to the point of starvation.

"If we want to advance peace, we have to let these people be more relaxed and allow (PLO Chairman Yasser) Arafat to come to an area where Hamas will not be in control, where there will be a better mood," Aloni said, referring to the Islamic organization that has taken responsibility for the recent attacks on Israelis.

The Israeli army commander for the southern sector said the closure will make life "very difficult for the Gazans and is likely to increase violence there."

Israel has closed off the territories before, including in late March, 1993. This closure is seen by some to be a delicate maneuver that must provide for Israelis' need for security without jeopardizing the peace process.

In Israel, those most affected by the closure are the building trades and agriculture, which, since 1967, have become increasingly dependent on cheap Arab labor.

Closure May Be Extended

The order to close the territories came April 7 -- one day after a suicide car-bomb attack in the northern Israeli town of Afula claimed the lives of seven Israelis.

After Sunday's Cabinet meeting, it was learned the closure may extend beyond Independence Day celebrations on April 14, the date originally selected as the final day of the closure.

Last week, the Hamas movement said it would step up terror attacks against Israel and turn the Independence Day celebration into a period of mourning.

To counter potential economic problems Israelis may face because of the closure, Agriculture Minister Yaacov Tsur and the director general of the Prime Minister's Office, Shimon Sheves, are to work out a scheme that will mobilize thousands of Israeli high school students and army personnel to help with the harvest.

Some of the shortfall in the labor force is to be met by permitting the entry into Israel of some 18,000 foreign workers. Some 15,000 of them will be employed in the building trades, and the rest in agriculture.

BARUCH GOLDSTEIN ACTED ALONE, PALESTINIANS TESTIFY AT INQUIRY
By Dvorah Getzler

JERUSALEM, April 10 (JTA) -- Dr. Baruch Goldstein acted alone when he killed at least 29 Palestinians at a Hebron mosque, three Palestinian guards said on the last day of hearings of a commission of inquiry.

The guards gave their testimony Sunday before the Shamgar Commission investigating the Feb. 25 mosque killings.

The guards had initially refused to testify before an Israeli panel, and only did so after they had been subpoenaed to appear before the commission.

The three confirmed that Goldstein, a Kiryat Arba settler well known to them, had carried out the murders single-handedly.

Their testimony contradicted that of other Palestinians who told the commission that Goldstein had not acted alone.

'He Was Alone'

A preliminary inquiry by the Israeli army reached the conclusion that Goldstein did not have an accomplice.

"He was alone. There was nobody else with him," one of the guards, Ismail Hashlamon, told the commission.

He also told the panel that, to his knowledge, Goldstein had not taken part in any earlier actions on the part of the settlers that he described as being intended to provoke Palestinians at the Hebron mosque.

Goldstein's widow, Miriam, appearing before the commission last week, said her husband's actions on the morning of Feb. 25 were still a source of confusion to her.

She had originally refused to testify, but agreed to appear on April 6 on the condition that the media not be informed of her presence in the court and that she speak before a closed session.

Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin also testified last week in a closed session of the commission, most of whose sessions were aired on Israeli television.

The record of her testimony, released last Friday, indicated that she had no idea of what pushed her husband to commit the mass killings.

"It's still an enigma for me. That's the truth. I've been over and over it, and I can't arrive at an answer," she told the court.

She indicated that her husband had often complained that the Israeli army was not doing enough to protect settlers from attacks by Palestinians.

"He always complained about the helplessness of the Israeli government, of the army, of the police -- that they don't do their jobs properly and that we (the settlers) are abandoned," she told the commission.

The Shamgar Commission -- which includes two Supreme Court justices, a professor, a former army chief of staff and a Palestinian judge -- will now retire for several weeks to consider the testimony.

**NEWS ANALYSIS:
MASSACRE INQUIRY MAY SPEED DESIRE
OF ISRAELIS TO BE RID OF TERRITORIES**
By David Landau

JERUSALEM (JTA) -- As the Shamgar Commission of Inquiry into the Hebron massacre wound up its hearings, it was clear that the commission had already made its indelible mark, opening a deep psychological wound in Israel's national psyche.

Meir Shamgar, president of Israel's Supreme Court, allowed his commission's proceedings to be broadcast live, and the result was that much of the public, listening aghast, squirmed in shame.

Witness after witness -- some of them generals in the Israel Defense Force -- painted a picture of inefficiency and indiscipline in the army and border police.

For now, the broadcasts are over.

The next stage for the five-member panel will be to consider who, if any, of the witnesses who appeared before it is "likely to be harmed" by its findings and recommendations.

By law, any such person must be notified in advance and given the opportunity to consult counsel and appear again, with counsel, before the commission.

Only after that will the three judges, one ex-general and one professor who make up the commission go on to draw up their report for submission to the government.

And only once the report is submitted and published will its repercussions begin to percolate through the political community and general public.

Sometimes a commission's findings lead the public to draw different conclusions from those drawn by the commission itself.

In the case of the Agranat Commission into the surprise attack that launched the Yom Kippur War, the commission required only military officers to step down. But a wave of public outrage swept from office the prime minister, Golda Meir, and the minister of defense, Moshe Dayan.

It is too early, therefore, to assess fully the significance of the Shamgar Commission or to predict its long-term impact on Israel's public life. With the commission's own views still unknown -- and probably still unformulated -- and the public's reaction still engaged, the Shamgar Commission continues to pose a huge question mark over Israel.

But the spotlight that has been focused on the Israeli army's policies in Hebron on the morning of Feb. 25 -- policies accepted as standard procedure until Dr. Baruch Goldstein let loose 109 bullets at worshipping Palestinians -- continues to leave a disturbing afterimage.

Not that people did not know the facts. Hundreds of thousands of Israelis have served in the administered territories.

Palestinians Often Humiliated

Thousands have passed through Hebron itself over the years. They all knew that Israel's administration of the territories, however benign it was depicted relative to other military occupations, often involved harassment and humiliation of the Palestinian residents.

They knew too that among the Jewish settlers there is a minority who seek to provoke and

persecute Palestinians, even if they have no connection to intifada violence or terrorism.

They knew, moreover, that these aggressive settlers are seen, at least in the Palestinians' eyes, to be hiding behind the army's protection. Hebron, and particularly the Tomb of the Patriarchs, was a perpetual flash point for these tensions.

But many Israelis, regardless of their political persuasions, preferred to put this chronic reality out of their minds.

Now, because of the evidence presented to the commission, brought live into their kitchens and living rooms, they are all confronted by it.

Some commentators point to the testimony of the national police chief, Rafi Peled, as encapsulating much of the evidence. In the territories, Peled told the commission, there is "the facade of law" rather than real law, and "the facade of order" rather than genuine order.

Among the doves on Israel's political spectrum, some are hoping openly that the commission will not make do with pointing a finger of blame at individual officers and soldiers of junior rank, whose performance on the morning of Feb. 25 made Goldstein's bloody deed possible. They also want the commission to recommend punitive action against the higher echelons of the army. Further, they hope the panel will excoriate the entire edifice of Israel's administration in the territories.

But that is highly unlikely.

Meir Shamgar, as the army judge advocate general and then as Israel's attorney general, was responsible more than anyone for instituting the legal system in the administered territories in the years immediately following the Six-Day War. He will surely not want now to bring down that structure, which in many ways represented Israel at its best and most enlightened, in a sweeping retroactive condemnation.

Many Israelis Traumatized

A great many Israelis, hawks and doves alike, have been traumatized by the massacre itself and by the sorry tale unfolded before the commission. Many of those who are not religiously or ideologically committed to Greater Israel seem to react with an overwhelming weariness and inarticulate desire to end the dangers to military morale and to individual and collective morality posed by Israel's administration of the territories.

These sentiments certainly do not translate into a wholesale, headlong desire to turn around and quit the West Bank. To the contrary, wide opposition emerged when the government contemplated removing Jews living inside Hebron.

But when Goldstein delivered the initial blow, clearly with the aim of destroying the peace process and preventing any withdrawal from the territories, it was argued that he may have achieved the very opposite effect: an acceleration of the process.

And at this point, with the IDF in the throes of vigorous withdrawal from the Gaza Strip and Jericho, and the diplomats working around the clock to cement the deal, it seems that prognosis was accurate.

Similarly the trauma of the Shamgar Commission, more drawn-out and by no means yet over, could catalyze the nation's desire to bring its role as a military occupier to an end.

'SCHINDLER'S LIST' FACES CENSOR AND CENSURE BY ISLAMIC COUNTRIES

By Tom Tugend

LOS ANGELES, April 10 (JTA) -- The Academy Award-winning film "Schindler's List" will not be changed in any way despite pressures by Islamic countries.

"We will not cut 'Schindler's List' for any reason. On other movies we've made requested cuts, but we won't with this," Tom Pollock, chairman of the MCA Motion Picture Group, told the Hollywood Reporter.

MCA includes Universal Pictures, which released the movie by Steven Spielberg.

In Washington, the State Department expressed regret that some foreign governments want to prevent the showing of the movie.

"The film movingly portrays, in a way that is accessible to all cultures, the 20th century's most horrible catastrophe, and it shows that even in the midst of genocide, one individual can make a difference," the department spokesman said.

"The department believes that this film should be available to people worldwide, and that the most effective way to avoid the recurrence of genocidal tragedy is to ensure that past acts of genocide are never forgotten," he said.

Universal Pictures said it will not screen the picture in Syria, Iraq, Jordan, Saudi Arabia and Pakistan, as well as India, which has a large Muslim minority.

In other countries, the fate of the picture is less clear.

Malaysia has reversed its original ban, invoked partly because of their claim that the film was too sympathetic to the Jews and too critical of the Germans. However, authorities still want seven cuts to eliminate violence and nudity.

According to the International Herald Tribune, the country's prime minister, Mahatzhir Mohamaad, said he will not be bullied into foregoing his demands.

"We run the country, Steven Spielberg doesn't," Mohamaad said.

Indonesia, the world's largest Islamic nation, has scheduled the opening of "Schindler's List" for this month, although the country's censor has not made a final decision about the film. Malaysia is reported to be putting pressure on Indonesia to ban the movie.

Censors Demanding Cuts

In the Philippines, the censor demanded elimination of all sex and nudity, but President Fidel Ramos reversed the ban. The picture is said to be doing well in the nation's movie theaters.

Universal, and its overseas distribution arm United International Pictures, decided that the movie will not open in Lebanon after authorities banned, without stating a reason, advertisements in theaters.

Egyptian censorship officials are still reviewing the movie, the Hollywood Reporter said in its weekend edition.

In Turkey, the most liberal Muslim nation, "Schindler's List" has been shown without incident.

Currently, Universal plans to appeal Scandinavian countries' decision to ban viewers under 15 or 16.

Both Pollock and Spielberg have expressed

their surprise at hostility to the film by Islamic nations, noting that "Schindler's List" was implicitly drawing a parallel to the fate of the Muslim population in Bosnia.

"The Bosnian Muslims have used this movie as an appeal to the West for aid in helping a Muslim movement against the ethnic cleansing by the Serbs," said Pollock.

So far, "Schindler's List" has brought in more than \$75 million in the United States and \$100 million in all other countries. Spielberg had expected to lose money on the film, which cost \$23 million to make.

Marvin Levy, spokesman for Spielberg's Amblin Entertainment, said in a phone interview that all profits from the movie will be donated to "Holocaust causes."

MATERIAL ON EASTERN EUROPEAN JEWRY OFFERED IN DEAL WITH UKRAINIAN LIBRARY
By Michele Chabin

JERUSALEM, April 10 (JTA) -- For decades, scholars researching the history and culture of East European Jewry have been hampered by the inaccessibility of much of the material.

Although a great deal of the material was lost during the Holocaust, much of it was simply locked away behind the impenetrable walls of the Soviet Union.

A recent agreement between the Hebrew University of Jerusalem and the Academy of Sciences of the Ukraine, in Kiev, demonstrates just how much these walls have crumbled since the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991.

The agreement -- between the Hebrew University's National and University Library and the Central Scientific Library of the Academy of Sciences of Ukraine -- will enable Israeli scholars and other researchers to study material hidden for a half-century.

According to Wolf Moskovich, a professor at Hebrew University, the Ukrainian library contains the largest collection in Eastern Europe of manuscripts written in Hebrew letters (in both Hebrew and Yiddish), as well as Jewish books, ethnographic and musicological material.

The collection is especially rich because it includes the material that was in the possession of the Research Institute for Jewish Culture that existed in Kiev until 1948. It also includes artifacts collected by the ethnographic expedition of the Zionist S. An-Ski in the Ukraine from 1912-14.

Under the terms of the agreement, the manuscripts will be microfilmed and sent to the Hebrew University, where they will be catalogued for the first time.

Hebrew University will supply the Ukrainian library with the equipment and materials to carry out the project and will teach the library's staff how to restore and preserve manuscripts.

"The Ukrainian Library has a very, very important collection," said Reuven Bonfil, director of the National and University Library.

"Until the collapse of the Soviet empire, we had succeeded in microfilming almost 95 percent of the Hebrew manuscripts extant today in the Western world," he said.

With about 1,000 manuscripts, "this collection represents a vital link in the chain of Hebrew scholarship," Bonfil said.

**AFTER THE IVAN CASE, DIRECTOR'S EXIT,
CONCERN FOR FUTURE OF NAZI-CRIMES UNIT**
By Steven Weiss

WASHINGTON, April 10 (JTA) -- Jewish observers of the U.S. Justice Department's Office of Special Investigations are concerned about recent changes in the leadership of the unit in charge of finding the world's remaining Nazi war criminals.

And in trying to anticipate what will become of the office that once helped ban Austrian President Kurt Waldheim from U.S. soil for war-time atrocities, observers hope that past successes bode well for the future.

But while experts hope that OSI's history, replete with the successful prosecutions of Nazi war criminals, will influence the years to come, the past few months will not be pleasantly remembered.

Before the departure last month of longtime OSI director Neal Sher, who became executive director of the American Israel Public Affairs Committee, the unit was suffering through a turbulent period.

It was stung by an appellate court judge's accusations last November that it committed fraud and acted in favor of special interests in its prosecution of John Demjanjuk, the Cleveland auto worker accused of being the sadistic death camp guard known as "Ivan the Terrible."

In Israel, Demjanjuk was convicted and sentenced to death in 1988. But last July, the Israeli Supreme Court overturned the conviction, saying there was reasonable doubt that Demjanjuk was indeed the notorious Ivan.

The U.S. appellate court, overturning the earlier extradition order that sent Demjanjuk to Israel, also said OSI catered to "various interest groups," which many observers interpreted as including the Anti-Defamation League.

And with critics of OSI given a boost both by the recent accusations and by reports that Attorney General Janet Reno is considering a reorganization of the Justice Department, Jewish observers are concerned.

The Demjanjuk Case 'Will Be Used' Against OSI

"The whole Demjanjuk affair will be used as a club to continue efforts to paralyze the Nazi prosecution effort," said Elan Steinberg, executive director of the World Jewish Congress in New York.

In the end, however, Steinberg and others expect the matter to have little if any effect on OSI, which over the years has enjoyed a reputation of conducting solid investigations under quality leadership.

With the departure of Sher, several Jewish leaders lamented that the unit lost an enthusiastic and capable leader unequalled in the vigor he showed while prosecuting Nazi war criminals.

And with Sher's permanent replacement as yet unnamed, observers hope the future will be as good as the past few years were under Sher.

"Without question, Neal was an extremely effective investigator and prosecutor," said Jess Hordes, the Anti-Defamation League's Washington representative.

"OSI must not lose a step in the transition" between leaders, Hordes said.

This concern, however, has been eased for

the time being by the appointment of Sher's chief deputy, Eli Rosenbaum, as acting director.

Rosenbaum, a Harvard Law School graduate and formerly general counsel of the World Jewish Congress, was the No. 2 official at OSI from 1988 until Sher's departure.

His reputation is as unblemished as Sher's, and observers hope that his temporary standing as director of OSI will become permanent.

"Eli is the person to give OSI the continuity it needs" during this period of transition, said Hordes.

Sher himself, reached recently at his AIPAC office, was supportive of his former deputy, saying that OSI is "in very capable hands" with Rosenbaum at the helm.

Observers agree, however, that any replacement has large shoes to fill after the departure of Sher, who held OSI's top position longer than any of his predecessors.

OSI Sparked Similar Efforts

Sher assumed the directorship in 1982 and, by most accounts, defined the office that was established to prosecute Nazi war criminals.

According to Elizabeth Holtzman, a former congresswoman from New York who was involved in the formation of OSI, the office was set up in 1978 with the difficult task of prosecuting individuals who had committed crimes more than 40 years earlier.

Given the mandate to perform its task while not appearing to be a stepchild of the Justice Department, OSI quickly functioned in a "fully professional manner" and even sparked similar efforts around the world, Holtzman said.

Previous heads of the office were Martin Medelsohn, Walter Rockler and Allan Ryan Jr.

By most accounts, Sher raised OSI's performance to another level.

"If you had an impossible task or job but you knew that justice was on your side, then you went to Sher," said Steinberg.

"Sher had the full weight of history on his shoulders," he said, "and recognized the importance" of being in that position.

OSI's achievements from its inception through Sher's term are numerous: 48 convicted Nazi war criminals have lost their U.S. citizenship, 40 have been removed from the United States, and 70,000 have been placed on a watch-list preventing their entry onto U.S. soil.

Still, the future of OSI is uncertain. Questions about who will become the next director and doubts about whether the office should continue to pursue aging criminals from a war more than 40 years ago have fueled the level of concern.

But Jewish leaders dismiss the argument that OSI is decreasing in importance. Hordes of the ADL said with a growing number of anti-Semitic incidents being reported around the world, "the importance of OSI is underscored."

Others point to the democratization of Eastern Europe as causing a virtual river of previously inaccessible information on war criminals to flow OSI's way.

With these factors in mind, Jewish groups are sure to keep emphasizing the significance of OSI and its continued importance.

Rep. Charles Schumer (D-N.Y.), a strong pro-Israel advocate, has promised to closely watch OSI's status.