

**SILENCE ON BOSNIA SHATTERED
AS JEWISH ACTIVISTS STAGE ARRESTS**

By Matthew Dorf

WASHINGTON, Dec. 5 (JTA) -- With a protest and a staged arrest in front of the White House last week, a group of rabbis and activists shattered months of virtual silence by the Jewish community concerning the war in Bosnia.

Sixteen rabbis and rabbinical students affiliated with a group known as Jews Against Genocide in Bosnia were arrested by police here last Friday in a carefully orchestrated campaign that included an instruction sheet titled "Procedures for Those Getting Arrested."

Joined by another estimated 50 protesters--mostly Jewish, but also a few Muslims -- speakers at the rally urged the Clinton administration to lift the arms embargo against Bosnia, defend the Bihac region that has nearly fallen into the hands of Bosnian Serb forces and convene an effective war crimes tribunal.

Amid cries of "Never again," speakers evoked the Chanukah holiday in calling for immediate action.

"President Clinton can make a miracle in our time," said Rabbi Jack Moline, chairman of the Conservative movement's Social Justice Committee and one of those arrested.

Some of the demonstrators privately admitted that some rabbinic colleagues had refused to participate in the rally because they believed it was too late to do anything.

'Enough Is Enough'

Suggesting that the Jewish community has been "far too quiet" on the issue in recent months, Moline stressed the importance of the demonstration.

"It's never too late if one life can be saved. Imagine if there were protests in the 1940s that helped someone live," he said.

Several Jewish organizations have been outspoken in the past on the issue, urging the Clinton administration to intervene to end the Bosnian genocide. Many have evoked the silence of the world during the Holocaust to encourage action in Bosnia.

Joshua Goldstein echoed Moline's remarks, saying, "Anything you do for Bosnia is too little too late, but that's no excuse not to act."

Goldstein heads the campaign here for Jews Against Genocide in Bosnia, which was founded at the Reconstructionist Rabbinical College outside of Philadelphia two years ago.

"Now is the time to stand up. Enough is enough," said Lisa Kapin, a Reconstructionist Rabbinical College student who traveled from Philadelphia to participate in the protest.

The hour-and-a-half rally culminated in a somber walk from Lafayette Park to the White House sidewalk across the street, where a shofar was blown, yahrzeit candles were lit and kaddish was said to commemorate the hundreds of thousands who have died during the war in the former Yugoslavia.

The arrests came after the 16 demonstrators

refused to leave an area in front of the White House where, for security reasons, demonstrators are required to continue walking.

Those arrested were taken to police headquarters, fined \$50 and released.

Organizers of the hastily arranged protest said they had planned to limit the number of those arrested to ensure their release before Shabbat.

Ironically, one day before the rally, a pro-Serbian demonstrator set up a vigil in Lafayette Park with a sign painted with swastikas that called for the expulsion of "Jews and Muslims from Europe" and proclaimed "Long live Serbia."

The protester slept through last Friday's Jewish-sponsored demonstration.

**CONTINUITY COMMISSION URGES JEWS
TO HELP OTHERS GROW IN 'JEWISHNESS'**

By Larry Yudelson

NEW YORK, Dec. 5 (JTA) -- American Jews are being urged to host their fellow Jews for Shabbat meals, organize study groups and form havurot.

These efforts at spreading Jewish identity and helping "other Jews grow in their Jewishness" are among the recommendations contained in a 36-page draft report of the North American Commission on Jewish Identity and Continuity.

The draft was presented at a meeting of the commission on Nov. 16 in Denver at the General Assembly of the Council of Jewish Federations.

The 88-member commission brought together leaders from all walks of Jewish life -- federations and synagogues, seminaries and national Jewish organizations, rabbis and academics -- to map out new directions as the American Jewish community shifts focus from rescuing endangered Jews abroad to strengthening Jewish life at home.

The draft, reflecting a year's discussion by the commission and four constituent working groups, described Jewish identity as "the bedrock of Jewish continuity."

It said the community's goal "must be to make Jewish identity more central and meaningful for more Jews, not just for the sake of the community's future, but because of Judaism's life-enriching power."

But the report did not define Jewish identity.

Discussing the draft at the recent commission meeting, Rabbi David Elcott said it was "disturbing" that the commission came up with neither a description of what a Jewish identity entails, nor the building blocks for creating one.

"If the report was talking about enhancing health, we would expect recommendations, such as 'don't smoke, exercise,'" said Elcott, academic vice president at CLAL: The National Jewish Center For Learning and Leadership.

It is likely that such recommendations will make their way into a final version of the report, which the commission hopes to present early next year.

Proposals range from the abstract, such as calls for greater cooperation between institutions,

to the more concrete, such as suggestions that communities make a concerted effort to keep teens involved in Jewish life after their Bar or Bat Mitzvah celebrations.

As an amalgam of reports from the four separate working groups, the report contains some inconsistencies.

While one group was urging that the high school, college and young-family years be seen as the prime focus of new efforts, the working group on "reaching and involving Jews outside the intensely affiliated core" zeroed in on young people out of college and not yet married.

Which should be the priority?

"That's a real issue," said Jonathan Woocher, executive vice president of the Jewish Education Service of North America, who compiled the report. "It will be resolved not by a commission, but community by community, institution by institution. For any national commission to come out and say, 'here is the rank order of priorities' would be counterproductive."

In one of its strongest messages of how money should or should not be spent, the draft report insists that Jewish identity must be built through both ongoing "formative" experiences, such as family life, Jewish schooling and summer camps, and through "transformative" experiences such as Israel trips.

"We see a tendency in continuity to value transformative over formative, to put the big bucks on the singular experiences," said Joseph Reimer, director of the Hornstein Program in Jewish Communal Service at Brandeis University, summarizing the report of the working group he helped lead.

Report Cites Several Broad Requirements

"We're pleading with planners of Jewish continuity to find the right balance between formative and transformative. The formative takes that moment of high intensity and turns it into a regularized part of our Jewish life," Reimer said.

In its introduction, the report cites several broad requirements for advancing the Jewish continuity agenda. They include:

- * "Vigorous advocacy to make and maintain Jewish identity- and community-building as priority concerns."
- * "Basic research and ongoing program evaluation" to learn what is effective in enhancing Jewish identity.
- * "Focusing more intently on the needs and growth paths of individual Jews, rather than on institutional needs and accustomed ways of doing business."

Whatever effect the report may have, the unusual grouping of religious and communal leaders in one commission has already yielded some positive results, according to participants.

Rabbi David Teutsch, president of the Reconstructionist Rabbinical College, has begun talking with a federation director about placing rabbinical students with an interest in community organizing and outreach with the federation as interns.

"Such ideas have become much more acceptable as a result of the attention this issue has gotten," said Teutsch.

And the United Synagogue for Conservative Judaism is taking seriously the discussions about keeping teens involved in Jewish life.

"I've learned from the commission that this is an important time in people's lives that we're not capturing enough," said United Synagogue Executive Vice President Rabbi Jerome Epstein, who serves on the commission.

"We're going into a new venture to try to bridge formal and informal education, particularly around the Bar Mitzvah area of time," he said.

One thing that commission members are clear about is that "we are not presenting a cure-all," in the words of Ronne Hess, a CJF board member from Birmingham, Ala.

"This is not a problem which you solve," said Woocher. "It's not as if you can work three years, stop intermarriage and turn your attention to other issues. This is part of the fabric of a mature Jewish community in an open American society."

Commission Was Convened By CJF

The draft report presented last month is the first product of the national commission, which was announced in November 1992, but took nearly a year to convene its first meeting.

The commission was convened by CJF, which assigned two senior staff members to work with the commission. Most of the staff work for the commission was undertaken by Woocher of JESNA, which is located in CJF's offices.

But CJF insisted that it did not "own" the commission, which instead belongs to the entire community.

Half in and half out, CJF was criticized by some commissioners as dominating the panel, and by others for not taking an active enough role.

CJF is now considering starting its own implementation committee to begin acting on the commission's recommendations. Like the commission, the new body would also include representatives of the synagogue movements.

Meanwhile, the national effort is being mirrored on the local level by more than 40 federations, which have launched similar local committees to plan continuity and identity initiatives.

"In every community in North America there's action taking place," said CJF Executive Vice President Martin Kraar.

"Some is good action, some I think is flawed, and we need some national activity so we don't invest our energy and dollars doing the wrong thing. We have federations going in a variety of directions, and CJF has not addressed the effort except to do some networking of heads of local continuity commissions," he said.

Where the commission itself goes from here has not yet been determined. Commission members agree that even when their draft report is polished up, there is plenty of work to be done.

But already, one chair of the commission -- former CJF President Shoshana Cardin -- has announced her resignation, citing other responsibilities, and the other, former UJA national chairman Marvin Lender, is nearing the end of his two-year commitment to the post. A new chair is expected to be announced in a few weeks, according to Woocher.

There will be no JTA Daily News Bulletin published Dec. 9.

AMERICA'S TOP GUN SCOUTS OUT ISRAEL

By Naomi Segal

JERUSALEM, Dec. 5 (JTA) -- Gen. John Shalikashvili, the chairman of the U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff, arrived in Israel this week for talks with Israeli army officers about possible security arrangements should Israel and Syria reach a peace agreement.

Shalikashvili, who was the guest of the outgoing Israel Defense Force chief of staff, Lt. Gen. Ehud Barak, told Israel Television after he arrived Monday that "the purpose of my trip is to learn as much as I can to understand Israel better."

He and Barak met Monday to discuss security arrangements in the Golan Heights -- including the possible deployment of American forces as part of a peacekeeping mission there -- that would go into effect if Israel withdraws from the area as part of a peace settlement with Syria.

Marking his first visit to Israel, Shalikashvili was scheduled to visit Israeli military bases and field units, as well as northern Israel.

GERMANY BRINGS NEW CHARGES AGAINST FORMER CAMP COMMANDER

By Gil Sedan

BONN, Dec. 5 (JTA) -- German authorities have brought new charges against Josef Schwammberger, the former Nazi concentration camp commander who is already serving a life sentence for killing 650 Jews during World War II.

The authorities handed down a new indictment last Friday charging Schwammberger, 82, with 144 new counts of murder, saying he had ordered mass executions of Jews and was also directly responsible for murdering prisoners himself.

The Nazi war criminal, who was the commander of several Polish ghettos and labor camps during World War II, was extradited from Argentina to Germany in 1990. He was sentenced to life in prison in May 1992 in the last major Nazi trial in Germany.

Prosecutor Kurt Schrimm said the new indictment came as the result of evidence that had surfaced during Schwammberger's previous trial, but which could not be introduced at the time because it had not been included in the original extradition request from Argentina.

Despite Schwammberger's advanced age, Schrimm said it was nonetheless the court's duty to prosecute him for every charge it could prove against him.

But it could take as long as six months before a judge finishes examining the charges and hearing likely defense objections to a new trial.

The indictment came down last week as a new, stiffer crime law went into effect in Germany. The law includes new provisions targeting Holocaust deniers, making it easier to prosecute such cases and calling for stiffer penalties of up to five-year prison sentences.

Under the new regulations, longer prison sentences of up to five years will be now be imposed on those carrying out violent hate crimes.

Speaking with Israeli journalists last week in Bonn, German President Roman Herzog expressed satisfaction with the new measures, saying they represented a "very important tool."

Court proceedings have meanwhile begun against four young men on charges of firebombing a synagogue in the northern city of Lubeck, the first attack on a synagogue since the Nazi era.

The men, who are between the ages of 20 and 25, were charged with attempted murder and arson for the March 25 attack.

The four, members of a right-wing group, allegedly threw two Molotov cocktails into the entrance of the building housing the synagogue.

Five people who live above the synagogue were asleep at the time. They were alerted by neighbors who heard glass breaking and discovered the fire in its early stages. No one was hurt, and the synagogue was only slight damaged.

According to the charge sheet, the four were motivated by "hatred toward foreigners and Jews." Two of the defendants have already admitted to participating in the attack.

GERMANY TO REJECT COMPENSATION FOR HEIRS OF CREMATORIUM MAKER

By Susan Birnbaum

NEW YORK, Dec. 5 (JTA) -- The heirs to the family that built the concentration camp crematoriums will have their claims for compensation rejected, Germany's justice minister has said.

Justice Minister Sabine Leutheusser-Schnarrenberger sent a letter to Berlin's mayor, Wolfgang Luder, saying the heirs to the J.A. Topf and Sons company are not eligible for the restitution they claim because the factory was used to manufacture the "murder machinery of the extermination camp."

The German government has already rejected a petition to have the factory site and other assets returned to the heirs.

The factory site, which is located in the eastern industrial city of Erfurt, was seized by the Soviets in 1948. Under current German law, land confiscated between 1945 and 1949 by communist authorities in what would later become East Germany, cannot be returned.

But the Topf family is still seeking financial restitution for the seized property, which is valued at more than \$2 million.

Jewish officials brought the issue to Luder "because he has been sympathetic to Jewish concerns," said Elan Steinberg, executive director of the World Jewish Congress, which has been pursuing the matter.

Luder, who is also a member of the German Parliament, wrote to the justice minister in September, questioning whether the Topf family claim was valid.

A copy of the letter, dated Nov. 12, was sent to the WJC and released last week.

In the letter, Leutheusser-Schnarrenberger assured the Berlin mayor that "payments will not be granted" if, among other reasons, "the claimant, or whomever from whom the claimant derives his rights," acted "against the principles of human rights or state rights."

This, wrote the justice minister, "should be valid concerning Topf and Sons."

"The cremation systems it developed and the crematoriums it built for mass extermination in Auschwitz were a substantive contribution to maintain in force the murder machinery of the extermination camp, since several thousand bodies had to be eliminated every day," she wrote.

**ISRAELI DRUSE STAGE DEMONSTRATION
TO DEMAND EQUAL GOVERNMENT FUNDING**
By Michele Chabin

JERUSALEM, Dec. 5 (JTA) -- Rami Zeiden, a 19-year-old Druse resident of Daliat al-Carmel in the Galilee, is angry.

A year away from his compulsory service in the Israeli army, Zeiden says that unless something is done to improve the standard of living in Druse villages, he may refuse to serve when the time comes.

Zeiden was in the capital Sunday, along with 2,000 other Druse demonstrators, protesting in front of the Prime Minister's Office against what the Druse community considers its second-class status in Israel.

Explaining why he joined the protest, Zeiden said he is upset that the Druse are expected to serve in the army but do not enjoy the same services afforded Jewish Israelis.

Israel's 80,000 Druse citizens, clustered in 18 villages in the north of the country, say the Israeli government is allotting them only a fraction of the sums given to Jewish development towns. Another 15,000 Druse live in villages on the Golan Heights.

The Druse are ethnic Arabs who split from Islam in the 11th century to form a new religion. The majority of the Druse community in the Middle East, an estimated 200,000 total, live in Lebanon and Syria.

Since the 1948 War of Independence, the Druse in Israel have served in the Israeli army, siding with Israel in its conflicts with its Arab neighbors.

One Shekel To Every Seven For Jews

"When it comes to government funding, the Druse receive one shekel for every seven allotted to Jews," asserted Riad Hassoun, a city clerk from Daliat al-Carmel.

"We need an immediate 250 million shekels (about \$83 million) to raise our standard of living to that of the development towns," he said.

Benny Cohen, the prime minister's media adviser, declined to give exact figures related to the Druse budget, but he conceded that the community has received a raw deal.

"During the past 47 years, all the governments of Israel have neglected the Druse," Cohen said, "and this government is determined to equalize their situation to that of the Jewish population.

"This effort cannot be accomplished in just one year," he said. "It will take three to five years."

In an attempt to pressure the government and gain widespread support for their cause among other Israelis, Druse leaders called a strike three weeks ago and began to demonstrate around the country.

The prime minister, eager to keep the goodwill of the country's most loyal minority, met with village council members on Sunday and offered them an immediate package of about \$43 million -- 30 percent more than had been promised in the original 1995 budget -- plus a loan of about \$33 million.

Rabin also promised to investigate the Druse claims of funding inequities and to formulate a long-term funding plan by March 1.

But Druse leaders rejected the offer, saying the package "offered nothing new" and still falls short of that given to Israeli communities.

Standing in front of the Prime Minister's Office following the council members' meeting with Rabin, Zeiden said the money was too little, too late.

"My grandfather and father served in the army," he said. "My brother is in the army now, and my father is doing his reserve duty this month. Yet what did they get out of it?"

Citing the dearth of municipal services in his village, which is home to 14,000 residents, Zeiden said, "We do not receive a good education because there are no good schools. The roads are terrible, and there is nothing for (teen-agers) to do in the evenings. The government promised many things, but hasn't delivered."

Hadi Mando, a 25-year-old demobilized soldier, agreed. "I work at a security job in Jerusalem, even though my home is Beit Jann," village in the north.

"What can I do? There are no factories near the village, and I can't find work back home. We need the government to provide jobs," he said.

"In 1987, the government promised us equality, but we haven't received it," asserted Mafarij Salalha, 43, a member of the Beit Jann regional council in the Upper Galilee.

"We are citizens, we serve in the army and pay taxes, but we do not enjoy equal rights, equal services," Salalha maintained.

"We have no industrial areas, so unemployment is high -- 12 to 15 percent -- much higher than the Israeli average. Our young men serve in the army, and they deserve jobs once they have completed their service," he said.

Salalha would also like to see investment in the Druse sector from Diaspora Jews.

"The Druse community is an integral part of Israel," he said, adding that "investing in us is an investment in Israel."

GREECE AGREES TO MILITARY COOPERATION
By Naomi Segal

JERUSALEM, Dec. 5 (JTA) -- Greek Defense Minister Gerasimos Arsenis wrapped up a three-day visit to Israel this week by signing a military cooperation agreement that reflected an atmosphere of improved relations between the two countries.

The agreement is "an important landmark in relations governing our defense structures," Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin said Sunday.

The agreement, signed by Rabin and Arsenis, provides for joint military exercises in the Eastern Mediterranean, reciprocal training of officers and a general framework for arms sales.

"We believe both countries should strengthen their relations and cooperation in the security area, especially now when there are dramatic developments in the Middle East and Europe," Arsenis told the Hebrew daily Ha'aretz.

He added that Israel and Greece can break into new markets using Israel's technological know-how and Greece's marketing advantage as a member of NATO.

Arsenis' visit to Israel was the first ever made by a Greek defense minister.

(JTA correspondent Jean Cohen in Athens contributed to this report.)