

## JAIL-BIRDS AA 7/7/89

THE once high-flying 'white president' of Bophuthatswana, Shabtai Kalmanowitch, is still making news even in prison where he is serving a 9-year sentence for spying for the Soviet Union (*Africa Analysis, passim*). In early May, he divorced his wife of 14 years, Tania, in a Tel Aviv Rabbinical court. On 6 June, Amram Vaknin, the warden of Kfar Yona prison, where Kalmanowitch is serving his sentence, was arrested on suspicion of accepting bribes to allow Kalmanowitch to 'entertain young women in his cell'.

The Lithuanian-born Kalmanowitch's path from Bophuthatswana to Kfar Yona went through Sierra Leone, where, through his Liat company, he was involved in agriculture as well as diamonds and gold. In May 1987, Kalmanowitch was arrested in London at the request of US authorities, who wanted to try him for forging \$2m worth of cheques on an account at the North Carolina National Bank.

It was after his arraignment on these charges in North Carolina and his release on bail that Israel seized Kalmanowitch for espionage; but his secret trial raised considerable doubt about his guilt.