

New Members Of 12th Knesset Include Many New To Politics

JERUSALEM (JTA) — If there is one thing that the 15 Israeli political parties elected to the Knesset have in common, it is that nearly all of them are sending new faces to sit in the 120-member legislative body.

Mostly young, predominantly Sephardic and new to politics are the words that describe most of the 18 members of the ultra-Orthodox parties who were elected to the 12th Knesset.

The far right-wing Tsomet and Moledet parties and the leftist Mapam also will be sending new faces to the Knesset, though their accent on youth is not so pronounced.

The ultra-Orthodox made a strong showing on election day, with candidates chosen for their religious backgrounds, rather than political experience.

Four of the six men the Shas party will send to the Knesset are newcomers. After incumbents Yitzhak Peretz and Rafael Pinhassi, No. 3 on its list is Rabbi Yosef Azran, 47, who has been Sephardic chief rabbi of Rishon le-Zion for the last 12 years. He also heads a rabbinical court in Paris and an educational institution in Strasbourg, France.

Azran is a graduate of a yeshiva in Tangier, Morocco. He also studied in London and at the

Ponevets yeshiva in Bnei Brak, headed by the venerable Rabbi Eliezer Schach.

Fourth on the Shas list and its only member of Yemenite ancestry is Israeli-born Rabbi Ariele Gamliel, 37. He heads a yeshiva in the Negev development town of Sderot and was said to have been reluctant to enter the Knesset race. He reportedly was persuaded by Schach and former Sephardic Chief Rabbi Ovadia Yosef, the spiritual mentor of Shas.

Shas' No. 5 man is Yair Levi, 36, who was active behind the scenes until now as the party's director general and an administrator of Sephardic institutions.

Rabbi Shlomo Dayan, sixth on the Shas list, is Moroccan-born and represents the party on the Jerusalem City Council. He is founder of the Sephardic Metivta school in Jerusalem.

The Agudat Yisrael party, which won five Knesset seats, is now headed by Rabbi Moshe Zeev Feldman, 58, an Austrian-born member of the Gur Hasidic movement and director of the Imrei Emet yeshiva in Bnei Brak. He will take the Agudah seat held by Avraham Shapira in the outgoing Knesset.

Feldman is described as a "Torah scholar but not a politician." He is known to be extremely

hostile to Schach, who broke with the Agudah to form the new Degel HaTorah party.

Degel's No. 1 man is Rabbi Avraham Ravitz, 54, a father of 12. He heads the Or Sameach yeshiva in Jerusalem, a school for people newly turned to religion. He reputedly influenced a popular Israeli actor, Uri Zohar, to embrace the faith. The other Degel seat is going to Rafael Moshe Gafni, another newcomer.

Three of the Knesset seats won by the National Religious Party will be going to men who did not serve in the 11th Knesset. They are Hanan Porat, Yigal Bibi and Yitzhak Levi.

The Knesset members of the secular right, as distinguished from the religious right, have military or scientific backgrounds.

The expansionist Tsomet party, which won two seats, is headed by reserve Gen. Rafael Eitan, a former Israel Defense Force chief of staff who sat in the 11th Knesset as part of the Tehiya.

He chose as his second in command Yoash Zidon, 62, a former air force officer. Zidon is a graduate of Israel's first flying course and was a wing commander during the Sinai campaign in 1956.

Zidon founded Cyclone, an Israeli company that

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