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SUPREME COURT HOTLY DEBATES RELIGIOUS EXERCISES IN PUBLIC SCHOOLS

WASHINGTON, Feb. 27. (JTA) -- With the attorneys-general of 19 states lined up on one side, and 66 Jewish organizations represented by the Synagogue Council of America and the National Community Relations Advisory Council in opposition, the United States Supreme Court opened a lengthy hearing here today in what the principal litigant called an appeal to maintain "the wall of separation" between Church and State. The appeal requested the Court to declare unconstitutional the recital of the Lord's Prayer and Bible reading in the public schools of Maryland.

The state legal officials and the Jewish groups had filed "amicus curiae" briefs, as "friends of the court," with the Jewish groups supporting the appeal from a Maryland court filed by Mrs. M. E. Murray, of Baltimore. That case concerns daily reading of the Bible in public schools. A companion case, arising in Pennsylvania, deals with the recitation of the Lord's Prayer in the schools supported by the state.

The members of the Supreme Court displayed unusual interest in the case, eight of the nine justices entering into active questioning and debate on the constitutional issues. Justice Potter Stewart, the lone dissenter in last summer's High Court decision outlawing official prayers in the public schools, clashed in open court with Justice Hugo L. Black, author of that majority ruling.

Most Baltimore parents, said Justice Stewart, "would like to have this prayer for the exercise of their religion." Justice Black responded: "They want to use the taxpayers' money to carry out their religious exercises." Chief Justice Earl Warren commented that, if Christian prayer were legal in Maryland schools--then Buddhist rites would presumably be acceptable by public schools in Hawaii.

Thomas B. Finan, Attorney General of Maryland, said to Justice Warren "this is a case of theism against non-theism." The Chief Justice interrupted to say "Hold on. There are millions of theists who oppose these prayers and I am sure they would deny your contention. For example, we have a brief here from the Synagogue Council of America and the National Community Relations Advisory Council. They represent a number of important religious organizations."

Black, Stewart, Continue Clash; Goldberg Hints at Possible Compromise

Mrs. Murray, calling herself an atheist, declared through her attorney, Leonard Kerpelman, of Baltimore, that the school opening prayer was a religious ceremony. Her son had suffered injury because he did not choose to participate, she claimed, and the boy was spat upon, assaulted, and ostracized.

Justice Stewart took exception to the phrase "wall of separation." He said "I have read the First Amendment and I never saw that language in it." He insisted that "if we strike down the school board's language requirements, we are interfering with the right of the majority to their free exercise of religion." Mr. Kerpelman replied that his objection was to the establishment of religion by use of the public school ceremony.

Justice Arthur J. Goldberg inquired whether a period of silent prayer would be constitutionally acceptable. Mr. Kerpelman answered that it seemed to him such a practice would not impinge on the First Amendment to the Constitution, but that it was not involved in the Maryland case before the Court.

Mr. Kerpelman charged that the Lord's Prayer had been "tolerated and blinked at for so long that it is now a tradition. A matter that one generation does not have the courage to question must be questioned by another." Justice Black noted that, if the prayer were approved, it would open the door to greater use of classrooms for religious rites.

Mr. Kerpelman maintained that practices could not be "somewhat" religious. He said an observance was either religious or it was not. He said, however, he would agree to compulsory study of religion. He saw nothing wrong in objectively teaching the history of religions. What he objected to, he told the Court, was "a religious ceremony with the approval of the school."

Legal counsel representing Baltimore school authorities said they agreed that the New York Regents Prayer, outlawed last summer, was unconstitutional because it was composed

by state officials. But they contended that the Lord's Prayer or Bible passages were constitutional because these were not composed by local officials but came from "ancient documents." They contended the Baltimore school observances were not primarily religious.

The hearing will go into a second day, continuing tomorrow. A ruling by the Court, however, is not expected for several weeks.

TWC MORE JEWS SENTENCED TO DEATH IN USSR; CHARGED WITH 'THIEVERY'

NEW YORK, Feb. 27. (JTA) -- Two more Soviet Jews have been condemned to death in another mass trial of so-called economic criminals, this time in the Ukrainian city of Ivanov-Frankovsk, according to the official organ of the Ukrainian Communist Party, received here today.

The report, appearing in "Pravda Ukrainy," published in Kiev, on February 21, told of a trial in which "several workers in a meat cooperative were convicted of speculation and thievery." The newspaper named two of the convicted men, stressing the death sentences imposed on them, as Dubovitzki and Kerker -- both Jewish names.

ANGLO-JEWISH LEADER RAPS ANTI-SEMITISM IN RUSSIA, CALLS FOR CHANGE

LONDON, Feb. 27. (JTA) - R.N. Carvalho, president of the Anglo-Jewish Association, asserted here last night that the Soviet Government should realize that the determined confinement of a religious group from contact with those in other parts of the world sharing its beliefs was "not only cruel but unnecessary."

He also told a meeting of the association's council that Russia would commend itself to all liberal-thinking men and women throughout the world if it freely established means by which Jews in Russia could maintain normal contacts with Jews outside.

He said that, if such a policy could be part of a general relaxation of government restrictions by which Russian Jews could organize a full and useful religious and cultural life, the Soviet Government "would earn the gratitude of its own Russian citizens and would merit the appreciation of all of us throughout the world."

Noting that, during the Stalin regime, Jews suffered physical persecution, he said it was "equally clear" there were still widespread anti-Semitic elements in the vast population of Russia. He added that "what one hopes to see is an attitude from the Soviet Government itself which makes it quite clear not only that official anti-Semitism does not exist but also that any form of anti-Semitism is to be discouraged and that any aspirations for a distinct religious and cultural life" for Russian Jews "should not be treated with suspicion and in one way or another made impossible."

BEN-GURION OFF FOR VACATION; HAD BEEN ABSENT FOR MONTH, NURSING COLD

JERUSALEM, Feb. 27. (JTA) - Prime Minister David Ben-Gurion started today a two-week holiday which he indicated he planned to spend in study and relaxation. He had returned only 10 days ago from a four-week absence, during which he had nursed a bad cold.

Prior to his departure he dealt with a number of Parliamentary questions submitted by deputies yesterday and today, in addition to presenting to the Parliament the budget of the Prime Minister's office for next year.

KNESSET DEFEATS OPPOSITION ON RULE FOR DISCLOSURE OF BANK ACCOUNTS

JERUSALEM, Feb. 27. (JTA) -- Israel's Parliament, the Knesset, defeated today two opposition motions to cancel a Treasury directive requiring banks to disclose the sums on deposit in accounts. The motions had been sponsored by the Liberal and Herut parties.

Finance Minister Levi Eshkol assured the House that the authority would be used only in cases of depositors who refuse to disclose their bank accounts to income tax assessors. He rejected charges that the directive infringed on the privacy of citizens, citing laws in the United States, Holland, Denmark and France which make it possible for governments to obtain the cooperation of banks in fighting tax frauds.

GOVERNMENT ACTION URGED TO CURB DECLINING ISRAELI BIRTH RATE

JERUSALEM, Feb. 27. (JTA) -- Rabbi Shlomo Lorintz, an Agudat Israel deputy, cited statistics in Parliament today to the effect that the Jewish birthrate fell by one-third in Israel during the past decade to buttress an appeal for Government measures to encourage births.

Prime Minister David Ben-Gurion expressed full approval of the religious deputy's views, and expressed concern over the "alarming" rate of "artificial miscarriages." He disclosed that he had appointed a special committee to study the problem.

However, the Prime Minister added, he did not believe any good purpose would be served by the general debate which Rabbi Lorintz had requested, and proposed instead that the matter be submitted to a Knesset committee. The House accepted that suggestion. Rabbi Lorintz contrasted the Jewish birthrate decline with the continued rise in the number of births of the Moslem population, one of the world's highest.

PEC REPORTS RECORD HIGHS IN CAPITAL, SURPLUS AND RESERVES, INCOME

NEW YORK, Feb. 27. (JTA) - PEC Israel Economic Corporation set record highs in capital, surplus and reserves, along with a substantial gain during 1962 in net income and total assets, Joseph Meyerhoff, president, said today in his annual report to PEC's 12,000 stockholders.

He said the PEC's capital, surplus and reserves rose to \$19,637,770 at the end of 1962, a gain of more than \$2,500,000 over the 1961 year-end total. He reported net income rose from \$799,629 in 1961 to \$872,024 in 1962, with per share income remaining the same because of an increase in the number of shares outstanding. A five percent stock dividend on the \$25 par common stock was paid today.

PEC total assets increased to \$20,452,250 at the end of 1962 compared with \$19,369,603 at the end of 1961.

JERUSALEM POPULATION REACHES 180,000; MAYOR ENVISAGES 250,000 TOTAL

JERUSALEM, Feb. 27. (JTA) -- Jerusalem has absorbed 100,000 immigrants since the establishment of the State of Israel and the city's population is now 180,000, compared with the 60,000 who remained in the capital after the lifting of the siege in 1948 during the War of Liberation, Mayor Mordechai Ish-Shalom reported today.

The Mayor presented the figures at a luncheon reception given by the municipality to the Parliament's Economic Committee, who also were told there has been no unemployment in Jerusalem for some time. He called on the committee and the Government for aid to raise the city's population to 250,000 in the next few years.

ISRAELI NEWS BRIEFS

JERUSALEM, Feb. 27. (JTA) -- The Ministerial Economic Committee is reconsidering the Government's ban on charter flights to Israel following protests from various quarters, it was reported here today. Among those requesting a review of the situation was Foreign Minister Golda Meir who expressed concern about the possibility that Scandinavian tourists in the Middle East would visit only Arab countries and skip Israel because of the ban on charter flights. The decision to review the question followed reports of a sharp drop in hotel reservations throughout Israel.

TEL AVIV, Feb. 27. (JTA) -- Starting Friday, passengers on El Al airliners will be offered the El Al answer to Scandinavian smorgasbord and French culinary specialties -- breakfast of bagels and lox. The bagels will be brought from the bagel capital of the world -- New York.

JERUSALEM, Feb. 27. (JTA) -- Every boy and girl in Israel between the ages of 13 and 16 should be required to learn a trade in industry or farming, and the compulsory school age should be extended to 16 now, Prime Minister David Ben-Gurion declared today in Parliament. Replying to debate on the Prime Minister's Office budget, the Prime Minister said that education was the second most urgent national problem after security. He said the utmost effort must be made in Israel and by world Jewry to meet the educational needs of Israel's new generation.

LONDON, Feb. 27. (JTA) -- Two BOAC aircrew members were flown home from Israel yesterday, and suspended from duty, pending an inquiry into charges they exhibited violently anti-Semitic behavior in an Israeli hotel bar. Their flight captain ordered them out of Israel after they were accused of insulting Jews in the bar. Patrons complained that the BOAC men cursed Israel and shouted at them "You should all be driven into the sea. You have no right to exist."

TEL AVIV, Feb. 27. (JTA) -- A Bedouin sheikh was awarded a liberation medal today for services to Israel during the War of Liberation. He was the first non-Jew in Israel to receive the award. In a colorful ceremony, the military governor of the Negev presented the award to Sheikh Auda Abu Moamer of the Azameh tribe. The official said that the sheikh had linked his tribe and his own fate with Israel.

NEW YORK, Feb. 27. (JTA) -- Saul P. Friedlander, head of the Scientific Bureau of the Israel Ministry of Defense, was awarded today a \$2,530 grant by the Rockefeller Foundation, for the completion of a research and writing project at the Graduate Institute of International Studies in Geneva, Switzerland. Mr. Friedlander's subject is the American factor in German foreign and military policy, 1939-1941.

TEL AVIV, Feb. 27. (JTA) -- A group of 120 mayors from Germany, France and England were in Israel today for a two-week visit as guests of the Local Authorities Center here. The German contingent, the largest of the groups, brought greetings from West Berlin Mayor Willy Brandt who encouraged them to go to Israel, where, he said, he had been very impressed with the development of the local authorities system. Also visiting Israel is a group of 53 members of the Danish resistance movement who came here as guests of the Danish-Israel Friendship Association.

ROCKWELL NAZIS PICKET A. D. L. IN MIAMI, CALL FOR GASSING JEWS

MIAMI, Feb. 27. (JTA) -- Five members of George Rockwell's American Nazi party picketed the downtown office of the Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rith here yesterday, and some were roughed up by enraged spectators. However, watching police made no arrests and the neo-Nazis departed after a few hours of marching before the building. The pickets carried the usual signs about gassing Jews and Jewish Communists.

The picketing was done in connection with a suit for damages against the ADL, filed by Roger Foss, a lieutenant of the Nazi group, who served a 180-day term in Miami jail on disorderly conduct charges arising out of an earlier picketing of the ADL office by the Nazis last June. Foss, who was released last January, contends in his suit that he was unjustly accused in the June picketing.

CHICAGO RABBINICAL COUNCIL OPPOSES STRICTER DIVORCE LAW IN ILLINOIS

CHICAGO, Feb. 27. (JTA) -- The Jewish community here is raising protests over a bill pending in the Illinois House of Representatives which would make adultery the only grounds for divorce in the state. Grounds for divorce now include impotency, bigamy, adultery, desertion, habitual drunkenness, cruelty and conviction of a felony.

Rabbi Moses Mescheloff, chairman of the executive committee of the Chicago Rabbinical Council, said today that the passage of the bill would work a distinct hardship on Jewish couples seeking divorce, since adultery "is one of the most difficult grounds to prove." He noted also that it would interfere with efforts of reconciliation "because of the gravity of the charge."

COMMUNAL LEADER GIVES \$50,000 FOR JUDAIC STUDIES AT SYRACUSE UNIVERSITY

SYRACUSE, N. Y., Feb. 27. (JTA) -- The first lectureship in Judaic Studies at Syracuse University here has been established under a \$50,000 grant from Bernard G. Rudolph, a leader of the Jewish community, according to an announcement today by the institution's Chancellor, William P. Tolley.

The lectureship, under the supervision of the university's department of religion, will launch the new program next month with an address by Dr. Moshe Davis, provost of the Jewish Theological Seminary of America. Dr. Davis and other visiting scholars will also conduct seminars for members of the faculty as well as for students.

Mr. Rudolph, in whose name the lectureship will be known, is a founder and president of the Syracuse Jewish Welfare Federation, and has been active in numerous other philanthropies here holding, among other posts, the chairmanship of the local United Jewish Appeal.

Rutgers Creates New Department of Hebraic Studies

NEW BRUNSWICK, N. J., Feb. 27. (JTA) -- The creation of a new department of Hebraic studies at Rutgers University was announced here today by Dr. Mason W. Gross, president. The new department will be headed by Associate Professor Leon A. Feldman, formerly of the faculty of Yeshiva University, who joined the Rutgers staff last July.

While the university has in the past offered courses in elementary and intermediate Hebrew language, and a course in Jewish civilization and culture, the new department will develop a unified program in the field of Hebraic studies and Jewish history.

BIBLIOPHILE GIVES EARLIEST PRINTED 'ZOHAR' TO BRANDEIS UNIVERSITY

WALTHAM, Mass. Feb. 27. (JTA) -- The earliest known printed edition of the "Zohar," classical Cabalistic book on Jewish mysticism, has been given to Brandeis University's Goldfarb Library by Mr. and Mrs. Maurice Spertus of Highland Park, Ill. The Morocco-bound volume, printed in Mantua, Italy, is of considerable value.

Mr. and Mrs. Spertus also included several other manuscripts of exceptional value dating from the 17th and 18th centuries. These include Hebrew manuscripts, prayers written in Palestine in 1790, scrolls written about 1700, a Talmud printed in Amsterdam about 1724, occasional prayers printed in Venice about 1795, and a Hebrew manuscript, "Yashir Moshe," copied in 1671. Mr. Spertus, who is a member of the Council of Bibliophiles of Brandeis, has given the university more than 1,400 volumes from his personal collection of standard Judaica and Hebraica.

Among the Spertus gifts to Brandeis is a Cabalistic "tree," which will be mounted as a permanent display here at the university's Golding Judaic Center. The "tree" is made up of seven sections, mounted in oak-framed panels, expounding the various principles of Cabalistic theory and their inter-relationships.

J. T. A. CORRESPONDENT DOCUMENTS 'SPECIAL TREATMENT' OF JEWS BY NAZIS

FRANKFURT, Feb. 27. (JTA) -- A book on Nazi mass murders of Jews and others during the Second World War, written by Josef Wulf, the Jewish Telegraphic Agency correspondent in West Berlin, was published here today. Entitled "Special Treatment," the phrase used by the Nazi hierarchy to describe the annihilation of European Jewry, the book includes a number of Nazi documents on the treatment of Jews, Poles, Czechs and prisoners of war.