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RELIGIOUS PARTY THREATENS ISRAEL CABINET CRISIS OVER REFORM ISSUE

TEL AVIV, Jan. 31: (JTA) -- A cabinet crisis may develop in Israel if the ban by the B'nai B'rith here, and by the ZOA House, on Reform religious services in their premises will be brought for debate in the Knesset, Israel's Parliament, the National Religious Party wanted today;

The religious party threatened to withdraw from the coalition Government -- which is only two weeks old -- if members of other parties in the Cabinet are allowed to introduce into the Knesset agenda a motion requesting a discussion on the ban. Shulamit Aloni, an Alignment member of the Knesset, indicated today that she intends to request such a debate. Emma Taimi, a Mapam deputy in the Knesset, simultaneously stated that she will request a Knesset debate on the Israel rabbinate's stand on a recent marriage of a Karaite to a Jewish girl.

Religious Affairs Minister Zorah Warhaftig, a leader of the National Religious Party, said today that these issues should be held inside the coalition and should not be introduced in the Knesset. The coalition presidium is expected to meet shortly on these sensitive issues;

B'nai B'rith Members in Israel Demand Discussion on Issue

Meanwhile, B'nai B'rith lodges in other cities in Israel, outside Tel Aviv, today demanded discussion of the refusal by the Tel Aviv administration of the local B'nai B'rith building to permit Reform services in the building. At the same time, Ben-Zion Kanders, president of the B'nai B'rith here, issued a statement reiterating that the organization decided not to permit Reform services in its building. (In Washington, the world headquarters of B'nai B'rith said today it has so far received no reply from Israel to a cable inquiring for details on the issue;)

A spokesman for ZOA House here confirmed that the management of the building, established by the Zionist Organization of America, had turned down a request for the holding of Reform services on its premises. He said that the ZOA House had been created as a cultural center and had not been intended to serve as a synagogue;

Noting that the ZOA had members from all three branches of Judaism, the ZOA spokesman said that the organization would not take any position favoring any one branch. He stressed that the ban on services was not directed specifically against the Reform religious movement.

A leader of the Reform movement said that the reason ZOA House had banned Reform services is because the management of ZOA House fears it may lose its kashruth certificate from the Israel Chief Rabbinate. Such loss, it was alleged, would deprive the ZOA House of income from weddings and banquets;

Sources in the Religious Affairs Ministry, controlled by the Orthodox movement, were quoted today as saying that Reform and other Jewish congregations needing financial help to build or acquire their own places of worship could get such aid from the Ministry of the Interior, in the same way that Orthodox congregations get such aid. However, Reform leaders replied that none of the Reform congregations in Israel ever got "a single thing from the Ministry for Religious Affairs."

At Ashkelon, where the new Conservative congregation was denied room for services at the WIZO headquarters there, it was said today that Conservative worshippers plan to hold outdoor Sabbath services next weekend.

AHARON BECKER REELECTED SECRETARY GENERAL OF HISTADRUT IN ISRAEL

TEL AVIV, Jan. 31: (JTA) -- Aharon Becker was today reelected secretary general of the Histadrut, at a meeting of the executive of the Israel labor federation. Mr. Becker was renamed to the post in spite of the fact that he earlier asked to be relieved of his candidacy for what he called "personal reasons."

Before the election, Premier Levi Eshkol told the Mapai Party to compel Mr. Becker to continue at his post in spite of the latter's objections to serving again. The secretary general received the votes of all parties except the Herut-Liberal bloc which abstained and the Communists who opposed Mr. Becker.

LEADING CLERGYMAN CONSIDERS STATEMENT ON JEWS 'CATHOLIC CONFESSION'

CHICAGO, Jan. 31: (JTA) -- The recent Ecumenical Council declaration concerning the Jews, later promulgated by Pope Paul VI as official Catholic Church doctrine, is not a Catholic "absolution" of the Jews but a Catholic confession of guilt, a leading Catholic clergyman declared here.

The statement was made by the Rev. Benedict M. Ashley, president of Aquinas Institute, at a symposium at Rosary College, near Chicago. He discussed the new Catholic doctrine which repudiates the charge of collective guilt of the Jewish people for the death of Jesus, and "deplores" anti-Semitism.

Declaring that people who think the Declaration on Relations With Non-Christian Religions, including a chapter on relations with the Jewish religion, is misunderstood as a statement that "Catholics absolve the Jews," Father Ashley said:

"They have missed the point that this declaration is essentially a confession by Catholics of their own guilt in the persecution of the Jews throughout 2,000 years. But if we Catholics are not absolving the Jews, we are seeking absolution of our own guilt through honest confession and a resolution to work against anti-Semitism and all forms of racial or religious discrimination."

Recalling "the facts of Jewish persecution," he told the symposium: "For many centuries, in countries calling themselves Catholic -- I will let Protestants speak for themselves -- Jews have frequently been subject to injustices as a persecuted minority. These have included injustices ranging from discriminatory practices that still go on in the United States, to disenfranchisement, to public branding and dishonor, to confiscatory taxation, to violent attacks and deportation, and finally to torture and mass murders. In our own time, the Nazis, some of whom were Catholics by origin, in a few years exterminated over 6,000,000 Jews, a great part of the whole Jewish people."

He derided the excuse that holds that "after all, the Jews deserve to suffer because they put Jesus Christ to death and, for some time, persecuted his first followers." He stressed that this was precisely the excuse declared false by the Vatican, saying:

"The fact that, 2,000 years ago, a small group of Jews were involved, along with the Gentile occupation government, in the unjust trial and crucifixion of Jesus of Nazareth in no way implies any guilt on the part of the great majority of the Jews then living who played no part in these troubles, and perhaps never even heard of them, and certainly implies no guilt on the part of the hundreds of generations of Jews who have lived since then or are living now."

JOHN BIRCH SOCIETY CHARGED WITH 'CONTRIBUTING TO ANTI-SEMITISM'

NEW YORK, Jan. 31: (JTA) -- The John Birch Society which denies it is anti-Jewish was charged here today with "contributing to anti-Semitism" by officials of the Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rith at the annual meeting of the organization held in the Waldorf Astoria Hotel.

Benjamin R. Epstein, ADL national director, and Arnold Forster, general counsel, reported that anti-Semitism is "an inherent problem" of the Birch Society which "it has made excuses for but failed to exorcise over the whole of the Society's seven years." The Birch Society's involvements in anti-Semitism, the report declared, are revealed by the following:

1: Birch Society American Opinion bookstores in states across the nation stock and sell the writings of known anti-Semitic propagandists;

2: The Birch magazine, "American Opinion," has as a regular correspondent Eric D. Butler, recognized for more than 25 years "as one of Australia's leading anti-Semites;"

3: Birch leader Robert Welch, on one of twelve record albums being sold by the Society, dismisses what he calls "the whole anti-Semitic thing" as being created by the Communists" who also "created Hitler and drugged him and the Nazi Party into persecution of the Jews; Revilo P. Oliver, associate editor of "American Opinion" says it is a lie that Hitler killed six million Jews;

4: The Birch Society has been infiltrated by anti-Semites. It has a "blind spot" about anti-Semitic activities "even when such activities are a matter of public knowledge."

Although the Society keeps its membership secret, the ADL report estimated it at between 80,000 and 100,000 with the largest Birch membership in the following states: California, about 14,000; Texas, about 6,000; Alabama, Arizona and New Jersey, about 2,000 each; Washington, about 1,500, and Indiana, about 1,400.

BRITISH JEWRY DISCUSSES 'FURTHER ACTION' ON SOVIET POLICY ON JEWS

LONDON, Jan. 31: (JTA) -- Proposals for "further action" for the amelioration of the position of Soviet Jewry "in the light of present circumstances and of possible developments" were discussed here today at a meeting that included representatives of virtually every section of British Jewry.

The meeting was convened by Sol Teff, president of the Board of Deputies of British Jews, who had invited the other organizations to consult with the Board's foreign affairs committee "to consider further the position of Soviet Jewry." The meeting noted with concern "the denial to the Jewish community in the USSR of facilities accorded to other groups within the Soviet Union, and the plight of those Jews in the USSR who are not enabled to be reunited with their families in Israel or elsewhere."

In addition to members of the Board's foreign affairs committee, those attending the session included representatives of the Chief Rabbinate, the office of the Haham, Agudath Israel, the Anglo-Jewish Association, B'nai B'rith, the Jewish Youth Organizations' secretaries committee, the World Sephardi Federation, the World Union for Progressive Judaism and the Zionist Federation of Great Britain.

PRESENTATION OF 'THE DEPUTY' IN BUENOS AIRES BRINGS THREATS TO JEWS

BUENOS AIRES, Jan. 31: (JTA) -- Plans for a presentation here of Rolf Hochhuth's controversial play, "The Deputy," led Unitas Argentina, an anti-Communist Catholic group, to call a press conference which was marked by veiled threats and warnings to Argentine Jewry today. "The Deputy," which has evoked controversy everywhere in Europe where it has been presented, contains the theme that the late Pope Pius XII failed to speak out against the Nazi destruction of European Jewry.

Washington Blanco Correa, president of Unitas Argentina, read a statement at the press conference in which he said that while his organization does not believe that the Jewish community, as such, had anything to do with the presentation here of the play, "representative Jewish bodies which have shown such concern for Christian Jewish relations, should make a statement in this regard."

He added that the presentation of the play could be "a triggering factor for racial confrontation which we repudiate" but that "we shall take to the streets so that our religion will be respected."

Msgr. Elias au Draos of the Arab-speaking Byzantine Catholics, said at the press conference that the play would "cause reactions contrary to Jews and will affect them seriously."

Rodrigo Toranzo, president of the Association for the Captive European Nations, said "this drama will create artificial tensions" in Argentina "and will serve only Communism;" Observers here said they believed that this was the first time that the debate which had greeted "The Deputy" almost everywhere had taken such a distinctly anti-Jewish tone."

NAZI CHIEF SENTENCED FOR SLAYING JEWS; IS FREED AFTER VERDICT

KIEL, Jan. 31: (JTA) -- Martin Fellenz, a former SS Lieutenant Colonel, was sentenced this weekend to seven years hard labor on a re-trial for war crimes committed while he was a Nazi police chief in occupied Krakow in Poland and was immediately released.

In passing sentence, the Kiel court said Fellenz had spent five years in pre-trial detention and ordered that time deducted from his sentence. The court then gave Fellenz a pardon for the remainder of the sentence.

Dr. A. Kehl, chairman of the court, said Fellenz was guilty of deportation of 38,000 Jews in 1942 from Krakow, Tarnow and Przemsyl, and that he was implicated in four cases involving the slaying of 45,000 Jews. The Kiel prosecutor had asked a life term for Fellenz, 66, who was a Schleswig town official until his arrest.

He had been sentenced previously to a four-year term after his first trial in Flensburg on the deportation charges. Soon after he began serving that sentence, the court ordered deduction of his pre-trial detention from that sentence and he was released. A West German high court ordered the re-trial in Kiel.

YOUNG LONDON WORKER CHARGED WITH STARTING FIRE IN TWO SYNAGOGUES

LONDON, Jan. 31: (JTA) -- A 23-year-old laborer was remanded in custody today after being charged with starting fires at two London synagogues last June which caused damages estimated at 200,000 pounds (\$560,000). David Thorne was accused of "unlawfully and maliciously" setting fire to the Brondesbury and Bayswater synagogues on June 30, 1965. He was ordered held until February 5 for a hearing.

JEWISH COLONIZATION ASSOCIATION VOTES FUNDS FOR VARIOUS ACTIVITIES

LONDON, Jan. 31: (JTA) -- The Jewish Colonization Association voted today to increase its contributions to the United Hias Service for transportation of Jewish emigrants from East Europe and North Africa to countries outside of Israel, and to the World ORT Union for Jewish vocational training in various countries;

At a meeting of its Administration Council, the JCA also approved grants for the agriculture faculty at Hebrew University, for the general budget of Mikveh Israel Agriculture School in Israel, Youth Aliyah, the plant genetics section of the Weizmann Institute, the scholarship fund of Israel for scholars and students at agricultural training establishments, the Alliance Israelite Universelle for its general education program and a specific grant for the Jerusalem Trade School;

The Council also approved an expansion of JCA participation in a project for three settlements of 50 farm units each in Israel after hearing a report by Dr. Eliahu Elath, an Israeli member of the Council, on a recent tour of inspection in western Galilee. There the JCA is collaborating with the Jewish Agency in setting up new farm settlements. He said good progress was being made in the construction of settlements and in land reclamation and rehabilitation work generally. He added it was hoped that the first farm units would be ready for occupancy by August;

Further progress or extension of other settlements in Israel which the JCA either founded or assisted in founding will be facilitated this year by JCA credits to finance construction projects and by helping the sons of colonists to be placed on farms of their own. The JCA also scheduled revolving funds for short-term farm loans for the erection of communal halls in such projects and related activities;

The JCA also will continue its programs in connection with the integration of immigrants in countries of reception, including France. Other JCA-supported programs to receive continued backing is Jewish social service in Belgium, loans, housing funds and cooperative building societies for immigrants to Australia, farm settlement and farm development loans for newcomers to Canada and to a loan institution in Toronto. Sir Henry d'Avigdor-Goldsmid, Member of Parliament, was reelected JCA president; Rene Mayer of France and Max Gottschalk of Belgium were again named vice-presidents;

HISTADRUT TO HOLD TWIN CONFERENCES IN NEW YORK AND MIAMI

NEW YORK, Jan. 31: (JTA) -- Two national conferences on succeeding days are scheduled to give a "big push" to the 1966 Israel Histadrut Campaign in the United States and Canada, it was announced here today by Joseph Schlossberg, president of the National Committee for Labor Israel. In New York, the annual mid-winter conference of the Israel Histadrut Campaign will take place Sunday, February 13th at the Commodore Hotel, while on Monday, February 14th, a conference devoted to the American Histadrut Development Foundation will be held in Miami Beach at the Fontainebleau Hotel;

The New York conference will seek to bring the cash drive for \$5,000,000 up to the half-way mark, with delegations from many communities bringing checks to the roll-call which features the conclave. At the Miami conference, efforts will be made to augment the resources of the Histadrut Foundation by \$2,000,000 through wills and bequests, to assure future income to finance the long-range educational and welfare activities of Histadrut in Israel. The Foundation has more than \$7,000,000 in accumulated commitments to date.

LOUIS STERN ELECTED PRESIDENT OF NATIONAL JEWISH WELFARE BOARD

NEW YORK, Jan. 31: (JTA) -- Louis Stern, prominent national Jewish leader, was today elected president of the National Jewish Welfare Board at the winter meeting of JWB's board of directors. He succeeds the late Mrs. Florence G. Heller, of Chicago.

Chairman of JWB's executive committee since 1964, and before that a national vice-president of the organization, Mr. Stern is the immediate past president of the Council of Jewish Federations and Welfare Funds. He held that office from 1963 to Nov. 1965; JWB's new president now serves as a co-chairman of the Interreligious Committee Against Poverty and was a member of the Rockefeller Foundation Commission to Study Voluntary Health and Welfare Agencies;

WIZO REDUCES ITS ACTIVITIES IN ISRAEL FOR BUDGETARY REASONS

TEL AVIV, Jan. 31: (JTA) -- An emergency meeting of WIZO, the Women's International Zionist Organization, convened here to deal with a budgetary crisis, decided to shut down four day nurseries in small towns in Israel in a retrenchment effort. The WIZO executive also voted to transfer to the Government one of its two agricultural schools;

JOHN STEINBECK, NOTED AMERICAN AUTHOR, ARRIVES IN ISRAEL

TEL AVIV, Jan. 31: (JTA) -- John Steinbeck, the Nobel Prize winning American author, arrived in Israel today, and told newsmen at Lydda Airport "I want to see everything in Israel," Mrs. Steinbeck, who was with him, said they would stay in the country several weeks, perhaps a month;