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Furore Within Religious, Lay Communities Over Move To Eliminate Jewish Chaplains

LOS ANGELES, March 21 (JTA)--Rabbi Harry Hyman, chaplaincy director of the Board of Rabbis of Southern California, has advised Rabbi Harold H. Gordon, executive vice president of the New York Board of Rabbis, that "This state chaplaincy matter has stirred up quite a furore all over the State of California," and that "the religious as well as the lay community are taking all the steps necessary to change the contemplated 'new plan.'" Rabbi Hyman, in a letter dated March 15, was referring to the proposal by California's Department of Mental Hygiene, endorsed by Gov. Ronald Reagan, to eliminate the three Jewish chaplaincies for the 826 patients in the state's 14 mental hospitals, ostensibly for economic reasons, while retaining the more than 30 Catholic and Protestant chaplains. Reagan and the Department have suggested that local rabbis take over the duties of the Jewish chaplains, a plan that Rabbi Hyman has scored as impractical and unfair. The rabbi, in his letter, pointed out that "practically every member of the California state Assembly and the California State Senate is being contacted and we hope, and have already some indications, that there will be a change in plans." In a letter to James M. Hall of California's Human Relations Agency, a copy of which was obtained by the Jewish Telegraphic Agency, Rabbi Hyman called the arguments for the proposed cutback "completely unrealistic and fallacious."

Rabbi Hyman noted: "If the California state budget calls for reduction of expenses, such as apparently travel expenses in the case of the Jewish Chaplaincy, I am sure that ways can be found through readjustment and reassignments to accomplish this end. Why, for instance, should a Jewish chaplain have to travel from Los Angeles all the way up to Stockton...if there is a Jewish chaplain available in Northern California?" The two cities are 300 miles apart. The California Jewish community "will not sanction this discriminatory hit-and-miss approach," Rabbi Hyman asserted, explaining: "As taxpayers to the State of California and on democratic principles, we feel that we have the right to the same type of state-sponsored chaplaincy service which is accorded the other denominations." The rabbinical leader urged the Human Relations Agency to rescind its proposal "before harm will be done to the welfare of our patients and before statewide repercussions are bound to ensue which cannot possibly benefit anyone concerned." In a separate letter to Reagan the same day, Rabbi Hyman said he hoped "that a realistic appraisal of all the factors involved in this situation will prompt you to change your stand in this matter."

Shortage Of Funds May Force Jewish Historical Society To Curtail Documentation

WALTHAM, Mass., March 21 (JTA)--A shortage of funds threatens to curtail the documentation of records and papers from American Jewish organizations and their leaders currently being collected by the 79-year-old American Jewish Historical Society, located on the campus of Brandeis University. Rabbi Abram Vossen Goodman, the Society's president, warned, "If this historical data, which we have gathered from Jewish groups since the early 1700's, cannot be retained, then we might wipe out the tremendous impact of American Jewish participation and values on American society." Rabbi Goodman, Rabbi emeritus of Temple Sinai, Lawrence, L.I., said that the nation's economic crisis has severely affected the programs of the society. He reported that small gifts from institutions, industry and individual memberships had been cut off or reduced, adding, "In determining priorities, academies and archives are among the last to be considered." The Reform rabbi said that the project cataloging the activities of American Jews and their institutions has become a victim of organizational cuts and curtailment. He noted that this program requires \$100,000 annually to maintain. Rabbi Goodman pointed out that the records of Jewish organizations and their leaders illustrate the manner in which Jews were involved in the history of the United States. He said such historical information can provide both for the present and future generations the scientific data needed to confront such questions as assimilation and anti-Semitism and to assist in the development of Jewish education, aid historians, scholars and students.

Jewish Community Protests Suggestion That Nazi War Criminal Be Pardoned

ROME, March 21 (JTA)--Rome's Jewish community sent telegrams today to President Giuseppe Saragat and Premier Emilio Colombo protesting suggestions that a convicted Nazi war criminal now serving a life sentence in Italy should be pardoned. Similar telegrams were sent to the chairman of the Italian Senate. They referred to suggestions by some West German officials that Italy pardon Herbert Kappler, a former SS officer who was convicted in connection with the Ardeatine Caves massacre of 1944 in which 330 persons including 80 Jews were murdered by the Nazis. The telegrams said the Jewish community "rejected with indignation the possibility of the reappearance among human society of a major exponent of Nazism."

Eban Optimistic Over Mideast Situation; Feels Better About U.S.-Israel Relations

NEW YORK, March 21 (JTA)--Israeli Foreign Minister Abba Eban expressed optimism today over the present situation in the Middle East which he described as "better than any alternative except peace." Appearing on the CBS television program "Face the Nation," Eban said he felt better now about Israel-U.S. relations (after meetings with administration leaders) than he had ten days ago because the two countries' "mutual respect" has been "strengthened." He praised President Nixon for having made an "enormous contribution" to the avoidance of war. Eban rejected charges that his government was intransigent on the issue of borders. "The word non-negotiable does not exist in our vocabulary," he said. He also claimed that Israel's position was bearing fruit. "Tenacity on interests" plus "flexibility on tactics" have resulted in an Egyptian "groping" toward peace with Israel that many

thought impossible a year ago, the Israeli foreign minister said. He observed that "the Arab mind is in a state of flux." Eban noted that historically Jews have been more idealistic than practical but said that Israel's policy was "based on very pragmatic security ideas." He referred specifically to the Sharm el-Sheikh stronghold in southern Sinai where, he said, there must be an "effective and physical Israeli presence and control." Eban rejected American emphasis on an international peace-keeping force instead of geographical security. He referred to the failure of such forces in the past, adding that for Israel, "it is a matter of memory."

Ambassador George Bush, the new U.S. envoy to the United Nations, appearing on the NBC-TV program "Meet the Press," asserted that a peace-keeping force could have "a very useful role" in the Mideast but that "we are not putting pressure on Israel." Bush said that in his conversation yesterday with Eban, the Israeli Foreign Minister was neither "negative nor adamant" on border issues. He said "we have not gotten down to real discussions" on peace-keeping forces either in the Big Four meetings or elsewhere, pending an agreement on substantive issues between the parties. But Bush explained that the kind of peace-keeping force the U.S. envisioned was hardly the equivalent of the UN force that Secretary General U Thant withdrew from the region in May, 1967. He said the proposed new force would not be susceptible to "unilateral withdrawal without our having something to say about it" through America's veto power in the Security Council. Bush said he was "reasonably optimistic" on Mideast peace prospects, adding, "we don't view it as a crisis" or expect the Jarring talks to "break down." He described UN mediator Dr. Gunnar V. Jarring as "a very useful, dedicated man and we support him." Bush said that since taking over his UN post three weeks ago he saw no evidence of a dominant Soviet-Arab bloc whose position was reflected by Thant.

Eban's television statements today reflected in substance what he apparently told the Conference of Presidents of Major American Jewish Organizations at a closed meeting here last week. The Jewish Telegraphic Agency learned that Eban told the Jewish leaders that while "the Arab movement from radicalism to realism was not yet completed, the Arabs have indicated a willingness to recognize Israel's sovereignty." He reportedly contrasted that development with the pre-cess-fire period of "political futility, military activity" and the growing threat of Palestinian terrorism. Eban said that Israel's tenacity had helped bring about the change. He said the present situation, in terms of pressure on Israel, was the "embarrassing consequence of success." After a meeting with Secretary of State William P. Rogers for 100 minutes Friday, Eban told newsmen that no pressure had been applied on Israel. He said he had been given a "very full opportunity" to state Israel's position and he did not want to "stress the differences of opinion." "What is at stake is Israel's security and Israel's survival," he said. "If there are differences of opinion on Israel's security, respect should be given to Israel's responsibilities and Israel's views," Eban said. He added, "Objectively, there's no deadlock at all" between Israel, the U.S. and the Arabs. At another point, Eban remarked that some elements of national security were so vital to Israel that "we will, if necessary, uphold our position alone."

Israel Seen Willing To Make Slight Concession On Sharm el-Sheikh

JERUSALEM, March 21 (JTA)--Israel may be willing to settle for something less than permanent sovereignty over the Sharm el-Sheikh stronghold in southern Sinai as long as it is assured of firm control over the position and over a land bridge linking it to Israeli territory, well informed political sources indicated today. The sources emphasized that Israel insists on "control," not a mere "Israeli presence" because Sharm el-Sheikh dominates the Straits of Tiran through which most of the nation's oil imports must pass. Most observers here believe the stand of Sharm el-Sheikh implies a slight concession that may have been occasioned by Washington's stiff resistance to Israel's demands for geographical security. They said the position indicated that Israel may be more willing now to consider an American proposal that Israel lease Sharm el-Sheikh from Egypt on a long term basis. The Israelis nevertheless are making a major effort to convince public opinion of the importance of Sharm el-Sheikh to its security.

It was disclosed for the first time officially that most oil imports pass through the Straits of Tiran enroute to Eilat, the southern terminus of Israel's new oil pipeline to the Mediterranean coast. Israel is also not willing to give up the new 150-mile road that runs from Eilat to Sharm el-Sheikh along the western shore of the Gulf of Aqaba. Political sources also sought to soften Secretary of State Rogers' recent remarks on territorial acquisitions. They noted that he drew a clear distinction between "use" and "acquisition" of a territory, implying that Israel could very well use Sharm el-Sheikh without acquiring it. They recalled that the U.S. with its technological superiority, insisted on retaining its leased naval base at Guantanamo, Cuba. Political circles here said Friday's talk between Foreign Minister Eban and Secretary Rogers in Washington was "frank and friendly." They insisted that no pressure had been brought to bear on Israel. But it was apparent from reports here that the gap separating the U.S. and Israel was by no means narrowed.

Reports That Large Numbers Of Soviet Jews Receiving Visas Puzzle Israeli Authorities

JERUSALEM, March 21 (JTA)--Israeli authorities are puzzling over whether recent reports that large numbers of Soviet Jews are receiving exit visas indicate a softening of Soviet policy or a temporary measure to avoid embarrassing incidents when the World Communist Party Congress convenes in Moscow at the end of March. Officials dealing with Soviet immigration here were unable to confirm a Moscow report by Agence France Presse that the Soviet government intends to issue 300,000 exit visas to Jews over the next few years. Israeli radio commentators speculated that the report may have been a Soviet propaganda maneuver to quiet public opinion in the West. But Immigration Minister Nathan Peled said last night that "there is no reason not to attach serious significance to the news from Moscow." (Authoritative Soviet sources denied the report that 300,000 exit visas would be issued to Jews. The sources said such reports were "irresponsible and absurd" and warned that they could have the effect of inhibiting Jewish emigration rather than aiding it. The indication was the persistence of reports of large scale visa grants to Jews might force Soviet authorities to clamp down for fear that other Soviet minorities might demand emigration rights.)

(According to reports from Moscow over the week-end, Jewish sources said they had information that virtually every applicant in Kiev, capital of the Ukraine, received permission to leave in recent days. They said there were also rumors that large numbers of Jews in Latvia and Lithuania have been given exit papers. One source said the visa office in Moscow remained open on Thursday, when it is normally closed, in order to issue exit documents to 15 Jewish families.) Israeli officials are beginning to express guarded concern over the impact a sudden large influx of Soviet Jews would have on Israel's absorption capacity and economy. Peled said, "should the report prove true, then the admission of such a large number of immigrants would face the nation with a very difficult challenge." Moshe Rivlin, director general of the Jewish Agency, told the Jewish Telegraphic Agency that the absorption of 300,000 immigrants would cost hundreds of millions if not billions of dollars. "We shall have no control over the rate of immigration, but we will certainly not do anything to slow it," he said. "We shall be glad to take them in even if all the 300,000 were to come in one year." He recalled that during the first year-and-a-half of Israel's independence, about 300,000 immigrants arrived, "but then our conditions and possibilities were much more limited than today."

Kahane, 200 Persons Arrested At Rally For Soviet Jewry In Which 3,000 Participated

WASHINGTON, March 21 (JTA)--More than 3,000 persons poured into this city for a mass rally on behalf of Soviet Jewry which ended late this afternoon with the arrest of Rabbi Meir Kahane, national chairman of the Jewish Defense League and 200 adult and teenage demonstrators. They were charged with violating District of Columbia traffic regulations when they staged a sit-down only a block from the Soviet Embassy and ignored police warnings to clear the area. Rabbi Kahane, the first to be arrested, was led into one of the dozen transit buses mobilized in the area to cart off demonstrators, and shouted out the window "Get more buses!" The crowd picked up the chant while parade marshalls simultaneously commanded the protestors to "get police badge numbers." Earlier in the day, as demonstrators began gathering in the marshalling area, JDL members engaged in a scuffle with four men sporting Nazi regalia. The men, bearing signs indicating Nazi philosophy and charging Jews with being "communists" approached the throng tauntingly. They were beaten by JDL members and were last seen fleeing the area.

Addressing the rally, in addition to Rabbi Kahane, were a dozen speakers including two members of the Italian-American Civil Rights League, who expressed their solidarity with the demonstrators and disclosed that 60 members of their organization were present at the meeting. David Solomon, a black Jew from New York, received waves of applause, when he told the rally "We are all of the same family, and for this - our house - I will die." Yosef Schneider, the 24-year-old Soviet emigre to Israel who is continuing his seven-day-old hunger strike, left his "prisoner's cage" outside the White House to tell the crowd in Hebrew his permit to demonstrate ends at midnight but that he would continue his hunger strike as he was "prepared to be arrested on behalf of Soviet Jewry."

In his address, Rabbi Kahane urged the demonstrators "not to engage in violence nor resist arrest. If a policeman touches you, stand up and go with him, and tomorrow morning the papers will say, '5,000 Jews got arrested for Soviet Jewry.'" Speaking to President Nixon through his address to the rally, Rabbi Kahane said "We respect and honor our country and President. It is important that you understand our bitterness, frustration, anger and determination." He added "We are here to do something about it." The demonstrators appeared to be mostly young men and women sporting buttons and bearing placards that read "No more deceptive tokenism"; "Another Zionist Hooligan for Soviet Jewry"; "Never Again"; and "Freedom Now." Both yarmulked youths and long-haired hippie types were among the protestors who thronged in the Ellipse which was heavily guarded by mounted police, the Washington Executive Police and the Metropolitan Washington Police. Officers on motorcycles could be seen continually whizzing by in a flurry of patrol activity, while two busloads of police stood in the Treasury Wing opposite the White House grounds.

CBS-TV Renews Controversial Show About Bigot Who Spews Racial, Religious Prejudice

NEW YORK, March 21 (JTA)--"All in the Family," the comedy series about an American bigot, which has been under fire by the Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rith, was renewed for the 1971-72 season by CBS-TV last week because the network found that it was being received favorably by most stations, critics and viewers. John Cowden, CBS-TV's vice president for information services, told the Jewish Telegraphic Agency that 183 of the chain's 195 station affiliates were carrying the series--an "overwhelming" total that represents "one of the highest" levels of acceptance among CBS-TV shows. In addition, he noted, a "majority" of critics and viewers have indicated approval of the program. "All in the Family," which premiered in January, centers on Archie Bunker, (played by Carroll O'Connor) a blue-collar worker who spews racial and religious prejudices, complete with ethnic epithets, and gets his comeuppance at the end of each episode. In one episode, Archie excoriated a Jewish woman for allegedly ramming his car ("They're all the same, them people!"), then sought a Jewish lawyer to represent him because "they're smarter and shrewder."

Arnold Forster, general counsel to the ADL, considers the series a "reinforcement" of stereotypes, and Whitney M. Young Jr., the late executive director of the National Urban League, had described the show as similar to "Amcs 'n' Andy." Norman Lear, co-producer and story consultant for "All in the Family," said recently on the "David Frost Show" that the program seeks first to entertain and second to cause viewers to reconsider their own prejudices. The show's supporters have included the critics of the New York Times and TV Guide, and it is a personal favorite of CBS-TV president Robert D. Wood. George Friedman, Jewish Telegraphic Agency staff reporter who recently reviewed this program, wrote: "Some impressionable youngsters may learn the wrong lessons from the program - but this observer's viewpoint is that the series (at least so far) is an always funny, often brilliant one that both makes its anti-bias points and entertains: the ideal combination." The series which now airs Tuesdays at 9:30 p.m., will be shifted to Mondays at 10:30 in the fall. It is still uncertain, Cowden said, whether the episodes aired this spring will be rerun this summer. He said there were no plans to change the characters, personnel or format of the show.

