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Rabbis Assail Draft Legislation That Eliminates Deferments For Divinity Students

NEW YORK, March 23 (JTA)--Three rabbis today assailed draft legislation just approved by the House Armed Services Committee that would give the President authority to eliminate deferments for college students and for men in divinity schools. The bill extends the selective service law for two years. Rabbi Solomon J. Sharfman, president of the Synagogue Council of America and Rabbi Henry Siegman, executive vice president, protested the measure in a telegram to Rep. F. Edward Hebert, chairman of the House Armed Services Committee. Rabbi Wolfe Kelman, executive vice president of the Rabbinical Assembly, the international association of Conservative rabbis, urged that the deferments should be continued. Rabbi Kelman said he was speaking for himself because the Rabbinical Assembly, having just completed its annual convention in Israel, did not have an opportunity to adopt a formal position. He said deferments for divinity students should be continued on the same basis as deferments for students of medicine and other specialties.

"Divinity students should be granted a deferment from military service until the completion of their seminary training at which time they should become available for military service as chaplains in veterans hospitals, mental hospitals, military chaplains and other areas consistent with their training and competence," Rabbi Kelman said. Rabbis Sharfman and Siegman telegraphed Rep. Hebert on behalf of the Synagogue Council, the umbrella organization of the lay and rabbinical branches of Reform, Conservative and Orthodox Judaism in America. They said, "We wish to express to you our distress that we were not informed of your committee's hearings on draft reform. We are particularly disturbed that your decision regarding the elimination of divinity student exemptions, which so vitally affects Jewish religious life in the United States, was reached without inviting the official representatives of the religious community to assess its implications. We believe this precipitous action is a service neither to the democratic process nor to the security needs of our country."

Jackson, Javits Assail Idea Of Big Four Mideast Peace-Keeping Force

WASHINGTON, March 23 (JTA)--A bi-partisan assault on the State Department's concept of a Big Power peace-keeping force in the Middle East was delivered today on the Senate floor. Sen. Henry M. Jackson, Washington Democrat, said he was "appalled" by signs that the U.S. was ready to consider Soviet participation in a force "designed to guarantee the integrity of an inherently insecure border." Sen. Jacob K. Javits, Republican of New York, declared that Israel "does not want to trade a guarantee which would call for U.S. or Soviet forces to be activated on its borders." He said, "Israel does not want to be a theater of confrontation between the forces of the two superpowers in an area likely to be explosive for a long time to come." He added that it was wrong to assume that the pieces of a fragile peace can be held together by a Big Four peace-keeping force. In this situation, he said, Israel could easily become "a ward or a scapegoat."

Both senators took issue with Secretary of State William P. Rogers' position that geographical advantages were not vital to Israel's security. Jackson claimed that "hope for a lasting peace (in the Middle East) lies in American support for a map of Israel with secure and recognized borders whose defense can be assured by the Israelis themselves." He said such borders must provide for continued Israeli control over the Sharm el-Sheikh stronghold in southern Sinai and a land bridge linking it with Israel. At another point, Jackson proposed "total demilitarization" of the Sinai peninsula "so that no Egyptian armor, aircraft or military personnel would be permitted to cross the Suez Canal." Javits said there was a serious question whether treaties based on the juridical concepts of the 19th century were sufficiently relevant to the Middle East situation to justify the contention that geography is not important in the modern world. Jackson said, "I believe the Israel government has properly rejected the view that external guarantees can substitute for defensible borders."

Future Of Jewish Emigration Depends On Outcome Of Communist Party Congress

TEL AVIV, March 23 (JTA)--Soviet Jews arriving here last night told newsmen that the future of Jewish emigration from Russia depends on the outcome of the Communist Party Congress which opens in Moscow at the end of this month. Only after the Congress will it be possible to ascertain what the Soviet attitude toward Jewish emigration will be, they said. The number of new arrivals was not disclosed. But it was apparently a large group coming from Moscow, Odessa, Riga, Kiev and Vilna. No mention was made of five Jewish families from Kharkov who were reported to have arrived in Vienna last Friday and were said to be due in Israel last night. More planes with Soviet immigrants, including chartered aircraft, are expected within a few days.

Many of the newcomers were greeted by relatives, among them Agriculture Minister Chaim Givati who was at the airport to welcome a relative, a 42-year-old electrical engineer from Kiev. A former Knesset member, Devorah Netzer, embraced her sister, Dr. Bluma Diskin. One of the immigrants, Efraim Possek, told newsmen he had waited six years until his application for an exit visa was approved. He said he had to renew his application each year. Possek brought with him an ancient Torah Scroll that has been in his family for generations. He plans to present it to the synagogue at Kfar Habad where his father lives. He said Soviet customs officials demanded that the scroll be opened to its full length even though it was listed on his export permit as a sacred object. He said the officials were looking for smuggled goods. Possek's wife, a physics teacher, said she was fired from her job three years ago when her schoolmaster learned of her application for an exit permit.

Jewish Leaders Try To Give CP Chief Petition On Soviet Jewry; Verbally Assaulted

NEW YORK, March 23 (JTA)--Snarl came to shout and push came to shove as a delegation of Jewish leaders clashed verbally and physically at high noon today with officials of the Communist Party

U.S.A. over the issue of Soviet Jewry. The delegation had come to present to party secretary Gus Hall a petition calling for "the free emigration of all Soviet Jews who desire to leave the USSR," "the release of Jews now in Soviet prisons only because they sought to exercise their basic human right to emigrate to Israel," "the restoration of Jewish cultural, religious, educational and communal rights and institutions to which they are entitled by Soviet law" and "the initiation of a national educational campaign against anti-Semitism and the end of discrimination against Soviet Jews in education, employment and other spheres of life." The petition, keyed to the upcoming Soviet Communist Party congress, also urged Hall to "bring the plight of Soviet Jewry to the attention of your colleagues and to the leadership of the USSR." Before the Jewish delegation had even arrived, and with most of those present members of the print and broadcast media, a spokesman for the Communist Party charged out of the front door of the party's brownstone on Manhattan's west side, waved his fist, called those assembled "anti-Soviet," "anti-Communist" and "racist."

He demanded that they "go out and shout for the freedom of Angela Davis," the black militant on trial in California for conspiracy in a courtroom shooting incident. There had in fact been no shouting or other noise to that point. The party spokesman, Claude Lightfoot, is himself black. After he closed the door behind him, the Jewish group arrived, headed by Richard Cohen, associate executive director of the American Jewish Congress and spokesman for the New York Conference on Soviet Jewry. After reading the petition aloud, Cohen scotch taped it to the door of the brownstone and knocked on the door. Lightfoot re-emerged, tore the petition from the door, crumpled it and threw it to the ground, while with one hand against Cohen's waist he launched into a verbal tirade against the delegation, calling them "Fascist JDL people" (the Jewish Defense League was not represented) and exclaiming: "You go to Israel and get them off the backs of the Arabs, that's what you do!" The delegation had been refused an appointment to talk to Communist Party officials, according to Cohen. Lightfoot further accused the demonstrators: "You aren't doing a damned thing about black people," and insisted: "Go down to Mississippi where you belong!" The Jewish leaders shouted back that American Jewry has been instrumental in the struggle of American blacks.

Lightfoot retorted that Israel was "keeping the Arabs in slavery," to which Cohen replied: "Lies! Slander! Lies!" Another black man, chewing on a wooden swizzle stick, emerged from the party building to aid Lightfoot, who was charging the demonstrators with trespassing. The second man warned the Jews to "Go ahead before you get your --- handed to you!" The incident broke up quickly as the demonstrators left. During his confrontation with Lightfoot and other Communist Party leaders, Cohen was nearly toppled from the stoop of the CP headquarters. There were no policemen on the scene. The Jewish delegation, in addition to Cohen, was composed of Jacob Birnbaum, director of the Student Struggle for Soviet Jewry; Rabbi Paul Reich of the New York Board of Rabbis; Rabbi Sidney Applebaum, vice president of the National Council of America; Seymour Reich of the Metropolitan Conference of B'nai B'rith; Mel Klarfeld, associate director of B'nai B'rith; Ben Silverman, Jewish affairs director of the Jewish War Veterans; David Geller of the American Jewish Committee, coordinator of the New York Conference on Soviet Jewry; and Aytan Stromberg, representing the Conference of Presidents of Major American Jewish Organizations. Birnbaum announced that the Communist Party building will be picketed next Tuesday afternoon and that there will be a "major freedom rally" in support of Soviet Jews at the United Nations on April 4.

U.S. Congressman Introduces Resolution Protesting Treatment Of Soviet Jews

WASHINGTON, March 23 (JTA)--Rep. James H. Scheuer introduced a concurrent resolution in the House yesterday protesting the treatment of Soviet Jews. The New York Democrat was joined by 46 other House members in sponsoring the resolution which was referred to the Foreign Affairs Committee. Scheuer said the resolution "is not a religious or a partisan matter but rather an act which is completely consistent with our history and beliefs." It calls on the President to take "appropriate affirmative action" toward granting of freedom of worship to Soviet Jews, granting the Jewish minority in Russia the same rights enjoyed by other minorities and permitting Soviet Jews to emigrate freely to Israel or any other country of their choice. The resolution carries moral, not legal weight. If adopted by the House it will be referred to the Senate for consideration.

Bill To Be Introduced In Knesset To Provide For Civil Marriages

JERUSALEM, March 23 (JTA)--The Independent Liberal Party said today that it was considering introducing a bill in the Knesset that would provide for civil marriages in Israel. A spokesman for the party's parliamentary faction said such legislation was necessary because of the "intolerable" situation created by Israel's Orthodox Chief Rabbinate by refusing to recognize the conversions of immigrants from the Soviet Union and other Eastern European countries performed in Vienna. Under present Israeli law, marriage, divorce and other personal matters come under the exclusive jurisdiction of the rabbinate which refuses to recognize rabbis other than Orthodox as "qualified." The Independent Liberal spokesman said the party was considering a measure that would establish special authorities authorized to perform civil marriages for citizens who are not interested in religious ceremonies. This would effect converts who are refused permission to wed in Israel because their conversions are not recognized by the rabbinate. Rabbi Shlomo Lorincz, an MK representing the ultra-Orthodox Agudat Israel faction, defended the rabbinical courts on the Knesset floor today against charges that they were obstructing immigration by refusing to recognize the Vienna conversions. He blamed the criticism on "anti-religious inciters" and claimed that if they were "kept away" the rabbinate would solve all the problems. He didn't say how.

10 Lebanese Soldiers Released By Israel On Request By Lebanese Authorities

TEL AVIV, March 23 (JTA)--Israel today freed ten Lebanese soldiers who had been held as prisoners of war for more than 14 months. An official communique said they were released "upon the request of the Lebanese authorities." The soldiers crossed the border under Red Cross auspices at the Rosh Hanikra border station. They were captured in an Israel Army raid on Kala village in Lebanon during 1970. The raid followed the kidnapping of an Israeli watchman, Shmuel Rosenwasser.

Report Jews Will Go On Trial In Riga, Leningrad Next Month

WASHINGTON, March 23 (JTA)--The Jewish Community Council of Greater Washington said today that it has learned from reliable sources that Jews will go on trial in Riga and Leningrad next month on aerial hijack plot charges. The sources said the trials would start after adjournment of the Communist Party Congress which opens in Moscow March 31. Ernest Shalowitz, chairman of the Council's committee on Soviet Jews, said that according to the sources, some of the Jews convicted at the first Leningrad hijack trial last December will be called as witnesses in the new trial. He said the rest of them have been transferred to labor camps. According to Shalowitz, a new trial will open in Leningrad early in April and the trial in Riga will commence on April 15.

COLPA Official Lauds Court Ruling Permitting Public Funds For Parochial Schools

NEW YORK, March 23 (JTA)--Julius Berman, president of the National Jewish Commission on Law and Public Affairs (COLPA), today praised the U.S. Supreme Court ruling which permits Connecticut to continue the use of public funds to aid parochial schools pending an appeal of a lower court order to halt such aid. The state aid consists of funds towards the salaries of teachers of secular subjects and the cost of textbooks. Berman welcomed the ruling handed down yesterday as "an indication that the Supreme Court appreciates the financial plight of parochial schools and considers public aid an open question. COLPA has always felt," he continued, "that formulas may be developed to provide state aid in full consonance with the American concept of the separation of church and state. The Connecticut statute is one such formula." Noting that the Supreme Court is currently hearing three cases on various aspects of the total question of governmental aid to parochial schools, Berman stated that COLPA, which has filed briefs in two of the cases, was "optimistic the court will rule in favor of granting such aid."

Israel To Provide U.S. With More Detailed Statement Of Its Territorial Claims

JERUSALEM, March 23 (JTA)--The government has decided to comply with an American request for a more detailed statement of its territorial claims than has been forthcoming up to now, the Jewish Telegraphic Agency learned today from very reliable political sources. The American request was put to Foreign Minister Abba Eban at his meetings last week with Secretary of State William P. Rogers and White House national security affairs advisor Dr. Henry Kissinger. Eban is expected to convey a statement on "territorial principles" to Rogers when he returns to Washington from his current visit to Latin America, the JTA learned. He was reportedly empowered to do so by Premier Golda Meir who decided to accede to the American request after consulting with her closest advisors. Political sources said Israel will inform the U.S. that its territorial demands as far as future borders with Egypt are concerned will be guided exclusively by strategic considerations but no such undertaking will be given with regard to borders with Jordan where "historical considerations are much more profound." Political circles here said today that the U.S. has become entangled in conflicting promises to Israel and Egypt from which President Nixon must now extricate it. They said that Nixon will have no choice but to tell President Anwar Sadat of Egypt that the U.S. is neither able nor willing to force Israel to commit itself to total withdrawal from the occupied territories without prior negotiations between the two parties.

Three Jews Arrested For Demonstrating Without Permit; All Released On Bail

WASHINGTON, March 23 (JTA)--An Israeli and two American Jewish youths were arrested on the green facing the White House last night for demonstrating after their permit had expired. They were later freed on \$10 bond. One of them was Yosef Schneider, a Russian Jew who emigrated to Israel in 1969. The other two were identified as Israel Danziger and Chaim Gewirtz. Danziger was believed to be a JDL member. Schneider began a hunger strike on the site last week, incarcerating himself in a simulated "prisoners' cage." The other two joined him and had handcuffed themselves to the "cage" when they were arrested by park police. Schneider's permit expired Sunday.

Hebrew U. Accuses Tel Aviv U. Of Luring Professors To Its Faculty

JERUSALEM, March 23 (JTA)--A mounting dispute between the Hebrew University and Tel Aviv University intensified today when Hebrew U. president Avraham Harman accused the younger institution of "brain snatching." Harman complained to Education Minister Yigal Allon that Tel Aviv U. was offering higher pay and better conditions to lure professors who have achieved fame and distinction at Hebrew U. away from its faculty. He cited the case of Prof. Moshe Lazar, head of the romance languages department in Jerusalem, who resigned recently. It was subsequently learned that Tel Aviv U. offered him a post that would require him to teach only six hours a week, leaving the rest of his time free for research. At Hebrew U., Prof. Lazar was required to teach 20 hours a week. Harman noted that Tel Aviv U. recently applied to the Education Ministry for additional financial aid to extricate it from a difficult situation. He said Hebrew U. has been asked to forego part of the public assistance it was receiving in order to help younger universities but said it was unfair to use public funds to entice professors away from Hebrew U.

Four prominent members of the Hebrew U. faculty have refused to confirm or deny that they were negotiating for positions with Tel Aviv U. They are Profs. Michael Michaeli, dean of the social sciences faculty; Shlomo Avineri, head of the political science department; Yehezkel Kutscher, professor of philology and Dr. Gershon Shaked, lecturer in Hebrew literature. In a radio interview today, Prof. Michaeli defended the principle of "mobility for faculty members." He said Hebrew U. had "tied itself" to a certain salary scale and working conditions and it was unreasonable for the government to permit one university to offer better conditions than another. All must be allowed to offer the same conditions, he said. Prof. Lazar charged in an interview published today that promotions at Hebrew U. were decided by the "clique system." He said the university's senate that was supposed to decide on these matters had in fact no influence at all and served merely as "a forum for professors who liked to hear themselves talk."

Orthodox Synagogue, Serving Elderly Congregants, Vandalized Twice in Three Days

NEW YORK, March 23 (JTA)--An historic 78-year old Orthodox synagogue in the lower East Side, serving mainly elderly congregants with limited incomes, suffered an estimated \$50,000 damage this weekend when vandals ransacked the congregation and left in their wake three fire-scorched rooms. According to Irwin Goldman, president of Congregation Beth Haknesses, the vandals were apparently dissatisfied with the damage they had wreaked on the large, brick synagogue. They returned again last night to destroy and abuse the prayerbooks, "talesim," and other religious articles which had been preserved from the fire's greedy fingers. Goldman told the Jewish Telegraphic Agency that the most distressing element of the entire incident was that many of the 60 daily worshippers who come to the synagogue from low-income housing projects flanking it, are feeble and partially-handicapped persons who would be forced to worship in their own homes until the synagogue's interior was repaired. The nearest synagogue which the younger congregants would attend until this synagogue is repaired, he explained, is six blocks away, a walk the elderly could not sustain. Noting that the latest vandalism was the ninth he personally had reported to police in the last two years, Goldman also disclosed that two other synagogues on the lower East Side had been ransacked the same evening fire partially destroyed his congregation's structure. Only minor damage was inflicted on the others, he reported.

Goldman told the JTA that the worshippers of Congregation Beth Haknesses had struggled for 18 years to maintain mortgage payments and prevent the synagogue from being foreclosed. On February 4th, he said, mortgage burning ceremonies had been held in the synagogue. Rabbi Morris Shigal, spiritual leader, presided at the ceremony and it was attended by Mayor John Lindsay and Harav Moshe Feinstein, father-in-law of Rabbi Shigal. "That was a joyous day," he said bitterly. Goldman described the reactions of the congregants to the news of the fire as one of disbelief. "The rabbi was just dumbfounded when he heard - he couldn't speak for a few moments," he said. "One of the elderly congregants who is partially crippled called me at my home and cried, asking what he was to do now, as the synagogue had been practically a home to him." Goldman disclosed that the police had found no clues to the identity of the vandals. In response to the increased attacks on synagogues in the area, he said, police were increasing the number of cars patrolling the streets, but were otherwise "helpless." They told me that the best thing would be to station a man in each synagogue," he revealed. "But they also added that they just don't have the manpower."

Hebrew School Organized For First Time In Century Under Auspices Of Federation

SIoux CITY, Iowa, March 23 (JTA)--The Jewish community of Sioux City, which recently began its second year as an organized body, has established its first community-wide united Hebrew school, under the auspices of the local Jewish Federation. The event was highlighted in the report presented at the Federation's annual dinner by David S. Serling, president. He said, "Our Hebrew school today is strong and fulfilling its function of educating our youth." Serling said the Federation plans to expand its educational program to include a Hebrew high school. He cited other evidence of vitality in this Jewish community which numbers only 1500. "Our youth groups have begun to coordinate and have joined together in several of their activities," Serling reported. "Closer cooperation in youth groups is certain to continue. In other respects our community has moved closer together. There have been joint meetings of the adult groups of our religious institutions. Our lay people have given the United Jewish Campaign strong leadership, working in close cooperation at every level. Fund-raising efforts of all organizations have been given strong united support by the entire community... As never before, we are being asked to respond to the needs of Jews everywhere in the world, and especially in the State of Israel," he said.

123 Applications For Scholarly Grants Being Considered By NFJC's Academic Council

NEW YORK, March 23 (JTA)--One hundred and twenty-three applications for grants from the National Foundation for Jewish Culture are now being considered by the Foundation's Academic Advisory Council of fifteen distinguished scholars. Totalling over \$500,000, the requests range from \$500 to \$44,000, it was announced by Dr. Daniel Jeremy Silver, NFJC president. Sixty-two applications are from graduate students seeking aid toward the completion of their pre-doctoral studies. The other sixty-one are from scholars, university faculty members and individual writers requesting assistance for research and publication projects. The applicants are affiliated with almost fifty universities in the United States, Canada and Israel. This year's applications represent one of the largest in the decade of the Foundation's Grants Program. They span a wide spectrum of specialized areas in Jewish scholarship in such fields as Biblical study, rabbinics, anthropology, sociology, history, political science, art, music, social welfare, literature, linguistics and philosophy.

"The Foundation undertook the program of scholarships, fellowships and grants-in-aid," Rabbi Silver explained, "to encourage the development of a cadre of first-rate young American scholars in the field of Jewish Studies, and to stimulate needed research and publication in Judaism among established scholars." Over two hundred grants have been awarded since the inception of the program. Former recipients of Foundation grants are now teaching in almost fifty major colleges and universities, or are engaged in creative Jewish cultural endeavors as writers, lecturers, archivists and researchers. The applications for grants are now being evaluated by the Foundation's Academic Advisory Council of which Dr. Salo W. Baron and Dr. Harry Wolfson are honorary chairmen.

Anti-Pollution Drive Launched; \$14 Million To Be Raised For Next Fiscal Year

JERUSALEM, March 23 (JTA)--The Health Ministry announced today that it will raise its allocation for anti-pollution drives throughout the country to \$14 million in the next fiscal year beginning April 1, four times the amount currently being spent for that purpose. Health Minister Victor Shemytzky told the Knesset that an outlay of \$17.5 million was foreseen for the 1972-73 fiscal year. Alexander Donagi, the Health Ministry's chief anti-pollution engineer, charged before the Knesset public service committee today that not one of Israel's 35,000 industrial plants has ever been checked for environmental pollution. The committee is discussing anti-pollution measures recommended by an American expert several months ago.