



daily news bulletin

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RABBI YEHUDA LEIB LEVIN, CHIEF RABBI OF MOSCOW, DIES AT 78

NEW YORK, Nov. 17 (JTA)--Chief Rabbi Yehuda Leib Levin of Moscow--the Russian capital's only rabbi during the past three years--died there today at the age of 78. He leaves his wife, three grown daughters and 15 grandchildren. Reports reaching here this afternoon from Moscow gave conflicting causes of death. Some attributed it to pneumonia, others to cancer of the prostate. Rabbi Levin was hospitalized this year for a prostate condition. Funeral services--limited by the authorities to three hours--will be held Sunday afternoon at Moscow's Choral Synagogue, where Rabbi Levin was spiritual leader.

Rabbi Levin, a tall man with an impressive bearing, studied in Slobodka, a suburb of Kovno, Lithuania, under Rabbi Baruch Ber Leibowitz. He then became the rabbi of Dnepropetrovsk, White Russia, and subsequently became the rector and then the rabbi of one of Moscow's two yeshivot. He had held his final post for about a decade.

A controversial figure because of his defense of Soviet policy toward Jews, Rabbi Levin was backed by Orthodox groups who stressed that he was under constant surveillance by Soviet agents. The Orthodox saw him as a heroic figure who had managed to maintain some semblance of Jewish life--such as synagogue activities and matzoh-baking--in his officially atheistic country. They also saw him as a tragic figure who had to say publicly what he--with his deep religious convictions--did not really believe.

Met With Hostile Reception

Many, however, were not so charitable. On the evening of June 19, 1968, Rabbi Levin was accorded a hostile reception when, in an appearance at Hunter College here, he denied the existence of Soviet anti-Semitism. In a radio interview that week, he said "all the restrictions on culture, work and similar matters were eliminated and the Jews have the same rights as other nationalities."

Charges of such anti-Semitism, he said, stemmed from "bad tongues, evil tongues, those that engage in gossip," and were circulated by "false prophets" who sought "strained relations among the governments." American Jews, he said, could come to Russia themselves and see that Jews there "occupy a prominent place in science and technology, in literature and art, and we, like all other peoples, are contributing our part to all branches of knowledge, of the economy, in building our socialist society."

Albert D. Chernin, coordinator of the American Jewish Conference on Soviet Jewry, protested then that Rabbi Levin "has been obliged to place a fine gloss over the real and tragic plight of Soviet Jewry," which Chernin said was "poised upon the precipice of disaster."

Dr. Nahum Goldmann, then as now president of the World Jewish Congress, condemned the outbursts of the Hunter audience as showing "a lack of understanding for the delicate position of Soviet Jewry and especially for the position of Rabbi Levin, who is trying under difficult circumstances to maintain Jewish religious life in Russia."

Not Agent Of Kremlin

The demonstration, Dr. Goldmann said, "did great harm to the strenuous efforts that have been going on for years to establish contact between Soviet Jewry and Jewish communities outside of the Soviet Union."

Rabbi Levin was saddened by the reception accorded him at Hunter. Speaking at the Jewish Educational Center in Elizabeth, N.J., he said: "The hurt was not for myself. I was not personally offended. I was offended for the Jewish community in Moscow, which had sent me." Rabbi Levin insisted he was not an agent of the Kremlin. "I have no instructions but one," he said. "Peace between our two countries and contact between Russian and American Jewry."

Less than two weeks ago Rabbi Levin officiated at a conversion of a woman who had received her exit visa for Israel. It was the first such conversion in Moscow in 20 years. Rabbi Levin visited the United States in 1968 and Hungary in 1969.

RABBI LEVIN PRAISED BY JEWISH LEADERS

Tass Lauds Him As Champion Of Peace, Freedom

NEW YORK, Nov. 17 (JTA)--The controversy which surrounded the life of Rabbi Yehuda Leib Levin followed him in death. Jewish leaders praised him today for maintaining Jewish communal life despite the restrictions imposed by the Soviet government. Tass, the Soviet government's news agency, lauded him as an anti-Zionist and a champion of peace and friendship.

A spokesman for the American Jewish Conference on Soviet Jewry said that "In spite of the many pressures and handicaps placed on him by the Soviet Union with its repressive policy toward Jews and its denial of their religious freedom, Rabbi Levin saw his role as that of a servant of the religious Jews of Moscow. As the only rabbi in the Soviet capital, the spokesman continued, he helped the Jews there carry on, at least minimally, their religious heritage."

The spokesman added that "Rabbi Levin's departure now leaves the nearly half million Jews of Moscow without a rabbi." Of the two remaining rabbis practicing in the European part of the Soviet Union, the rabbi of Leningrad, Rabbi Lubanov, 91, is too old to succeed Rabbi Levin, he said, adding that should Odessa's Rabbi, Israel Schwartzblatt, a middle-aged man, replace him, "this would leave that city of 250,000 Jews without a rabbi or a synagogue to replace the one burned out several months ago." The rabbi of Kiev died four years ago and has not been replaced.

The Conference spokesman concluded that "With Rabbi Levin's death, one of the last remaining vestiges of Jewish religious life in Soviet Russia is gone, leaving another gap in the already decimated and restricted religious community."

Tass, in a dispatch from Moscow, stated that the "Soviet public knew Levin as an active peace champion and a worker of stronger friendship between peoples." He was, Tass reported, a member of the Soviet Peace Committee, a group of Soviet public figures, and he was "decorated with a medal for peace activities." Rabbi Levin, Tass continued, contributed articles to the press calling for solutions of outstanding world issues

through negotiations. The dispatch also stated that Rabbi Levin was among the organizers of a conference of religious figures in the Judaitic religion. The conference was held in Moscow last March, according to Tass and "it denounced world Zionism for its provocation and anti-Soviet activities."

Rabbi Arthur Schneller of Park East Synagogue in N.Y. said Rabbi Levin's death "certainly is an irreparable loss and void." Rabbi Schneller, who last June 26 became the first American rabbi to lead services in Moscow, filling in for Rabbi Levin when the latter was hospitalized for a prostate condition, said Rabbi Levin "was a rabbi in the old tradition who was the point of contact with Russian Jewry. He was very warm and had a very impressive, striking personality. He had love for his people."

Rabbi Moshe Sherer, executive president of Agudath Israel of America, said "the death of Chief Rabbi Levin is a great loss to the cause of Russian Jewry because his departure cuts one of the last links of Jews throughout the world with this symbol of Jewish eternity which he represented." Rabbi Sherer, who met with Rabbi Levin during the latter's 1968 visit to the US said the late Chief Rabbi maintained correspondence with Western Jews.

EBAN AGAIN UNDER FIRE FOR TV REMARKS

JERUSALEM, Nov. 17 (JTA)--In one of its most rancorous sessions in a long time, the Knesset today defeated a Gahal motion for a debate on Foreign Minister Abba Eban's recent remarks on escaped Nazi criminals. The vote was 27 to 22. Dr. Benjamin Halevi, a German-born, Berlin-educated former Israeli Supreme Court Justice now serving as a Gahal MK, accused Eban of lying in presenting his explanation of his remarks to the Knesset and the Israeli public.

Eban opened a hornet's nest Oct. 18 when, on the David Frost television show taped in New York, he said that the question of hunting down escaped Nazi criminals "hardly interests me." Eban said that while he did not oppose trials of captured Nazi criminals, their crimes were not "capable of explanation" and the essence of the holocaust did not rest on "some wretched man in Paraguay or Brazil."

On returning to Israel, Eban stressed that the holocaust should be viewed in terms of its impact on and lessons for humanity, rather on the search for individual criminals.

Charges Cheap, Irrelevant

Dr. Halevi charged that Eban had tried to mislead Israelis with his explanation and that the practical effect of Eban's remarks would be a slowing down of what the MK called the already laggardly searches for wartime killers of Jews. "I accuse the Foreign Minister of publishing a deliberately mendacious statement," Dr. Halevi declared, "and I take full responsibility for what I say. The Foreign Minister's personal credibility is under debate. Such behavior is not appropriate for a Minister in Israel."

Eban replied that Dr. Halevi's charges were the cheapest and most irrelevant he had ever heard. He said public reaction in Israel had praised him for displaying profound understanding of the holocaust and genuine feeling for its victims. In the flood of letters he received--from Jewish leaders and wartime partisans and average Jews--not one was critical, he asserted.

(In London, Joseph Rosensaft, president of the World Federation of Bergen-Belsen Associations, said this week he could find no fault with Eban's remarks and said he thought Eban was rather effective on the subject of the holocaust. He added that perhaps Eban's phrasing was unfortunate with

reference to the apprehension of war criminals.)

In the Knesset vote Eban received coalition support, but Avraham Silberman of the Labor Alignment abstained, as did three members of the National Religious Party. Eban was also supported by the Independent Liberals and Haolam Hazeh. Voting against him were Gahal, the Free Center, the State List and the pro-Moscow Rakach (New) Communists. Agudat Israel supported an unsuccessful alternate motion by Shmuel Tamir, chairman of the Free Center, to refer the matter to committee.

HAUSNER DISCLOSES SADAT LAUDED HITLER

KIAMESHA LAKE, N.Y., Nov. 17 (JTA)--Gideon Hausner, the chief prosecutor in the Adolf Eichmann trial, disclosed today what he said was an 18-year-old letter by Anwar Sadat, now President of Egypt, saluting Hitler for his leadership of Germany in World War II. Hausner, who was Israel's Attorney General from 1960 to 1963 and is a Knesset member representing the Independent Liberals, read the letter to the 2,000 delegates to the assembly of the United Synagogue of America.

According to Hausner, some Egyptian personalities were approached by an Egyptian newspaper to write a hypothetical letter to Hitler, if indeed he were alive and residing in South America as then rumored. On Sept. 18, 1953, Anwar Sadat, then a rising officer in the Egyptian Army, provided the following reply:

"Dear Hitler: I salute you from the depths of my heart. Though you have apparently lost your war, you are the real winner, for you succeeded in breaking the lines between Churchill and his accomplices. True, you have made a few mistakes by fighting on too many fronts, but you have become an eternal leader of Germany and no one ought to be surprised if you will rise to power again or if the world will see another great Hitler."

Of the letter by Sadat, Hausner said: "Those are the beliefs of the adversary with whom we are dealing." Hausner also serves as chairman of the Yad Vashem, the memorial to the Jewish martyrs of World War II.

(In New York, a spokesman for the Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rith said the letter cited by Hausner was unknown to him but that the ADL had a file documenting anti-Semitic and pro-Nazi actions and statements by Sadat over the years. The spokesman cited reviews of Sadat's 1957 book, "Revolt on the Nile," quoting him as recalling that "(we) acted in complete harmony with them (the Nazis)" and "we were prepared to fight side by side with the Axis to hasten England's defeat." In November 1942, Sadat was dismissed from the Egyptian Army on charges of collusion with the Nazis.)

Hausner also warned the Soviet Union that "no Soviet personality will henceforth be able to venture into a foreign country without being confronted there with the demand for justice for Soviet Jews." The Israeli lawyer praised the "miraculous rebirth of Jewish identity" in the USSR, singling out Soviet Jewish youth for their willingness to "go to all lengths and burn their bridges behind them in the battle for the right to live as Jews in the country of their choice--Israel."

The convention adopted a resolution urging the State Department to "speedily reconsider its present decision to withhold the shipment of Phantom aircraft," and charged that current US policy encourages Egypt "to presume that aggressive action may be timely."

EBAN SAYS ISRAEL RECEIVED \$250M IN ECONOMIC AID FROM US SINCE 1967

Reports Say US To Curtail Military Aid

JERUSALEM, Nov. 17 (JTA)--Foreign Minister Abba Eban told the Knesset this morning that Israel has received a total of \$250 million in economic aid from the United States since 1967. But Israeli newspapers reported today the possibility of a further hardening of the American position on military aid to Israel. According to correspondents Haggal Eshed, of Davar and Dan Margalit of Haaretz, both considered to be very well informed, the curtailment of US military supplies may include not only Phantom jets but other items of equipment.

The papers said this was hinted to Ambassador Yitzhak Rabin and Maj. Gen. David Elazar, chief of the General Staff branch at Israeli General Headquarters, by US Assistant Secretary of State for Near Eastern Affairs, Joseph J. Sisco at a recent meeting in Washington. Haaretz said today that President Nixon was considering meetings with President Anwar Sadat of Egypt and Premier Golda Meir early next year in a personal effort to break the deadlock in the Middle East.

The paper claimed that Nixon's new initiative may be announced in December but the meetings would probably take place in January or February. It said that unofficial soundings for such a move were made with President Tito of Yugoslavia when he visited Washington last month. Tito is close to the Egyptian leadership. Haaretz said a Nixon-Sadat meeting would be followed by a similar meeting with Mrs. Meir. (In Washington, State Department spokesman Charles Bray said today he did not know the foundation for the report of a Nixon-Sadat meeting.)

The Knesset Foreign Affairs and Security Committee yesterday discussed Israel's preparedness for any situation it may have to face in the near future, as was announced today. Defense Minister Moshe Dayan briefed the committee. The Knesset committee normally discusses such matters but the fact that a special announcement was made indicated that the MKs wanted to make the point that Israel will not be caught with its guard down despite possible cuts in the fiscal 1972 defense budget.

Although details of the briefing were not disclosed there was an indication that the officials were concerned with warnings by Egyptian President Anwar Sadat that the Middle East crisis must be resolved by the end of this year.

Eban reaffirmed to the Knesset today that the government continues to insist on an unlimited cease-fire and a ban on Egyptian troop crossings of the Suez Canal as conditions for any interim agreement that might be concluded between the two sides. Eban told the Knesset officially that the Cabinet had decided unanimously to pursue negotiations with France over the 50 embargoed Israeli Mirage jets. But he refused to give any details of the talks which have been going on in Paris for the past several weeks. Eban said German Foreign Minister Walter Scheel's visit here last July did much to strengthen relations between Israel and West Germany. He said the diplomatic dialogue and the flow of aid from West Germany had greatly increased since the visit.

KALIK, NUDELMAN IN ISRAEL

TEL AVIV, Nov. 17 (JTA)--The long ordeal for Mikhail Kalik is over. The leading Soviet Jewish movie director who first applied for an exit visa in Dec. 1970, was welcomed this morning in Israel. He told newsmen at Lydda Airport of his struggle to obtain a visa and quipped: "I hope I shall be able to

produce films here without censorship."

In 1952 Kalik, who was then 21 years old, was arrested for his "Jewish and pro-Israel sentiments," and sentenced to 10 years at hard labor. Stalin's death cut short his stay and he was released after serving four years and "rehabilitated." Arriving on the same plane this morning was Dr. Yuri Nudelman, a well known Soviet surgeon, and his family. He said that he and his family were subjected to abuse from Soviet authorities after they had applied for emigration to Israel.

ITALIAN SOCIALISTS ACT ON BEHALF OF SYRIAN JEWS

ROME, Nov. 17 (JTA)--The Secretary General of the Italian Socialist Party, Giacomo Mancini, has cabled the Syrian ambassador in Italy to protest against the persecutions of Syrian Jews, including reported arrests of 12 Jews. The Socialist Party has been most active on behalf of the Jewish community of Syria. The Syrian ambassador received the Party's head of the Foreign Affairs Department, Luciano De Pascalis, who expressed his concern over the news arriving from Damascus.

After leaving the Syrian Embassy, De Pascalis reported that the Ambassador had denied the information concerning the arrests and had invited the Italian Socialist Party to send a delegation to Damascus. De Pascalis retorted that a Socialist delegation would gladly fly to Syria provided it was allowed to assume the role of an enquiry commission on the situation of Syria's Jews. The ambassador did not respond to this suggestion, De Pascalis said.

A letter of protest was sent last week to the Syrian authorities by Socialist Senator Piero Caleffi. Another cable protesting the arrests of the 12 Jews reportedly held incommunicado in a Damascus jail was sent by Prof. Ricardo Bauer, president of the Italian section of the International League for Human Rights, to Foreign Minister Aldo Moro. Prof. Bauer requested Moro to intervene officially in order to insure the liberation of the 12 Jewish prisoners.

NEW STRIKE WAVE IN ISRAEL

JERUSALEM, Nov. 17 (JTA)--The capital was hit by a new wave of strikes in the past 24 hours. Telephone and postal service was suspended this morning as hundreds of workers walked off their jobs to demonstrate for wage demands. Radio broadcasting was suspended for three hours yesterday as technicians quit to demand shorter working hours. A spokesman for the Communications Ministry said last night that the demands of postal and telephone workers were part of an overall wage question that could be settled only within the framework of countrywide wage agreements.

Finance Minister Pinhas Sapir offered on Monday to abolish the 8.5 percent compulsory defense loan and the 6 percent compulsory savings loan if Israeli workers agreed to make no new wage demands during 1972 except for the cost of living allowance which is estimated at about 8 percent.

The broadcast technicians here are demanding that their working hours be reduced from 47 to 28 hours a week, the same as for journalists. A spokesman for the Broadcasting Authority noted that the journalists' 28 hour week did not include required reading and other preparatory work done at home to keep abreast with news developments. Sapir's offer was described in economic circles yesterday as a trial balloon.

34 DAY SCHOOLS GIVEN \$213,000**FOR FACILITY, EQUIPMENT IMPROVEMENTS**

NEW YORK, Nov. 17 (JTA)--A New York stock broker and philanthropist has stimulated the distribution of \$213,000 to 34 New York City Jewish day schools for facility and equipment rehabilitation. Concerned about the physical disrepair of the yeshivot, Joseph Gruss approached the Federation of Jewish Philanthropies and toured the 34 schools with Federation representatives.

Federation obtained \$100,000 from various donors and Gruss matched that money with another \$100,000. A friend of his contributed the rest. Individual grants of between \$2,500 and \$10,000 were allocated to the schools by a special committee composed of Rabbi Joseph B. Soloveitchik, the Talmudic scholar, Rabbi Emanuel Rackman of the Fifth Ave. Synagogue and Dr. Alvin I. Schiff, executive vice-president of the Board of Jewish Education.

The schools were chosen for assistance because they had the greatest need. The money is being used to improve safety, health and sanitation conditions as well as to purchase necessary equipment. One grant enabled a Brooklyn girls' yeshivah to buy four buses to transport its students to and from school. Lacking bus transportation the girl students had been subject to street harassment. However, despite the assistance the grants are providing, Gruss told the Jewish Telegraphic Agency that more money is needed to upgrade the physical facilities of the area's day schools.

NIXON Praised For Sensitivity**TO ROLE OF NON-PUBLIC SCHOOLS**

WASHINGTON, Nov. 17 (JTA)--President Nixon was praised today for his "display of a keen sensitivity to the role of the non-public schools as equal partners in the educational structure of our nation," by Rabbi Moshe Sherer, executive president of Agudath Israel of America.

The Orthodox leader's comments came at the conclusion today of a two-day conference at the Airlee House in Virginia, convened by the US Office of Education, which brought together the superintendents of the public schools of the largest cities in the country, with corresponding leaders of non-public education of all faiths.

Rabbi Sherer especially lauded the announcement at this conference by US Commissioner of Education Sidney G. Marland that the Nixon administration has appointed a special assistant commissioner, Dwight Crum, who will relate entirely to the problems and the needs of the non-public schools.

"Establishing a non-public school department in the US Office of Education is a major forward step in the recognition of the non-public schools and their public contribution to education, which should be welcomed by every American concerned with the needs of all our nation's children without discrimination," Rabbi Sherer declared.

The joint conference of public and non-public school officials enabled them to discuss in depth all possible areas of mutual cooperation in their respective school systems as well as in their financial problems.

'MARTYRS MEMORIAL MONTH' PROCLAIMED

LOS ANGELES, Nov. 17 (JTA)--Mayor Samuel W. Yorty has proclaimed Nov. 15 to Dec. 15 "Martyrs Memorial Month," and has asked the entire community to support the Jewish Federation-Council in its plans to memorialize the six million Jews who died in the holocaust.

The JFC has established a committee to build a memorial "as a tangible tribute to these victims,

as a reminder of the Jewish community's remembrance of the past, as an inspiration for generations to come, and as a declaration that knowledge of history can serve to avoid its repetition."

The memorial is to be part of the present Jewish Community Library, on the grounds of the Federation and is to be a memorial-archives-library complex. It will house, in addition to the memorial, Jewish community archives, historical documents pertaining to the Nazi era, exhibits and a sanctuary. A fund-raising drive is under way.

ISRAEL HAS WASPS TOO

WASHINGTON, Nov. 17 (JTA)--In America, a WASP is a White Anglo-Saxon Protestant who is considered in the position of dominance in American affairs. In Israel, according to Amos Elon, journalist and author of "Founders and Sons," a WASP is "a White Ashkenazi Socialist with Protektzia (pull)." Elon gave this definition during the course of an address on current problems in Israel to an audience of more than 1,000 at the Washington Hebrew Congregation. The statement and his address were warmly applauded.

BRITH SHOLOM LEADER URGES**LINDSAY TO RESCIND MINORITY CENSUS**

NEW YORK, Nov. 17 (JTA)--Henry Cron, national president of Brith Sholom, a national fraternal organization, appealed to Mayor John V. Lindsay to rescind the executive order authorizing the survey undertaken by the Human Rights Commission on minority employees in city government. Cron, a Brooklyn lawyer, warned that the survey's "implication that merit and qualifications be ignored to insure a quota-type representation" of minority groups would result in "ethnic and racial politics and demagoguery and further division among the citizens of New York."

To insure that qualified personnel from all groups are represented, he strongly supported all efforts to provide equal education and training for all citizens and urged a campaign to acquaint the public with job openings in the city administration. Cron said, "Jews historically must be wary of any attempt to surrender the hard won concept of achievement by merit for a system of ethnic balance according to population." He said that wherever anti-Semitism rose, one of the complaints has been "that there are too many Jews in this or that profession or business."

JEWISH-OWNED BANK REOPENS

BUENOS AIRES, Nov. 17 (JTA)--The Jewish-owned Commercial Bank of Buenos Aires which closed two weeks ago in a financial scandal that rocked the Jewish community, has reopened under new management. Julio Geller, the bank's new director, told the Jewish Telegraphic Agency that the bank now enjoys the confidence of the Argentine government's Central Bank and expressed the hope that it will continue to receive the support of all Jewish bodies in Argentina and abroad.

It was taken over by the Liebermann and Geller families, prominent Argentine Jews, with the permission of the Central Bank. The former management left a record of financial mismanagement and a loss of some \$4 million which led to the bank's collapse. The Commercial Bank of Buenos Aires was started 60 years ago as a mutual aid cooperative serving Jewish peddlers and small shopowners. It rose to the status of a bank many years later but still represented mainly Jewish investors. Julio Geller is a German-born Jew, the commercial representative here of the Parker Pen Co. for many years.