JTA daily news bulletin

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FEDERAL AUTHORITIES ADVISE JEWISH GROUPS TO SCREEN MAIL FROM ABROAD

Postal Authorities Checking Hadassah Mail

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If mail seems suspicious in any way, the authorities have advised the recipients to set it aside unopened and to call either police or postal authorities. They warned that this procedure should be followed even if the name of the sender is familiar to the recipient. Federal authorities have not said that any one Jewish organization or leader is earmarked to receive letter bombs but as one spokesman put it, "We're covering the field in order to safeguard all organizations from any possible danger."

The meetings with Jewish leaders were part of an intensive campaign announced by the White House following the spate of letter bombs mailed to Jewish and Israeli officials in this country and abroad, one of which killed an Israeli diplomat in London. Earlier letter bombs were postmarked in Amsterdam but the most recent ones have come from Malaysia.

No Alarm At Hadassah Office

Postal authorities in New York were checking all Hadassah mail today following receipt of letter bombs from Malaysia by Mrs. Rose L. Halprin, honorary vice-president of Hadassah and Hannah Greenberg, former executive director of the women's Zionist organization. Mrs. Halprin received the booby-trapped letter yesterday at her home in Manhattan. The one addressed to Miss Greenberg came to the Hadassah office last Friday. Both letters were opened but in each case the explosive device inside failed to detonate.

Mrs. Halprin told the JTA today that there was "absolutely no alarm" at the Hadassah office which has about 100 employes, mostly women. She said the office routine has not been affected. Elaine Kaplan, executive secretary, said that stringent security measures have been introduced, explained to the staff and will be observed on a permanent basis.

She expressed satisfaction with the cooperation received from the postal authorities and said the mail screening was not affecting Hadassah's operations. Miss Kaplan said that no suspect mail has been received at the office since Friday and that Hadassah has not received telephone threats as a result of the wide publicity given the letter bombs.

SHAPIRO FIRED, FACES JAIL TERM

NEW YORK, Oct. 11 (JTA)--Gavriel Shapiro, the Moscow Jewish activist serving a one-year "corrective labor" sentence for alleged draft evasion, was fired from his State-assigned job which he started just a week ago and faces possible imprisonment if he is unable to find another job, his American wife, Judith Silver Shapiro informed the Jewish Telegraphic Agency today.

Mrs. Shapiro phoned the JTA from the Jewish Community Center in St. Louis after a telephone conversation with her husband in Moscow. She said he told her he was summoned yesterday by the director of the automotive manufacturing plant where he worked and told he was dismissed "due to rescheduling." Shapiro, an engineer, was employed in the brake products division where he was required to lift parts weighing as much as 200 pounds, Mrs. Shapiro said.

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(SAM) missiles over the eastern bank of the Suez Canal. None of the planes was even hit, and all were well east of the canal, he said. This was the first such incident since July 24. The waterway was quiet this morning.

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This rise coincided with the summer-visit program, under cover of which several terrorist organizers penetrated the security screening. These elements were active in setting up new terrorist cells in the administered areas. Some of the cells have been smashed, but an explosive went off yesterday at the Hebron cemetery, damaging some tombstones and a nearby house.

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On Oct. 2, a statement made by Pincus at a meeting in Jerusalem of the Prisoners of Zion Conference that the Jews should "bless" President Nixon for what he is doing diplomatically for Soviet Jews, was incorrectly interpreted by some that he was against a forceful and open campaign by the Jews of the world in behalf of Soviet Jewry and against the ransom tax now being levied on Jews emigrating from Russia.

The full text of the statement adopted by the World Zionist Executive was: "On Sept. 4 the representatives of the Jewish communities throughout the world at a special convention held in London, took it upon themselves to undertake an all-out struggle against the emigration tax. It was unanimously decided that in this campaign it was to be made clear that the tax would impair the efforts to cement cultural, economic and political ties with the USSR.

"The London conference also decided to appeal to all governments, organizations, academic bodies and leading personalities throughout the world to raise their voice in protest against this tax and to do everything in their power to bring about its abrogation. The representatives of the Jewish people decided not to rest until the law was annulled.

"It should be noted that thousands of scientists, artists, public figures and men of renown throughout the world have answered the call and in cables, letters, petitions, international conferences, have protested against this Russian law.

"All political efforts and diplomatic actions taken must, of course, be welcomed and fully appreciated. But nothing that has happened since the London conference, no political action taken or promises given, can take the place of this public and all-out struggle against the Russian emigration tax, nor free the Jewish people of its duty to wage this all-out struggle. The lines of action decided upon by the London conference are still binding and must be assiduously continued and even stepped up.

"The struggle is likely to be both difficult and prolonged. We shall face it with unrelenting effort and with unity, until this law is annulled and the free and unhindered aliya of Russian Jewry to Israel is approved and secured."

25 SOVIET JEWISH MUSICIANS FIRED

NEW YORK, Oct. 11 (JTA)--Twenty-five Jewish musicians of the Soviet All Union Radio and Television Orchestra have been fired from their jobs in apparent reprisal for the emigration to Israel of the orchestra's former conductor, Yury Aronovich, the Student Struggle for Soviet Jewry reported today. The SSSJ said the dismissals occurred several weeks ago. Aronovich went to Israel last Aug.

The SSSJ said that it was informed by Jewish sources in the Soviet Union that shortly after Aronovich left, the entire orchestra was informed that it would have to be "re-tested." The competitive testing was conducted by an official named Merkurov. As a result, 30 musicians were dismissed, 25 of them Jews. Only four Jews remain in the orchestra and they have been told that their jobs will last only until Nov. or until replacements are found. None of the fired musicians have been able to find other jobs, the SSSJ reported.

SECURITY MEASURES BEING TAKEN AGAINST THREATS OF A 'POGROM'

BUENOS AIRES, Oct. 11 (JTA)--The Jewish community took security measures today as concern mounted over widespread rumors that terrorists planned a "pogrom" and mass kidnappings of Jewish children tomorrow on the occasion of Columbus Day. The rumors which have been circulating for several weeks are attributed to the Arab League and local neo-Nazi groups said to be trying to intimidate the Jewish population.

A delegation of the DAIA, the representative

body of Argentine Jewry, met for an hour today with Gen. Alberto S. Caceres, chief of the federal police to discuss the threats. Caceres assured the delegation that all measures would be taken to maintain public order and condemned attempts to disturb the peace by terrorist actions or threats of violence.

According to reliable Jewish sources, the campaign of intimidation was planned months in advance. Pamphlets mailed to many Jews and thousands of non-Jews warned that "crimes" committed by "Jews and Zionists" would receive retribution at 4 p.m. Oct. 12. Threats were also received that 200 Jewish children were to be kidnapped. The DAIA has cautioned the Jewish community against panic but has advised all Jewish institutions to take adequate security measures.

ZAYYAT ASSAILS ISRAEL; URGES JOINT INTERNATIONAL ACTION

UNITED NATIONS, Oct. 11 (JTA)--Mohammed H. el-Zayyat, the Egyptian Foreign Minister, charged in the General Assembly today that a "power-drunk" Israel was undercutting the United Nations and said that only "joint international action" could overrule "Israel's utter disregard for the UN and its resolutions." Zayyat did not specify what action he had in mind, but contended that "inaction would only be interpreted as condoning aggression."

Zayyat, who was formerly the Egyptian Ambassador to the UN, accused Israel of "preconceived and pre-planned expansionism," alleged that Zionism was attempting "to dominate as much of the Middle East as it possibly can," and assailed Israel's Foreign Minister Abba Eban for his criticism of the UN's efficiency as a peace-making body in his Sept. 28 address to the General Assembly. "Not once" did Eban mention UN resolutions designed to safeguard "peace and security," the Egyptian diplomat said.

Observers here saw Zayyat's speech as an attempt to rally Arab, Soviet and "Third World" support for Egyptian efforts to isolate Israel and to alienate its supporters, principally the United States. The fact that Zayyat chose the final day of general debate to deliver his speech was seen as significant despite the official Egyptian explanation that he postponed addressing the Assembly earlier because he was suffering from a sore throat.

Zayyat spoke following meetings last week between Egyptian representatives and US Secretary of State William P. Rogers. Some sources believe he postponed his speech to the final day as a pretext for extending conversations with US officials. The sources said that the Egyptians were trying to feel out Washington as to how far Zayyat could go in his speech without inflaming US opinion.

Soft Stance On U.S.

His speech was almost devoid of criticism of the US although he referred at one point to American military aid with which Israel "can sustain its occupation of our lands...and protect it against any UN action." A Western source close to the Middle East situation called Zayyat's presentation "defensive."

Zayyat referred four times to Israeli "terrorism" but made no mention of Arab terrorism in general nor to the Lod Airport massacre last May and the Munich killings in Sept. He made a special plea for the "Palestinian people," accused Israel of "disdainfully rejecting" UN resolutions and the Feb. 8, 1971 aide-memoire of UN Ambassador Gunnar V. Jarring, and said that his country sought "dignity and freedom...progress and advancement." His references to the Soviet Union, whose personnel were expelled from Egypt last July, were minimal and he made no references to the People's Republic of China.

TEKOAH: ZAYYAT'S SPEECH SHOWS EGYPT REMAINS INTRANSIGENT

UNITED NATIONS, Oct. 11 (JTA)--Israeli Ambassador Yosef Tekoah said today that things remained "as they were" in the Middle East following Egyptian Foreign Minister Mohammed el-Zayyat's "customary but vain attempt to improve Egypt's tarnished image and to cover up Egypt's responsibility for the present impasse." The situation, Tekoah said, "remains overshadowed by the Egyptian-backed atrocity campaign of Arab terrorism and by Egypt's refusal to discuss any peaceful agreement unless Israel accepts in advance Egypt's diktat."

Noting that Zayyat "did not mention or even hint at the possibility of his government's agreeing to a dialogue with Israel," Tekoah said that "once shorn of its public relations embellishments, Mr. Zayyat's statement reveals an Egyptian position as intransigent as ever." Additionally, Tekoah said, the Zayyat speech "appears to signal that there will be no change in Egypt's usual tactics in the General Assembly. Egypt's tactics, he concluded, "sacrifice the interests of the Arab nation and of all the peoples in the Middle East on the altar of sterile rhetorics in the United Nations."

SOVIET NON-DELIVERY OF MAIL PROMPTS U.S. POLICY CHANGE

NEW YORK, Oct. 11 (JTA)--The United States Postal Service will reintroduce "descriptive listing" procedures on registered mail sent to the Soviet Union beginning Oct. 15, it was reported today by Malcolm Hoenlein, executive director of the Greater New York Conference on Soviet Jewry. Under the current procedure registered mail was "bulk billed" to the Soviet Union requiring Soviet postal officials to sign for bags of mail but not for each item. Thus, claims filed for registered mail sent to Russia that was not delivered or returned, were met by denials from Soviet officials that they received the article.

The Conference, led by project chairman Ernest Goldblum, began its efforts at the request of the National Conference on Soviet Jewry more than a year ago. A comprehensive and intensive study of mail procedures and international postal agreements was undertaken. United States postal authorities were "responsive and sympathetic from the start," said Goldblum. "Our intention was to put the Soviet Union on notice and to make manifest their clear violation of the international postal agreements."

Hoenlein said that hundreds of claims were filed with US postal authorities from persons who had written to Soviet Jews and had not received the required receipt acknowledging that the letter was delivered. As a result, American authorities notified the Soviet Union that unless the situation improved they would return to the "descriptive listing" system.

Israel and the United States will sign an agreement Friday in Washington calling for the purchase of a record $64 million in agricultural commodities by Israel during the current US fiscal year ending next June 30. Under public law, repayment to the US Treasury will be in 25 years at 3 1/2 percent interest. The total in the new agreement is $10 million greater than for the arrangements covering purchases during the last fiscal year which ended June 30.

U.S. TELLS SYRIA IT WILL WELCOME SYRIAN JEWS TO THE U.S., AND WILL MAKE AVAILABLE IMMIGRANT VISAS

WASHINGTON, Oct. 11 (JTA)--The United States "has made known directly" to the Syrian government "its willingness to welcome Syrian Jews and to make available immigrant visas for those with relatives in the United States," the White House has said in a letter made public today. "Though the post-Munich climate is not helpful," Richard K. Cook, Deputy Assistant to President Nixon for Congressional Relations, wrote to Rep. Edward I. Koch (D.NY) who had asked for White House intervention for the approximately 4000 Syrian Jews, "I understand that this initiative has not yet been officially rejected."

In addition, according to Cook's letter to Koch who made it available, the US has been making "quiet diplomatic efforts through third governments and other organizations to urge the Syrians to allow the emigration of Syrian Jews" and has been "expressing its concern" in the United Nations and other forums regarding their "plight."

Syria broke off diplomatic relations with the US as a result of the Six-Day War. At present, Syrian authorities are holding an American citizen of reported Jewish origin, Jonathan Bates of New York, on an espionage charge, and an American military attache, Major Robert H. Barrett, who was arrested while in transit from his post in Amman to Beirut.

"Over the years," Cook pointed out, the "experience of our government and others with whom we consult on this matter, such as the United Hebrew Aid Society and leaders of the Syrian Jewish community in New York, has been that public pronouncements or undue publicity simply do not work with the Syrian government. In some instances, this has been counter-productive and stiffened hostility." Describing Cook's response as "encouraging," Koch in his reply asked him to make it known to the Syrians that the Attorney General "would exercise parole authority so as to include those without the necessary US family relations."

ARGENTINE JEWISH COMMUNITY UNEASY OVER UPSURGE OF ANTI-SEMITIC ACTS

NEW YORK, Oct. 11 (JTA)--The Jewish community in Argentina is worried and uneasy as a result of recent synagogue bombings and an upsurge of anti-Semitic manifestations, Bertram H. Gold, executive vice-president of the American Jewish Committee, declared here today. His statement was based on reports from the AJC office in Buenos Aires.

During the past few weeks, the Jewish community there has been especially concerned about demands by local anti-Semitic groups that the government institute political and economic measures against Jews to coincide with Columbus Day, Oct. 12, also known as the Day of the Spanish Race. These inflammatory statements, it is believed, may have been designed to stimulate overt anti-Semitic actions by certain groups doing "their own justice."

A new threat to Jewish security is the appearance of anti-Semitic material in "Las Bases," a fortnightly journal published by followers of former President Juan Peron, Gold reported. The publication, which has been appearing since the beginning of the year, is the first Peronist periodical permitted by the government since Peron's ouster in 1955. Argentine Jews were shaken by a recent article in it by Peron's private secretary, Jose Lopez Rega, which included a variety of anti-Semitic statements and accusations against Jews --including some which echoed Arab League propaganda.

Other incidents include distribution of anti-Semitic pamphlets by mail, with the false return address of a Catholic order of teaching nuns, and a physical attack on an Israeli exhibition of industrial farm products at a fair recently sponsored by the Argentine Rural Society.

NO CHOLERA DANGER IN ISRAEL

JERUSALEM, Oct. 11 (JTA)--A health official said today that there was no need yet to take immediate action in light of the cholera epidemic reported in Syria this week. The official said, however, that "standing orders" were being carried out on the West Bank where officials are checking the innoculation certificates of incoming travelers and innoculating persons who intend to travel to Jordan.

According to the latest reports from Damascus, two children have died of cholera and the number of cases reported has risen from 52 to 74. The Jordanian government has begun a nationwide anti-cholera innoculation campaign. Lebanon and Iraq are reported to be taking similar measures. There was a cholera epidemic in Israel and the administered territories in Aug. and Sept. 1970.

ONE MILLION TREES TO BE PLANTED TO MARK QUEEN ELIZABETH'S WEDDING ANNIVERSARY

LONDON, Oct. 11 (JTA)--A forest of one million trees will be planted in Israel to mark the silver wedding anniversary of Queen Elizabeth II. The forest will be planted by the Jewish National Fund but will be sponsored by British Jews as their expression of loyalty and affection to the Queen. This was announced by the Rev. Dr. Isaac Levy, director of the JNF, Great Britain, who said also that a commemorative volume containing the names of all donors will be presented to the Queen and the Duke of Edinburgh on the completion of the project. Dr. Levy said that the forest would be planted in Galilee near Nazareth on the slopes of Mt. Tabor where the Prophetess Devorah sat in judgment. It will be not far from the coronation forest planted by the British Jewish community to mark the Queen's coronation.

IKRIT BECOMES ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITE

TEL AVIV, Oct. 11 (JTA)--Ikrit, the Maronite village near the Lebanese border, is again in the news. But not because of the expelled population and the demonstrations to have them back. This time it's because important archaeological findings were discovered there recently. Burial caves and various objects were found near the Maronite Church of the village. While one series of caves is dated back to the Tenth Century BCE, another group of caves is more modern--the Third Century. There is a significant difference in shape of the caves of the two groups and more excavations are expected today and tomorrow.

ISRAEL RELEASES NEW CHANUKA COIN

NEW YORK, Oct. 11 (JTA)--Israel's new Chanuka coin commemorating the Festival of Lights, and issued by the Bank of Israel, is scheduled to be released late this month. According to Rafael Aldor, North American director of the Israel Government Coins and Medals Corp. in Jerusalem, this will be the first issue within Israel's numismatic program commemorating the 25th anniversary of its independence. This issue will also mark the reintroduction of the Chanuka series, which was discontinued in 1963.

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"The London conference also decided to appeal to all governments, organizations, academic bodies and leading personalities throughout the world to raise their voice in protest against this tax and to do everything in their power to bring about its abrogation. The representatives of the Jewish people decided not to rest until the law was annulled.

"It should be noted that thousands of scientists, artists, public figures and men of renown throughout the world have answered the call and in cables, letters, petitions, international conferences, have protested against this Russian law.

"All political efforts and diplomatic actions taken must, of course, be welcomed and fully appreciated. But nothing that has happened since the London conference, no political action taken or promises given, can take the place of this public and all-out struggle against the Russian emigration tax, nor free the Jewish people of its duty to wage this all-out struggle. The lines of action decided upon by the London conference are still binding and must be assiduously continued and even stepped up.

"The struggle is likely to be both difficult and prolonged. We shall face it with unrelenting effort and with unity, until this law is annulled and the free and unhindered aliya of Russian Jewry to Israel is approved and secured."

25 SOVIET JEWISH MUSICIANS FIRED

NEW YORK, Oct. 11 (JTA)--Twenty-five Jewish musicians of the Soviet All Union Radio and Television Orchestra have been fired from their jobs in apparent reprisal for the emigration to Israel of the orchestra's former conductor, Yury Aronovich, the Student Struggle for Soviet Jewry reported today. The SSSJ said the dismissals occurred several weeks ago. Aronovich went to Israel last Aug.

The SSSJ said that it was informed by Jewish sources in the Soviet Union that shortly after Aronovich left, the entire orchestra was informed that it would have to be "re-tested." The competitive testing was conducted by an official named Merkurov. As a result, 30 musicians were dismissed, 25 of them Jews. Only four Jews remain in the orchestra and they have been told that their jobs will last only until Nov. or until replacements are found. None of the fired musicians have been able to find other jobs, the SSSJ reported.

SECURITY MEASURES BEING TAKEN AGAINST THREATS OF A 'POGROM'

BUENOS AIRES, Oct. 11 (JTA)--The Jewish community took security measures today as concern mounted over widespread rumors that terrorists planned a "pogrom" and mass kidnappings of Jewish children tomorrow on the occasion of Columbus Day. The rumors which have been circulating for several weeks are attributed to the Arab League and local neo-Nazi groups said to be trying to intimidate the Jewish population.

A delegation of the DAIA, the representative

body of Argentine Jewry, met for an hour today with Gen. Alberto S. Caceres, chief of the federal police to discuss the threats. Caceres assured the delegation that all measures would be taken to maintain public order and condemned attempts to disturb the peace by terrorist actions or threats of violence.

According to reliable Jewish sources, the campaign of intimidation was planned months in advance. Pamphlets mailed to many Jews and thousands of non-Jews warned that "crimes" committed by "Jews and Zionists" would receive retribution at 4 p.m. Oct. 12. Threats were also received that 200 Jewish children were to be kidnapped. The DAIA has cautioned the Jewish community against panic but has advised all Jewish institutions to take adequate security measures.

ZAYYAT ASSAILS ISRAEL; URGES JOINT INTERNATIONAL ACTION

UNITED NATIONS, Oct. 11 (JTA)--Mohammed H. el-Zayyat, the Egyptian Foreign Minister, charged in the General Assembly today that a "power-drunk" Israel was undercutting the United Nations and said that only "joint international action" could overrule "Israel's utter disregard for the UN and its resolutions." Zayyat did not specify what action he had in mind, but contended that "inaction would only be interpreted as condoning aggression."

Zayyat, who was formerly the Egyptian Ambassador to the UN, accused Israel of "preconceived and pre-planned expansionism," alleged that Zionism was attempting "to dominate as much of the Middle East as it possibly can," and assailed Israel's Foreign Minister Abba Eban for his criticism of the UN's efficiency as a peace-making body in his Sept. 28 address to the General Assembly. "Not once" did Eban mention UN resolutions designed to safeguard "peace and security," the Egyptian diplomat said.

Observers here saw Zayyat's speech as an attempt to rally Arab, Soviet and "Third World" support for Egyptian efforts to isolate Israel and to alienate its supporters, principally the United States. The fact that Zayyat chose the final day of general debate to deliver his speech was seen as significant despite the official Egyptian explanation that he postponed addressing the Assembly earlier because he was suffering from a sore throat.

Zayyat spoke following meetings last week between Egyptian representatives and US Secretary of State William P. Rogers. Some sources believe he postponed his speech to the final day as a pretext for extending conversations with US officials. The sources said that the Egyptians were trying to feel out Washington as to how far Zayyat could go in his speech without inflaming US opinion.

Soft Stance On U.S.

His speech was almost devoid of criticism of the US although he referred at one point to American military aid with which Israel "can sustain its occupation of our lands...and protect it against any UN action." A Western source close to the Middle East situation called Zayyat's presentation "defensive."

Zayyat referred four times to Israeli "terrorism" but made no mention of Arab terrorism in general nor to the Lod Airport massacre last May and the Munich killings in Sept. He made a special plea for the "Palestinian people," accused Israel of "disdainfully rejecting" UN resolutions and the Feb. 8, 1971 aide-memoire of UN Ambassador Gunnar V. Jarring, and said that his country sought "dignity and freedom...progress and advancement." His references to the Soviet Union, whose personnel were expelled from Egypt last July, were minimal and he made no references to the People's Republic of China.

TEKOAH: ZAYYAT'S SPEECH SHOWS EGYPT REMAINS INTRANSIGENT

UNITED NATIONS, Oct. 11 (JTA)--Israeli Ambassador Yosef Tekoah said today that things remained "as they were" in the Middle East following Egyptian Foreign Minister Mohammed el-Zayyat's "customary but vain attempt to improve Egypt's tarnished image and to cover up Egypt's responsibility for the present impasse." The situation, Tekoah said, "remains overshadowed by the Egyptian-backed atrocity campaign of Arab terrorism and by Egypt's refusal to discuss any peaceful agreement unless Israel accepts in advance Egypt's diktat."

Noting that Zayyat "did not mention or even hint at the possibility of his government's agreeing to a dialogue with Israel," Tekoah said that "once shorn of its public relations embellishments, Mr. Zayyat's statement reveals an Egyptian position as intransigent as ever." Additionally, Tekoah said, the Zayyat speech "appears to signal that there will be no change in Egypt's usual tactics in the General Assembly. Egypt's tactics, he concluded, "sacrifice the interests of the Arab nation and of all the peoples in the Middle East on the altar of sterile rhetorics in the United Nations."

SOVIET NON-DELIVERY OF MAIL PROMPTS U.S. POLICY CHANGE

NEW YORK, Oct. 11 (JTA)--The United States Postal Service will reintroduce "descriptive listing" procedures on registered mail sent to the Soviet Union beginning Oct. 15, it was reported today by Malcolm Hoenlein, executive director of the Greater New York Conference on Soviet Jewry. Under the current procedure registered mail was "bulk billed" to the Soviet Union requiring Soviet postal officials to sign for bags of mail but not for each item. Thus, claims filed for registered mail sent to Russia that was not delivered or returned, were met by denials from Soviet officials that they received the article.

The Conference, led by project chairman Ernest Goldblum, began its efforts at the request of the National Conference on Soviet Jewry more than a year ago. A comprehensive and intensive study of mail procedures and international postal agreements was undertaken. United States postal authorities were "responsive and sympathetic from the start," said Goldblum. "Our intention was to put the Soviet Union on notice and to make manifest their clear violation of the international postal agreements."

Hoenlein said that hundreds of claims were filed with US postal authorities from persons who had written to Soviet Jews and had not received the required receipt acknowledging that the letter was delivered. As a result, American authorities notified the Soviet Union that unless the situation improved they would return to the "descriptive listing" system.

Israel and the United States will sign an agreement Friday in Washington calling for the purchase of a record $64 million in agricultural commodities by Israel during the current US fiscal year ending next June 30. Under public law, repayment to the US Treasury will be in 25 years at 3 1/2 percent interest. The total in the new agreement is $10 million greater than for the arrangements covering purchases during the last fiscal year which ended June 30.

U.S. TELLS SYRIA IT WILL WELCOME SYRIAN JEWS TO THE U.S., AND WILL MAKE AVAILABLE IMMIGRANT VISAS

WASHINGTON, Oct. 11 (JTA)--The United States "has made known directly" to the Syrian government "its willingness to welcome Syrian Jews and to make available immigrant visas for those with relatives in the United States," the White House has said in a letter made public today. "Though the post-Munich climate is not helpful," Richard K. Cook, Deputy Assistant to President Nixon for Congressional Relations, wrote to Rep. Edward I. Koch (D.NY) who had asked for White House intervention for the approximately 4000 Syrian Jews, "I understand that this initiative has not yet been officially rejected."

In addition, according to Cook's letter to Koch who made it available, the US has been making "quiet diplomatic efforts through third governments and other organizations to urge the Syrians to allow the emigration of Syrian Jews" and has been "expressing its concern" in the United Nations and other forums regarding their "plight."

Syria broke off diplomatic relations with the US as a result of the Six-Day War. At present, Syrian authorities are holding an American citizen of reported Jewish origin, Jonathan Bates of New York, on an espionage charge, and an American military attache, Major Robert H. Barrett, who was arrested while in transit from his post in Amman to Beirut.

"Over the years," Cook pointed out, the "experience of our government and others with whom we consult on this matter, such as the United Hebrew Aid Society and leaders of the Syrian Jewish community in New York, has been that public pronouncements or undue publicity simply do not work with the Syrian government. In some instances, this has been counter-productive and stiffened hostility." Describing Cook's response as "encouraging," Koch in his reply asked him to make it known to the Syrians that the Attorney General "would exercise parole authority so as to include those without the necessary US family relations."

ARGENTINE JEWISH COMMUNITY UNEASY OVER UPSURGE OF ANTI-SEMITIC ACTS

NEW YORK, Oct. 11 (JTA)--The Jewish community in Argentina is worried and uneasy as a result of recent synagogue bombings and an upsurge of anti-Semitic manifestations, Bertram H. Gold, executive vice-president of the American Jewish Committee, declared here today. His statement was based on reports from the AJC office in Buenos Aires.

During the past few weeks, the Jewish community there has been especially concerned about demands by local anti-Semitic groups that the government institute political and economic measures against Jews to coincide with Columbus Day, Oct. 12, also known as the Day of the Spanish Race. These inflammatory statements, it is believed, may have been designed to stimulate overt anti-Semitic actions by certain groups doing "their own justice."

A new threat to Jewish security is the appearance of anti-Semitic material in "Las Bases," a fortnightly journal published by followers of former President Juan Peron, Gold reported. The publication, which has been appearing since the beginning of the year, is the first Peronist periodical permitted by the government since Peron's ouster in 1955. Argentine Jews were shaken by a recent article in it by Peron's private secretary, Jose Lopez Rega, which included a variety of anti-Semitic statements and accusations against Jews --including some which echoed Arab League propaganda.

Other incidents include distribution of anti-Semitic pamphlets by mail, with the false return address of a Catholic order of teaching nuns, and a physical attack on an Israeli exhibition of industrial farm products at a fair recently sponsored by the Argentine Rural Society.

NO CHOLERA DANGER IN ISRAEL

JERUSALEM, Oct. 11 (JTA)--A health official said today that there was no need yet to take immediate action in light of the cholera epidemic reported in Syria this week. The official said, however, that "standing orders" were being carried out on the West Bank where officials are checking the innoculation certificates of incoming travelers and innoculating persons who intend to travel to Jordan.

According to the latest reports from Damascus, two children have died of cholera and the number of cases reported has risen from 52 to 74. The Jordanian government has begun a nationwide anti-cholera innoculation campaign. Lebanon and Iraq are reported to be taking similar measures. There was a cholera epidemic in Israel and the administered territories in Aug. and Sept. 1970.

ONE MILLION TREES TO BE PLANTED TO MARK QUEEN ELIZABETH'S WEDDING ANNIVERSARY

LONDON, Oct. 11 (JTA)--A forest of one million trees will be planted in Israel to mark the silver wedding anniversary of Queen Elizabeth II. The forest will be planted by the Jewish National Fund but will be sponsored by British Jews as their expression of loyalty and affection to the Queen. This was announced by the Rev. Dr. Isaac Levy, director of the JNF, Great Britain, who said also that a commemorative volume containing the names of all donors will be presented to the Queen and the Duke of Edinburgh on the completion of the project. Dr. Levy said that the forest would be planted in Galilee near Nazareth on the slopes of Mt. Tabor where the Prophetess Devorah sat in judgment. It will be not far from the coronation forest planted by the British Jewish community to mark the Queen's coronation.

IKRIT BECOMES ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITE

TEL AVIV, Oct. 11 (JTA)--Ikrit, the Maronite village near the Lebanese border, is again in the news. But not because of the expelled population and the demonstrations to have them back. This time it's because important archaeological findings were discovered there recently. Burial caves and various objects were found near the Maronite Church of the village. While one series of caves is dated back to the Tenth Century BCE, another group of caves is more modern--the Third Century. There is a significant difference in shape of the caves of the two groups and more excavations are expected today and tomorrow.

ISRAEL RELEASES NEW CHANUKA COIN

NEW YORK, Oct. 11 (JTA)--Israel's new Chanuka coin commemorating the Festival of Lights, and issued by the Bank of Israel, is scheduled to be released late this month. According to Rafael Aldor, North American director of the Israel Government Coins and Medals Corp. in Jerusalem, this will be the first issue within Israel's numismatic program commemorating the 25th anniversary of its independence. This issue will also mark the reintroduction of the Chanuka series, which was discontinued in 1963.