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BUNDESTAG BEING PRESSED FOR EARLY DECISION ON CONTINUING TRIALS OF NAZI WAR CRIMINALS

By Alfred Schroeder

BONN, June 21 (JTA) -- The Bundestag's momentous debate over the extension of the statute of limitations for the prosecution of Nazi war criminals is nearing a climax with supporters demanding an early decision and opponents pressing a string of proposals that could, in effect, allow most Nazis still at large to go scot-free. Herbert Wehner, the Social Democratic Party floor leader, has urged that a vote be taken before parliament recesses for the summer in mid-July. The statute is due to expire on Dec. 31, unless extended or abolished.

"This is a burning issue which must be settled at the soonest," he said, noting that "the discussions are now in a critical phase. We must have a clear decision and I won't tolerate any tricks and maneuvers to postpone it any longer. And I reject attempts to reverse the basic intentions of the law," Wehner said. Former Justice Minister Gerhard Jahn, deputy chairman of the Social Democratic Party, supported Wehner. He noted that "certain Bonn parliamentarians" are trying to "push through special regulations for criminals who committed crimes during the Nazi time."

He was referring to a series of proposals by the opposition Christian Democratic Party including one that "minor Nazi criminals" should be exempted from prosecution "if the accused was in a subordinate position and carried out orders."

Another proposal by the Christian Democrats' legal advisor, Benno Ehrhard, would drop cases where the "moral and social behavior of the accused permits the conclusion that he won't commit any more crimes." That was not supported by the opposition party, however, and is given little chance of acceptance.

Wehner characterized the various opposition proposals as tantamount to "a sort of amnesty." Nevertheless, there appears to be a considerable number of Bundestag deputies who prefer to allow the statute of limitations -- extended twice in the past 20 years -- to expire, thereby conferring immunity on war criminals whose whereabouts are presently unknown. Wehner said he was astonished that such sentiments should exist "in a country where a growing number of books and records demand tough counter-action before a threat materializes."

Heinz Galinski, chairman of West Berlin's Jewish community, said he suspected the Ehrhard proposal was intended to relegate Nazi war crimes to the category of "trifles and petty cases." He said that gave rise to fear that the effort to continue the prosecution of Nazi criminals may not command a parliamentary majority.

WEIZMAN THREATENING RESIGNATION BY GIL SEDAN

JERUSALEM, June 21 (JTA) -- Defense Minister Ezer Weizman is reported today to have threatened to resign from the government and Premier Menachem Begin is said to have told him he would accept his resignation but not at this

time. The issue is the controversial Gush Emunim settlement of Alon Moreh near Nablus on the West Bank which the government claims is necessary for security purposes. Weizman was one of the Cabinet minority who opposed the settlement and questioned its security value. Nevertheless, he did nothing to alter a letter signed by Chief of Staff Gen. Raphael Eytan at Begin's request, claiming that Alon Moreh was vital for defense because it controlled communications in northern Samaria. The letter was submitted to the Supreme Court which ordered the temporary suspension of work on Alon Moreh yesterday pending the outcome of an appeal by local Arabs whose land was seized for the settlement.

According to unconfirmed reports today, Weizman met with Begin Sunday to express his unhappiness with the present state of affairs and told him he was considering resignation. Begin reportedly said he had full confidence in Weizman as Defense Minister but told him "I would accept your resignation if it were handed to me a year from now."

Meanwhile, both Weizman and Foreign Minister Moshe Dayan absented themselves from yesterday's meeting of the six-man ministerial delegation conducting autonomy talks with Egypt and the U.S. The talks are expected to resume next week. Earlier, Weizman and Dayan indicated that they felt their presence was not required at the negotiations, a position that irritated the delegation's chairman, Interior Minister Yosef Burg. Burg complained to Begin who promised to air the matter when the Cabinet meets again this Sunday.

FRENCH EXPRESS UNDERSTANDING; BUT NOT SUPPORT FOR ISRAELI POLICIES

By Edwin Eytan

PARIS, June 22 (JTA) -- Alain Poher, President of the French Senate said yesterday that many Frenchmen understand Israel's attitude in the autonomy talks. Poher, a friend of Israel, did not, however, express support for Israel's policy or its creation of new settlements in the occupied territories.

Poher spoke at a farewell lunch tendered by the Parliamentary Friendship Group with Israel to departing Israeli Ambassador Mordechai Gazit. In spite of the presence at the lunch of Israel's staunchest friends in France, none of the speakers endorsed the current settlement policy.

After the lunch, several members of Parliament told the Jewish Telegraphic Agency that they "understand but not necessarily approve" the Israeli position. Gazit is due to leave France next month. He will be replaced by Meir Rosenne, legal advisor to Israel's Foreign Ministry, who is due to take over his new post in the autumn.

CANADIAN CABINET DISCUSSES ARAB FINANCIAL THREATS

By Michael Solomon

OTTAWA, June 21 (JTA) -- The Inner Cabinet, after meeting last night to discuss Arab threats to suspend all financial transactions with Canada, refused to disclose what if any decisions were taken. While lower echelon officials indicated that any Arab actions would have minimal effects on the Canadian economy, Industry Minister Robert de Cottereau said that "Arab and Canadian business reaction warrant continued attention."

He said any guess at the level of Arab invest-

ment in Canada "would be a real stab in the dark but I will be very surprised if it amounted to \$1 billion." That was the figure contained in a report from Bahrain, Abu Dhabi on Tuesday announcing that the Arab Monetary Fund, an Arab League agency has halted all financial dealings with Canada and would withdraw Arab funds from Canadian banks because of the government's stated intention to transfer its embassy in Israel from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem.

A Finance Department official said today that little was known here about the Arab Monetary Fund but he thought any investments in Canada "would be relatively small." Dr. Michel Kelly, director of the finance Department's international division, also thought that "the direct implication of the announcement by the AMF would appear to be minimal."

Dr. Roland Frazee, president of the Royal Bank of Canada, the country's largest bank, said today that he was "worried about what can happen to major contracts Canadian companies have in Arab countries for housing, building and communications projects. We cannot afford to jeopardize that business." Although Frazee told the Jewish Telegraphic Agency on Tuesday that "I have never heard of the Arab Monetary Fund," his bank apparently does a significant amount of business with Arab countries.

Before last night's cabinet meeting, Immigration Minister Ron Atkey assured Canadians that "if the Arabs want Canadian products they will buy them. The Arabs' bark is worse than their bite," he said.

NEED FOR 'PHYSICAL JERUSALEM' AS WELL AS 'SPIRITUAL STRESSED'

By Judith Rosen

NEW YORK, June 21 (JTA) -- Dr. Emil Fackenheim, a noted Jewish philosopher, said today that while the "spiritual Jerusalem" is important to all Jews, the need for a physical Jerusalem is necessary as a safe harbor for all Jews in times of oppression. Fackenheim addressed a "Convocation on Jerusalem" sponsored by the New York Board of Rabbis at the National Conference of Christians and Jews headquarters in New York. The Catholic and Protestant perspectives on Jerusalem were also presented.

Fackenheim, professor of Philosophy at the University of Toronto, spoke of the "relationship between the Jerusalem above and below" -- the physical and spiritual aspects of the city. Fackenheim emphasized the political explosiveness of the Jerusalem issue in noting Canadian Prime Minister Joe Clark's campaign promise to move the Canadian Embassy from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem, as a formal recognition of that city's rightful claim as Israel's capital. He said this has sparked unprecedented hostile attacks on the Clark government.

Rev. William Harter, chairman of the National Council of Churches Committee on the Status of Jerusalem and Human Rights in the Middle East, said Jerusalem was a "symbol of survival" with an "infinite capacity to astonish." Harter cited the rise of Jerusalem after 1948 as "ruining the theory of the destruction of Jerusalem as told in the New Testament." "Jerusalem is being freed by God to be renewed to bear God's revelation, today," Harter said. He stressed that we mustn't "reduce the present and immediate future to allegory and symbol. The Jerusalem to come must not cancel out the Jerusalem that is."

Dr. Eugene Fisher, executive secretary of

the Secretariat for Catholic-Jewish Relations of the National Conference of Catholic Bishops, presented a Catholic perspective on Jerusalem. Fisher outlined the traditional outlook on Jerusalem and the "Holy Land," and emphasized that the church "was deeply committed to Eretz Yisrael."

He noted that as a result of the Second Vatican Council, there is "no fundamental core interest conflicts in our views" with the Jewish faith. Fisher did note that the official church position on Jerusalem still favors some sort of internationalization to guarantee the preservation of the holy sites and to protect Christians living in the city and in Israel. But he personally hopes that Jerusalem will be "one city and a city of peace."

IDA NUDEL REMEMBERED

NEW YORK, June 21 (JTA) -- The outgoing chairman and chairman-elect of the National Conference on Soviet Jewry (NCSJ) today urged Soviet President Leonid Brezhnev to release Ida Nudel from exile and allow her to emigrate to Israel. Eugene Gold, who will end his three-year chairmanship on Aug. 15, and Los Angeles attorney Burton Levinson, declared "in the spirit of good will and cooperation of the SALT II accords, we urge the Soviet Union to release Ida Nudel and allow her to join her sister in Israel."

Today is the first anniversary of Nudel's exile to a small colony a few kilometers from the tiny Siberian village of Krivosheyno. Known as the "Guardian Angel" of other Jewish "Prisoners of Conscience" in the Soviet Union, Nudel first applied to emigrate to Israel in 1971.

Repeatedly detained and interrogated by the secret police, she placed on her apartment balcony a sign that read, "KGB, give me my visa." That defiant act precipitated her four-year exile for "malicious-boogymism."

Meanwhile, the Long Island Committee for Soviet Jewry commemorated today the first anniversary of Nudel's exile by dedicating two benches on the grounds of the Nassau County Supreme Court building in Mineola in her name.

In a related event, a special vigil was held this morning outside the Soviet Consulate in San Francisco. The Bay Area Council on Soviet Jewry, which sponsored the event, declared the week of June 14-21 as Ida Nudel Week, as part of the international campaign to gain her release. In Israel, a group of women demonstrated in front of the Finnish Embassy, which handles Soviet affairs, urging Nudel's release.

ADL LAUNCHES CAMPAIGN

JERUSALEM, June 21 (JTA) -- The Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rith has embarked on a campaign to arouse world opinion to the lack of human rights in Argentina which increasingly affects the Jewish population of that country, an ADL official said here today. Abraham Foxman, associate national director of the ADL, who is attending the ADL's National Commission meeting in Jerusalem, said at a press conference that he did not want to compare the situation in Argentina with that in the Soviet Union.

However, he said, experience has shown that "countries do care about their image." He said that "close to 1,000 of the large Jewish community in Argentina have either disappeared or we know that they are imprisoned." Some Jews who were put on trial and found not-guilty are still under house arrest, he said. Foxman said a world outcry might prompt Argentina to prove there is no anti-Semitism there.

BRAZILIAN COURT REJECTS EXTRADITION REQUEST FOR WANTED NAZI CRIMINAL

By Gil Seden

JERUSALEM, June 21 (JTA) -- Justice Minister Shmuel Tamir said today that Israel would continue to make every possible effort to bring Nazi war criminal Gustav Wagner to trial despite the Brazilian Supreme Court's rejection of extradition requests from four countries, including Israel yesterday. Wagner, held responsible for the deaths of more than 250,000 Jews in the Sobibor and Treblinka concentration camps in Poland, found a haven in Brazil after World War II.

He is wanted in West Germany, Austria, Poland and Israel. Brazil's highest court rejected Israel's request on grounds that it did not exist at the time the crimes were committed. This prompted Tamir to observe, "How painful to be told that the fact that we did not have a sovereign state of our own during the Holocaust, the major reason there was a Holocaust, is used to keep such a murderer from facing trial."

Commenting on press reports that Austria did not really want to try Wagner and did not press its extradition request, Tamir said "If this is the case it is more than regrettable. The net result is that one of the worst Nazis is about to go free." Wagner has been under arrest in Brazil since he was detected there last year but confined to a hospital for the mentally ill. Tamir said Israel is consulting with its legal counsellor in Brazil to see what further measures can be taken to extradite him.

WAGNER'S ONLY REGRET: GERMANY LOST

By Maurice Samuelson

LONDON, June 21 (JTA) -- Gustav Wagner, a former commandant at Sobibor concentration camp where 250,000 Jews were exterminated including several of them at his own hands, made it clear here this week that his major regret was that Germany had lost the war.

Wagner was speaking in a BBC television interview filmed in Brazil. The program included four of the handful of Sobibor survivors who said Wagner would never enjoy his lunch until he had first personally murdered two or three of the inmates.

The 68-year-old gray-haired Nazi insisted, in subdued tones, that he had personally never murdered anybody. The extermination program was top secret work for the German Reich which he was sworn by oath to carry out, he said. He and his colleagues were merely carrying out orders: "We were small fry. I am an ordinary man, like others. I feel no different," he said.

He said that he had seen people exterminated "who were really innocent," but he would have been shot if he had not done his duty.

Germany had called him to make war and given him a job to do, Wagner said. "But now they punish me for it. Everything went wrong once Germany lost the war," he concluded.

Esther Raab, one of the survivors, recalled how Wagner would come out of his office with his thumbs in his pockets, a sign that he needed blood like a drunkard needs to drink. "Another survivor, describing how Wagner had beaten a father and son to death with an axe handle, said the Nazi chief could not enjoy his lunch without first having killed two or three people."

Simon Wiesenthal, head of the Vienna War

Crimes Documentation Center, who helped to track down Wagner in Brazil, said Wagner's life was not important. What mattered was that he should be arrested 37 years and 10,000 miles from the scene and time of his crime. "That is a warning for the would-be murderers of the future," he said.

'DAVID' LOSES TO 'GOLIATH'

By Yitzhak Shargil

JEL AVIV, June 21 (JTA) -- The Soviet Union defeated Israel by 98-76 last night to win the European basketball championship in Turin, Italy. But Israelis were still excited that their team was the runnerup, the highest finish ever achieved by an Israeli quintet.

The Israeli team's surprise showing in the finals came after it beat Czechoslovakia by one point Sunday night. Israel then lost to the Soviets but when the Italian team was also beaten, Israel earned its chance to play in the championship game.

Paul Klein, the Israeli coach, said prior to last night's game that it was a battle of "David and Goliath," little Israel against the giant Soviet Union. All Israel came to a standstill last night as Israelis watched the game on television. Even the Israel Philharmonic Orchestra performed its concert two hours earlier than scheduled so that the audience could see the game. Many people went to the Western Wall to pray for victory.

JERUSALEM (JTA) -- Thousands of Israelis filed by the pier of Yisrael Yeshayahu in the Knesset plaza Thursday to pay last respects to the former Speaker of the Knesset who died Wednesday at the age of 68. Yeshayahu, who was born in Yemen in 1911 and immigrated to Palestine in 1929, was buried Thursday on Mt. Herzl in a plot set aside for national leaders.

JERUSALEM (JTA) -- Israel is ready to absorb another 200 refugees from Vietnam. This is the result of Premier Menachem Begin's call on all nations of the free world to open their gates to the Vietnamese refugees.

JERUSALEM (JTA) -- The first among the 8000 youth expected to arrive this summer on the Jewish Agency "summer project" arrived this week. Some 100,000 Jewish youth have visited Israel since 1948 in the "summer projects." This year, the visits will emphasize education and not tourism, Avraham Katz, head of the Jewish Agency's youth and hechalutz department said. The common denominator of the various courses the youth will take is the deepening of knowledge on the subjects of Judaism and Zionism.

JERUSALEM (JTA) -- Three Arab youths were killed when an explosive device detonated in a house near Jenin on the West Bank Thursday. Security sources investigating the incident said they were apparently preparing a bomb which exploded prematurely. No other details were available.

BONN (JTA) -- The public prosecutor in Baden-Baden, Bavaria formally opened proceedings Thursday against a fugitive Nazi war criminal whose whereabouts have been unknown since he disappeared 17 years ago to avoid arrest. The defendant, Dr. Aribert Heim, "is accused of the murder of an unknown number of Jewish concentration camp inmates at Mauthausen," Chief Prosecutor Heiting von Lanzinger said Thursday. He said "their death followed injections" allegedly administered by Heim. Heim vanished in 1962 and there has been no trace of him or any "hot lead," von Lanzinger said at a press conference.

N.Y. BILL PLACES RESPONSIBILITY ON JEWISH GROUPS FOR PLACING FOSTER CHILDREN IN JEWISH HOMES

By Ben Gallob

— NEW YORK, June 21 (JTA) — The sponsor of a bill requiring major changes in child welfare practices in New York State, which has been approved by both houses of the Legislature, stressed today that the measure placed on Jewish organizations the responsibility for ending the placement of Jewish children in non-Jewish foster homes.

Assemblyman Howard Lasher (D. Brooklyn), himself an Orthodox Jew, introduced the New York State Child Welfare Act of 1979 in the Assembly. An identical bill was introduced in the Senate by Sen. Joseph Pisani (R. New Rochelle). Gov. Hugh Carey was expected to sign the measure into law promptly.

Lasher said the measure emphasizes preventive services to help keep children in their natural homes, as well as efforts to find permanent adoptive homes. If keeping them in their natural homes is not possible, thus de-emphasizing foster care. Lasher said the new legislation establishes a framework which provides both the opportunity and the responsibility of the Jewish community to find Jewish families "willing to adopt hard-to-place Jewish children, many with severe physical or emotional handicaps."

The new measure requires the state Department of Social Service to issue regulations providing the procedures "reasonably necessary for the placement of children" in accordance with the measure's requirements that children be placed in adoptive homes of their own religious background "where practicable."

'Unique Opportunity' Offered

In a letter to Jewish leaders about the new legislation, Lasher declared that while the measure was long needed in the child care field, "it also presents a unique opportunity to permit the addressing of the problem of placement of Jewish children in non-Jewish homes, a long-time scandal in the Jewish community."

Lasher said the language in the measure providing for maximum efforts to place Jewish children in Jewish homes was inserted in consultation with the National Jewish Commission on Law and Public Affairs (COLPA). Lasher said that procedures in the placement process developing over many years and the lack of a large pool of Jewish families available in which to place hard-to-place children had led to no more than lip service being paid to the legal requirement that placements be made within the faith "where practicable."

Howard Zuckerman, COLPA president, said the goal of the Jewish groups was to seek to put some teeth into the "where practicable" element of the law. COLPA took part in both the drafting of the language and in meetings with Commissioner Barbara Blum of the Social Services Department on behalf of the Union of Orthodox Jewish Congregations of America, Young Israel, the Rabbinical Council of America and Agudath Israel.

Lasher said he had had several meetings since the drafting of the new measure, with Blum and Dennis Rapps, COLPA executive director, when the major concepts of the regulations mandated by the new legislation were developed.

Lasher said one of the major points agreed on was that "religious matching" would become

an integral element of the entire placement process. Another key point agreed on was that personnel involved in the placement process must be appropriately trained and monitored. Also agreed to was creation of some kind of coordinating council; to be made up of representatives of all Jewish social work agencies, to be the working agency to find the needed homes and to persuade Jewish parents to adopt the children.

Zuckerman said a key element to be incorporated in the rules to be promulgated by the Social Service Department is one to provide additional support -- including psychological counseling, therapy, homemaker service and caseworkers -- to help the natural parents keep their children.

Seek Willing Jewish Homes

If that fails, Zuckerman said, an effort will be made to place the child in a permanent adoptive home of that child's faith. The strategy worked out by the Jewish groups is aimed at creating a broad and sustained effort to find willing Jewish homes for such children. That effort will be made by the projected coordinating council, on which representatives of interested Jewish agencies will serve at the invitation of the Social Services Department, Zuckerman said.

Under the regulations agreed to at the meeting between Blum, Lasher and Rapps, whenever a Jewish child is under consideration for placement in an adoptive or institutional foster care agency, notice will be required to be given to the coordinating council, which will have the function of locating a Jewish home for the child, by use of such modern systems as computer listings and matching. The coordinating council's work will be funded under the new legislation.

COLPA officials said they had been informed by Jewish agencies that the agencies were convinced there are Jewish parents who would be willing to accept such children if they were sought out and that the problem is not lack of such parents but lack of knowledge as to where they exist, a gap which the coordinating council will seek to fill in a scientific rather than by the present haphazard approach.

Zuckerman said promulgation of the rules to implement the new legislation will take several months and that formation of the projected coordinating council will not take place until after the rules have been issued and put into effect. Meanwhile, he said, COLPA has been consulting, on behalf of the other Orthodox organizations, with the Ohel Children's Home, the Federation of Jewish Philanthropies and the Mishkan-Home for additional information and evaluation of the major changes the new legislation requires.

NEW YORK (JTA) — The leader of the organization of Holocaust survivors praised the "nobility of spirit" of Pope John Paul II and the "sincerity and eloquence" articulated during his visit to the Auschwitz and Birkenau concentration camps. Solomon Zynstein, president of the American Federation of Jewish Fighters, Camp Inmates and Nazi Victims, said that the Pope's forthrightness was welcome and a good omen for the future.

VIENNA (JTA) — The United States has asked the Soviet Union to free Raul Wallenberg, the Swedish diplomat missing since 1945, who is credited with saving 25,000 Hungarian Jews from deportation to the Auschwitz death camp. According to Simon Wiesenthal, head of the Nazi War Crimes Documentation Center here, Wallenberg's name was on a list of Soviet dissidents which U.S. Secretary of State Cyrus Vance handed to the Soviet delegation at the Salt II summit talks in Vienna last week.