

JTA daily news bulletin

Continued coverage and education only by previous arrangements

Published by Jewish Telegraphic Agency / 165 West 46th Street / New York, New York 10036

Vol. XLVII - 62nd Year

Tuesday, December 4, 1979

No. 229

COALITION CRISIS THREATENED BY CONTROVERSIAL ABORTION BILL

By David Landau

JERUSALEM, Dec. 3 (JTA) — A coalition crisis threatened anew today after a compromise formula intended to remove opposition to a controversial abortion law amendment was rejected by the Aguda Israel's "Council of Sages." The measure, demanded by the Aguda as their price for remaining in Premier Menachem Begin's coalition, was defeated in the Knesset last month when a number of coalition MKs refused to support it, resulting in a tied vote.

The coalition "rebels" had agreed, albeit reluctantly last night to the compromise finally worked out between them and the Aguda Knesset faction at the urging of coalition whips. "It's not ideal but it's good enough," Likud MK Ehud Olmert told reporters after a protracted meeting. Shlomo Lorincz, the Aguda leader in the Knesset, claimed that the compromise in fact satisfied Aguda principles. But the leading Hasidic sages, the Gurrer Rebbe and Rabbi Eliezer Shach of Bnei Brak, thought otherwise.

The formula would have eliminated clause five of the abortion law which permits abortions for socio-economic reasons, meaning for mothers of poverty families with large numbers of children. However, it expanded clause four of the law to include some of the cases covered by clause five.

The new language was deliberately left vague and open to broad interpretations. Clause four permits abortions on grounds of "danger to the women's life" or "severe physical or mental damage" resulting from continued pregnancy. The compromise added the words "or such (damage) as is caused by a difficult milieu or family circumstances that find no other solution."

The Aguda sages informed the party's Knesset faction last night that the terms "milieu and family circumstances" were unacceptable to them. This morning, Likud and Aguda MKs were still making desperate efforts to find alternative language that would appease the rebbes and would be acceptable to the Likud "rebels." The measure in its original form is not likely to be adopted and Begin has refused to resubmit it to the Knesset unless he is assured in advance of full-coalition support.

CLOSING IN ON NEO-NAZIS

BONN, Dec. 3 (JTA) — Justice Minister Hans-Jochen Vogel has called for measures to close legal loopholes which prevent the effective prosecution of neo-Nazis. Addressing a conference of the Social Democratic Party's parliamentary faction in West Berlin, he cited the fact that the production, storage and import of toys and other objects with Nazi emblems remains legal while the distribution and use of such items is a criminal offense. Vogel noted that to date there have been 244 convictions for neo-Nazi activities and 310 cases are pending. The longest sentence was 11 years and the highest fine was DM 14,000.

INJURED ENVOY DOING WELL

JERUSALEM, Dec. 3 (JTA) — Ephraim

Eldar, Israel's Ambassador to Portugal who was wounded in a terrorist gun attack on him two weeks ago outside the Israel Embassy in Lisbon, is now out of the hospital and recuperating at his home in Lisbon, a Foreign Ministry spokesman said here today.

Portuguese police reported at the time of the attack that two men opened machinegun fire and threw hand grenades at the Ambassador as he was about to enter the Embassy building. Eldar was wounded in his arms and legs, a Portuguese security officer who was acting as Eldar's bodyguard was killed and the envoy's driver and a uniformed policeman were wounded.

According to the Foreign Ministry spokesman today, the operation to remove the bullets from Eldar's legs and arms was successful and he will have no lasting impairment from the wounds.

FRENCH JEWRY APPEALS TO SAVE CAMBODIANS FROM 'NEW AUSCHWITZ'

PARIS, Dec. 3 (JTA) — The French Jewish community today launched an appeal to save the Cambodian population from "a new Auschwitz." The community's central welfare fund, the Fonds Social Juif Unifié (FSJU) urged France's 700,000 Jews to donate to a special fund which will be used to ship food and medical supplies to Cambodia.

The appeal, signed by the FSJU president Baron Guy de Rothschild, says "Cambodia's fate today reminds us of what the Jews suffered yesterday at the hands of the Nazis. Our memory commands us to come in aid to Cambodia's countless innocent victims." The FSJU will send its aid to the stricken population in cooperation with Catholic and Protestant organizations operating in France.

BUDGET GETS IL 100 BILLION BOOST

JERUSALEM, Dec. 3 (JTA) — Finance Minister Yigal Hurwitz's "economic cabinet" approved an IL 100 billion addition to the national budget for the current fiscal year yesterday. But Treasury officials insisted that the new sum merely covered an unpredicted increase in inflation and represented, in fact, a four percent cutback in real terms. The budget for the current fiscal year ending March 31, 1980 stood originally at IL 324 billion.

Hurwitz said it "would be a real achievement" if the government stuck by the limits of the present budget. He said he would "absolutely insist" that a reduction in the order of four percent is made in the new State budget for fiscal 1980-81 that is now being prepared.

Meanwhile, opposition Labor circles predicted today that the additional budget with its implied cutbacks in real spending would necessitate a 40 percent rise in the prices of fuel and other commodities before March 31.

SPECIAL REPORT THE ANTI-SEMITISM OF THE USLP

By Rochelle Saidel Walk
(Part 2 of a 3-Part Series)

NEW YORK, Dec. 3 (JTA) — Lyndon LaRouche, Jr. and his United States Labor Party (USLP) have been labeled "neo-Nazi" by writer Dennis King in a series of articles that began Aug. 26 in Our Town, a Manhattan giveaway with a reported circulation of 163,000.

Calling the National Caucus of Labor Committees (NCLC), of which USLP is the political arm,

"a nationwide neo-Nazi organization" that provides "homegrown Nazism" with resources and political skills unseen since the heyday of the German American Bund in the late 1930s," King says that LaRouche is the "huehrer" for some 2500 NCLC-USLP members who are "far better educated and more highly motivated than those of the smaller Nazi sects." He also describes LaRouche as a "ruthless hate-monger who advocates the 'Final Solution' against American Jews."

King and Our Town publisher Ed Kayatt have been sued by LaRouche and USLP for \$20 million as a result of the series. They are also being sued by Computon, a computer software corporation that is connected with LaRouchites. Attorney David Heller is handling both suits, as well as a slander suit against the Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rith.

Use Of Code Words

King says that LaRouche, who is a candidate for President of the United States in 1980, uses code words such as "British" and "Zionist" for "Jew," and "humanist republic" for "Nazi-totalitarian state." According to the King series, on Feb. 17, 1978 LaRouche "took the big plunge and wrote of the necessity for a Final Solution against world Jewry," using code words.

"The LaRouche (Presidential) campaign represents the first attempt by neo-Nazism, as opposed to less drastic forms of lunacy, to force its way into the national electoral arena," King states. He quotes sources close to NCLC saying that LaRouche does not expect to win, but hopes to "emerge from the Presidential campaign as a major figure on the ultra-right in this country -- a Nazified version of George Wallace." While on campaign tours, however, LaRouche "successfully concealed his anti-Semitic ideas" and "managed to avoid the image of a fanatic," King reports.

A two-part series by Howard Blum and Paul I. Montgomery in The New York Times on Oct. 7 and 8 states that the USLP has already raised over \$100,000 for the 1980 elections. Through air-portals of its publications, fund-raising drives, among members and income from computer and printing companies, the USLP is expected to raise more than \$4 million this year.

Dominant Role In Three Firms

The Times articles report that USLP members have a "dominant role" in three Manhattan companies that have total revenues of \$5 million per year. These are the computer software Computon Technologies Corporation, which has among its clients Mobil Oil, Citibank, Bristol-Myers, and A.T. & T.; World Composition Services, a computer typesetting complex that does work for the Ford Foundation and major publishers; and PMR Associates, a job printing shop.

Two former USLP members have charged that money from Computon is given, unreported, to the party, a potential violation of the federal campaign law.

Referring to The Times investigating team, King says that the NCLC held press conferences in July in Washington and New York City to claim that this was "part of a giant conspiracy involving the Anti-Defamation League, the liberal press, Israeli intelligence, Rep. Elizabeth Holtzman (D.NY) and the Justice Department's newly created Nazi war crimes investigation unit."

King adds that "in effect, LaRouche served notice that he would use the antic harassment of

his Presidential campaign as a pretext for launching a drive of the right to disband the Justice Department's investigation of Nazi war criminals."

Claims There Is A 'Hit Order'

"New Solidarity," the twice-weekly newspaper of the NCLC-USLP, says in a front-page article by Jeffrey Steinberg on Aug. 31 that "the organized crime-corrupt Justice Department mob (is) behind Our Town." Another article, entitled "Dirty Civiletti" and written by LaRouche, discusses a "hit order" to assassinate LaRouche.

"This (assassination) operation was conducted in cooperation with the B'nai B'rith Anti-Defamation League, the New York Times, Israeli intelligence, and the Office of Special Investigation of the U.S. Department of Justice, a unit which reports directly to (Attorney General Benjamin) Civiletti. Civiletti was, in fact, the only top ranking Justice Department official to actively lobby for creation of the Office of Special Investigations (OSI)," LaRouche says.

Article Implicates The OSI

Another page one article in the same issue of "New Solidarity," entitled "The Case of Roy Cohen" by Criton Zoakos, also mentions the Justice Department's Nazi war criminal unit. Again, the OSI is implicated in an assassination attempt against LaRouche. "Israeli intelligence had completed preparations with Attorney General Civiletti to provide a political 'cover' for the assassination by lending credence to the slander that 'LaRouche is a Nazi' through the so-called Office of Special Investigations created for precisely this specific purpose."

"Attorney General Civiletti had requested that in order for him to instruct the Office of Special Investigations to launch an investigation into the Labor Party's alleged 'Nazi connections,' he should be supplied with a cause to be provided by a series of articles in The New York Times, The Washington Post, and The Los Angeles Times," Zoakos writes.

The Zoakos article concludes that "the OSI is a special dirty trick against the Presidential campaign of Lyndon M. LaRouche, Jr." and that "The New York Times articles would 'provide the excuse to Benjamin Civiletti to order the Office of Special Investigations to investigate the Labor Party and wreck LaRouche's campaign.'"

Since the OSI is responsible only for the investigation and prosecution of Nazi war criminals and collaborators who were connected with Hitler's mass murders and genocide during World War II, and not for investigating neo-Nazis, "New Solidarity's accusations appear not only far-fetched but illogical. Whether they point to a link between the USLP and Nazi war criminals living in America or whether they are more of what the ADL has called the USLP's 'conspiracy fantasia' is a subject for further investigation."

(Tomorrow: Part 3)

GOLDA MEIR MEMORIAL SQUARE

By Yitzhak Rabi

NEW YORK, Dec. 3 (JTA) -- The plaza between 39th and 40th Streets on Broadway in midtown Manhattan was officially declared today by Mayor Edward Koch as Golda Meir Memorial Square. The announcement was made during a ceremony attended by the late Israeli Premier's family members, including Clara Stein, Mrs. Meir's sister, Israeli and American officials, Jewish and non-Jewish communal leaders and some 200 guests. This is the first American memorial to Mrs. Meir, and it marks the first anniversary of her death.

Jack Weiler, chairman of the Golda Meir Memorial Committee, a project of the Jewish Community Relations Council of New York (JCRC), announced that the area will be landscaped and will feature a bust of Mrs. Meir which is being prepared by a group of outstanding sculptors. "This project, undertaken by the JCRC together with the city of New York, reflects the high esteem in which Mrs. Meir was held by people of all religious and ethnic groups," Weiler said.

Koch, paying tribute to Mrs. Meir's statesmanship and principles, declared that the memorial is a "permanent memorial to Golda" and "this spot (39th St. and Broadway) will be known for ever and ever as Golda Meir Square."

Paul Kedor, Israel's Consul General in New York, also paid tribute to the late Premier and read a special message of greeting from Ephraim Evron, Israel's Ambassador to Washington. The ceremony opened with singing by the New York Cantors Ensemble. Cantor Joseph Malovany of the Fifth Avenue Synagogue recited the El Mole Rachamim. The ceremony was chaired by JCRC president Richard Ravitch.

Weiler, an honorary president of the JCRC and past president of the Joint Distribution Committee, expressed appreciation to the Mayor, Councilman Henry Stern who introduced the necessary legislation, and the entire City Council which unanimously approved the bill. He added that the location, the former site at the Metropolitan Opera House, would become a gathering place on suitable occasions.

BLUM: USSR, SYRIA DEPRIVE JEWS OF THEIR BASIC HUMAN RIGHTS

By Yitzhak Rabi

UNITED NATIONS, Dec. 3 (JTA) -- Israel charged today that the Soviet Union and Syria both deprive their Jewish citizens of their "basic human rights," and called on both governments to allow their Jewish citizens to emigrate.

Yehuda Blum, Israel's Ambassador to the United Nations, addressing the General Assembly's Social Committee, during a debate on human rights, said that Soviet Jews are persecuted and that their religious and cultural aspirations have been "systematically suppressed." The Soviet authorities, Blum charged, are sponsoring an official campaign of anti-Semitism.

"If a Jew cannot live freely as a Jew in the Soviet Union," Blum declared, "if he is denied his national, religious and cultural rights, if he is subjected to discrimination, intimidation and false arrest, if the Soviet Union, in short, is not prepared to accord its Jewish citizens their basic human rights, then surely it should at least allow them to leave the country."

Regarding the situation of Syrian Jews, Blum said that they are "still being held as virtual hostages by the Syrian government." Continuing, he said: "Living as second-class citizens in the ghettos of Damascus, Aleppo and Kamishli and under constant surveillance by the Syrian secret police, these Jews are still denied their basic human rights, and first and foremost the right to emigrate."

"In fact, this year has seen a dramatic worsening in the attitude of Syrian authorities toward its Jewish community. Jewish men have been brutally beaten and detained by the Muhabarat, the Syrian secret police, because they were suspected of helping Jewish families flee the country."

ELIAS JACOBS DEAD AT 87

BUFFALO, N. Y., Dec. 3 (JTA) -- Elias Rex Jacobs, for 51 years editor and publisher of the Buffalo Jewish Review, died here last week at the age of 87. He is credited with expanding the Anglo-Jewish weekly from a local chronicle of community events to a newspaper covering national and international affairs of Jewish concern. He also brought to the paper a strong pro-Zionist position in contrast to the anti-Zionist stance of its earlier owners. He retired in 1972.

Jacobs, the youngest of nine children, was born in a village near Vilna, Lithuania and immigrated to New York with his family at the age of three. He graduated from City College in 1912 and from Columbia University Law School in 1915. He practiced law in New York City even after joining the Navy in 1917. He worked at the Brooklyn Navy Yard by day and maintained his law practice at night.

After World War I, he became an apprentice on the Detroit Jewish Chronicle and in 1920 he moved to Kansas City where he founded the Kansas City Jewish Chronicle. In 1921 he settled in Buffalo and purchased the American Jewish Review which he re-named the Buffalo Jewish Review. The paper's previous owners had appealed to a largely assimilated readership. Jacobs changed its orientation toward immigrant Jews from Eastern Europe who had read the Yiddish language newspapers published in New York City.

During his long career, Jacobs served as a vice president of the American Jewish Press Association, a member of the Buffalo Area Israel Bonds executive committee, president of the Zionist Organization of America Buffalo District and vice president of the Bureau of Jewish Education. He was also president of the Montefiore Lodge of B'nai B'rith, director of the Hebrew Benevolent Loan Association, a member of the organizing committee of the Kadimah School, a board member of the United Jewish Federation and a member of the Jewish War Veterans of the U.S. He was a member of Temple Shearay Zedek and Congregation Beth Abraham in Buffalo.

SINAI GOVERNOR VISITS ISRAEL

JERUSALEM, Dec. 3 (JTA) -- The Egyptian Governor of El Arish and northern Sinai, Gen. Muhammad Shawkat, arrived in Israel yesterday for a five-day visit as a guest of the Foreign Ministry. He was feted by Defense Minister Ezer Weizman at a reception last night. Shawkat is a former Chief of Military Intelligence and is considered one of the rising stars in Egypt's political/military firmament. His host for this visit is Yosef Hadass, head of the "normalization" section at the Foreign Ministry. He is expected to discuss issues connected with economic and agricultural cooperation between the area under his command and neighboring Israel and Gaza.

BRUSSELS (JTA) -- Israel's Ambassador to Belgium, Itzhak Minerbi, accused Belgian information media, especially the State-controlled radio and television networks Sunday of distorting the truth and "systematically slandering Israel." Minerbi, addressing a meeting of the Belgian-Israel Friendship Society, said the Belgian media "are mixing in the same pot the victim and the aggressor, Israel and the terrorists." Former French Minister Daniel Mayer said France "has marred its reputation" by having permitted the Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini to live for months on French territory and conduct from there his anti-Shah campaign.

SPECIAL TO THE JTA
A LAWSUIT, THE FIRST OF ITS KIND,
SEEKS TO BLOCK SALE OF ABANDONED
BUT STILL USABLE SYNAGOGUE BUILDING
 By Ben Gallab

NEW YORK, Dec. 3 (JTA) -- A lawsuit in a New York court to block the sale of an abandoned but still usable synagogue building, described as the first lawsuit of its kind, may stimulate inquiries to determine the validity of such transactions extending far beyond New York State, according to Howard Zuckerman, president of the National Jewish Commission on Law and Public Affairs (COLPA).

In response to that lawsuit, filed in State Supreme Court in Manhattan, Judge Martin Stecher ordered a trial to determine whether conditions of the sale of the Kalvarier Synagogue, also known as the Pike Street Synagogue, on Manhattan's Lower East Side, to the Eastern Buddhist Association for \$180,000 had been made in accordance with the state's Religious Corporation Law. The sale was made by three Jews -- Abraham Gulker and Saul Goldstein of Brooklyn and Seymour Shyman of Manhattan -- claiming to be trustees of the congregation.

The 75-year-old synagogue building had long been abandoned by its original congregants but was being used for regular weekend worship by some 25 Jews in the area who contributed to the upkeep of the synagogue, according to Zuckerman.

Under the Religious Corporation Law, sale of religious property in New York State requires court approval. The sellers indicated in their application for such approval that the proceeds would be used to maintain the synagogue's cemetery in Ozone Park in Queens. The application was routinely approved in Stecher's court last January.

Judge Rules On The Suit

In response to the suit, Stecher ruled on Nov. 14 that the sellers did not comply with the law because, in the absence of by-laws providing otherwise, congregants must approve a sale of real property owned by the congregation and the sellers did not give required notice of the proposed sale or call a meeting of the congregants to express their approval.

The worshippers who filed the suit last September in Stecher's court were joined as plaintiffs by the United Jewish Council of the East Side. They are represented by Sheldon Silver, a New York State Assemblyman from Manhattan and a COLPA member, and by Daniel Chazin, also a COLPA member, and Dennis Rapps, COLPA executive director, with assistance from Jeffrey Strashun, a recent Cardozo Law School graduate.

In issuing his ruling, Stecher ordered that the sale proceeds be placed in escrow and notified the Buddhist purchasers that they would be making changes in the building for their needs "at risk," since the expected trial could result in nullification of the sale. The purchasers have barred use of the building to the Jewish worshippers and it is currently unused.

In addition to freezing the transaction, Stecher ordered the two sides to undertake "discovery" proceedings by which lawyers for each side may seek evidence of the validity of the relevant claims of the other side. Rapps cited, as an example, the legal right of the defendants to require the plaintiffs to prove they met the

basic requirements of a congregation -- regular worship and contributions to the upkeep of the synagogue building.

Says Ruling In Accord With Halacha

Rapps said that Stecher's grant of voting status to regular worshippers is in accord with a statement by Rabbi Moshe Feinstein, considered one of the world's leading authorities on Halacha. Rapps said the judge's grant was also in accordance with the position of the Union of Orthodox Jewish Congregations of America, considered the largest American Orthodox synagogue group, as contained in an affidavit signed by its president, Julius Berman. Rapps added that the statements provide the Halachic definition of a worshipper. One of the issues to be decided at the trial is whether the plaintiffs are in fact regular worshippers at the Pike Street Synagogue.

Similarly, Rapps said, the plaintiffs have a legal right to determine whether the sellers are bona fide trustees of the congregation and authorized to make the sale, even if they have been ruled by Stecher as having failed to give notice of intention to sell to the congregation and arrange for congregants to approve or disapprove the sale. Another factual issue on which Stecher seeks information is whether the three sellers have not been worshippers at the synagogue for many years, as charged by the plaintiffs.

When these fact-finding procedures are completed, attorneys for the two sides will submit briefs to Stecher, who will decide whether to rule on the basis of the documents or to order a trial. Zuckerman said, adding it might take three or four months for Stecher to act.

Wider Aspects Of The Case

In discussing the wider aspects of the case, Zuckerman stressed that, had there been no court challenge by the small group of Jews worshipping at the synagogue and contributing to its maintenance, the transaction would have taken place with no question raised as to the legal right of the sellers to make such a sale.

Rapps said the situation pointed to the lack of some mechanism in the Religious Corporation Law to enforce a requirement of proof of authority to make such transactions, such as a requirement of proof of authority to make such transactions, such as a requirement that would be sellers provide notice to the office of the Attorney General and/or interested Jewish community agencies for public inspection by concerned persons.

Zuckerman said the scenario of abandonment of synagogues by Jews fleeing from deteriorating neighborhoods, and the unsupervised sale of synagogue real property had been a fact of Jewish life in the United States for at least a decade and that there could well be a very substantial number of such transactions of doubtful validity. He said COLPA had been informed of such synagogue building transactions in at least two adjoining states since dispute over the sale of the Pike Street Synagogue became public knowledge.

ALBANY, N.Y. (JTA) -- Gov. Hugh Carey has proclaimed Dec. 10 as "Women's Plea for Soviet Jewry Day" in New York State. The proclamation declared that Dec. 10 also marked UN Human Rights Day and that "it is highly fitting that the heroic struggle for freedom and dignity which continues to be waged by Soviet Jewry be acknowledged and supported by all people of goodwill."