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PLO DENIED OBSERVER STATUS AT MEETINGS OF THE WORLD BANK

By Joseph Polakoff

WASHINGTON, Sept. 24 (JTA) -- The two chief branches of the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the Reconstruction and Finance Corporation (RFC), made known today that they have denied the Palestine Liberation Organization observer status at its annual meeting here and in the process upset a decision by the chairman of the sessions which began next Tuesday, to exclude all other observers.

The IMF and the RFC said that the resolution offered by the United States against changing the rules that prevailed at the 1979 meeting has been adopted by their boards of governors. In accordance with the usual practice, the IMF and the RFC refused to give details of the balloting either by the IMF's 140 members or the RFC's 135.

The IMF, making the first announcement last night, said its resolution provides for the executive directors to "consider the relevant rules with a view to making such proposals to the board of governors as they believe necessary." An IMF spokesman said he would not comment on whether this means the issue will arise again next year since Saudi Arabia and Kuwait, both strong backers of the PLO, have been agitating for its inclusion as an observer.

The RFC early this afternoon disclosed that the resolution adopted by its board of governors "provides that attendance at the 1980 meetings is limited to those observers invited to the 1979 meetings." It is assumed that the IMF will support this stand.

The two resolutions effectively bar observer status to the PLO since it did not have this status at the 1979 meetings. However, Tanzania, which has the chairmanship at this year's annual meetings, decided to deny observer status to all other organizations. Tanzania, represented by its Finance Minister, Amir Jamal, made its decision known after the IMF disclosure of the balloting that ended Friday.

Circumventing Tanzania's Decision

But the RFC ruling apparently has effectively overruled the Jamal decision. The Tanzanian decision reportedly was a sop to the Arab countries for being defeated on their PLO maneuver.

The organizations, which traditionally participate in these World Bank meetings of finance ministers and central bankers, include the Bank for International Settlements (BIS) and the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD). An American source said prior to the RFC statement that the OECD and the BIS probably would be able to have representation through "unofficial observers or special guests" to circumvent Tanzania's decision.

The RFC's decision apparently took cognizance of the view that these important international finance organizations should not be excluded because of pique among the PLO's allies.

Although the results of the balloting have been unofficially known since Friday, the IMF and the RFC reportedly have delayed announcing

the results because Arab countries had challenged the results and Saudi Arabia and Kuwait suspended financing some projects in demanding status for the PLO.

FRANCE SAYS ISRAEL'S 'UNILATERAL' AND 'ILLEGAL' DECISIONS ARE NEW IMPEDIMENTS TO MIDEAST PEACE

By Yitzhak Rabi

UNITED NATIONS, Sept. 24 (JTA) -- France charged today that "the unilateral and illegal decisions of the State of Israel, whether in regard to the West Bank or more recently, Jerusalem, are new impediments to the search for a peaceful settlement in the Middle East."

French Foreign Minister Jean Francois-Poncet, addressing the General Assembly in the course of its general debate, referred only briefly to the Middle East conflict in a speech that outlined his country's major foreign policy principles. But his remarks on the Middle East were conspicuous for singling out Israel's actions as an obstacle to further progress toward a settlement in the area.

In what was obviously another thrust at Israel, though he did not mention it by name, Poncet charged that "attacks on Lebanon's sovereignty and territorial integrity and on the mission and authority of the United Nations force in that country" are a further danger to peace in the area. He said, "The friendship that links France to Lebanon and my country's role in UNIFIL (United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon) makes this action all the more abhorrent to France."

Poncet, whose country is a member of the European Economic Community (EEC), did not elaborate on the Middle East question. The French position was spelled out yesterday by Foreign Minister Gaston Thorn of Luxembourg who spoke for all nine member states of the EEC.

SENATE UNLIKELY TO CONSIDER ISRAELI TAX PACT THIS YEAR

By Joseph Polakoff

WASHINGTON, Sept. 24 (JTA) -- The new U.S.-Israel tax agreement, which seeks to avoid double taxation and includes provisions regarding deductions of taxable income for certain charitable contributions, probably will not be considered by the Senate until after the new Congress convenes in January, the Jewish Telegraphic Agency was informed today.

Senatorial sources said one factor for the delay is the objection by Sen. Mike Gravel (D-Alaska) to referring the agreement, which is a protocol to the Israeli-U.S. treaty, to the Senate Foreign Relations Committee. Gravel wants the Senate Finance Committee, of which he is a member, to consider the agreement, too.

An aide to Gravel told the JTA that Gravel is "concerned about its provisions that would allow U.S. citizens to tax writeoffs on contributions to Israel." The agreement with Israel, however, is not unprecedented for Americans. The same provisions are incorporated in an accord between the United States and Canada already in effect, according to both Senate and U.S. government sources.

One provision of the new agreement would allow an American to deduct on his U.S. tax return

contributions to officially recognized charities in Israel up to 25 percent of the income he derives from Israeli sources. The same applies to Israelis in reverse. Income from Israel Bonds as well as from commercial enterprises would be eligible for such deductions, a U.S. Treasury Department specialist reported.

Under this agreement, he said, charitable organizations in Israel are those that are created or organized under the laws of Israel. In addition, their standard would be measured against U.S. tax laws regarding charities. The donations also would be limited to the U.S. tax laws on charitable contributions.

Because of the limitations on the deductibility of the contributions, the specialist indicated the Treasury Department anticipates the impact on total contributions and on U.S. tax revenues will be relatively small.

Gravel's call for a Senate committee other than Foreign Relations to consider the treaty protocol is said to be unprecedented. The process for Senate ratification of a treaty or protocol to it is for it to be transmitted by the government through the Vice President, who presides over the Senate, to the Secretary of the Senate who makes a request for unanimous consent to refer it to the Senate Foreign Relations Committee. Gravel's objection blocked unanimous consent.

While a Senate majority could set aside Gravel's objection, Senate leaders and the Foreign Relations Committee's key members were said to be bogged down in activities and involved in the national elections which precludes action apparently for the remainder of this session of Congress.

Another factor is that Gravel will not return to the Senate in January and without him procedural objection to the agreement will not arise. Gravel was defeated in Alaska's recent Democratic primary. He alleged that his defeat was in part due to Jewish support for his opponent, Clark Gruening.

JEWISH NAZI VICTIMS IN THE U.S. HAVE TILL NOV. 30 TO FILE FOR GERMAN SOCIAL SECURITY BENEFITS

NEW YORK, Sept. 24 (JTA) -- Jewish victims of Nazism living in the United States have until Nov. 30 to file for West German social security benefits, the Conference on Jewish Material Claims Against Germany announced today in a "reminder" statement issued here. The Conference stressed that all applications for benefits must be submitted to the Bundesversicherungsanstalt fuer Angestellte, Ruhrstr. 2, 1000 Berlin 31, "before the firm deadline of November 30, 1980."

An agreement recently concluded between the United States and the Federal Republic of Germany provides for German social security benefits to certain U.S. citizens who were residents or employed in Germany. "The basic purpose of the agreement is to give former employees in either country a transferable credit for the social insurance contributions made in either Germany or the U.S.," the Conference said.

The new agreement also "makes it possible for those whose employment in Germany was interrupted as a result of Nazi persecution to obtain old-age, widow or disability pensions, providing criteria of eligibility are met and certain retroactive payments are made," the Conference reported.

Former German residents who made no prior

payments into the German social insurance system because they were self-employed lawyers, physicians or housewives, may also qualify. Those whose education and potential employment was interrupted because of persecution may be entitled to "buy into" the German system, the Conference said. "It should also be noted that persons from the so-called 'expulsion areas' (Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Rumania, Yugoslavia, Poland, etc.) may be eligible if they belonged to the German ethnic group," according to the Conference. "Free monthly credits may be granted to certain applicants depending upon age and former employment, and certain rejected claims may be reopened."

The rules governing eligibility and the amounts to be paid, as well as the size of the pensions, are regulated by German laws, including a Law for the Reform of the Pension System, Law to Regulate Workers Social Insurance, and Law for Payments to Victims of National Socialist Injustice, the Conference said. The requirements and computations of optional payments and benefits are highly technical and vary with each case. The Conference urged potential applicants to consult a qualified specialist dealing with German social insurance laws or claims of victims of Nazi persecution.

For further clarification the Conference suggested communication with:

The United Restitution Organization

570 Seventh Avenue

New York, N.Y. 10018

Phone: (212) 921-3860 (Monday thru Thursday)

LEGAL AUTHORITIES MOBILIZE TO DEFEND RIGHTS OF SYRIAN JEWS

NEW YORK, Sept. 24 (JTA) -- The New York Legal Coalition for Syrian Jewry announced today that more than 200 prominent members of the legal profession, including public officials, deans, attorneys and judges have joined together to defend the rights of Syrian Jews, especially the right to emigrate.

New York State Attorney General Robert Abrams, one of the four chairmen, stated that the Coalition "will seek to document and publicize the facts regarding the denial of rights and persecution of the Syrian Jewish community." The other chairmen are Gov. Hugh Carey of New York; Clifford Case, former Republican U.S. Senator from New Jersey; and Joseph McLaughlin, Dean of Fordham University School of Law.

Case said that according to reports on Syria from international rights organizations, there have been "several striking abuses of civil liberties." These include arbitrary detention without trial for political offenses; closed trials with no right to defense counsel; no right to call witnesses when trials are held; torture and beatings; severe internal travel restrictions; and an absolute ban on Jewish emigration.

In its most recent report, the Department of State has severely criticized the Syrian government noting in particular the prohibition against Jewish emigration, Case said. In addition, he noted, the report stated, "There are significant restraints on freedom of speech and assembly, although these freedoms are guaranteed by the Syrian constitution."

Notes Timeliness Of Announcement

Laurence Tisch, president of the Jewish Community Relations Council of New York, with which the Coalition is affiliated, noted the timeliness of this announcement.

"It is important to realize that Syrian Jews have risked their lives and the lives of their children in order to escape," he said. "There is evidence

that a group of lawyers organized in Syria to protest restrictions was recently forced to disband. This, together with other reports of violence in Aleppo and Damascus and threats of civil war, cause us great concern for the safety of our brethren in Syria. The more unstable the situation becomes in Syria, the more likely it is that the Jews may be used as pawns, even scapegoats."

Abrams added, "The new merger between Syria and Libya causes us great concern for the safety of the Syrian Jewish community. Mr. (Hafez) Assad (President of Syria), well-known for his hostility to Israel, recently declared, 'Unity will be a health potion for us and the death knell for our enemies.'"

Among the attorneys working on various Coalition projects are lawyers from families that emigrated from Syria. The Coalition will work with a similar group established in Los Angeles. The leadership of the California Coalition includes Mayor Thomas Bradley, Republican Sen. S.I. Hayakawa and other prominent members of the state's legislative bodies.

CARTER'S INTERVENTION FOILS ARAB MOVE TO OUST ISRAEL FROM UNESCO

By Joseph Polakoff

WASHINGTON, Sept. 24 (JTA) -- An Arab attempt to deprive Israel of its membership in the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) was defeated today at the 21st general conference of the UN agency in Belgrade, the State Department informed the Jewish Telegraphic Agency, apparently as a result of direct intervention by President Carter.

The Carter Administration told the JTA that Carter had directed acting Secretary of State Warren Christopher to have all American embassies inform their host governments that if the challenge to Israel's credentials was successful, the American delegation would walk out of the meeting with as many of its friends and allies that would join it.

No vote was taken on the Arab proposal which caused an unexpected political storm at the Belgrade meeting. The credentials of all 152 member governments were accepted by consensus, but with the clarification that acceptance of Israel's credentials should not be interpreted as evidence of Israel's claim of Jerusalem as its capital, the State Department spokesman said.

While there was no dissent from the consensus, representatives of at least 25 or more member states, mostly Arab and the Soviet Union, spoke out against Israel and expressed reservations. Israel was criticized by them for making Jerusalem its "eternal capital." The U.S. and Australia gave strong support to Israel in the debate. Japan and other countries were also reported to be opposed to expulsion and urged the conference to approve Israel's credentials.

Yesterday, Napoleon LeBlanc of Canada, president of the meeting, submitted a compromise offered by the credentials committee that would have allowed Israel to keep its seat. But Arab and African countries refused to accept it and a decision was postponed until the consensus was taken today.

In addition to Carter's intervention, Secretary of State Edmund Muskie, who is in New York for the 35th session of the UN General Assembly, was in contact with key countries toward the same end. The JTA was told that the Administration

was warning the anti-Israel members of UNESCO that other measures might be taken as needed to block the expulsion of Israel.

When the JTA asked if the other measures included U.S. suspension of its payments to UNESCO -- about 25 percent of the agency's budget -- a top level source declined to comment.

U.S. WITHHOLDS \$5 MILLION IN FUNDS FOR UN PROGRAM

NEW YORK, Sept. 24 (JTA) -- The U.S. has withheld \$5 million in funds for a United Nations program following a request from Rep. Bill Green (R, NY), the legislator's office here reported. Green, in a letter dated Aug. 12 to Secretary of State Edmund Muskie, recommended that the U.S. reconsider its funding to the UN because the United Nations Environmental Program (UNEP) director, Mostafa Tolba, prevented an Israeli firm from being the contractor on a major construction project.

The Israeli firm had submitted the lowest bid on a proposed \$23 million UNEP headquarters complex in Nairobi, Kenya, but "under pressure from Arab and African states," Green said, "Mr. Tolba simply threw out the bids," and plans on revamping the project specifications.

According to the State Department, it warned UNEP that U.S. support was "in jeopardy" and then on Aug. 22 it called its representative in Nairobi and ordered him to advise UNEP that the U.S. \$5 million contribution to UNEP for the second half of 1980 has been indefinitely deferred.

The State Department, in a letter to Green, said it is now awaiting Tolba's report on the project to the UN General Assembly. "It would be absurd to give money and have it used unfairly and against the best interests of the U.S. and our ally Israel," Green said.

WHITE HOUSE REACTS TO BAPTIST MINISTER'S REMARK ON JEWS

By Joseph Polakoff

WASHINGTON, Sept. 24 (JTA) -- The White House reacted today to the statement by Dr. Bailey Smith, president of the Southern Baptist Convention, that "God Almighty does not hear the prayer of a Jew." Smith made that remark at a gathering of fundamentalist Christians in Dallas Aug. 22.

Dr. Robert Maddox, special assistant for religious liaison on the White House staff, told the Jewish Telegraphic Agency, "I personally believe most Southern Baptists would disagree with the Rev. Dr. Smith." Maddox, an ordained Southern Baptist Minister from Calhoun, Ga., who has been at the White House for the past 18 months, also said:

"President Carter has prayed with people like Israeli Prime Minister Menachem Begin and Egyptian President Anwar Sadat and felt a spirit of prayer and communion with them. The President believes that God hears all his children when they pray." Maddox asked the JTA reporter if Smith's remark had disturbed the Jewish community and observed, "It has disturbed thousands and thousands of Southern Baptists across America."

TEL AVIV (JTA) -- One person was seriously injured Tuesday when a bomb apparently planted by terrorists exploded at a bus stop here, police said. The bomb was hidden in a discarded paint can, and a guard at the bus stop was wounded when he tried to move the can, setting off the charge, according to police.

SPECIAL PREVIEW **'PLAYING FOR TIME'** **IS PLAYING WITH FIRE** By Rochelle Sidel Walk

ALBANY, N.Y., Sept. 24 (JTA) -- "We know a little something about the human race that we didn't know before, and it's not good news," Fania Fenelon says in the CBS-TV production of "Playing for Time," which is to be aired Tuesday evening Sept. 30. The Jewish Telegraphic Agency was invited to preview the production without commercial interruptions.

This statement referring to her experience as a member of the women's orchestra at the Birkenau extermination camp could also summarize the three-hour dramatization's effect on the viewer.

"Playing for Time" has been surrounded by controversy since last year when Vanessa Redgrave, an outspoken supporter of the Palestine Liberation Organization, was cast as Fenelon, a half-Jewish French musician. "You are an artist. In this place (Birkenau-Auschwitz) you will have to be an artist and only an artist," orchestra director Alma Rose tells Fenelon in the film. Perhaps both Redgrave and her critics should heed this advice about separating art and politics. Politics aside, as "artist and only an artist," Redgrave is superb in her role.

The other actors -- practically an all-woman cast, including Jane Alexander, Shirley Knight, Viveca Lindfors, Melony Mayron and Marisa Berenson -- are equally convincing in this powerful story of a handful of women prisoners struggling for survival at Auschwitz.

Fenelon's Situation Romanticized

No dramatization nor factual description by a survivor can adequately recreate for others the degradation, the stench, the fear, the death that encompassed inmates of Nazi extermination camps. Despite the shaved heads and running sores, the interspersed footage of actual transport, the production can be criticized for romanticizing and minimizing Fenelon's situation.

While the attempt at realism is more successful than previous television docu-dramas about the Holocaust, we are still left knowing only "a little something" about life in Birkenau-Auschwitz.

The film, written by Arthur Miller and directed by Daniel Mann, nevertheless presents the viewer with some information which has not previously been mentioned by American commercial television:

- There were organized underground resistance activities in the camps.

- Poles, Catholics, political and other "untermenschen" were also victims of the Nazis, but Jews were singled out for "special" treatment.

- The Pope and other Christian leaders knew of the situation in Nazi concentration camps but remained silent.

- The Auschwitz crematorium burned some 12,000 corpses a day.

- Some German Jews were more German than Jewish, but not according to the Nazis.

Errors Of Omission And Commission

But "a little knowledge can be a dangerous thing," the old saying goes. Through errors of omission and commission, "Playing for Time" can give viewers a false impression of life in a Nazi death camp.

For example, Dr. Josef Mengele, the infamous Auschwitz doctor now reportedly hiding in Paraguay, is depicted as a cultured German gentleman who loves music. No mention is made of his heinous human medical experiments; his role in selections of inmates for gassing is grossly minimized. The producer, Linda Yellen for Syzygy Productions, Ltd., apparently assumed prior knowledge which some viewers may lack. But this is a violation of a basic principle of journalism and documentaries -- never to assume prior knowledge. In the case of Mengele, especially, it becomes a travesty of history not to at least mention or indicate his nefarious role.

Likewise, SS camp commander Maria Mandel, chief of the Birkenau women's camp, is portrayed as a sometimes humane music lover who cries over the disappearance of a little Polish boy she had "adopted." In Fenelon's book, on which the film is based, Mandel is specifically described as personally taking "her" little boy to the gas chamber. There is nothing mysterious or implied about his disappearance.

Perhaps most misleading is a scene that exaggerates a description in Fenelon's book. The body of orchestra conductor Rose is laid in state in a coffin, surrounded by flowers. Rose, a German Jew, and niece of Gustav Mahler, was not treated in death nor in life as were hundreds of thousands of victims of Auschwitz.

While Fenelon's book describes this extraordinary but actual occurrence, the film fabricates details that are unbelievable to the point of absurdity. In the film, the coffin of Rose is draped with a Nazi flag by members of the SS and Mengele, himself, comes to pay his last respects. At one point, he even kisses Rose's violin.

Film Shows Exception; Not Rule

Some four million Jews and non-Jews perished in Birkenau-Auschwitz, by gassing, burning, beating, torture, dog bites, shooting, hanging. This was the "normal" way of death there. The film shows the viewer the exception, but not the rule. At this point no film footage of actual gas chambers or crematoriums is interspersed.

Even the one hanging that is portrayed is romanticized. The victim, underground leader Malag, is shown being hanged next to her lover, with whom she had attempted an escape. They gaze into each other's eyes as they die. Malag was in fact hanged alone. But not before she was tortured, beaten and trampled until she was "just one mangled mass of blood, a disjointed puppet," according to Fenelon's book.

The end of the film becomes garbled, as though the producers were "playing for time." After 10 months at Birkenau, Fenelon and other orchestra members were in fact moved to the Bergen-Belsen concentration camp by train in November, 1944 and liberated by the British on April 15, 1945.

BONN (JTA) -- Jewish emigrants from the Soviet Union will no longer be allowed to settle in West Berlin. At a press conference Tuesday, Interior Minister Peter Ulrich of the West Berlin city government, said an exception would only be made for those with families already living in Berlin. Some 2500 Soviet Jews have settled in West Berlin since 1974, some of them with illegal entry papers. Ulrich said about 319 Jews were being investigated for having entered the city illegally. Ulrich said the Jewish community in West Berlin has agreed with the decision.