

SWISS PROTESTANT CHURCHES LAUNCH PETITION DRIVE FOR UNITED JERUSALEM AND FOR EXPULSION OF PLO REPRESENTATIVE IN GENEVA

By Tamar Levy

GENEVA, Dec. 11 (JTA) — A Protestant church movement, the Schweiz Israel Shalom, has initiated a petition drive to collect signatures in favor of united Jerusalem and calling for the expulsion from Switzerland of the Palestine Liberation Organization delegate in Geneva.

The petition, which will be forwarded to the Swiss government, calls on Swiss authorities to recognize united Jerusalem as Israel's capital. It also states that, given Switzerland's neutrality, the illegal terrorist activities of the PLO cannot be condoned. "Thus we demand that the Swiss government expel without delay Daud Barakat, the PLO observer to the UN in Geneva, and that the PLO office in Geneva be closed," the petition states.

Pastor Adolphe Hunziker, the spiritual leader of the Le Reveil church in Geneva, who distributed the petition to his congregation, said: "We do not have any illusions that our gesture will change things but it is the least we can do to show our support for Israel." Hunziker and members of his congregation visit Israel annually.

KIBBUTZIM MOVEMENT CALLS FOR THE ANNEXATION OF THE GOLAN HEIGHTS

By David Landau and Gil Sedan

JERUSALEM, Dec. 11 (JTA) — The United Kibbutz Movement, a merger of the Ihud, which had been affiliated with Mapai, and the Kibbutz Hameuchad, which had been affiliated with Achdut Ha'avoda, has called for the annexation by Israel of the Golan Heights. The call was contained in a resolution adopted today by a majority of the movement's council meeting since yesterday at Kibbutz Netzer Sireni. This is the first conference of the united movement.

The proposal for annexing the Golan was made yesterday by the movement's secretary, Moussa Harif, the former secretary of the Ihud Hakibbutzim Vehakvutzot. He urged that the new movement influence the Labor Party to bring in legislation for this purpose.

Another resolution adopted unanimously today stated that the Golan is an integral part of Israel and that Israeli sovereignty in the Golan is a guarantee for security and peace. The council also decided to continue with the development of the Golan in cooperation with the Histadrut's settlement department.

The resolutions are similar to those passed last month by the Labor Party's political committee. The Kibbutzim representatives comprise 13 percent of the delegates to the Labor Party convention which is scheduled to meet next week.

The merger of the Ihud and Kibbutz Hameuchad was meticulously prepared over several years and is expected to significantly increase the influence of the kibbutz circles in Labor Party forums. The Kibbutz Hameuchad is the bastion of support for Yitzhak Rabin and had previously

formed the nucleus of support for the late Yigal Allon. The Ihud, on the other hand, mainly support Shimon Peres, the chairman of the Labor Party. At this time, the United Kibbutz Movement has to some extent become squared by the race between Peres and Rabin for the Labor Party leadership.

FORD EXTOLLS RELIGIOUS DIVERSITY IN AMERICA; SAYS JEWS PROVIDED SPIRITUAL, MORAL FABRIC OF NATION

By Helen Silver

WASHINGTON, Dec. 11 (JTA) — Former President Ford extolled religious diversity in America last night in an address to some 1500 guests attending the formal opening of an exhibition titled "The Jewish Community in Early America: 1654-1830" sponsored by the Daughters of the American Revolution at the DAR Museum here.

"America is great because of, and not in spite of, the many different people — people of different cultural, religious and national backgrounds — who have participated in its history and its life," Ford said. "Conspicuous among them are the Jewish people, coming from many lands, themselves representing diverse backgrounds but united by their religious and ethical principles which, in fact, have provided the spiritual and moral fabric of this nation."

"This exhibition," the former President said, "is a reminder to us not only of the great contributions of the Jewish people to our beloved country, but also of the principles upon which our nation is founded and to which it owes its quality. It is a reminder that while we are basically a religious nation, it is an essential part of our nationhood that we not only tolerate, but we welcome and owe much to the diversity of religious beliefs and practices among our people."

Ford described the exhibition as "an exciting and inspiring collection." He told the audience that "it is a reminder to us of the enormous debt that we owe to the diverse people who are part of America. Diversity in our society is a great strength of America, just as the beauty of Joseph's coat is its many colors."

The exhibition is the first on a Jewish subject at the DAR Museum. It will continue through March 15 and is open to the public. Admission is free.

HURWITZ MEETS BEGIN ON BUDGET

By Gil Sedan

JERUSALEM, Dec. 11 (JTA) — Finance Minister Yigal Hurwitz met yesterday with Premier Menachem Begin for the second consecutive day in an effort to gain his support for a meagre new budget for 1981-2.

Following the meeting, Hurwitz promised that he would not impose new economic burdens on the public, and that the "prosperity" would continue. Hurwitz met Tuesday with Begin for an hour, and briefed him on the main points of his economic plan. Begin reportedly only listened.

Hurwitz did not appear encouraged upon leaving the initial meeting. He would not disclose the details of the new plan, but a number of principles were disclosed: the government will not increase tax rates and national insurance dues may even be lowered. However, at the same time the government will cancel many services, including non-mandatory education, aid to sick-funds, support of universities, backing

of residential construction and reducing army payrolls.

It was also indicated that the ranks of the Israel Defense Force will be reduced and funds to local authorities will be conditional on budget and staff cuts. The municipalities will be allowed to impose a municipal Value Added Tax (VAT) of 1.5 percent; the diplomatic staff overseas will be reduced, as well as other official representatives overseas; a near-freeze will be imposed on inter-urban highways, and the State will continue to sell properties such as government corporations.

Altogether, the budget will aim at stabilizing the rate of inflation around an annual 100 percent. Presently, the annual rate of inflation is 138 percent.

This year, for the first time, Hurwitz intends to introduce a strict budget which will not allow for any deviation. The various ministries will have to learn to live with their shares in this general framework. This means, of course, that the ministers would have to reach an agreement in the Cabinet.

In the past, the Cabinet has been an arena for dog-fights between the ministers on this issue. It was the argument over the defense budget which led to the resignation of Ezer Weizman as Defense Minister. It was for this reason that Hurwitz was trying to reach an understanding with Begin—both in his capacity as Premier and Defense Minister.

KNESSET UNIT TO CONSIDER CASE OF ABU-HATZEIRA

By David Landau

JERUSALEM, Dec. 11 (JTA) — The Knesset House Committee will convene early next week to consider whether to lift the immunity of Religious Affairs Minister Aharon Abu-Hatzeira who has been indicted on three counts of bribe-taking. It has been urged to do so by Attorney General Yitzhak Zamir so that the 42-year-old Moroccan-born minister and Knesset member can be brought to trial.

But friends of Abu-Hatzeira, mainly from the religious parties, have apparently succeeded in planting doubts in the minds of some committee members that Zamir has a valid case. When the indictment was announced a week ago, it had appeared that a majority of the committee was prepared to strip Abu-Hatzeira of his immunity.

Since then, Zamir and police officials have been accused by religious members of the committee of conducting a vendetta against Abu-Hatzeira. Yehuda Ben-Meir of the National Religious Party and Shlomo Grass of the Aguda charged that senior police detective Binyamin Siegel employed interrogation techniques that bordered on "psychological torture" of the accused.

The minister's attorney, Shlomo-Tussia Cohen, urged the committee not to deprive Abu-Hatzeira of his parliamentary immunity if they were inclined to believe that he would be acquitted in court. The lawyer argued that even though the trial would end with acquittal, it would constitute severe punishment for Abu-Hatzeira as a public figure and political personality.

It was apparent after the committee hearings yesterday that some members were impressed

by these arguments. Uzi Baram of the Labor Party told reporters that he is deeply troubled by the fact that the case against Abu-Hatzeira rests almost exclusively on the testimony of Yisroel Gottlieb, himself a politician and Religious Ministry functionary who escaped indictment by agreeing to turn State's evidence. Baram questioned whether the Attorney General had taken account of the propensity of some politicians to ruin the careers of others.

At the same time, he said, he was troubled by Abu-Hatzeira's refusal to waive immunity and face trial. His full rehabilitation can be achieved only by acquittal, Baram said. Some observers believe Abu-Hatzeira will voluntarily waive immunity before the Knesset committee decides on the issue. They say he is satisfied that he has succeeded in weakening the case against him and thereby improved his standing in public opinion.

Israel television reported Tuesday that if the committee lifts his immunity, Abu-Hatzeira will take a leave of absence from the Cabinet for the duration of the legal process.

STORMY WEATHER IN ISRAEL

By David Landau

JERUSALEM, Dec. 11 (JTA) — Israel had a foretaste of winter when a sudden storm unleashed gale force winds over most of the country last night accompanied by heavy rain and substantial snowfall in Jerusalem and other high-lying areas. There were countless accidents as motorists skidded on ice-coated roads and traffic jams developed in Tel Aviv and Jerusalem because signal lights were short-circuited by flooding.

Meanwhile, Army and Air Force helicopters managed a spectacular off-shore rescue in the teeth of the gale last night. Some 80 foreign laborers, most of them Italian, were air-lifted from two floating hostels that broke their moorings at Hadera and drifted helplessly in heavy seas. Many of the men were bruised and shaken but no serious injuries were reported. The hostels serve as sleeping quarters for laborers building a coal jetty for the new coal-fired electric power plant in Hadera.

The rain was welcomed by farmers because it ended a prolonged drought that threatened their crops. The snow came as a surprise for Jerusalemites. Although it occurs annually, it rarely snows before January and February when temperatures descend to the freezing point.

PATRIARCH BENEDICTUS DEAD AT 92

JERUSALEM, Dec. 11 (JTA) — The head of the Greek Orthodox Church in Israel, Patriarch Benedictus I, died here yesterday. He was 92 years old.

Benedictus was the 96th Patriarch in the Mideast after the foundation of this church. He was born in Turkey, and came to Palestine at a young age. Altogether he spent some 70 years of his life in this country. He was appointed as leader of his church in 1957 and has since been considered as one of Israel's greatest friends in the Christian leadership in the area.

His funeral will take place tomorrow or Sunday. It is expected to turn into a major Christian event, with religious leaders attending from the USSR and Greece as well as a delegation of 22 Greek Orthodox bishops from the U.S., who are presently in Israel.

BLUM CHARGES JORDAN'S UN ENVOY WITH CRUDE ANTI-SEMITIC SLANDERS

By Yitzhak Rabi

UNITED NATIONS, Dec. 11 (JTA) — Yehuda Blum, Israel's Ambassador to the United Nations,

charged here yesterday that a number of statements made during the current Mideast debate in the General Assembly were pervasively anti-Semitic in tone. "The crudest anti-Semitic slanders were uttered by the representative of the Palestinian Arab state of Jordan," Ambassador Hazen Nuseibeh, Blum said, charging that delegates to the UN "enjoy an immunity to spread anti-Semitic invective with an openness and in a way which will not be tolerated in any decent society."

The Israeli envoy's remarks followed charges by Nuseibeh that there is a Jewish cabal "which controls, manipulates and exploits the rest of humanity by controlling the money and wealth of the world."

Blum said that this is not the first time that the Jordanian official "has revealed his warped mentality and embarrassed this Assembly by drawing almost word by word from such notoriously anti-Semitic works as the 'Protocols of the Elders of Zion.'"

In his speech Monday in the course of the Mideast debate, which was concluded yesterday, Nuseibeh attacked "People like Lord Rothschild (who) every day, in iron-clad secrecy, decide and flash round the world how high the price of gold should be on each particular day," and Harry Oppenheimer of South Africa, chairman of the Anglo American company, parent of De Beers Consolidated Mines, the diamond monopoly, for holding "15 million Blacks in bondage" and exploiting South Africa's natural resources.

"These odious charges," Blum declared yesterday, "are nothing but out and out anti-Semitism of the worst and most virulent kind. If this Assembly were to stop playing at a mock parliament, and were to introduce some real parliamentary rules and ethics such calumnies would have long been ruled out of order."

"I have warned of the danger of this organization becoming a world center for anti-Semitism," Blum continued, "on a number of occasions. Nowadays, it is fashionable to avoid direct attacks on Jews and the Jewish people. Instead, anti-Semites now attack Zionism and Zionists. There used to be a time when some delegates here claimed that they were not anti-Jewish, but merely anti-Zionist. That cover has long been blown by statements of the Nuseibehs and their ilk -- to the lasting shame of this organization."

NEW MEDICAL DIAGNOSIS TECHNIQUES ANNOUNCED BY HAIFA TECHNION

By David Landau

HAIFA, Dec. 11 (JTA) — A new approach to medical diagnosis developed at the Haifa Technion will become available to clinicians soon.

The technology enables safer, less expensive performance of a wide variety of clinical diagnostic tests, including pregnancy tests, thyroid examinations in cases of growth or functional problems, urine analysis, dosage analysis for heart patients where exact dosage can be a matter of life or death, and can be useful in cases of chemical or drug poisoning. In addition, it is safer for the clinician working with radioactive tests.

The new system consists of sophisticated new test tubes and operating equipment, in which danger from radioactive radiation is practically eliminated. The research was carried out in the chemistry department by Prof. Michael Cais and Moshe Shimoni, a doctoral student.

The new system is based on immunoassay technique. Radio-immunoassay is a diagnostic method using specific antibodies and radioisotope labelled antigens. Most currently used diagnostic methods using radioimmunoassay techniques suffer from many disadvantages, including safety hazards from radiation, time consuming centrifugation steps, problems of accuracy because of complicated separation techniques and technician handling.

The new technology provides a high degree of safety, eliminates the centrifugation steps and technician handling, reduces time of the assay and provides increased accuracy for the assay.

The Swiss firm, Ares (Applied Research Systems) will be partners with the Technion's research and development foundation and the researchers, in reduction of the technological system. The project was supported by the chief scientist of the Ministry of Industry, Commerce and Tourism, Prof. Arye Lavi.

SOVIET JEWRY VIGIL, HUMAN RIGHTS DAY MARKED BY WASHINGTON JEWRY By Helen Silver

WASHINGTON, Dec. 11 (JTA) — Washington Jewry observed the 10th anniversary of its daily vigil for Soviet Jewry and the 32nd anniversary of the signing of the United Nations Declaration on Human Rights here yesterday with an appeal to the Soviet Union to free Jewish Prisoners of Conscience and to end the "cultural and religious persecution of Jews" who seek to emigrate from the USSR.

Marking the vigil, which has been a daily practice opposite the Soviet Embassy since it began on Dec. 10, 1970, during the Chanukah festival, a large crowd gathered at the site as Marcia Weinberg, chairman of the Soviet Jewry Committee of the Jewish Community Council of Greater Washington, and Rev. John Steinbruch, Pastor of the Luther Place Memorial Church, attempted to deliver a "statement of concern" to the Embassy.

They were met at the Embassy gate by an official who spoke to them briefly but refused to accept the document. It was later mailed to the Embassy.

The case of Viktor Brailovsky, the Soviet Jewish scientist and human rights activist who was arrested Nov. 13 and is currently awaiting trial in Moscow on charges of "slandering the Soviet State," was the central focus of the Human Rights Day observance. A program preceding the vigil was addressed by Jerry Goodman, executive director of the National Conference for Soviet Jewry, who assessed the outlook for human rights and Soviet Jews following the Helsinki review conference in Madrid, and by Steinbruch who reported on his human rights activities in Madrid. Steinbruch said he had raised the Brailovsky case with the delegates of several nations participating in the conference.

The statement addressed to the Soviet Embassy said: "We call on the government of the USSR to live up to the obligations of the UN Declaration on Human Rights and to the Helsinki agreements, and to free all Jewish Prisoners of Conscience who are suffering in labor camps, prisons or in exile because of their desire to emigrate to Israel; to forbid all existing forms of cultural and religious persecution of Jews who have expressed the wish to unite with their families and their people; and to allow the 'refusniks' — those men, women and children who for years have been deprived of their basic rights and have lived under constant pressure without means of livelihood — to emigrate from the USSR."

PENNSYLVANIA GOVERNOR, VISITING ISRAEL, SAYS STRONG ISRAEL IS CENTRAL TO AMERICAN INTERESTS

PHILADELPHIA, Dec. 11 (JTA) — Gov. Dick Thornburgh of Pennsylvania visibly impressed by what he described as "an exciting and rewarding five-day trip through Israel" — his first look — told reporters in Jerusalem that "a strong Israel is central to American interests. If the U.S. wants to preserve its respect on the international scene, it must honor its commitments to its allies," according to a report on the Governor's trip in this week's edition of the Jewish Exponent. The Republican official visited Israel last month.

Asked by the Jewish Exponent correspondent in Israel what report he intends to bring to his fellow Pennsylvanians, Thornburgh said: "I will stress the fact that the U.S. continues to have a staunch friend in Israel, which looks to our nation with profound respect. It's been an inspiration to witness the extraordinary progress this small, democratic country has made."

Continuing, the governor asserted: "We have a stake in Israel's stability and advancement, for if we wish to preserve our oil and trade interests in the Middle East we must make every effort to bring a just and lasting peace to the area." He stressed that he was "confident" that President-elect Reagan "feels the same way, and that he will not allow himself to be pressured by big business and the oil trusts to enter any agreement with OPEC (Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries) or other states which would be injurious to Israel."

Replying to a question as to whether he believes that cuts in aid to Israel might be made by a Republican Administration, the governor expressed his confidence that the President-elect is aware of the fact that "the U.S. has a stake in Israel" and would do nothing to weaken that country. He noted that Richard Allen, Reagan's Foreign Policy Advisor, has often stressed Israel's strategic importance to the U.S.

Israel's Borders Are Vulnerable

"I had a chance to see just how vulnerable Israel's borders are," Thornburgh stresses. "Anyone who goes to the Galilee can see for himself why it's necessary for Israel to be constantly alert, and understandably sensitive about requests — sometimes demands — from well-intentioned people who from afar cannot appreciate the situation in which Israel finds itself. It's a small country with vulnerable borders and hostile, well-armed neighbors."

"I can understand why Israel can mistakenly be considered hyper-sensitive on the matter of its security. I visited Yad Vashem, the memorial in Jerusalem to the six million victims who perished in Hitler's Europe. Israelis — indeed, Jews everywhere — are haunted by that trauma. They are determined to survive. I would recommend that every statesman visit that shrine and see for himself why every Israeli tends to view events through the prism of the Holocaust. Six million human beings were butchered as the world looked on."

The governor also remarked that after seeing Jerusalem he could appreciate why the city must remain undivided. "Better a little friction

now and then," he said, "rather than barbed wire." According to the governor, the Camp David accords hold out the best possible prospects for peace. "It will undoubtedly become the cornerstone of Reagan's policy vis-a-vis Egypt and Israel," he affirmed.

What would be America's position were Israel to be attacked again? "We'd rush aid as fast as possible," came the prompt reply.

One of the most moving experiences of the governor's trip occurred when he and his wife Ginny met the relatives in Israel of Jewish "refuseniks" they had spoken to during an earlier National Governors' Association trip to the Soviet Union. The encounter was arranged by Joseph Smukler, president of the Jewish Community Relations Council of Greater Philadelphia, and his wife Connie, Philadelphia co-chairperson of JCRC's Soviet Jewry Council.

Denounces Anti-Semitism

Speaking out strongly against Russian persecution of Jews wishing to leave for Israel, the governor stated that "until the question of granting human rights is satisfactorily settled, there could be little opportunity for increased trade between the U.S. and the Soviet Union," which the Kremlin desires. He strongly endorsed the Jackson-Vanik amendment which he maintained had compelled the Russians to mitigate their oppression of their Jewish minority. He stated that he would work for the release of imprisoned Jews whose only crime was their desire to leave the USSR.

Noting that anti-Semitism was not confined only to the Soviet Union but had raised its head again in Western Europe, Thornburgh pledged that he would take vigorous action if he encounters it in Pennsylvania. "I can well understand Israel's bitterness with what is taking place in so-called democratic lands — they are accustomed to it in Moslem and Soviet-dominated countries — and I, too, share their sense of outrage," he said.

The Thornburghs took a day off from their tour of Israel to make a quick trip to Egypt where they met with officials close to President Anwar Sadat. They came away, the governor said, convinced that the Egyptian people wanted peace as much as the Israelis.

The week-long Israel mission was arranged with the cooperation of the Israel Foreign Ministry and was coordinated by the Federation of Jewish Agencies of Greater Philadelphia.

One of the highlights of the governor's visit was a trip to the "good fence" at the Israeli-Lebanese border where he and Mrs. Thornburgh met Maj. Saad Haddad, the leader of the Christian forces in southern Lebanon. "Here we had an opportunity to see how peace can be attained on a people-to-people basis," Thornburgh stated. "Both are working together against their common enemy, the PLO, which, significantly enough, has taken a toll of far more Christian lives than Jewish ones."

NEW YORK (JTA) — Igor Guberman, who was sentenced last March to five years imprisonment in a labor camp and had his property confiscated, has been released from the camp and sent to internal exile in Siberia where he will serve a 16-month term, according to the Student Struggle for Soviet Jewry and the Union of Councils for Soviet Jews. His exact location is at present unknown. In another development, Simon Shnirman, 23, who was arrested May 1978, was released from a labor camp Nov. 29 after completing a 2 1/2 year sentence on charges of draft evasion.