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At The Gathering Of Jewish Holocaust Survivors: REAGAN PLEDGES THAT 'THE SECURITY OF YOUR SAFE HAVENS HERE AND IN ISRAEL WILL NEVER BE COMPROMISED'

By David Friedman

WASHINGTON, April 12 (JTA) -- Thousands of survivors of the Holocaust and their children received a pledge from President Reagan last night that their security would never again be in jeopardy either in the United States or in Israel.

The President, speaking to some 17,500 persons at the opening ceremony of the American Gathering of Jewish Holocaust Survivors, noted that Jews had recently celebrated Passover which marked the ancient exodus from Egypt.

"You bear witness to a modern day exodus from the darkness of unspeakable horror to the light of refuge of safe havens, the two most important being America and what soon became the State of Israel," Reagan said. "As a man whose heart is with you and as President of a people you are now so much a part of, I promise you the security of your safe havens here and in Israel, will never be compromised."

His statement was received with thunderous applause throughout the large oval shaped Capitol Centre by the survivors and their children who came to Washington for the four-day Gathering from throughout the United States and Canada.

Reagan also expressed the "gratitude" of the U.S. to the survivors "for choosing America... for reminding us how important it is to remain true to our ideals as individuals and as a nation."

'We Are Here'

The President, accompanied by his wife, Nancy, received from Benjamin Meed, president of the Gathering, a Scroll of Remembrance to the American people signed by some 50,000 Holocaust survivors and their children. Meed, saying "we are here," in Yiddish, declared in English that the journey from Auschwitz to America and from the Warsaw Ghetto, of which the 40th anniversary of its uprising is also being marked at the Gathering, to Washington seems an "incredible distance."

He noted that 38 years ago yesterday the U.S. Army under Gen. Dwight D. Eisenhower liberated Buchenwald. He said the survivors want to give "thanks to the hundreds of thousands of young Americans who fought to liberate us and the thousands who gave their lives to crush Hitlerism." He pointed out that a major theme of the Gathering is to give thanks to the U.S. for the new lives the survivors were able to build here.

Recalls A 'Bitter' Time

But Meed also said that there was a "bitter" time when the U.S. failed to take in persons fleeing Nazism and then during World War II it failed to bomb the death camps and the railroads leading to them. He also stressed that anti-Semitism continues now under the guise of anti-Zionism with Jews being attacked in Paris and Rome, Jews being oppressed in the Soviet Union and Israel being "reviled" in the United Nations.

Reagan, in his address, also took note that there was a time when "how we and our friends acted" was "not favorable to our memory." Following the presentation of the Scroll, the audience joined the U.S. Navy Band in singing "God Bless America."

U.S. Pressure On Israel Criticized

While Reagan's speech implied a confirmation of U.S. support for Israel, Elie Wiesel, the writer and chairman of the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Council, appeared to criticize Administration pressure on Israel.

Speaking after the President departed, Wiesel declared that "to remember" the Holocaust means "not to apply pressure on Israel." He called such pressure "morally wrong" since Israel was the only place to take in Jews when the "world closed its gates" to Jews. "Israel is the only country in the world that is threatened militarily by its enemies and politically by its friends," he said.

Dov Shilansky, a deputy minister representing the Israeli government, said that Israel now allows the Jewish people to "determine our future." He said that Israel seeks peace but it can have peace only if it "gives us security."

Julius Berman, chairman of the Conference of Presidents of Major American Jewish Organizations, said that the Gathering was a "commitment to the safety and security of our brethren" in Israel "against all threats and all pressures from whatever source."

'We Refuse To Forget'

While one of the themes of the Gathering was, according to Meed, to "express our close ties with Israel," its major purpose was to keep the remembrance of the Holocaust alive. Berman referred to this when he said: "Tonight is dedicated to remembrance. We are assembled here to state to the world that we refuse to forget what occurred during those dark days, dark days of destruction and persecution, when virtually no country in the world lifted a finger to halt the mass destruction."

Rabbi Arthur Schneier, president of the American Section of the World Jewish Congress, said, "To be spared implies the obligation of survivors to remember, never to forget."

Reagan also stressed this theme in his address. "We are here first and foremost to remember. These are the Days of Remembrance, Yom Ha-Shoah." He said that "good and decent people must not close their eyes to evil" and "must never remain silent and inactive in times of moral crisis." But he stressed "what we do tonight is not for us" but for the next generation.

Meed also pointed out that soon all of the survivors will be gone "but we must see that our past is not forgotten." Menachem Rosensaft, chairman of the International Network of Children of Jewish Holocaust Survivors, pledged that "we will never forget."

Reagan, in his address, discussed the stories of some individual survivors and of "righteous gentiles" who sought to help Jews as he has done in his two previous Holocaust addresses in 1981 and 1982. The loudest applause came when he mentioned Raoul Wallenberg, the Swedish diplomat who was imprisoned by the Soviet

Union after he saved thousands of Hungarian Jews from the Nazis. "If those who took him from Budapest would win our trust let them start by giving us an accounting of Raoul Wallenberg," Reagan declared.

The plight of Soviet Jews was not neglected by speakers at the ceremony last night. Wiesel called for an "appeal so powerful as to break all indifference" toward Soviet Jewry.

The long ceremony included the lighting of six candles for the six million Jews killed by the Nazis by survivors, children of survivors and members of the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Council. The audience recited Kaddish and the El Mole Rachamin was chanted by Cantor Isaac Goodfriend of Atlanta, Georgia, a member of the Holocaust Memorial Council.

Meaning Of Remembrance

In other addresses, Berman said the Nazis not only tried to kill Jews but they "attempted to extinguish that glorious chain of tradition that we, the Jewish people, have maintained throughout the ages." He declared: "We are here this evening to give testimony that that diabolical scheme has not succeeded, and we commit ourselves that it will never succeed."

Gideon Hausner, chairman of the Council of Vad Vashem in Jerusalem, said that the ceremonies of remembrance in Jerusalem and Washington this week forges a stronger common bond between the U.S. and Israel. He said remembering "is the really true monument to the victims and heroes of the Holocaust, stronger than any brick and mortar because it lives in the hearts of the people."

A Poignant Moment

One of the most poignant moments in the ceremony last night was the appearance of two persons who met when the U.S. Army liberated Buchenwald on April 11, 1945. One was Rabbi Herschel Schacter of The Bronx, N.Y., who as a chaplain in the U.S. Army, discovered a frightened seven-year-old boy hiding behind a pile of corpses as the U.S. troops walked into the camp. The other was that boy, Israel Lau, now Chief Rabbi of Netanya in Israel.

At The Gathering Of Jewish Holocaust Survivors: HOLTZMAN URGES INVESTIGATION TO EXAMINE 'WHAT OUR GOVERNMENT DID WITH HITLER'S HENCHMEN HERE'
By Helen Silver

WASHINGTON, April 12 (JTA) — Congress was urged by former Rep. Elizabeth Holtzman today to authorize the establishment of a special commission with subpoena powers "to examine what our government did with Hitler's henchmen here."

Holtzman, who is presently District Attorney of Brooklyn, was referring to the Nazi war criminals hired by U.S. government agencies after World War II and helped by them to escape justice. The former member of Congress from New York delivered greetings and the opening address at today's plenary session of the American Gathering of Holocaust Survivors here, marking the 40th anniversary of the Warsaw Ghetto uprising.

The Gathering is attended by more than 15,000 Jewish Holocaust survivors and their children. Many of them were guests at a Congressional breakfast at the Capitol this

morning where they met with more than a dozen Senators and Representatives from their home states and districts. The plenary session was followed by a series of panel discussions. One of the most important topics, to which most of the day was devoted, was the special role of the children of survivors and its many ramifications.

Holtzman, who called for "a relentless war against anti-Semitism" because "we must insist on the right of Jewish survival," said that Klaus Barbie, the "butcher of Lyon" now awaiting trial in a French prison, is not the only Nazi murderer helped by the U.S. government. She said the government hired more than 20 Nazi war criminals after World War II with full knowledge of the charges against them.

Holtzman, who as a member of Congress spearheaded the drive to root out former Nazis living in the U.S. who obtained American citizenship by lying about their past activities, stressed that those Nazis still at large in the U.S. must be brought to justice. She said the U.S. must call on Canada and on the Latin American countries to act similarly with respect to Nazi war criminals within their borders. European countries also must be made to exert greater efforts in that direction, she said.

Other speakers at the plenary session expressed appreciation to the U.S. for having provided a haven and opportunities for Holocaust survivors. They praised the heroism not only of the defenders of the Warsaw Ghetto but of Jews who resisted the Nazis in many other parts of Europe.

Some of the panel discussion topics this afternoon were on the "Integration of the Children of Survivors into Society," "Creative Responses to the Holocaust" and "Anti-Semitism in America."

ISRAEL PROTESTS TO LEBANON AGAINST BEIRUT'S ORDERS TO RESTRICT TRANSIT OF GOODS By David Landau

JERUSALEM, April 12 (JTA) — Israel delivered a "vigorous protest" to Lebanon yesterday against the Beirut government's orders restricting the transit of goods between the two countries. Israeli officials said the protest was made at Netanya where the delegates of Israel, Lebanon and the U.S. convened for another round of talks aimed at reaching political and security agreements.

The Lebanese delegation offered no immediate response but said it would refer the protest to the authorities in Beirut. Israeli sources quoted Lebanese negotiators as saying that the issue of trade would be resolved once an agreement is signed for the withdrawal of Israeli forces from Lebanon.

Lebanese merchants have reported that the Lebanese army has set up road blocks in the Beirut area to impound goods originating in Israel. A Lebanese newspaper reported Sunday that some traders have been arrested for buying Israeli goods. President Amin Gemayel recently issued an edict ordering the confiscation of goods purchased illegally but it is not clear whether this was directed specifically at Israeli goods.

Some Lebanese sources have accused Israel of dumping its products on the Lebanese market, to the detriment of the local economy. Israel insists that trade is part of the normalization of relations it demands from Lebanon. It is unclear how much reference to trade is contained in the agreement that has been evolving between the two countries for the past four months.

Lebanon is known to be extremely reluctant to spell out the terms of normalization in the agree-

ment because of the negative effect this would have on its trade and diplomatic relations with the Arab world. Nevertheless, Israeli sources say they are satisfied with the sense of determination that marks the approach of all parties to the negotiations.

The talks are now said to be in their final stage. The three parties are meeting four times a week instead of twice weekly as had been the case. They spend two days in Netanyahu, and two days in Khalde, near Beirut. The U.S. has been represented at the talks by Morris Draper, a State Department official with the rank of special Ambassador. President Reagan's representative, special Ambassador Philip Habib who just returned to the region from Washington, has now joined the talks.

The delegates from the three countries are attempting to finalize a draft based on all matters agreed upon to date and to draw up an inventory of issues still outstanding. Chief among the latter, according to Israeli sources, is the future role of Israel's ally in Lebanon, Maj. Saad Haddad, and the future presence of the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL) in the south Lebanon security zone.

The sources said Lebanon has accepted Haddad's continued presence in the zone in some capacity. But it still refuses Israel's demand that Haddad be appointed commander of a "territorial brigade" comprised of his 2,000-man Christian militia and Lebanese army regulars to maintain security in south Lebanon after Israeli forces withdraw.

REAGAN TO MOVE AHEAD WITH HIS INITIATIVE DESPITE HUSSEIN'S DECISION

WASHINGTON, April 12 (JTA) — President Reagan reaffirmed today his intention to move ahead with his September 1 Middle East peace initiative despite the decision by King Hussein of Jordan to drop his efforts to negotiate with Israel on behalf of the Palestinians.

Denouncing what he termed "radical elements" for putting a snag in his initiative, Reagan said, "We will not let the forces of violence and terror exercise a veto over the peace process." Reagan made his remarks during a White House welcoming ceremony for the Sultan of Oman, Qaboos Bin.

Asked specifically if the Jordanian decision brings his peace initiative to an abrupt halt, Reagan replied, "It is not dead." He called on "the Palestinian leadership" to make "a bold and courageous move" to break the Middle East impasse.

His comments today were the first since telling reporters last Sunday that Hussein's decision "would impede" the U.S. efforts to bring about a Mideast peace settlement. Reagan asserted today, however, that there "may be bumps along the way," but that the U.S. "will not be deterred from our long-term objectives."

Earlier, a White House spokesman said Reagan had telephoned President Hosni Mubarak of Egypt last night to review the Middle East situation. The spokesman would not provide details of the conversation with the Egyptian leader. It was the fourth call Reagan has made to an Arab leader since Sunday. He has also spoken with Hussein, King Hassan of Morocco and King Fahd of Saudi Arabia.

Meanwhile, the spokesman for the Israel Cabinet, Dan Meridor, today urged the Reagan Administration to return to the Camp David process "and ask King Hussein to come along without the extremists," an apparent reference to the PLO. Speaking on the NBC-TV "Today" program, Meridor said "the worst thing to do is to ask the PLO to participate."

ISRAEL TO LAUNCH CAMPAIGN TO ATTRACT MORE SETTLERS TO THE WEST BANK AND THE GAZA STRIP

By Gil Sedan

JERUSALEM, April 12 (JTA) — Israel will launch a new mass campaign to attract more settlers to the West Bank and Gaza Strip next week, aimed to "establish facts" in those territories, according to Ben-Zion Rubin, Deputy Minister of Labor and Welfare who announced the program at a press conference here today.

Rubin said the new settlement drive "is the proper response to the refusal of King Hussein to join the peace talks." He explained that this was so, even though the campaign was planned many months ago, because it was announced two days after Jordan declared it would not negotiate with Israel on behalf of the Palestinians.

"We shall establish facts in Judea and Samaria whether you (Hussein) join or not join. Eretz Israel is all ours," Rubin proclaimed. He said the effort to attract more settlers will begin officially next week, right after Israel's Independence Day and would last a month. Tours will be organized to the building sites and settlers will receive loans on easy terms from the Housing Ministry, as well as grants, Rubin said.

He said 68 settlements on the West Bank and Gaza Strip are participating in the campaign. According to Rubin, 4,000 apartments are now ready for occupancy. There are presently about 30,000 Jewish settlers in the territories and the intention is to add 15,000 more by the end of next summer, a 50 percent increase.

S.A.F.E. SAYS COLUMNISTS ERRED

NEW YORK, April 12 (JTA) — Americans for a Safe Israel (SAFE) said today that syndicated columnists Rowland Evans and Robert Novak erred when they reported on April 8 that Israeli government officials had promoted the sale of land on the West Bank to American Jews during a SAFE conference in New York on March 13.

The organization, which contends that Israel must permanently retain the West Bank if it is to be secure, said the conference was a forum in response to President Reagan's September 1 peace initiative which Israel rejects, that none of the speakers could be considered an Israel government official and that none promoted land sales.

SAFE said the only mention of land sales to Americans at the conference was contained in a flyer explaining how Americans could buy land on the West Bank. "None of the Israelis addressing the conference was aware of the existence of the flyer," SAFE said.

AVRAHAM YOFFE DEAD AT 69

TEL AVIV, April 12 (JTA) — Maj. Gen. (res.) Avraham Yoffe, a commander in the pre-State Hagana and in the Israel army, died here last night at the age of 69 after a long illness. He had served in the Knesset for a time as a member of the Land of Israel movement before it merged with Likud and, at his death was head of the Nature Preserves Authority.

Yoffe was born in Yavniel, Israel and educated in England. He was an officer of Hagana, the Jewish defense force in Mandate Palestine from 1936-39 and served in Gen. Orde Wingate's special Night Squads which protected Jewish settlements during the Arab riots in that period. He served in the British army's Palestine unit from 1940-46 and from 1948-56 was commander of the Israel army's northern and southern commands.

SCHINDLER TO LEAD A DELEGATION OF 24 REFORM JEWISH LEADERS TO WARSAW GHETTO UPRISING CEREMONIES

NEW YORK, April 12 (JTA) — Rabbi Alexander Schindler, president of the Union of American Hebrew Congregations (UAHC), will lead a delegation of 24 Reform Jewish leaders to Poland to attend ceremonies marking the 40th anniversary of the Warsaw Ghetto uprising next week.

"Our presence cannot be construed as support for the present government there or as endorsement of the suppression of human rights in Poland," Schindler said.

"Rather, our purpose is to dedicate the restored synagogue in Warsaw, to visit the Jewish cemeteries we helped repair, to honor the memory of the heroes of the ghetto in the place where they died, and then to go on to Treblinka and Auschwitz to say Kaddish and to renew the vow that those who lie in unnamed graves will never be forgotten."

Schindler recalled the cultural exchange agreement, signed in 1981, between the UAHC and the government, church and academic institutions in Poland, under which sacred objects, books and manuscripts, historical texts, paintings and other items that were thought destroyed in the Holocaust are being made available in the United States for exhibition, reproduction and scholarly study.

A special aspect of this program, Schindler said, was the raising of funds from Reform synagogues in the U.S. and Canada to help repair crumbling Jewish cemeteries in Poland. Thus far, he said, about \$25,000 has been raised and seven cemeteries in Warsaw, Lublin, Bialystok, Lodz and Cracow have had restoration work begun.

Scheduled Meetings In Warsaw

In Warsaw the UAHC delegation will meet with Joseph Cardinal Glemp, Primate of Poland, and will be received at a reception in the American Embassy there, Schindler said. He pointed out that participation of the UAHC in the ceremonies in Poland had been decided after "full consultation" with the U.S. State Department, which he said "urged us to go."

Schindler will also take part in the rededication and reopening of the Nejeck synagogue in Warsaw. In behalf of Reform Jews in the U.S. and Canada, he will present to the congregation eight silver Torah ornaments from the collection of Mount Nebah Congregation in Manhattan.

More than 1,000 Jewish representatives from Western countries — including several hundred from Israel — are expected at the ceremonies. A highlight of the visit will be the official ceremonies in Warsaw's Grand Opera House at which President Vladislav Jablonsky will represent the Polish government.

Schindler will address the gathering. Other scheduled speakers are: Julius Berman, chairman of the Conference of Presidents of Major American Jewish Organizations; Rabbi Isaac Lewin, a leader of Agudath Israel of America; and Henry Taub, president of the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee.

The World Council of Synagogues, international branch of the Conservative movement, will be represented at the ceremonies through its vice president, Leon Jolson, as will the World Federation of Jewish Fighters, Partisans and Camp Inmates, headed by Stefan Grayek of Israel, its president.

The World Jewish Congress will be represented at the ceremonies by Greville Janner, M.P., of London, president of the Board of Deputies of British Jews and vice president of the WJC; Dr. Gerhart Riegner of Geneva, secretary general of the WJC; and Kalman Sultank of New York, vice president of the WJC.

Yad Vashem, the Israel government-sponsored Holocaust museum and documentation center in Jerusalem, will be represented at the ceremonies by Ze'evulun Hammer, Israel's Minister of Education.

Opposition To The Ceremonies

Two U.S. Jewish groups have publicly opposed Jewish participation in the ceremonies. They are the Jewish Labor Committee and the Workmen's Circle. A surviving leader of the Warsaw Ghetto uprising, Marek Edelman of Lodz, rejected an invitation to serve on the Polish-government sponsored anniversary committee. He declared:

"To celebrate our anniversary here, where enslavement and humiliation is now the lot of a whole society, where words and gestures have become nothing but lies, would betray the spirit of our struggle... The true memory of the victims and heroes, of the eternal striving for truth and freedom, will be preserved in the silence of graves and of hearts."

Commenting on this statement, Schindler said: "I recognize and appreciate Dr. Edelman's feelings. There is no right or wrong here. Each of us must decide as the heart dictates."

In Israel, Grayek also responded to Edelman's contention by noting that he had argued with the former Warsaw Ghetto leader about it. Grayek charged that Edelman was a Socialist Bund leader in Poland and had always been anti-Zionist and had failed to speak out against anti-Semitic tendencies in his country. Grayek noted that the Israeli and Jewish delegations from the West will be drawing attention to the fate and heroism of the anti-Nazi fighters in Warsaw and in other ghettos.

MORE ISRAELIS ARE OPPOSING CONCESSIONS ON THE WEST BANK

TEL AVIV, April 12 (JTA) — A public opinion poll published in today's Maariv shows a steady increase in the percentage of Israelis who oppose any territorial concessions on the West Bank.

The poll, conducted by the Modi'in Ezrachi Institute, also showed that exactly half of those questioned were in favor of a temporary freeze on West Bank settlement activities to enable the start of negotiations with Jordan, while 35.5 percent were against such a settlement halt.

The number against territorial concessions rose from 42.4 percent in December 1982 to 46.6 percent in February to 50.2 percent in March 1983. Those in favor of giving up "certain parts" dropped in those months from 39.8 percent to 31.9 percent last month.

GENEVA (JTA) — The International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) has declined to confirm or deny that its representative who investigated a mystery ailment on the West Bank a week ago shares the Israeli view that the symptoms which sent hundreds of teenage Arab girls to hospitals were a manifestation of mass hysteria. Dr. Franz Altherr, who conducted the investigation on behalf of the Red Cross, has refused to make any comment to the press since he returned to Geneva last Tuesday.