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SPECIAL TO THE JTA OVER 20,000 PEOPLE PAY HOMAGE TO DEAD OF AUSCHWITZ-BIRKENAU By Milton Jacoby

AUSCHWITZ, April 21 (JTA) -- More than 20,000 people jammed the green fields dotted with deserted barracks, and the plaza surrounding the striking monument to the dead of Auschwitz-Birkenau, the largest Nazi death camp.

Jewish delegations from all over the world; scores of Polish government officials; ordinary Poles, Jews and non-Jews alike from many towns and cities all over Poland were present. It was one of the largest gatherings ever to be held at this death site since the war, apparently exceeded in numbers only at the time Pope John Paul II visited the site in 1979.

Auschwitz held the world's record for murder: Up to 60,000 people a day were killed by the use of Zyklon B gas. First, in 1941, it was mainly Polish Jews, and then Jews from every country of Europe. By 1944 more than three million were executed.

Under the bright sun, on this 40th anniversary of the Warsaw Ghetto uprising, to the accompaniment of military drums, one delegation after another marched to the monument to lay its wreath. They included representatives of the Polish government, the Union of Fighters for Freedom and Democracy, the International Auschwitz Committee, the World Federation of Jewish Combatants, the World Jewish Congress and others.

Symbol Of The Jewish Presence

The large Israeli contingent laid a blue and white flowered wreath and then stood beside the monument proudly holding aloft the Israeli flag -- the most visible symbol of the Jewish presence at this enormous observance.

(A few hours earlier, a 16-member Israeli delegation had left Warsaw upon learning that a PLO representative had placed a wreath yesterday at the Warsaw Ghetto fighters memorial well after the ceremonies were concluded.

(They had sent a note to Poland's Ministry of Education to protest this action which had occurred at a time when many members of the diplomatic corps were paying their respects. But the remaining 300 Israelis were firmly resolved to continue with their schedule until the end. And they certainly have made their presence felt.)

A speech of welcome was given by Prof. Chlebowski, chairman of Pron (Patriotic Movement of National Revival). Other addresses were by the Vicemarshal of the Polish Parliament, Z. Gertych and by Rabbi Alexander Schindler, president of the Union of American Hebrew Congregations. A moving appeal to the nations of the world was delivered by Dr. Smolen, a prisoner at Auschwitz and now director of the Jewish Museum there.

Heads Were Bowed, Tears Flowed

Then by the thousands, the participants wended their way to the Auschwitz sector and to the infamous death wall where so many Jews were executed by firing squads, and again they placed garlands of flowers

Heads were bowed, tears flowed, everything faded away except the bitter memory of loss and the iron resolve that this must never, never happen again.

As this reporter watched the ceremonies he recalled some lines inscribed on a wall of the Ghetto of Venice: "And nothing shall purge your deaths from our memories/ for our memories are your only graves. The rest is silence."

CONCERN IN ISRAEL THAT SYRIA MAY BE SEEKING A MILITARY CONFRONTATION By David Landau and Gil Sedan

JERUSALEM, April 21 (JTA) -- Mounting Israeli casualties in Lebanon have increased concern here that Syria may be seeking a new military confrontation with Israel. They have also brought calls from both coalition and opposition sources for a unilateral withdrawal of Israeli forces to a security zone in south Lebanon.

The latest fatalities were Capt. Zvi Makles, 21, of Savion and Lt. Menachem Reich, of Haifa, also in his early twenties, who were killed yesterday in a clash with Palestinians along the Beirut-Damascus highway near Sofar on the Israeli-Syrian cease-fire line.

A military spokesman said four Palestinians were killed trying to infiltrate the Israeli lines from the Syrian-occupied area of east Lebanon. They were carrying Soviet-made Kalachnikov rifles and U.S. M-16s.

The two Israeli officers were buried today. Their deaths brought to three the number of fatalities suffered by Israel's armed forces in Lebanon in a period of six days. An Israeli soldier was killed on April 14. Sources here said the improved weather in Lebanon has resulted in stepped up attacks on Israeli forces by Syrians using Palestine Liberation Organization units sheltered behind their lines as proxies.

Israeli fatalities in Lebanon, both during the war last summer and after the cease-fire in September, are approaching 500. This has led to proposals that Israel pull its forces back to the Awali river line which is the approximate border of the 28-mile security zone in south Lebanon to spare further casualties.

Some MKs Urge Unilateral Withdrawal

Minister-Without-Portfolio Mordechai Ben-Porat said today that Israel had to consider only its own security needs and expressed hope that the Cabinet would now discuss his proposal for a unilateral withdrawal. Ben-Porat, a member of the former Telem faction which merged with Likud after the death of its founder, the late Foreign Minister Moshe Dayan, is regarded as a hardliner.

But similar urgings for a unilateral withdrawal came from Labor MKs Gad Yaacobi and Yossi Sarid, an outspoken dove. Yaacobi called on Labor Party chairman Shimon Peres to convene the party's political committee immediately on the issue. Sarid said Israel is paying a daily price in blood for no possible political or security gain. He warned that the Likud government could lead the country into a new war with Syria.

The Labor Party in fact issued a communique today in a similar vein. It stated that the tension caused in part by the continued deployment of Israeli forces in Lebanon could be relieved only by their withdrawal. "It is unacceptable to maintain a prolonged negotiations process with false announcements of breakthroughs when our soldiers sink in the Lebanese mud, and when the prospect of another war knocks at our door," the statement said.

The government so far is pursuing its political and security aims in the four month-old tripartite talks between Israel, Lebanon and the U.S. It insists that Israeli forces will be withdrawn from Lebanon only after satisfactory security arrangements and some degree of political normalization are agreed to by the Beirut government, and only if Syrian and PLO forces pull out.

Damascus Pressure On Lebanon Seen

Some observers have suggested that the increase in Syrian-backed PLO ambushes and hit-and-run attacks on Israeli forces represent the application of pressure by Damascus on the Lebanese government not to make political concessions to Israel. The attacks are being escalated because an Israeli-Lebanese agreement seems to be imminent, they said. This theory is given some credence by the fact that the Syrians are exerting strict control over the PLO forces under their protection meaning that they intend to avoid an all-out direct confrontation with Israel.

Only a few hundred yards separate Israeli and Syrian lines in Lebanon. An estimated 5,000-6,000 PLO men are believed to be based behind Syrian lines and another 1,500 deployed in north Lebanon. But the Israelis have detected large-scale military preparations by the Syrians themselves, bolstered by massive military hardware supplied by the Soviet Union to replace the heavy losses the Syrian army and air force sustained during the war in Lebanon last summer.

Defense Minister Moshe Arens said this week that it was not entirely clear whether the Syrians, egged on by the Soviets, are preparing for renewed warfare with Israel in Lebanon or are taking defensive measures against a possible attack by Israel. There are "worrying signs" from Syria, Arens said yesterday in a briefing to the Knesset's Foreign Affairs and Security Committee.

He said the Israel army must remain on maximum alert because the Syrians may think that they can act with impunity under the umbrella of Soviet SAM-5 long-range anti-aircraft missiles. "But the umbrella has holes in it," Arens warned.

He also implied that there was a possibility that the Syrians and their Soviet patrons genuinely fear that Israel may take the initiative against them. Former Premier Yitzhak Rabin endorsed that idea in a recently published article in which he analyzed the Soviet warning last month that if Israel attacks Syria, the Syrians would not fight alone.

Still another view is that Syrian military moves and the tough rhetoric from both Damascus and Moscow is paving the way for Syria to pull its forces out of Lebanon without seeming to do so under duress.

Meanwhile, according to the Israelis, they are doing their best to torpedo an Israeli-Lebanese agreement. Some Israeli circles blame Syria for the Beirut government's refusal to agree to Israeli security demands and political normalization.

BEGIN; ISRAEL WILL CONTINUE TO HOLD ON TO THE GOLAN HEIGHTS

JERUSALEM, April 21 (JTA) -- Premier Menachem Begin responded obliquely last night to reports that President Reagan has assured President Hafez Assad of Syria that the U.S. would insist that the return of the Golan Heights would be on the agenda of comprehensive peace negotiations based on United Nations Security Council Resolution 242.

The Golan Heights "came under Israeli law and administration a year-and-a-half ago and will continue to be so," Begin told a Herut rally in Tel Aviv. "It will apply there forever," he said. The Knesset vote to apply Israeli law to the Syrian territory in December, 1981, was widely viewed as de-facto annexation in Israel and abroad. But Reagan reportedly told Assad that Resolution 242 applies to the Golan Heights no less than to the West Bank and Gaza.

ISRAELIS URGED TO TOLERATE OPPOSING IDEOLOGICAL VIEWS

By David Landau

JERUSALEM, April 21 (JTA) -- National unity and tolerance for opposing ideological views were the themes sounded at the awards ceremonies here for the prestigious Israel Prize, the closing event of the Independence Day celebrations.

Education Minister Zevulun Hammer urged people to stop categorizing each other in ideological terms or other labels because this leads to intolerance and intellectual deafness. One of the prize winners, former Religious Affairs Minister Zerah Warhaftig who spoke for his fellow-recipients, also stressed the need for greater tolerance and openness in Israeli society.

Hammer, a leader of the National Religious Party, declared: "The forces of creativity are crushed when we lock people into ideological or political pigeon-holes. People who compartmentalize others become deaf to what others have to say."

Warhaftig noted that the prizes are not simply awards to individuals but were symbolic of Israel's admiration for values of research, scholarship, literature, poetry and song.

Winners Of The Israel Prize

Warhaftig, the senior among the seven winners, was awarded the Israel Prize for his academic researches in Jewish law and his general contributions to Jewish scholarship. Other recipients were Prof. Aharon Appelfeld for Hebrew literature; Naomi Shemer, Moshe Wilenski and Haim Heffer who shared the prize for Hebrew song; and Prof. Saul Friedlander and Avron Saltzman for history.

Wilenski and Heffer are composers who have been responsible between them for most of Israel's favorite contemporary music. Earlier in the day, Heffer and Friedlander were among the thousands of Peace Now demonstrators who protested the establishment of a new civilian settlement, Beracha, on the outskirts of Nablus, the largest Arab city on the West Bank.

BONN (JTA) -- The West German government has assured Israel that it will be invited to participate in negotiations between the European Economic Community and Mediterranean countries over trade problems arising from the enlargement of the Common Market, especially the impending entry of Spain into the EEC.

BEHIND THE HEADLINES THE 'PRESUMPTION' FACTOR: NEW REFORM CRITERION FOR JEWISH IDENTITY

By Ben Gallob

NEW YORK, April 21 (JTA) — A Reform rabbinical leader said that a resolution on parental transmission of Jewish identity to children of mixed marriages, adopted last month at the convention of the Reform rabbinate, has been widely misinterpreted, misunderstood and misreported by the media, both general and Jewish.

Rabbi Joseph Glaser, executive vice president of the Central Conference of American Rabbis (CCAR), told the Jewish Telegraphic Agency in an exclusive interview that the intent of the proposal was to give both the non-Jewish and Jewish parent an equal opportunity to arrange for conditions to help assure a Jewish upbringing for their child.

He emphasized that the resolution, approved at the CCAR's 94th annual convention in Los Angeles, did not seek to restore patrilineal transmission of Jewish identity, as had been widely reported by the print and television media.

Required Acts Of Validation

What the resolution does propose, Glaser said, is that the child of a mixed marriage is to be considered — with the consent and the cooperation of both parents — to be under the "presumption" of Jewish descent and that this "presumption" is to be validated "through appropriate and timely public and formal acts of identification with the Jewish people."

The resolution listed the "mitzvot" which constitute required acts of validation as including entry into the covenant, which Glaser said meant ritual circumcision of the male infant; study of Jewish sacred lore; acquisition of a Hebrew name; and Bar and Bas Mitzvah participation. Parents are required to maintain a Jewish home.

Glaser said that the judge who, for a particular individual, will determine that the "presumption" has been validated by adequate performance of such "public and formal acts of identification," will be the Reform rabbi who becomes involved in such a situation, such as a case in which the child, as an adult, may wish to join his congregation or to be married by him to a Jewish mate.

Troublesome Issue For Reform Judaism

The troublesome issue for Reform Judaism of the problem of whether a child of a mixed marriage may be considered Jewish had been codified in two earlier actions. One is a resolution adopted by a 1947 CCAR convention. The second is a statement in the 1961 edition of the CCAR Rabbis Manual.

Glaser stressed that both the 1947 resolution and the Rabbis Manual statement focussed on mixed marriages in which the mother was Jewish and the father was not. He said emphatically that there was no question in those two documents about the Jewish mother determining the Jewish identity of her children.

The current radical break with past practice in such marriages, Glaser said, is that the 1983 resolution makes both parents equal in accepting the "presumption" that their child is Jewish and that the "presumption" of Jewish identity must be with the consent and participation of both parents validated by such public acts, even if the mother is Jewish.

The validity of the ancient practice — still stringently observed in Conservative and Orthodox Judaism — that the mother transmits Jewish

identity, is continued in the 1947 resolution and in the 1961 Rabbis Manual, but it is terminated in the 1983 CCAR resolution.

The 1961 manual declares that "Jewish law recognizes a person as Jewish if his (or her) mother is Jewish, even though the father is not a Jew." Such a child may be admitted to synagogue membership and enter into a marital relationship with a Jew "provided he (or she) has not been reared in or formally admitted into some other faith."

The manual also declares that Reform Judaism accepts the child of a mixed marriage as Jewish, without formal conversion, if he or she attends a Jewish school and follows a course of studies leading to Confirmation. "Such a procedure is regarded as sufficient evidence that the parents and the child himself intends he shall live as a Jew."

Thousands Of Situations Cited

The Los Angeles convention resolution, in departing from the matrilineal law of descent, cited the thousands of situations of mixed marriages in the United States and Canada. In the vast majority of such mixed marriages, "the non-Jewish extended family is a functioning part of the child's world" in such a marriage, and "it can no longer be assumed, a priori, therefore, that the child of a Jewish mother will be Jewish any more than that the child of a non-Jewish mother will not be," according to the Los Angeles resolution.

The resolution continues: "This leads us to the conclusion that the same requirements must be applied to establish the (Jewish) status of the child of a mixed marriage, regardless of whether the mother or the father is Jewish."

Glaser told the JTA that he and many of his Reform rabbinical colleagues had considerable "ambivalence" about this admittedly radical departure from Jewish tradition. He said that two concepts were central to an understanding of the motivations for the approval of the 1983 resolution. He said one was "opportunity" and the other was "commitment."

He said the Los Angeles resolution was approved partly out of hope that it might end the existing chaos in which children of mixed marriages can be in a religious limbo if the non-Jewish parent refuses to convert to Judaism.

Glaser said the resolution also was adopted out of the hope that it would provide an opportunity for the Jewish father in a mixed marriage to have a role equal to that of his spouse in helping to affirm the "presumption" their child was Jewish, with the prospect that the child would be accepted, at least in the Reform movement, as a Jew by virtue of performance of the required "public acts of identification."

Significance Of The 'Commitment' Factor

The significance of the "commitment" factor is based on the realization that thousands of American Jews-by-birth are Jews almost entirely by biology and rarely by Jewish behavior, of the kind required to validate the claim to Jewishness by "presumption."

Glaser was asked whether this new definition of transmission of identity would not create an irreparable breach with Orthodox and Conservative Judaism. He replied that he has frequently discussed the issue with "good Orthodox friends" and that he has stressed to them that the 1983 resolution is not based on Halacha — which Reform Judaism does not regard as binding on its adherents, in any case — that it is entirely advisory, and that any Reform rabbi could choose to follow or not follow the "presumption" procedure.

He asserted it was not accurate to say that Reform rabbis generally accept without hesitation or question any family in which the parents say they wish to become members of their congregations.

In fact, he said, since Reform Judaism started an "out-reach" program several years ago, more and more congregations are taking in mixed married couples and, correspondingly, the key rabbinical and congregational Reform officials are getting more and more questions.

He said these include queries on such matters as to whether a non-Jewish mother could be acceptable for membership in the Sisterhood; for office in the Sisterhood; and for office on the congregation's Board of Trustees. There is also a growing stream of questions as to whether a non-Jewish father could be called to the Torah or participate in a Bar Mitzvah.

System Of Records

Glaser was asked whether any system of records was being planned, so that there could be some kind of documentation to guide the Reform rabbi in the future who might be called upon to determine whether an adult from a mixed marriage, seeking either membership in his congregation, or the rabbi's services in marrying a Jewish spouse, had, in fact, gone through the process of validating any "presumption" of Jewishness.

Glaser replied that the issue of "recordation" had been among the topics vigorously debated by the Reform rabbis and that many, including him, both felt the need for some such registry and were also troubled by possible misuses of such records.

Glaser said he was aware of the statement by Rabbi Gilbert Klaperman, issued in his capacity as president of the Rabbinical Council of America, one of the major American Orthodox rabbinical organizations, that "we totally and absolutely reject" the 1983 CCAR resolution.

Orthodox Rabbi Warns Of Schism

Klaperman declared that the resolution contained "the seeds of schism creating two 'kinds' of Jews, who would not be permitted to marry one another according to Jewish Law." He also declared that this "new definition" of Jewish religious status, "in total disregard of Halacha and tradition, affects all Jews and their descendants, far beyond the organizational limits and philosophy of Reform Judaism."

Klaperman also touched on an issue which has stirred fierce controversy in American Judaism for many years; participation of Orthodox rabbis and congregational organizations in umbrella agencies, working with Reform and Conservative groups.

One of the most prestigious of these umbrella groups is the Synagogue Council of America. But Orthodox Jews also work with Reform and Conservative Jews in local boards of rabbis in many cities and states, notably the New York Board of Rabbis, and in the JWB Commission on Jewish Chaplaincy.

It was suggested to Glaser that the new CCAR proposal would give the foes of such joint participation a powerful new weapon to use in their increasing pressure on Orthodox rabbinical and lay organizations to resign from such umbrella agencies.

"Continue To Need Each Other"

Glaser responded he was convinced that Orthodox leaders would understand that the CCAR proposal was non-binding and that he felt the Orthodox realized the urgency of continued Jewish denominational cooperation on such non-Halachic problems as the threat of nuclear devastation, the danger of cults, poverty among Jews, as well as among Americans generally, the spread of assimilation, the

growth of anti-Semitism and -- above all -- Jewish dedication to the welfare and security of Israel.

"On these and other areas of critical concern to all Jews, we continue to need each other," he said.

JEWISH LEADER URGES ADMINISTRATION TO REASSESS ITS MIDEAST POLICY

By Yitzhak Rabi

NEW YORK, April 21 (JTA) -- Julius Berman, chairman of the Conference of Presidents of Major American Jewish Organizations, called on the Reagan Administration today to reassess its Mideast policy in view of "the collapse of the Reagan peace plan."

Speaking at a press conference here, Berman said that the recent decision by King Hussein of Jordan not to enter into negotiations with Israel demands that the United States end its reliance on "moderate" Arab states and abandon its efforts to create an Arab consensus regarding a settlement with Israel. Berman also said that the U.S. should recognize that peace in the Mideast can only come when individual Arab states display the courage to defy PLO terrorism and join Israel at the negotiating table.

Berman said that the Presidents Conference has requested a meeting with the President to discuss U.S. policy in the Mideast, and that it is expecting a reply from the White House in the next few days.

"I am optimistic that a reevaluation of U.S. policy has already begun," Berman declared. "The positive action of Secretary of State George Shultz in permitting American companies to supply Israel with assistance needed to develop its Lavie fighter planes is a highly encouraging development."

Berman added: "We hope to see an early decision by the Administration to notify Congress of its intention to fulfill its commitment to sell 75 F-16 jet fighters to Israel. This would be the most effective answer to the provocative action of the Soviet Union in placing and manning with its own troops the lethal SAM-5 missiles in Syria."

U.S. Holds Key To Solution In Lebanon

Turning to the situation in Lebanon, Berman expressed the hope that an agreement between Israel and Lebanon may come soon. He said, however, that the U.S. holds the key for an early solution because "it remains only for the United States to signal to Lebanon that it wants an agreement soon. When the signal is given, Lebanon will respond."

He added that the bombing of the American Embassy in Beirut on Monday "must have demonstrated to the Administration that Lebanon is not yet strong enough to prevent terrorists from returning to the Israeli border. That is why Israel insists on adequate safeguards before it withdraws."

5 ARAB YOUTHS TO GO ON TRIAL

JERUSALEM, April 21 (JTA) -- Five Arab youths from Dahariya went on trial for manslaughter here today in connection with the death of 22-year-old Esther Ohanna, an Israeli woman hit by a rock while driving through that West Bank town last January.

The accused, who were apprehended less than a week after the incident, are also charged with membership in an illegal organization, incitement of school children, barricading roads and stoning Israeli vehicles. They pleaded not guilty to all of the charges. The trial was postponed for a month.