

SERIES OF LETTERS PURPORTEDLY FROM JEWISH GROUPS THREATENING MEMBERS OF PARLIAMENT ARE BRANDED FORGERIES BY BOARD OF DEPUTIES OF BRITISH JEWS
By Maurice Samuelson

LONDON, April 11 (JTA) — The Board of Deputies of British Jews has branded as forgeries a series of letters purportedly from Jewish organizations and groups threatening violence against members of Parliament and others alleged to be enemies of Israel and the Jewish people.

One letter, under the letterhead of the Association of Jewish Ex-Servicemen and Women, a London-based organization, was mailed from Frankfurt, West Germany, to members of Parliament. It named 10 MPs accused of having "dangerous tendencies" who "harm the interests of Jewry (sic) and of Israel." The letter warned that the Association was "campaigning for purification of Parliament and of other political and cultural activities in Great Britain."

A second letter, mailed from Vienna, bore a crude letterhead, "Jewish Action— Terror Against Terror," alongside a representation of the Israeli flag. It was mailed to, among others, members of the Conservative Friends of Israel. It warned representatives of the Association of Cinematographers, Television and Allied Technicians against "giving way to their anti-Jewish and anti-Israel provocations at their next conference."

Dr. Jacob Gewirtz, executive director of the Board of Deputies, said there was no question that both letters are a crude hoax, apparently intended to alienate friends of Israel in both the Conservative and Labor parties, and come from the same source. "It is absolutely certain that the perpetrators of the 'Terror Against Terror' hoax are the same as those responsible for the bogus (ex-Servicemen's) letter."

Gewirtz pointed out the same errors of grammar and construction in both the Frankfurt and Vienna letters which were obviously inexperienced translations from German.

FIGHT IN THE LIBERAL PARTY FOR FIRST PLACE ON THE LIKUD-LIBERAL LIST FOR THE JULY 23 ELECTIONS
By David Landau

JERUSALEM, April 11 (JTA) — At least three candidates will vie for the first place on the Likud-Liberal Party Knesset list when the party's 264-member Central Committee convenes April 26 to pick the Knesset slate.

Justice Minister Moshe Nissim, Energy Minister Yitzhak Mordechai and Knesset Speaker Menachem Savidor have announced their candidacies, and there may yet be others who will throw their hats into the ring before April 26.

Political pundits feel the odds were fairly even so long as it looked like a straight fight between Mordechai and Nissim. But with Savidor announcing his candidacy yesterday — the calculations have become more complex. Savidor is unlikely to emerge as winner. But he could be a spoiler, harming the chances of one or more of the front-runners by diverting support for himself.

Mordechai and Nissim head rival factions within the much-factionalized Liberal Party. Commerce Minister Gideon Patt and Tourism Minister Avraham Sharir also head factions, but neither has yet announced a bid for the leadership.

Once a leader is elected — and if the party succeeds in uniting behind him — the leader would fill the No. 2 slot in the Likud Knesset list, and would have a strong claim to a Deputy Premiership if Likud forms the next government. This was the late Simcha Ehrlich's position in the list both in 1977 and in 1981. Ehrlich, a long-time Liberal leader, died last year and since then there has been no acknowledged head of the party.

There has been muttering within Herut against the Liberals' large number of assured seats on the Likud list. Herut activists — especially those who feel deprived of a chance to win a Knesset seat — contend that Herut brings in the votes and that the Liberals, were they to run alone, would achieve nowhere near the 18 seats they have out of Likud's present 46.

Premier Yitzhak Shamir is unlikely, however, to upset the Likud-Liberal balance agreed upon by Menachem Begin and Ehrlich almost 20 years ago when they formed their Likud (then called Gahal) bloc that went on to wrest power from Labor in the 1977 elections.

MERIDOR: ISRAEL'S STRUGGLE FOR SURVIVAL MOVING FROM THE MILITARY TO THE ECONOMIC SPHERE
By David Friedman

WASHINGTON, April 11 (JTA) — Israel's struggle for survival is moving from the military to the economic sphere and high technology exports is the key to its success, Israel's Minister of Economic Affairs, Yaacov Meridor, stressed here today.

"The main asset of Israel is the Israeli brain, the Israeli talent, the Israeli ability," Meridor said at a press conference at the Israel Embassy. He noted that Israel demonstrated its technological skills when it knocked out Syria's Soviet-built missiles and planes in Lebanon. The same ability is also there for civilian products, he said.

Meridor is here to promote the Israel Economic Conference, to be held May 20-25 at which representatives of more than 300 companies from all over the world will be given a chance to see how their companies can use the research and development facilities and skills available in Israel. He called the conference a "springboard" to Israel's economic success.

Forty to 45 percent of the companies that will participate are from the United States, including 50 companies with annual sales of more than \$1 billion, Meridor said. The others are from Canada, Latin America, Western Europe, Japan, South Africa, New Zealand and Australia. The majority of the participants will be non-Jewish companies, he said.

The Most Important Economic Event

"It will be the most important economic event in the history of Israel," the Minister stressed. He said the companies will be encouraged to open their own plants in Israel, as have such firms as Motorola and Intel, or to work out arrangements to use the research and development facilities in Israel, as 150 American companies now do.

The conference, which is Meridor's brain-child, was postponed from May, 1983, so that it could be held in the same week as the "Isratech '84" exhibition, Israel's sixth Technology Week, at the Tel Aviv Fairgrounds.

Meridor stressed today that Israel has both the facilities and the scientific manpower to increase its potential in the high technology field. As one example, he noted that Japan, which does well exporting high technology hardware, is weak in developing software, an area where Israel is strong.

Some Israeli scientific firms have also opened branches in the U.S., so it is a "two-way street," Meridor said. He added that while Israel wants to export its technology, it does not want to export its brains. Israel's high technology exports in 1983 totaled \$1.4 billion out of total exports of \$5 billion. Excluding diamonds, this was 40 percent of the industrial exports, Meridor said. He said that if Israel invested \$250-\$300 million a year in research and development, within eight years it could increase its high technology exports to \$8-10 billion a year.

Goal Is Economic Independence

Israel would then be "able to say to the United States of America, 'thank you for your help. We are now (economically) independent,'" Meridor declared. "This is our goal, this is our wish, this is the war we are fighting now," he said.

Meridor said Israel's economic problems are solvable. He said the Israeli budget is 40 percent debt service. The rest is civilian and military allocations and the government, this year, has cut nearly \$2 billion from this. "We have had to do something which was unpopular," he said. He explained that it was done to let the Israeli people know that reducing the debt is the "number one prerequisite" of the government.

He said Israel now owes about \$21 billion of which \$10 billion is long term debt to the U.S. for military and economic aid and \$4 billion is a debt owed to Jewish people and others who bought Israel Bonds.

JEWISH STUDENTS TEAR DOWN AND DESTROY ANTI-VATICAN POSTERS

NEW YORK, April 11 (JTA) -- Teen-age Jewish students in Corpus Christi, Texas, systematically tore down and destroyed anti-Vatican posters that had been plastered all over that south Texas port city of 200,000. Their action, over a three-day period last month, was reported by the National Catholic News Service (NCNS).

Many of the posters carried offensive messages similar to the canards used by anti-Semites against Jews. They accused the Vatican of controlling the media to "exalt and exonerate themselves (sic) from crimes they have done and are currently doing." The messages began with the word "Warning" and alleged Vatican ownership of major American magazines, newspapers and television networks.

"It reminds me of the Nazis and the Holocaust," one student was quoted as saying by the NCNS. Another student, Laura Hopkins, 15, said "Whoever is doing this is not only hurting the Christian community but the whole city as well."

Most of the posters were glued to windows of abandoned buildings. Some were attached to lamp posts and garbage cans. According to the NCNS, they appeared in cities throughout the U.S., beginning in Des Moines, Iowa last February 11 and

spread to the Middle West, the South and East. They were first noticed in Corpus Christi on March 21.

Harold Alberts, a local lawyer who is Jewish and helped organize the student removal campaign, said all the posters had been destroyed by March 23. "One day is too long for these signs to be in our city," he said.

The person or persons responsible are unknown. According to Bob Gilmartin, communications director of the Corpus Christi Diocese, "whoever is involved in this is using transients to put them up during the cover of night." The students said they were prepared to remove the posters if they appear again.

JOSEPH WEISBERG DEAD AT 73

BOSTON, April 11 (JTA) -- Funeral services were held here today for Joseph Weisberg, editor and publisher of the Boston Jewish Advocate. He suffered a massive heart attack while at work at his desk Monday and was rushed to Massachusetts General Hospital where he died. He was 73 years old.

A graduate of Harvard Law School, Weisberg was in private law practice for 10 years until he joined the Advocate in 1946. He was a reporter for the Boston Post from 1929 to 1933 before enrolling in Harvard College.

Weisberg was active in legal, educational and social service causes. He was a member of the Board of the Jewish Telegraphic Agency and a founder and past president of the American Jewish Press Association. He was a fellow of Brandeis University, a member of the Overseas Press Club and of the Massachusetts Board of Education. He was also a member of the Association of World Jewish Journalists.

Weisberg received awards and citations from Women's American ORT; the Zionist Organization of America; the Union of American Hebrew Congregations; the New England Press Association; the B'nai B'rith; the State Legislature; and the Associated Synagogues of Massachusetts. He was a trustee of the Combined Jewish Philanthropies of Greater Boston and a member of the executive council of the American Jewish Historical Society.

PRACTICE MOBILIZATION HELD

TEL AVIV, April 11 (JTA) -- Israel held a practice mobilization yesterday to test the efficiency of its system for calling up the reserves in a national emergency. The test was held only a day after the army announced that such an exercise was impending, a shorter advance notice than usual.

Reservists were summoned to their units by a series of codewords broadcast on radio throughout the day. Only four series were used, fewer than in the past. Military sources explained that the number of code phrases does not indicate the number of reservists ordered to report. Each code can apply to a few dozen men or vehicles or to several hundred or even thousands.

The publicly broadcast codes are one form of call-up. Another is a secret system of individual notices delivered to reservists by messengers from their units.

REMINDER

There will be no Bulletins dated April 18 and 19, the first two days of Passover.

NJCRAC URGES ADMINISTRATION TO SUPPORT HUMANITARIAN EMERGENCY RELIEF, CITING DISASTER IN AFRICA

By Kevin Freeman

NEW YORK, April 11 (JTA) — The National Jewish Community Relations Advisory Council (NJCRAC) has urged the Reagan Administration "to support humanitarian emergency relief as a matter of urgency and without regard to the political ideologies of the recipient countries."

"To do so may prevent a disaster of major proportions from occurring in Africa," the NJCRAC said in a letter to Secretary of State George Shultz. The letter was signed by Donald Lefton, NJCRAC international commission chairman, Robert Schrayner, chairman of the NJCRAC committee on Ethiopian Jews, and Jacqueline Levine, NJCRAC chairperson.

NJCRAC noted the severity of the current drought afflicting more than 150 million people in some 24 countries in Africa. One of the countries affected is Ethiopia with a Jewish population estimated at 20,000 persons, the letter said, adding that this is the second year of the drought and "food stocks are expected to be exhausted before new harvests become available."

Ethiopia Severely Hurt By Drought

Ethiopia is ranked fourth among the countries most severely hurt by the drought, and NJCRAC's appeal to Shultz to supply relief aid to countries "without regard" to the countries' "political ideologies" appears to be an indirect appeal for aid to Ethiopia. United Nations officials estimate that 50 to 100 children are dying daily in northern Ethiopia as a result of the drought.

The Administration originally requested \$90 million for food aid to meet the relief needs of all of Africa. Sponsors of Congressional initiatives for food aid differ with the Administration as to the total amount of aid needed and the portion of the total the U.S. should contribute.

The House approved a bill providing \$150 million in relief aid while the Senate approved the Administration's request of \$90 million. The famine relief appropriation will have to go to conference to settle the \$60 million differential.

Noting that the current drought may take an even greater toll than did the famine of 1973-1974, NJCRAC declared in the letter to Shultz: "Thus it is critical that the United States government respond generously to pending and future emergency relief appeals for food, medical supplies, seeds, shelter needs; and that appropriate funding for inland transport of aid be part of such aid packages."

Freshmen House Members To Chernenko:
AS A HUMANITARIAN GESTURE,
LET JEWS AND OTHERS EMIGRATE

By David Friedman

WASHINGTON, April 11 (JTA) — Freshmen members of the House have urged Soviet leader Konstantin Chernenko to allow Jews and others to emigrate as a positive gesture for the beginning of his tenure in office.

"As members of the 98th Congressional Class for Soviet Jewry, we are writing to urge that you begin your tenure in office with an important humanitarian gesture: reversing the Soviet policy of repression and harassment of Soviet Jews and all other minorities and allowing those who want to emigrate to do so," the Congressmen said in a letter to Chernenko.

"We hope that under the new Soviet leadership, U.S.-Soviet relations will enter into a new period of trust," the letter said.

Rep. Mel Levine (D. Calif.), co-chairman of the group made up of 77 of the 81 first term members of the House, said he hoped the change of leadership in the USSR would bring about a change of policy toward Jews.

Worsened Plight Of Jews Cited

In their letter, the Congressmen noted that the "plight" of Soviet Jews "has worsened considerably" and pointed out in particular the "drastic decrease in emigration from a high of 51,320 in 1979 to a low of 1,314 in 1983."

The Congressmen, who said that they have spoken out in behalf of individual Soviet Jews, stressed that "We have followed the unfolding of this increasingly harsh policy with great concern and sadness." They noted a speech by Chernenko on February 13 in which he "referred to the necessity of each of our countries to perform 'practical deeds' in order to show our respective good will."

"Reviewing the Soviet Union's repressive policy toward Soviet Jews would be just such a deed. It would be solid evidence of the Soviet leadership's commitment to bettering relations between our two countries — something which would be of benefit not only to the U.S. and Soviet Union but to the entire world."

SAUDI WARNS U.S. ON MOVING EMBASSY

WASHINGTON, April 11 (JTA) — Saudi Arabia's Ambassador to the United States warned against moves in Congress to relocate the American Embassy in Israel from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem. In an appearance before the Washington Press Club yesterday, Prince Bandar Bin-Sultan also warned that if the U.S. refuses to sell weapons to Arab countries they will purchase their arms in the Soviet Union, England or France.

Calling on the U.S. to play a more even-handed role in the Middle East, Bandar said "We believe strongly that no change should be done in the Jerusalem situation" until the status of the city is settled by negotiations. Moving the Embassy at this time, he said, "will profoundly affect one billion Moslems around the world like you have never seen it before."

The Saudi envoy was especially critical of the U.S. for the withdrawal of a proposed sale of missiles to Saudi Arabia and Jordan last month under what he claimed was pressure from Israel's supporters in Congress. He said this spotlighted "a very dangerous trend."

He noted that U.S. trade with Arab nations totaled \$13 billion a year, creating some 600,000 jobs. "The Israelis are doing their best to drive us out of the American market, particularly in weapons," Bandar said. "We are determined to defend ourselves, and we will get those weapons anywhere." He asked if Israeli security and U.S. interests would be served if the Arabs took their arms business elsewhere.

Bandar said that there is a perception among Arabs that the U.S. applies two standards, "one for the Palestinians and the other for the rest of the world" and that whenever an American President tries to be more even-handed in the Mideast "the Israelis jump on him."

He said that U.S. relations with the Arabs were not "at a high peak at this time," and added: "You've got to stop looking at us as just oil and dollars and look at us as human beings."

**FIRST NEW YORK STATEWIDE KOSHER
FOOD MARKET SURVEY SET UP
FOLLOWING WIDESPREAD COMPLAINTS
ABOUT KOSHER PRODUCT PRICE GOUGING**
By Ben Gallob

NEW YORK, April 11 (JTA) -- The first statewide kosher food market basket survey, which Governor Mario Cuomo ordered in response to widespread complaints about kosher product price gouging, indicated that while prices for kosher meat and poultry did not rise during its current pre-Passover shopping period, observant consumers still pay twice as much for kosher foods as do consumers buying similar non-kosher products.

In disclosing the survey findings, Cuomo said he would create a permanent Kosher Foods Advisory Council to examine, among other matters of interest to observant consumers, why the same kosher grocery item can be significantly more costly in one store than another. He said "the issue we now will explore is whether kosher food prices are exorbitant all year around."

Cuomo said the survey had also found that consumers buying matzoh and matzoh meal for the coming Passover will pay higher prices in upstate New York retail outlets because of recent price increases but that downstate residents can expect to pay the same price as usual for matzoh products.

A spokeswoman for the Governor's New York City office told the Jewish Telegraphic Agency that Cuomo had not indicated when he planned to set up the advisory council. The survey was made by the state Consumer Protection Board (CPB). Staff members visited 27 supermarkets and nine kosher butchers during the weeks of February 13-24, March 12-13 and April 2-5.

Of the 36 stores surveyed, 12 supermarkets and four kosher butchers are located in the upstate areas of Albany, Syracuse, Rochester and Buffalo. The other 15 supermarkets and five kosher butchers are in the downstate areas -- New York City, Westchester County and Long Island.

Purpose Of The Survey

The Governor said the purpose of the survey was to monitor the prices of grocery items purchased by observant Jewish consumers for Passover. He said the CPB staff informed wholesalers and retailers that they were being monitored.

He declared that the monitoring, "along with all the publicity this issue has received over the past year through the media and public hearings, kept prices from going up as they have in the past. The issue we will now explore is whether kosher food prices are exorbitant all year around."

The advisory council, Cuomo said, will conduct monthly and bi-monthly market basket surveys; conduct hearings of interest to observant Jews; examine the possibilities of pre-packaged kosher meat being sold in supermarkets; researching other brands of kosher poultry, in addition to those now on sale, which could be made available in supermarkets to observant shoppers; and "generally overseeing what is happening in the kosher marketplace."

The Governor reported members of his staff have been meeting with representatives of various Jewish religious groups to discuss a proposal to establish a kosher slaughterhouse in New York as a way to assure effective processing of kosher slaughtering, assure the supply of kosher meat and increase the possibility of lower costs to observant consumers.

The CPB survey checked prices of matzoh, matzoh meal, gefilte fish, borscht, matzoh ball soup, potato pancake mix, kosher and non-kosher gelatin, fryer and roaster chicken, chicken cutlets and brisket of beef.

The survey indicated that the statewide average price for a ten-ounce box of matzohs was \$1.04 in February, \$1.08 in March and \$1.11 in April. The statewide average prices for a 24-ounce container of gefilte fish were, respectively, for the same periods, \$3.12; \$2.91 and \$2.80. Prices also dropped in the averages for prices of gefilte fish for both upstate and downstate.

Average prices statewide for a pound of kosher chicken rose from \$1.55 in February to \$1.60 in April. Average statewide prices for a pound of non-kosher chicken were 97 cents in February, 96 cents in March and 98 cents in April.

The survey found that of the six supermarkets offering kosher chickens, prices varied by as much as 50 cents per pound between stores for the same name-brand chicken. Kosher chicken cuts varied by as much as 70 cents per pound for the same brand product from one store to another.

With the exception of matzoh, matzoh meal and meat and poultry products, prices for kosher products generally remained the same or dipped slightly during the survey period in the upstate regions but declined slightly in most downstate stores.

Many Questions Raised

Richard Kessel, executive director of the CPB, said the survey results raised many questions. He said these included why a significant number of supermarkets in New York State did not sell kosher chicken; why only two major brands of kosher chickens are available in supermarkets; why kosher meat is totally unavailable in supermarkets; why exactly the same kosher item varies so greatly in price from one store to another in the same area; why there is such a disparity between the prices of kosher and non-kosher meat and poultry; and what can be done to monitor the industry on an ongoing basis.

Kessel said that, at the Governor's request, the CPB would investigate those issues and report back to him as soon as possible. He also noted that because of special supervision, ingredients, processing and marketing costs, kosher foods, including meat and poultry, generally are higher priced than similar non-kosher products.

ISRAELI SOLDIER, FIVE CIVILIANS WOUNDED BY BLAST IN SOUTH LEBANON By Hugh Orgel

TEL AVIV, April 11 (JTA) -- An Israeli soldier was slightly wounded by a hand grenade thrown at his patrol in Nabatiya in south Lebanon today. Five local residents were hurt by the blast.

Security sources are blaming Syria for the recent increase in attacks on Israel Defense Force personnel in Lebanon. According to the sources, there were at least 70 attacks or attempted attacks during the past month which resulted in four Israeli soldiers dead and 32 wounded. There have been 16 attacks since the beginning of April.

The sources say this is due to Syria's failure to restrain terrorists operating from areas of Lebanon it controls. Observers noted that where the Syrians have acted to prevent attacks, such as on the Golan Heights, none have occurred.