

REPORT SPANISH JEWS TO REACH 'CONCORDAT' WITH THE GOVERNMENT

NEW YORK, July 15 (JTA) — The head of Spain's Jewish community disclosed here that final details are being concluded on an historic agreement, a "concordat" between the government of Spain and the Jewish community, defining and protecting the civil and religious status of the Jewish community in Spain.

Samuel Toledano, secretary-general of the Federation of Jewish Communities of Spain, the representative body of Spanish Jewry, made this disclosure at a meeting Friday with leaders of 30 national Jewish organizations. The meeting was called by the WJCongress-American Section and was chaired by Frieda Lewis, president of Hadassah.

Toledano said that the Spanish Jewish community, numbering some 12,000 persons, is striving to preserve Jewish life with "dignity and pride" in a country where Jewish life has been absent for five centuries.

He reported that, with the help of the WJCongress legal office in Geneva, agreement with the Spanish government on the concordat will finally give legal sanction and protection to Jewish communal concerns. Among the important provisions agreed upon are that:

Jewish communal property like that of the Catholic Church will be tax exempt; the Federation will formally be given official status as the Jewish representative to the government on a par with other faiths; students will be given the right not to take exams on Jewish holidays nor will Jewish soldiers be obligated to serve on such days (services would be "made up" on Sundays and Christian holidays); the Jewish community will have access to state television and a regular weekly Jewish program is to be initiated; and protection of Jewish cultural patrimony is to be guaranteed.

Two Observances Scheduled

Toledano told the Jewish leaders that the Spanish government had appointed him a member of the commission organizing the 500th anniversary of Columbus's discovery of America in 1492. When he pointed out to the government that the year had significance "for another event" (the expulsion of Spanish Jewry) it was decided that this anniversary also would be marked by an appropriate commemoration.

In addition, the Spanish government, jointly with the WJCongress, is undertaking to organize observances in connection with the 850th anniversary of the birth of Maimonides, the medieval Jewish scholar and physician, at his birthplace in Cordoba, Toledano said.

Support Growing For Diplomatic Ties

Toledano reported that there was a general groundswell of support within the country for the establishment of diplomatic relations between Spain and Israel. "If a referendum were to be held today," he said, "it is likely that more than eighty percent of the population would be in favor."

Although formal diplomatic relations between the two countries are not maintained, there is in

fact an "Israeli Ambassador" in Madrid who, while technically accredited to the world tourist organization headquartered in the city, is received by the Spanish government and treated on a de facto basis with full diplomatic protocol. Moreover, Toledano noted, that, in other spheres, particularly trade, culture, and technology, there are increasingly strong relations between the two countries.

He praised the efforts of WJCongress president Edgar Bronfman in his involvement in the delicate negotiations to bring about Spanish diplomatic recognition of Israel and briefed the Jewish leadership on the stage of the negotiations. He singled out the unrelenting pressure of Arab countries as the single most important obstacle to be overcome on this issue.

BEHIND THE HEADLINES

ISRAELI PARTIES COURT ARAB VOTE

By Gil Sedan

JERUSALEM, July 15 (JTA) — Israeli Arabs are expected to vote in large numbers on election day July 23. Were all of them to vote for the same party, that party would gain 10 Knesset seats, becoming the third largest political body and thus affecting the formation of a coalition government.

So far, the Arab voters have never united behind one political party. But the potential that they might do so is attractive. The novelty of the current election campaign in the Arab sector is that at least four political parties are working hard to take advantage of that potential.

In the past, competition for the Arab vote was between the Communist Party, in its broader form of the Democratic Front for Peace and Equality (DFPE) — which includes non-Communist elements — and the Labor Alignment.

Between them they won seven "Arab" seats in 1981 — four went to the DFPE and three to the Alignment. The other three "Arab" seats were shared among the smaller parties.

Arabs Disenchanted With Communists

On the eve of the present election campaign, the Alignment senses considerable disenchantment among Arab voters with the Communist Party. A repeated complaint among Israeli Arabs is that the Communists are too involved with high-brow politics, such as the struggle for a Palestinian state, and too little involved in looking after the interests of Israel's Arab citizens — ensuring their rights as equal citizens in the country — independent of the struggle for a Palestinian state.

The Alignment hopes to build on this frustration with the Communists. Its message is that a vote for the DFPE indirectly strengthens the Likud which is unpopular among Arab voters.

The Alignment promises that if it is returned to power, it would pay much more attention to the interests of the Arab population; and that as a ruling party it could do much more for them than the Communists who are considered outcasts by all Zionist parties.

This approach worked quite well in the last elections when Arab hopes to topple the Likud were so strong that many switched their votes from the DFPE to the Alignment. The Communists lost one Knesset seat in favor of Labor.

In the present election campaign, the situation is different. The Alignment is no longer the only alterna-

tive to the Communists. The new choice is the Progressive List for Peace and Equality (PLPE), an Arab-Jewish coalition that shares the main demands of the DFPE for an independent Palestinian state alongside an Israel reduced to its pre-1967 borders, but stresses that it does not get its directives from Moscow.

The Communists and the new faction each claim to be more nationalistic than the other. Each party seeks the support of the Palestine Liberation Organization. During last week, 25 West Bank nationalist leaders came out in support of the DFPE. Yesterday, Communist Party leader Meir Wilner went to Geneva to meet with PLO chief Yasir Arafat to get his blessing for the DFPE.

In reaction, the PLPE quoted from earlier statements by Arafat that he supported them. Thus, two parties running for the Knesset claim to have the support of Arafat who, as far as Israel is concerned, is public enemy number one.

Arabs Flock To Hear Navon, Weizman

In this atmosphere, former President Yitzhak Navon could consider his warm reception in Nazareth yesterday a pleasant surprise. Navon, fluent in Arabic, told the cheering crowd that if the Alignment came to power it would see to it that Arabs would be integrated into the administration, that young Arab couples would have an easier time finding decent housing, and that in general the situation of the Arab minority would improve.

But for the first time in years, the Alignment finds that competition for the Arab vote is coming not only from the left but also from the right. Former Defense Minister Ezer Weizman's Yahad list is reportedly being received warmly in Arab villages. Weizman himself visited the Arab village of Kufer Kara near Hadera last week and was received by an unprecedented crowd of 10,000 cheering Arabs who hailed him as the "hero of peace."

Weizman may well be one of the main beneficiaries of the 10 "Arab" seats. Other leftist and liberal parties active within the Arab constituency are Shinui and the Citizens Rights Movement.

LABOR'S LEAD IN ELECTION RACE IS SHRINKING, POLLS SHOW

By David Landau

JERUSALEM, July 15 (JTA) — The Labor Alignment's lead in the election race is shrinking, according to two public opinion polls published last Friday, with indications that a good deal of Labor's loss of support for the July 23 Knesset elections is slipping away to its "natural allies," Shinui and the Citizens Rights Movement.

The opposition party now leads Likud by nine Knesset seats, according to Dr. Nima Zemach, whose poll was published in Yediot Achronot, and by 12 seats, according to Hanoch Smith, whose poll was published in The Jerusalem Post. Both pollsters found a significant slippage in Labor's lead since their past survey of the public—in Zemach's case, 10 days ago.

Both Zemach and Smith found that Likud is making some ground. Zemach gave Likud 38 seats 10 days ago, while Friday he gives them 41. Labor, in the same period, went from 53 to 50, according to Zemach. Smith puts the present gap between the two major parties at around 12 seats, but he notes that if the present trend continues it could narrow still further.

The upshot of both polls seems to be that while a Labor victory over the ruling Likud coalition is

still likely, a clear-cut Labor-led coalition is altogether a different — and more difficult — proposition. Former Defense Minister Ezer Weizman's newly formed Yahad Party, which both pollsters give around four seats, could therefore become pivotal in post-election horse-trading.

Speculation About Begin's Role

The narrowing of the gap between the two political parties has given rise to a renewed flurry of speculation that former Premier Menachem Begin may yet come out of his solitary retirement to give a personal boost to the Likud campaign.

Last Thursday, Begin sent a personal cash contribution of 25,000 Shekels to Likud's flagging campaign fund — a fact quickly broadcast by Likud to the media. Asked outright by a radio reporter whether he would take part in the campaign, Begin said by telephone: "There are ten days left. We'll see."

Deputy Premier David Levy advised reporters to "wait a few days and see" whether Begin would put in a campaign appearance. Premier Yitzhak Shamir, at a rally in Safed, told the audience that the Likud leadership is in daily contact with the former Premier who retired last September.

C.O.I. SOARED BY 13.3% IN JUNE

By Hugh Orgel

TEL AVIV, July 15 (JTA) — The cost-of-living index soared by 13.3 percent in June, the highest increase ever recorded for that month which in the past has been a month of low to modest rises in the price index.

The figures, released by the Central Bureau of Statistics today, were a severe blow to the Finance Ministry and the Likud government in general just a week before election day. Likud had resisted the Labor Alignment's demands for spring elections in the hope that a low rate of inflation in June would help it at the polls in midsummer.

Predictably, Finance Ministry spokesmen blamed the June rise on Histadrut, charging that the trade union federation was responsible for inflation because it turned down a government wage package deal.

Histadrut spokesmen returned the fire, charging that it was the government that rejected Histadrut proposals to hold down wages, prices and taxes across the board. The June inflation was only further proof of the bankruptcy of Likud's economic policies, Histadrut said.

The 13.3 percent rise was nearly four times higher than in June, 1983 when the index increased by only 3.6 percent. It was twice as high as the previous June record of six percent in 1982.

Since the beginning of the year, the cost-of-living index has risen by 122.5 percent. Inflation is now running at an annual rate of just under 400 percent.

The June increase means that employees will receive an additional 20 percent c.o.i. allowance with their July wages, payable August 1. This includes a 10.6 percent hike representing 80 percent of the June price index plus a 10 percent erosion increase won by workers in the public and private sectors.

TEL AVIV (JTA) — Israel's 53-member Olympic squad left for Los Angeles Sunday for the 1984 Olympic Games which open there at the end of the month. The squad consists of 33 athletes, 17 trainers, a physician and the chairman and vice chairman of the Olympics Committee.

JACKSON REGRETS REMARKS

By Helen Silver

WASHINGTON, July 15 (JTA) — The Rev. Jesse Jackson said today that he regretted remarks he may have made that alienated the Jewish community and felt there is a need for "a summit meeting" between Blacks and Jews very soon.

Jackson spoke in reply to a question on the NBC-TV "Meet the Press" program broadcast from San Francisco where he will be one of the principal speakers at the Democratic National Convention which opens there tomorrow.

Asked if he regretted not having disavowed Black Muslim leader Louis Farrakhan who slurred the Jewish religion and called Israel an "outlaw" state last month, Jackson replied, "My greatest regret is that there are those who try to impose upon a brotherhood relationship a 'Siamese twin' relationship."

Jackson was apparently referring to the fact that while he publicly repudiated Farrakhan's views, he refused to disavow the Black Muslim leader's support for his campaign for the Democratic Presidential nomination. On June 28, when Jackson was enroute home from Cuba, his campaign office in Washington issued a statement on his behalf calling "reprehensible" Farrakhan's use of the term "gutter religion" to describe Judaism. The statement declared that Farrakhan's inflammatory remarks had no place "in my own thinking or in this campaign."

Jackson said on "Meet the Press" today that "None of us can bear the burden of each other's responsibilities and I simply reserve the right to represent my point of view. None of us should be locked and bound as I have been by other peoples' points of view."

In his latest tirade against Jews, Jackson last week accused American Jewish leaders of trying to "make me a pariah and isolate our support, and attempt to isolate me from the masses."

APPROVAL GIVEN FOR ESTABLISHMENT OF NEW SETTLEMENTS ON THE WEST BANK

By Gil Sedan

JERUSALEM, July 15 (JTA) — The Ministerial Settlement Committee today approved a burst of activity on the West Bank this week, culminating with the establishment of nine new settlements in the territory by next Sunday, the day before election day.

The infrastructure for most of the nine has already been built and three to five additional new settlements got the Committee's official stamp today. The five are in the heavily Arab-populated Samaria district where the Labor Alignment insists settlements should be avoided.

The fate of the new settlements may depend on which party wins the elections July 23. But even if Labor should be victorious, it would be presented with a fait accompli hard to undo.

The Labor Alignment has accused the government of playing politics with a serious, sensitive and divisive issue. It has complained to the Central Elections Committee that the ceremonial inaugurations of the new settlements represent the use of public funds for electioneering purposes.

Zeev Ben-Yosef, a senior official of the World Zionist Organization's settlement department, denied today that the ruling Likud Party was trying to make political capital. Supreme Court Justice Gavriel Bach, chairman of the Central Elections Committee, warned, however, that if the ceremonies were used for electioneering, he would ban the use of government funds for the purpose.

During the past month the Likud government has invested some 500 million Shekels in nine "outposts" in the occupied territories, each the nucleus of a settlement. Roads have been built, electric power and water lines have been laid and 15 pre-fabricated housing units were trucked in. According to existing plans, new settlements will be erected daily during the coming week, four of them next Sunday with the first families moving in.

The new settlement drive led to an angry exchange between the co-chairmen of the WZO settlement department, Likud MK Mattityahu Droblless and Laborite Nissim Zvilli.

Zvilli, who succeeded veteran settlement expert Raanan Weitz on his retirement last month, charged that only three of the nine new settlements had been allotted funds. The rest were being financed from the regular operations budget, at the expense of other projects. He said moreover, that the decision to lay down nine new settlements by election day was taken without his knowledge.

Droblless insisted that his duty was to establish as many settlements as possible and that he had violated no regulations or exceeded his authority.

Former Defense Minister Ezer Weizman, running for election at the head of his new Yahad Party, entered the fray over the weekend. He told an election rally at Herzliya that Jewish settlements on the West Bank were a defense liability, not an asset. In case of emergency, the Israel Defense Force would have to protect them, he said and in any case they were not a national priority.

3 IDF SOLDIERS WOUNDED

TEL AVIV, July 15 (JTA) — Three Israel Defense Force soldiers were wounded in Lebanon today when light arms fire and grenades were directed at their patrol near Medoushi village, southeast of Sidon.

In another incident involving the IDF, an armored personnel carrier ran over a mine on the eastern sector of the Lebanon front Friday, but there were no casualties. Another mine found nearby was exploded by army engineers.

The armored personnel carrier exploded the mine on a dirt road near Amik, northeast of Lake Karoun, but there were neither casualties nor damage. The Amik area, near the line with the Syrians, has been the scene of several shooting incidents in recent days.

NYC AND KARMIEL MAYORS MEET

NEW YORK, July 15 (JTA) — Mayor Edward Koch and Mayor Baruch Venger of Karmiel in the lower Galilee met for 45 minutes several days ago and discussed the problems and developments of each of their cities.

Koch also inquired about the prospects of improving Israel's economic situation and expressed particular interest in Venger's life story as a survivor of a Nazi concentration camp, his flight to Palestine, his attempt to land in Palestine "illegally" and his interment by the British in Cyprus. Koch told Dr. Mordecai Hacohen, first vice president of Bank Leumi Trust Company of New York, who introduced Venger to Koch, that he was deeply moved by Venger's story.

During their meeting, Venger presented Koch with a plaque, an honorary citizenship in Karmiel and books about his town. Koch responded with an inscribed copy of his book and a tie of the city.

Karmiel is a city of 20,000 inhabitants, mostly scientists and engineers from 36 countries. It was founded in 1964 and houses within its futuristic "Region 2000" some of the most sophisticated high technology industry and research centers in Israel.

An Unprecedented Conference: RIGHTEOUS GENTILES AND JEWS THEY RESCUED TO MEET IN WASHINGTON

By Gerald Regan

NEW YORK, July 15 (JTA) -- An unprecedented conference on rescuers of Jews in Europe during the Holocaust will take place in Washington in September, it was announced by the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Council, the conference's sponsor.

Preparations are under way for 500 scholars, survivors and their rescuers, from North America, Europe and Israel, to participate in the gathering to be held September 17-19.

The conference, titled "Faith in Humankind: Rescuers of Jews During the Holocaust," is to bring together rescuers and those they saved "to bear witness to what has been done and to what could have been done to help Jews during the Holocaust," according to Dr. Carol Rittner, a Catholic nun who is the conference's coordinator.

Three hundred of the rescuers, "as many as we know are still living," have been invited, said Sheila Summers, a spokesperson for the Council in a telephone interview with the Jewish Telegraphic Agency. Many of the conference's discussions, meetings and oral histories will be recorded for future use by scholars and students. They will be stored in Washington in the archives of the planned U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum.

Among those scheduled to attend the gathering are Secretary of State George Shultz and Gideon Hausner, former Attorney General of Israel and the prosecutor of Adolf Eichmann. Author Elie Wiesel, who is chairman of the Council, will make the opening remarks at the conference.

Highlights Of The Conference

The gathering will feature full sessions and workshops focusing on conditions in occupied Europe which either inhibited or enabled non-Jews to aid Jews. One session will be devoted to the French community of Le Chambon-sur-Lignon, which during the war sheltered more than 2,000 Jews. Among those on the session's panel will be Magda Trocme, wife of Pastor Andre Trocme, Le Chambon's leader, and some of the Jews the community helped save.

According to Summers, the conference proceedings will aim to shed light on what she called the conference's major theme, "Who were the Righteous Gentiles and what can we learn from them?"

Summers said that the participants will place the testimonials, scholarly insight, and discussions presented into the larger context: what is the legacy of the rescuers? what should be the place of the Righteous Gentiles in history books? does their conduct during the Holocaust alter the relationship between Jews and Christians? how should knowledge about their behavior during the Holocaust shape decisions today?

The U.S. Holocaust Memorial Council, which is responsible for planning the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum, was established by Congress in 1980 to foster nationwide remembrance of the Holocaust.

SAUDI EMBASSY OFFICIALS ACCUSED OF VIOLATING U.S. ANTI-BOYCOTT LAWS

NEW YORK, July 15 (JTA) -- The American Jewish Congress has accused the Saudi Arabian Embassy in Washington of violating American law by providing a service that gives information over the telephone on the Arab boycott of Israel, it was reported in the AJCongress' monthly publication, Boycott Report. The Saudi Arabian practice was des-

cribed as an abuse of diplomatic privilege. The AJCongress said it wanted the State Department to crack down by warning that unless the practice is stopped, Saudi diplomats involved in the scheme will be declared "persona non grata" and asked to leave the country.

William Maslow, AJCongress general counsel, said the agency is working with members of the Senate to have the problem brought to the attention of the State Department for appropriate action. The Boycott Report said that the "bold as brass" Saudi attempt to circumvent American anti-boycott laws was initiated when the Saudi Embassy's commercial section spread the word that it would answer telephone inquiries about the blacklist status of American firms or individuals.

By calling the Embassy's commercial section, a caller can learn whether a particular firm is on the Saudi blacklist, the Boycott noted. The Embassy does not require the caller to put the request in writing or give a reason for the inquiry. Although the caller is asked for his name and company, no attempt is made to check his or her real identity.

Says Practice Should Not Be Tolerated

The AJCongress said that the policy of providing information to telephone callers encourages violation of anti-boycott laws and makes it more difficult to catch and prosecute lawbreakers. The Boycott Report said the State Department should not tolerate such an effort to circumvent federal laws through the misuse by the Saudi Embassy of its diplomatic privilege.

The Boycott Report also noted that under federal anti-boycott legislation, requests by American firms or individuals for blacklist information are by themselves not illegal. Only the transmission of such data to others or actual participation in the boycott is a violation of law.

Federal anti-boycott laws enacted in 1976 and 1977 penalize American taxpayers who participate in or cooperate with an international boycott not sanctioned by the United States government. The 1977 legislation in particular forbids any "U.S. person" from furnishing information concerning the existence or absence of a business relationship with a boycotted company.

A principal target of the legislation was the Arab boycott of Israel, which has remained in force since the Jewish State was founded in 1948. The boycott has included the maintenance of an Arab blacklist of firms that do business with Israel or have relations with other companies that do business with Israel.

MAN SENTENCED IN SYNAGOGUE BOMBING

CHATTANOOGA, Tenn., July 15 (JTA) -- Joseph Paul Franklin, a convicted murderer, was found guilty here last week of bombing a Chattanooga synagogue in 1977, after telling the jury he had bombed the synagogue because it was the "synagogue of Satan."

He was sentenced to a term of 15 to 21 years in prison for the bombing and a consecutive term of six to 10 years for possession of explosives.

The 34-year-old drifter is already serving life sentences for violating the civil rights of two Black men who were fatally shot while jogging with two white women in Utah. Franklin also faces trials for racially-motivated crimes in other states.

TEL AVIV (JTA) -- The Israel Defense Force will hold another mobilization exercise for reservists shortly, the IDF announced Sunday, the fourth in recent months. The call-up announcement is publicized in order to ensure Israel's Arab neighbors that it is only a drill.