

A MOVE TO APPROVE ESTABLISHMENT OF SIX NEW SETTLEMENTS ON THE WEST BANK IS NARROWLY DEFEATED

By Gil Sedan

JERUSALEM, Dec. 18 (JTA) — The fragile nature of the unity government was demonstrated in the Knesset today when the Herut bloc of Likud voted against the government in support of a motion to establish six new settlements on the West Bank.

The motion, presented by Geula Cohen of the rightwing Tehiya Party, demanded immediate implementation of a coalition agreement to establish the six settlements. It was defeated by a narrow margin of three votes. Tehiya, which is in the opposition, was supported by the religious parties both within and outside the coalition, by the Herut MKs and the extremist Kach faction.

Likud's Liberal Party wing voted with Labor to strike the motion from the agenda. The opposition leftist parties, Mapam, Citizens Rights Movement (CRM) and the Progressive List For Peace abstained.

Economic Situation Blocks Implementation

Minister of Agriculture Ariele Nehamkin, a Laborite, acknowledged the coalition agreement but said it could not be implemented now because of the economic situation. Herut MK Michael Dekel, who led the revolt against the coalition, accused the government of trying to get out of the agreement on a formality.

Cohen warned that if the government refused to act, the "idealists of Gush Emunim" would, as they did in 1977 when they established the illegal settlement of Sebastia during the waning days of the last Labor government.

Yossi Sarid of the CRM denounced Cohen. He charged that the political branch of the Jewish underground was challenging Israel's democratic institutions. He was apparently referring to the members of an alleged Jewish terrorist underground who have been on trial since last spring, accused of acts of violence against Arab civilians and Islamic shrines.

CARDINAL SAYS THAT THE JEWISH COMMUNITY AND TRADITION MUST BE GIVEN AN 'ABSOLUTELY PRIVILEGED' POSITION IN INTERRELIGIOUS DIALOGUE

By Lisa Palmieri-Billig

ROME, Dec. 18 (JTA) — An "absolutely privileged" position must be given the Jewish community and tradition in interreligious dialogue, Cardinal Carlo Maria Martini of Milan told the Jewish Telegraphic Agency here last week. He also spoke of how interpretations of Biblical texts injurious to Jews can be removed from Christian teaching.

Cardinal Martini was interviewed after releasing to the press a new Papal dialogue, a "post-synodal apostolic exhortation on reconciliation and penance" which examines conflict in human society on all levels.

He explained to the JTA that three of the four Biblical passages claimed as basic source material for the Papal document — Genesis 3, Genesis 11,

Psalms 50 — are passages from the Jewish scriptures, clear evidence, he said, of Christianity's Jewish heritage.

The Cardinal recalled the statement he made last July at a meeting of the International Conference for Christians and Jews at Vallombrosa, on the necessity "to remove tendentious or injurious interpretations of Biblical texts from Christian teaching."

Implementation On Two Levels

Asked how, in light of the new Papal document's stated aim of "promoting sincere ecumenical dialogue," this could be implemented, Martini said he believed it must be done on two levels.

One was "the idea of dialogue ... the capacity to understand the other's values and point of view. And this is true — a fortiori — in a sense of absolute privilege for the Jewish community and for the Jewish roots of Christian history."

He pointed out that "passages of the Old Testament are at the basis of this vision of man." The second level according to Martini, is centered around the catechism.

"It is within catechistical (teaching) that we must work at the enlightenment ... Catechism must be presented with care, with attention, with precision, bound to the word of God. As guidelines we already have, for example, the norms laid down by the Secretariat for Christian Unity which are an invitation to this type of catechism, and which can be applied through the indications in this document of apostolic exhortation," the Cardinal said.

"It seems to me," he added, "that these are the two lines we must emphasize in our progress toward knowledge, throwing light on ambiguities — if only in terminology — and then in giving full value to the Jewish heritage, to Jewish culture, to Jewish compassion and piety."

The Papal document examines conflicts between peoples, between religions and social classes. It emphasizes individual responsibility as opposed to the passive acceptance of evils by shifting the blame on abstractions such as "society" or "class."

While the document admits that injustice everywhere and in every form must be fought, it does not consider hate or violence as admissible.

GOVERNMENT CRISIS ESCALATES

By David Landau

JERUSALEM, Dec. 18 (JTA) — The unity government crisis escalated today when Likud leader Yitzhak Shamir, the Deputy Premier and Foreign Minister, announced that he has given Premier Shimon Peres 48 hours to resolve the conflict surrounding the resignation from the government of the Sephardic religious party Shas, a client of Likud.

Shamir, emerging from a private meeting with Peres in the Knesset building this evening, informed the press of the deadline, adding that if Peres failed "he knows what we will do."

Shamir did not say specifically that Likud would leave the government. He said the Likud ministers would meet in caucus Thursday to decide what steps to take. By then three Likud ministers presently abroad, will have returned — Ariel Sharon, Moshe Arens and Gid Patt.

Shas leader Rabbi Yitzhak Peretz, a Minister-Without-Portfolio, submitted his resignation to Peres Sunday. It took effect this morning despite a last minute appeal from the Prime Minister to retract it. Shas has been embroiled in a dispute over portfolios with the National Religious Party supported by Labor.

Peretz has refused to accept the Ministry of Interior because, under a compromise worked out last week, its religious functions would be transferred to the Religious Affairs Ministry, headed by the NRP.

'No Time For Political Games'

Peres has said repeatedly in media interviews that he expected the crisis to be resolved and did not believe the Shas resignation was its "last word." He called on all concerned to preserve the Labor-Likud unity coalition.

"This is no time for political games," Peres declared, noting the dire condition of the economy and talks for increased economic aid from the U.S.; the talks with Lebanon on Israeli withdrawal and negotiations with Histadrut for the elimination or reduction of government price subsidies to attack the mounting deficit.

These are cardinal matters of state which must be addressed by both major parties in unison, he said. Labor Party Secretary General Uzi Baram called the crisis "a storm in a teacup." He said Likud was making a great show of its unswerving support for Shas but predicted that eventually the dispute between Shas and the NRP would be resolved.

Seeking New Compromise Proposals

Representatives of Labor and Likud were working behind the scenes today on new compromise proposals. Most political pundits felt the crisis would indeed be resolved with Likud remaining in the government and Shas probably returning to it.

Their optimism derived from the fact that Likud, torn by internal disputes between its Herut and Liberal Party wings, does not want to risk new elections and the possibility that Peres would govern with a narrow majority.

On the other hand, many Likud people see the Shas issue as a test of their party's credibility as the patron of a small but potentially vital client. Having "lost" the NRP to Labor and with the Agudat Israel "sitting on the fence," Likud is anxious to preserve its close links with an Orthodox faction, observers said.

POLL SHOWS MORE ISRAELIS FAVOR SPEEDY WITHDRAWAL FROM LEBANON

By Hugh Orgel

TEL AVIV, Dec. 18 (JTA) -- The number of Israelis who favor the speedy, unconditional withdrawal of the Israel Defense Force from Lebanon is growing and while those who favor withdrawal, but only under certain conditions, remain a majority, their numbers have declined according to a public opinion poll published today.

The poll showed that as of the end of November, 19.1 percent of the respondents favored immediate, unconditional withdrawal of the IDF, up from 12.7 percent in October. Another 10 percent would have the IDF withdraw, but only if it is replaced by the Israel-backed South Lebanon Army (SLA). This was down from 11.2 percent in October.

The large majority of Israelis, 62.6 percent, indicated in November that they would support withdrawal only after suitable security arrangements are made with the Lebanese government and other involved parties. In October, they had constituted 64.1 percent of the respondents.

The number of Israelis who want the IDF to remain in Lebanon for the foreseeable future dropped from 8.9 percent in October to 6.5 percent at the end of November. The poll found that those in favor of withdrawal are mainly women, the children of European and American families and the better educated and more affluent sectors of the population.

KNESSET UNIT RECOMMENDS RESTRICTION ON KAHANE'S FREEDOM OF MOVEMENT

By Hugh Orgel

JERUSALEM, Dec. 18 (JTA) -- The Knesset House Committee recommended today that the Knesset vote to restrict the freedom of movement that Rabbi Meir Kahane, leader of the extremist Kach party, enjoys as part of his parliamentary immunity.

The proposal does not strip Kahane of his immunity. But it requires the Knesset Speaker to hold a secret ballot within 24 hours on whether or not to limit it.

Kahane has announced his intention to visit Arab villages in Israel to try to persuade the residents to leave Israel voluntarily and to prevail on Jewish women married to Arabs to desert their husbands. There has been a move underway in the Knesset for some time to strip Kahane of his immunity so that he may be prosecuted for racist agitation against Israel's Arab citizens.

Kahane was barred by police two months ago from entering the Arab village of Umm el-Fahm where large numbers of Jews had joined Arab villagers in a demonstration to keep him out. The police said at the time that they acted because Kahane's presence would have resulted in a clash and breach of peace.

ANTI-DAROUSHA ACTION THWARTED

TEL AVIV, Dec. 18 (JTA) -- Several dozen Herut activists and their supporters converged on the Arab village of Iskal in Galilee today to demand punishment for one of its residents, Labor Party Knesset member Abdel Wahab Darousha, who tried, unsuccessfully last month, to go to Amman, Jordan to address the Palestine National Council (PNC) meeting there.

The Herut group was confronted by several thousand local Arabs and friends from neighboring villages, joined by hundreds of members of Peace Now and left-wing Israeli Jews. A strong police force was on hand but no incidents occurred.

The Herut group had police permission to protest Darousha's attempt which was technically in violation of Israeli law forbidding contact with terrorist organizations. The PNC, convened by Palestine Liberation Organization chief Yasser Arafat, is regarded by many Palestinians as their parliament-in-exile.

The Labor Party, too, was unhappy with Darousha's actions but contended he did not break the law because he never reached Amman. The Arab MK got as far as Cyprus and then returned to Israel. He said the Jordanian government refused to grant him entry. Other sources said he was dissuaded by Labor Party colleagues from pursuing his mission. (By Hugh Orgel)

ATTACK ON JEWISH FEMINISTS AS 'JEZEBELS' RAISES STORM OF PROTEST

By Ben Kayfetz

TORONTO, Dec. 18 (JTA) — An attack from the pulpit on Jewish feminists as "Jezebels" given to "self-worship" as "opposed to worship of God" has raised a storm of protest in the Jewish community and brought strong rejoinders from two prominent Orthodox women who are feminists.

The two, Blu Greenberg of Riverdale, N.Y., who has written extensively on Jewish religious matters, and Norma Joseph, who teaches at a Montreal university, were named by Rabbi Immanuel Schochet in a speech to some 300 persons at Shaarei Tefila synagogue here earlier this month.

Schochet, who is Orthodox with leanings toward Hasidism and teaches philosophy at a community college, titled his address: "Jezebel as Rabbi—Deforming Religion by Feminist Reforms." It was an attack on demands by women to participate fully in Jewish religious ritual in the synagogue and the ordination of women as rabbis.

According to Schochet, halacha (religious law) specifically excludes female participation in certain functions. "If women do not like this, they should take up their case with God directly and demand and await a new revelation which will sanction any changes," he said.

Denounces Reforms As 'A Perversion'

Schochet denounced reforms such as counting women for the minyan or calling women to the Torah as "not only a denial of Jewish tradition but a perversion of common sense." He went on to say: "The modern Jezebels that we criticize are women like Blu Greenberg and Norma Joseph. In their writings and talks they present themselves as members of the Orthodox tradition while simultaneously denying the authenticity and authority of halacha ..."

The dictionary definition of "Jezebel," the wife of Ahab, is a woman "notorious for profligacy, fanaticism and cruelty." Schochet provided local newspapers with notes from his address.

Responses To Rabbi's Attack

Greenberg, author of "On Women and Judaism—A View from Tradition," said in a telephone interview that halacha is not etched in stone as Schochet implies. "To say that halacha was developed throughout the last three-and-a-half millennia and Jewish tradition developed throughout three-and-a-half millennia is not at all to diminish the force of centrality and revelation of divinity."

If Schochet regards feminism as a contaminating foreign body, he is a poor philosopher, she said, adding: "I define myself as an Orthodox Jew because I observe halacha and am part of this community. There is a halachic process and what I perceive to be the criteria is to bring women more equally into it."

Joseph said Schochet's use of her name was "humiliating and it is scandalous for him to say at a public forum that I don't care about Jewish law ... I don't deny halacha at all but I feel bound by it. I care deeply about being a Jew and the Jewish community. I'm not a 'Jezebel.'"

Rabbi Elyse Goldstein, assistant rabbi at Toronto's Reform Holy Blossom Temple, said Schochet's sermon title offended her as a woman, a rabbi and a Jew. Shalom Schachter, a local lawyer, said that while Schochet had a right to express his opinions, "to attach this kind of label and eliminate the legitimacy of the alternate point of view in such a harsh way is completely uncalled for."

Schochet said in a later interview that he used the term "Jezebel" as a "teaser" and a symbol of self-idolizing people who put their own ambitions above everything else.

RELIGIOUS LEADERS DENOUNCE APARTHEID

NEW YORK, Dec. 18 (JTA) — On the eve of Chanukah, national Jewish religious leaders sharply condemned South Africa's apartheid policies and urged that the Black citizens of that nation be granted equal opportunities for employment, education, housing and voting rights.

"As we begin the celebration of our eight day Festival of Lights, it is appropriate that we call attention to one of the most flagrant deprivations of human and civil rights," asserted Rabbi Mordecai Waxman, president of the Synagogue Council of America (SCA).

The statement was signed by the SCA's six member organizations representing the congregational and rabbinic groups of Conservative, Orthodox and Reform Judaism serving four million congregational members.

Waxman noted that some rabbis, as individuals, had participated in demonstrations protesting South African policies and that during the next few weeks large numbers of his colleagues would speak out on the issue from the pulpit in sermons and hold educational forums in their synagogues.

Text Of The Statement

The SCA statement said:

"Repression, violence and loss of life in South Africa continue to dramatize the injustice of white supremacy rule in that country. The degrading and dehumanizing policy of apartheid denies the Black people of South Africa basic human rights and deprives them of almost every opportunity for living with dignity."

"If South Africa is to be a responsible and respected member of the family of nations, it must fulfill the moral mandate of providing for all its citizens — equal opportunities in education, employment, housing and representation in the country's electoral process."

"We urge the American government to continue its current initiatives and utilize all appropriate actions at its disposal to impress upon the government of South Africa, our repugnance of these racial policies."

"Further, the Synagogue Council calls upon the rabbis and congregational leaders of the American Jewish community to speak out in clear and unequivocal terms against South Africa's discriminatory practices."

JERUSALEM (JTA) — Five members of a network of Moslem extremists, who were arrested last June and charged with anti-State activities, have been sentenced to prison terms ranging from nine to 13 years by the Gaza military court.

BEHIND THE HEADLINES A MISLAID JEWISH GEM

By Milton Jacoby

BARCELONA, Dec. 18 (JTA) — After many centuries of silence about the significance of Jewish contributions and influence in Gerona, a breakthrough has begun on the part of Spanish municipal officials and non-Jewish leaders to bring this ancient city in the north of the country and some 70 miles from cosmopolitan Barcelona into the limelight.

Gerona is a Jewish gem that has been mislaid for 600 years. It was the first center of the Cabbalah in Spain and the home of the renowned scholar, Nachmanides. Only in the past 20 years has it been rediscovered. A valiant effort is now under way to reclaim this ancient bastion of Jewish intellect and enterprise as a glittering center of the Golden Age of Spanish Jewry which reached its apogee in the 12th and 13th centuries, and then crumbled under the onslaught of the Catholic Church.

There are no Jews left now in Gerona, but both the mayor of the city and its Delegate for Tourism informed this reporter that they would assist in every way possible in the creation of a Jewish museum and research institute there, and in the development of Gerona as a center for Jewish tourism from all parts of the world.

Their sentiments were echoed by civic officials in Barcelona which, in its own right, is a treasure trove of Jewish influence and the remains of a great Jewish community annihilated in the 14th and 15th centuries.

Attitude Of Catalans

An international association has just been founded to preserve and to restore the Jewish riches of Gerona. "The Friends of Gerona's Call" ("call" is derived from the Hebrew "kahal" or "community") by a non-Jewish civic leader of Barcelona, Joan Dexeus, who told this writer that it was his duty as a Catalan "to do all I can to rediscover our common heritage and to make known the great contribution the Jews made to Spain."

He said that he had Jewish blood, "as do most Catalans, and we are proud of this element in us, which makes us more open and receptive to other peoples and cultures. We owe the Jews of the past, and also the present, a great debt for what they have given and suffered on our behalf. We, the non-Jews from Catalan (the northeast region of Spain) also admire Israel and all it is achieving for humanity."

The new organization has already acted upon its lofty resolve, with its recent purchase of the Isaac el Sec cultural center in Gerona's ancient Jewish quarter, named after a prominent Cabbalist who died in 1235. It is the site of Gerona's third and last synagogue (14th century), a mikvah and a Jewish hospital.

Another Jewish 'Jewel'

Some 700 miles from Gerona down the southern coast of Spain, in fashionable Marbella, is another Jewish "jewel," the first synagogue to be built in southern Spain in 600 years. Another extraordinary aspect of this place of worship is that it is the creation of a family.

Three brothers, Meier, David, and Simon Chayon arrived from Morocco several years ago and found that there was no synagogue in which they could express their religious convictions. So they built their own — not only for themselves, but for any and all Jews who already resided there or might come to live in this superb locale. The synagogue, called Beth El, is small but exquisite, and it has already proven to be a haven for residents and tourists alike.

Further Evidence Of Governmental Concern

Further tangible evidence of governmental concern for its 12,000 Jewish citizens is its funding of a film now being produced by the Ministry of Tourism on Jewish life in Spain, past and present. It will be widely distributed in the United States in 1985. For the first time, American Jewry will be able to view ancient Gerona, the sparkling new synagogue in Marbella, Toledo, and many other sites constituting the glory that was once Jewish Spain, and its remarkable renaissance after centuries of dispersion.

It is to be hoped, and government officials are taking unprecedented steps to achieve a new goal, that American Jews by the thousands will embark upon a journey to explore the rich Jewish heritage of Spain and to link hands with the now small but inspiring Jewish communities of Madrid, Barcelona, and the Costa del Sol.

ATTEMPT BEING MADE TO REVERSE NEAR EXTINCTION OF A RARE SPECIES

By Hugh Orgel

TEL AVIV, Dec. 18 (JTA) — Vultures, the winged scavengers of desert regions, may be un-loved by most humans. But Yaacov Segal, keeper of the Tel Aviv University zoo, is not one of them. He is trying to arrange a love-match between two of the creatures in the hope of reversing the near extinction of a rare species, the lappet-faced vulture, a habitue of the Negev.

The prospective mates are a 33-year-old vulture named Rosa and a nine-year-old male, both members of a breeding group at the university's Canadian Center for Ecological Zoology.

The age difference apparently is no problem. But Segal's presence at the mating is essential. He has cared for Rosa since she was brought to the zoo as a chick and she apparently regards him as her "mate." Rosa has laid eggs for Segal. But a male vulture is required to fertilize them.

The center's academic supervisor, Prof. Heinrich Mendelsohn, hopes that Segal and the male vulture will induce Rosa to produce a chick. If she does, it will be the first lappet-faced vulture to be conceived and born in captivity.

The lappet is a strong predator, with powerful curved bill, sharp claws and nine-foot wingspan. Its name is derived from the distinctive skin folds (lappets) on its neck. Once a familiar sight in the Arava valley south of the Dead Sea, there are now said to be only two or three of the birds left in the region. Other subspecies are found throughout Africa but their numbers are rapidly dwindling.

There will be no Daily News Bulletin dated December 25, Christmas, a postal holiday.