

## AUSTRIAN DEFENSE MINISTER APOLOGIZES FOR WHAT HE CALLS A 'MISCALCULATION'

VIENNA, Jan. 29 (JTA) -- Defense Minister Friedhelm Frischenschlager apologized to Chancellor Fred Sinowatz "and to the public" today for what he called "this miscalculation," his characterization of the personal greeting he extended last Thursday to Nazi war criminal Walter Reder on his return to his native Austria after nearly 40 years in prison in Italy.

Frischenschlager's reception of Reder touched off the worst political storm in Austria's recent history. It threatened the survival of Sinowatz's Socialist-led coalition government of which the Defense Minister's small, right-leaning Freedom Party (FPÖ) is a partner. Last night, Sinowatz ordered the Defense Minister to cut short a three-day official visit to Egypt -- begun last Saturday -- and to return home to explain his action.

His journey to Graz to meet Reder, a 69-year-old former SS Major convicted of the mass murder of civilians in Italy in 1944, triggered demands for his resignation across the entire political spectrum. In particular, it infuriated leaders of world Jewry, assembled in Vienna for the first time since World War II to attend a meeting of the Governing Board of the World Jewish Congress.

### Evolution Of Apologies

Sinowatz's initial reaction to the affair was to call it a "grave mistake." Later, in a message to WJC president Edgar Bronfman, the Chancellor said, "I am profoundly sorry" about the Reder incident. In the course of his prepared address to the WJC gathering Saturday night, Sinowatz told the delegates, "The fact that this transfer (of Reder to Austria) made for personal contact between the Defense Minister and Reder was a grave political error."

He called it an "isolated event" from which "we should not draw conclusions" and stressed Austria's dedication to democracy and its long-standing role as a haven and transfer point for refugees, including many thousands of Jews from the Soviet Union.

The Chancellor's explanation did not sit well with many of the Jewish leaders who felt the issue was a moral one, not simply a "political error."

Frischenschlager, who had made clear he would not resign under pressure, gave his apology to Sinowatz at a Cabinet session. "I am sorry for this miscalculation and I can only offer my regrets to you, Chancellor and to the public," his statement said. It was read to reporters today by Sinowatz.

## BLACK AFRICAN DIPLOMAT SAYS THERE IS A 'CRISIS OF MISUNDERSTANDING' BETWEEN JEWISH PEOPLE AND THIRD WORLD BY AVIVA CANTOR

VIENNA, Jan. 29 (JTA) -- There is a "crisis of misunderstanding" between the Jewish people and its aspirations and the Third World, Ambassador James Jonah of Sierra Leone told delegates attending the World Jewish Congress Governing Board here.

Jonah, Assistant United Nations Secretary General and Secretary General of the Second World Conference to Combat Racism and Racial Discrimination, described in considerable detail his efforts at explaining to other Africans the concept of Zionism as intrinsically anti-racist and anti-ghetto, in the context of the successful efforts to head off the inclusion of the Zionism-equals-racism equation in the final declaration of the Second World Conference on Racism, held in Geneva in 1983.

While this formula was not included, several paragraphs condemning Israel's "racial discrimination against Palestinians" in the occupied territories, and the increased relations with the "racist regime" of South Africa were included.

### Points To A Key Factor

Jonah pointed to the "high profile" of Israel's relations with South Africa as a key factor in the Black African nations' refraining from diplomatic relations with Israel. "Your agony in thinking about the Holocaust is exactly the African feeling about apartheid," Jonah said. "Your experience in the Holocaust frightens the Africans."

Responding to Jonah, Dr. Gerhart Riegner, former Secretary General of the WJC and now co-chairman of its Governing Board, said that it is "our duty to come back to the UN Decade (Against Racism) on all fronts." (The WJC had withdrawn from the First Decade Against Racism 1973-1983 after the UN General Assembly adopted the Zionism-equals-racism resolution in 1975.)

Paraphrasing Chaim Weizmann's 1939 statement about fighting both the Nazis and the British White Paper, Riegner added: "We will fight against racism as if the anti-Israel clauses (in the final declaration of the Second World Conference on Racism) did not exist. We will fight the anti-Israel discriminatory clauses as if the fight against racism didn't exist."

### 'No Selective Struggle Against Racism'

Rabbi Arthur Schneier, chairman of the WJC Third World Commission, spoke of how the Holocaust began with racism. Jews, he said, were the first historical victims of racism "and we are its victims still in many parts of the world. This is why as a matter of survival we identify with the struggle waged by other victims of racism."

In a strong statement, Schneier said: "There cannot be a policy of differentiation in the struggle against racism. One cannot condemn apartheid and condone anti-Semitism. One cannot condemn anti-Semitism and condone apartheid. There must be no selective struggle against racism."

### Cites Changes In Activities For Soviet Jewry

On a parallel track, Rabbi Alexander Schindler, president of the Union of American Hebrew Congregations, declared that the oppression of Soviet Jewry cannot be considered a "strictly internal affair, not any more than we can consider South Africa's apartheid laws to be strictly an internal affair."

Speaking of the dangers in activities for Soviet Jewry becoming "cold warriors and urging an acceleration of the arms race," Schindler said that "we reject

the damning caricature of the Soviet Union as an 'evil empire' totally devoid of all humanity," a reference to this description by President Reagan.

While expressing criticism of the Soviet Union for not living up to its ideals, Schindler was against Jews falling into the trap of "joining the shrill voices of those who wish to sink Russia and America ever more deeply into incendiary rhetoric and reciprocal military confrontation." He said this would be totally counterproductive to the cause of increasing Soviet Jewish emigration, which diminishes "when Soviet-American relations are strained."

#### Non-Jews Lauded For Aiding Ethiopian Jews

In a closed session, Ambassador Moshe Gilboa, director of the world Jewish affairs division of Israel's Foreign Ministry, reportedly lauded non-Jews who had helped Ethiopian Jews, as latter-day Wallenbergs, who could not be mentioned by name. (The reference was to Raoul Wallenberg, the Swedish diplomat, who was instrumental in saving tens of thousands of Jews in Hungary during the Holocaust and who disappeared in the Soviet Union 40 years ago last week.)

The Ethiopian story, Gilboa reportedly said, has "brought to the world a new feeling of Israeli daring and courage" not seen since the days of the Entebbe rescue in 1976 and the capture of Adolf Eichmann in 1960. The majority of the African press has been full of "praise, understanding and expressions of solidarity," Gilboa said.

Franz Cardinal Koenig, the Primate of Austria, who addressed a session on Christian-Jewish relations, announced the contribution of 100,000 Schillings (\$5,000) for Ethiopian Jewry relief.

Premier Shimon Peres of Israel said, from Jerusalem, during a closed-circuit TV dialogue between himself and the WJC Governing Board delegates, that a key issue Israel will be focusing on in the near future will be the absorption of Ethiopian Jews. He pointed with pride to the fact that the Ethiopian Jews, "a forlorn tribe, divorced and isolated from the mainstream of Jewish history for 2,000 years and under extremely heavy oppression," had remained Jews.

#### Peres: Who Is A Jew Question Is A 'Futile Effort'

On another matter, Peres called the Who is a Jew question a "futile effort" and an "unnecessary question." He expressed gratification that the Knesset "had the wisdom and responsibility not to choose the kind of answer that would divide our people." The Knesset, on January 16, voted 62-51 against an amendment to the Law of Return demanded by Israel's Orthodox religious establishment.

In answer to a question on the subject, Peres suggested a "summit meeting" of the major streams in Jewish life "to work out a formula of spiritual coexistence." In his opening statement on this issue, the Premier emphasized the importance of accepting the concept of pluralism in Jewish life. "We can argue, debate, suggest, and we can remain together," he said. "We can be different in our views, but united in our destiny."

Immediately following the conversation with Peres, Rabbi Emanuel Rackman, president of Bar Ilan University and an Orthodox spokesperson, rose and commented that "not all Orthodox Jews support a change in the Law of Return." Rackman, a former president of the Rabbinical Council of America, said that many of the groups of "modern Orthodox"

with which he identifies "strongly oppose changing the law and are perfectly content with the Law of Return as it stands today."

The session with Peres was scheduled to be followed by a Holocaust memorial service at the Stadtemple (Seitenstettengasse Shul), and two receptions, one of them tendered by Vice Chancellor Norbert Steger of the Freedom Party, to which Defense Minister Friedrich Frischenschlager also belongs.

That reception was being boycotted by the Austrian Jewish delegation to the WJC Governing Board as well as by some other delegates, including WJC vice president Kalman Sultanik, in protest against the Defense Minister's greeting of Nazi war criminal Walter Reder.

#### WITHDRAWAL OF EQUIPMENT FROM AWALI RIVER LINE IS VIRTUALLY COMPLETED

By Hugh Orgel

TEL AVIV, Jan. 29 (JTA) -- Military sources said today that the withdrawal of equipment from the Awali River line, until now the forward position of the Israel Defense Force in south Lebanon, has been virtually completed as the first stage of the three-stage withdrawal of the IDF from Lebanon progresses.

According to the sources, all heavy equipment and moveable installations have been pulled back to the new line on the Litani River. Army engineers are preparing to blow up fixed installations which neither the Lebanese army nor the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL) have offered to buy.

The engineers are also destroying the underground bunkers built by the Palestine Liberation Organization before 1982 when the PLO was in virtual control of south Lebanon.

An IDF officer told Israel Radio today, "It does not really matter now whether we hand over to the Lebanese army or to UNIFIL because there is nothing left to hand over." The first stage of the withdrawal is expected to be completed by February 18.

#### NO PROGRESS IN TABA TALKS

TEL AVIV, Jan. 29 (JTA) -- Three days of talks between Israel and Egypt over the future status of Taba ended at Beersheba tonight with little progress to report, save that the two delegations agreed to meet again in about a month. No date was set.

Taba is a tiny strip of beach on the Gulf of Aqaba claimed by both countries. Egypt broke off the negotiations two years ago and they have only just resumed. Zvi Keddar, head of the Israeli delegation, told reporters he was not certain where the talks stand at the moment.

Abdul Halim El-Badawi, leader of the Egyptian delegation, said Cairo was ready to continue the talks but wants third party arbitration. The joint communique issued by the Israelis, Egyptians and U.S. observers said only that the talks would be continued at a time and place yet to be fixed.

#### ISRAEL'S CHIEF RABBIS DECLINE TO EASE RELIGIOUS DIVORCE LAWS

By Gil Sedan

JERUSALEM, Jan. 29 (JTA) -- Israel's chief rabbis have politely refused to do anything to ease the religious divorce laws which often impose severe hardships on women. There is no civil divorce in Israel.

The two Chief Rabbis, Avraham Shapiro, Ashkenazic, and Mordechai Eliahu, Sephardic, received a delegation representing women's organizations today to hear their plea for change. But according to Arye Rosenzweig of the Tel Aviv University law faculty, one of three Orthodox lawyers who discussed the problem

with the rabbis, Shapiro and Eliahu were "sympathetic" but claimed there was little they could do. Of about 15,000 divorce petitions filed each year in Israel, only 5,000 are resolved. In many cases one partner, most often the woman, has to wait years for a divorce decree because the other spouse refuses to agree to terms. The religious courts, which have sole jurisdiction, usually will not grant a divorce if one spouse refuses to agree.

Rosenzweig said at a press conference here today that the rabbis were unable to comprehend the problems of the secular public in Israel and are not willing to tackle them. He said the women's delegation tried to persuade the Chief Rabbis that halacha (religious law) could be used to change the situation but the rabbis rejected that idea.

#### NCSJ WELCOMES SOVIET INVITATION TO BRONFMAN BUT WARNS OF POSSIBLE PROPAGANDA PLOY BY THE USSR By David Friedman

WASHINGTON, Jan. 29 (JTA) — Morris Abram, chairman of the National Conference on Soviet Jewry, welcomed today the invitation the Soviet Union has made to Edgar Bronfman, president of the World Jewish Congress, to go to the Soviet Union.

But he warned that if Bronfman receives only "token gestures," his visit, scheduled for late March, would serve only for "propaganda" for the Soviet Union rather than be a means of easing the plight of Soviet Jewry.

"I am glad that any representative of any Jewish organization is invited to the Soviet Union to discuss the problems," Abram said at a press conference at the NCSJ office here. But he added that the invitation does not "indicate" the USSR "is going to change its fundamental policy" of restricting Jewish emigration and officially approved anti-Semitism.

"If the Soviet Union intends only to release a few persons," Abram said, "but continues the vast persecution, the nationwide persecution; if it intends to continue to restrict emigration; if Soviet Jews like Anatoly Shcharansky and Josef Begun remain in jail and if the Hebrew language continues to be repressed barring even the printing of Hebrew books on Karl Marx, then whatever palliative or token gesture they make will be of only propaganda use."

But Abram added that he hoped the conversations Bronfman has "will be substantive and touch all the elements which the Soviet Union should be doing without being asked" because it has signed international agreements such as the Helsinki accords.

In a recent letter to The New York Times, Abram criticized Bronfman for a column in which the WJC leader said the Soviet Jewry issue was turning the Jewish community into "cold warriors."

The press conference and a meeting Abram had later with Secretary of State George Shultz were in preparation for the NCSJ's day-long "Emergency Action For Soviet Jews" gathering scheduled for Capitol Hill tomorrow. Participants will include members of Congress and a broad spectrum of American religious and ethnic leaders, and will feature a symbolic "prisoner lunch" of potato soup and black bread.

#### Wants To Thank Shultz

Abram said he wanted to thank Shultz for keeping his pledge to the NCSJ last year that in all meetings with the Soviet Union, the U.S. would raise the issue of Soviet Jewry, including the meeting Shultz

had with Soviet Foreign Minister Andrei Gromyko in Geneva earlier this month. Lionel Olmer, Undersecretary of Commerce for International Trade Administration, also raised the issue of Soviet Jewry during recent trade talks in Moscow, Abram said. He noted that Olmer told him he spent an evening with a Soviet Jewish refusenik and found it an "extraordinary experience."

Jerry Goodman, NCSJ executive director, said the NCSJ believes that if there are to be improved cultural, scientific and trade relations between the U.S. and Soviet Union, it required if not "explicit, implicit preconditions," that there be improved conditions for Soviet Jews including increased emigration. He said this view is shared by the Reagan Administration.

Abram said the Jackson-Vanik Amendment which links trade to immigration is not written in "concrete" and Jews would not oppose changing the amendment if the Soviet Union would honor the Helsinki accords. But he stressed the Jackson-Vanik Amendment has not been a barrier to emigration but may have assisted it since 51,000 Jews emigrated from the USSR in the year it was adopted. Emigration last year was below 900.

#### Anti-Semitism, Anti-Zionism Continues Unabated

Abram suggested that the coming Geneva talks on disarmament may lead to improved conditions for Jews in the USSR. But he stressed that the persecution of Jews continues now especially against teachers of Hebrew. He noted that when he was a representative to the United Nations Commission on Human Rights in 1964 he showed the commission a book printed in the Ukraine, "Judaism without Embellishment" which was anti-Semitic.

Last November, in Leningrad, a 27-minute documentary was broadcast on television called, "Hiring and Accomplishes" which Abram said was intended to warn Jews to keep away from contacts with people in the West and to turn non-Jews against Jews.

The film, which was shown at the press conference and will be shown again tomorrow, portrays Zionism as an anti-Soviet movement serving Western imperialism and aliyah as a means of bringing Soviet Jews to Israel for "cannon fodder for Israel's continuing offensive against the Arab world." American and other Western Jews are portrayed as seeking to convince Soviet Jews to betray their country in return for material rewards.

#### NEW ACTIVIST GROUP FORMED IN ISRAEL

JERUSALEM, Jan. 29 (JTA) — A new activist group which wants to re-arrange government priorities in favor of social issues has emerged here, calling itself "Combat '85." One of its first demands is the transfer of monies allocated for new settlement building on the West Bank to the needy.

The group is composed of young city dwellers and some not so young who were active in the now defunct Black Panthers movement in the 1970's. Their immediate goal is to lead the social struggle in slum neighborhoods, inhabited mainly by Oriental Jews, which long have been considered strongholds of Likud and other rightwing parties.

Two of its leaders, Saadya Marciano of the Labor Party and MK Charlie Biton of the Hadash Communists, are both former leaders of the Black Panthers.

## GOVERNMENTS TO OPEN ARCHIVES TO YAD VASHEM SCHOLARS

LOS ANGELES, Jan. 29 (JTA) — The governments of West Germany, Poland, Hungary and Rumania have independently agreed to share their heretofore confidential archives of the Holocaust period with scholars from Israel's Yad Vashem Martyrs and Heroes Remembrance Authority, it was announced by Abraham Spiegel, chairperson of the Los Angeles Martyrs Memorial and Museum of the Holocaust, its West Coast affiliate.

"We are very anxious to have access to this material," Spiegel noted, "for it will enable us to make significant advances in repairing the patchwork of the history of the period. We will be able to trace the fates of individuals, of communities, of the development of a genocide which should never again happen to any people on earth."

The German state central archive in Ludwigsburg, which contains essential information on Nazi war criminals, will be available for researchers to take whatever is considered necessary back to the Yad Vashem research facility. While the Polish archives have been accessible to scholars for about three years, they, like those of the other Eastern European countries, will be open to exchange with the Jerusalem-based facility.

It is estimated that hundreds of thousands of documents are contained in these resources, which include those of the Jewish communities as well as the state. "We don't know why these materials have been opened up to us at this point," Spiegel stated. "We must act quickly lest the opportunity be withdrawn. Let us hope that this marks the beginning of a new understanding of peoples."

## ITALY'S DEFENSE MINISTER SAYS THERE MUST BE A CAMP DAVID II

NEW YORK, Jan. 29 (JTA) — Italy's Defense Minister Giovanni Spadolini told a large audience at Columbia University last Friday that "Israel without question is the only democracy in the Middle East," and "those who care about democracy in Western Europe must care about the democracy in Israel."

Speaking at Columbia University's School of International Affairs, Minister Spadolini said that "Camp David was a good first step toward negotiating peace between Israel and her Arab neighbors, but there must now be a Camp David II." He addressed an audience composed of mainly Italian academics, civic and business leaders, and media people.

A three-man delegation from the American Jewish Committee was present during the lecture. The subjects of Israel, Palestinians, Middle East peace and terrorism dominated the question-and-answer period.

At the invitation of the Italian Embassy in Washington, the AJC representatives held a brief, private meeting with the Italian Defense Minister at Casa Italiana. The AJC group consisted of Theodore Ellenoff, chairman of AJC's Board of Governors; Rabbi Marc Tanenbaum, AJC's director of international relations; and David Harris, deputy director.

During an hour-long lecture in Italian, Spadolini said that the European Economic Community (EEC) should play "a constructive role in seeking to promote negotiations and peaceful coexistence between the Arabs and Israel." He stated that

"the EEC should coordinate its policies with the United States and not compete with the U.S." Spadolini also said that diplomatic means must be found to help save the remaining Black Jews in Ethiopia and the Sudan. He added that Italy and the EEC will try to contribute to that humanitarian cause. Italy now holds the presidency of the EEC and Spadolini indicated that Italy would use the next five months of its EEC presidency to advance these objectives.

Spadolini then condemned international terrorism as a major threat to world peace. He singled out Libya as a primary exporter of terrorism. The counter-ing of global violence and terror, he said, was a major subject of his consultations with U.S. Government officials.

During their private meetings, Ellenoff commended Minister Spadolini for his positive views on Israel and Middle East peace, the rescue of Ethiopian Jews, and on combatting terrorism. Tanenbaum proposed a meeting for fuller discussion of these concerns with Spadolini in Rome during the week of February 10 to 14 when a high-level delegation of AJC leaders will be on a mission to Italy. Spadolini agreed to such a meeting.

## SOVIETS REJECT AN ISRAELI PROPOSAL

JERUSALEM, Jan. 29 (JTA) — Israel proposed to the Soviet Union that the two countries resume cooperation on the occasion of the 40th anniversary of the defeat of Nazi Germany this year. But the idea was flatly rejected by the USSR, Premier Shimon Peres told a meeting of high school students here yesterday. The Soviets broke diplomatic relations with Israel in 1967.

Peres said Israel's message was conveyed to the Kremlin by Armand Hammer, the American oil magnate who is well connected in Moscow through his extensive business dealings with the Russians. The reply was that a development such as was suggested by Israel would depend on relations between the Soviet Union and the U.S.

Peres revealed the exchange of messages shortly after Edgar Bronfman, president of the World Jewish Congress, announced at the WJC Board of Governors meeting in Vienna that he had been invited to the Soviet Union later this year in his capacities both as businessman and WJC president.

## RUTH FELDMAN DEAD AT 52

WASHINGTON, Jan. 29 (JTA) — Ruth Feldman, who served as executive director of B'nai B'rith Women from 1983 to 1985, died of cancer last week at her home in Buffalo, N.Y. She was 52 years old. She resided in Washington during her service to B'nai B'rith Women and had only recently returned to Buffalo.

Prior to her arrival in Washington, Feldman was executive director of the Buffalo Philharmonic Orchestra for five years. An accomplished pianist and registered music therapist, she served as director of social rehabilitation and creative arts therapies for the New York State Department of Mental Hygiene prior to her work with the Buffalo Philharmonic. She also taught creative arts therapy and grantsmanship at the State University College at Buffalo.

Feldman was the co-author of a book and wrote several articles examining ways arts organizations can best serve the hearing impaired. In 1980 she was named "Woman of the Year" by the State University of New York at Buffalo.