

INTERNATIONAL JEWISH LEADERS MEET OFFICIALLY IN BEIJING FOR THE FIRST TIME WITH CHINESE GOVERNMENT AGENCIES

MELBOURNE, Oct. 28 (JTA) — Representatives of international Jewish organizations have met officially in Beijing for the first time with two Chinese government agency officials to discuss prospects for establishing further contact.

The president of the Asia Pacific Jewish Association (APJA) and the Executive Council of Australian Jewry, Isi Leibler, held talks with officials of the Bureau of Religious Affairs and the Chinese People's Association for Friendship.

Leibler, a member of the Executive of the World Jewish Congress, was accompanied by Sam Lipski, vice president of the Australian Institute of Jewish Affairs and an executive member of the APJA. (Lipski is also the Jewish Telegraphic Agency's correspondent in Australia.)

At the Bureau of Religious Affairs, which has administrative responsibility for all religions in China, they met Zaho Kuang-Wei, head of the Bureau's research office, and Wang Yi-Bin, head of the Islamic Office. At the Friendship Association, discussions were held with Yao Ren-Lui, the deputy director of American and Oceanian Affairs.

In addition to officials from the agency dealing directly with religious affairs and international relations, the Jewish representatives met informally with a wide cross-section of officials from various government departments, as well as editors, writers, academics and publishers.

Leibler said the Chinese officials had been friendly, and those at the Friendship Association had promised to consider proposals for establishing a basis for arranging some form of contact with world Jewish organizations.

Significant And Precedent-Setting Meeting

It was significant and precedent-setting, Leibler said, that the Chinese agencies had been willing to meet at all and to accept the formal greetings extended on behalf of the World Jewish Congress, the Asia Pacific Jewish Association and the Executive Council of Australian Jewry.

"At the same time, the Chinese remained wary and skeptical. We did not expect any breakthroughs on this issue, and there were none. But we have been invited to return to China for future discussions and we believe some doors were opened, however slightly," Leibler said.

Leibler said he had asked for an "address" to which bodies such as the WJC and APJA could direct their enquiries. He had also asked whether it would be possible to convene a conference in Beijing, bringing together Chinese and Jewish scholars to explore subjects of mutual interest, such as Chinese and Jewish philosophy, wisdom literature, and the history of the Jews of Kaifeng, the community of indigenous Chinese Jewry which had flourished for many centuries.

Leibler said they agreed to consider these requests. He added that while it was clear the Chinese

were bound to be sensitive to any approach from international Jewish organizations so long as there were no diplomatic relations between China and Israel, there had been a noticeable improvement in their willingness to listen to suggestions of contact on a cultural, non-political level.

Compared to an earlier visit in 1981, when he had raised similar issues but only at a non-government level, the climate had changed towards much greater openness, Leibler said. "This, of course, reflects the noticeable expansion of China's open door policies in other areas," he said.

PERES: ISRAEL'S INTERNATIONAL STANDING HAS INCREASED GREATLY DURING THE LAST TWO WEEKS

By Gil Sedan

JERUSALEM, Oct. 28 (JTA) — Israel's international image and stature has improved considerably during the past two weeks, Premier Shimon Peres told Israel TV last night. He alluded to the favorable response by Western leaders — and also Jordan — to his peace initiative, to the decline of the PLO's international standing — and to the U.S. Senate action postponing until March I the sale of arms to Jordan, as significant signs of Israel's improved status.

In view of these developments, Peres said he could not understand the reason for Likud's criticism of his peace plan nor the attitude of Likud Cabinet ministers that there is a crisis in the national unity government as a result of the peace plan. "A very serious change has taken place in the status of Israel," the Premier told Israel TV. "Israel has gained points, and did not lose one single point." He indicated that in today's Knesset debate on his proposals, he would stand firm on his plan for starting peace talks with Jordan.

(The debate lasted late into the night. Full story will be in tomorrow's Bulletin.)

(Jordan's response to Peres' proposals was expected to be discussed by King Hussein of Jordan and PLO chief Yasir Arafat in Amman tonight.)

Referring to Hussein's generally favorable response to the initiative he unveiled last Monday in his address at the United Nations General Assembly, the Premier said that "a door that was almost totally closed has been opened To my mind, there is a new opportunity and room for new dynamics."

Dismisses Statement By Jordanian Official

Peres dismissed a statement made yesterday by Jordan's Information Minister Mohammed Al-Khatib that Jordan, "at this particular time ... categorically rejects direct talks or any partial or separate settlement with Israel," and that an international conference "of all parties concerned, including the PLO, plus the permanent members of the UN Security Council" remained "the only way for a peaceful, just and comprehensive settlement of the Palestinian issue." Peres had called for direct talks with Jordan.

Peres called attention to what he called Hussein's unprecedented response to his peace initiative, to Hussein's reevaluation of the role of the PLO in the Mideast peace process, to a statement by United States Ambassador to the UN Vernon Walters that the PLO had

taken itself out of the negotiating process, and to French President Francois Mitterrand's indication that he was reconsidering his attitude toward the PLO.

Peres said that those in the government who continued to insist that there was no evidence that any Arab countries were prepared to negotiate with Israel were setting up a straw man. The developments in the last two weeks, he said, "stand for themselves, and nothing will help" to change that reality. He said that the critics of his peace plan were simply engaging in "a political maneuver."

"Therefore," Peres said with regard to the Likud criticism, "I am calm. I am not saying that the process has been completed, but if one compares the overall political picture now with that of two weeks ago, one can notice a substantial change."

POPE TELLS JEWISH LEADERS THAT ANTI-SEMITISM SHOULD BE COMPLETELY WIPED OUT

ROME, Oct. 28 (JTA) — Pope John Paul said at the Vatican today that "anti-Semitism in its ugly and sometimes violent manifestations should be completely wiped out." He made this statement to a delegation from the International Jewish Committee on Interreligious Consultations (IJCIC) which is here for meetings with the Vatican Secretariat on Catholic-Jewish Relations October 28-30 in connection with the 20th anniversary of "Nostra Aetate," the Vatican II Declaration on the Jews.

The Pope, in his address, referred to a Vatican document, "Notes on the Correct Way to Present the Jews and Judaism in Preaching and Catechesis in the Roman Catholic Church" issued last June.

The document was criticized by IJCIC at the time as a "retrogression" from Nostra Aetate primarily because of its failure to acknowledge the religious significance of the State of Israel to the Jewish people, and its superficial reference to the Holocaust — the two events that have "decisively shaped the way Jews define themselves."

The Pontiff today said the Church was always prepared "to revise and renew whatever in her attitudes and ways of expression happens to conform less with her own identity."

Responding to the Pope's speech, Rabbi Mordecai Waxman, chairperson of the Synagogue Council of America, IJCIC's U.S. Secretariat, addressed himself primarily to Nostra Aetate. "The repudiation" by that declaration "of the false teaching, responsible for so much hatred and persecution, that all Jews then and now were responsible for the death of Jesus," he said, "encouraged Jews everywhere to feel that there was a new spirit in the Christian world."

Waxman said Jews were "conscious that much of its vision has yet to be translated into reality and universal acceptance." He also noted, with "distress, lapses from time to time into the old and repudiated language by some Catholic authorities." Despite this, he said, "wise acceptance of the new approach in the Catholic world has been for us a source of hope."

Waxman and the four other members of the American delegation at the meeting with the Pope presented him with a copy of the Kaufman Manuscript of the "Code of Maimonides" in recognition of the commemoration of the 850th anniversary of the philosopher's birth by the Jewish and the Catholic world.

Johannes Cardinal Willebrands, Secretariat president, and Waxman, are heading their respective delegations. Rabbi Marc Tanenbaum, director of international relations of the American Jewish Committee, who was the only rabbi present as a guest observer during the deliberations of Vatican Council II, is scheduled to present a survey and evaluation of the present state of Catholic-Jewish relations during the two-day meeting.

WIESENTHAL CENTER CALLS FOR SWIFT ACTION ON NAZI WAR CRIMINAL

LOS ANGELES, Oct. 28 (JTA) — The Simon Wiesenthal Center has called upon both the West German and French governments to act swiftly on reports that infamous Nazi war criminal Alois Brunner is prepared to give himself up for trial. An article on Brunner published in the West German magazine, Bunte, claims that Brunner is prepared to give himself up as long as he has assurances that he will not land in Israeli hands.

A deputy and chief aide to Adolf Eichmann, he was responsible for deportations of at least 128,500 Jews, and was sentenced to death in absentia in 1954 in France for crimes against humanity. Brunner, who lives under the name of George Fischer in Damascus, is 73 years old.

Wiesenthal Center officials had previously met with French diplomats to urge renewed efforts to bring Brunner to justice, and have scheduled meetings with French Justice Ministry and Foreign Ministry officials in Paris next month.

"We have contacted those officials in Paris, to get immediate clarification as to what steps, if any, are available to the French," said Rabbi Abraham Cooper, associate dean of the Center.

An official of the French Foreign Ministry said they would confirm with the Wiesenthal Center within the next day or so whether or not France will take additional steps in the Brunner case. "Our legal counsel, Martin Mendelsohn, has asked the West German Embassy to clarify the claims in the Bunte story, and to reconfirm West Germany's commitment to try him for his deep involvement in the 'final solution'," Cooper said.

Brunner, who is also wanted by Greece, Austria and Czechoslovakia, heads the Wiesenthal Center's list of most wanted Nazi war criminals. Others include Leon Degrelle, former head of the Belgian SS, who was sentenced to death in absentia in Belgium after the war. Degrelle, an unrepentant Nazi, gives lectures and seminars on Nazi history, and contributes revisionist articles to publications of the notorious Institute for Historical Review, a Center spokesman said. Also on the Center's list is Walter Kutschmann, now 71 years old, a former gestapo leader, who has been identified by Simon Wiesenthal as having escaped to Argentina after the war. It has been reported that he lives in the coastal town of Miramar, Argentina, under the name of Pedro Ricardo Olmo.

SOME 4,000 ISRAELI ARMY DESERTERS HAVE VOLUNTARILY TURNED THEMSELVES IN

TEL AVIV, Oct. 28 (JTA) — Over half of an estimated 7,000 soldiers considered deserters — most of whom had failed to report for reserve duty when called up — have voluntarily turned themselves in at IDF depots by the time a two-week grace period was up.

Of the 4,000 surrendering deserters, 362 have already been sent to prison following trials, 350 are

now awaiting trial, and others were fined. Some 250 were forgiven because of medical and other social reasons. The deserters who gave themselves up had apparently believed, when the appeal for them to surrender was first made by the authorities, that they would be pardoned if they turned themselves in during the two-week period. The IDF Command, denying they had promised the deserters amnesty, said they had merely indicated that soldiers found to be deserters after the two-week grace period ended would receive very heavy punishment.

SRAEL TV IN COLLABORATION WITH THE ADL TO SHOW FILMS WARNING AGAINST DANGERS OF KAHANE'S RACIST IDEOLOGY by David Landau

JERUSALEM, Oct. 28 (JTA) — Israel Television, in collaboration with the Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rith, will soon be presenting regular public service broadcasts warning against the dangers of Kach's member Meir Kahane's racist ideology.

This is the first time that an American Jewish organization has become involved in an internal public affairs issue in Israel, according to Harry Wall, ADL's Israel representative.

The one-minute films, which will be televised directly before the nightly, high-rating, Mabat newscast, will be co-produced by employees of the Education Ministry and Israel Television in consultation with the ADL's Ted Freedman, director of the ADL's intergroup relations division, and Frances Sonnenschein, ADL's national educational director.

The producers will be consulting, during their planning and production work, with a panel of eminent Israelis, including authors and journalists.

The first broadcast, with tolerance as its theme, is scheduled for the end of November, and will feature Israeli celebrities speaking out against Kahane.

"American Jewry can no longer stand aside while democracy is endangered in the Jewish State," said Wall. He noted that Israel and its supporters abroad have always stressed Israel's uniqueness as the sole democracy in the region.

The ADL will be financing the broadcasts and Israel Television will screen them for no charge. The ADL also plans posters showing popular Israeli singing stars and sports people supporting the anti-Kahane campaign, and it is hoped that Egged buses will carry the posters to reach as wide a public as possible.

The ADL has material that was used to counter religious and racial prejudice in America, and the League believes that this can be adapted for use in an ongoing Ministry of Education school campaign to imbue Israeli school children with democratic values.

INF FOREST TO HONOR MOROCCAN MONARCH

NEW YORK, Oct. 28 (JTA) — A Jewish National fund forest of 10,000 trees has been dedicated in Jerusalem's Ramot neighborhood in honor of King Mohammed V of Morocco, who died in 1961. The late king is revered by North African Jews for courageously refusing their deportation to Nazi Germany during World War II. Mohammed was the father of the reigning monarch, Hassan II.

The forest is being planted by the JNF at the initiative of the Association of North African Immigrants in Israel. Former Moroccan Jews now living in Israel began six years ago to think of an appropriate memorial for the king, who insisted that all his subjects were equal and refused Jewish deportation.

Some of the Moroccan Jews discussed the project with the present king, who reportedly also has a favorable attitude towards his Jewish subjects, despite censure from fellow Arab leaders on policies relating to Jews and Israel. The Moroccan Jews proposed that a forest bearing his name be planted in Jerusalem and, according to JNF, the king silently acquiesced. Five pine and cypress trees are to be taken by former Moroccan Jews to Hassan's royal court yard for planting.

The Immigrants' Association raised about \$10,000 in Israel, France and Canada. Contributions also came from former Moroccan Jews and various enterprises. The money was donated to JNF, the agency responsible for afforestation and land development in Israel.

The dedication was attended by the Chief Rabbis of Israel, Interior Minister Yitzhak Peretz, and guests from France and Canada.

QUICK RATIFICATION OF THE GENOCIDE CONVENTION URGED BY B'NAI B'RITH

WASHINGTON, Oct. 28 (JTA) — Terming quick ratification of the Genocide Convention vital to United States interests, B'nai B'rith International called on two Senate Republican leaders to bring the treaty to the floor of the Senate at the earliest opportunity.

Gerald Kraft, president of B'nai B'rith International, said in letters to President Reagan, Senate Majority Leader Robert Dole (R. Kansas) and Foreign Relations Committee chairman Richard Lugar (R. Ind.) that further delay in ratifying the 37-year-old accord "will only give America's adversaries more ammunition with which to attack us, both in world forums and in bilateral meetings."

On the other hand, Kraft said, ratification would "bolster America's efforts to advance the cause of human rights around the world." Moreover, he added, ratification prior to the Geneva summit talks next month would deprive the Soviets of a propaganda advantage and strengthen the U.S.'s hands in negotiating.

The B'nai B'rith leader commended Reagan for asking Dole to pursue ratification during this Senate session. "The United States is the only country with the moral conviction and power to make the Genocide Convention a potent tool," Kraft said. "But without ratification we cannot employ it."

LATE NEWS BULLETIN

JERUSALEM (JTA) — The national unity government weathered a crisis Monday when, after a five-hour debate in the Knesset on the peace plan by Premier Shimon Peres, the coalition partners voted confidence in the government. Peres reiterated word for word the operative section of the speech he delivered in the UN General Assembly last Monday and declared emphatically that he stood by every word of it.

JERUSALEM (JTA) — Premier Shimon Peres met discreetly last weekend in Paris with the President of Sri Lanka, Israel Radio reported Monday. The two leaders reportedly discussed joint projects in Sri Lanka, and the possibility of developing full diplomatic relations. An Israeli diplomat now represents Israel in Colombo, operating from the American Embassy.

PERES: ISRAEL IS READY FOR AN INFLUX OF SOVIET JEWISH IMMIGRANTS

NEW YORK, Oct. 28 (JTA) -- Prime Minister Shimon Peres of Israel yesterday told North American Jewish leaders, in a teleconference from a studio in Jerusalem, that he and other Israeli leaders had no fears about whether Israel could handle an influx of newcomers from the Soviet Union, if such a development occurred.

The first international teleconference was organized by the American Zionist Federation to link 18 American Jewish communities and Montreal in a dialogue with Peres.

The live television program was relayed by satellite from a studio in Jerusalem to a panel of leading Jews in a Manhattan studio and to an audience estimated at 10,000 listeners in New York and other cities. Most of them watched in synagogues linked to the satellite.

The Premier was responding to a question from Charlotte Jacobson, president of the Jewish National Fund, who asked, "Given the situation in Israel and the very high unemployment, how does Israel see itself able to absorb large numbers of immigrants from the Soviet Union or even the smaller numbers from the United States?" She added, "We have a great deal of concern that even our small aliya is threatened by the prospect of not having employment in Israel" for the immigrants.

Peres responded that "more than the country building the immigrants, the immigrants are building the country." He said there were times when Israel was taking in "thousands of immigrants" daily when Israel was "really poor, in a terrible shape. We didn't have a penny in our pocket."

Peres added that he was "sure" that if immigration started again, "optimism and more optimism will be introduced in our country. And what is actually an economy if not the spirit of the people?" He declared also that he believed "our economy is now on the way to recovery. The people of Israel are ready to make important sacrifices to bring order to our house and all indications are that we are returning to the right way."

Three Main Challenges For Israel

A viewer in Pittsburgh asked: "What do you see as the three main challenges for Israel in the 21st century as we look to the future?"

The Premier replied: first, "to make our country true to its heritage, namely, a country that is based on moral values, and demonstrates that spirit," asserting it was not necessarily true that "expediency can form a new and a successful society in our times."

"Secondly," he said, "I would like really to see Israel growing culturally, based on a larger audience of people who speak, who sing, who read and who write in the language of the Bible."

Then, he continued, "I would like to see peace in our area and Israel becoming not only a country that lives in peace with her neighbors but also a country that contributes, as we would like so deeply, to other countries poorer than we are with needs more burning than we have and really showing what we would like to show -- generosity in our concepts."

The Premier added, "We would like, since there is a possibility that Jewish life will remain elsewhere, to become the spiritual center of Jewish life and really show that whatever we have suffered

for, is being translated in a reality which is not disappointing, by justifying our belief that every man can better himself and every society can become better."

View On Peace Overture To Jordan

In answer to other questions by Brooklyn District Attorney Elizabeth Holtzman and Daniel Schorr, the moderator of the 70-minute session, Peres said that despite disagreement in the Cabinet with his peace overture to Jordan, "we shall have enough support to carry on." On another question, whether King Hussein of Jordan is too weak to make peace with Israel by himself, Peres answered:

"Why pass the judgement that he is too weak? I think he is strong enough to do so. He needs peace as badly as we do. I believe the King is in a position to negotiate. A man is as strong as he feels."

Peres also reiterated, in response to related questions, that there "is no replacement for direct negotiations" in the peace process. "I do not believe we can reach an agreement unless we shall meet face to face." He added: "No international forum can serve as a substitute for direct negotiations. Yet I can think of many ways in which international support may be helpful." Specifically, he said that the UN Security Council could help by calling for direct negotiations.

In Paris, over the weekend, Peres said that under certain circumstances, the Soviet Union and the People's Republic of China, both permanent members of the Security Council, could vote in favor of such an undertaking.

GORKY HEBREW TEACHER SENTENCED TO THREE YEARS IMPRISONMENT

NEW YORK, Oct. 28 (JTA) -- The National Conference on Soviet Jewry reported that Hebrew teacher and long-time refusenik Leonid Volvovsky of Gorky was sentenced to three years imprisonment on charges of allegedly "defaming the Soviet state and social system." The sentence was handed down after a five-day trial from which his family and friends were barred.

Among the evidence presented against the 43-year-old engineer was Leon Uris' novel, *Exodus*, marking the second time in less than a year that the novel was presented as alleged "proof" of anti-Soviet behavior. It had also been included in evidentiary materials used in the case against Odessa Hebrew teacher Yakov Levin, who was convicted of the same charge last November. A woman who testified against Volvovsky claimed that he gave her the book and asked her to distribute it.

According to NCSJ executive director Jerry Goodman, the fact that *Exodus* -- which contains nothing which can be construed as anti-Soviet -- was submitted as major evidence in the case serves to illustrate the baseless nature of the charges against Volvovsky. The conviction was also based on testimony that Volvovsky "associated with Anatoly Shcharansky and Iosif Begun."

Volvovsky's wife, Ludmilla, as well as his mother, daughter and Iosif Begun's son, Boris, attempted to attend the trial. Shortly after it began, however, all but Volvovsky's daughter were ordered to leave the courtroom. When his daughter protested the action, she was charged with "improper conduct" and forcibly removed from the room.

Volvovsky, who refused to accept the attorney appointed by the court, conducted his own defense.