

PLAN TO BUILD CONVENT ON SITE OF AUSCHWITZ DEATH CAMP SPARKS ANGER AMONG EUROPEAN JEWISH COMMUNITIES

BRUSSELS, Jan. 12 (JTA) — European Jewish communities are shocked and outraged at a plan by Polish Catholic Church officials to build a Carmelite convent on the site of the Auschwitz death camp where more than two million Jews were murdered by the Nazis during World War II, the World Jewish Congress reported today. The WJC also reported that at its request, the Polish government will intervene with church officials regarding their plan.

Belgian Jews first learned of the convent proposal when fund-raising efforts for its building were organized by a group called "Help to the Church in Distress," which works for the Roman Catholic Church in Communist countries.

According to the Brussels evening newspaper *Le Soir*, eight Carmelite monks have been living in Auschwitz since last May, in preparation for the erection of a convent there. The newspaper reports that the convent would symbolize: "Love, peace and reconciliation, witnessing the victorious power of the cross of Jesus. It will become a spiritual fortress, and the proof of the conversion of apostates and those who went astray in various countries."

In early December, when a delegation of the WJC led by its president Edgar Bronfman was officially received in Warsaw, the issue was raised with Polish authorities. Bronfman advised Poland's Minister of Religious Affairs Adam Lopatka of the categorical Jewish opposition to the proposed convent and received Lopatka's assurances that he would intervene directly with Polish Catholic officials.

'... Auschwitz Belongs To All Who Were Massacred'

In Geneva, the president of the International Council of Jewish Women, Leila Siegel, has written to Sister Sheila Sedawie of the Sisters of Zion asking that the placement of a convent in Auschwitz be prevented:

"We feel this way not only because of the martyrdom of millions of Jewish children, women and men," Siegel wrote, "but also because their martyrdom was shared by millions of human beings having various beliefs and creeds."

She added: "We believe that the ground of Auschwitz belongs to all who were massacred there and that, therefore, no one group should establish itself on this hallowed ground. Were this to happen, the action, however laudible in its aims, would create much misunderstanding and resentment."

BORDER POLICEMAN KILLED, ANOTHER WOUNDED IN DAYLIGHT ATTACK IN NABLUS

By Gil Sedan

JERUSALEM, Jan. 12 (JTA) — An Israeli Druze border policeman was fatally shot and another wounded in a broad daylight attack on the main street in Nablus yesterday. Military sources, who clamped a curfew on the area, said the attack appeared to have been carefully planned.

The victims were Sgt. Maj. Jamil Fares, 46, a resident of Galilee who died of a chest wound after he was rushed by helicopter to the Sheba Medical Center in Ramat Gan; and a 19-year-old policeman, identified only as Ghanem, who was taken to the same hospital for treatment of what were described as moderate wounds.

Five passersby were wounded, apparently by shots fired by Israel Defense Force soldiers who rushed to the scene to try to head off the attackers. A military spokesman said the shooting of the two Druze policeman seems to have been premeditated because both had served for some time in Nablus. They were well acquainted with the local scene and knew what security precautions to take.

Both were off duty at noontime yesterday but in uniform while they went shopping with their wives and other members of their families. Fares and his family entered a shop and Ghanem remained on guard outside. He was struck first by what appeared to be a pistol shot. Fares was gunned down when he rushed outside to aid his fellow officer.

Mayor Expresses Regret

Zafer Al-Masri, the newly appointed Mayor of Nablus, expressed regrets over the attack and hoped the killers would be caught swiftly. In the past year, 17 Israelis were attacked in the administered territories, five fatally. Police suspect two terrorist gangs are active in the Samaria region of the West Bank where Nablus is located. An Israeli civilian employed by the military government was shot to death there last July.

The dead police sergeant was the father of six children. He had served in the Nablus area periodically since 1967. He also saw service in Lebanon where he escaped death twice from roadside bombs. A member of his family, Kamal Fares, was killed three years ago by a bomb explosion in Ramallah.

U. S. DOWNPLAYING SYRIA'S INVOLVEMENT WITH ABU NIDAL'S TERRORIST GROUP

By David Friedman

WASHINGTON, Jan. 12 (JTA) — The Reagan Administration, while focusing on Libya's support for the terrorist attacks on the Rome and Vienna airports December 27, appears to be downplaying any Syrian involvement.

However, evidence emerged over the weekend that the members of terrorist Abu Nidal's group who carried out the atrocities came from a camp in the Syrian-controlled Bekaa Valley of eastern Lebanon and went through Damascus on their way to Europe.

But Secretary of State George Shultz said today he was "not able to say" to what extent the Syrian authorities knew anything in advance of the group's plans. "Libya is clearly supporting terrorism in general," Shultz said in an appearance on the CBS-TV program "Face the Nation." He said Libya provides financial support to terrorist groups, "particularly the Abu Nidal group which is the group that perpetrated the latest catastrophe."

He stressed that there is a "very definite Libyan connection with this and a whole pattern of terrorist activity." But Shultz said that while "Syria has long

been on our terrorist list," a list the U.S. publishes of countries supporting terrorism, Syrian "behavior is rather different" from Libya's. Explaining, he said he was referring to Syria's "public attitude" and "we are working with Syria on a number of fronts in a constructive way." While Shultz did not elaborate, the U.S. is believed to be working with Syria in an effort to get six American hostages held in Lebanon released.

In addition, although Shultz said at a State Department press conference last Thursday that he did not hold out much hope for Syrian participation in the Middle East peace process, the U.S. for the last several months has continued to hold the door open for Syrian participation.

Syria Angered Over Remarks

Syria, meanwhile, is reportedly angered over remarks by Robert Oakley, head of the State Department's counter-terrorist office, that the U.S. might impose the same economic sanctions on Syria that it did on Libya. Speaking to journalists last Thursday, Oakley said there was strong evidence that Syria supports the Abu Nidal group.

He suggested that Syria follow Iraq's example and expel Abu Nidal who apparently divides his time between Syria and Libya.

In his TV interview today, Shultz said Oakley is "doing an outstanding job." But he rejected the possibility of sanctions against Syria, although he noted that this did not depend on the U.S., but "on what other countries do. I hope that Syria will not do things that will make that necessary and my guess is that they won't."

Peace Means Sitting Down With Israel

Shultz repeated today his assertions at his State Department press conference last Thursday that the terrorists are opposed to the Middle East peace process. "Peace means that the countries in the Middle East need to sit down with Israel and make peace," he said.

He noted that when some, like the late President Anwar Sadat of Egypt or King Hussein of Jordan, attempted to make peace with Israel, the terrorists tried to kill them. The terrorists are "not for peace," Shultz said. "They're really not for the Palestinian cause. The Palestinians need a better break ... They need a peace process. They're not going to get it through this violence."

The Secretary of State had pointed out Thursday that "The violence and terrorism in the Middle East has not achieved anything for the Palestinians." He said he has always been concerned with the fate of the Palestinians who he called a "deprived people." "They deserve a better fate," he added.

GERMAN LAWMAKER REGRETS ANTI-JEWISH SLUR BUT WON'T RETRACT HIS REMARKS By David Kantor

BONN, Jan. 12 (JTA) — Hermann Fellner, a Bundestag member of the government coalition, has expressed regret for the "misunderstanding" caused by his slur on Jews seeking reparations for former slave laborers of the Nazi era. But the 35-year-old rightwing politician, in a statement issued over the weekend, did not retract his remarks.

He alleged instead that the furor they created was due to attempts by the opposition in parliament to portray himself and his party as anti-Semitic. Fellner is a member of the Christian Social Union (CSU), the Bavarian sister party of Chancellor Helmut Kohl's ruling Christian Democratic Union (CDU).

Kohl and other prominent leaders of the CDU and CSU expressed displeasure with Fellner's canard but refused to condemn him for it. The Bavarian lawyer, who is Home Affairs spokesman of the CSU's Bundestag faction, stated publicly last week that pressure for reparations creates the impression that "Jews always show up when money jingles in German cashboxes."

The CSU has offered to meet with leaders of the West German Jewish community. Theo Aigle, chairman of the party's Bundestag faction, suggested that Fellner might participate to explain his statement.

Debate On Reparations

Meanwhile, the Bundestag is preparing to debate next week an opposition motion that would force companies to pay reparations to Jewish slave laborers they or their subsidiaries used during World War II.

Several industrial giants such as Krupp, Seimens and I.G. Farben already have. The Deutsche Bank last week approved payment of 5 million Marks, about \$2 million, to former slave laborers of Dynamit-Nobel, a subsidiary of the Flick industrial conglomerate which Deutsche Bank acquired last month.

The money was made available to the Frankfurt-based Conference on Jewish Material Claims Against Germany which is acting on behalf of the claimants. The reaction in the Jewish community has been mixed.

While some Jewish spokesmen seem satisfied that the reparations process has been advanced, Heinz Galinsky, leader of the West Berlin Jewish community, criticized Deutsche Bank for characterizing the payment as a "humanitarian" gesture while insisting it had no legal obligation to honor Jewish claims.

DISPUTE ERUPTS OVER KREISKY'S DEFENSE OF QADDAFI By Reinhard Engel

VIENNA, Jan. 12 (JTA) — An angry dispute developed here over former Chancellor Bruno Kreisky's defense of Libyan leader Muammar Qaddafi against charges that he was a supporter of international terrorism.

Kreisky, whose Socialist Party still governs Austria, said in a television interview recorded yesterday in Paris, that he has "plenty of reliable evidence that Qaddafi was not involved in this thing."

He was referring to the December 27 simultaneous terrorist attacks on Vienna and Rome airports in which 19 persons were killed and over 110 wounded. Qaddafi has been denounced by President Reagan as an abettor of terrorism and the U.S. has imposed economic and legal sanctions against Libya.

Josef Hoehchl, of the conservative opposition Austrian Peoples Party, took strong issue with Kreisky's remarks. The former Chancellor, he said, "has obviously lost completely political decency and taste."

Hoehchl, who is his party's human rights spokesman in the Austrian parliament, said it was outrageous that Kreisky defended "his friend Qaddafi and found words to excuse his policy of terror." He maintained that the Vienna and Rome attacks, both directed at El Al passenger facilities at the airports, were proven to have been backed by Qaddafi.

Kreisky conceded that as "an Arab revolutionary leader" Qaddafi "might think differently about terrorists than we Western politicians do. But it is an oversimplification to hold him responsible for everything." He added that terrorism will continue unless the "basic problem" in the Middle East, the Palestinian question, is resolved.

Kreisky sharply criticized the Reagan Administration's policy toward Libya. He said Reagan "has used strange terminology" to characterize Qaddafi. Reagan, at a press conference last Tuesday, called the Libyan leader a "barbarian" and a "flake." Kreisky said the U.S. has no right to set itself up as a moral judge.

Kreisky, as Chancellor three years ago, invited Qaddafi to Vienna. "It is known I do not share with him his many political positions. Still, I think our talks were not useless," Kreisky said. He added he would be willing to meet with Qaddafi again.

TABA DISPUTE CONTINUES TO SIMMER By David Landau

JERUSALEM, Jan. 12 (JTA) -- The 10-man Inner Cabinet, Israel's top policymaking forum, was in special session late tonight over the vexing and divisive issue of Taba and the overall Israeli relationship with Egypt. Before the session began, both major coalition parties had voiced fear that if the differences between them on this issue are not resolved at this meeting, the breakup of the 16-month-old unity coalition would ensue.

Last Thursday, at an earlier meeting of the Inner Cabinet, Premier Shimon Peres told his colleagues they would sit all night if necessary to reach a vote. He said he was determined to arrive at a decision one way or another.

At a caucus of Likud ministers this afternoon, chaired by Deputy Premier and Foreign Minister Yitzhak Shamir, the Likud leader, it was resolved to take a united stand at the Inner Cabinet later. They drafted their reservations to the package deal with Egypt that Peres is proposing and undertook to defend their stated position.

Peres is proposing that the Taba border dispute be submitted to international arbitration as part of a general thaw in the "cold peace" with Egypt. Trade and tourism would be increased and the Egyptian Ambassador would be returned to Tel Aviv, Peres is convinced.

In the arbitration itself, the three arbitrators (one Israeli, one Egyptian, and the third mutually agreed upon) would be allowed to suggest compromise ideas during the early months of arbitration.

Requirement By The Likud

According to leaked reports from the caucus today, the Likud document requires that Egypt eject the Palestine Liberation Organization presence from Cairo, submit to Israel its long-delayed report on the Ras Burka massacre of October 1, and pay compensation to the families of the seven Ras Burka victims, all before arbitration begins.

At Ras Burka, a Sinai tourist attraction, seven Israeli vacationers were shot dead by an Egyptian soldier, Suleiman Khater, who was subsequently sentenced to life imprisonment. Last week he committed suicide in a prison hospital.

Khater's death triggered demonstrations in his home village and at university campuses, a cause of concern in Jerusalem.

Peres argued previously that the demand for the ejection of the PLO presence is unrealistic given that the PLO maintains a presence in most Western European capitals too.

Peres has flatly rejected Likud demands for further clarifications, through diplomatic channels, of the proposed package deal between Cairo and Jerusalem. He told the ministers he would not demean himself by asking President Hosni Mubarak for additional material on matters which, in both leaders' views, have been exhaustively and satisfactorily discussed by the two sides' top diplomats.

TOWNS IN NORTHERN ISRAEL TO RECEIVE FINANCIAL BENEFITS By Gil Sedan

JERUSALEM, Jan. 12 (JTA) -- A ministerial committee has decided to provide financial benefits for towns in northern Israel equal to those given Jewish settlements in the administered territories.

The decision last week followed a comprehensive study of conditions in northern Israel which is economically depressed and vulnerable to terrorist attacks from Lebanon. A special committee of experts, headed by the Director General of the Interior Ministry, Haim Kubersky, will make recommendations to improve the situation in Kiryat Shemona, a town on the Lebanese border which recently came under renewed Katyusha rocket attacks.

Defense Minister Yitzhak Rabin pledged that the government is committed to the security of the border towns. But the economic needs of the region will also be considered. Townships and settlements in northern Israel will receive larger financial grants from the Interior Ministry and additional aid for education.

The coastal city of Nahariya, a municipality which antedates the founding of the State, will be given the status of a development town to qualify it for extra financial assistance. A special effort will be made to encourage industry in the region.

JEWISH LAWYER APPOINTED SECRETARY OF STATE FOR SCOTLAND By Maurice Samuelson

LONDON, Jan. 12 (JTA) -- Malcolm Rifkind, a 39-year-old lawyer, has been appointed Secretary of State for Scotland, making him the youngest person in Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher's Cabinet and its fifth Jewish-born member.

Born and educated in Scotland, he was for the past three years a Minister of State at the Foreign Office in charge of European and East-West questions. He has shown a general interest in human rights and has quizzed the Soviet authorities on several occasions about the missing Swedish diplomat and humanitarian, Raoul Wallenberg.

Other Cabinet members of Jewish birth are Sir Keith Joseph, Education Secretary; Nigel Lawson, Chancellor of the Exchequer; Leon Brittan, Trade and Industry Secretary; and Lord Young, Employment Secretary.

At the Scottish Office, Rifkind replaces George Younger, who becomes Defense Secretary following the sudden resignation of Michael Heseltine over the future of Britain's Westland Helicopter Company.

SPECIAL TO THE JTA JEWS AND MUSLEMS HAVE BECOME INVOLUNTARY ALLIES ON SHEHITA ISSUE

By Maurice Samuelson

LONDON, Jan. 12 (JTA) — Britain's Jews and Moslems, deeply divided over Mideast politics, have become involuntary allies in the face of threats to outlaw their respective methods of religious slaughter.

Both the Jewish practice of shehita and its Moslem equivalent would be barred under proposals currently being considered by the Minister of Agriculture, Food and Fisheries, that animals should be stunned before they are killed.

Both communities have protested that the proposals, by the Ministry's Farm Animal Welfare Council, will be incompatible with their religious principles and deprive them of fresh meat. They utterly repudiate the claims by the Council, a governmental body, that their methods of slaughter are more cruel than others used in British abattoirs, and even argue that the reverse is true.

Together with the Council's recommendations, the Jewish and Moslem objections are currently being considered by the government prior to a decision on whether or not to submit the proposals to Parliament.

Both communities are hopeful that, in line with this country's long tradition of religious toleration, politicians will finally decide to put human freedom before animal welfare, whatever conclusions are reached over the suffering involved in their slaughter methods.

In defending its sacred traditions, each community is speaking only for itself. Nevertheless, in the course of the past few months they have become aware of their mutual interest in defeating the proposed reforms.

Jews And Moslems Exchange Reports

The Board of Deputies of British Jews and the Islamic Cultural Center have sent each other copies of their reports to the government. There have also been isolated personal contacts between Jewish and Moslem religious dignitaries.

Rabbi Berl Berkovich, Registrar of the London Beth Din, whose president is Chief Rabbi Immanuel Jakobovits, told the Jewish Telegraphic Agency that although there was a world of differences between Jewish and Moslem slaughter methods, there was common ground between the two faiths whose beliefs were under attack.

He said that, as an observant Jew, he felt far less in common with Christians than with Moslems, whose religion, like Judaism, embodied a precise and detailed system of law, both written and oral.

Although Jews shun halal meat, Moslems find kosher food religiously acceptable. In other areas, too, there are points of contact. Berkovich cites cases of Moslem fathers in Britain arranging circumcision of their sons by Jewish mohelim. He himself has recently been asked by a Moslem lawyer for advice on reconciling Moslem divorce — known as talak — with the British legal system.

But it is not a one-way relationship. On the political level, the Jews gain much from the large Moslem presence in Britain. There are no Moslem British members of Parliament — compared with 30 or so Jewish MPs and a handful of Jewish Cabinet

ministers. But the 2.3 million Moslems in this country, outnumbering the declining Jewish community 7 to 1, have a formidable voting power.

Internationally, too, Moslems have impressive influence, which overshadows the discussions here about religious methods of slaughter. An assault on a central tenet of their faith in Britain would have very widespread international repercussions which no government in its right senses would care to arouse.

It is a reminder, too, of what Jews and Moslems could achieve together if, instead of the present strife over territory, they were allies in defence of their common interests.

DISPUTE BLACKS OUT ISRAELI TV

By Hugh Orgel

JERUSALEM, Jan 12 (JTA) — Israel Television broadcasts were off the air today for the third consecutive day because of a dispute involving disciplinary action taken against the chairman of the technician's committee.

Israel Television technician's staff committee members said they would return to work only after committee chairman Hezi Koka is reinstated. He was suspended by the Broadcasting Authority last Thursday for refusing to allow a segment of film, provided by a foreign news agency, from being broadcast.

The State-owned radio was also off the air for five hours last Thursday night, as a sign of solidarity with the television employees.

Background Of Dispute

The incident leading to Koka's suspension followed his decision to black out a segment of last Wednesday night's newsreel involving disturbances on the Temple Mount, during the visit there that morning by a group of Knesset members.

Israel Television did not have enough of its own footage for the broadcast and wanted to make use of a film segment obtained by satellite from the British Visnews television agency. The technicians refused to handle the film, claiming it was taken with equipment not covered in their work agreement and which they were not prepared to use.

Israel Broadcasting Authority director Uri Porat, furious at what he said was another example of the state of anarchy at the television operation, summoned an urgent meeting of the management committee which voted unanimously to suspend Koka and bring him before a disciplinary tribunal.

Histadrut officials had warned Porat that suspending Koka would cause a strike, but Porat and the committee maintained that Koka's position as the committee chairman did not exempt him from disciplinary action.

Observers here suggest that the government-appointed television Board of Governors would be glad to close down the service for a week or so, to reorganize the service and ensure that management, and not reporters or technicians, decide what should be aired and what not.

In the interim, Israelis have switched to Jordan or the Christian missionary Voice of Hope television broadcasts from south Lebanon, to replace the dark screens on the Israeli channels.

There will be no Daily News Bulletin dated January 20, Martin Luther King, Jr. Day, a postal holiday.