

WALDHEIM PLEDGES TO OPEN A DIALOGUE WITH AUSTRIAN JEWS AND TO FIGHT RELIGIOUS, ETHNIC DISCRIMINATION

VIENNA, June 12 (JTA) -- President-elect Kurt Waldheim pledged Wednesday to "make particular efforts to open up a dialogue, especially with our Jewish citizens" and to "make every attempt to counteract all forms of religious, racial or ethnic discrimination."

Waldheim spoke at his first press conference since winning the Presidential run-off elections last Sunday after a campaign in which anti-Semitic feelings were aroused among the electorate.

This was seen as a backlash against charges by Jewish and non-Jewish groups abroad, backed by substantial documentary evidence, that Waldheim was involved in war crimes when he served as a Wehrmacht intelligence officer in the Balkans during World War II.

The President-elect, who will be sworn into the largely ceremonial office on July 8, "made scant reference to the controversy surrounding his alleged Nazi past. Asked how he defined Jews, the former United Nations Secretary General replied, "They are citizens exactly like the others. In our country its a religious minority, a minority like the Croats or Slovaks."

Fight For Secure Israel

He pledged to "stand up for a policy that secures Israel's right to exist" and predicted that Israel would continue to maintain good relations with Austria once it is proven that there was "nothing" reprehensible in his past. Israel reacted to Waldheim's election by recalling its Ambassador to Vienna, Michael Elitzur.

Waldheim said he saw "no problems" in being received abroad as Austria's head of State, observing that he knew "most of the heads of state and government personally."

The U.S. Department of Justice is considering a recommendation by the head of its Office of Special Investigations (OSI), Neal Sher, that Waldheim be placed on the "watch list" barring individuals accused of war crimes from entering the U.S. But even if the Justice Department agrees, Waldheim would be immune to the ban for his six year tenure as President of Austria.

200 SUSPECTED TERRORISTS ARE BEING HELD IN SOUTH LEBANON SECURITY ZONE

By Hugh Orgel

TEL AVIV, June 12 (JTA) -- Gen. Antoine Lahad who commands the Israel-backed South Lebanon Army (SLA), confirmed Thursday that he is holding 200 suspected terrorists prisoner in the south Lebanon security zone and defended his refusal to permit representatives of the International Red Cross to visit them.

Lahad said that 75 percent of the prisoners belong to the extremist Shiite Moslem Hezbollah group, said to be influenced by Iran. They are being held at the El-Hiam prison which the Israel Defense Force used for detainees before its withdrawal from Lebanon a year ago.

Lahad said he banned visits by the IRC because other groups in Lebanon impose such bans. He added however that no visits would be permitted until the whereabouts of the three SLA soldiers kidnapped by Hezbollah are made known.

He said he occasionally allowed prisoners visits by family members who live outside the security zone. Lahad said he recently freed 42 prisoners in honor of the Moslem holiday of Id-El-Fitr. Lahad is a Christian Lebanese.

REAGAN SAYS HE ACCEPTS ISRAEL ASSURANCES ON POLLARD SCANDAL

By David Friedman

WASHINGTON, June 12 (JTA) -- President Reagan indicated Wednesday night that he accepts Israel's assurance that Jonathan Pollard was an unauthorized exception to Israel's policy of not spying on the United States.

"The only thing I know is that the Israeli government has assured us, as much as they can, that they never had any program of trying to get intelligence information from our country or doing any spying on us," Reagan said in a nationally-televised press conference from the White House.

He added that the Justice Department is continuing its investigation, "but so far there's been no evidence presented to us from anyone."

Asked what he would do if some evidence of additional Israeli spying was found, the President replied: "Well, then I think we'll have to deal with that then and find out whether it's a surprise to the Israeli government, whether someone was off playing their game or not."

A Rogue Operation

Pollard pleaded guilty June 4 to spying for Israel while a civilian intelligence analyst for the Navy. His wife, Anne, pleaded guilty to the lesser charges of receiving and possessing stolen national defense documents. Both are awaiting sentencing.

The Israeli government has maintained that the Pollard episode was a "rogue" operation of which it had no knowledge. The Israeli Embassy has declared that charges that the espionage went beyond Pollard are "baseless."

The State Department said on Monday that it accepts the Israeli assurance that the espionage does not go beyond Pollard and that Israel is cooperating in the continuing investigation.

However, Justice Department sources have been asserting that the espionage goes further than Pollard. Pollard is cooperating with the probe as part of his plea bargaining agreement in which he will not receive a life sentence.

Hints Of Other Indictments

Justice Department sources have hinted that others may be indicted too, possibly the four Israelis who were listed as coconspirators with Pollard.

They are: Rafael Eitan, who as head of the Bureau of Scientific Affairs, headed the Pollard operation; he is now chairman of the Board of Israel Chemicals.

Aviem Sella, who as an Air Force colonel doing graduate work at New York University was Pollard's

first contact. Now a brigadier general he is in charge of an Air Force base in the Negev. Joseph Yagur, who as Consul for Scientific Affairs at the Israeli Consulate in New York replaced Sella as Pollard's contact until returning to Israel when Pollard was arrested.

Irit Erb, who was a secretary to the scientific attache at the Israeli Embassy here and at whose Washington apartment Pollard delivered the information. She also returned to Israel immediately after Pollard's arrest.

If any of the four are indicted they would not be extradited, but would be subject to arrest if they returned to the U.S.

RECONCILIATION EFFORT UNDERWAY AFTER ARSON ATTACK ON SYNAGOGUE IN TEL AVIV SHOCKS ISRAEL

JERUSALEM, June 12 (JTA) — The government is trying hard to effect a reconciliation between non-religious and religious Jews in Israel in the aftermath of an arson attack on a Tel Aviv synagogue Wednesday which shocked the country.

Although damage to the Bnei Benjamin synagogue was minor, the act was clearly in retaliation for the wave of arson and spray paint attacks on bus shelters in Jerusalem and other cities by ultra-Orthodox zealots who have declared war on what they consider "indecent" advertising posters.

A note was posted on the door of the torched synagogue by a group that calls itself "People Against the Ultra-Religious." The note said, "for every bus shelter, a synagogue."

Knesset Speaker Shlomo Hillel said the synagogue arson raised memories "of the worst experience of the Jewish people." He also condemned the attacks on the bus shelters and observed, "When a member of the Knesset condoned the spraying and even declared that he would do the same himself, this was incitement to lawlessness."

Knesset Outbursts

Hillel, a Laborite, was referring to a remark by Aguda Israel MK Menachem Porush who shouted that the Speaker was a "liar." This prompted Yossi Sarid of the leftist Civil Rights Movement (CRM) to call the Orthodox MK a "thug." Sarid was removed from the chamber by ushers. Hillel adjourned the session but MKs continued to hurl invectives at each other for some time afterwards.

The incident in the Knesset where raucous outbursts are hardly unknown served to emphasize a schism in Israeli society that has existed since the State was formed but has grown more serious of late.

Premier Shimon Peres announced Wednesday that he intended to convene without delay a meeting of religious and secular leaders to prevent further confrontations between observant and non-observant Jews. Among the invitees are Israel's two Chief Rabbis, the mayors of the major cities, members of all coalition factions and representatives of the media.

Widening Gap

But the gap between the two camps is widening. Peres was confronted with a demand by the Chief Rabbis that the status quo on religious affairs be frozen by law for 20 years. The status quo is an unwritten agreement allowing the Orthodox establishment to control many aspects of public and private life in Israel.

Secular spokesmen contend that the status quo has been stretched over the years to give the religious camp ever more power though it represents barely 20 percent of Israel's population.

Secular leaders, such as Communications Minister Amnon Rubinstein also deplored the synagogue arson. Rubinstein protested Wednesday against attempts to place religious and non-religious extremists on the same level.

Whereas setting fire to the synagogue was a "despicable act of one person," there has been an organized campaign by the ultra-Orthodox against the State and its laws, he said.

Many of the religious vandals arrested for defacing bus shelters are members of the Neturei Karta sect which holds that a Jewish State established before the advent of the Messiah is illegitimate and its laws are not to be obeyed.

Peres Seeks To Avoid Confrontation

Peres called a special meeting of ministers Wednesday afternoon and it was decided that all necessary measures would be taken to end violence by "a relatively small group." The Prime Minister, however, seems determined to avoid an all-out confrontation with the Orthodox community. He is believed to fear that an "iron fist" against religious extremists would rally the more moderate religious elements in their support.

An indication that such a development is possible was seen in the repeated statements by leaders of the religious community, such as Interior Minister Yitzhak Peretz and Aguda MK Porush, justifying the attacks on the advertising posters.

Even the law enforcement authorities have taken a conciliatory approach. Police Inspector General David Kraus told the Knesset Interior Committee Wednesday that Orthodox Jews have a "lawful basis" to protest advertisements that offend their religious sensibilities. Noting that Orthodox Jews also use bus shelters, he said the ads could be seen as "coercion against religious people."

Kollek Critical Of Police

The new Attorney General, Yosef Harish, said Wednesday that those who attack bus shelters should be punished to the full extent of the law. But he added that provocative posters should not be put up in religious neighborhoods. The vandals, however, have ranged far from their neighborhoods to burn or deface bus shelters.

Mayor Teddy Kollek of Jerusalem is disturbed by what he sees as insufficiently forceful action by the police against ultra-Orthodox vandals. He warned Tuesday that if the religious zealots are not punished, extremists on the other side would take revenge. His warning was confirmed by the Tel Aviv synagogue arson.

President Chaim Herzog maintained Wednesday that this latest act was isolated. "You have lunatics and nuts everywhere, in every society, and let's not see this out of context," he said. He warned however that "When you created the atmosphere in which lunatics can operate, then you have created a very dangerous atmosphere."

Herzog Initiates Action

Herzog has called on ultra-Orthodox leaders to join a forum he organized to reduce tension between religious and secular Jews. Its first meeting was boycotted by representatives of the Aguda Israel and extreme Orthodox circles.

"I hope they will realize that this is not a time to be choosy," Herzog said. He said he put himself and

the Presidential residence at the disposal of anybody who wants to effect a dialogue and reduce tensions. In a Voice of Israel Radio interview, Herzog warned that "The recent developments of extremism in the Israeli society are most alarming indeed. This is a time for us to take stock of what is happening in our society. Violence breeds violence and there is not enough dialogue." (By Gil Sedan)

**AMERICAN JEWISH LEADERS
DENOUNCE WALDHEIM'S ELECTION**

NEW YORK, June 12 (JTA) — A growing number of representatives for American Jewish organizations — secular, religious and fraternal — issued statements this week denouncing the election of Kurt Waldheim, former United Nations Secretary General, to be President of Austria.

Waldheim's campaign for the largely ceremonial position had been marked by a series of charges by Jewish organizations, led by the World Jewish Congress, charging that Waldheim had lied about his war-time record and could be considered at least an accessory in Nazi war crimes.

Waldheim reluctantly admitted he had falsified his war-time record but rejected all Nazi war crime involvement, turning the tables on his critics by accusing them of mixing in Austria's internal affairs. He won an easy victory in a runoff election Sunday.

Urge Waldheim Be Barred From U.S.

Kenneth Bialkin chairman of the Conference of Presidents of Major American Jewish Organizations, said that Attorney General Edwin Meese should continue his investigation of the Nazi record of Waldheim and that Waldheim should be placed on the so called "watch list" barring him from the U.S.

"At least the American government would be officially on record concerning Mr. Waldheim's Nazi past, and any official honors being considered for him would be evaluated in that light," said Bialkin.

Theodore Ellenoff, president of the American Jewish Committee, declared that the fact "that a majority of the Austrian electorate could choose to ignore both Dr. Waldheim's war-time involvement in Nazi operations in the Balkans and his subsequent unbridled deceit about this period represents a truly sad day in Austrian history."

Rabbi Alexander Schindler, president of the Union of American Hebrew Congregations, the association of American Reform synagogues, commented that "the country that gave us Hitler has now chosen one of his earliest followers as its President."

By doing so, Schindler said, the Austrian people gave the lie to their claim they were the first victims of Nazi aggression. "They were not," he said. "The Anschluss was their enthusiastic choice, making them willing partners in the evil of Nazism."

Alleck Resnick president of the Zionist Organization of America said, "The choice of Kurt Waldheim by the majority of the Austrian people appears to confirm their unrepentant acceptance of Nazism and also conveys a message that anti-Semitism is still an important political factor in that land."

Henry Siegan, executive director of the American Jewish Congress, declared that by electing as their President "a man with a Nazi past," the people of Austria "knowingly and deliberately associ-

ated themselves with that past," and, by doing so, "by their own actions and their own choice, Austrians have covered themselves with shame."

Burton Levinson, chairman of the Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rith, called on the United States and the rest of the world to ban the entrance of Waldheim to their territories. He spoke at a news conference in Jerusalem where the ADL is holding its annual conference.

Menachem Rosensaft of New York, founding chairman of the International Network of Children of Jewish Holocaust Survivors, declared that Waldheim won in Austria "in part because of the United States Justice Department's refusal to place him on the 'watch list.' As a result, Waldheim was able to tell the Austrian people that his only accusers were Jews."

'A Deliberate Liar'

Rabbi Marvin Hier, dean of the Simon Wiesenthal Center in Los Angeles, asserted that Waldheim was "a deliberate liar," accused by the Yugoslav government of "murder." He said Waldheim "could have, but did not, fly to Yugoslavia to confront that government before the world, demanding the release of his file to clear his name."

Barnett Zumoff, president of the Workmen's Circle, accused Waldheim of having "played the Soviet-Arab bloc game" against Israel when Waldheim was UN Secretary General. Zumoff cited "the Soviet anti-Israel diatribe in defense of Waldheim" as evidence.

Herb Magidson, president of the Jewish Labor Committee, said that organization found "abhorrent" Waldheim's victory in the face of well-documented charges that he lied about his Nazi past.

Sidney Kwestel, president of the Union of Orthodox Jewish Congregations of America, said Waldheim's election was "a sad testimonial to the fact that there are many in this world who still wish to forget the Holocaust." Kwestel said that during the past three months during which charges were being made against Waldheim, "almost no non-Jewish groups have spoken out on Waldheim."

Some 400 delegates at the 77th annual convention of B'nai Zion adopted last Sunday a resolution calling for an economic boycott of Austria in anticipation of the announcement of Waldheim's victory.

RABIN APOLOGIZES TO ARMY OFFICER

TEL AVIV, June 12 (JTA) — Israel Radio said this week that Defense Minister Yitzhak Rabin had apologized to Maj. Gen. Yitzhak Mordechai, cleared of implication in the death of two captured terrorists which gave rise to the "senior security" officer affair, the day after news of the affair leaked out.

Rabin expressed his regrets at the hardship caused to the senior army officer because of accusations which the media now assert were based on false and misleading reports of what transpired after the two terrorists were led away from a hijacked bus for interrogation by the General Security Services.

The Radio said that Rabin had called Mordechai as soon as he learned details of the affair and apologized to him on his own behalf and of that of the IDF command. Rabin had learned all the details in meetings with Premier Shimon Peres and with Foreign Minister Yitzhak Shamir, who had been Premier at the time of the incident, the radio said.

A SERIOUS LOOK AT JEWISH HUMOR

By Marlene Goldman

NEW YORK, June 12 (JTA) -- There was this nice man who passed away to heaven and after his deeds were charged, it was found he was not so nice and should go to hell, but it should be an easy one. The attendant said there are two kinds of easy hell, a Jewish one and a gentile one.

In the gentile one, you go to the boiling water at 7, go out at 5 and the rest of the day you can watch television or do whatever you want. In the Jewish one, you go to the boiling water at 9, stay until 5 and the rest of the day you can watch television or do whatever you want.

The man said, "I'll take the Jewish one," and the attendant said, "Why? They're both the same." The man said "You don't know. In the Jewish one 9 is not 9, 5 is not 5, and the water is not really boiling."

All joking aside, the study of Jewish humor and particularly its impact on American humor were the serious theme of the Second International Conference on Jewish Humor, sponsored by Tel Aviv University. During the daily concurrent sessions, held here this week at the New School for Social Research, academicians from a dozen countries presented papers on various topics in an effort to understand the roots and meanings of Jewish humor.

Koch Has Latest Waldheim Joke

Even Mayor Edward Koch, the guest of honor at the opening ceremony, cut down on the jokes and anecdotes to open the floor to questions. "I did not come here really to participate in the humor side of the evening," he said. "It was more to extend the greetings of the city ... and maybe to repeat a joke that I heard."

"Do you know what Waldheimer's disease is? It's a Nazi who's forgotten his past," the Mayor said. Much of Koch's brief appearance addressed audience questions, some amusing and some political. He described Jewish humor as self-deprecating and sophisticated, but not all that different from other ethnic humor.

"I think all people who have suffered probably depended ultimately on a certain sense of humor to pull them through," he said.

"Humor is universal," Koch added. "Stories and anecdotes that I would tell here and would be well-received here, I've told in the People's Republic of China and were also well-received."

Koch's Culinary Habits Questioned

While Koch's one-liners and anecdotes aroused chuckles and mild laughter, one of the largest responses came from a teasing question. "A long time ago you responded to the energy crisis by saying you'd use less oil on your salad," an audience member said. "Now with the energy surplus, how will you change your culinary habits?"

The Conference was also opened last Monday by Allen Austill, dean of the New School for Social Research; Yehuda Ben-Shaul, rector of the Tel Aviv University; Moshe Yegar, Consul General of the Israeli Consulate here; and Raphael Patai, a scholar and author.

Throughout history, Jews have been able to laugh at their own troubles, according to Ben-Shaul, and have used humor as "one of the strongest weapons for survival."

The tendency for Jews to laugh at themselves dates back centuries to the shlemiel, shlemazle, village idiot, miser, matchmaker, and Yiddish name of Eastern Europe folk humor.

Reasons For Jewish Jokes

Yegar recalled reading that "through humor, Jews try to deal with internal conflicts, problems of self-identity and problems of Israel ... Jewish jokes are close to masochism. The stereotypes are almost cruel, bordering on anti-Semitism."

Since World War II, American Jews have felt secure enough to depict the JAP— Jewish American Princess— as materialistic, self-centered, and lazy, the martyred Jewish mother and the money hungry Jewish professional.

These Jewish jokes and stories are second to no other in revealing the mental state of Jews, according to Patai. "Jokes and anecdotes are peepholes to understanding the lives of people," he said.

Ben-Shaul noted that about 80 percent of successful humorists are of Jewish origin. Despite the high number and the spotlight on such stars as Woody Allen and Joan Rivers, Patai warned of a rapid disappearance of traditional Eastern European folklore and humor with the gradual downfall of the Yiddish language.

"The number of Jewish anecdotes in Yiddish are greater than in all other languages combined," Patai said. In order to save the characteristic Jewish humor, Patai suggested that the works must continue to be preserved in collections. He also hopes for a comprehensive study of the problems and issues created by Jewish humor.

ARAB LEADER URGES THAT POWERS BE TRANSFERRED TO ARABS IN THE OCCUPIED TERRITORIES

By Gil Sedan

JERUSALEM, June 12 (JTA) -- A prominent figure in the Gaza Strip, D. Hatem Abu-Ghazale, has called for the transfer of as many powers as possible to the Arabs in the administered territories.

Speaking at a lecture at the Truman Institute in Jerusalem, Abu-Ghazale disagreed with the Palestinian view which boycotts any cooperation with the Israeli authorities. Rather, he said, "we should do everything possible to call the Israeli bluff," when the Israelis talk about efforts to improve the so-called quality of life in the territories.

Recent reports had that Rashad A-Shawa, the deposed Mayor of Gaza, recently proposed to President Hosni Mubarak of Egypt to control the implementation of autonomy in Gaza. Although A-Shawa denied the report, which if true, conflicted with the Palestine Liberation Organization position which rejects the Camp David accord's call for autonomy, Abu-Ghazale welcomed the idea.

"That Egypt would be the authority overseeing autonomy, I would consider liberation," Abu Ghazale said. "It would be the end of the Israeli occupation. It would bring us back to the Egyptian rule, but through an autonomous Gaza Administration -- a situation that any responsible Palestinian should welcome."

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TEL AVIV (JTA) -- Prof. Leo Sachs, professor of biology and head of the Department of Genetics at the Weizmann Institute of Science at Rehovot, has been awarded the 1986 Royal Society Welcome Foundation Prize, given by the London-based Royal Society every two years for original contributions to medical science.