

JURIST EVOKES A STORM OF ANGER BY SAYING THAT DEMJANJUK SHOULD NOT BE BROUGHT TO TRIAL
By Hugh Orgel

TEL AVIV, Nov. 19 (JTA) -- Former Supreme Court Justice Haim Cohen's remark that if he were Attorney General he would recommend that suspected Nazi war criminal John Demjanjuk should not be brought to trial, raised a storm of protest in Israel Wednesday, especially from concentration camp survivors and children of Nazi victims.

Cohen, who is retired from the bench and a former Attorney General, also said on a television interview Tuesday night that if he were still a practicing lawyer, he would be prepared to assist in Demjanjuk's defense.

Cohen said that while he upholds in principle the right and duty to bring Nazi war criminals to trial for their acts, he believes that after more than 40 years it is difficult to provide accurate eye-witness identification of a suspect.

Demjanjuk's defense is expected to hinge on mistaken identity. The 66-year-old Ukrainian-born former resident of Cleveland, Ohio, insists he is not the notorious Treblinka death camp guard known by the inmates as "Ivan the Terrible" because of his unmitigated brutality.

Cohen said that when he was a prosecutor more than 30 years ago he was convinced that a gap of even 10 years between crime and trial could result in unreliable identification. Cohen, who is noted for his outspoken defense of unpopular causes, observed also that there is a danger that convictions in Nazi war crime cases in Israel might be based on popular emotion without sufficient legal substantiation.

Not Revenge But Justice

That aroused the wrath of Mapam MK Chaika Grossman. She said on a radio interview Wednesday that Cohen's remark about emotionalism cast doubt on Israel's capacity to bring any former Nazi to justice. "If we cannot do it, who else can?" she asked. "It's not a matter of revenge but of justice and justice is not based on emotionalism."

The Association of Children of Nazi Victims charged that Cohen's remarks lent legitimacy to those who want to forgive the Nazis for their crimes. Association president Edna Steinberg suggested that they would only encourage neo-Nazis throughout the world.

Meanwhile, Tel Aviv attorney Gershon Orion made clear that he agreed to assist in Demjanjuk's defense only at the request of the Israel Bar Association to assist the defendant's American lawyer, Mark O'Connor, with respect to Israel's legal system. Orion stressed that even so, he would join the defense only on the basis of a court order.

He explained that he needed a court order to deflect possible accusations by his family and friends and others that he was helping a Nazi.

Trial Set For Demjanjuk

Demjanjuk, the first Nazi war criminal suspect ever extradited to Israel, will go on trial

in Jerusalem on January 19. About 67 survivors of Nazi death camps are expected to testify. The case will be heard by a panel of three judges--Supreme Court Justice Dov Levin and District Court judges Dalia Lerner and Zvi Tal.

The hearings will be conducted in Hebrew with simultaneous English translation. The site of the trial has not been announced. A section of the Binyanei Hauma concert hall is considered a possibility because the trial is expected to attract great public attention.

PERES; ISRAEL DOES NOT INTEND TO UPGRADE ITS REPRESENTATION IN AUSTRIA
By Hugh Orgel

TEL AVIV, Nov. 19 (JTA) -- Foreign Minister Shimon Peres said Wednesday that Israel does not plan to upgrade its diplomatic representation in Austria. This apparently means that Israel will not name a replacement for Michael Elizur, the former Ambassador in Vienna, who retired several months ago.

The Vienna Embassy is presently headed by a Charge d'Affaires. A new Ambassador would have to present his credentials to President Kurt Waldheim whose Nazi past was exposed during the Austrian election campaign last summer.

Peres, replying to questions in the Knesset, said Israel's position toward Austria would depend in the long run on world reaction to Waldheim. He noted that U.S. Secretary of State George Shultz has refrained from meeting with Waldheim. But Soviet Foreign Minister Eduard Shevardnadze has called on him.

According to Peres, Israel's diplomatic stance will not have any effect on Vienna's continued role as a transit point for Jews leaving the Soviet Union for Israel.

A TROUBLESOME TRIP FOR HERZOG
By David Landau

JERUSALEM, Nov. 19 (JTA)-- President Chaim Herzog's official tour to Australia, New Zealand and Southeast Asia, now nearing its end, has been fraught with embarrassments which some Knesset members are attributing to poor planning and inadequate briefings of the President by his aides and government officials.

But observers here stress it is premature to say whether or not Herzog's primary purpose, to enhance Israel's political image and expand its export markets in a prospering region of the world was achieved.

Moreover, it seems likely that the noisy anti-Israel demonstrations that greeted Herzog when he arrived in Singapore Tuesday to begin a scheduled three-day visit does not reflect important sentiment in that booming island nation but was orchestrated by Singapore's powerful Moslem neighbors, Malaysia and Indonesia.

Herzog was warmly greeted by Singapore's veteran Prime Minister, Lee Kuan Yew, who faced down heavy Moslem and Arab pressure to cancel the visit. Israel has a long-standing relationship with Singapore which includes civilian and military aid and trade ties. Lee made a point of extolling that relationship, though he also urged

Herzog that Israel must vacate the Arab territories it occupied in 1967.

Nevertheless, Israelis were disturbed by reports Wednesday that Herzog was politely asked to shorten his visit to Singapore--the last stop in his tour--so as to leave before Pope John Paul II arrives on his official visit.

An Unfortunate Coincidence

Herzog's visit to Australia unfortunately coincided with intense interest there in the affair of Mordechai Vanunu, the former technician at the Dimona nuclear facility who disappeared in London October 1 and has turned up in jail in Israel. He faces charges of either espionage or treason for giving a British newspaper information about Israel's alleged nuclear weapons capabilities.

Vanunu lived in Australia for a time and it was there that he converted to the Christian faith. Rev. John McKnight, the Anglican vicar who converted him, went to Israel last month in an unsuccessful attempt to discover Vanunu's whereabouts. He charged that Vanunu was kidnapped from British soil by Israeli agents and brought to Israel against his will.

Israel vociferously denied this, though it hasn't said how or when Vanunu came to Israel. Herzog's embarrassment was compounded because the Jerusalem government failed to inform him when it decided, after weeks of silence, to acknowledge publicly that Vanunu was in Israel.

As a result, Herzog was innocently denying knowledge of his whereabouts after the Cabinet in Jerusalem confirmed he was being held "under lawful detention."

In New Zealand, his next stop, the President found the focus of media attention not on his visit or on bilateral relations with Israel but on the issue of nuclear weapons in light of Vanunu's revelations. There is a fierce national debate going on in New Zealand about nuclear defense.

Those matters lent credence to Likud Liberal Pinhas Goldstein's charge in the Knesset Wednesday that the Herzog tour was "replete with glitches and snafus" and "not well planned." Goldstein, who called the events in Singapore "the last straw," introduced a motion for Knesset debate on Herzog's trip.

Some Undisputable Successes

There were of course some indisputable successes for the Israeli chief of state, such as his tour of the South Pacific island nations. The King of Tonga and other local leaders displayed genuine warmth toward Herzog and Israel and expressed interest in improving relations with the Jewish State.

In large measure, their attitude stems from the favorable impressions made by the small number of Israeli experts, mainly agronomists, who have served in the region. The local population is interested in more aid and know-how from the Israelis.

One expected high point of the tour, a visit to the Philippines, was cancelled at the last minute because of the troubled political climate in that nation. Herzog, after a telephone conversation with Premier Yitzhak Shamir, decided to avoid Manila.

When informed by the Israeli Ambassador of the cancellation, Philippines President Corazon Aquino reportedly "shed a tear," as if Herzog's decision somehow symbolized her own precarious position.

But there were suggestions in the Israeli media that her disappointment may have been tinged with relief because she, too, has been under pressure from the Moslem states not to welcome the Israeli President. The Philippines itself has a large and powerful Moslem minority which has been in on-and-off rebellion against the Manila regime.

On the other hand, Herzog was warmly received in Hong Kong where he made a hastily arranged visit as guest of the local Jewish community to fill the time before his scheduled arrival in Singapore. Israel recently re-opened its Consulate in the British Crown colony which had been closed for several years for budgetary reasons.

Israel hopes his visit will result in important commercial relations with Hong Kong which is also a political conduit to the People's Republic of China.

ISRAELI OFFICIAL BELIEVES THAT MOST PALESTINIANS ON THE WEST BANK ARE MOVING AWAY FROM THE PLO

By David Friedman

WASHINGTON, Nov. 19 (JTA) -- Gen. Ephraim Sneh, the civilian administrator of the West Bank, believes that most of the 800,000 Palestinians in Judea and Samaria are moving away from the Palestine Liberation Organization to a more "realistic" position.

"I believe the majority of Palestinians understand that Israel is a fact" and "they have to live peacefully beside Israel," Sneh said in an interview with the Jewish Telegraphic Agency Monday. "They understand the slogans of the PLO to destroy the Jewish State are irrelevant and far from reality."

Sneh admits that the "sympathy of the Palestinians is still with the PLO." But he said there is a growing "disillusionment" with PLO terrorist activities which they see offer no hope for a solution of the Palestinian problem. "Most of the Palestinian residents of the West Bank reject terrorism," he maintained.

He said there are less riots, demonstrations and strikes on the West Bank and terrorist incidents have decreased. Sneh conceded that the Palestinian youth are more likely to be radical and militant as elsewhere in the world. "It changes with age," he added.

Sneh is in the United States as part of a program of the Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rith to enhance the dialogue between Israelis and Americans. A physician, most of his career has been with the Israel Defense Force's medical corps. He headed the medical team participating in the Israeli rescue mission at Entebbe, Uganda.

Sneh has headed the civil administration of the West Bank since July, 1985. He is in charge of government activity in the area except for security which is under the military administration. The civilian administration was created in 1981, but like the military administration, is under the Ministry of Defense. It does not have authority for the Jewish settlements on the West Bank which are under Israeli law.

A Non-Interference Policy

While he is in effect in charge of the civilian government of the West Bank, Sneh stressed that it is Israel's policy "not to interfere with the day-to-day lives of the West Bankers." He noted

that in the civil administration 13,000 of its employees are local Arabs and only 300 are Israelis. In addition, he said Israel wants to improve the quality of life for the Palestinians. One example he gave was in the economic field, where Sneh said Israel has encouraged investment from inside and outside the West Bank "very liberal policies" and butting "bureaucratic obstacles."

Sneh also said that in four major West Bank towns -- Nablus, Ramallah, Beit Jallah and Hebron -- existing hospitals are being expanded into regional medical centers with modern facilities.

He said the number of hospital beds on the West Bank are being increased by 50 percent within the next two years. In addition, primary care clinics are being established in the rural areas. The health standards on the West Bank are better than most Arab countries and almost as good as Israel, he noted.

All this should answer charges that Israel wants to drive the Arabs out of the West Bank. "If we have a policy which improves the quality of life of Palestinians on the West Bank it doesn't mean our goal is to drive them out," he said.

Not A Substitute For Peace Settlement

Sneh said that the Israeli policy on the West Bank is "not a substitute" for an eventual peace settlement. Instead it is to "change the atmosphere on the West Bank" to lead to negotiations between Israel and the Palestinians.

He said the Israeli policy of allowing the Palestinians control of their daily lives was not autonomy. He said this could only come about through negotiations, not unilaterally. Nor was Israel sharing rule on the West Bank with Jordan, Sneh stressed. "We are the government of the West Bank," Sneh said.

Most West Bank Palestinians are Jordanian citizens and Jordan has recently begun an economic development program on the West Bank, he noted. Sneh said that most of the Palestinians eventually want to see a Jordanian-Palestinian state.

He noted that on his current trip to the U.S., the question he is most asked about is his opinion on arms shipments to Iran. "I am very glad this is not in my jurisdiction," he quipped. "I have enough problems of my own."

A DISTURBING ISSUE FOR ITALIAN JEWRY: TEACHING CATHOLICISM IN PUBLIC SCHOOLS By Lisa Palmieri-Billig

ROME, Nov. 19 (JTA) -- The Quadrennial Congress of the Union of Italian Jewish Communities (UIJC) is focussing on what is perhaps the most disturbing issue for Italian Jewry since the last Congress four years ago -- the teaching of the Catholic religion in the Italian school system.

Classes on Catholicism at all grade levels were introduced as a result of the 1985 accord between the Education Ministry and the Catholic Episcopal Conference. While they are voluntary, there is no feasible alternative for the very small minority of Jewish and other children who do not want to participate.

The problem is high on the agenda of the three-day conference attended by delegates from the Jewish communities of Rome, Milan, Turin, Florence, Naples, Venice and many smaller cities all over Italy. Youngsters from the Italian Jewish

Youth Federation handed out pamphlets at the entrance to the Palazzo Barberini, where the conference is taking place, calling for repeal of the 1985 accords.

Numerous Case Histories Compiled

The UIJC has compiled numerous case histories testifying to the ill-effects of the new law on non-Catholic children, particularly in nursery and kindergarten. It is especially alienating for Jewish children who cannot, at their age, understand why they must be separated from their friends while Catholic ideology is taught, the UIJC points out.

Vittorio Ottolenghi, one of the four Jewish representatives on the eight-member "Mixed Commission" (government and UIJC) which is charged with revising and updating the 1930 treaty between the UIJC and the Italian state, told the Jewish Telegraphic Agency that there is hope the present law may be suspended immediately and revised within 2-3 years, at least as it applies to nursery and kindergarten.

Italian Jews have been joined in protest by the Waldensian Protestants. Concerned Moslem parents in Italy also reportedly intend to make themselves heard through the channels of Arab Embassies in Rome.

The Congress is the gathering where every four years Italian Jews elect their official representatives, plan their future and try to gain perspective on their past.

Dignitaries Address Opening Session

The opening ceremonies Monday were honored by the presence of President Francesco Cossiga, the first Italian chief of state ever to attend such an event. It was addressed by Foreign Minister Giulio Andreotti who spoke for the human rights of Soviet Jews, and by the 1986 Nobel Laureate in Medicine, Dr. Rita Levi-Montalcini, who traced the intellectual and moral contributions of Italian Jewry through the centuries, symbolized by the history of her own family.

At the last Congress, in 1982, the UIJC was in a budgetary crisis which threatened such communal services as the Jewish schools in Rome where nearly half of the country's 40,000 Jews live. The community was then also divided over Israel's invasion of Lebanon.

But a better atmosphere prevailed at Monday's opening. The financial situation has improved and Israel is once again the focus of Italian Jewish unity. A matter up for discussion is a revision of the statutes of the self-governing UIJC which, since the last Congress, has been transformed from a public institution with obligatory registration and Jewish community taxation for all Jews, into a private, voluntary association.

JERUSALEM (JTA) -- An Israeli Navy patrol intercepted a band of heavily armed terrorists in two rubber dingies off the coast of Lebanon, a military spokesman announced Wednesday. He said the incident occurred three days ago when the boats were spotted off Sidon, on course south to Israel. He said the terrorists were members of an El Fatah faction and carried a large arsenal of weapons, including explosives, mortars and rocket-propelled grenades.

'BEATE KLARSFELD STORY': STRONG PERFORMANCE BY FAWCETT, BUT HOLOCAUST'S TERROR LACKING

By Herbert Luft

HOLLYWOOD, Nov. 19 (JTA) -- The courageous anti-Nazi activity of Beate Klarsfeld will be brought before the American public in dramatic, episodic fashion on Sunday, November 23.

"Nazi Hunter: The Beate Klarsfeld Story," which will air from 9-11 p.m. EST on ABC-TV, is a better than average look at the issues of the Holocaust and the pursuit of the Nazi criminals who seek to escape justice.

Farrah Fawcett, perhaps best known for her roles as glamorous women, is marvelous as a thoroughly believable Beate, a German-born Protestant who became committed to bringing Nazi criminals to justice. She displays broad sensitivity, and ages convincingly.

But her co-stars are weak. Academy Award winner Geraldine Page overacts as Itta Halaunbrenner, who with Klarsfeld chained herself to a bench in protest in Bolivia. As Serge, Tom Conti is too smiley, especially in meeting Beate in Paris. But the casting of Hungarians as Germans, French as French and South Americans as Bolivians adds realism.

The movie begins with the innocent 17-year-old Beate waving to her parents as she boards a train in Berlin for Paris in 1960. There she meets and falls in love with Serge Klarsfeld, a law student who makes her aware of the Holocaust. The couple of course eventually become partners in life and in hunting Nazis.

A Sketchy Portrayal

Beate's sudden conversion to hatred of Nazis, including the indifference shown by her family -- is sketchily portrayed. More effectively staged is Beate's first appearance on the world scene, when she focuses attention on Nazi leaders.

The movie shows her shouting, "Nazi, resign," at German Chancellor Kurt Kiesinger from the gallery of the German legislature. She later slaps him.

Also well played is the attempt to kidnap a mass killer in Cologne, after which the Klarsfelds turn their attention to Klaus Barbie, who today awaits his trial for war crimes in Lyon, France.

The movie's first half features rapid, staccato images, but then the portrayal of the search for Barbie slows to a tedious and obscure halt at times. Producer William Kayden said it was difficult to condense 20 years of the Klarsfelds' efforts into a continuous, comprehensive account. Also missing is Beate-exposing Kurt Waldheim's Nazi past at a street meeting in Vienna.

Lacks Terror-Filled Impact

While essentially accurate, "The Beate Klarsfeld Story" lacks the terror-filled impact a Holocaust film ought to have, and that many French, Russian and Dutch films do show. This partly is due to the constant hugging and kissing by Beate and Serge, which may provide necessary relief for the public, but it is a disturbing juxtaposition with newsreel shots from the extermination camps.

The drama was photographed on location in Paris and southern France, with Nice doubling for La Paz, Bolivia, where Barbie was hiding. The UN building in Paris was to be used as the setting of the German legislature, but 10 days before the scene was scheduled, the German Ambassador

protested, contending that the scene would unflatteringly portray a German official. The scene was filmed in a theatre.

"The Beate Klarsfeld Story" was born in February 1983, when producer Kayden saw Beate Klarsfeld interviewed about her campaign to extradite Barbie.

He set off on his own search. "It took me a full year to find Serge and Beate Klarsfeld," he recalled. "We finally met in New York in 1984 and I acquired the rights to the life story." The Klarsfelds served as consultants.

He found a director, Michael Lindsay-Hogg, who brought great commitment to the project. "(E)ven in the face of wars, aviation, television and space travel," the director said, "the 20th century will be marked throughout history by the Holocaust.

"The quest of Serge Klarsfeld and Beate, whose parents through indifference shared the guilt, aims to right as much of the wrong during the Holocaust as is possible, by exposing and bring to justice Nazi war criminals."

Lindsay-Hogg sees the couple as "basically ordinary ... except that they are fueled by their commitment and that they act in an extraordinary way."

EXTRADITION BATTLE SHAPING UP

By Gil Sedan

JERUSALEM, Nov. 19 (JTA) -- Attorney General Yosef Harish is fighting proposed legislation to avoid the extradition of William Nakash, a Jew wanted for robbery and murder in France. Nakash is supported by a coalition of rightwing and religious elements who say they fear he will be a target of revenge on ethnic grounds if he is imprisoned in France. The murder victim was an Arab.

Nakash allegedly killed him in the course of a robbery in the French town of Besancon in 1983. France has asked for extradition. But Justice Minister Avraham Sharir has proposed a special law that would give him the authority to impose a prison sentence on Nakash in Israel equivalent to whatever sentence is pronounced in France.

The case is being argued before the Ministerial Legislation Committee where Harish maintained that the Justice Minister's proposal runs counter to Israel's legal system as well as its international legal commitments. He also denounced Nakash as "trash" who "came to Israel in order to destroy it."

The Attorney General's harsh words were in response to a remark by Interior Minister Yitzhak Peretz of the Shash Party that the "Jewish aspects" of the case should be considered. Nakash's attorney, Ronald Rot, filed a complaint against Harish with the Justice Minister. "The Attorney General has no moral or functional right to call my client trash," Rot said.

JERUSALEM (JTA) -- Two men accused of murdering Israeli bus driver Solomon Hatuka six months ago pleaded guilty in a Ramallah military court. Hatuka died several days after he was wounded by shots fired at his bus near Deir Abu-Mashal village in the West Bank.