

HERZOG VISITS BERGEN-BELSEN AND DEDICATES SYMBOL TO MEMORY OF THOSE WHO PERISHED IN THE HOLOCAUST

By David Kantor

BERGEN-BELSEN, April 6 (JTA) -- President Chaim Herzog of Israel, reciting the words of the psalmist, "My pain is with me forever," unveiled a rock quarried in Jerusalem at the site of this former concentration camp Monday and dedicated it to the memory of those who perished in the Holocaust.

"I do not bring forgiveness with me, nor forgetfulness," declared Herzog, the first President of Israel to visit Germany. "The only ones who can forgive are the dead. The living have no right to forget. Thus I will surely remember, with a heavy heart."

The brief, moving ceremony at Bergen-Belsen followed by a few hours Herzog's arrival at Bonn where he was greeted with a 21-gun salute and personally welcomed by President Richard von Weizsaecker of the Federal Republic.

Several hundred people assembled here, including Holocaust survivors and West German dignitaries, headed by von Weizsaecker and the Prime Minister of Lower Saxony, Ernst Albrecht. Many fought back tears as the El Mole Rachamin, the prayer for the dead, was chanted by a cantor.

Then Herzog faced the audience. "In this place, the vale of slaughter, and at the outset of my journey on this soil, I leave as a memorial, my brethren and sisters, victims of the Shoah (Holocaust), a stone hewn from the rocks of Jerusalem. On it are carved the words of the psalmist, as testimony to the decimation of my people: 'My pain is with me forever.'"

'The Jewish People Lives On'

He recalled, "I was here for the first time 42 years ago. Then I was a Jewish soldier from the land of Israel, participating in the destruction of the Nazi regime, plucking the brands snatched from the fire. The memory of those shocking sights will never, ever leave me."

"Now, accompanied by some survivors, I return as President of the State of Israel, the independent Jewish State, by decision of its sovereign government, to bear witness before you that the ultimate destiny of the Jewish people will never be betrayed and that the Jewish people lives on."

At the ceremony, a Holocaust survivor, Hadassah Rosensaft, recognized Herzog as one of the officers of the British army which liberated the concentration camp. She burst into tears and embraced the President.

The memorial service at Bergen-Belsen was a far cry both in mood and setting from the ceremonial pomp that greeted Herzog and his wife Aura when they stepped from their Israel Air Force jet at Bonn airport at 10 a.m. Monday.

After reviewing a guard of honor, Herzog was flown by helicopter to Villa Hammerschmidt, the official residence of President von Weizsaecker. There, German army units passed in review and the national anthems of Israel and West Germany were played. The two Presidents had a brief talk and were then flown to Hannover,

capital of Lower Saxony, and from there by helicopter to Bergen-Belsen. Before unveiling the memorial stone, Herzog visited the museum at the concentration camp site and inspected the sole remaining barrack.

Statement By Germany's President

Herzog's five-day tour of West Germany, following a five-day visit to Switzerland, was controversial in Israel where some thought no President of Israel should set foot on German soil. Von Weizsaecker went out of his way to thank Herzog for accepting Bonn's invitation. "Of course I understand those who voiced criticism," he told reporters three days before Herzog's arrival. He said the visit by the Israeli chief of state was "an extraordinary event of an extremely important meaning."

Von Weizsaecker denied that the visit was intended to "close" the chapter of the German past. "In history there can be no such closure," he said.

Herzog's Statement At Bergen-Belsen

Herzog's words at Bergen-Belsen bore that out, for he addressed himself to those long dead. "You bequeathed to our people the precept of life, the imperative of existence," he said.

"To ensure that never again would the Jew be a helpless victim, and that never again would Holocaust and destruction be the fate of Israel, you bequeathed a testament to build the future of the Jewish people in its homeland, proud and free. A people strong in its moral right and in its moral force no less than in its ability to defend itself."

"The grief of your death will eternally be with us. Not as a perpetual hatred. Not as barren, paralyzing hostility. But as a call to strength and steadfastness, a call to understand the depths to which the human soul can sink, and a call to rise above them. To fulfill with all our very being the antithesis of evil, of wickedness: Turn away from evil, and do good. Seek peace and pursue it."

Herzog concluded: "In the name of the Jewish people and in the name of the State of Israel, I repeat our oath never to forget and to be forever faithful to your bequest--the imperative of life."

Herzog and his wife spent five days in Switzerland last week as guests of President Pierre Auber of the Swiss Confederation, who is also Foreign Minister. Herzog was the first Israeli President to pay an official visit to Switzerland.

In addition to talks with Auber on bilateral and world issues including the Middle East, the Herzogs were feted by the Swiss Jewish community. They also had an opportunity to visit with their grandchildren.

PERES SAYS SPANISH KING HAS PROMISED TO DO WHAT HE CAN TO HELP PEACE IN THE MIDDLE EAST
By Edwin Eytan

MADRID, April 6 (JTA) -- Israeli Foreign Minister Shimon Peres met for over an hour with King Juan Carlos at the Zarzuela Palace Monday and said afterwards that "His Majesty has prom-

ised to do what he can to help peace in the Middle East." But Spanish officials are puzzled by what they see as a strange dichotomy within the Israeli government over how peace in the region should be pursued.

Peres, here on a two-day official visit, the first by an Israeli Foreign Minister since Spain and Israel established diplomatic relations more than a year ago, made clear he was seeking Spanish support for an international conference for Middle East peace.

But the Israel government's position on this issue is "far from clear," a senior Spanish diplomat, Ambassador Jorge Dezcaller, told Israeli correspondents at a briefing Monday. Dezcaller, who heads the Foreign Ministry's Middle East department, said "We are puzzled by the Israeli government. On the one hand, Foreign Minister Peres advocates a peace process, on the other, Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir has informed our Ambassador of his opposition to the plan."

Nevertheless, Prime Minister Felipe Gonzalez, who had a three-hour meeting with Peres Monday, pledged that his government would use its contacts in the Arab world to see if an international conference can be advanced, Israeli sources here said. Even so, Spain and Israel have different conceptions of an international conference.

Spain believes the Soviet Union and the Palestinians should participate. Israelis, at least those who share Peres' views, would exclude the Soviet Union unless it re-established diplomatic ties with Israel. They would accept Palestinian representatives, but only those with no connections to the Palestine Liberation Organization.

Relations With Moscow

In statements to the press, to Spanish officials and to representatives of Spain's 13,000-member Jewish community, Peres spoke of relations with Moscow. He stressed Israel's current diplomatic priority is to improve them. The test of Soviet sincerity will be its opening of the gates for all Russian Jews who want to leave, Peres said. He called reports that exit visas would be granted to 11,000-12,000 Jews this year "a promising start" but far from satisfactory in view of the estimated 380,000 seeking them.

Peres also met Monday with Foreign Minister Fernando Ordonez who invited Israel to participate in the Spanish National Exhibition in Seville in 1992, commemorating the 500th anniversary of Columbus' voyage of discovery. He said a special pavilion would be devoted to the Jewish contribution to Spanish history and culture.

Peres, at his meeting with the King, invited Juan Carlos to visit Israel "to repair a 500-year-old injustice" -- the expulsion of Jews from Spain in 1492. Juan Carlos reportedly replied that he would be happy to visit Israel. But no definite plans can be made. Such a visit must be approved by the government and would entail lengthy and detailed preparations.

NETANYAHU SAYS ISRAEL WILL ASK UN CHIEF TO ALLOW IT TO INSPECT ADDITIONAL FILES ON WAR CRIMINALS By Yitzhak Rabi

NEW YORK, April 6 (JTA) -- Binyamin Netanyahu, Israel's Ambassador to the United Nations, revealed Sunday night that Israel will soon ask UN Secretary General Javier Perez de Cuellar to be given permission to inspect hundreds more files at the UN archive on war criminals. In

an interview with the Jewish Telegraphic Agency shortly before he departed for consultations in Israel, Netanyahu said Israel will request an access to 500 more files in addition to the 2,500 files it already examined. The UN archive on accused war criminals contains some 40,000 files. Last month the Secretary General rejected Israel's demand that the archive be open to the public, contending that the nations which were members of the long-defunct War Crimes Commission had objected to it.

Netanyahu addressed the annual dinner of the American Friends of Migdal Ohr at the Waldorf Astoria Hotel Sunday night. Migdal Ohr is a special school for disadvantaged children in the town of Migdal Haemek in lower Galilee. Netanyahu told the more than 500 guests at the dinner that Israel will continue its campaign to open the files to public scrutiny. He said that two nations, Australia and Holland, of the 17 nations who were members of the War Crimes Commission, agreed so far to the opening of the files.

"Public access to the files is needed for two reasons: justice and history," the Israeli envoy declared. He said that new information in the files could help bring to justice the Nazi war criminals who are still alive. In addition, he contended, free access to the files by scholars and researchers will help establish a more accurate record of that historical period.

UAHC URGES SHULTZ TO DEMAND THE RELEASE OF UN FILES ON WAR CRIMINALS By David Friedman

WASHINGTON, April 6 (JTA) -- The Commission on Social Action of the Union-of-American Hebrew Congregations (UAHC) sent a telegram to Secretary of State George Shultz Monday urging him to demand the release of information on Nazi war criminals from the United Nations.

The Reform Judaism group authorized the telegram at a "Consultation on Conscience" which opened here Sunday night to mark the 25th anniversary of the UAHC's Religious Action Center here.

The telegram, signed by Harris Gilbert, chairman of the commission, asked Shultz to urge UN Secretary General Javier Perez de Cuellar to allow public access to the UN files on Nazi war criminals. De Cuellar rejected last month a similar request from Binyamin Netanyahu, Israel's Ambassador to the UN.

"The War Crimes Commission, in giving these files to the UN, never intended that the records be hidden from the UN," the telegram to Shultz said. "The UN action in keeping them under lock and key has no standing in law and no moral justification. "We respectfully urge you to demand that the files be and made available to all scholars, researchers, students and others with legitimate reasons to have access to this information."

Gilbert also stressed that "burying the record of the past dooms us to repeat it. Locking away the files from public view protects only those who have something to hide. Let the facts be made public, let the truth be told."

TEL AVIV (JTA) -- Traffic accidents took a heavy toll Sunday. Twenty-one people were injured when a truck slammed into a bus at a highway intersection near Ashkelon. All were hospitalized. Only one passenger was seriously hurt.

ISRAEL LOOKS AHEAD
THE END OF THE BEGINNING
 By Murray Zuckoff
 (Part One Of A Five-Part Series)

(Editor's note: Murray Zuckoff participated in a recent United Jewish Appeal Department of Communications/Public Relations special mission to Israel to study the changes the country has undergone since 1948 and the outlook for the period ahead. In the course of the mission, he met dozens of local political leaders, representatives from industries, agriculture, research and development, kibbutzim, moshavim, Project Renewal and ordinary citizens.)

JERUSALEM, April 6 (JTA) -- In 1938, 10 years before the State of Israel was born, David Ben Gurion wrote a letter to his children in which he said: "At this crucial moment we must bear the simple truth: in the diaspora our history was made by others. In Palestine -- by ourselves. And whatever others scheme and foreigners do, if we are able to create history even in the worst possible conditions, they shall not be able to overcome us."

Israel did create history, and in the worst possible conditions, and it has not been overcome. This might very well be the theme of Israel's 40th anniversary next year, with one modification: creating history under far better conditions. What lies ahead can be described as an unprecedented period of great possibilities in technological, scientific and medical innovations, profound social changes, progressive improvement in relations with the international community, and an acceleration of Zionist consciousness.

The possibilities at home are quantum leaps in the fields of high-tech industries and agriculture, intense and planned efforts to settle the Galilee and the Negev, the continued restructuring and renewal of decaying neighborhoods and blighted lives, and far-reaching applications of computer science to medicine and research and development.

Some Changes In The Period Ahead

The next period will also be marked by greater national self-assurance and self-sufficiency in the economic and military fields. Israel has the technological know-how to produce its own sophisticated and innovative military weapons, thereby reducing its dependence on American military aid diverting some of the attendant pressures from American administrations.

Israelis in all walks of life are saying both privately and publicly that the country's umbilical ties to the United States must be severed in order to change the perceptions of Israel as nothing more than a vassal state of the U.S. in the Middle East.

Israel may also be expected to adopt a more critical and less symbiotic relationship with diaspora Jewry. At some point, Israelis note, Israel will have to forego advice from afar and paternalistic treatment that characterizes "check-book Zionism." It will no longer accept the status of a poor relative from either the U.S. Administration or diaspora Jewry.

In short, ever more Israelis are saying that Israel's relations with the world at large, Jewish and non-Jewish, will remain correct but it will be less reactive, less skittish, and more independent. It will be more assertive in determining its own

domestic and foreign needs based on what it perceives as necessary for survival and growth, not as others see it.

The consensus of many Israelis is "We do our own dying and we'll do our own living, unless there is someone out there who wants to do the dying for us."

This is not a hard-nosed attitude, nor one of arrogance and impudence. It is a declaration of independence from what Israelis feel are undue pressures -- some refer to it as "meddling"-- from all sides to shape up according to an image projected by others.

The Art Of Survival

For 40 years Israel has been beset by war and unremitting and relentless terrorist attacks in which thousands of Israelis have been killed, wounded and maimed. For 40 years fathers have been saying kaddish for their sons.

It has had to weather contradictions, conflicts and tensions between Ashkenazim and Sephardim, secular and religious, tradition and modernity, overcrowded cities and barren spaces in the Galilee and Negev, shanty towns and squalor in the shadows of posh high rise apartments and commercial buildings, Jews and Arabs, dreams and realities, hopes and fulfillments.

Through all this, Israel has absorbed almost 2 million Jews from 120 countries speaking 70 languages. But now, while it continues to call for more aliyah, yerida (emigration) is mounting.

No other country in modern history has had to contend with so many diverse problems and pressures. No other country could have withstood them and still continue to survive and progress. To compensate for the uncertainty of life and the fate of the nation, Israelis chose to act as if they didn't care what the rest of the world thought about them.

They acted out an existence that might have taken its cue from a line in the Broadway hit, "My Fair Lady," to paraphrase, "Israelis don't actually care what anyone says about them as long as it's pronounced correctly." But this is beginning to change. Israelis are becoming more reflective and introspective, more sensitive to interpersonal and international relations.

There Is 'Another Israel'

Winds of change are blowing throughout the country. Ironically, the more changes that are taking place they less they are noticed or alluded to by the world at large. And Israelis are angry about this. The world media, for example -- with the exception of the Jewish media -- continue to view Israel through the prism of hard-headedness and obduracy.

Israelis resent having their country depicted as a homogeneous entity best represented by dichards and rightwingers like Menachem Begin, Ariel Sharon, Yitzhak Shamir, Guela Cohen, the Gush Emunim, West Bank Jewish settlers, and a rapacious and bellicose foreign policy typified by the invasion of Lebanon.

Headline hunters abroad -- and unfortunately some even in Israel -- continue to depict Israel as uncaring, self-centered, rambunctious and hard-bitten. They focus almost exclusively on ethnic tensions and conflicts, political imbroglios, gyrations of politicians, extremists, strikes and anti-Palestinian activities.

But, Israelis point out, there is "another Israel": people who seek peace with the Arabs and Palestinians, oppose West Bank settlements,

develop and implement cultural enrichment programs for Jews and Arabs, seek to settle the Negev and the Galilee, renew and revitalize cities and the lives of the poor, and share industrial, scientific and medical advances with developing nations.

For example, Israelis note, there are about 50 societies in Israel devoted to fostering Jewish-Arab understanding. Some of the more outstanding ones are:

The veteran Beit Hagefen, the Arab-Jewish center in Haifa, which was created more than 23 years ago by the late Mayor Abba Khoushy and now has some 20,000 registered and paid-up members, 60 percent of whom are Arabs and 40 percent Jewish. Neve Shalom/Wahat Al Salam (Oasis for Peace), a settlement 34 kilometers northwest of Jerusalem where Jews and Arabs live and work together and which includes a School for Peace from which more than 10,000 students have graduated since 1980; Givat Haviva, a Mapam-oriented study center for Jews and Arabs; Hilai, the Israel Center for Creative Arts which was founded in 1984; active in Maalot-Tershiha in the Galilee, the only jointly administered Jewish-Arab town in Israel, and in Mitzpeh Ramon in the Negev.

Searching For Representative Palestinian

In politics, more and more Israelis are saying that Israel will have to, and indeed should, talk to the Palestine Liberation Organization. This view was until recently shunned and attacked by almost all Israelis except for extreme leftwing ideologues. This is no longer so.

Minister-Without-Portfolio Ezer Weizman, whose Yahad Party joined the Labor Party earlier this year, and Labor MK Haim Ramon, an outspoken dove, are calling for talks with the PLO because, they say, whether Israel likes it or not, Palestinians by and large accept the PLO as the "sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian people."

Weizman was very blunt about this. Talking to a group of students recently, he said: "I invite (PLO chairman Yasir) Arafat to dial 242338 (a reference to United Nations Resolutions 242 and 338) and to stop the shooting. Then I'll be ready to sit down and talk peace with him. People who say the PLO poses a danger to Israel's security make me laugh. To put it politely, that's nonsense. We must sit down with the Palestinians to find a solution to the problem. What can we do if Egypt, Jordan and the Palestinians view the PLO as their representative?"

Akiva Eldar of Haaretz wrote recently: "We won't be able to evade the question of Palestinian representation forever. Unlike the international (Mideast peace) conference, which is merely a skeletal framework, this is an issue which touches the very nature of the peace settlement ultimately to be reached." Meanwhile, Eldar noted, Israel is "muzzling Palestinian representatives who are considered 'authentic.'"

Ze'ev Schiff, Haaretz's respected military correspondent, denounced "the sort of gratuitous suppression that arises from Israel's military rule over more than one million Palestinians." Referring to an incident last January when Defense Minister Yitzhak Rabin prevented three prominent Palestinians who favor a peaceful solution to the Mideast conflict from attending an international conference on the Arab-Israeli conflict in San Diego, California, Schiff wrote: "What's particularly troublesome in this brouhaha is the hypoc-

risy of some of our leaders, who claim to be searching for moderate Palestinians with whom to conduct talks on resolving the conflict. It may well be that local Palestinian leaders cannot, in fact, stand up to the extreme wings of the PLO, or even the more radical elements with Fatah; but we are doing everything in our power to stop whatever ability they have to do so."

Labor Party members of Knesset, including Vice Premier and Foreign Minister Shimon Peres, Abba Eban and Ora Namir are trying to put together a peace front with representative Palestinians from the West Bank. The projected front calls for peace within the framework of an international conference which would include "legitimate representatives of Israel, Jordan and the Palestinian people."

These statements were not met by public derision and relentless hostility as they would have been in the past. There was no public outcry and no one demanded any heads.

Nucleus Of A 'Young Guard' In Labor

There are other winds of change in the Labor Party. There is the nucleus of a "young guard" that is calling for greater sensitivity to Israel's poor, Sephardim, Arabs, development towns, and the reordering of priorities away from West Bank settlements to the settlement of the Galilee and Negev. This nucleus includes Peres' advisors Nimrod Novik and Yossi Beilin, and Maalot Mayor Shlomo Buchout, Sderot Mayor Amir Peretz, and Yeroham Mayor Baruch Elmakias.

In addition, the Labor Party received an infusion of new and progressive blood when Mayor Eli Dayan of Ashkelon announced that he was joining the party. The 37-year-old mayor, a lawyer who was born in Morocco and was a member of the now defunct Democratic Movement for Change and Tami, twice won the municipal election in the Likud-leaning town. He said he plans to run for the Knesset in the next elections. In announcing that he was joining Labor, Dayan said that in the past the party had closed itself off from young leaders in development towns, but that this was now changing.

For many Israelis these developments, which are routinely unreported in the foreign media, and many others in the life of Israel, represent the country's coming of age. It is the end of the beginning.

(Tomorrow: Part Two)

TERRORIST GANG NABBED IN FRANCE

PARIS, April 6 (JTA) -- French counter-intelligence has arrested eight men believed to be terrorists planning to blow up El Al and TWA airliners. The police have refused to pinpoint the date of the arrests and said that one of the group was a Lebanese, another a Frenchman known for his pro-Palestinian leanings, and the rest "came from the Middle East."

Police say that documents found at the time of the arrests show that the group was also planning to carry out individual attacks against various Israeli personalities in France as well as against Arab representatives considered by them as "hostile to the Palestinian cause."

Police have found three hand grenades and an unspecified amount of explosives and are searching for additional weapons which, they say, the group has hidden in the vicinity of Paris.

PERES SAYS HE IS ENCOURAGED BY HIS TALKS WITH TWO SOVIET OFFICIALS

By Hugh Orgel

TEL AVIV, April 9 (JTA) -- Foreign Minister Shimon Peres returned from Europe Thursday saying his meeting with two senior Soviet officials in Rome Tuesday night encouraged his hope that Israel could negotiate peace with the Arabs without superpower intervention.

The meeting, which had been unscheduled, followed Peres' two-day official visit to Spain. His stopover in Rome was to attend the opening of the Socialist International conference Wednesday.

Peres told reporters at Ben Gurion Airport that his 90-minute private discussion with Karel Bruten and Alexander Zutov of the Soviet Communist Party Central Committee's international affairs department, was conducted in a serious and balanced atmosphere. He said he found "openness" on some of the matters on the agenda but no agreements were reached.

"I can tell you that I return encouraged by the chances of reaching direct negotiations without international powers, including the Soviet Union, trying to impose solutions on us," Peres said.

A Beginning, Not An End

"As for the Jewish question, it should be noted that there have been several important changes," he told reporters. He said they were "not all we would like to see . . . the number of immigrants -- or more accurately of those leaving -- has increased. Six of the eight Prisoners of Zion have been released. And a low-level Soviet delegation will probably arrive (in Israel) to discuss limited issues.

"I don't think that is the end, I think it is a beginning," he said, "and I think we can work toward expanding the opening which has been made, and also to ensure that those leaving (the USSR) will probably come direct to Israel."

Peres summed up his conversation with the Soviet diplomats as "the first serious direct dialogue between us and Soviet representatives. I am not ready to go into further details."

Dismisses Likud Protests

Peres dismissed the storm of protest raised in Likud circles by his advocacy of an international conference for Middle East peace. He stated before leaving for Madrid Sunday that one of his objectives was to solicit Spanish support for such a forum. Premier Yitzhak Shamir stated publicly that he hoped the Foreign Minister "would not succeed."

"Israel's foreign policy is not an article here or there, or a blessing or the opposite of a blessing," Peres said, "but a continuation of the peace process and the process of opening up the gates of emigration" from the Soviet Union.

Peres said he would be reporting to Shamir on his trip and would take up their differences when they meet. Shamir for his part, told a group of Likud Liberals Thursday that the idea of an international conference was "crazy" and advised Peres to forget it and get down to the "serious day-to-day problems facing Israel."

HERZOG URGES WEST GERMANY TO REFRAIN FROM STRENGTHENING ISRAEL'S ENEMIES

By David Kantor

WEST BERLIN, April 9 (JTA) -- President Chaim Herzog of Israel declared here Thursday that "Germany has an historic responsibility to help Israel in the vital task of survival and to abstain from any act which might strengthen those who are at war with Israel and are its declared enemies."

His remark was a departure from the prepared text of his speech at a dinner given in his honor by the Berlin Press Association. It was in direct response to an article published Wednesday by Franz-Josef Strauss, the Prime Minister of Bavaria, who strongly advocates the sale of advanced German weaponry to Saudi Arabia.

Strauss is leader of the Christian Social Union (CSU), the Bavarian sister party of Chancellor Helmut Kohl's ruling Christian Democratic Union (CDU). Herzog, who is winding up a five-day visit to West Germany, the first ever by a President of Israel, considered the subject important enough to address.

In fact, some of the President's aides urged him to use much stronger language. But Herzog rejected that. He told the Jewish Telegraphic Agency, "I know the attitude of Strauss on this matter. There is nothing new in it."

He stressed in his speech that Germany has a lasting moral responsibility toward the survivors of the Holocaust. He recalled the Kristallnacht in 1938, the first organized pogrom against German Jews. It led eventually to Auschwitz, Treblinka and other symbols of Nazi crimes. "It was the night which led to the most terrifying Holocaust in the history of man," he said.

Herzog also told the prominent West German journalists attending the dinner that too much emphasis has been given the Arab-Israeli conflict. "If, hopefully, it is resolved, by whatever peaceful means, the main centers of bloodshed, warfare and instability may well persist" in the region, he said. He chided the media for "lack of perspective and therefore a failure to gauge the advance which has been made toward peace in the Middle East."

Herzog appealed to the Soviet Union to open a new chapter in relations with the Jewish people and Israel. "Let us cease talking about each other and start talking to each other, even about our different approaches to the world's problems, including those of the Middle East," he said.

Herzog was welcomed to West Berlin by Mayor Eberhard Diepgen. Accompanied by his host, President Richard von Weizsäcker of the Federal Republic, the Israeli President placed a wreath at the Ploetzensee Memorial to Germans who had opposed the Nazi regime and paid with their lives. It was a symbolic act greatly appreciated by the West Berliners.

Herzog also offered them hope that their city may not forever be divided. "I stand before you as a President who lives in Jerusalem and who brings a message of hope from a thriving city which was once divided to a city which is, alas, still divided," he said.

Herzog visited the local Jewish community Thursday afternoon. He placed a wreath at the Holocaust Memorial. His host, Heinz Galinski, president of the Berlin Jewish community, said German Jews took inspiration from Israel and would continue to demonstrate their solidarity and support for Israel.

JORDAN'S PRIME MINISTER AIRS VIEW ON CONFERENCE FOR MIDDLE EAST PEACE
By David Friedman

WASHINGTON, April 9 (JTA) -- Jordan's Prime Minister Zeid Rifai stressed here that Jordan still views an international conference that includes the five permanent members of the United Nations Security Council as a means to negotiate Middle East peace.

"We're not talking about peace between Jordan and Israel," Rifai said after he and Foreign Minister Taher Masri met with Secretary of State George Shultz at the State Department Tuesday. "We're talking about a comprehensive settlement of the Arab-Israeli problem."

He said this includes the problem of the Golan Heights with Syria, southern Lebanon and the Palestinian problem "which is at the core of the Middle East conflict."

Rifai was apparently giving a different explanation for Jordan's need for a peace conference than that stated by King Hussein since last year when he said on a visit to Washington that he wanted an international conference as an "umbrella" for negotiations with Israel.

Shultz indicated, as he did when he met with Israeli Premier Yitzhak Shamir here last month, that the U.S. is considering an international conference if it would lead to direct negotiations. He stressed that it is up to the parties themselves to agree on the method of negotiations.

Shultz praised King Hussein for his efforts to improve the economic situation in the West Bank and Gaza Strip. He said the U.S. is seeking a way to provide an extra \$10-\$30 million for this effort.

TEL AVIV CHIEF RABBI PROPOSES INSTITUTION OF CIVIL MARRIAGE
By Hugh Orgel

TEL AVIV, April 9 (JTA) -- Religious circles expressed astonishment Thursday at a proposal by Tel Aviv Chief Rabbi Chaim David Halevy to institute civil marriage in Israel and, as a logical consequence, civil divorce.

Halevy made the suggestion during a conference on oral law Wednesday. He said civil marriage might solve the problems of what he called "permissiveness" in Israeli society where an increasing number of Jewish couples live together out of wedlock or simply co-habit.

He stressed that non-religious weddings would still have to conform to halachic standards. The couple would have to prove they were not previously married and if they were, that their divorces were religiously acceptable. The ban on a Cohen marrying a divorced woman would be upheld.

Halevy said that couples married in a civil ceremony would be able to obtain civil divorces, avoiding the lengthy often complicated religious divorce procedure. The civil divorce would have

no bearing on future religious marriages and the problem of "agunah" (abandoned woman) would be solved. A woman whose spouse refuses to give her a religious divorce has the permanent status of agunah and can never re-marry according to religious law.

Reactions in Orthodox circles were generally angry. Chief Rabbi Mordechai Eliayahu of Rishon LeZion said he could not believe Rabbi Halevy made the statements attributed to him. Religious Affairs Minister Zevulun Hammer said the Tel Aviv rabbi should be credited for having an "open mind" but his ideas offered no solution to the problems between Orthodox and secular Jews.

According to Hammer, if civil marriage was offered in Israel, arrangements could also be made to allow secular Jews to desecrate the Sabbath and to consume forbidden foods.

FUCHS-RABINOVICH IS FREE
By Susan Birnbaum

NEW YORK, April 9 (JTA) -- The long ordeal of Michael Fuchs-Rabinovich is over. The seven-year refusenik arrived in Vienna on Wednesday, accompanied by his wife, Marina, and son, Mishka.

Michael and Marina Fuchs-Rabinovich staged a hunger strike in January to dramatize their plight following an invitation by a Wellesley, Mass., synagogue to Bar Mitzvah their son. As it looks now, Mishka Fuchs-Rabinovich will be Bar Mitzvahed as planned at Temple Beth Elohim in Wellesley. The synagogue's rabbi, Ronald Weiss-- a strong activist on behalf of Soviet Jewry along with his entire congregation -- adopted case of the Fuchs-Rabinovich family and received the support of a large cross-section of Massachusetts legislators and religious figures, both Jewish and Christian.

On March 17, Fuchs-Rabinovich went to demonstrate in front of the Lenin Library in Moscow, as planned and announced to Soviet authorities, but was stopped from demonstrating by his wife, who came from OVIR (emigration office) with the news that the Soviet authorities would be making a decision on their case within a week. Fuchs-Rabinovich made a lot of people laugh when he told OVIR authorities inviting him to their offices for that morning, "I'm sorry, I'm busy. I'm demonstrating."

The 50-year-old meteorologist was refused first in 1979 for having access to "secrets" at work. He was stripped of his Ph.D in mathematics, and demoted from his position of manager to that of simple engineer, with a large decrease in pay. In January 1983, he was fired from his job.

Last week, Fuchs-Rabinovich telephoned his friends in Andover, Massachusetts, Eduard and Galina Nizhnikov, and told them he would be arriving in Vienna on Wednesday with his family. Galina went to Vienna to meet them, along with Weiss' wife and daughter.

According to HIAS in New York, large numbers of Soviet Jews are arriving in Vienna these days. During the first three months of this year, 704 Jews have been permitted to leave the USSR, according to HIAS, a figure considerably higher than last year. On Wednesday, 81 Jews arrived in New York from Rome, where the emigres go from Vienna to be processed for entry into the U.S. In addition, there were 11 Iranian Jews and six Rumanian Jews on the same flight.

ISRAEL LOOKS AHEAD THE RESTORATION OF 'HATIKVAH'

By Murray Zuckoff
(Part Four Of A Five-Part Series)

JERUSALEM, April 9 (JTA) -- A group of pre-teen children sit in a classroom in a school in the Ramot Eshkol neighborhood of Lod, poised in front of desk-top computer consoles. At a signal from their teacher they push down appropriate keys and words appear on the screens. There is an outburst of giggles. They have just had their first lesson in how to operate computers.

* In the Giora neighborhood of Hod Hasharon, 18 kilometers northeast of Tel Aviv, people wait patiently for a bus at a bus stop. Within a few minutes a bus arrives and passengers get off and on. Nothing dramatic, almost routine. But until recently there was no bus stop there and the Giora residents had to walk some four kilometers through orange groves to the center of town to do their daily chores.

* Along a row of streets in the Hatikvah quarter in Tel Aviv there are new and refurbished houses with lawns and gardens around them. Adults stroll under a warm sun and children are romping through a playground. Not long ago this was a slum neighborhood, but now the neighborhood exudes vitality and even a modicum of prosperity.

* In Givat Hamoreh and Afula Illit, where a large number of Ethiopian Jews have settled, children are offered classes in Hebrew, Torah, mathematics and English. These classes are helping the youngsters to integrate into Israeli society.

* In Sderot, a development town in the Negev, residents are smiling more broadly these days. For years they were without a dentist. But since 1981, more than 100 American volunteer dentists, members of Alpha Omega, the fraternity of Jewish dentists in the U.S., have helped establish a comprehensive dental program for the town's 9,000 inhabitants.

New Form Of 'Chalutzit'

These examples can be multiplied by the dozens throughout the country. The renewal of poverty neighborhoods in the large cities and development towns and the infusion of "hatikvah" (hope) into the lives of tens of thousands of Israelis who had all but forgotten the meaning of the word, has been made possible by a new form of "chalutzit" (pioneering) and practical Zionism: Project Renewal. In its distilled essence, Project Renewal is the rehumanization of what had become over the decades dehumanizing conditions.

This awesome and massive undertaking was initiated in 1977 by then Premier Menachem Begin as a partnership between the Israel government and the organized worldwide Jewish diaspora. In the United States the partner is the United Jewish Appeal and the local Jewish Federations with whom the Israeli neighborhoods were twinned. In the rest of the world the partner is Keren Hayesod. The Jewish Agency serves as the implementation body for all the Project Renewal undertakings initially funded by diaspora communities.

Project Renewal has sought to deal with two interlinked problems: social justice and economic equality. When Begin initiated the Project, he said: "The promises of a better life in our national homeland has not been kept for many of our earlier immigrants and their children. Many live

in great distress, in sadness and in anger, in poor neighborhoods throughout Israel."

Most of the poverty neighborhood residents were Sephardic Jews who were dumped into "maabarot" (immigrant transit camps) and decaying sections of large cities and development towns in the 1950's and 1960's.

These immigrants, who were dubbed the "reluctant pioneers," felt that the successive Administrations then proceeded to neglect and abandon them without establishing proper infrastructures providing for jobs, and educational, health, recreational and transportation facilities. Their anger and resentment finally crested in the early 1970's against a complacent Ashkenazic government. Its political expression was the Black Panther movement of Israel.

Social Problems Engendered By Neglect

A report by the Project Renewal Department of the Jewish Agency last December stated: "Throughout the years, the educational infrastructure in development areas had been neglected. Thus, many schools lack basic laboratories, workshops, science and nature rooms, while many existing facilities are out of date and run down."

At the same time, the report continued, "there is a shortage of specialized teachers in the crucial sciences and technology fields, in particular in physics, chemistry, computers and advanced technology. As a result, the achievement levels of graduates of development area high schools are unsatisfactory and many students do not complete their studies."

Aside from the social problems engendered by these conditions, there were also economic problems. Israel, in the midst of technological changes and advancement, requires a literate and skilled labor force capable of supporting and furthering such developments, a labor force which was not traumatized by unbearable living conditions.

The idea of Project Renewal was not immediately embraced by either Israeli or diaspora leaders. Many viewed it as a boondoggle or as just another stab at remodeling neighborhoods along the lines of the Model Cities program in the U.S. in the 1960's and the Office of Economic Opportunity Neighborhood Youth Corps program--neither of which solved the social and economic problems of the urban and rural poor.

Radically Different Approval

But Project Renewal was radically different in its approach to human and physical rehabilitation. The two key concepts that marked Project Renewal, which were missing from the American programs, were accountability and participation. It meant the remodeling of neighborhoods could not be haphazard nor capricious, it had to have lasting social value, and programs could not be imposed on neighborhood residents but only in conjunction with them as active participants in the process.

Yigal Barkan, director of Project Renewal in Israel, emphasized that the story of Project Renewal is the story "of people, of people who wanted to help themselves but didn't have the opportunity. Project Renewal means that there is an opportunity to change things, that things need not be as they are. The secret to the transformation of lives is the unique partnership that we have between diaspora twinning communities and renewal neighborhoods in Israel; the knowledge of renewal neighborhood residents that there is

someone out there who cares, who really cares." The caring on the part of diaspora communities "is enhanced by the fact that neighborhood residents say we want to change our lives but we can't do it alone, we need help. People don't ask for handouts but for things the entire community can enjoy and partake of," Barkan said. "The tremendous dynamism Project Renewal has is that all sections of the population are touched as one section of the population is touched and elevated in their living conditions."

By last January there were 82 neighborhoods in Project Renewal with a total population of 450,000. There are 55 neighborhoods twinned with U.S. communities and 249 U.S. Jewish Federations are twinned with renewal neighborhoods, according to the latest available UJA fact sheet. The total Project Renewal expenditure for UJA up to February 28, 1986 was \$129,723,105. The total UJA pledge to January 1987 was \$168 million, according to the fact sheet.

If Project Renewal was responsible for introducing a major innovation into Israeli political life by creating new instruments for decision-making at local levels, the twinning arrangement was another major innovation. For the first time, fundraising leadership from diaspora communities is involved in decision-making processes in Israeli neighborhoods, helping to establish priorities and to set budget goals.

The rebuilt neighborhoods provide not only "shtoltz" (pride) to their residents. They also attract new industries, lay the basis for future investments, and develop the technical and educational facilities that will eventually provide a skilled labor force.

Success Stories Abound

Many of the Project Renewal neighborhoods are immeasurably successful. A case in point is the Giora neighborhood in Hod Hasharon which is twinned with South Broward and Palm Beach, Florida, communities. Giora was constructed in 1962 to provide housing for inhabitants of local immigrant transit camps who came to Israel from Morocco, Iraq, Libya, Iran and Rumania.

Before Project Renewal was initiated there, Giora "was the most socially problematic neighborhood in the town," explained Elizabeth Homans, the Project Renewal representative there who immigrated to Israel in 1983 from Hollywood, Florida, with her husband and three daughters.

Giora had a high concentration of crime among adults and youth, drug addiction, delinquency, family and personal problems, illiteracy, violence and vandalism against property, Homans said. "Over the years, there had been a constant turnover in the neighborhood population," she noted. "Residents whose financial status improved tended to leave the neighborhood, as did all the families of European origin and a number of large families who obtained better living conditions in other parts of Hod Hasharon."

Since Project Renewal, values of apartments have substantially increased and out-migration has almost ceased. In 1979, before renewal, 77 percent of the kindergarten children suffered from retarded development, compared to 40 percent in 1984, since renewal; in 1979, 70 percent of pupils tested were found to be below educational standards, compared to 46 percent in 1984. A club for the elderly has been established and the facilities are sometimes used to operate pre-school enrichment programs. Residents have become more active in decision-making and neighborhood processes.

Some of the renewal efforts have unintentionally proved to be too successful. Ramot Eshkol has become so attractive that Arabs living nearby are beginning to buy apartments and buildings in the neighborhood with money they got from the government for land they had owned at one time in and near Ramot Eshkol and from relatives who work in Saudi Arabia. There is now concern that Arabs may soon displace Jews by buying them out.

Lives Will Never Be The Same Again

Of course, Project Renewal cannot go on forever. It was originally visualized as a five-year plan, but some neighborhoods have required much more time for renewal. What happens if the financial well runs dry and construction and labor costs exceed budgets?

"Solid structures and infrastructures must be in place within five to seven years or the process becomes reversible," Barkan said. Hagit Hovav, the government's Project Renewal coordinator, said, "Stopping Project Renewal may cause frustration and regression in the neighborhoods." In fact, she added, residents have warned that unless a solid social framework is left behind, the program's success would quickly disappear.

There are successes and there are also failures, half starts and false starts. But success or failure, the lives of the people touched by Project Renewal will never be the same again.

(Monday: Part Five)

HIGH COURT ISSUES LANDMARK DECISION By Hugh Orgel

TEL AVIV, April 9 (JTA) -- The Supreme Court issued a landmark decision upholding the right of journalists to protect their sources of information, except in the most serious cases of wrong-doing.

Supreme Court President Justice Meir Shamgar ruled Tuesday that a journalist must reveal his sources only if a crime carrying a five-year maximum sentence or a lesser crime with grave consequences, was involved. He said in the case of a serious civil crime, disclosure would be required only if it was essential in the interests of justice.

The ruling was on the case of two journalists, Ben-Zion Citrin and Yifat Nevo, who appealed to the high court against a demand by the Israel Bar Association's disciplinary tribunal that they reveal the sources of published information in the trial of two lawyers charged with violating the Bar's code of ethics.

The tribunal wanted the journalists to disclose whether the information they published originated with the accused lawyers. The case was the first to come before the Supreme Court questioning a journalist's right to protect his sources.

Shamgar stated in his decision that a democracy can exist only if it recognizes the right to gather and publish information. "The right to gather information includes the need to protect the sources of that information," he said.

There will be no Bulletins dated April 15 and 16, Passover. Hag Samcach to all.