



U.S., EUROPEAN JEWRY AND ISRAEL CONDEMN POPE'S PLANNED AUDIENCE WITH WALDHEIM, URGE CANCELLATION

From JTA Bureaus

JUNE 18 (JTA) -- Jewish leaders continued to express shock and anger Thursday over the decision by Pope John Paul II to grant an audience to President Kurt Waldheim of Austria, whose alleged complicity in Nazi atrocities during World War II has made him unwelcome in most of the world.

In Rome, Tullia Zevi, president of the Federation of Italian Jewish Communities, said the meeting "could have negative consequences on relations between Catholics and Jews."

Chief Rabbi Rene Sirat of France called it an "intolerable" insult to the memory of Nazi victims. In New York, Theodore Mann, president of the American Jewish Congress, urged the Pope to reconsider.

The Vatican announced Wednesday that the Pope will receive Waldheim there on June 25. Waldheim, a practicing Catholic, will be accompanied by Austrian Foreign Minister Alois Mock on what will be Waldheim's first trip abroad since his controversial election last July.

A spokesman for the Italian government said Thursday that President Pietro Cossiga will not meet with the Austrian President "because of the internal political situation." But Foreign Minister Giulio Andreotti will confer with Mock while he is in Rome, the spokesman said. He added that Waldheim would be greeted at the airport with "all the courtesy due a foreign President."

The only reaction from Israel was a brief statement by a Foreign Ministry spokesman who said the Vatican's invitation "surprised the Jewish world and the State of Israel." He added, "We wonder what were its motives and we condemn the decision."

Calls For Cancellations

Reactions were especially strong in the United States, where the Justice Department recently placed Waldheim on its "watch list" of undesirable foreigners barred from entering the country. Several American Jewish groups hinted that it could affect Jewish attitudes toward the Pope when he visits the U.S. next September.

Mann said the Pontiff's meeting with Waldheim "would temper the enthusiasm with which leadership anticipates the Pope's forthcoming visit to the United States." The Synagogue Council of America, which represents the rabbinic and congregational organizations of Reform, Conservative and Orthodox Judaism, warned that "These developments cast a dark cloud on Jewish-Vatican relations and on the scheduled meeting of the Pope with leaders of the American Jewish community in Miami on September 11."

Theodore Ellenoff, president of the American Jewish Committee, said the Pope's decision to receive Waldheim "with full 'state honors' is morally and politically incomprehensible." Ellenoff observed that, "It would be altogether a matter of personal conscience were the Pope to receive Dr. Waldheim as a private Catholic communicant seeking pastoral solace" but "for the

Supreme Pontiff as head of the Holy See to receive Kurt Waldheim as President of a state makes a mockery of truth and justice."

In urging the Pope to reconsider, Mann pointed to "the revulsion felt by the rest of the world over Waldheim's past Nazi associations and activities" which "is reflected in the decision of leading nations, including our own, to ban, or at least discourage visits by Waldheim."

In Paris, Cardinal Jean-Marie Lustiger, declined to comment on the forthcoming meeting, but noted that the Pope "traditionally never refuses a meeting with a foreign chief of state." The same explanation was offered by Vatican Radio Wednesday.

ISRAEL ISSUES VISAS FOR TWO SOVIETS WHO PLAN OFFICIAL VISIT IN JULY

By Gil Sedan

JERUSALEM, June 18 (JTA) -- The Foreign Ministry confirmed Thursday that Israel has issued visas to members of a Soviet consular delegation due to come to Israel next month.

The visas were issued by the Dutch Embassy in Moscow which represents Israeli interests in the Soviet Union. The delegation will be the first official Soviet body to visit Israel since Moscow broke diplomatic relations after the 1967 Six-Day War. It will be headed by the Deputy Director of the Soviet Foreign Ministry's Consular Department, Evgeni Antipov.

The Foreign Ministry spokesman here was unable to give a date for their arrival, say how long the Soviet officials will stay or with whom they would meet.

A report from Paris Wednesday quoted Soviet Foreign Ministry spokesman Gennadi Gerasimov as saying the mission's task is "to ascertain the situation of Soviet-owned property in Israel and to provide consular services for Soviet citizens living in Israel." He reportedly ruled out a reciprocal visit by an Israeli delegation to Moscow.

The Israeli Foreign Ministry spokesman said Israel was not demanding reciprocity. He added, however, that Foreign Minister Shimon Peres believes that if an Israeli delegation applied for Soviet visas, they would be granted.

ISRAEL TO HELP CAMEROON WITH FARMING IN ARID AREAS, FISHING

By Edwin Eytan

PARIS, June 18 (JTA) -- Premier Yitzhak Shamir promised Thursday that Israel would lend its expertise to help Cameroon improve its agriculture, especially in its arid northern regions, and to develop its fishing industry.

Shamir spoke in Yaounde, the West African nation's capital, after a two-hour meeting with President Paul Biya. His remarks were monitored here by French radio.

"Israel has managed to transform its own arid lands into fruitful, arable land and we are ready to share our experience with all friendly nations," Shamir said at a press conference.

He said Israeli experts are drawing plans for a fisheries project, a training center for public health workers and an institute for agricultural

research in Cameroon. Local officials said no financial agreements have been signed.

Shamir arrived in Yaounde after a three-day visit to Togo and will go on to Liberia before returning to Israel. His trip to Cameroon was the second by an Israeli leader in less than a year.

Foreign Minister Shimon Peres visited there in August 1986, when he was Premier. At that time, Cameroon decided to re-establish diplomatic relations with Israel, which it broke during the 1973 Yom Kippur War.

Togo announced on June 9 that it too would re-establish ties with Israel. Earlier, Liberia, Zaire, and Ivory Coast renewed relations with Israel but 24 other Black African states have yet to do so.

ISRAELI CONFIRMS SHIN BET AGENT'S CLAIM THAT ISRAEL OKAYED PLO TALKS By Hugh Orgel

TEL AVIV, June 18 (JTA) -- An agent of the Shin Bet, Israel's internal security service, testified in closed court Wednesday that several Israelis have with government approval met with officials of the Palestine Liberation Organization.

The agent, identified only as "Reuven," appeared as an expert witness at the trial in Ramla magistrates court of four Israeli leftists who met with PLO representatives in Rumania several months ago in violation of the law. According to Israel Radio, Reuven named Lova Eliav and Uri Avneri, among others.

Eliav confirmed to Israel Radio that he had indeed met with PLO officials with the government's assent and instructions to find ways to secure the release of Israelis held prisoner by Palestinians and other Arab groups in Lebanon.

Eliav added that he thought the law banning such contacts was absurd.

RIGHTWING SIGNS UP 30 RESERVISTS TO PROTEST ISRAELI MEDIA TREATMENT By Hugh Orgel

TEL AVIV, June 18 (JTA) -- A group of Israel Defense Force reservists serving in the West Bank has been recruited by the Gush Emunim and its allies in Likud and other rightwing parties.

These reservists will wage a propaganda counter-offensive against IDF soldiers and officers who have criticized Jewish settlers for violent and provocative acts against Arab residents of the territory, particularly the armed attack on the Daheisha refugee camp near Bethlehem during the night of June 6.

About 30 reservists have signed a statement protesting "a situation in which senior echelons and the media cast all the blame on the Jewish residents of the area while they are constantly being murdered and attacked by Arab rioters."

According to Davar, the petition was organized by reservist Aryeh Vudka at the request of settlers in Kiryat Arba, adjacent to Hebron, a Gush Emunim stronghold. Vudka is a contributor to the newspaper Hayarden, which advocates Israeli sovereignty over all of the biblical "land of Israel."

The petition is aimed specifically at another group of reservists posted in Hebron, who issued a statement last week charging Jewish settlers there with constant harassment of Arab residents, and also at critics of the Daheisha raid. None of the signatories were among the IDF soldiers who

witnessed the attack on Daheisha and intervened to prevent bloodshed. The latter publicly support Lt. Gen. Amram Mitzna, commander of the central sector, who denounced the Daheisha raid as "contemptible."

NATIONAL ARAB ASSOCIATION REACHED OUT TO JEWS AT ANNUAL CONFERENCE By Judith Colp

WASHINGTON, June 18 (JTA) -- The 15th annual policy conference of the National Association of Arab Americans (NAAA), held here this week, attempted for the first time to reach out to the Jewish community.

Rep. Benjamin Gilman (R. NY) attended the NAAA keynote dinner, and co-hosted a farewell reception for the group along with Rep. Stephen Solarz (D. NY) and their House colleagues of Arab descent -- Mary Rose Oakar (D. Ohio) and Nick Rahall (D. W.Va.).

"I think we have a responsibility to continually make an effort to build bridges between Israel and the Arabs," Gilman, ranking Republican of the House Foreign Relations Subcommittee on Europe and the Middle East, told the Jewish Telegraphic Agency.

NAAA Executive Director David Sadd said he found nothing unusual about Gilman's support. "You're making a presumption that it's not supportive of Israel to be working with us," Sadd told the JTA. "If he (Gilman) wants to work with us on Iraq, it has nothing to do with his support of Israel."

To Work With American Jews

Sadd said there was a strong interest expressed by the NAAA Executive Board to work with American Jews. Invitations to the policy conference were sent out to all the major Jewish groups, although only a handful attended, including Hyman Bookbinder of the American Jewish Committee and journalist I.F. Stone.

The NAAA's luncheon on "prospects for peace" featured a Jewish Israeli, MK Col. Ran Cohen of the Citizen's Rights Party.

Israeli Arabs were represented by a moderate -- Knesset Member Abdulwahab Darawshe of the Labor Party. There was a deliberate absence of Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) speakers on the agenda.

"There are impediments, as a practical way manner, put in the way by those who attempt to block peace. We want to allow credible viewpoints all the way around," Sadd explained.

But the NAAA unequivocally endorses the PLO as the representative of the Palestinian people, and the head of the PLO Information Office, Hasan Rahman, addressed the group briefly.

The NAAA is also fiercely lobbying against legislation recently introduced in Congress to close the PLO offices in the U.S. "This is a point we in the NAAA have to fight," outgoing NAAA President Peter Tanous said.

IDF KILLS 3 TERRORISTS IN SOUTH LEBANON

TEL AVIV, June 18 (JTA) -- Three terrorists were killed in a clash with an Israel Defense Force patrol in the eastern sector of the south Lebanon security zone Wednesday night, an IDF spokesman reported. There were no IDF casualties.

The spokesman said the clash occurred at midnight when an IDF force encountered the terrorists north of Hetzbayeh village on the security zone border. Personal weapons and combat materiel were found on the bodies.

UCSJ RIPS PLAN FOR SOVIET JEWS TO FLY TO ISRAEL VIA RUMANIA

By David Friedman

WASHINGTON, June 18 (JTA) --The Union of Councils for Soviet Jews (UCSJ) denounced Thursday a proposal that Soviet Jewish emigrants go directly to Israel through Rumania.

"The plan would deny the emigres' right to select the United States or other Western nations as their destination of first choice, as guaranteed by international human rights treaties," the UCSJ said.

The UCSJ position was outlined in an Op-Ed article in The New York Times by Pamela Cohen, the organization's president, and Micah Naftalin, its Washington representative, and was reiterated in a separate statement by Cohen.

While calling the proposal an "Israeli plan," the UCSJ criticism was aimed at the negotiations held with Soviet officials last March in Moscow by Edgar Bronfman, president of the World Jewish Congress (WJC), and Morris Abram, president of the National Conference on Soviet Jewry (NCSJ) and chairman of the Conference of Presidents of Major American Jewish Organizations.

They negotiated a procedure by which Soviet Jews would fly to Israel through Rumania rather than the current route through Vienna. Although all Soviet Jews leave the USSR with visas for Israel, most go to some other country, chiefly the U.S.

World Jewry Wants Plan: WJC

"The question of direct flights is not an Israeli plan, it was the request of the world Jewish community at the beginning of the emigration movement," Elan Steinberg, executive director of the WJC, told the Jewish Telegraphic Agency.

He noted that Soviet Jews go through Vienna because there is no diplomatic relations between the Soviet Union and Israel. Rumania was suggested because it is the only Soviet bloc country that has diplomatic relations with Israel, according to Steinberg, who participated in the Moscow negotiations.

In her statement, Cohen charged that the proposal "shifts the focus of attention and energy away from our number-one priority, a high and sustained level emigration on the order of 50,000 per year until all 500,000 who wish to be rescued and leave have gained permission.

"While we hope many more Jews will choose Israel, the State has no right to control their personal decisions by fiat. Israel could provide more encouragement for aliyah by first offering greater political and moral support to those Soviet Jews who have already risked taking Israeli citizenship in the midst of the hostile, anti-Semitic and anti-Zionist environment of the Soviet Union."

Steinberg said that the Soviet officials told Bronfman and Abram that 10,000-12,000 Jews would be allowed to emigrate within a year. The Jewish leaders "gave no undertaking in return," he stressed. Instead, they stressed that "the factor in determining the Jewish attitude toward the Soviet Union" would be greater emigration; he said. In issuing its statement, the UCSJ stressed that its

position was "an open break with many of the major American and international Jewish organizations that customarily take positions on Israel and Soviet Jewry matters."

Jerry Goodman, the NCSJ's executive director, agreed with this. "There is no question that their view is a minority view in the U.S. and Israel," he said, adding that the issue has been discussed within the Jewish community and most agree that direct flights through Rumania is a good idea.

The issue has also been discussed with Jews in the Soviet Union and "most of the refuseniks who plan to go to Israel were in favor of the proposed Rumania route," Goodman said.

Goodman added that the UCSJ charge that the Rumania route distracts attention from the emigration issue is a "straw man" which is itself a "distraction" because the Jewish community debated the issue and the Rumania route was supported by the organization leaders as well as the grassroots.

Dispute Over Refugee Status

Steinberg said that if all Soviet Jews had to go directly to Israel, they could still move to another country later. But the UCSJ said that if they went to Israel, they would lose their status as refugees under U.S. law, and could only enter the U.S. under normal immigration quotas.

While most American Jewish organizations have supported the Rumania route proposals, they have not supported a demand by Israeli Premier Yitzhak Shamir that all Soviet Jewish emigrants be denied U.S. refugee status since they automatically become Israeli citizens when they apply to leave the USSR.

The Reagan Administration also rejected this proposal.

TEN DUTCH SHULS TO BE ABSORBED

AMSTERDAM, June 18 (JTA) -- At least 10 small Ashkenazic congregations will be absorbed by larger ones in their vicinity, according to a decision announced Sunday by the central committee of the Netherlands Ashkenazic congregations.

There are about 40 Ashkenazic congregations in Holland. The decision applies to those with fewer than 25 members which are no longer able to provide themselves with required facilities.

NAZI LOSES BERN COUNCIL SEAT

GENEVA, June 18 (JTA) -- Ernst Kim, a self-proclaimed Nazi who expressed racist views in an interview with a West German newspaper, was ousted from his seat on the Bern City Council last week and from the extreme rightwing National Action Party which he represented.

Political circles and the public were outraged by the interview in the newspaper Bund, which quoted Kim as saying: "I am a Nazi. All dark-skinned people should be expelled from Switzerland, mixed marriages prohibited and foreigners not allowed to participate in demonstrations in Switzerland." Markus Ruf, leader of the National Action Party, apparently had no choice but to dismiss Kim. The Swiss daily La Suisse said in an editorial that he did so because the party wanted to demonstrate it is not a Nazi party. "If so, why is Ruf always accompanied by shaven-headed body guards who have been arrested several times in Basel and Zurich for attacking refugees from Sri Lanka?" the editorial asked.

JEWISH AGENCY ASSEMBLY LIKELY TO DISCUSS IMMIGRATION PLANS, BROADENED FUNDING, LAW OF RETURN By Margie Olster

NEW YORK, June 18 (JTA) -- A contingency plan for massive Soviet Jewish immigration, funding for Reform and Conservative immigrants to Israel and proposed changes in the "Who is a Jew?" law will likely be discussed at the 1987 Jewish Agency Assembly June 21-25 in Jerusalem.

The 398 members of the Jewish Agency Assembly meet annually to review the coming year's budget -- a proposed \$427 million -- and programs. This year, the Assembly will also elect a new Board of Governors.

The Jewish Agency's programming is largely devoted to social welfare, promoting Jewish immigration and resettlement of new immigrants. Yet, politics is rarely absent from the Assembly.

Tensions between the so-called Zionist factions, which align along Israeli party lines, and the American fund-raisers, who provide the bulk of the Agency's annual budget, have been labelled by some a crisis.

Fund-raisers Seek More Input

Some local Jewish Federations have shown a desire to exert more direct control over where their dollars are going and the programs themselves. In January, the Jewish Community Federation of San Francisco, the Peninsula, Marin and Sonoma Counties decided to allocate \$100,000 directly to charities in Israel not funded by the Jewish Agency, instead of to the United Jewish Appeal (UJA).

The federation made the allocation, a small percentage of its \$8.5 million annual contribution to UJA, as a statement that its priorities were not being addressed within the Jewish Agency framework.

"The issue of the kind of partnership between Israel and the diaspora and the quality of that partnership will be raised," said Irving Kessler, executive vice-chairman of United Israel Appeal (UIA). The UIA is the organization created to channel the money raised by UJA in North America to the Jewish Agency. Half of the Agency Assembly is composed of UIA delegates representing Federations across America.

The other half comes from the Zionist parties represented in the World Zionist Organization (WZO). Kessler urged the Zionist contingent of the Agency to "deemphasize politics" and work for a common and united leadership.

Reforms Proposed

Leon Dulzin, chairman of the WZO and the Jewish Agency, called Monday for the full union of the WZO and the Jewish Agency and general reform in the structure of both organizations.

Speaking to the Zionist General Council (ZGC), the leadership body of the WZO, Dulzin said such a union could eliminate much of the overlap in the two organizations' programs.

"Departments should be unified, the number of executives should be limited, the Zionist federations should be strengthened by means of having their leaders participate in the Board of Governors of the Jewish Agency," Dulzin said. "Functional departments should be set according to geographical zones."

Ephraim Even, chairman of the ZGC, warned against the trend of leading fund-raisers taking over the Jewish Agency. He recommended that the

WZO maintain control over the Jewish Agency as well as aliyah and Jewish education programs in the diaspora.

But beyond the politics of leadership and control, specific programs and issues will come under scrutiny during the Assembly session, including the economic troubles of agricultural kibbutzim and moshavim, aliyah and absorption processes, and the controversy over funding for "non-Zionist" elements in Israel.

The ongoing debate over the "Who is a Jew?" question also is likely to be on the Assembly's agenda. Last month, Jerold Hoffberger of Baltimore, chairman of the Jewish Agency Board of Governors, sent a letter of consternation to Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir following signs that Shamir was ready to bow to pressure from the religious parties to amend the "Who is a Jew?" provision of Israel's Law of Return.

The religious parties are seeking a change that would require Jews-by-choice to be converted "according to halacha (Jewish law)" in order to receive the automatic citizenship conferred upon all Jews under the Law of Return.

In the letter, Hoffberger advised Shamir that changing the status of "Who is a Jew?" would be potentially damaging to Israel's relationship with diaspora Jewry. Hoffberger also called on Shamir to consult with the leaders of the Jewish Agency before amending the law.

The controversy over "Who is a Jew" is one of several issues of religious pluralism on the Assembly's agenda this year. Last year, the Assembly passed a resolution providing for equitable funding for all streams of Judaism in Israel. This year, delegates will examine the steps taken during the past year to institute this resolution, which included an increase in funding to the Israeli programs of the American Reform and Conservative movements.

Last year, the Assembly also passed a resolution to cut off Jewish Agency funding for any non-Zionist institution or person in Israel. A progress report on this resolution and many others is expected this year.

But the bulk of Jewish Agency funds and programs is devoted to the aliyah and resettlement process. Under this category, the state of agricultural settlements, crisis in the moshavim and changing settlement patterns will be discussed.

Although aliyah from Iran, the Soviet Union and Ethiopia is rising slowly, many agree that the Jewish Agency must be prepared for a mass immigration and absorption of Jews from these countries. A plan for this, including a proposal for emergency funds, is in the works for the upcoming session.

MAN NABBED FOR BOMB THREAT AT MUSEUM By Judith Colp

WASHINGTON, June 18 (JTA) -- A Jewish resident of Silver Spring, Md., apparently angry over a building being torn down to make way for the U.S. Holocaust Museum, threatened to explode a bomb at the museum's site Wednesday.

Kenneth Kipperman, 40, told police he was an employee at the power plant of the Bureau of Printing and Engraving, which is being razed to make way for the museum. Kipperman was arrested without incident after police discovered he had no explosives. No charges have been filed against Kipperman, who was sent to St. Elizabeth's Hospital for psychiatric evaluation.