



POPE BLESSES GRATEFUL WALDHEIM AFTER AUSTRIAN'S FIRST MEETING ABROAD AS PRESIDENT; PROTESTORS CARRY SCAFFOLD

ROME, June 25 (JTA) -- Austrian President Kurt Waldheim received a blessing and was praised as a man of peace by Pope John Paul II at the Vatican Thursday. Meanwhile on the fringes of St. Peter's Square, sealed off for security, several hundred demonstrators protested bitterly against the presence in the Vatican of the man accused of complicity in Nazi atrocities and the papal honors bestowed upon him.

Waldheim's visit, his first trip abroad since his election nearly a year ago, aroused anger and dismay among Jews all over the world.

The Pope's decision to receive him was sharply criticized by ranking members of the Roman Catholic hierarchy in the United States and Europe and by Protestant church leaders. The Italian government dissociated itself from the Papal invitation and pointedly ignored Waldheim's presence on Italian soil.

He was greeted at the Vatican with all of the pomp and ceremony due a visiting head of state. Waldheim, accompanied by his wife Elizabeth, appeared flushed with pleasure and emotion as he was met at the Vatican gates and reviewed a rank of colorfully uniformed Swiss Guards, their rifles held at the present-arms position. A brass band played the Austrian and Vatican anthems.

Pope Praises Waldheim's Work

He was escorted to the Pope's private library for a 30-minute audience. Afterwards, in a formal address, the Pope praised Waldheim for his work as a two-term Secretary General of the United Nations and as President of Austria.

"Your activity up until now in your international life as a diplomat and as the Foreign Minister of your country, as well as your activity at the United Nations, has always been dedicated to securing peace among all nations. As the highest representative of the Austrian people, your professional life experience in this field can be of service to your highly regarded country," the Pope said.

He also paid tribute to Austria, which he said "played a free, democratic and responsible role in world affairs" since World War II.

Replying, Waldheim stressed the Pope's role as "a recognized moral authority and conscience of the world." He added, "I can assure Your Holiness that I appreciate in all its significance the high value of this encounter."

There was no reference, nor could any be expected, to Waldheim's wartime activities. As an intelligence officer in the German army occupying the Balkans, he was involved, according to a growing body of documentary evidence, in atrocities against Jews, other civilians and resistance fighters in Greece and Yugoslavia.

That wartime record, which has kept Waldheim in virtual diplomatic isolation until his reception by the Pope, was the target of the protestors -- mainly Jews but also former members of the Italian resistance fighters and surviving deportees. They carried a six-foot model scaffold, complete with hangman's noose, to the

edge of St. Peter's Square to remind the world of the horrors of Nazi death camps. Four American Jews, led by Rabbi Avi Weiss of New York, appeared in the striped garb of concentration camp inmates, yellow Stars of David sewn on the tunics, prayer shawls draped over their shoulders.

Among the demonstrators were Nazi-hunters Serge and Beate Klarsfeld, who helped track down war criminal Klaus Barbie in Bolivia. Barbie is currently on trial in Lyon, France for crimes against humanity. The demonstrators, held back by cordons of police, shouted, "When will Barbie meet the Pope?"

Following the Papal audience, the Waldheims, accompanied by Austrian Foreign Minister Alois Mock, were escorted by Vatican Secretary of State Msgr. Agostino Casaroli to a reception with foreign diplomats accredited to the Holy See.

The U.S., Britain and several other Western countries were represented by low-ranking diplomats.

JEWISH LEADERS OUTRAGED AT POPE'S MEETING WITH WALDHEIM; THEIR SEPT. 11 PAPAL MEETING IN DOUBT

NEW YORK, June 25 (JTA) -- Weeks of protest and dismay over the decision by Pope John Paul II to receive Kurt Waldheim turned to outrage after the meeting Thursday. Jewish leaders stood aghast as the Pontiff not only blessed the Austrian President, who is accused of complicity in Nazi atrocities, but praised him as an outstanding diplomat who always worked for peace.

The reactions of Jewish leaders in the U.S. and elsewhere to Waldheim's reception at the Vatican were blunt. "A cruel insult to the memory of the victims of Nazism," is how Burt Levinson, national chairman of the Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rith put it.

"This is no less than a whitewash of an international figure who has been accused of complicity in the Holocaust," declared Rabbi Gilbert Klapperman, president of the Synagogue Council of America, the umbrella organization of Reform, Conservative and Orthodox Jews in the U.S.

"How is one to explain so profound an insensitivity to the meaning of the Holocaust, so painful a failure of the moral imagination, by the custodian of Catholic conscience?" Theodore Mann, president of the American Jewish Congress, asked in an open letter to the Pope read at a press conference here following the papal reception of Waldheim.

American Jewish leaders also made it clear the Pope's action placed in doubt, at best, their scheduled meeting with him September 11 in Miami during his visit to the U.S. Some declared flatly that they would not participate.

Peres Questions Symbolism

In Paris, Israeli Foreign Minister Shimon Peres, presently visiting Western Europe, said on television that the Pope should have realized the "symbolic implications" of his gesture toward Waldheim. Speaking in French, Peres also recalled some "unanswered questions" about the

Vatican's attitude toward the Holocaust during World War II. "We express our shock and distress that the prestige and moral standing of the Vatican were bestowed without qualification on Kurt Waldheim, whose complicity in Nazi crimes and his failure to acknowledge them or repent have led to his being barred from the United States and other Western countries," a statement released jointly by seven national and international Jewish organizations said.

It was signed by the American Jewish Committee, ADL, World Jewish Congress, B'nai B'rith, American Jewish Congress, National Jewish Community Relations Advisory Council and the Synagogue Council of America.

The statement noted that "Waldheim sought the appearance of moral exoneration from Pope John Paul II. By the Pontiff's agreeing to the meeting and failure to speak to the issue of moral accountability for heinous acts, Waldheim has not only advanced the process of whitewashing his past but of obliterating a reality and memory which the world forgets at its peril. We refuse in conscience to acquiesce to that revision of history."

"We appreciate our many Catholic friends and others who have spoken out publicly, who have felt our pain and who have lent their voices to ours. We look forward to continued constructive relations with them."

Meeting In Doubt

In his separate statement for the ADL, Levinson said "The Pope's silence is tragically reminiscent of the Church's silence less than 50 years ago...the hypocrisy of welcoming and praising Waldheim as an outstanding diplomat is offensive and damaging to the progress in Catholic-Jewish relations."

Levinson added that the ADL is reconsidering its participation in the September 11 meeting with the Pope in Miami.

Klapperman said "The Pope's praise of Waldheim's diplomatic career at the United Nations as 'dedicated to the securing of peace' must be challenged in light of the fact that it was during his tenure that the UN passed the infamous resolution equating Zionism with racism."

He added: "This makes all the more imperative the substantive meeting with the Pope called for by the Synagogue Council of America and other major Jewish organizations. We hope that the Vatican will agree quickly that this meeting is timely and critical for Vatican-Jewish relations."

Seymour Reich, president of B'nai B'rith International, said in a statement Thursday: "The Pope's decision to see Waldheim places in doubt the scheduled ceremonial meeting between the Pope and Jewish leaders in September. We are unconvinced that such a meeting can be productive. It remains for the Pope to clarify the Church's position. The action today clearly erodes the progress made in Catholic-Jewish relations in recent years."

Menachem Rosensaft, founding chairman of the International Network of Children of Jewish Holocaust Survivors, said he was "prepared to demonstrate" against "any meeting by Jewish leaders and the Pope" and urged that such a meeting be boycotted. He said the reception of Waldheim "demonstrated the Pope's lack of memory of the Holocaust" and that "there should be no dialogue on the part of the Jewish community with this Pope."

Theodore Mann said in his open letter to the Pope: "We believe it is terribly important that we give clear and unambiguous witness to the central moral issue that was raised by the decision to receive Kurt Waldheim. It is the fact that you and the Vatican see Kurt Waldheim as just another head of state. Sadly, this indicates to us that despite the Church's pronouncements on this subject, the significance of the Holocaust and the uniqueness of the evil it represents is not really part of the consciousness of the Church..."

"Is it possible that this man, who has become the symbol not only of an evil Nazi past, but of current efforts to diminish, falsify and forget the Holocaust, is just another unpleasant head of state for the supreme leader of the Catholic Church? That, incredibly, is what your spokesman has said, and that is what the welcome you personally extended this man inescapably implies...How paradoxical, and how deeply disquieting, that secular governments like the United States were determined to put politics aside to take a stand on moral principles by isolating Waldheim, while the Vatican was guided by political considerations and put moral principles aside."

Mann asked: "Is it possible Your Holiness, that in Waldheim's forgetfulness there is an echo, however distant, of the Church's forgetfulness as well? Has your Holiness dealt with the indifference of the Catholic churches in Europe to the fate of their Jews during World War II?...Despite the extraordinary heroism of so many individual Catholics, isn't it true that, along with so much of the rest of the world, the official churches were largely silent, and abandoned the Jews in their agony?..."

"These are some of the painful questions that are raised by the audience you granted Kurt Waldheim. We have participated in the dialogue with the Catholic Church for these past 20 years, and we value its significant achievement. But this dialogue can no longer avoid urgent questions that so deeply agitate our consciences and our souls. The meeting scheduled for September 11 in Miami is not where these questions will be addressed. It is therefore not where we can be..."

ISRAEL PROVIDES WRITTEN INFORMATION SOUGHT BY IRAN/CONTRA COMMITTEE

By Judith Colp

WASHINGTON, June 25 (JTA) -- Israel has provided information regarding its role in the sale of arms to Iran to the joint congressional committee investigating the Iran/Contra affair, announced Sen. Daniel Inouye (D. Hawaii), co-chairman of the joint committee, Thursday morning.

Asher Naim, the Israel Embassy's Minister of Information, told the Jewish Telegraphic Agency that Israel submitted responses to questions posed by the committee.

When Premier Yitzhak Shamir met with members of the investigating committee while visiting here last February, he agreed to provide the written information in lieu of the committee questioning the individual Israelis involved in the sale of arms to Iran.

Israel has contended that these individuals were working for the Israeli government and so should not be required to testify individually.

"It's proven to be good for both sides. The committee has more information and Israel has not infringed the rights of people who were involved," said Naim.

The Israeli information, which has been examined by Senate and House officials on the Iran/Contra committee, will be made public, Inouye said. But some information will not be released because it would pose a threat to Israel's national security.

Inouye called the agreement with Israel "unique cooperation" and added that "without these facts, our investigation would not be complete."

Naim said when the information is released "Israel will look as a country that wanted to be helpful as an ally. We were only doing as we were asked." He would not comment further on the details of the information.

Naim said the responses took so long to complete because of the need to provide exact information.

There was still no indication whether David Kimche, former Director General of the Israeli Foreign Ministry who played a key role in the sale of arms to Iran, would be forced to testify. Kimche, along with two Israeli arms dealers, has been subpoenaed by independent counsel Lawrence Walsh.

U.S. BACKS ARAB PARTICIPATION IN JERUSALEM CITY ELECTIONS

By David Friedman

WASHINGTON, June 25 (JTA) -- The State Department indicated Thursday that the United States would like to see Arabs in Jerusalem participate in municipal elections.

"The United States strongly supports government through the democratic process," Phyllis Oakley, a department spokesman, said. "In that spirit, we believe all the people of Jerusalem should decide how to run their municipal affairs for themselves." Oakley stressed she was not referring to any "specific" case, a reference to a statement by Hanna Seniora, editor of the East Jerusalem newspaper Al Fajr, that he might run for the Jerusalem City Council in 1988. He has since indicated that he is reconsidering the idea.

East Jerusalem Arabs have been eligible to vote for the City Council since the city was reunited by Israel. But in the last election, in 1983, 12,000 of the 68,000 eligible voted.

Oakley would not comment on whether the U.S. still considers East Jerusalem part of the occupied West Bank. The official U.S. position has been that while Jerusalem must remain united, its final status must be negotiated as part of an overall Arab-Israel peace agreement.

NGO'S INDIVIDUAL MEMBERS CALL FOR INTERNATIONAL MIDEAST CONFERENCE

By Yitzhak Rabi

UNITED NATIONS, June 25 (JTA) -- A former American hostage in Lebanon, a Palestinian lawyer from the Gaza Strip and an Israeli who is active in the left-wing Mapam party appeared in a joint press conference here Wednesday and called for an international peace conference on the Mideast with the participation of the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO).

The Rev. Benjamin Weir, the Presbyterian Minister who was held captive by terrorists in Lebanon, said that PLO participation in an international peace conference is a "must" and that the U.S. should recognize the PLO.

Tawfiq Abu Ghazaleh, an attorney from Gaza, and Latif Dori, a Mapam party activist and

an advocate of Palestinians rights, denounced Israel's continued occupation of the West Bank and Gaza. Both said that there can be no peace without recognition of the PLO.

The three were attending a UN seminar on the question of Palestine, held by the North American Coordinating Committee for Non-Governmental Organizations (NGO) Tuesday and Wednesday. The seminar ended with a call urging the UN Security Council to take steps toward the convening of an international peace conference on the Middle East.

ISRAELIS DEVELOP DRUG THAT MAY HELP AIDS, CANCER PATIENTS; EXPECT U.S. TESTING SOON

By Hugh Orgel

TEL AVIV, June 25 (JTA) -- Bar Ilan University scientists have developed a new drug which may prolong the lives of victims of AIDS (Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome) and cancer sufferers. According to Prof. Shmuel Salzberg, head of the university's science faculty, the drug AS101 was used to treat AIDS patients in Mexico, whose condition appeared to have improved a year later.

Salzberg said the drug stimulates the immune system to produce lymphocytes to fight infections. Experiments with laboratory mice at Bar Ilan and in the U.S. showed positive results, he said.

According to Salzberg, the Food and Drug Administration is expected to approve the experimental treatment of patients in the U.S. with AS101 within the next few months.

Meanwhile, the police are investigating a reported case of euthanasia involving an AIDS victim in Israel. Joanna Yehiel, editor of the Jerusalem Post's weekend magazine, described the case in her book "The Eleventh Plague." She wrote of a man dying of AIDS, who begged friends to put him out of his agony. They suffocated him while he slept, Yehiel reported. The book does not disclose names or where the alleged killing took place, and police are trying to determine the authenticity of the account.

STUDENTS QUARANTINE VATICAN MISSION BECAUSE OF 'WALDHEIMER'S DISEASE'

By Marlene Goldman

NEW YORK, June 25 (JTA) -- A reputedly highly infectious disease, most recently afflicting Pope John Paul II, triggered the North American Jewish Students' Network to quarantine the Vatican Mission to the United Nations Wednesday.

Initial symptoms of this contagious malady, known as "Waldheimer's Disease," include not recognizing Nazis and falling into selective amnesia about Nazi war crimes.

Protestors noted that Pope John Paul II's case reached an advanced stage as he agreed to meet with Austrian President Kurt Waldheim. "The illness is very dangerous," explained Alan Orich, executive director of Network. "Last year, over 50 percent of Austria caught it."

In this instance, according to Orich, the Vatican is getting its hands dirty. "The Pope knew the Jewish community would be offended, but I guess he didn't care enough. It shows his insensitivity to the Jewish people and concerns." About 20 students from the U.S., Canada and a representative from South Africa, all clad in doctors' uniforms, organized the protest and conducted free tests for the disease on passersby.

SHAMIR REPORTEDLY MET SECRETLY LAST WEEK WITH KENYAN PRESIDENT

TEL AVIV, June 25 (JTA) -- Premier Yitzhak Shamir last week met secretly with Kenyan President Daniel Arap Moi during a stopover on the way to Togo, Maariv reported Tuesday.

Moi promised he would consider establishing full diplomatic relations with Israel in the near future, but also outlined preconditions.

Shamir's entourage stayed on the plane during the 90-minute "refuelling stop," and was told the Premier had gone to the terminal.

Israel has an Interests Section in Kenya, headed by an Israeli diplomat who holds the rank of Ambassador.

Maariv also reported that the head of the President's office in Equatorial Guinea came to Lome, the capital of Togo, and met with members of Shamir's entourage. The Israel Ambassador to Cameroon, Gad Golan, then went to Equatorial Guinea for additional talks.

Shamir could not visit due to a lack of sufficient preparation time.

SUPREME COURT TO HEAR NAKASH'S EXTRADITION APPEAL ON JULY 2

By Gil Sedan

JERUSALEM, June 25 (JTA) -- A final appeal by William Nakash against his deportation to France will be heard by a three-judge panel of the Supreme Court on July 2, delaying execution of the deportation order signed by Justice Minister Avraham Sharir this week.

Nakash, an Algerian-born French Jew, was convicted in absentia in France for the 1983 murder of an Arab in the city of Besancon. He evaded arrest and fled to Israel in 1985, where he was granted automatic citizenship.

Sharir initially rejected the French extradition request but reversed himself at the recommendation of Attorney General Yosef Harish. The Justice Minister was also under orders from the Supreme Court to show cause by July 7 why extradition should be denied.

The principal argument against deportation was that Nakash's life would be in danger in a French prison. But a judicial committee in Israel concluded after a study that this was not probable. Nakash's attorney, Ronald Rot, flew to France Wednesday to try to persuade the authorities to allow Nakash to serve his prison term in Israel.

The 25-year-old Nakash hopes to convince the Supreme Court to void the extradition order because his wife, Rina, is two months pregnant following artificial insemination.

SHULTZ, SOVIET COUNTERPART TO DISCUSS MIDEAST CONFERENCE: BEILIN

TEL AVIV, June 25 (JTA) -- U.S. Secretary of State George Shultz and Soviet Foreign Minister Eduard Shevardnadze will meet in mid-July in the U.S. Their discussion will include promoting an international peace conference on the Middle East, according to Foreign Ministry Political Director-General Yossi Beilin, who returned from the U.S. and Europe Wednesday.

In addition, Davar quotes State Department officials as saying Monday that the U.S. sees no chance for implementing an interim agreement between Israel and Jordan that was suggested last week by Ministerial Economist Coordinator Gad

Yaacobi in his meeting with Assistant Secretary of State Richard Murphy.

SEPHARDIC LEADER OZIEL DIES

TORONTO, June 25 (JTA) -- Leon Ozziel, a leader of the Sephardic community, died of a sudden heart attack at age 44 as he was entering Mt. Sinai Hospital here after leaving his office. He had been feeling poorly.

Ozziel, who came to Canada from Tangiers in 1957, was president of the Canadian Sephardic Federation and a former president of the Ontario Sephardic Association. He was a founder of Or Ha-Emet, Toronto's only Sephardic day school, and a founder and long-time president of Congregation Petach Tikva Anshe Castillia here.

Ozziel was also active in the Jewish Immigrant Aid Service, the Canadian Jewish Congress, the Canadian Zionist Federation and Canadian Friends of the Hebrew University. He was a delegate to two World Zionist Congresses in Jerusalem.

His family has received messages of condolence from Education Minister Yitzhak Navon of Israel and Housing Minister David Levy, both of Sephardic descent.

380,000 ISRAELIS LIVE ABROAD: REPORT

TEL AVIV, June 25 (JTA) -- The total number of Israelis who have emigrated abroad is 380,000, according to a report by the Central Bureau of Statistics issued here this week.

According to the report, about 15,000 Israelis leave the country every year to live abroad. The Bureau estimates that some 35,000 of the 100,000 "yordim" (emigrants) who left Israel in the past seven years are between the ages of 20 and 30.

Additional information about the yordim was disclosed at an Education Ministry-sponsored conference on the issue this week. Haifa University Sociology Professor David Mittleburg reported that 45 percent of kibbutz youth who have immigrated in recent years are army officers, while 37 percent served in combat units. He also said that 60 percent of the young kibbutz emigrants are married to non-Israelis, and 25 percent are married to non-Jews.

RABIN SEEKS LAVI DECISION

TEL AVIV, June 25 (JTA) -- Defense Minister Yitzhak Rabin is exerting pressure on cabinet members to bring the Lavi issue to a vote, perhaps at the cabinet meeting on Sunday, Haaretz reported Wednesday. This pressure apparently stems from a communique sent from the Reagan Administration to the Defense Ministry, in which it was stated that the U.S. would not discuss military aid to Israel in 1988 until the cabinet decides on the Lavi issue, Haaretz said.

Moreover, the Administration cancelled a discussion which was to have taken place three weeks ago in Washington on the subject of military aid to Israel. Several ministers will apparently decide their respective positions only after the Defense Minister declares his own view. Rabin's position appears to be that he will not oppose continuation of the project, on condition that the government agrees to add an annual \$220 million to the defense budget. Haaretz added that if funds are not made available, there will be no choice other than to ground the Lavi.