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JEWISH AGENCY ASSEMBLY BACKS CURRENT LAW OF RETURN, PUSHES STRONGER FUND BAN FOR NON-ZIONIST GROUPS

By David Landau

JERUSALEM, June 28 (JTA) -- The Jewish Agency Assembly ended its week-long session here Sunday with adoption of a resolution affirming that the Law of Return be "retained in its present form."

The resolution, carried by a large majority despite vociferous protests by an American Orthodox leader, Rabbi Louis Bernstein, was a flat rejection of efforts by the Orthodox religious establishment and their parties in the Knesset to amend the law to invalidate conversions performed by non-Orthodox rabbis.

It referred to and reaffirmed the text first adopted by the Assembly in 1985 that warned that "any change in the Law of Return may fracture the unity of the Jewish people."

Another controversial resolution, adopted by a substantial majority Thursday, reaffirmed the Assembly's determination to channel funds only to Zionist educational institutions. It allows funding only "to those Jewish schools, programs, yeshivot and institutions...which recognize Zionist principles and support the State of Israel as the national and Zionist homeland of the Jewish people at this time."

Its Aim Apparent

The text did not cite any specific Zionist criteria, but was clearly aimed at ultra-Orthodox yeshivas which are non-Zionist or challenge Zionism on religious or ideological grounds.

A draft resolution critical of the Jewish Agency Board of Governors for not effectively enforcing a previous resolution on the subject was voted down.

But the adopted text implied strong dissatisfaction with the Board. It requires that "The appropriate Board of Governors Committee... should oversee the allocations so that ... this resolution will be carried out in a timely and appropriate way."

During an otherwise festive closing ceremony Sunday in the Knesset building, the Assembly unanimously passed a resolution deploring the meeting between Pope John Paul II and Austrian President Kurt Waldheim at the Vatican Thursday. It specifically condemned "the invitation to Waldheim," noting "that Waldheim lied about his activity in the service of the Nazis..." The Assembly resolved to send the resolution to the Pope.

ISRAEL, TERRITORIES TENSE AFTER WEEKEND OF TERRORISM, CLASHES

By Gil Sedan and Hugh Orgel

JERUSALEM, June 28 (JTA) -- Following a weekend of terrorist incidents and Jewish-Arab recriminations, Israel and the administered territories were tense.

A Haifa-area woman, Hadassah Schechter, 28, had her left foot mangled Saturday, necessitating amputation. She stepped on an explosive charge

buried in the sand at Carmel Beach. Her seven-year-old son was slightly injured by the blast.

On Sunday, an Arab was fatally shot and four Arabs and a border policeman were wounded at Ibadiya village in the West Bank east of Bethlehem during a confrontation between the Israeli surveyors and villagers who suspected the survey was preparatory to expropriation of Arab land to enlarge Jewish settlements.

On Friday, five persons, three of them minors, were remanded in custody in connection with the fire-bombing of an apartment occupied by Arabs in Ramat Amidar, a suburb of Ramat Gan, near Tel Aviv. There have been two arson incidents and several physical attacks on Arab workers in the neighborhood, which is near Bar Ilan University.

Also on Friday, an Israel Defense Force soldier, hitchhiking to his base near Netanya, was attacked by two men who gave him a lift. He managed to fight them off but suffered a leg injury when he fell out of the car and was struck by it. Police believe the assailants intended to steal the soldier's weapon, not kidnap him. It is not known whether they were Arabs or Jews. The car had been stolen earlier in Kfar Saba.

An Arab bus driver from Hebron, ending his run from Beersheba to Tel Aviv Sunday morning, found a bomb as he was cleaning out his vehicle at the central bus station. It was safely removed by police.

Haifa Bathers Angry

The incident at the Haifa beach drew the ire of bathers, who said the sand had not been raked as usual Saturday morning to clear it of debris and to check for mines. They also charged that no police were patrolling the sands.

A spokesman for the city council said outcroppings of rock at the section of beach where the incident occurred prevented the tractor-drawn rakes from covering the entire area. Police said most patrolmen at the beach were busy directing the heavy weekend traffic. Both complaints will be investigated by the authorities.

Emotions ran high at Ramat Amidar. Bar Ilan students claimed the trouble stemmed from a "neighborhood quarrel." Residents interviewed by Israel Radio said it appeared to be a clear case of racism. But the Residents Committee complained Arabs were responsible for the tension because they lived 10-to-a-room and allegedly brought drugs and prostitutes to their homes. "It won't end until all the Arabs are gone," one man said.

Kahane, Sarid Rebuffed

Rabbi Meir Kahane and members of his extremist Kach Party tried to visit the neighborhood, but were ordered by police to stay away. A planned visit by MK Yossi Sarid of the Citizens Rights Movement was called off at the request of police.

Israeli Arab students at Bar Ilan and Arab workers from the West Bank rent apartments in Ramat Amidar. Three were injured in the arson attack last week, requiring hospitalization.

Meanwhile, Arab mayors in the Bethlehem area protested plans to drill a well near Herodion,

southeast of Jerusalem, claiming it will deplete the Arabs' water supply.

They said that for the past 10 years Jewish settlements have drawn off disproportionate amounts of water while Arab communities usually are turned down when they apply to drill new wells.

REAGAN HAS CONTACTED SYRIA; TALKS ONGOING, SAYS STATE DEPARTMENT

By Judith Colp

WASHINGTON, June 28 (JTA) -- The State Department confirmed Friday that President Reagan has sent a letter to Syrian President Hafez Assad in an apparent effort to improve relations between the two countries.

"Syria is an important country in the region, and it has an important role to play in any Middle East peace settlement," State Department spokesman Charles Redman said.

Relations between the two countries weakened after the Syrians were linked with the attempted bombing of an El Al jet in London in April 1986. The Administration withdrew its Ambassador to Syria, Thomas Eagleton, last October in protest.

Redman said there were no plans to send Eagleton back. He denied assertions that the U.S. was hoping to use Syrian influence to free journalist Charles Glass who was taken hostage this week in Lebanon.

"There is no link between our concern for hostages and this broad question of U.S.-Syrian relations," Redman said.

Redman denied that the letter constituted the opening of new diplomatic channels to Syria. "We have had a contact through our Charge in Damascus for some time and this is a part of a continuing process of dialogue," he said.

Redman also reiterated State Department policy that Syria should play a role in a Middle East peace agreement.

BRITAIN ENDORSES MIDEAST CONFERENCE; REPORTEDLY INVOLVED WITH U.S., SYRIA

By Maurice Samuelson

LONDON, June 28 (JTA) -- The British government has formally endorsed an international conference for Middle East peace with the participation of the five permanent members of the United Nations Security Council, including the Soviet Union.

Foreign Secretary Sir Geoffrey Howe told the House of Commons Friday that convening such a conference would be one of the major foreign policy objectives of the newly re-elected Conservative government of Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher.

He said its purpose was to bring Israel and Jordan into direct negotiations, though the conference would not have the power to impose solutions or veto agreements between the parties directly concerned. He said Britain, as a member of the Security Council, would play a full part in the effort.

Howe addressed Parliament after a visit to London last week by Israeli Foreign Minister Shimon Peres, a strong advocate of an international conference, which is vigorously opposed by Premier Yitzhak Shamir. Howe and Thatcher had lengthy discussions with Peres on the subject. The Israeli Foreign Minister stated publicly that his objective in visiting Western Europe was to solicit

the support of its leaders for an international forum. He visited France and West Germany after leaving Britain.

It was confirmed here meanwhile that Thatcher has been involved in promoting secret U. S. negotiations with President Hafez Assad of Syria. Britain broke diplomatic ties with Syria last year because of its involvement in an aborted attempt to place a bomb on an El Al airliner about to leave London's Heathrow Airport for Tel Aviv.

The United States promptly followed Britain's action. But now President Reagan has proposed sending the U.S. Ambassador to the United Nations, Vernon Walters, to Damascus to meet with Assad. Thatcher, it is known, helped clear the way for this contact by confirming that Syria recently has taken steps to distance itself from terrorist activities.

Thatcher's next direct involvement in Middle East diplomacy will be her meeting with King Hussein of Jordan when he visits London shortly. She is expected to brief him on her two-hour conversation with Peres last Tuesday.

AJCOMMITTEE DENOUNCES REV. SMITH'S LATEST THEOLOGICAL 'ADVICE' FOR JEWS

NEW YORK, June 28 (JTA) -- The Rev. Bailey Smith, a fundamentalist Christian leader, has once again recommended that Jews be "born again."

Smith, a former president of the Southern Baptist Convention, gained notoriety in 1980 when he said that "God Almighty doesn't hear the prayer of a Jew." He subsequently apologized.

Addressing the Conference of Southern Baptist Evangelists in St. Louis June 17, Smith said that "unless they (Jews) repent and get born again, they don't have a prayer."

Rabbi A. James Rudin, director of interreligious affairs of the American Jewish Committee, said: "Smith's recent statement clearly reveals that he remains where he was seven years ago: a self-imposed prisoner in a theological swamp of narrow triumphalism and religious imperialism." But, Rudin noted, "his negative views and limited understanding of Jews and Judaism are daily being repudiated by an increasing number of Christian bodies and leaders, including members of his own Southern Baptist Convention, and most recently the Presbyterian Church U.S.A."

According to a tape of Smith's remarks in St. Louis, the fundamentalist leader said: "I'm not against the Jewish people. Unless they repent and get born again, they don't have a prayer. You say, 'Man, that's going to cause you trouble.' I don't care what trouble it causes. I love the Jewish people and the greatest love you can have for the Jews or anybody else is to tell them without Jesus Christ you don't have a hope. That's the only hope there is. Through Jesus Christ."

CABINET SCRAPS TWO-TIER TUITION SCHEME FOR UNIVERSITY STUDENTS

By Gil Sedan

JERUSALEM, June 28 (JTA) -- The Cabinet reached a compromise agreement Sunday on the issue of university tuition fees that apparently is acceptable to all parties. It reversed its most controversial decision to establish a two-tier system of lower fees for veterans of the Israel Defense Force, which much of the public saw as

direct discrimination against Arab students who are barred by law from serving in the military.

All students will now pay an annual fee of \$1,350, about \$100 less than the current fee. The government will provide a \$4.5 million subsidy for the financially hard-pressed universities to help reduce their deficits. The sum is less than the universities had asked for.

The Cabinet decision was a compromise between Education Minister Yitzhak Navon, who had pressed for lower fees, and Finance Minister Moshe Nissim, who insisted the Treasury could not afford additional subsidies.

The Cabinet acted under growing pressure from students and the universities. The Board of Governors of the Hebrew University in Jerusalem, Israel's oldest and largest institution of higher learning, voted last month not to open for the 1987-88 academic year unless a "realistic balanced budget" can be achieved for the next fiscal year.

The Governors said this was contingent on a "realistic commitment" of financial assistance from the government and "if deemed appropriate, a revision in the schedule of tuition fees."

The Hebrew University's budget for the current fiscal year, which ends September 30, is about \$124 million. Its current operating deficit is about \$20 million and the accumulated deficit for this year is estimated at \$83-84 million.

CABINET DISCUSSES LAVI AGAIN AFTER ECONOMIST SAYS ITS TOO EXPENSIVE By Gil Sedan

JERUSALEM, June 28 (JTA) -- The Cabinet Sunday held its fifth meeting devoted to the Lavi jet fighter project. No decision is expected until next Sunday's session, but pressure on both sides of the issue has intensified.

As the ministers deliberated, several thousand employees of Israel Aviation Industries (IAI), which has built and is testing prototypes of Israel's second-generation jet fighter plane, demonstrated noisily outside the Prime Minister's Office. They warned this was "only the beginning" of their campaign and that abandonment of the Lavi would have dire consequences.

But Michael Bruno, Governor of the Bank of Israel, the country's central bank, delivered the most fierce and outspoken public attack yet against the project in an address to the Israel Management Institute in Tel Aviv Tuesday.

"There is no 'on the one hand and on the other hand.' On the basis of economic analysis, there is no justification whatsoever for continuing the project," Bruno said.

Threats Made

Likud Minister Moshe Arens, an aeronautical engineer by training and the strongest supporter of the Lavi in the government, threatened a "harsh reaction" inside Likud if Premier Yitzhak Shamir sides with the Lavi's opponents.

Probably the strongest opponent is Minister-Without-Portfolio Ezer Weizman of the Labor Party, a former Air Force Commander and, like Arens, a former Defense Minister. He has spoken publicly against the Lavi which he had originally supported as a "second line" aircraft to replace Israel's aging American-made Skyhawks. Since then, he has said, the Lavi has escalated to a highly sophisticated front-line combat plane which while technically worthy, does not warrant the huge development and production costs. Defense Minister Yitzhak Rabin argued at Sunday's Cabinet

meeting that as long as there are no additional funds, the Lavi project cannot be continued. He reflected the views of a growing majority within the defense establishment and the Israel Defense Force who contend that the Lavi is diverting funds from other urgently needed weapons systems.

Bruno argues in a similar vein. He said the fact that the Lavi represents a great technological achievement for Israel does not mean it "ought to be manufactured."

"Nor is it relevant if alternative sources of financing can be found, because these will only be at the expense of other possible uses for the money," Bruno said.

"The economy has no comparative advantage in producing the plane. It is only a substitute for imports, but these imports will cost less than producing the Lavi, even without taking into account the development costs. Nor will this project lead to subsequent ones," the Bank of Israel chief said.

Rips Job-Loss Defense

He addressed the problem of unemployment if the Lavi is scrapped -- the primary concern of the IAI employees. "From the employment point of view, any advantages of continuing the project would be only short-term," Bruno maintained. "Even the limited number of specialists employed on research-and-development work would be employed only for the next five years. Their tasks would then be completed and they would in any case have to find other employment."

Bruno warned that the long-term effects of the project would be less funds for other projects, less exports and fewer jobs available.

YOUNG DWARF TO RECEIVE SPECIAL STRETCHING TREATMENT IN ISRAEL

TEL AVIV, June 28 (JTA) -- A bone-stretching procedure offered only in Israel and two other countries will be performed at the Sheba Hospital in Tel Hashomer in an attempt to add to the height of eight-year-old Jon Gisselson, a child from Iceland who suffers from achondroplastic dwarfism, a genetic disease.

Young Jon, who is not Jewish, is on the government hospital's pediatric ward with three Israeli children with the same ailment. Doctors hope to add about two feet to his height.

The disease is not responsive to drugs. The long bones of the body fuse too early in life, stunting growth. Victims usually have normal intelligence but a sunken nose, small face and stubby, short limbs.

The procedure has been performed in Italy and Austria. Metal screws are inserted into the leg bones and turned slightly each day for about a month before they are withdrawn. Sheba Hospital has performed it successfully in other cases. While the patients do not attain normal height, they are much taller than untreated dwarfs.

Jon's parents head about the treatment when he was an infant.

They came to Israel where his father, an engineer, found work in Ashdod.

SAMOEYED TOPS ISRAELI DOG SHOW

TEL AVIV, June 28 (JTA) -- A two-year-old white Samoyed, a Siberian breed of dog owned by Esther Helmi of New York, won first prize at the World Dog Show held at the Fair Grounds Friday.

**FORMER REFUSENIK FUCHS-RABINOVICH
CELEBRATES LONG-AWAITED BAR MITZVAH
By Susan Birnbaum**

NEW YORK, June 28 (JTA) -- The long-awaited bar mitzvah of Mishka Fuchs-Rabinovich, 13-year-old son of prominent former Moscow refuseniks Michael and Marina Fuchs-Rabinovich, took place Saturday at Temple Beth Elohim in Wellesley, Mass., before 600 worshippers.

The congregation adopted the family four years ago and sent Mishka a formal invitation to be bar mitzvah there. The family arrived in the U.S. three weeks ago.

"It's very, very hard to tell you how I feel. It's impossible to express such a nice feeling," Mishka told the Jewish Telegraphic Agency in sure and clear English. Like any bar mitzvah boy, he said he was "nervous." Pesach, which the family celebrated in Vienna, was a tremendous experience, he added, as "I really felt free."

The parents last week discussed their tremendous excitement and gratitude for being here at last and being able to celebrate the long-planned bar mitzvah. Mishka had been preparing for more than a year in Moscow with visiting American rabbis.

His Torah portion, "Miketz," and haftarah from the Book of Kings was actually not appropriate at this time in the Hebrew calendar, but the Soviets did not grant the exit visas convenient to his intended bar mitzvah Shabbat.

However, the fact that Mishka could observe his bar mitzvah in his 13th year is, his father said, thanks to the support of their friends in America, "which was extremely important for us. I think it was only through their support that we were able to become free. I'm sure that without it, we could not have left Russia."

He also praised the help of HIAS and the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee. At the bar mitzvah, he expressed gratitude to U.S. politicians and Jewish leaders for work on the family's behalf.

Long Struggle To Leave

Michael, a 49-year-old meteorologist with advanced degrees in mathematics and physics, lost his job in 1983. Marina, also a meteorologist, lost her job when the family applied to emigrate eight years ago. The application, he said, is "like committing suicide with your previous life."

The family staged a 20-day hunger strike in December to protest the Soviets' eight-year refusal to permit their emigration and particularly their request that Mishka be allowed to celebrate his bar mitzvah at the Wellesley temple, whose members simultaneously held a sympathy fast.

In April, Michael began a demonstration in front of the Lenin Library in Moscow, about which he had previously alerted the government. The night before, he refused an invitation by OVIR emigration authorities for the next day. "I'm sorry, I'm busy; I'm demonstrating," he told them.

His demonstration was stopped by his wife, however, who came running to the library with news that the authorities would decide on their case the following week. They did, and the family arrived in the United States two weeks ago.

Michael said he didn't want their release "to be considered on behalf of Soviet liberalization. To a certain degree, it is so." He called the current process of "glasnost" (openness) a "well performed" act. He wants his case "to be a good

precedent for other families who want to struggle for their freedom." Most important, he said, "We left a lot of close friends in the community behind. We want to be responsible for them. We consider ourselves representatives of the refuseniks who are still waiting. We want to join the struggle with everyone who helped us."

The emigration rules of January 1987 have "excited" refuseniks, he said. They are both "happy that a small portion of their friends can leave, but worried if they're refused once more, when someone else can be permitted."

Michael emphasized the plight of his refusenik friend Benjamin Charny, who suffers from many illnesses including cancer, and whose brother Leon lives in Needham, Mass., near the Fuchs-Rabinovichs' new home. "I know there are a lot of important cases, and our aim is to seek all refuseniks here or in Israel as they want. But Ben Charny is a real emergency, maybe considered as the most important case now. He can't wait," Michael said.

Cites KGB Inroads

Michael is amused by Americans' willingness to accept recent Soviet gestures, such as the U.S. tour of the Soviet Yiddish theater group, and the offer for six Soviet Jews to study for the rabbinate in the U.S.

He agreed with the assessment of Yuri Shtern, spokesman for the Soviet Jewry Education and Information Center in Jerusalem, about the rabbinical students: "So why not have six KGB rabbis?" Michael said, "I'm quite sure that any person who wants to have this rabbinical education can only get it through the KGB."

Michael said that the main Moscow synagogue is "a special place for me, but the rabbi himself (Adolph Shayevich, who recently visited the U.S. and promised a kosher restaurant and Hebrew teachers soon for the USSR) does not mean anything to me. I don't consider him a rabbi. No doubt he's supported by the KGB."

He called the Jewish Cameo Musical Theatre of Moscow, which recently performed in North America, "a dirty fairy tale ... part of Soviet propaganda. The fact that Jewish artists were permitted to come here is proof they're part of the KGB. Practically no one else has such a privilege to go to the U.S. on their own will. If they are sent, they are sent by the KGB."

He also mocked America's preoccupation with Soviet "journalist" Vladimir Posner, who is frequently seen on network television here and has co-hosted programs with Phil Donahue here and in the USSR. "Posner has no influence on Soviet media," Michael said. "In Moscow, in Leningrad, everyone knows he's just a KGB man and nobody respects him."

ISRAELI WORRIED ABOUT TRANSMITTERS

TEL AVIV, June 28 (JTA) -- Giora Ilani, chief zoologist of the Israel Nature Reserves Authority, has warned that erection of Voice of America radio transmitters in the Negev may have grave ecological implications for the region, Davar reported.

Ilani said the Americans have failed to supply precise data on the amount of electromagnetic radiation the transmitters will emit. He is concerned that the radiation will harm the hundreds of thousands of migratory birds that fly over the Negev each year.