

YUGOSLAV NEWS AGENCY TO OPEN AN OFFICE IN JERUSALEM

TEL AVIV, July 27 (JTA) -- The Tanjug official Yugoslav news agency will have a bureau in Israel and its local representative, Miroslav Vishjic, formerly head of its Cairo bureau, said Sunday the establishment of its office in Jerusalem signals improved Yugoslav-Israeli relations.

"The fact that an official news agency opens its bureau in Israel speaks for itself. After this, similar step-by-step moves most probably will follow," he told reporters. He said he had chosen Jerusalem as the center of his news gathering and reporting activities because he suffers from asthma. An official Tanjug agency report issued in Belgrade on Saturday said its Israel bureau would be opened in Tel Aviv.

Vishjic has been in Israel several times, coming here on special reporting assignments from his previous post in Cairo.

SHAS CONTINUES TO PUSH FOR RABBINICAL COURT LAW AMENDMENT

By Hugh Orgel

TEL AVIV, July 27 (JTA) -- The ultra-Orthodox Shas party proposed in the Knesset Monday an amendment to the Rabbinical Courts Law which would give the court sole authority to approve all conversions performed abroad.

The anticipated proposal prompted a delegation of American Jewish leaders to take an unscheduled trip to Israel Sunday to convey to Israeli officials and public their serious concern and opposition to the politization of the "Who is a Jew?" issue.

A leader of the delegation, Shoshana Cardin, president of the Council of Jewish Federations, said last week the series of amendments to Israeli laws dealing with converts would delegitimize millions of non-Orthodox American Jews.

Likud warned Shas Sunday night that it could not guarantee a majority vote to pass the proposal at the first introductory reading scheduled for Wednesday. Likud and Shas representatives are scheduled to meet again Monday night but a Shas spokesman indicated that they might withdraw the proposal by Wednesday if the legislation seemed doomed to failure.

Effect Of The Shas Amendment

The "back door" Shas amendment would have the same effect as other proposed amendments to the Law of Return which would redefine "Who is a Jew?" The ultra-Orthodox have introduced numerous amendments to the Law of Return which would stipulate that a convert undergo a halachic conversion in order to qualify for automatic Israeli citizenship granted to all Jews on request.

Under Israeli law, an amendment that fails can only be reintroduced six months after the vote. The Shas amendment effectively keeps the issue on the political agenda after the failure of proposed amendments to the Law of Return on July 8.

American Jewish leaders have expressed their opposition to the issue becoming a political football rather than a religious dispute. Shas has

threatened to pull out of the unity government and vote for early elections if Likud would not push the amendments through Knesset. Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir, in an apparent capitulation to pressure from Shas, pledged several months ago to do all in his power to get the amendments passed.

Likud MKs almost unanimously supported an amendment to the Law of Return on July 8 but the measure was narrowly defeated.

FEDORENKO EXECUTED

By Susan Birnbaum

NEW YORK, July 27 (JTA) -- Feodor Fedorenko, the Nazi guard at the Treblinka death camp deported in 1984 from the United States to the Soviet Union and sentenced to death last year, has been executed, according to a report from the Soviet news agency Tass. The report did not indicate when the 79-year-old Fedorenko was executed.

Fedorenko was the first Nazi war criminal to be deported from the U.S. to the Soviet Union. The Ukrainian, who came to America in 1949, was charged by the U.S. government with failing to disclose his wartime activities when he entered the country, and when he applied for U.S. citizenship, granted him in 1970. The prosecution charged him with having beaten and shot Jewish inmates.

Fedorenko was the first Nazi war criminal to be judged by the U.S. Supreme Court, and the first time a U.S. Attorney General had taken part in the proceedings.

In 1981, Fedorenko, who had been a factory worker in Philadelphia, himself applied to live permanently in the Soviet Union, where he had family, after the Supreme Court revoked his U.S. citizenship in January of that year for lying about his past when he immigrated to the U.S. He was ordered deported in February 1983. At the time, he faced no charges in the Soviet Union, and he lived as a free man for approximately a year before being arrested and charged with wartime crimes.

Fedorenko himself admitted at his original denaturalization trial that he had been an SS guard at Treblinka, according to Eli Rosenbaum, former prosecutor at the Justice Department's Office of Special Investigations. And he admitted, said Rosenbaum, joining his fellow guards in shooting "in the direction of" escaping Jewish prisoners during the Treblinka uprising in 1943. The Soviet court in the city of Simferopol passed the death sentence on Fedorenko on June 19, 1986 after finding him guilty of treason and the mass execution of citizens from many countries at Treblinka.

In April, the U.S. deported Nazi concentration camp guard Karl Linnas to the Soviet Union, where he had been sentenced to death in absentia in 1962 for his crimes. Linnas died earlier this month before a decision was made to confirm that sentence.

It was during several photo-spread reviewing sessions by Treblinka survivors being asked to look at photos in the Fedorenko case that the survivors instead pointed to a photo of John

Demjanjuk, identifying him as "Ivan the Terrible" from Treblinka. Demjanjuk's picture was on the spread only because the government had needed photographs of eight men of similar appearance.

Demjanjuk at the time was under investigation for crimes committed at the Sobibor death camp. Monday, Demjanjuk began testimony in his own defense at his trial in Jerusalem.

FOCUS ON ISSUES

LONGHORNS, ISRAELIS AND JNF

By Susan Birnbaum

NEW YORK, July 27 (JTA) -- Surely, there is no mention in any liturgy of Laredo, Texas, as a "land of milk and honey." Yet, with the sure vision and unflinching approach of the agriculture commissioner of the Lone Star State, a troubled and poor spot is about to bloom on the Rio Grande, with Israeli know-how and the Jewish National Fund partners with Texas in an unusual but highly practical experiment.

Jim Hightower, the Texas Commissioner of Agriculture, was at JNF headquarters in New York last week to announce the novel project. Charlotte Jacobson, treasurer and past president of JNF, and Dr. Samuel Cohen, JNF executive vice president, presented the softspoken Texan with a comprehensive plan for developing a "Blueprint Farm of the Future" at Laredo using Israeli farm technology.

JNF financed \$50,000 for a feasibility study by the Texas-Israel Exchange (TIE), Hightower's maverick creation of mutually beneficial agriculture projects that include crop production, water conservation, cooperative marketing, integrated pest management and solar energy generation. The Laredo project is the first of the TIE program. A 15-member steering committee of public officials and local business and agricultural leaders from south Texas is working with TIE on the project.

"Because of the financial support of the Jewish National Fund, the technical expertise of an Israeli evaluation team, and the pioneering spirit of the people of Laredo, our 'Blueprint Farm' is ready to advance from the talking stages into the plowing and planting stages," Hightower said.

Determined To Make Project Work

Since the demise of Texas oil riches and because of the painful difficulties that American farmers are facing -- a story in itself -- the small Texas farmer, and the state in general, have plummeted in productivity. But Texas sees these problems as a challenge to even more productivity. Hightower, a man of great conscience and an iron will, is determined to make a project work. He has devoted a large chunk of his time to bringing together the sharpest minds and greatest expertise among Israelis and Texans.

Hightower is a mover and a shaker, but he is also modest, and he gives credit to others as it is due, and immediately. He said he owes his idea of bringing together Texas and Israel for the novel exchange to Sara Ehrman, a Jewish Texan once a member of the American Israeli Public Affairs Committee (AIPAC), active in Texas Jewish and Democratic activities, and TIE's first Texas coordinator. (Hightower announced last week that Nancy Epstein now serves in that position.)

Ehrman, he said, approached him back in 1982 -- as soon as he was elected commissioner -- to look into the possibilities of such a Texas-Israel cooperative venture. On the face of it, the

partnership might look a trifle lopsided, but the fact is that Texas and Israel lie on the same latitude, and have similar problems with aridity and the need for advanced irrigation techniques and crop rotation.

An interesting footnote: drip irrigation, always spoken of with Israel in mind, was, said Hightower, invented at Texas A&M University.

The Evolution Of An Idea

Hightower was invited to Israel but, he said, he "wanted to do more than just take a tour. I wanted it to be a useful trip." He went to Israel "to see people who did something innovative," he told JTA in a long interview at the JNF offices.

About 200-300 leaders of the Texas Jewish community were interested in the idea, and AIPAC and the Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rith also got involved in the venture; ADL out of missions to Israel by its Texas regional members who came back "wanting to do something."

In 1984 in Israel, Hightower was advised by several people in government to talk to Avraham Katz-Oz, then a Labor Member of Knesset, a kibbutznik personally involved in agriculture and since named Deputy Minister of Agriculture. Hightower said there was "no need to discuss grandiose schemes. It was only necessary to make one thing work." A team of Texans, comprising farmers, business people and government figures, was invited to Israel. After talking to Katz-Oz about an agricultural exchange, "They were really bowled over," Hightower said. Katz-Oz himself came to Texas in the spring of 1985. "This raised a lot of eyebrows in Texas and Jerusalem," Hightower laughed. "The Foreign Ministry asked, 'What's going on?'"

No Small Potatoes

It wasn't just small potatoes. Together, the Texans and the Israelis had come up with the idea to rotate crops of December tomatoes; asparagus, melons, bell peppers, sweet basil, dill and other fresh herbs; and cut flowers such as irises and gladioli.

Hightower and Katz-Oz then signed a memorandum of agreement in Austin, Texas, for Texas-Israel agricultural cooperation, with each man becoming a cochairman of TIE. In fact, Katz-Oz admitted that Israel could learn from Texas farmers, citing Texas's ability to grow sweeter citrus fruits.

Hightower returned to Israel in November 1986, having been reelected to his post, with specific proposals and a meeting with the Israel contingent of TIE. In Texas, John Vlcek, assistant commissioner for marketing and agricultural development, toured Texas with Ehrman, visiting Rotary Clubs and other places where farmers gathered to discuss the planned venture.

The dean of Laredo Community College, Jacinto Juarez, offered 100 acres of the college's land for farming. A local farmer and businessman, Randolph Slaughter, offered additional acreage, already irrigated, for the project. In all, the project is making use of 47 acres of the land offered.

At this point, Hightower approached JNF in Texas, which agreed to commit a small portion of the money it raised to go to the project.

In Israel, Tahal Consulting Engineers Ltd., a government-owned company, was commissioned to assess the land in Laredo.

This past March, a team of three Israeli agriculture experts spent a month making a

detailed analysis of the farmsite's soil characteristics, irrigation capabilities and climate. The team, composed of Dr. David Ityiel, agricultural planner, Dr. David Melamed, irrigation engineer, and Dr. Binyamin Gamliel, crops specialist, indicated that crop production could begin this coming fall.

Some Favorable Statistics

The total cost of developing the Blueprint Farm -- which will include greenhouses, protective nets and a drip irrigation system -- was calculated by the Israelis at approximately \$480,000. TIE has already received a grant of \$125,000 from the Meadows Foundation of Dallas to hire an Israeli farm manager, prepare the land, buy seed and equipment and develop market surveys for the farm.

The Israeli team estimated costs and yields on a 25-year basis, and figures that the internal rate of return would be about 20 percent, "with all capital investment recovered within nine to ten years."

With these favorable statistics in mind, TIE is now seeking additional funds to develop the project from the Hobbittelle Foundation of Dallas, the Ford Foundation and the Jewish Fund for Justice.

And Hightower's maverick concept has not stood still with Israel. Texas now has an exchange agreement with Egypt, sending 12,000 dairy cows to Egypt, as well as a crop exchange with Mexico, and other states have since established individual ties with Israel, following the lead of Texas.

60 LAWMAKERS URGE JAPAN TO INVITE JERUSALEM TO CONFERENCE IN KYOTO By David Friedman

WASHINGTON, July 27 (JTA) -- Sixty House members have signed a letter to Nobuo Matsunaga, the Japanese Ambassador to the United States, urging that Jerusalem be invited to send representatives to a World Conference of Historical Cities to be held in Kyoto in November.

"Any conference on the impact of the major cities of the world on the history of mankind would be noticeably incomplete without a discussion of the historical contributions of the city of Jerusalem," the Congressmen stressed in the letter initiated by Reps. Mel Levine and Robert Matsui (both D. Calif.). "In this case, such an omission is so blatant and unjustified that it raises concerns of political bias and prejudice," the letter said.

The exclusion of Jerusalem was first raised with Matsunaga in May by the Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rith. Abraham Foxman, at that time the ADL's associate national director, in a letter to the Ambassador, noted that "not to have Jerusalem, is, in our judgement, unjustified and raises questions as to whether there is some political bias at work here."

Fears Appear Justified

This fear appears justified from the reply Foxman, now national director, received this month from Koichi Haraguchi, the Japanese Embassy's counselor for public affairs. Haraguchi said that Foxman's letter was sent to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Tokyo, which then received from the City of Kyoto several reasons for not inviting Jerusalem, including a decision that since Jerusalem's status was the "subject of political controversies as reflected in the debate at the

United Nations," the Israeli capital would not be invited "irrespective of its long history and tradition."

Enclosed with Haraguchi's letter was a copy of the Dec. 15, 1980 UN General Assembly resolution rejecting the Knesset action annexing all of Jerusalem and declaring the city Israel's capital. Japan voted for the resolution.

Foxman replied to the Ambassador last week that "Unfortunately, Jerusalem's exclusion from the Kyoto conference is not an isolated instance of Japanese political bias against Israel. Your government's open support for the Arab boycott, its refusal to engage in scientific exchanges and to promote cultural ties with Israel have contributed to the coolness that has characterized the two countries' relations for more than a decade."

His remarks were echoed by Jess Hordes, associate director of the ADL's Washington office, who told the Jewish Telegraphic Agency that "This incident is unfortunately indicative of Japan's traditional reluctance to have full and open political, economic and cultural relations with Israel." Hordes also noted that "No Japanese official of ministerial rank has ever visited Israel." Haraguchi, who could not be reached for comment Monday, also stressed in his letter that the City of Kyoto wanted "to make it clear" that its decision does not reflect any "racial or religious bias."

He added that such cities as Fez, Baghdad, Tunis, Quebec and Cuzco had asked to attend and were rejected. Among the 35 cities invited were Alexandria, Egypt, and Damascus, Syria. The only United States city invited was Boston.

SCIENTISTS ASK FOR LERNER'S PERMIT By Susan Birnbaum

NEW YORK, July 27 (JTA) -- Hundreds of computer scientists meeting in Seattle this month for the Sixth National Conference on Artificial Intelligence appealed to Soviet authorities to allow their colleague, Prof. Alexander Lerner of Moscow, to emigrate, according to the Committee of Concerned Scientists.

Lerner, 73, a cyberneticist, is one of the longest-term refuseniks, first applying to emigrate in 1971. He was refused that year, and many times subsequently, on the basis of knowledge of "state secrets," although prior to 1971 he had traveled to the West for scientific symposia with testimony by his highest supervisor to the KGB that Lerner was not privy to state secrets.

Lerner and his late wife Judith, who died in 1981, had two small daughters before World War II who were killed at Babi Yar with their grandparents. Lerner had taken the girls, ages three and five, to his native Vinnitsa in 1941 for vacation with their grandparents, two weeks before the German invasion on June 22.

After the war, the Lerner's had two other children, Sonya and Vladimir. Vladimir is currently a Moscow refusenik and Sonya Lerner Levin lives in Rehovot, Israel. Lerner was among eight people cited earlier this year by the Soviets as never to be permitted to emigrate on grounds of "national security." The petition on behalf of Lerner was circulated by Judea Pearl, a professor of computer science at UCLA and a member of the Committee of Concerned Scientists, an independent organization of 5,000 American scientists and engineers dedicated to scientific freedom and human rights of colleagues worldwide.

IN THIS AGE OF WORKING MOTHERS, HADASSAH SEEKS NEW, YOUNG LEADERS

By Alan Feiler
Baltimore Jewish Times

BALTIMORE, July 27 (JTA) -- With the clear majority of its nearly 400,000 members past the age of 50, Hadassah, the women's Zionist organization, finds itself in the predicament faced by many Jewish service organizations -- needing young leadership in an age when women increasingly are juggling careers and families.

Although Hadassah's membership and fundraising figures are up, officials of the 75-year-old organization, which held its 73rd annual convention here earlier this month, said that it is imperative to reorganize the goals and agendas of its 1,700 chapters to meet the demands and interests of the 1980's career woman who wants to contribute to the development of Israel.

"We live in different times," said Carol Kaplan, president of the southeastern region of Hadassah, who at age 39 is the youngest member of the national board. Kaplan said that older women continue to be the backbone of Hadassah, which has been highly instrumental in the growth of Israel's medical and educational resources.

But, Kaplan said, "between their families and working, there's very little leftover time today for younger women to get involved. We have to show them that there is still a place for them in Hadassah, even if they only have limited time. It's a real challenge for our organization."

Hadassah At Night

Kaplan ought to know. A mother who runs a retail store with her husband in Macon, Ga., she finds that she can tackle Hadassah projects only very late in the day. Her presidency includes Hadassah chapters in Georgia, South Carolina and portions of North Carolina.

"I often say to myself, 'Why am I doing this?' when it's 2 a.m. and my family is sleeping soundly while I'm working at my desk," said Kaplan, who quickly answered her own question: "This is the only way for me to live in Macon, Ga., and direct my feelings about Zionism. Hadassah is my passport."

"Hadassah is aware that we need to have available programs for career women," said Toby Blake, a Baltimore member. "We're having more meetings in the evenings and on weekends, and we're featuring more subject matters that will bring in the professional women."

Indeed, many of the sessions and discussions at the convention dealt with women's place in Jewish life and how to balance family and work. According to Hadassah's national officials, career seminars and offering child care are some of the ways that the organization is attracting younger members.

Recently, Hadassah created a young leadership division that promotes career women and outreach programs for young members who are wives and mothers. However, according to James Lee, director of Hadassah public relations, involvement in Hadassah ultimately depends on the commitment of the individual.

Blake concurred. "Young women are still joining Hadassah because of the work that the organization does. The whole concept of tzedakah is part of Jewish culture. Hadassah is not dying. It's growing," she said. A sense of pride over 75

years of accomplishments combined at the convention with excitement for the future of the organization and the main benefactors of its efforts -- American Jewish women and Israel.

More than 2,500 delegates from all 50 states and Israel converged upon the Baltimore Convention Center to celebrate the 75th anniversary of the founding of Hadassah by Baltimore native Henrietta Szold and listen to such speakers as former Israeli Ambassador Simcha Dinitz, Maryland Senators Paul Sarbanes (D) and Barbara Mikulski (D) and Secretary of State George Shultz discuss a variety of domestic and international matters.

At the formal opening of the convention, Hadassah national treasurer Deborah Kaplan announced that the organization raised \$65.5 million in 1986-87, an increase of \$9 million.

Contributions included \$16.4 million raised for the Hadassah Medical organization, \$2.9 million for the organization's Youth Aliyah program, \$1.7 million for educational services in Israel, \$1 million for the Jewish National Fund and \$1.9 million for projects for Zionist youth activities. In addition, dues were increased by \$2.8 million, and it was later announced that more than \$1.25 million in pledges was raised at the convention's annual founder's dinner.

Senator Urges Child Care

In an impassioned speech that was frequently cheered by Hadassah delegates, Mikulski called for increased U.S. funding for Israeli schools and hospitals. She also called for more affordable child care and long-term health care to help American women.

Shultz, who was honored for his work on human rights, praised in his speech American Jews for their commitment to civic duty and human rights, and called for a continued American presence in world affairs, including those concerning Middle East peace prospects.

Hadassah president Ruth Popkin said at the convention's close that many goals were reached there, including the restructuring of Hadassah's youth activities and the formation of a new outreach program at Hadassah's community college in Israel.

ISRAEL'S TOP LEADERS REFUSE NBC-TV INTERVIEWS FOLLOWING DOCUMENTARY

By Hugh Orgel

TEL AVIV, July 27 (JTA) -- Israeli spokesmen say the refusal by the three top government leaders to grant interviews to NBC-TV correspondents is an expression of displeasure over a July 1 network documentary on Israel.

Premier Yitzhak Shamir's spokesman, Avi Pazner, said NBC's "Six Days Plus 20 Years ... A Dream Is Dying" was a "completely biased and one-sided documentary on Israel." He complained that only non-representative Israeli officials were on camera.

NBC has complained that the refusal of interviews by Shamir, Foreign Minister Shimon Peres and Defense Minister Yitzhak Rabin is a boycott of the network. The Foreign Press Association in Israel is looking into the situation, saying official attempts at a boycott of a foreign news agency was a dangerous, undemocratic precedent that smacked of news management such as that practiced in the Soviet bloc.