

BRONFMAN AND HUNGARIAN LEADER DISCUSS ISRAEL, HUNGARIAN JEWRY

By Susan Birnbaum

NEW YORK, July 25 (JTA) — The state of Hungarian relations with Israel and world Jewry was among the subjects discussed Sunday night at a meeting between World Jewish Congress President Edgar Bronfman and visiting Hungarian leader Karoly Grosz.

Three hours of what were described as "intense discussion" took place over a kosher dinner at the Manhattan apartment of industrialist Bronfman, who is also chairman of the board of Seagram and Sons.

WJC Executive Director Elan Steinberg, who was present at the meeting along with Israel Singer, the organization's secretary-general, said the two men "discussed the role that Hungarian Jewry now plays as a bridge between East and West, and Grosz agreed with that."

Steinberg described the tone of the meeting as "constructive, positive and helpful," and said it "continued the process between Hungary and world Jewry and Hungary and Israel."

Hungarian Jews have been experiencing ever greater freedoms and a strong sense of identity recently, while Hungary appears to be stepping up its currently low-level diplomatic ties with Israel, re-established last September, 20 years after Budapest severed relations.

Israeli Foreign Minister Shimon Peres held previously unannounced talks with Grosz in Budapest on May 8 and 9, two weeks before Grosz took over Hungary's top position from veteran leader Janos Kadar.

Steinberg said the subject of full diplomatic relations between Israel and Hungary was discussed Sunday night, but that the issue would be left to the two countries themselves.

Grosz, who is on a 10-day visit to the United States, has been holding meetings with top bankers and financial leaders in the United States, as Hungary moves toward what are described as radical economic reforms that will open the country to a greater infusion of Western capital.

An Independent Thinker

Grosz will meet Wednesday with President Reagan, Vice President George Bush and Treasury Secretary James Baker. He will meet with Federal Reserve Board Chairman Alan Greenspan on Tuesday, as well as with officials of the World Bank and International Monetary Fund.

Grosz met Monday with former President Nixon and was scheduled to meet in Boston with Democratic presidential nominee Michael Dukakis.

Also discussed at Sunday's meeting with Bronfman were Soviet Jewry, the Middle East, the state of Hungarian Jewry, East-West relations in general and "the whole range of international problems," Steinberg said.

The WJC official said the participants were impressed by Grosz's "assertiveness and his independent thinking."

Among the subjects placed on the table was the delicate state of Hungarian-Romanian relations, recently upset by Romanian leader Nicolae Ceausescu's stated intention of razing several

thousand villages in Transylvania, a large region that now is part of Romania, but which until World War II was a legendary part of Hungary.

Bronfman met with Ceausescu at the end of June to discuss the situation of Romanian Jews. He is probably the only leader to have met with both the Hungarian and Romanian leaders since the unusual split between the neighboring countries came about.

Steinberg said the discussions between Bronfman and Grosz could be seen as part of a "general relaxation between East and West. There is a general change in the political atmosphere which has moved the Soviet Union and East bloc toward the realization that they cannot play a role in the Middle East without relations with Israel.

"On the other hand, the World Jewish Congress has made it clear to them that the East bloc cannot normalize its relationship with world Jewry, in general, and more specifically thereby with the West and the United States, without normalizing its relationship with the State of Israel. It cannot divide world Jewry from the State of Israel."

SHAMIR ACCUSES PERES OF FAVORING EGYPT ON TABA BORDER DISPUTE

By David Landau

JERUSALEM, July 25 (JTA) — Partisan recriminations over the handling of the Taba border dispute with Egypt enlivened a session of the Knesset Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee on Monday.

Premier Yitzhak Shamir started the uproar by intimating that the Labor Party had bullied Likud into accepting binding arbitration of the dispute, which now seems likely to uphold Egypt's claims to the tiny strip of Red Sea beach instead of Israel's.

"Those who supported arbitration rather than conciliation served Egypt's interests rather than Israel's," Shamir claimed. He was clearly referring to his differences with Labor Party leader Shimon Peres in 1985 and 1986.

Peres was prime minister at that time. Shamir, who was foreign minister, insisted that the conciliation process had not been exhausted, while Peres pressed for international arbitration.

Both methods of settling bilateral disputes are allowed under the terms of the 1979 Israeli-Egyptian peace treaty. The Taba dispute was submitted to an international panel of five experts, which spent most of last year sifting thousands of documents and hearing oral arguments by both sides in Geneva.

Attempts at conciliation — negotiations aimed at reaching a compromise — continued with the support and encouragement of the United States. But they had failed to make progress by the time the arbitrators adjourned last February to begin deliberations. It is widely assumed the international panel has decided in Egypt's favor.

Conciliation efforts have now been revived. The arbitration panel has agreed to delay announcement of its decision until September to give the disputants time to hammer out a compromise.

A new round of conciliation talks is ex-

pected to open in Cairo in two weeks, with Shamir's top aide, Yosef Ben-Aharon, heading the Israeli delegation.

But Shamir's tough stand does not augur well for the process. He has already refused an Egyptian offer to give Israel free access to the luxury resort hotel and vacation village it has built at Taba, provided Israel cedes sovereignty over the area to Egypt.

Shamir's implication that Peres was serving Egypt rather than Israel drew cries of outrage from Labor members of the committee and their allies.

"Rubbish," shouted Laborite Micha Harish. "Disgraceful," said Yossi Sarid of the Citizens Rights Movement. Likud members shouted rejoinders. Shamir picked up his papers and stalked out of the chamber.

ON THE SCENE IN GAZA, AS ARMY FREES 147 PALESTINIAN PRISONERS By Gili Sedan

GAZA, July 25 (JTA) -- It was very hot at 2 p.m. Sunday afternoon, when three busloads of Palestinians arrived at an Israeli military headquarters camp in Gaza.

There were 147 of them. They didn't seem to mind the intense heat or the tough plastic ribbons that bound their hands tighter than handcuffs. A good will gesture was about to be enacted, and these Palestinians were the beneficiaries.

The military authorities made a special effort to be nice to the news media, which all too frequently they see as an adversary. Local and foreign journalists were invited to bear witness that the Israel Defense Force is ready to meet the Palestinians half way.

The IDF had announced some days earlier that on the occasion of the Moslem feast of Id el-Adha, and in appreciation of "the relative quiet in the Gaza Strip," these Palestinians were to be released.

They were only a tiny portion of the thousands of West Bank and Gaza Arabs imprisoned since the intifada, as the Palestinians call their uprising, began in the territories more than 7 months ago.

This particular group had just completed a two-hour ride from the remote detention camp of Ketziot in the Negev -- a bone dry, terribly hot and thirsty place by reputation.

Now they were being offered cold drinks. But somebody had to cut their bonds. "Scissors, scissors, we need scissors," an officer demanded impatiently. The scissors were produced and the officer personally released the prisoners' hands, one by one.

A Gesture With A Message

Many in the group were administrative detainees. They were imprisoned at Ketziot without trial, under emergency regulations. Some had been held up to six months.

The official rationale for administrative arrest is that while the authorities are convinced that certain persons are active in organizing the intifada, they have no proof that would stand up in court.

The practice is a holdover from the British Mandate's emergency regulations, which were employed over 40 years ago against Jews.

The release of the 147 prisoners Sunday was intended to send a message to the Palestinians that there are alternatives to the IDF's get-tough

policies, if the local population cooperates.

The about-to-be-freed detainees were marched into the main hall of the military headquarters for a final word. Their faces were impassive. But they seemed to be saying, "We will do anything you want, just let us out of here."

A senior officer of the civil administration entered the hall. The prisoners rose in respect. They were determined to please the system, lest the military have second thoughts about releasing them.

The civil administration official, who is an IDF officer, delivered a short speech. He explained to the prisoners that their release was an act of good will, but that any future breach of law and order would send them again behind bars.

The prisoners did not need much convincing. They only wanted out. In interviews with reporters after their release, none could understand why he was detained in the first place.

Nasser el-Hour, 21, of Gaza admitted that some of the detainees must have taken part in the intifada -- but not him.

Asad el-Hassaneh, 25, from the Shati refugee camp in Gaza said he was jailed for four months, because he violated a curfew order. He said he was given a court trial, but was not allowed to appeal his sentence.

Cheering In Downtown Gaza

The prisoners were each given temporary identity cards as they boarded buses to freedom.

The convoy hardly left the camp heading for downtown Gaza when the buses were surrounded by hundreds of cheering Palestinians. Horns honked and there were shouts and handshakes.

There was much hugging and kissing as prisoners were reunited with family and friends in Gaza's main square.

An Arab mother, embracing and kissing one son, heard voices shouting at her to "look, there is the other one." She turned and saw her second son, also just released from detention.

But there were warnings from some well-comers for the prisoners to leave the area quickly, lest they be re-arrested for unlawful gathering.

Was the Israeli gesture appreciated? "Of course," said a former student at Bir Zeit University in the West Bank, who asked to remain anonymous.

"I would not wish a period of detention at the Ketziot prison to my worst enemy," he said.

ARAFAT PLEASED BY DUTCH VISIT TO ISRAEL By Henrietta Boas

AMSTERDAM, July 25 (JTA) -- Palestine Liberation Organization chief Yasir Arafat is pleased by the way Holland's top leaders raised the Palestinian issue with their Israeli hosts on a visit to Jerusalem last week.

Arafat's appreciation was conveyed to Premier Ruud Lubbers and Foreign Minister Hans van den Broek, who were in Israel from July 17 to 19.

Afif Safieh, the PLO representative in The Hague, asked to be briefed on their trip and was invited to the Foreign Ministry Friday.

He told the Dutch officials that Arafat and the PLO's foreign policy spokesman, Farouk Kaddoumi, were grateful that Lubbers and van den Broek had made their trip not just a Dutch-Israeli matter but a Dutch-Israeli-Palestinian tripartite affair. They appreciated the foreign minister's visit to the Kalandiya refugee camp.

DOCTORS RESUME THEIR STRIKE, AS NEGOTIATIONS BREAK DOWN

By Hugh Orgel

TEL AVIV, July 25 (JTA) — An agreement reached Sunday to negotiate an end to the six-month-long health care crisis at government hospitals fell apart Monday.

Doctors, who promised to resume their normal work schedule immediately while discussing a settlement with the Health and Finance ministries, apparently had a change of mind overnight.

A meeting scheduled for 10 p.m. Sunday with Health Minister Shoshana Arbeli-Almoslino did not take place. Each side accused the other of bad faith.

The government-employed physicians have been resorting to selective work sanctions, affecting hospitals in different parts of the country on a rotating basis.

Staffs are reduced to Sabbath levels, outpatient clinics remain closed and only emergency surgery is performed. That was to have ended Monday.

Instead, the doctors continued their sanctions. They said they would negotiate only when they were satisfied that the government would seriously consider their demands.

Health Minister Arbeli-Almoslino complained Monday that she had been unable to contact the doctors after making arrangements to meet their representatives Sunday evening.

They refused to talk to her and did not respond to her calls, but they talked freely and eagerly to the news media, she said.

The doctors, for their part, questioned the government's sincerity. They said they would not meet simply to hear again the offer of a 5 percent wage increase that they rejected out of hand a week ago.

But the Finance Ministry said it will not start serious negotiations until the doctors end their work sanctions. The stand-off continued Monday evening with no date set for further meetings.

There was no end in sight either to the job actions and hunger strikes begun last week by the nurses union. And doctors employed by Kupat Holim, Histadrut's health care agency, to which most Israelis belong, are carrying out work sanctions of their own.

ORTHODOX WOMAN REGAINS JOB LOST OVER SABBATH OBSERVANCE

By Yitzhak Rabi

UNITED NATIONS, July 25 (JTA) — A Jewish woman whose contract with the United Nations Development Program was not renewed in April because she would not work on the Sabbath was reinstated Monday.

Danielle Hartweg, an Austrian citizen, had been leaving her job as a computer operator at the UNDP early on Fridays during the winter months, so that she could return home before the Jewish Sabbath.

Contacted at her office here by the Jewish Telegraphic Agency, Hartweg said of her reinstatement, "I am very happy to be back at work and I am very satisfied the way things were worked out."

She declined further comment, referring all questions to Dr. Harris Schoenberg, director of United Nations Affairs for B'nai B'rith International, who was instrumental in helping her regain

her job.

Schoenberg said Monday that Hartweg not only received a new contract with the UNDP, but also received a promotion.

"The decision to reinstate Ms. Hartweg establishes an important precedent in dealing with religious discrimination cases at the U.N.," Schoenberg told JTA.

He said that while discussing the case with UNDP officials, he found them to be sensitive to the U.N. commitment to human rights and freedom of religion.

The decision to give Hartweg a new contract "reaffirms UNDP's commitment to abide by the standards laid down in the U.N. Charter, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, and the 1981 declaration against religious intolerance," Schoenberg said.

Schoenberg said that Hartweg attends religious services at Lincoln Square Synagogue on Manhattan's West Side.

He said that Hartweg first appealed for assistance in her case to Peter Hohenfellner, the Austrian ambassador to the United Nations, but he said he could not help her.

She turned to Schoenberg at the advice of her U.N. counsel, Hans Janitschek of the U.N. Fund for Population Activities. Schoenberg praised Janitschek for his support of Hartweg.

DUTCH INSTITUTE TO EXAMINE AUTHENTICITY OF FRANK LETTERS

By Henrietta Boas

AMSTERDAM, July 25 (JTA) — The authenticity of two letters and a postcard allegedly written in April 1940 by Anne Frank and her sister, Margot, to pen pals in Danville, Iowa, will be examined by the Netherlands State Institute for Documentation on the Second World War and by the Netherlands Research Institute in The Hague.

The letters are scheduled to be auctioned by the Swann Galleries in New York Oct. 25.

According to George Lowry, president of Swann Galleries, the letters already have been authenticated by the Anne Frank Foundation in Amsterdam.

The recipients, who have put them up for sale, are Juanita and Betty Ann Wagner of Danville. Like the Frank sisters, they attended a Montessori school. The correspondence was initiated by an American teacher who visited Europe the summer before World War II.

The fact that the Frank letters were written in English has raised questions here. It was pointed out that until the war, English was not taught in Dutch elementary schools.

Dutch pupils corresponding in that language would have to have their letters translated by a person literate in English and then copy the translation.

This could hardly have been done without mistakes, which are missing from the Frank letters, sources here pointed out.

According to Lowry, the Frank sisters' letters were translated by their father from Dutch and copied by them in English. They are the only known samples of Anne Frank's handwriting in English, he said.

Anne was 11 at the time and Margot 14. Their letters, dated April 27 and 29, 1940, were lighthearted, without premonition of the tragedy about to befall Holland and the Frank family.

CAJE TO MARK 'BAR MITZVAH' YEAR WITH SIX-DAY CONCLAVE IN ISRAEL

By Andrew Silow Carroll

NEW YORK, July 25 (JTA) -- At a regional "institute" conducted last week by the Coalition for the Advancement of Jewish Education, more than 400 educators attended sessions at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee on topics as diverse as family education, early childhood development, "experiential learning" and the art of teaching.

Simultaneously, more than 500 teachers, principals and administrators attended CAJE's San Diego Institute at San Diego State University, where the study of Hebrew and Jewish spirituality were on the agenda.

By the time the 13th annual CAJE conference ends six days of sessions in Jerusalem next week, more than 3,000 Jewish educators will have taken part in what the organization's executive director calls "an annual recharge of batteries."

More than numbers mark CAJE's migration from the fringes of Jewish education to the mainstream. The educational alternatives it promotes, once considered maverick, are now topics of serious attention at all levels of Jewish education: family involvement in supplementary Jewish learning, increased respect for the teaching profession and a larger share of the community budget going toward Jewish schooling.

Even its name reflects a change: the "A" in CAJE once stood for Alternatives.

The organization's executive director acknowledges that CAJE cannot claim all the credit for changes in Jewish education. But Eliot Spack, in a phone interview before the Milwaukee Institute, said CAJE has played "a significant role."

'Assault On The Status Quo'

Founded in 1976 by a small group of Boston-based educators, CAJE then represented "a direct assault on the status quo," said Spack.

The goal, he said, "was to place Jewish education as a higher priority item on the domestic agenda, gain status for Jewish educators and make it a more attractive career calling. CAJE wanted to help stem the personnel crisis" in Jewish education.

The annual conferences, whose attendance grew from 350 in 1976 to an average of 1,500 over the past five years, became "a wonderful support system for people who are in the field. They reduced a sense of isolation and gave them access to materials, colleagues, and professional development," Spack said.

The Israel meeting, which opens Sunday and continues through Aug. 5, may well represent the most ambitious programming yet in what has certainly been a far-reaching bar mitzvah year for the organization.

Subsidized by the Jewish Agency's Joint Program for Jewish Education, the conference will feature more than 300 sessions divided among 14 "programmatic divisions." Topics to be discussed range from traditional subjects, such as classical Jewish texts, Israel and Zionism, to such contemporary concerns as special education and school administration.

The conference will also include two days of "havayot," or full-day field trips, at sites around the country.

The basis for a conference in Israel now is at least two-fold, said Spack. Not only will American educators be better able to teach Israel in

the classroom, but Israelis will be able to meet Americans and dispel prejudices about Diaspora Jewry, a community whose vitality is doubted by many Israelis.

"CAJE's presence in Israel could give people an opportunity to see what we call a living model of 'clal Yisrael,' or pluralism in action," said Spack.

Unrest Is No Deterrent

The tourist drought that has confounded Israel as a consequence of the Palestinian uprising does not seem to have had much effect on the conference, which according to Spack will bring the largest single group of visitors to Israel this year.

Current enrollment is at 1,300, and Spack said that of 100 cancellations, fewer than 10 seem to be related to fears of ongoing violence in the West Bank and Gaza Strip.

"We suspect that 30 to 40 percent of the attendees have never been to Israel before," said Spack, who hopes their presence will boost the country's morale.

Despite his own good spirits -- he was a proud participant in the Milwaukee seminar, manning CAJE headquarters in a "chief zoo-keeper" t-shirt -- Spack acknowledges that CAJE has still to meet a number of self-appointed goals. The organization could be more aggressive in what he calls an "advocacy role" and in combatting the downward trend in the number of full-time Jewish educational positions.

At the Milwaukee Institute, educators fretted about an erosion in educational programs and staff quality, especially in synagogue and "supplementary" schools (those in session on Sundays and weekday afternoons).

Joel Grishaver of the Los Angeles-based Torah Aura Productions, a producer of educational materials, acknowledged that "there are places all over where educational excellence is being taken seriously." But he said that some schools are "radically cutting down" both the time and content of their courses.

"There are schools across North America that will look for any warm body to stay one chapter ahead of the kids," said Spack. "Here's the best indicator: At a gathering of Jewish parents, ask how many want their son or daughter to be involved as a professional in Jewish education."

"The sparse number of hands will tell you. Until that becomes a significant number, we're in trouble."

(Wisconsin Jewish Chronicle reporter Leon Cohen contributed to this story.)

TEAM SET UP TO INVESTIGATE NAZIS

By Maurice Samuelson

LONDON, July 25 (JTA) -- Suspected war criminals who settled in Britain after World War II will be investigated by a special team of retired police officers being set up by the government, the Daily Mail reported Sunday.

The inquiry will be headed by the former director of public prosecutions, Sir Thomas Hetherington. He will provide the names of suspects to the police team to research their backgrounds, the Daily Mail reported.

Sir Thomas received 110 names in Moscow last week. They include alleged middle-ranking SS officials who fled to Britain from countries under Soviet control.