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AS PRELATES DISSENT FROM GLEMP, TWO JEWS PLAN ON SERVING LAWSUIT

By Allison Kaplan

NEW YORK, Aug. 31 (JTA) -- Controversy continued to swirl Thursday around the escalating crisis in Catholic-Jewish relations regarding both the convent at Auschwitz and recent anti-Semitic remarks by Poland's Cardinal Jozef Glemp.

A consensus appeared to be developing among American Catholic leadership in favor of relocating the Auschwitz convent, as the archbishops of the cities of Los Angeles and Boston joined New York's Cardinal John O'Connor in asking that the convent be moved quickly.

The Los Angeles archbishop also agreed that Glemp's comments were "harmful and distressing."

Both Cardinal Bernard Law of Boston and Archbishop Roger Mahony of Los Angeles made their pleas to the Polish Catholic leadership and the Auschwitz nuns, in the interest of Christian-Jewish harmony.

At the same time, New York Rabbi Avraham Weiss was pursuing a more confrontational strategy in dealing with the strains with the Polish Catholic Church.

Weiss has retained renowned attorney Alan Dershowitz to investigate what legal action can be taken against Glemp both in Polish and American courtrooms.

It was Weiss and his six companions who climbed over the fence surrounding the Carmelite convent on July 14, in a protest that sparked the present round of controversy. The group was subsequently drenched with water, beaten and dragged off of the convent grounds by workers.

In remarks made at a Polish feast Saturday, Glemp referred to "a squad of seven Jews from New York" who "launched attacks on the convent at Oswiecim (Auschwitz). In fact, it did not happen that the sisters were killed or the convent destroyed, because they were apprehended. But do not call the attackers heroes."

In the same speech, Glemp implied that Jews were directing the international media against Poland and implied that Jewish activism over the convent issue was working to destroy Poland's sovereignty.

Slandered and Defamed

"The cardinal clearly slandered and defamed Weiss and the other protestors who went in a Martin Luther King manner of non-violence to the convent," Dershowitz told the Jewish Telegraphic Agency.

Dershowitz said that Glemp's words were slanderous "under Polish, American and Vatican law." He said the Polish primate had "a long history of racism, which we will document."

He accused Glemp of being a life-long supporter of an anti-Semitic political party and claimed that Glemp vetoed the Solidarity party's first choice for prime minister because he was born Jewish.

Weiss said he is not regarding this action as "a personal issue," but that he viewed Glemp's comments "as a slap in the face to the entire Jewish community, so it's my responsibility to pursue it, using any legal recourse."

Weiss and Dershowitz may soon have the opportunity to pursue the matter in the United States. Glemp is scheduled to arrive in the United States in late September on a visit to the Chicago and Milwaukee Polish Catholic communities.

"If he steps one foot in this country, we are going to serve him a summons and subpoena on a slander charge," Dershowitz said.

Said Weiss, "If he's going to be in Chicago, I'm going to be in Chicago. Wherever he will be, I will be. I will confront him face to face."

The Chicago Chapter of the Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rith has already received an invitation for an ecumenical prayer service and reception honoring Glemp on Sept. 25.

"As of this moment, if there is no apology and retraction by Cardinal Glemp, we do not plan to attend," said Abraham Foxman, ADL's national director.

But if Glemp chooses to cancel his visit here, Weiss and Dershowitz still plan to follow the matter, both in Polish courts and with the Vatican.

"In the ecclesiastical forum, we plan to file a complaint with the Vatican," said Dershowitz. "In the past, the Vatican has dismissed cardinals and taken disciplinary actions against cardinals. We want the Vatican to issue disciplinary sanctions against the cardinal."

Dershowitz added that "when a cardinal libels someone, he doesn't have the immunity of law. This isn't the Middle Ages anymore."

Upbeat On Statements

While Weiss planned his legal strategy, other Jewish leaders sounded upbeat Thursday about the statements issued by the Boston and Los Angeles archbishops.

Cardinal Law of Boston published an open letter to the Carmelite nuns asking them to relocate.

In the letter, he expressed great sympathy for the nuns' position, but requested that, in the interest of Christian-Jewish peace, they move from the site of the death camp.

"Unwittingly, you are at the center of a dispute which threatens Catholic-Jewish relations and which casts an unmerited shadow on the great Polish people at a pivotal point in their history," Law wrote.

"St. Paul reminds us that even if there is no objective cause for offense to be taken, we should still avoid the act which others deem offensive," he said.

"In the name of Christ's reconciling love," Law wrote, "I hope you will find it possible to move from your present site."

In Los Angeles, Archbishop Mahony said he would "publicly associate" himself with O'Connor's remarks on Tuesday, which asked "Polish church officials to get on with their formal commitment to relocate the convent."

O'Connor also said he had been "shocked" by Glemp's remarks, and that Glemp was transferring the blame for the failure of Polish Catholic leaders to honor the agreement to move the convent.

Weiss said he was very pleased with O'Connor's statement. "It took courage for him to stand up and tell Glemp that what he said is outrageous."

Rabbi A. James Rudin, director of interreligious affairs for the American Jewish Committee, called Law's letter "a very positive statement from a very important leader," and said Mahony's remarks were "extremely important and significant."

Rudin, who is also chairman of the International Jewish Committee on Interreligious Consultations, said he was pleased that "we are beginning to see reactions from the American leadership" of the Catholic Church.

He said the remarks signaled that the Auschwitz convent issue was moving away from being strictly a Jewish-Catholic question, and was now becoming a topic of debate "inside the Catholic community."

(JTA staff intern Elena Neuman in New York contributed to this report.)

AMERICAN JEWS AND POLAND'S RABBI BOYCOTT PRAYER SERVICE IN WARSAW

By Edwin Eytan

PARIS, Aug. 31 (JTA) -- Poland's chief rabbi, Pinkhas Menachem Joskovitz, as well as leaders from American Jewish organizations, boycotted a church-organized ecumenical prayer service held at Auschwitz on Thursday in protest over remarks made by Cardinal Jozef Glemp, Poland's highest-ranking Catholic official.

The Polish primate claimed among other things that Jews control the international news media, and that last month "a squad of seven Jews from New York launched an attack," which he implied was for the purpose of killing the nuns and destroying the convent.

Because the cloud of the convent issue has darkened relations between world Jewry and the Polish Catholic Church, nearly all of the Jewish individuals and organizations declined invitations to the prayer services, as well as the ceremonies marking the 50th anniversary of the German invasion of Poland on Sept. 1, 1939.

Abraham Foxman, national director of the Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rith, said that his organization was invited twice to attend the events, and that after the ADL declined the first invitation, "we were asked to reconsider."

Foxman said that he told those who issued the invitations that "the time was not appropriate to be in Poland," due to the unresolved issue of the convent.

The World Jewish Congress also turned down the invitation to participate.

"While we did not say we were boycotting," said WJC Executive Director Elan Steinberg, "we made it clear that it would be inappropriate for Jews to participate.

"There is no respect being given by the Poles to our martyrs in Auschwitz and no respect being given to agreements which we have signed," he said.

Invitations From Glemp

The invitations to the ceremony received by the Jewish organizations were issued from Rome, but were also sent out "on behalf of His Eminence Cardinal Jozef Glemp, archbishop of Warsaw and primate of Poland."

According to Radio Warsaw, the interfaith prayer service was attended by Catholics, Protestants, Greek Orthodox, Armenian Christians, Moslems and Buddhists.

Jacob Neusner, a prominent American Jewish scholar, was among the three non-Polish Jews reported to have been in attendance.

Rabbi Marc Tanenbaum said that Neusner planned to speak out against the continued presence of the convent at the death camp, and had prepared a speech discussing Jewish sensitivity over the Holocaust.

"He wanted to speak with them face-to-face, not through newspaper headlines," Tanenbaum said.

Tanenbaum added that while Neusner was participating in the Warsaw ceremonies, he had turned down an invitation to travel to Krakow and to Auschwitz.

(JTA staff writer Allison Kaplan in New York contributed to this report.)

DUTCH CLERGY FAVORS MOVING CONVENT BUT SAYS THAT IT'S POWERLESS TO ACT

By Henrietta Boas

AMSTERDAM, Aug. 31 (JTA) -- The Dutch Catholic clergy favors the removal of a Carmelite convent from the grounds of the former Auschwitz death camp but is powerless to act, two Orthodox rabbis of Amsterdam were told.

The bishop of Haarlem, Msgr. Hendrik Bomers, advised Rabbis Lody Van De Kamp and Isaac Vorst at a meeting Monday night that the entire Dutch Catholic episcopate believes the convent should be located elsewhere.

He explained, however, that all prelates are autonomous in their respective diocese and Dutch Catholics therefore cannot influence the Polish cardinal, Franciszek Macharski, the archbishop of Krakow who has jurisdiction over the Auschwitz convent.

The rabbis and Bomers arranged to meet Monday night to discuss a range of Catholic-Jewish issues, with the convent issue at the forefront.

One of the subjects was an interview with Bomers published recently in the Dutch Jewish weekly NIW.

The bishop was quoted as saying that "Christians have the duty to preach the Gospel to the Jews."

He told the rabbis that according to Matthew XII, they indeed have the duty to preach the Gospel to everyone, including Jews, but that does not mean they have to enforce it.

Another subject was the opinion expressed in the interview by Bomers that Pope Pius XII had been powerless to speak against Hitler during World War II, and that his public condemnation of the Nazis would not have helped the Jews.

The rabbis said afterward that the dialogue was "open and sincere," but both parties stuck to their views.

NEW AUSCHWITZ CONVENT SITE PROPOSED

By Edwin Eytan

PARIS, Aug. 31 (JTA) -- Prime Minister Giulio Andreotti of Italy has proposed relocating the controversial Carmelite convent from the grounds of the Auschwitz death camp to a former convent near Rome.

His suggested site is at the Adreatine Forest, where the Nazis executed Jewish and Catholic hostages and resistance fighters during World War II.

The presence of the convent at Auschwitz, where 2 million Jews perished in the Holocaust, has severely strained Jewish-Catholic relations for the past two years.

PBS STILL PLANS TO RUN 'DAYS OF RAGE' DESPITE ALLEGATIONS OF IMPROPRIETY

By Allison Kaplan

NEW YORK, Aug. 31 (JTA) -- Following new allegations regarding Arab funding of the documentary "Days of Rage: The Young Palestinians," Jewish groups are asking the Public Broadcasting System to reassess its decision to air the film.

An article published Thursday in The New Republic, a weekly charges that the documentary's producer, Jo Franklin-Trout, was paid by the Arab American Cultural Foundation in exchange for international distribution rights.

The foundation receives money from Arab nations, as well as individuals.

Despite the allegations, PBS is "still proceeding with plans for broadcast," according to spokeswoman Mary Jane McKinven.

"We are looking into the allegations" made in the New Republic article, she said, but as of now, PBS investigators "haven't found anything to say that it isn't the way we represented it."

The New Republic article, written by Steven Emerson, quotes the director of the Arab American Cultural Foundation as saying that Franklin-Trout entered into a verbal agreement with foundation director Hisham Sharabi -- before the making of the $180,000 film -- that the foundation would purchase the distribution rights.

Sharabi is described in the magazine article as "a friend and adviser" to Palestine Liberation Organization chief Yasir Arafat.

In a letter to Bruce Christiansen, the president of PBS, the National Jewish Community Relations Advisory Council "strongly urges PBS to postpone airing the documentary until the actual funding sources can be determined."

PBS has a stated policy of refusing to air films produced by organizations or institutions with a vested interest in the subject matter.

The NJCRAC letter states that the alleged agreement by the foundation to buy the distribution rights to "Days of Rage" "leads one to conclude that the guidelines appear to have been violated."

The Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rith has sent telegrams to Bruce Christianson, the president of PBS, and to William Baker, president of WNET, the New York affiliate that is sponsoring "Days of Rage" and produced its accompanying wrap-around programming.

The telegrams point out how in discussions with Jewish leaders, both WNET and PBS representatives "continually emphasized how critical it was that 'Days of Rage' was produced through independent funds of Jo Franklin-Trout."

Abraham Foxman, national director of the ADL, noted in a telephone interview that PBS affiliates have turned down films which received ADL funding because of the PBS guidelines.

Franklin-Trout's documentary has been the center of controversy since the spring, when another PBS affiliate, WNYC, chose not to sponsor the film because of its pro-Palestinian bias.

Its current sponsor station, WNET, has produced documentary footage and a panel discussion to be shown alongside "Days of Rage" in order to balance the presentation.

REMINDER: There will be no JTA Daily News Bulletin on Monday, Sept. 4, because of the Labor Day holiday in the United States.

DUTCH LIBERALS CHARGE AUSTRIANS WITH NEO-NAZISM IN THEIR PARTY

By Henrietta Boas

AMSTERDAM, Aug. 31 (JTA) -- The liberal party of Holland, VVD, contends that neo-Nazism is rife in the Austrian Liberal party, the FPO, and is trying to have it ousted from the International Liberal Union.

Relations between the two were embittered when the chairman of the Austrian party, Joergen Haider, refused to dissociate himself from neo-Nazi personalities and publications cited in a letter from Dr. Louis Ginjaar, the Dutch Liberal party chairman.

Haider, who is premier of the Austrian province of Carinthia, planned to attack the Dutch Liberals on their own turf during an official visit to Holland this week.

He canceled it at the last minute on the advice of the Austrian ambassador in The Hague, Heinrich Pfusterschmidt.

The reason was that the recently established Austrian Committee in Holland has been urging Dutch tourists to avoid Carinthia because of widespread neo-Nazism there.

The committee is headed by Dick Houwaart, a journalist who is a past president of the Anne Frank Foundation.

Haider told reporters in an interview in the provincial capital of Klagenurtth that the large-scale presence of Dutch tourists in Carinthia this summer was "the best answer" to the campaign by Houwaart.

ISRAEL GETS MOSLEM JUDGE

By David Landau

JERUSALEM, Aug. 31 (JTA) -- President Chaim Herzog swore in Israel's first Moslem woman judge this week.

She is Aada Sa'ad, who will preside over a traffic court in northern Israel.

Sa'ad, who served as a state attorney in Haifa, was one of 19 new magistrates and junior judges recently appointed.

At the brief swearing-in ceremonies held at the presidential residence, Herzog singled out Sa'ad.

"I want to congratulate you and I hope more judges will follow in your wake," he said.

HUNGARIAN YOUTH TO ISRAEL

By Gil Sedan

JERUSALEM, Aug. 31 (JTA) -- Thirty Jewish teen-agers from Hungary will arrive here within two weeks to begin studies at the Alonei Yitzhak youth village, according to David Hagoel, head of the Jewish Agency's Youth Aliyah department.

Although there have been cultural exchanges in the past and Jewish youths from Hungary have made brief visits to Israel, this project is the first of its kind since the two countries took steps toward normalizing their relations.

Israel and Hungary do not have formal diplomatic ties.

The youngsters, boys and girls of 15 and 16, will spend the next school year in Israel.

All are graduates of elementary schools in Hungary but had no Jewish education and do not speak Hebrew.

They will study the language at an ulpan for the first three months and then join 11th graders in classes at the youth village.

ISRAEL ORDERS WORKERS' FAMILIES TO LEAVE COLOMBIA IMMEDIATELY

By Hugh Orgel

TEL AVIV, Aug. 31 (JTA) -- Israel's Defense Ministry has ordered the families of Israelis working in Colombia to leave the country immediately because of the tense situation there.

The order applies to the families of 40 employees of Israel Aircraft Industries and Tadiran, a military industry, who are working under defense contracts with the Colombian government.

Their work includes the delivery and maintenance of Kfirs, the Israel-made jet fighter planes sold to the Colombian air force.

The Defense Ministry said the evacuation order may be only temporary. There has been a series of bombings and assassinations in Colombia lately linked to the drug cartel's war against the government.

Meanwhile, police said Thursday that they will drop their investigation of several Israel Defense Force reserve officers if no information is received by next week to substantiate allegations that they trained assassination squads for the Colombian drug cartel.

The police have requested material from the Colombian authorities and sent two reminders so far, which have gone unanswered.

The Colombians, instead of providing fresh information, asked the Israeli police for the results of their probe.

The Israeli police criminal investigation division has questioned Lt. Col. Yair Klein, head of the Hod Hahanit security consultant firm, and several of his associates who allegedly provided military equipment and know-how to unofficial groups in Colombia.

Klein said he trained security guards for Colombian farmers and ranchers to defend themselves against cattle rustlers and guerrillas.

KATYUSHA ROCKETS STRIKE GALILEE

By Hugh Orgel

TEL AVIV, Aug. 31 (JTA) -- Three Katyusha rockets exploded in the Upper Galilee panhandle early Thursday morning, causing no casualties and only slight damage.

The rockets were fired from southern Lebanon, outside the Israeli-controlled border security zone. Israeli artillery later opened fire on the apparent launching sites.

One rocket hit a garden in an Israeli border town, shattering windows and downing some power lines.

The other two were identified only after search parties discovered their impact craters in a field near the border fence.

TEL AVIV MAYOR'S CAR BOMBED

By Hugh Orgel

TEL AVIV, Aug. 31 (JTA) -- A fragmentation grenade was thrown at Mayor Shlomo Lehat's car outside his home in the northern Tel Aviv suburb of Afek early Thursday morning, but no one was hurt and damage to the car was slight. A grenade fragment broke a neighbor's window.

The mayor, scheduled to leave for Europe, shrugged off the attack, the fourth since he took office several years ago.

Police said it seemed to be criminally motivated, unconnected with the Palestinian uprising.

The mayor was unaware of the incident until awakened by neighbors and later visited by the police.

"The air conditioner was on and we didn't hear anything," Lehat said.

"Whoever it was apparently knew I was about to go to Europe this morning and wanted to be able to say they drove me away," the mayor added with a grin.

Lehat is taking a three-day vacation in Switzerland and will then attend a series of fund-raising meetings in France and Britain.

BROTHERS WHO SURVIVED SHOAH ARE REUNITED 50 YEARS LATER

By Gil Sedan

JERUSALEM, Aug. 31 (JTA) -- Two survivors of the Holocaust, brothers from a Polish town, were reunited at Ben-Gurion Airport on Thursday almost 50 years to the day after the outbreak of World War II, when they were separated.

Mordechai Melubani, 67, of Givatayim, and Grisha Melubani, 65, recently from Odessa, fled their hometown of Ostra in different directions when Germany invaded Poland on Sept. 1, 1939.

Their family perished in the Holocaust and neither brother was aware the other was alive.

Mordechai emigrated from the Soviet Union to Israel after the war, but it wasn't until 1960 that he learned from immigrants arriving from the USSR that his brother Grisha had survived.

He traced his address and the brothers began a correspondence which lasted until 1967, when Moscow severed diplomatic relations with Israel.

They resumed exchanging letters in 1980 and started talking by telephone in 1987.

Mordechai spent a year arranging immigration for Grisha, who arrived with his wife on Thursday.

The 50th anniversary of the war's outbreak was observed with a modest ceremony at the Yad Vashem Holocaust memorial Thursday.

Defense Minister Yitzhak Rabin, who spoke at the ceremony, said the first priority of Israelis was to create a "safe shelter" for the Jewish people.

"We have no one to rely on except ourselves, the Israel Defense Force and its moral power to establish a state in which we and our children will want to live," Rabin said.

TIME SWITCH SAVED MORE THAN DAYLIGHT

By Hugh Orgel

TEL AVIV, Aug. 31 (JTA) -- Daylight-saving time, which ends Saturday, reduced the country's electric bill by $7 million this summer, the minister of energy and infrastructure, Moshe Shahal, said Thursday.

Millions of dollars more were saved by industry during the 127 days of extended daylight, according to Shahal. He is campaigning to have the Knesset pass legislation lengthening daylight-saving time to 210 days.

If that is done, daylight-saving time will be in effect in Israel from the end of March to the end of September, which coincides roughly with daylight-saving time in America and Europe.

The only opponents to the measure are Orthodox Jews, who complain they would have to awaken at an ungodly hour to recite their Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur prayers.

Israelis will revert to standard time at midnight Saturday.