

# GLEMP SAYS PAST REMARKS ABOUT JEWS WERE 'BASED ON MISTAKEN INFORMATION'

By Debra Nussbaum Cohen

WASHINGTON, Sept. 22 (JTA) -- Cardinal Jozef Glemp of Poland emerged from a meeting with a dozen Jewish leaders here Friday saying that "through dialogue" he now understands that statements he made in a homily two years ago "may have caused pain to the Jewish community and were seen as fostering stereotypes of Jews and Judaism."

In the Aug. 26, 1989 homily, Glemp, who heads the Roman Catholic Church in Poland, accused Jews of getting peasants drunk, exerting control over the international news media and introducing communism to Poland.

In a statement Friday, the cardinal said those remarks "were, in many aspects, based on mistaken information." He explained that they had been made during the "difficult and highly emotional events of the summer of 1989," which centered on the dispute over the Carmelite convent at the Auschwitz death camp.

Most of the Jewish participants in the two-hour meeting with Glemp said they accepted his explanation as an apology, although the cardinal did not use the word "apologize" in his prepared statement or during the news conference that followed the meeting.

"The statement indicates he was in error. That indicates an apology," said Rabbi Mordechai Waxman of Great Neck, N.Y., a congregational rabbi and representative of the Conservative movement on the Synagogue Council of America.

In a statement of their own, the Jewish participants described the meeting, which took place at the headquarters of the National Conference of Catholic Bishops here, as "forthright, open and, we believe, a constructive conversation."

## 'Enormous Step Forward'

But they did not say whether they believed the cardinal had adequately apologized for past remarks. And Jerome Chanes, co-director for domestic concerns of the National Jewish Community Relations Advisory Council, said that "in terms of substance, there were some serious questions that are as yet unresolved."

Nevertheless, many of the participants felt Glemp's position was significantly forthcoming.

Rabbi A. James Rudin, director of interreligious affairs for the American Jewish Committee, described Glemp's statement after the meeting as a "clear and unambiguous acknowledgement that aspects of his statements in his homily were mistaken."

That acknowledgement "constitutes an enormous step forward," he said.

Rabbi Jack Bemporad of Lawrence, N.Y., who chairs the Synagogue Council's interreligious affairs committee, called the change in Glemp's attitude toward Jews "epochal."

Rabbi Marc Tanenbaum, a longtime player in the interreligious arena, said he believed that the remarks Glemp made during 1989, which inflamed Jews and Catholics all over the world, were made out of "his misunderstanding of history."

Glemp "knows that he has made an egre-

gious error that grew out of his lack of information and experience," he said. He added that many Poles share the cardinal's "difference in the perception of the role of Jews" in history.

During the meeting, the Polish primate said he had never met so many Jews at one time, participants reported.

The cardinal was subdued afterward during a news conference with a dozen American journalists and 10 Polish reporters, in contrast to what the Jewish participants in the dialogue called his animated and frank manner during their meeting with him.

"There was a vigorous spirit of give and take, and of candor" during the meeting, according to Rudin of AJCommittee. "I had a palpable sense that a door previously closed had been opened," he said.

Rabbi Jerome Davidson, of Great Neck, N.Y., and president of the Synagogue Council, said some in the Jewish community had made "an idol out of the word 'apologize,' and were using it to justify their own reluctance to participate in dialogue."

He was referring to several important participants in Jewish-Catholic dialogue who refused to meet with Glemp because he had not, before departing Poland on Sept. 18, specifically addressed the assertions he made in the 1989 homily about Jews and Judaism.

## 'Many More Steps To Take'

One of those who refused to meet with the cardinal was Seymour Reich, who resigned last week -- three days before Glemp's arrival -- as chairman of IJCIC, the International Jewish Committee on Interreligious Consultations, which is charged with representing the world Jewish community in contacts with the Vatican.

Reich, who quit in frustration over IJCIC members' inability to reach consensus on whether to meet with the cardinal, said in a telephone interview after Friday's meeting that he was "still disappointed with Glemp's failure to acknowledge the error of the homily, to retract the anti-Semitic statements and to understand the harm that his statements caused."

"What was really missing was that he didn't make any significant statement in Poland before he left," said Reich.

"When he speaks without a script, like he did at the Warsaw airport, his guttural references come forth."

Reich was referring to a Sept. 18 interview with the Polish press, in which Glemp appeared to justify the contentions in his 1989 homily, asserting that they were backed up by literature and sociological research.

Glemp "really has many more steps to take, and the Washington meeting may have been one of those steps," he said.

Elan Steinberg, executive director of the World Jewish Congress, went even further.

"Glemp demonstrated that he snookered the Jews. He emerged from the meeting to declare there is no anti-Semitism in Poland, just three days after the violent anti-Semitic attack on the Warsaw synagogue."

He was referring to a Sept. 13 attack by six drunken teen-agers on the Warsaw synagogue, in

which an elderly Jewish community staff member was badly beaten.

During the news conference, Glomp was asked if he would restate his position about Jews and Judaism after he returns to Poland on Oct. 7.

The prelate replied that Friday's statement would be published in his home country. He also said, "We are looking for new forms of cooperation to work for the common good" of Jews and Poles in Poland.

#### Small Protest Outside Meeting

As the cardinal arrived Friday morning at the Bishops Conference for his meeting with the Jewish leaders, New York activist Rabbi Avi Weiss tried unsuccessfully to serve Glomp with papers related to the civil suit he has filed against the primate for defamation and libel.

In his August 1989 homily, Glomp accused Weiss and his followers of trying to destroy the convent at Auschwitz and to kill the nuns there during a protest they staged the month before.

The cardinal admitted, in a letter last month to Archbishop Adam Maida of Detroit, that the Jewish activists "did not intend to kill the sisters or to destroy the convent." But Weiss called that statement inadequate.

On Friday, Weiss and about a dozen of his followers remained just outside the entrance to the building and demonstrated, carrying signs reading "Cardinal Glomp: Dialogue, Not Diatribe" and "Glomp: Apologize!"

Weiss said that his attorney, Harvard Law School Professor Alan Dershowitz, had asked Glomp's lawyer that they be able to serve the cardinal with the court papers "with dignity."

"If he disagrees, we'll have to surprise him," Weiss said. He pledged to bring his "entire synagogue to Cardinal (John) O'Connor's residence for a peaceful prayer vigil" when Glomp meets with the archbishop of New York on Oct. 6.

Some New York Jewish leaders are now discussing whether to seek a meeting with Glomp when he comes there. And Jewish leaders in Chicago are deciding whether to show up for an appearance the cardinal is scheduled to make at Spertus College of Judaica there.

The cardinal plans to make stops in 14 cities during his visit to the United States.

#### **ISRAELI WHO CALLED BUSH ANTI-SEMITIC STRENGTHENS HIS ATTACK ON PRESIDENT** By Hugh Orgel

TEL AVIV, Sept. 22 (JTA) -- Rehavam Ze'evi, the Israeli Cabinet member who last week brazenly called President Bush an anti-Semite, has strengthened his attack on the American president by accusing Bush of taking actions that could bring about another Holocaust.

Predicating his charges on Bush's refusal to grant Israel immediate guarantees for \$10 billion in loans for immigrant resettlement, Ze'evi told Israel's army radio that Bush "wants to cause something that will lead to a second Holocaust."

Given such conditions, Ze'evi said, "I can protest and scream. These are the symptoms of anti-Semitism."

Ze'evi, who heads Moledet, a small, extreme right-wing faction that believes in transferring Arabs out of the administered territories, accused the American president of wanting "to twist Israel's arm in regard to our rights over the Land of Israel."

His latest attack against Bush drew fire from

a prominent American Jewish leader who has himself criticized the president for withholding the guarantees.

Abraham Foxman, national director of the Anti-Defamation League, called the remarks "irresponsible" and urged Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir to censure Ze'evi for his latest comments.

"His first outburst was forgivable. His second is not," said Foxman, who has himself reproached Bush for linking loan guarantees with a freeze on settlement-building in the administered territories.

Foxman, a Holocaust survivor, said that "if Ze'evi sees what is happening now as a prelude to another Holocaust, he has a total misunderstanding of what the Shoah was all about."

Ze'evi's latest remarks follow a week of reiterating the comments he first made at last week's Cabinet meeting, after Bush called for a 120-day moratorium on the loan guarantees.

At that Cabinet meeting, Ze'evi branded Bush an anti-Semite and liar, and repeated those epithets in radio and television interviews.

Ze'evi, who is a minister without portfolio in the Israeli government, has also continuously voiced his opposition to the Middle East peace conference which Bush and the Soviets hope to convene next month. He maintains that such a conference would only be a forum for "humiliations and attacks on Israel."

According to Ze'evi, a 64-year-old Israel Defense Force reserve major general, there is no chance for peace in the foreseeable future.

#### **SENATORS URGE BUSH TO SEPARATE LOAN ISSUE FROM THE PEACE PROCESS** By David Friedman

WASHINGTON, Sept. 22 (JTA) -- A dozen members of the Senate Appropriations Committee have urged President Bush to work with the panel to provide Israel with U.S. guarantees for \$10 billion in loans for immigrant resettlement.

"Approval of the refugee guarantees is a humanitarian issue, which is separate and apart from the peace process," the senators said in a letter to Bush drafted by Sen. Frank Lautenberg (D-N.J.).

"The fate of these refugees should not be held hostage to political differences, over which the refugees have no control, between Israel and the Arab countries," the letter said.

Lautenberg pointed out that ethnic tension is on the rise in the various republics of the Soviet Union while at the same time there is a danger of famine there this winter. "Historically, the combination of these factors spell uncertainty for Jews in the former Soviet Union," he warned.

Among those signing the letter were Sens. Daniel Inouye (D-Hawaii) and Robert Kasten (R-Wis.), who have drafted the legislation to provide Israel with the loan guarantees, and one announced candidate for the Democratic nomination for the presidency, Sen. Tom Harkin of Iowa.

Others signing it were Sens. Dennis DeConcini (D-Ariz.), Barbara Mikulski (D-Md.), Quentin Burdick (D-N.D.), Harry Reid (D-Nev.), Brock Adams (D-Wash.), Wyche Fowler (D-Ga.), Alfonse D'Amato (R-N.Y.) and Arlen Specter (R-Pa.).

The signers include a majority of the Appropriations subcommittee on foreign operations but not its chairman, Patrick Leahy (D-Vt.), who has indicated he will go along with Bush's request for a 120-day delay on consideration of the loan guarantee legislation.

**GERMANY DENIES IT'S UNDER PRESSURE FROM U.S. TO DELAY LOANS TO ISRAEL**

By David Kantor

BONN, Sept. 22 (JTA) -- Echoes of Israel's angry dispute with the Bush administration over loan guarantees for immigrant resettlement are now resounding in Germany.

German government spokesman Dieter Vogel flatly rejected an Israeli media report Friday that President Bush had persuaded Chancellor Helmut Kohl to delay action on an Israeli request for \$5 billion from Germany.

"Stupid, foolish," was Vogel's response to the report in the Israeli newspaper Ma'ariv. He confirmed that Israel had applied for credits to build apartments for arriving Soviet Jews but said no sum was mentioned and no decision made.

Germany will decide for itself and there is no need or room for pressure from any source, Vogel added in a statement released here Friday.

The story in Ma'ariv might have gotten little reaction here but for the corroboration it seemed to get from Yossi Ben-Aharon, Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir's chief aide.

Ben-Aharon, who is director general of the Prime Minister's Office, on Friday told an army radio interviewer in Jerusalem that he didn't "rule out that the United States has requested states to deny us aid at this stage in order to bring pressure. I hope it's not true."

Israeli officials have accused the United States, and now Germany, of holding humanitarian requests for immigrant resettlement aid hostage to the political issue of Israel's settlement-building drive in the West Bank and Gaza Strip.

The Bush administration and all of its predecessors have made clear they consider the settlements an obstacle to peace.

A key member of the Bonn government, Minister for Economic Cooperation Carl-Dieter Spranger, took the same position during a visit to Cairo last week. He said no further aid to Israel should be forthcoming before the peace process gets under way.

Spranger, who said he was expressing his "personal opinion," called Israel's settlements policy "illegal" and "the major obstacle to peace in the Middle East."

**Levy Promised Favorable Consideration**

That is the argument of the Bush administration, which urged Congress to postpone discussion of Israel's loan guarantee request until after a Middle East peace conference convenes under U.S.-Soviet auspices.

Israel's requests for German credits or loan guarantees for its immigrant absorption program dates back to Israeli Foreign Minister David Levy's visit to Bonn on March 17.

He was warmly received on that occasion, shortly after the end of the Persian Gulf War, when Israel enjoyed wide support in Europe for its restraint while under missile attacks from Iraq.

Levy reportedly was promised favorable consideration of the request.

Earlier this month, the director general of Israel's Finance Ministry, Shalom Singer, visited Bonn to discuss the matter further with German officials. An Israeli spokesman said later that negotiations were under way but no conclusions had been reached.

But until two weeks ago, Germany refused to confirm it was even considering such a request.

Officials here pointed out that Germany was

extremely generous to Israel during the Gulf war, supplying it with \$590 million worth of humanitarian and military aid.

In addition, Bonn had agreed to finance two submarines for the Israeli navy, to be built by a shipyard in the German port of Kiel. Israel ordered the undersea craft several years ago but was forced to cancel the order last year because of budgetary constraints.

**JEWISH AGENCY READY TO EVACUATE JEWS OF YUGOSLAVIA, IF NECESSARY**

By Hugh Orgel

TEL AVIV, Sept. 22 (JTA) -- Contingency plans have been drawn up to transfer the Jewish community of strife-torn Yugoslavia to Israel, according to Uri Gordon, head of the Jewish Agency's Immigration Department.

"The establishment here is prepared. But it depends on the Jews there," he said.

Yugoslavia is in the throes of civil war. Fighting has been especially fierce in the secession-minded republic of Croatia, home to about 2,000 Jews, most of whom live in the capital, Zagreb.

Gordon estimated the total Jewish population of Yugoslavia to be about 5,500, of whom 1,500 live in the national capital, Belgrade; 1,200 in Zagreb; and 1,300 in Sarajevo, capital of the province of Bosnia-Herzegovina.

He said Jewish Agency emissaries have gone to Yugoslavia in recent months to observe the condition of the Jewish population. One is at the moment in the area of the fighting, he said.

In New York, Michael Schneider, executive vice president of the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee, confirmed that the Jewish Agency has made plans to evacuate the Yugoslav Jewish community, if necessary.

"We understand they will be doing everything they can to get people to Israel," he said.

He said JDC officials have also made arrangements with Jewish communities in neighboring Hungary, Austria and Italy to temporarily house Jews fleeing unrest in Yugoslavia.

JDC, meanwhile, has allocated emergency funds to provide additional medicine and food to the Yugoslav community if the fighting worsens. Regular aid to the Jewish community of Croatia, which normally goes through Belgrade, is now being provided directly to the Jews of Zagreb, Schneider said.

He also said JDC staff have helped beef up security and otherwise fortify the Jewish Old Age Home in Zagreb, which also houses the local synagogue. Recalling the bombing last month of the Jewish community center in downtown Zagreb, Schneider said, "We're trying to make sure that doesn't happen" to the Jewish Old Age Home.

Gordon of the Jewish Agency described the Yugoslav Jewish community as middle- and lower-middle-class families who live in an impoverished country on the verge of bankruptcy.

"There are always Jews in any endangered community who hope that things will improve and that there is always time to leave tomorrow, remaining where they are in the meantime to look after their property," Gordon said.

He said the Jewish Agency and Israel are prepared to help all Jews who wish to leave their countries and come to Israel.

**REMINDER: The JTA Daily News Bulletin will not be published Tuesday, Sept. 24.**

**SYRIAN MINISTER SAYS ISRAEL MUST RELEASE ALL DETAINEES**

By David Kantor

BONN, Sept. 22 (JTA) -- Israel will have to release all Arab detainees from its prisons if Westerners held hostage by pro-Iranian groups in Lebanon are to be freed, the visiting Syrian foreign minister, Farouk a-Sharaa, told reporters here last week.

He said his country hoped Israel would comply for humanitarian reasons. But he denied Syria was making a resolution of the hostage situation dependent on what Israel does.

"We want to contribute to end this tragedy," the minister said last Thursday after meetings with top officials here, including President Richard von Weizsacker.

There was a flurry of hope when the Israeli-backed South Lebanon Army released 51 Lebanese and Palestinians from detention at a prison camp in the southern Lebanon security zone Sept. 11.

There were indications at the time that an American captive, Joseph Cicippio, and a Briton, Jack Mann, would be freed in exchange.

But the only reciprocation was the return to Israel of the body of Sgt. Samir Assad, a Druse soldier in the Israel Defense Force who was kidnapped in Lebanon in 1986 and died in captivity.

The pro-Iranian Revolutionary Justice Organization in Beirut called the Israeli-SLA act "incomplete" and has refused to free any Western captives until at least 20 more Arab prisoners were released by Israel.

The group wants the release of Sheik Abdul Karim Obeid, spiritual leader of a faction of the Islamic fundamentalist Hezbollah, whom Israeli commandos seized from his home in southern Lebanon in July 1989.

His release at this point is unlikely, inasmuch as the Israelis consider Obeid their most valuable bargaining chip.

**May Have Suggested A Deal**

And introducing yet another complication, it was reported over the weekend that Hezbollah is now trying to link the release of British hostages to a literary prize awarded to writer Salman Rushdie. Rushdie is under a death threat from Iran for his book "The Satanic Verses."

Syria until now has remained on the sidelines of the hostage crisis, claiming it had no influence with their captors.

But Sharaa, aware of the concern here over the fate of two Germans among the Western hostages in Lebanon, is believed to have made some suggestions in his talks with German officials on how to cut a deal with Shi'ite extremists for their release.

Germany has rejected demands that it release the brothers Mohammed and Abbas Hamadei, but lately has been reported considering a swap.

Mohammed Hamadei was tried, convicted and sentenced to life in a German court for the 1985 hijacking of a TWA jet and the murder of an American passenger, U.S. Navy diver Robert Stethem. Abbas Hamadei was sentenced to 13 years for his role in kidnapping two German nationals in an attempt to effect his brother's release.

Germany refused to extradite Mohammed Hamadei to the United States and Washington agreed reluctantly to let him be tried by a German court. The Americans are vigorously lobbying the Germans not to release him from prison for any reason.

**ITALY CHECKING FOR PLO ROLE IN FAILED HIJACKING TO TUNIS**

By Ruth E. Gruber

ROME, Sept. 22 (JTA) -- Italian authorities are investigating the failed hijacking Sept. 19 of an Alitalia flight to Tunis.

Though it appears to have been the work of a love-lorn Tunisian immigrant upset by losing his job in Italy, the authorities are not fully convinced there was not a political motive.

One source of suspicion was the presence on the aircraft of Nemer Hammad, the Palestine Liberation Organization's representative in Italy.

The authorities also suspect that the admitted hijacker, Hedi Ben Hassan Bouchnak, might have pretended to be mentally unhinged to cover his real motives when it became clear the hijacking attempt would fail.

Arrested in Tunis, Bouchnak said he tried to seize the plane with 137 people aboard for revenge because "Italy treated me badly."

Italian news reports said Bouchnak was depressed by financial difficulties after he lost his job and by problems with his fiancée, who stayed in Tunis when he moved to Italy.

Reports said that Bouchnak claimed to have a pistol and a bomb when he briefly took over the plane in flight. In fact, he had neither, which came as a relief to officials of Fiumicino Airport.

Fiumicino was the scene of one of the worst terrorist acts of the last decade when, in 1985, Palestinian gunmen killed or wounded dozens of people in the El Al airline terminal. Since then, the airport has been regularly patrolled by a force of some 600 uniformed and plainclothes security men assisted by trained dogs.

Airport director Mario Luzzati told the newspaper La Repubblica that it would be "practically impossible" for anyone to board a plane carrying arms or explosives.

**FRENCH PLAN TO CHARGE TWO LIBYANS FOR 1989 BOMBING OF FRENCH AIRLINER**

By Michel Di Paz

PARIS, Sept. 22 (JTA) -- An investigating magistrate is reportedly about to issue warrants for the arrest of two high-ranking Libyan officials in connection with the destruction of a French airliner and the deaths of all 170 people aboard over the African desert on Sept. 19, 1989.

Judge Jean-Louis Bruguiere, convinced Libyans masterminded the terrorist act, was reported ready to issue warrants for Moussa Kussa, Libya's vice minister for foreign affairs, and Abdallah Senussi, the No. 2 man of its secret service.

There have been angry objections by the Libyan authorities and warnings from Tripoli that "appropriate steps" would be taken if France formally accused Libya in the disaster.

The French Foreign Ministry also clearly is not happy with Bruguiere's pursuit of the case. But the judge has vowed to "go all the way."

A suitcase containing a time bomb is believed to have been put aboard the UTA airliner at Brazzaville, Congo, before it left on a flight to Paris. Congolese opposition groups backed by Libya are held responsible.

The plane blew up over the Tenere desert. Bodies and debris were scattered over 24 square miles. But French investigators managed to retrieve every splinter. A study of the wreckage, which was reassembled in Paris, led to Bruguiere's conclusions.