

WORLD BEAT

edited by Marta Garelik

Israel Worries About Its Relations with South Africa

JERUSALEM (JTA) — Israel faces a three-fold dilemma in its future relations with South Africa—economics, moral, and its obligation to do nothing that might compromise the security of South Africa's large and active Jewish community.

Relations with South Africa has become an urgent issue because of sanctions against the Pretoria regime enacted by the U.S. Congress over President Reagan's veto. Countries engaged in certain areas of trade with South Africa, particularly arms trade, may face a reduction in U.S. economic aid.

The General Accounting Office (GAO), a Congressional body, will publish a list of countries involved in the arms trade with South Africa. Israel is expected to appear prominently on that list.

Israel has been selling military equipment to South Africa for the past 15 years, mainly light weapons, communications and electronic equipment. This adds to Israel's economic difficulties. Its military ties with South Africa provide employment for thousands of Israelis and Israel relies heavily on South African coal to generate electric power, because of the higher cost of oil.

A Gem of a Robot

TEL AVIV (JTA) — An Israeli company has invested over \$2 million to design and produce a robot capable of cutting and polishing colored gem stones.

The new "Robo-Gem" fully automated system works better than the skilled human hands which have been cutting and polishing precious stones from time immemorial. "Robo-Gem" is especially good with emeralds and may be adapted later for processing diamonds, one of Israel's chief exports.

The robot cutter saves up to 90 percent of costly rough stones. Between 60 and 85 percent is currently lost in the cutting. The company has not yet decided whether to make it available outside Israel.

Israelis Concerned Over AIDS

Only 35 cases of AIDS have been diagnosed in Israel to date. There have been 12 fatalities. The purpose of the program, which followed a television documentary on the subject a week earlier, was to inform the public of the AIDS diagnostic centers that have been set up at a number of

hospitals where blood tests are conducted anonymously.

One surprising aspect of the program was the medical opinion offered that infants adopted from Brazil should be tested for AIDS because of the prevalence of the disease in that country. The so-called "Brazil Babies" are sought by many Israeli couples because of the shortage of babies for adoption in Israel.

Weizman Institute Develops Drug for AIDS Victims

TEL AVIV (JTA) — A drug developed by the Weizmann Institute of Science, which reportedly had dramatic results in the treatment of some AIDS victims, has been approved by the Health Ministry for limited use in Israel.

The drug, AL721, was synthesized from egg yolks six years ago by Weizmann Institute Profs. Meir Shinitzky and David Samuel for the treatment of drug addicts, the aged and children with cystic fibrosis. Though not approved for public use by the U.S. health authorities, it is being manufactured in experimental quantities by Praxis Pharmaceuticals Ltd. in Beverly Hills, Calif., under license from the Weizmann Institute.

Agricultural Project In Ethiopia

NEW YORK (JTA) — United Support of Artists for Africa has granted the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee (JDC) \$150,000 for an agricultural recovery project in the Gondar region of Ethiopia. The JDC will use the funds to buy oxen, seeds and tools that will help farmers regain self-sufficiency. The supplies will be bought in Ethiopia and then distributed in the designated area.

JDC has been providing non-sectarian assistance in the Gondar region since 1983. In addition to the agricultural recovery project, JDC has built a health center in the village of Tedda and is planning a polyclinic in the town of Gondar.

Netherlands Supports Opening of UN War Crimes Archives

AMSTERDAM (JTA) — The Netherlands supports the opening of the United Nations archives on war criminals to all member states of the UN and to private individuals and institutions engaged in serious research.

The archives were compiled between 1943-47 by the now defunct UN War Crimes Com-

mission. Israel's request for access was denied by UN Secretary General Javier Perez de Cuellar on grounds that all but one of the Commission's 17 member states wanted them closed. The only dissenting country was Australia.

Unusual Display of USSR-Israel Amity

GENEVA (JTA) — An unusual display of amity between the Soviet Union and Israel occurred here when Tass correspondent Vladislav Chichlo proposed Sari Rauber, correspondent for the Israeli newspaper Maariv, for membership in the committee of journalists accredited to the United Nations here. Rauber returned the compliment by proposing Chichlo for membership. Both were elected unanimously to spontaneous cheers of delegates to the annual meeting of the United Nations Press Association.

Tid-Bits

JERUSALEM (JTA) — A semi-official organization, the World Federation of Hungarians, has offered to act as intermediary between Hungary and Israel in the absence of formal diplomatic relations between the two countries. The World Federation of Hungarians, with the backing of the Budapest government, seeks to maintain ties with Hungarian emigrants all over the world. There are about 100,000 Jews of Hungarian origin in Israel. The Jewish population of Hungary numbers an estimated 62,000, the largest in Eastern Europe outside the Soviet Union.

JERUSALEM (JTA) — The Al-Sam Association which combats drug abuse has launched a national campaign to educate the public to the problem. This follows a survey by the group which showed that between 10,000-20,000 adults in Israel use drugs regularly and about 10 percent of youths, between ages 14-18, used drugs at least once.

NEW YORK (JTA) — Mayor Edward Koch of New York, unveiled the street sign designating "David Ben-Gurion Place" here while standing in a truck-crane.

The square is at the site of the old Biltmore Hotel, where 45 years ago Ben-Gurion and other Zionist leaders formally established the goal of the Jewish State of Israel during the Biltmore Conference.

TEL AVIV (JTA) — The Knesset marked International Women's Day by enacting a law equalizing the retirement age of women and men. Until now, men retired at 65 and women at 60. Under the new measure, women may work until age 65 unless they choose to take their pensions at 60.

NEW YORK (JTA) — The Jewish Braille Institute of America announces that it is expanding its library of 5,000 books of Jewish interest recorded on standard audio tapes. The "Talking Books" collection of current best-sellers, classics and other books may be borrowed free for up to 90 days. Contact the institute at 110 E. 30th St., New York, NY 10016; (212) 889-2525.

VIENNA (JTA) — A survey conducted by Austria's four major opinion poll institutes showed that seven out of every 100 Austrians are self-declared anti-Semites. The survey of a cross-section of the population, totalling 9,000 people, sponsored by the Austrian National Bank, showed that the lowest rate of anti-Semitism — four percent — was in the 14-29-year age group and the highest among those over 60.

TEL AVIV (JTA) — The Israeli pavilion at the International Trade Fair in Cairo had some 10,000 visitors during the first week of the fair.

MILWAUKEE, Wis. (JTA) — "To buy Israel, you have to ask Israel," advises Elmer Winter, chairman of the Committee for Economic Growth of Israel (CEGI). CEGI has published a pamphlet that answers the question, "What Israeli foods, wines and apparel are sold in the United States?" To obtain a copy, write: CEGI, 5301 N. Ironwood Road, Milwaukee, WI 53217; or call (414) 961-1000.

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