

# WORLD BEAT

— edited by Marta Garelik

## Syrian (Bears) Make Aliyah

GENEVA (JTA) — Two offspring of a Syrian with the familiar name Assad left here for Israel recently after departure ceremonies attended by the Israeli ambassador to Switzerland, David Rivlin, and members of the Bern Jewish community.

The "olim", named Dubi and Berna, have homes waiting for them in Jerusalem, at the Biblical Zoo. They are young bears, presented to President Chaim Herzog of Israel when he visited Bern last April. At the time, they were newborns, too young to travel.

The father bear was born in Syria, which probably accounts for his name, which he shares with Syrian President Hafez Assad. For some reason that fact embarrassed the president of the Bern Jewish community, who managed to keep it out of the press until now.

## Canada to Seek Evidence Against War Criminals

MONTREAL (JTA) — Canada has begun negotiations with the Soviet Union and the governments of Poland, Romania, Hungary, Czechoslovakia, West Germany and Israel to allow Canadian legal teams to search for evidence in the cases of 20 definite war crimes suspects and 200 probable

suspects residing in Canada.

Participating in the conference, whose theme is "Nuremberg 40 Years Later: The Struggle Against Injustice in Our Time", are prominent jurists, government ministers, legislators and human rights activists from Canada, the U.S. and other countries. Its purpose is to impress on the world the need to implement international legislation on war crimes and to safeguard freedom of expression and the defense of human rights.

## Swastikas Strike Providence

PROVIDENCE (JTA) — The Jewish community here has been the target of extensive anti-Semitic graffiti.

Fluorescent orange swastikas were discovered over the Columbus Day weekend. The swastikas had been spray-painted onto the walls of two synagogues and two Jewish-owned businesses. Another swastika was chalked onto the entrance to Providence's Jewish Community Center. All of these incidents took place in the heavily Jewish East Side neighborhood, in the environs of Brown University.

## Two-Way Trade Likely Between China and Israel

TEL AVIV (JTA) — Two-way trade between Israel and the People's Republic of China appears to have been advanced

at several meetings held here recently between visiting Chinese businessmen and Minister of Commerce and Industry.

Some Israeli products are shipped directly to China in vessels sailing from Eilat. Others are sent via Hong Kong. A Hong Kong businessman in Israel recently expressed interest in importing clothing, particularly bathing suits.

One result of his visit is an "Israel Week" to be held in Hong Kong. Some of the items displayed there may well end up in China.

## Hate Crimes Data Bill Passes House Panel

WASHINGTON (JTA) — A bill requiring the Justice Department to collect data about crimes motivated by racial, ethnic, religious and anti-gay prejudice was approved by the House Judiciary Committee by a 21-13 vote.

The Hate Crime Statistics bill would require the FBI to publish an annual report similar to the Uniform Crime Statistics it now provides.

## Boy Abducted from Father Who Strayed from Orthodoxy

TEL AVIV (JTA) — The case of a 5-year-old boy taken by his mother from the Orthodox township of Bnei Brak several months ago, allegedly because his father was not sufficiently strict in his religious observances, is being treated by police as a kidnapping.

The serious crimes squad has been assigned to the case, after the father reported anonymous telephone calls warning that he would never see his son unless he returns to strict Orthodoxy.

The telephone caller, a male, said the boy's mother charged that the father stopped studying Torah, engaged in secular pursuits and had purchased a television set. Residents of Bnei Brak are vigorously discouraged from watching television or reading "secular newspapers".

## Austrian Socialist Denounces Waldheim

VIENNA (JTA) — A ranking member of Austria's governing Socialist Party this week denounced President Kurt Waldheim as "a perfidious liar" and demanded that he resign for the good of the country.

Thunderous applause greeted the remarks by Josef Hindels, president of the Federation of Socialist Freedom Fighters, at the opening of the party's three-day national congress here. "When an official does serious damage to the country, it is not undemocratic to say: 'Resign in the interests of Austria, Mr. Waldheim,'" Hindels said.

## Tid-Bits

TEL AVIV (JTA) — The Orthodox minority in the town of Netivot, east of the Gaza Strip, would deny their secular neighbors a close shave. They are boycotting shops that sell razor blades on grounds that Jewish tradition forbids the use of blades to remove or trim beards.

The Orthodox insist there is no organized boycott but refuse to patronize shops that sell anything they regard as an "abomination". Shopkeepers have disguised packs of razor blades by wrapping them in old newspapers so as not to offend the eyes of the pious.

TEL AVIV (JTA) — The first cases of botulism in Israel in 16 years apparently were caused by contaminated whitefish from the United States.

They reported it was traced to fish recently brought from Brooklyn, N.Y., by the relative of a 40-year-old woman admitted to Hadassah Hospital in Jerusalem. Several days earlier, a 60-year-old woman, a member of the same family, died. She, too, is believed to have eaten the contaminated fish. U.S. health authorities have been notified.

WALTHAM, Mass. (JTA) — The recent introduction of pork and shellfish in a cafeteria of Brandeis University here does not — as some faculty critics claim — diminish the Jewish character of the school, according to its president, Evelyn Handler.

WASHINGTON (JTA) — An organization of Catholic lay leaders in Argentina has condemned recent anti-Semitic remarks made by a Catholic priest in their country and has offered profound apologies in a letter to Seymour Reich, international president of B'nai B'rith.

TEL AVIV (JTA) — The Indian government has refused to grant a visa to Hebrew University Prof. Shlomo Avineri who has been invited by one of India's most prestigious "think tanks" to participate in a conference on Soviet bloc developments.

Avineri, an expert on Marx and Communist theory and one of Israel's leading Sovietologists, said he received his invitation a year ago from the Indian School of Political Economy.

See WORLD BEAT page 22

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