

WORLD BEAT

edited by Marta Garelik

Graffiti Arouse Warnings of Anti-Semitism in Italy

ROME (JTA) — The appearance of swastikas and anti-Semitic graffiti in Rome, Milan and Bologna has prompted warnings of an upsurge of anti-Semitism among Italians, especially the far right.

Slogans such as "Burn Jews," "Jews to the ovens," "Israelis kill Palestinians — Jews will pay" or "Dirty Jew, we will kick you out" have been spray-painted or scrawled on walls along Rome's Via Ottaviano, in Milan and Bologna. They often are accompanied by swastikas or the symbols of right-wing and neo-fascist groups. The official newspaper of the Republican Party, *Voce Repubblicana*, attributed them to the neo-fascist Italian Social Movement (MS). The paper spoke of a "lynching" mentality and "anti-Jewish reflexes" almost everywhere.

Police are now guarding synagogues, Jewish schools and the Israeli Embassy here and have stepped up vigilance at the borders to prevent the entry of suspected anti-Israel terrorists.

The Vatican newspaper, *Osservatore Romano*, condemned what it called the Israeli assaults at the Al Aksa and Al Amari mosques, branding the moves another very serious sign of the deterioration of the situation in East Jerusalem and the territories.

"It is feared, with good reason, that the situation could produce an upsurge of infamy, of barbarism and also anti-Semitism," the Vatican newspaper said, adding, "It is urgent that there prevail a supreme sense of self-control, of moderation, of tolerance."

In mid-January, some 5,000 people marched through the streets of Rome in support of Palestinians in the Gaza Strip and West Bank. The march was organized by student groups and left-wing political parties. Similar demonstrations were to take place in Milan, Genoa, and other

Italian cities as Venice, Perugia, Bari and Cagliari.

In Rome, the protesters, many of them wearing the Arab kaffiyeh scarf, carried a banner reading, "Is our civilization founded on the massacre and oppression of peoples? Free Palestine."

They chanted slogans accusing the Israeli government of being a "band of assassins" that has engaged in the "slaughter of children." Another said, "Forty years of occupation won't stop the fight for liberation," calling in to question not only Israel's administration of the West Bank and Gaza Strip, but also its very right to exist.

There were moments of tension at the end of the march, when about 250 demonstrators broke off from the main group and headed toward Rome's main synagogue, in the Old Ghetto on the banks of the Tiber, still a largely Jewish neighborhood. Security forces blocked off the synagogue, however, aided by dozens of members of the Jewish community who rushed to the scene.

Arts Exchange to Celebrate Israel's 40th Anniversary

NEW YORK (JTA) — North America and Israel will exchange performances of theater, music and dance troupes beginning this spring to celebrate Israel's 40th anniversary.

The exchange, "Independence and Interdependence," is organized by the National Foundation for Jewish Culture in the United States and Omanut La'am (Art for the People) in Israel. The \$4 million program will receive more than half of its funding from the CRB Foundation, Montreal. Other funds will be provided by the National Endowment for the Humanities and the Israel Committee for the 40th Anniversary.

The seven Israeli performing arts groups include the Inbal Dance Theatre of Israel,

the Habrera Hativit ethno-fusion music group and the Haifa Municipal Theatre. The national foundation is still selecting eight North American groups.

Besides touring 40 North America cities for performances still to be announced, the Israeli groups will appear at three-day festivals in Philadelphia, May 15-17; San Francisco, next fall; New York, spring 1989.

National foundation president George Zeltzer said "the exchange offers an unusual chance to create a dialogue between Israeli and American artists, scholars, critics and audiences."

Spanish-Israeli Relations Suffer from Media Bashing

MADRID (JTA) — Fears are growing here that the recent improvements in Israeli-Spanish relations will fall victim to what observers see as one of the strongest anti-Israel campaigns ever in the Spanish media.

All this came in the middle of a dramatic resurgence of Spanish solidarity with the Jews. Spaniards have been giving increasing attention to the history of close Spanish-Jewish cultural ties. However, Spain still is planning major events to perpetuate the memory of the old Jewish community in this country.

Spain is eager to draw on the Israeli experience in using solar energy for heating and other purposes. But politically, an observer added, Spain would be wise to avoid any announcements on starting or advancing projects in Israel.

The Israelis who are competing with the French here for a \$200 million deal to modernize Spanish fighter planes display the same kind of attitude.

They have not raised the matter publicly since the unrest in the territories began in December, and they certainly hope Spain will postpone making its decision.

Top Iranians Get Israeli Care

JERUSALEM (JTA) — The Hadassah-Hebrew University Medical Center here has not treated Iranian leader the Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini, despite what a Kuwaiti newspaper recently reported. However, Dr. Shaul Feldman, head of the center's neurology department, has disclosed that "tens" of Iranians had been secretly treated in the medical center wing jokingly called "The Persian Private Medical Service" as well as in other Israeli hospitals.

A few are Jews, but "most are people of means or are connected to the upper echelons of those in power," he said. The patients come with a variety of ailments and in a variety of clandestine ways, he reported. The doctor said many of the Iranians treated at the Ein Karem medical center cross the border into Afghanistan and make their way through Turkey to Israel. Others fly to Europe and then to Israel, changing airlines and destinations.

Arabs Earmark Funds for War of Attrition Against Israel

TEL AVIV (JTA) — The Arab League has decided to fund a war of attrition against Israel, to be waged by a newly established Palestinian underground in the West Bank and Gaza Strip, according to reports from Tunisia.

The foreign ministers of the 21 Arab League member states gathered at league headquarters there for an emergency meeting on the situation in the territories. They decided that every Arab country would be obligated to contribute substantial funds for the war, said the reports, which were attributed to inside sources.

The new underground leadership, which attended the meeting, took a secret oath of allegiance to the Palestine Liberation Organization. But instead of going through the PLO, the funds will be transferred through United Nations relief agencies in the territories. According to the reports, a U.N. representative was present at the meeting.

The monies are intended to help the local population endure prolonged strikes and disturbances.

PLO chief Yasir Arafat, addressing the foreign ministers, was quoted as saying, "We have found the weak point in the Israeli occupation. Arab blood will overcome Israel's guns and powerful war machine."

Anti-Semitic Incidents Increase

NEW YORK (JTA) — Anti-Semitic vandalism in the United States increased by 17 percent in 1987 to 694, ending an essentially downward trend, according to the just-released annual Audit of Anti-Semitic Incidents conducted by the Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rith.

The audit includes vandalism and desecration of Jewish institutions and property, ranging from swastika daubings to arson. It found anti-Semitic episodes in 34 states and the District of Columbia. Ten incidents involved arson or bombings.

The rise from 594 episodes in 1986 largely reflects a 121 percent increase in such acts in California — from 62 reported acts of vandalism in 1986 to 137 last year.

New York state reported the highest number of anti-Semitic incidents, with 207, 21 more than those reported in 1986, California was second, followed by Florida, where the 64 reported anti-Semitic acts is 15 less than last year.

Other leading states were New Jersey, with 43 incidents, down five from 1986; Illinois, 36, an increase of 22; Massachusetts, 27, up three; and Pennsylvania, 22, down seven.

Anti-Semitic incidents in the West were up 104 percent from 1986, with the California episodes contributing largely to this increase. Figures for the West comprised 22.6 percent of the national total, up from 13 percent of the total in 1986.

ADL has published and distributed a manual for prejudice-reduction instruction in schools, as well as an anti-bigotry program to stress

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