

World Beat

Germany to Give Israel \$165 Million

BONN (JTA) — Chancellor Helmut Kohl announced that Germany would grant Israel \$165 million to help overcome its economic problems, which have been worsened by the Persian Gulf war.

Kohl made the commitment after being accused by opposition Social Democrats and even members of his own Christian Democratic Union of insensitivity toward Israel, especially after the Jewish state became a target of Iraqi missile attacks.

Kohl's announcement was welcomed by Kent Schiner, president of B'nai B'rith International, who had met with the chancellor.

In his announcement, Kohl also promised to take swift, decisive action to halt German exports of "sensitive equipment" to Iraq or to any country from where it could find its way to Baghdad.

German firms are known to have supplied the Iraqis with material, equipment and technology for the manufacture of chemical weapons.

Israel Asks U.S. for \$10 Billion

JERUSALEM (JTA) — Israel has asked the U.S. for an additional \$10 billion in aid over the next five years.

The request was made by Finance Minister Yitzhak Moda'i at a meeting in late Jan. with U.S. Deputy Secretary of State Lawrence Eagleburger. In making the request, Moda'i cited Israel's immigrant absorption burden and costs incurred as a result of the Persian Gulf conflict, which has made Israel a target of Iraqi missile attacks. Moda'i told reporters that Israel could raise additional funds it needed from other sources.

Eagleburger and his team of State Department and Pentagon aides also have met with Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir.

Treasury officials said Israel had lost \$1 billion from the slump in tourism caused by the Persian Gulf crisis and another billion in lost production as

workers stayed home during the missile attacks.

A Treasury breakdown released quantified early missile damage in Tel Aviv and its environs at \$30 million.

Israeli and Palestinian Activists Receive Vienna Human Rights Awards

VIENNA (JTA) — Two Israeli doves and a Palestinian nationalist were among the 24 recipients of the Bruno Kreisky Human Rights Prizes.

The prizes, named for the late Jewish-born chancellor of Austria who had an abiding interest in Middle East peace, were awarded by Mayor Helmut Zilk of Vienna.

The ceremony was held after the second Iraqi missile attack on Israel, which, speakers noted, was hardly an occasion for joy and jubilation. Most of the prizes went to organizations engaged in human rights and humanitarian activities.

The individual recipients included Yael Dayan, an author and journalist who is the daughter of the late Israeli foreign minister and defense minister, Moshe Dayan. She was cited for contributing significantly to the dialogue between Israelis and Palestinians.

Another recipient was Israeli lawyer Felicia Langer, who presently lives in Germany. She was honored for serving as legal counsel to West Bank Palestinians faced with deportation, arrest and the punitive destruction of their homes.

The Palestinian winner was Faisal Husseini, a prominent intellectual and journalist from East Jerusalem, who preaches non-violent resistance to Israeli rule in the territories, though Israeli officials say he is a leading organizer of the intifada. The jury cited Husseini's efforts to find "a peaceful solution of the conflicts between Israelis and Palestinians through negotiations."

An award also was given to the International Center for Peace in the Middle East, headed by Chaim Cohen, former

president of Israel's High Court of Justice.

Syrian Jews See Window of Hope

NEW YORK (JTA) — The U.S.-Syrian alliance against Iraq, condemned by most Jewish leaders, is being seen as a "window of opportunity" for the emigration of 3,500 Syrian Jews, say Syrian Jewish activists.

The New York-based Council for the Rescue of Syrian Jews, an organization which represents Jews in Syria, has said that although Syrian Jews have the freedom to teach and practice Judaism, they are nevertheless denied basic civil rights. Among them is the right to emigrate, a right guaranteed by the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, signed by Syria.

The council is also seeking a relaxation of travel restrictions.

New York's 30,000 Syrian Jews have historically kept a low political profile regarding Syrian issues. The council is cautiously optimistic that the discussions between President Bush and Hafez Assad in November presented an opportunity for the U.S. to request the emigration of the 3,500 Syrian Jews for family reunification in this country.

"I really feel that now there is a window of opportunity that we have to take advantage of," says Alice Harary, the group's vice president. "With the focus on the Persian Gulf and the Middle East alliance, we have to capitalize." Harary, an attorney, has been coordinating the group's lobbying efforts in Washington.

Jewish Communities To be Remembered

NEW YORK (JTA) — More than 5,000 Jewish communities in Europe that were destroyed in the Holocaust will be remembered by the Yad Vashem Holocaust Memorial in Jerusalem, with the inscription of the names engraved on the stones of the rough hewn buildings that will constitute the Valley of Destroyed Jewish Communities.

The project, begun in 1983, will be completed in the spring of 1992. Yad Vashem, the Jewish people's central memorial to the Holocaust, is the only place in the world where the names of Jewish communities large and small, representing 1,000 years of flourishing Jewish life before the Nazi onslaught, are commemorated.

Anti-Semitic Poem Demands Action from British Jewry

LONDON (JTA) — A crude anti-Semitic rhyme mailed to

Jewish organizations and businesses has been referred to the attorney general by the Board of Deputies of British Jews.

Titled "Holohoax" by "Simon Wiesenstool," a pun on the name of the famous Nazi-hunter, it mocks the Holocaust and pokes fun at the gassing of Jews.

The Board of Deputies expressed confidence that action will be taken. It pointed out that the attorney general has approved the first two prosecutions for circulating anti-Semitic material under the 1986 Public Order Act.

The authorship is unknown. It appears to be the same that contrived "Yiddery-Pokery," an earlier doggerel pillorying Jews who were convicted in the Guinness affair, which involved stock market manipulation. That title was a takeoff on "jiggery-pokery," an archaic expression referring to illicit activities. The publisher styles itself "Gentile Awareness League," which officials believe is a fictitious name.

According to the Board of Deputies, at least 20 Jewish organizations received copies of the "poem" in the mail. So did Compco, a West End property development company whose managing director, Robert Nadler, is Jewish.

Nadler said, "I am disgusted that in this country and in this day and age, someone can go to the trouble of producing something so bigoted and offensive."

The Board of Deputies said the circulation of anti-Semitic material has been on the rise in Britain in the last two years. It has referred more than 20 samples to the attorney general.

One Cannot be Both a Catholic and Anti-Semitic Says Walesa

WASHINGTON (JTA) — Vowing to rid his country of anti-Semitism, President Lech Walesa of Poland told a group of visiting Jewish leaders in Warsaw that one cannot be both a Catholic and anti-Semitic.

"My religion teaches me that the Jews are the chosen people," said the Polish leader, who is Roman Catholic. "If I take my religion seriously — if I think of myself as a believer — then I cannot be anti-Semitic." He added, "If I have anything to say about it there will be no more anti-Semitism in Poland."

Walesa also expressed his government's support for Israel in an official communique, which was released after his meeting with American and European representatives of B'nai B'rith International.

The delegation of B'nai B'rith members, on a 17-day tour of Eastern European capitals, was headed by Kent Schiner, pres-

ident of BBI.

Walesa had agreed to name a permanent task force to combat anti-Semitism in his country when he met earlier with Miles Lerman, a Holocaust survivor and chairman of the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Council's international relations committee.

Walesa's pledge to root out anti-Semitism came a little more than a month after his country's Roman Catholic bishops issued a statement formally condemning anti-Semitism in Poland, and acknowledging that some Poles helped Nazis kill Jews during World War II. The four-page document, unprecedented in Polish church history, was released in Warsaw on Dec. 20 and read during Catholic mass on Jan. 20. It may have been prompted by the disturbing emergence of anti-Semitism in the election campaign leading up to Walesa's landslide victory on Dec. 9.

There was a widespread whispering campaign that Walesa's rival, Prime Minister Tadeusz Mazowiecki, a devout Catholic, was of Jewish origin. Walesa himself remarked during the campaign that Jews who seek political office should identify themselves as such.

Students from Kishinev Arrive in U.S.

NEW YORK (JTA) — Four young students from Kishinev in Moldavia arrived in the U.S. to begin a program that enables Jewish youths in the Soviet republic to pursue religious studies in yeshivot abroad. They have been enrolled in Yeshiva Toras Chaim in Denver, which has designed a special curriculum for them in Jewish studies.

The youths, who range in age from 12 to 14, took courses at a yeshiva in Kishinev last spring established by the Vaad, the umbrella organization of Soviet Jewry. But that institution's full-time studies are primarily for high school graduates in their 20s and 30s.

The project was instituted by the Va'ad L'Hatzolas Nidchei Yisroel of Agudath Israel of America. The agency has been active in promoting Orthodox Judaism among Soviet Jews for a decade, dating from the pre-glasnost era.

Rabbi Chaim Freeman of Lakewood, N.J., who served as dean of the Kishinev yeshiva last fall, arranged the student exchange program with aides of the prime minister of the Moldavian republic.

Rabbi Yoel Sperka of Detroit will go to Moldavia as part of

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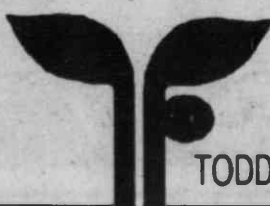
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