



THE JACOB RADER MARCUS CENTER OF THE
AMERICAN JEWISH ARCHIVES

Preserving American Jewish History

MS-603: Rabbi Marc H. Tanenbaum Collection, 1945-1992.

Series D. International Relations Activities. 1961-1992.

Box 57, Folder 2, Central America, 1983-1986.





The American Jewish Committee

Institute of Human Relations • 165 East 56 Street, New York, N.Y. 10022 • 212/751-4000 • Cable Wishcom, N.Y.

OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT

September 19, 1985

His Excellency
Dr. Fernando Berrocal
Permanent Representative of Costa Rica
to the United Nations
211 East 43rd Street
Suite 903
New York, NY 10017

Dear Dr. Berrocal:

We were very pleased to learn from Sergio Nudelstejer and David Harris of your meeting on September 13th, and especially delighted to subsequently hear of your acceptance of the invitation to address a session on Central America at our National Executive Council meeting in Miami, Florida.

The National Executive Council, which meets annually, brings together hundreds of our leaders from across the country to examine domestic and international issues of concern to the United States and American Jewry. In light of the widespread attention being paid to the Central American region, and the challenging issues posed for those countries that seek the promotion of regional stability and democracy, an examination of developments in the area -- such as the Contadora Process, political and economic trends, the position of the Jewish community -- will be the focus of a major plenary session on Sunday, November 10th at 10 a.m. Ambassador Samudio of Panama has also been invited, together with Marcel Ruff of Guatemala, President of the Federation of Jewish Communities of Central America (FEDECO), and Sergio Nudelstejer of Mexico, the Director of our Central American Office, whom you met last week.

It would be our pleasure to have you arrive in Miami at your convenience and to be our guest at the Hyatt Regency Hotel, the site of the meeting. It would be a particular honor if you could join us for our gala dinner, to be held on Saturday evening, November 9th. Among the speakers at that session will be Dame Mita Barrow of Barbados, Convenor of the Non-Governmental Forum at the Nairobi Women's Conference, and Ambassador Alan Keyes, Assistant Secretary of State-designate for International Organizations at the Department of State.

HOWARD I. FRIEDMAN, President ■ THEODORE ELLENOFF, Chair, Board of Governors ■ EDUARDE E. ELSON, Treasurer ■ SHIRLEY M. SZABAD, Secretary ■ ALFRED H. MOSES, Chair, National Executive Council ■ EMILY W. SUNSTEIN, Associate Treasurer ■ ROBERT S. JACOBS, Chair, Board of Trustees ■ DAVID M. GORDIS, Executive Vice-President ■ RITA E. HAUSER, Chair, Executive Committee ■ HONORARY PRESIDENTS: MORRIS B. ABRAM, ARTHUR J. GOLDBERG, PHILIP E. HOFFMAN, RICHARD MAASS, ELMER L. WINTER, MAYNARD I. WISHNER ■ HONORARY VICE-PRESIDENTS: NATHAN APPLEMAN, MARTIN GANG, RUTH R. GODDARD, ANDREW GOODMAN, RAYMOND F. KRAVIS, JAMES MARSHALL, WILLIAM ROSENWALD ■ MAX M. FISHER, Honorary Chair, National Executive Council ■ EXECUTIVE VICE-PRESIDENTS EMERITI: JOHN SLAYSON, BERTRAM H. GOLD ■ VICE-PRESIDENTS: NORMAN E. ALEXANDER, Westchester; RICHARD J. FOX, Philadelphia; HOWARD A. GILBERT, Chicago; ■ WESTCHESTER: RICHARD J. FOX, PHILADELPHIA: HOWARD A. GILBERT, CHICAGO: ■ DENVER: GORDON S. ROSENBLUM

His Excellency
Dr. Fernando Berrocal
September 19, 1985
Page 2

Please be kind enough to advise David Harris of your travel plans and any particular arrangements you would like us to make in your behalf.

We look forward to welcoming you in Miami in November.

Sincerely,

Leo Nevas

Leo Nevas, Chairman
International Relations Commission

Howard I. Friedman

Howard I. Friedman
President



DOCUMENTO FINAL DEL PRIMER SEMINARIO INTERAMERICANO
SOBRE EDUCACION Y DERECHOS HUMANOS

Los participantes del Primer Seminario Interamericano sobre Educación y Derechos Humanos reunido en San José del 8 al 12 de julio de 1985 y organizado por el Instituto Interamericano de Derechos Humanos con los auspicios del Instituto Blaustein, después de haber analizado ampliamente el temario de este evento cuyo programa se adjunta al presente documento, acordaron el siguiente informe final:

La vigencia de los derechos humanos constituye un principio fundamental propio del desarrollo de la civilización, en consecuencia compete a los individuos y a los Gobiernos realizar esfuerzos con el fin de alcanzar el referido objetivo.

No obstante su creciente reconocimiento, la práctica, la difusión y el conocimiento de los derechos humanos no han alcanzado su adecuada dimensión.

La liberación del género humano del oscurantismo, del prejuicio, de la ignorancia y [del estado de necesidad] hace imperiosa la urgente divulgación y práctica de los derechos humanos.

Los diferentes tipos de derechos humanos: civiles, políticos, económicos, sociales y culturales, así como los denominados de la tercera generación (derechos al desarrollo, a la paz, a disfrutar del patrimonio común de la humanidad y a un medio ambiente sano y ecológicamente equilibrado) se enuncian y se separan sólo para fines de análisis; sin embargo, su relación es totalmente interdependiente, de tal manera que la satisfacción de alguno de ellos requiere la vigencia de los demás, y que la consolidación de los derechos en cualquiera de las categorías repercute en el progreso y validez de los otros. Por ejemplo, en los derechos culturales, el derecho de la educación no tiene futuro si los civiles, políticos, económicos y sociales no se practican del todo o se practican sólo parcialmente.

En consecuencia, los Estados deben velar por el ejercicio real e integral de los derechos humanos. Igualmente responsable es la comunidad internacional -en la cual, por razones históricas, se ha generado una relación desigual- de posibilitar en todos los países la plena vigencia de los derechos humanos, tratando por todos los medios de bajar los índices de desigualdad mundial.

Por otro lado, no cabe duda de que la educación resulta un medio idóneo para coadyuvar al logro del respeto y la observancia de los derechos humanos.

La descripción del régimen constitucional y legal referente a los derechos humanos, presentado por los delegados de los países participantes en este Seminario, permite, indudablemente, destacar, en primer término, la extraordinaria coincidencia existente en el reconocimiento, dentro del marco normativo, de los derechos humanos. En segundo lugar, debe afirmarse también que tal marco jurídico facilita la existencia de procesos educativos tendientes a la incorporación o fortalecimiento de la enseñanza de los derechos humanos. Esta coincidencia no ha de sorprender si se toma en cuenta que existe un sustrato histórico-social común y que el desarrollo constitucional y legal posterior a 1948, se ve notablemente influido por la Declaración Universal de Derechos Humanos. Sin embargo, es necesario reconocer la existencia de diferencias surgidas de la particularidad propia de nuestros pueblos y que ha marcado formas distintas de encarar algunos problemas creándose por ello formas institucionales diferentes en procura de metas comunes.

Los sistemas educativos nacionales tienen, absolutamente todos, fundamento constitucional en el que se declara, entre otros, el derecho a la educación, con el correspondiente desarrollo legal e institucional. Este derecho, inspirado justamente en la concepción del hombre como sujeto de derechos que le son esenciales por su propia dignidad, se proclama de conformidad con los postulados de la Declaración Universal de Derechos Humanos, además, en algunos casos, se trasciende el contenido mínimo señalado para declarar y reconocer un desarrollo mayor, como ocurre con la gratuidad de la enseñanza en todos los niveles, ciclos y modalidades, y con la ampliación de la obligatoriedad en el proceso educativo.

Sin excepción, los países participantes han ratificado los Convenios Regionales que reiteran y desarrollan los derechos humanos en materia de educación, de tal suerte que principios tales como la igualdad de oportunidades, la proscripción de todas las formas de discriminación, la libertad de enseñanza, el derecho preferente de los padres a escoger el tipo de educación de sus hijos, entre otros, constituyen, pues, sustrato común del ordenamiento jurídico escolar o educativo. Esta circunstancia obliga a la difusión, promoción y enseñanza de los derechos humanos mediante el sistema educativo.

Con fundamento en la ideología de los derechos humanos y con elementos comunes en la legislación, reconocemos que los países americanos en general, se preocupan, hoy de sistematizar su enseñanza; esfuerzos estos que no se producen con igual intensidad en todos nuestros países. Sin embargo, de los informes presentados

en este Seminario, se desprende que se ha venido trabajando en cuatro áreas de interés común:

1. Cambios curriculares por medio de los cuales se pretende incluir la enseñanza de los derechos humanos.
2. Políticas tendientes a capacitar a los docentes de diferentes materias, en la enseñanza de los derechos humanos.
3. Actividades dirigidas a la producción de material didáctico, textos escolares, guías curriculares, publicaciones, programas de radio y televisión y otros.
4. En la educación no formal: talleres, seminarios, conferencias y otras actividades tendientes a promover el conocimiento y la observancia de esos derechos.

Los puntos coincidentes arriba comentados, permitirían constituir una base común de objetivos y acciones en materia educativa para que la meta de la enseñanza de los derechos humanos y la educación como derecho humano en sí misma, alcance niveles homogéneos y de excelencia.

Como contribución que resulta de un análisis serio y sistemático, el Primer Seminario Interamericano de Educación y Derechos Humanos presenta las siguientes conclusiones y recomendaciones.

CONCLUSIONES

1. El ordenamiento normativo, constitucional, legal e institucional, permite y facilita la incorporación de la enseñanza de los derechos humanos en los sistemas educativos nacionales.
2. La proclamación de los derechos humanos y su incorporación al ordenamiento normativo, implican la obligación del poder público de realizar acciones tendientes a la difusión, promoción y enseñanza de los derechos humanos.
3. La incorporación de la enseñanza de los derechos humanos a las acciones educativas debe ser integral, entendiéndose que los derechos humanos son consustanciales a todas las actividades educativas.
4. La enseñanza de los derechos humanos trasciende el ámbito de la educación formal, de tal suerte que la educación debe ser práctica y enmarcada en la vida cotidiana misma.

5. La metodología para la enseñanza de los derechos humanos es eminentemente formativa y vivencial más que informativa o académica.
6. El derecho a la paz, derecho fundamental de los pueblos, es requisito básico para la práctica y el desarrollo de todos y cada uno de los demás derechos humanos.

RECOMENDACIONES

I. En el ámbito curricular.

1. Incorporar en forma amplia y sistemática la enseñanza de los derechos humanos en todos los programas educativos, libros de texto y materiales didácticos.
2. Elaborar materiales y recursos audiovisuales que apoyen la enseñanza de los derechos humanos.

II. En el ámbito de la capacitación.

1. Realizar seminarios, talleres y cursos sobre los derechos humanos dirigidos a los docentes y encaminados principalmente al cambio de actitudes.
2. Apoyar y resaltar la incorporación de las universidades, escuelas normales, e institutos de educación superior, en la promoción, educación y defensa de los derechos humanos, por cuanto estas entidades tienen a su cargo la formación de profesionales, particularmente en el campo de la educación básica, y además, como es lógico, por ser centros de creación intelectual del más alto nivel.
3. Requerir al Instituto Interamericano de Derechos Humanos que brinde capacitación, asesoría o asistencia técnica en relación con los derechos humanos.
4. La enseñanza de los derechos humanos debe hacerse extensiva a otros grupos cuya función sea de servicio o salvaguarda de los ciudadanos, por ejemplo: Policía, Fuerzas Armadas y otros funcionarios públicos.

III. De carácter general.

1. Hacer llegar a los organismos internacionales y a los gobiernos mediante sus Ministerios o Secretarías encargadas de la educación, por medio del Instituto Interamericano de Derechos Humanos, un mensaje en relación con la necesidad de la enseñanza de los derechos humanos.
2. Establecer un canal de comunicación entre los países del área acudiendo a las entidades dedicadas a la educación, en torno a las investigaciones, estudios y acciones en relación a los derechos humanos.
3. Realizar experiencias piloto en forma conjunta entre dos o más países.
4. Intercambiar experiencias en relación a la forma en que se ha incorporado el tema de derechos humanos en los libros de texto y programas generales.
5. Propiciar el ejercicio de los derechos humanos en la familia, la escuela y la comunidad.
6. Enfatizar los esfuerzos para superar el analfabetismo en tanto la educación es un derechos fundamental de la humanidad, lo que redundaría, en forma colateral, en el mejor conocimiento, defensa y difusión de los derechos humanos.
7. En tanto la enseñanza de los derechos humanos postula una metodología integral e incorporada a la vida misma, se propone reforzar la participación de los medios de comunicación masiva en la responsabilidad de difundir y defender los derechos humanos.
8. Resaltar la importancia de la investigación, conservación y difusión del patrimonio cultural de los pueblos de América, elemento fundamental para lograr su verdadera identidad nacional y marco indispensable para conocer, reclamar y difundir los derechos humanos en forma consciente y auténtica. Debe resaltarse el respeto a la multiplicidad étnica y su contribución a la nacionalidad de los diferentes países americanos.
9. En virtud de que la enseñanza de los derechos humanos es un tópico complejo por sus aspectos técnicos, académicos, sociales, de novedad y actualidad, así como por su repercusión en ámbitos ajenos a la escuela, se considera necesario sugerir la formación o integración de cuerpos técnicos nacionales que, al responsabilizarse de la propuesta, coordinen las acciones correspondientes.

Luis Isch Chiriboga
ECUADOR

Adela Guerrero Reyes
MEXICO

Horacio Fernández Q.
NICARAGUA

Jaime R. Sapolski
Jaime R. Sapolski
URUGUAY

Graciela de Jauregui
Graciela de Jauregui
COLOMBIA

Ciriaco Landolfi
Ciriaco Landolfi
REPUBLICA DOMINICANA

Edmundo Marcano
Edmundo Marcano
VENEZUELA

Carlos A. Burgos
Carlos A. Burgos
EL SALVADOR

Marvin Matthews E.
Marvin Matthews E.
COSTA RICA

Oscar Fonseca Z.
Oscar Fonseca Z.
Universidad de Costa Rica

Manuel A. Hernández
Manuel A. Hernández
Ministerio de Educación
Pública. Costa Rica

David Smith
Confederación Superior Universitaria
Centroamericana

San José, 12 de julio de 1985

OCT 17 1985

memorandum

THE AMERICAN JEWISH COMMITTEE

date : October 16th, 1985
to : Marc H. Tanenbaum
from : Sergio Nudelstejer
subject : Session on Central American in the next National Executive Council Meeting.

Just as we agreed and immediately after the earthquake in Mexico, I contacted the Presidents of the Jewish Communities in Central America to invite them to participate in the Session on Central American which will take place in Miami, November 7th through the 10th.

Am glad to inform you that the following people have confirmed their presence: Mr. Marcel Ruff from Guatemala, President of the Federation of Jewish Communities of Central America and Panama (FEDECO). Dr. Mario Permuth, President of the Jewish Community of Guatemala; Mr. Gustavo Prifer, President of the Jewish Community of Costa Rica and Mr. Joseph Harari, President of the Jewish Community in Panama.

I am trying to get in touch with Mr. Helmuth Seidel, of Tegucigalpa, Honduras to assure his presence as well. Please contact Bill Gralnik and ask him to get in touch with Mr. Ernest Freund, former president of the Jewish Community in El Salvador to assure his presence as well.

Just as we discussed it over the phone, I will take care on the members of the Central American delegation as well as on the Ambassadors Dr. Fernando Berrocal from Costa Rica and Arq. David Samudio Jr. from Panama.

For your information, Tosia is joining me in this trip and we will be arriving in Miami on Wednesday, November 6th and will stay until the 11th and leave on the 12th.

I will try to find out exactly the day and time of arrival of our Central American guests and as soon as I will know, I will let you know immediately.

Coming back to the program on Central America, which will also take place Sunday November 10th at 10:30 in the morning, I think it is very important if the Ambassador in charge of Central American Affairs in the State Department - whom we recently visited-, could participate. I consider that his official point of view and representing the policy of the American Government on Central America could be of interest to the AJC. The three Ambassadors together

with the president of FEDECO could be the speakers and the other participants could be in the panel adding some information or during the ~~meeting~~ ~~period~~. I place this idea in your hands. Don't forget that to establish a criteria, it is vital to have also the official position of the U.S.A. Government on Central America.

As always, my best and cordial regards.

copies: David Harris
Shula Bahat.



Inter-Religious Task Force on Central America



475 Riverside Drive, Room 563, New York, NY 10115 tel. 212-870-3383

October 2, 1985

Dear Friend,

We are compiling an annotated list of resources on Central America which various denominations and organizations have available for use. This list will be shared with local interfaith groups and task forces to help facilitate their educational efforts and activities. We are writing to request your assistance in this project. The specific information we would like from you includes the following:

1. Trips to Central America -- Does your denomination/organization arrange study tours to Central America, have volunteer or observer programs in the region, or provide contacts for persons interested in visiting Central America? Do you have a sister church/synagogue/organization relationship with any Central American group or any type of exchange program? Is there funding available to cover or supplement expenses of trips to the area? Please include the address and phone number of the individual, office, or group one may contact for this information.
2. Speakers -- Does your denomination/organization provide speakers on Central America? Who does one contact to arrange for a speaker?
3. Advocacy -- Are there legislative advocacy networks in place within your denomination/organization? If yes, what is the procedure for becoming a part of the network?
4. Reports and Newsletters -- Are there study tour reports and/or regular newsletters available from your denomination/organization?
5. Written Resources and Audio-Visuals -- Please send us an annotated list of written and audio-visual resources which your denomination/organization has produced related to Central American issues. We are interested in what educational curricula and liturgical materials you may have available as well as books, pamphlets, films, filmstrips, and slide shows.

We would also be interested in learning about any other services, resources, or information your denomination/organization provides or produces to support work on Central American concerns. Wherever appropriate, please provide the contact name, address, and phone number of the group or office associated with that particular resource.

Our deadline for gathering these resources is November 1st, in order to publish and distribute the list as soon as possible and increase the use of these existing resources. We look forward to receiving materials and information from you soon. Thank you very much for your important contributions to this project.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Amy Shahinian".

Amy Shahinian
Resource Development Associate

THE AMERICAN JEWISH COMMITTEE

date October 21, 1985
to Marc H. Tanenbaum
from David A. Harris
subject Costa Rica

I had lunch today with Dr. Fernando Berrocal, Costa Rica's Ambassador to the U.N., at his invitation. I had originally thought it was intended as a follow-up to the telephone call from Presidential candidate Oscar Arias concerning American Jewish financial support for the campaign, but no mention was made of this during a very pleasant 90-minute meeting.

We discussed a number of issues. Dr. Berrocal is increasingly convinced, after meetings with Secretary Shultz and other senior American officials, that the U.S. will not take military action against Nicaragua, though he noted Elliott Abrams' particular hostility to the Sandinista regime. He feels instead that the U.S. will become more supportive of the Contadora Process, especially now that it enjoys the support of the four South American nations referred to as the "Lima Group," and he feels that together with the West European interest in the region, it might possibly lead to a peaceful settlement in Nicaragua which would permit free elections and a restoration of civil rights. Of course, he acknowledged that other and less optimistic scenarios were also possible.

Concerning the forthcoming Costa Rican presidential election, the current polls show his candidate, Arias, about three percentage points ahead of Calderon. Berrocal feels that Calderon has peaked in his support whereas Arias will pick up most of the 20% that represents the undecided in the Gallup Poll. It should be noted that Sergio's latest information from members of the Costa Rican Jewish community is quite different, namely, that Arias has increasingly little chance of winning the election. One of the significant aspects of the election, of course, is that whereas Arias is pledged to maintaining strong and unqualified support for Israel and the embassy in Jerusalem, Calderon may well shift the embassy to Tel Aviv.

We also discussed the current visit of President Luis Alberto Monge to Israel. The Costa Rican President is in Israel for a week of meetings with government officials and will attend the dedication of a forest in his honor.

October 21, 1985
Memo Marc H. Tanenbaum
Page 2

The U.N. decision on Arafat also came up. Costa Rica's position is, of course, clear. What is not as clear is whether Arafat will, nevertheless, use his status as a U.N. observer to attempt to speak at the General Assembly when, for example, the Palestine question comes up, possibly in early November, or whether he will challenge the legal interpretation concerning his right to speak during the week commemorating the 40th anniversary.

Interestingly, Berrocal mentioned that, in addition to having served as the Presidential chief of staff and having negotiated the key oil agreement in Costa Rica's behalf between the Central American and Caribbean nations on the one hand, and Venezuela and Mexico on the other, he was also the first resident ambassador of Costa Rica in Moscow. He spent 2½ years in the post and also travelled extensively in Eastern Europe to oversee the Costa Rican Embassies in those countries. He did not, however, mention any contact with Soviet Jews.

Concerning the N.E.C., I told him that we would discuss the matter at the Monday luncheon with Ambassador Samudio of Panama and yourself.

DAH:CH

cc: Leo Nevas
Sergio Nudelstejer



For your information

From the desk of:

JACOB KOVADLOFF

10/22/85

Director, South American Affairs

TO: MARC H. TANENBAUM



DATE: October 7, 1985

TO: Jacobo Kovadloff, South American Affairs and Spanish Media

FROM: Bernardo Fain, Buenos Aires, Argentina

SUBJECT: Explosion in a Jewish kindergarten

An extensive condemnation originated the explosion of a strong bomb at dawn of October 2 in the kindergarten Gan Aviv of the Jewish community located in the lower middle class section of Palermo, in the city of Buenos Aires, which although it did not cause victims, it did occasion serious losses in the building and breakage of glasses in neighbor houses. The kindergarten belongs to the Scholem Aleichem Organization for Jewish Education.

The bomb, placed on the threshold of the one floor ancient house destroyed masonry, glasses and didactic materials of the ~~class-rooms~~ class-rooms close to the street, and tore out the metallic entrance door.

The kindergarten, which is attended by about eighty children of 2 till 5 years old, was examined closely by Dr. David Goldberg, President of the Delegación de Asociaciones Israelitas Argentinas (DAIA); Aarón Dashevsky, President of the Vaad Hahinuch, Central Board for Jewish Education; Mauricio Korin, principal of the Scholem Aleichem Schools Organization; and Augusto Conte, member of the House of Representatives, of the left-oriented Christian Democratic Party, who came "to express his solidarity to the members of the Jewish community", as it was said to the press.

Interviewed by ~~the~~ a television ~~journalist~~ journalist, Mr. Dashevsky answered negatively when he was asked if he would consider such criminal action as a response to the retaliation ~~action~~ action executed by Israel against the OLP headquarters in Tunisia.

Korin said "We never received threats of any kind, and nobody assumed the action. During the day the school worked normally, and at 7:30 p.m. the last person left the house. Fortunately, no caretaker lives in the school and nobody was at the sidewalk when the explosion happened".

The DAIA issued a communiqué condemning energetically the criminal action, which ~~is~~ --according to the same-- "is another proof of the extensive growth of the anti-Semitic violence denounced by DAIA".

"The aggressions include reiterated intimidations and threats against schools, institutions, leaders and members of the Jewish community.

We informed on such episodes the Minister of the Interior once, and the chief of the Federal Police twice, and we claimed for measures capable to prevent the repetition of such criminal facts, as well as to elucidate them.

Because of the seriousness of this new aggression followed by ~~the~~ other telephone threats, DAIA asked Minister of the Interior an urgent meeting.

DAIA alerts public opinion on the graveness of the anti-Semitic episodes which threaten the Constitutional order and the inhabitants' security".

Guillermo Patricio Kelly, a very special personage, leader of ~~the~~ a Fascist-type youth organization thirty years ago, today a journalist and a friend of the Jews, kind of a private detective specialized in kidnappings said the press: "There are people that did not realize yet that Hitler was defeated during World War Two. Between them, the members of Triple A (a rightist organization responsible for many murders during the ~~the~~ early seventies), who continue working as in their better times, threatening journalists, placing bombs in schools and television channels and kidnapping --mainly-- members of the Jewish community".

On October 4, a two-hour meeting was held in the Ministry of the Interior on the criminal attempt against the Jewish kindergarten, in which participated the Minister Tróccoli and a delegation of DAIA.

According to Dr. David Goldberg, DAIA's President, the Minister was asked for "full guarantees, not only ~~the~~ for the Jewish community but also for all the Argentine society". ~~Minister~~ Minister Tróccoli, in turn, promised that he would take measures.

According to Goldberg, "the Jewish community feels uneasy though not intimidated". He added that the Jewish community as well as all the Argentinians, feels bound in such goals as the support of democracy, the living together peacefully and the establishing of a pluralist society, ideologically, ethnically and culturally. He finally expressed his hope that actions as the one underwent by the kindergarten will be prevent, and that the crime will be clarified.

Same day, in the evening, Raúl Galván, Undersecretary of the Interior, informed that the government decided that all public and private schools have police watchmen till next election day --the House of Representatives must renew one half of its members--, scheduled for November 3.

2
OCT 16 1985

DATE: September 30, 1985

TO: Jacobo Kovadloff, South American Affairs and Spanish Media

FROM: Bernardo Fain, Buenos Aires, Argentina

SUBJECT: Anti-Semitism in court

In two months of hearings, evidences gave by different witnesses in the trial where nine commanders in chief of the three armed forces are indicted for violation of human rights, prove that Nazism was not absent from repressive forces in their behaving toward prisoners, that Jews must pay an additional quota of suffering, and that unconscious anti-Semitism was possible to infer from expressions stated at the court by witnesses, defenders and even a Justice member of the same.

When Robert Cox, editor of English daily The Buenos Aires Herald was under arrest at the Federal Police headquarters, he saw a large swastika painted on the wall, and the inscription "Nazi - Nacional-socialismo", below.

Jacobo Timerman was asked by one of ~~his~~ his captors at the Puesto Vasco secret concentration camp how to write the English word "lobby" "Those lunatics thought they were fighting a Jewish lobby".

Former publisher of La Opinión made clear that although he was not arrested for being a Jew, he was treated worse for that reason. "They asked me if I were Jewish, I told them yes; if I were Zionist, I said yes; if I were socialist, I said yes. Such combination excited their Nazi and paranoic imagination, and made they to think that they were having in their hands the big trial against somebody who recognizes such weighty crimes".

Jaime Prats Cardona, well reputed criminologist, defender for admiral Massera, asked Timerman on the "anti-Semitic ideology" of the Process for the National Reconstruction (namely, the military régime). The old jurist avoided to say the word "anti-Semitism".

--Mr. Graiver... (addressing Timerman) excuse me (rectifying). Mr. Timerman..., said the Justice member Guillermo Ledesma.

--Do you have anything against me?, asked him Timerman.

The former publisher of La Opinión then quoted Leon Poliakoff and explained: "Take notice how terrible it is. The Graivers were judged and absolved. In spite of that such name sounds more terrible than Suárez Mason's one, who is a fugitive murderer" (General Suárez Mason, reputed big shot of the desaparecidos operations as he was chief of the Buenos Aires military area at the time most of them took place) ~~please~~).

When Juan Ramón Nazar, the editor of a newspaper in Trenque Lauquen, a small country town, was taken to the above-mentioned Puesto Vasco camp, he had to answer questions from Darío Rojas, chief of police, on a supposed secret pact between former President Perón and Gelbard, his Minister of Economy, and on the so-called Andinia Plan, which would consist in the segregation of a portion of Patagonia (a huge steppe, one third of Argentina's surface) in order to establish there a Jewish state. "I told them that the fact was unknown to me and that I considered it fantastic. All questions were markedly anti-Semitic. They were interested in Zionist penetration in the Confederación General Económica (CGE) which, according to them, it was in the hands of the Jews Gelbard, Broner and Dujovne. For them, Jews are traitors to the fatherland".

- - -

For mail carrier, gas fitter and plumber Rubén Fernando Shell, a swastika tattooed on his arm when he was a child acted in his favor, by improving his diet at the Quilmes Investigations Brigade. He is tall, blond; they call him the German. Coco or The Colonel, chief of the concentration camp told him: "With such an appearance you should be an S.S. What are you doing among those natives?" A jail warden nicknamed Espantoso titled "Nazi" himself, used to carry a key ring with a swastika and to ask Shell if he sometime attended meetings of the Argentine Hitlerian Youth. He did not inform him where such an organization met.

- - -

When Mrs. Nelba Falcone, nee Méndez, arrived at the El Banco concentration camp they inquired her persistently on her religion, if she was Catholic or Jewish. "They showed a recalcitrant anti-Semitism which used to be revealed in torture to Jewish prisoners", she said. During the night turn guards El Turco Julián used to play German records with Adolf Hitler's speeches. Another guard of El Banco liked to call El Führer himself and used to require from the captives to be saluted in the Nazi form.

- - -

Former corporal Armando Luchina, of the Federal Security Superintendency was asked by Justice member Ricardo Gil Lavedra, if he saw a swastika on the wall. "Yes. Chief of police Veira was the person whose job was to attract those who enjoy Nazi tendencies among personnel. Nazi publications were spread there, personnel used to wear green sack coats, black berets, bracelets with swastikas. They used to comment that subversion would finish when Jews end", he answered.

- - -

Miguel Angel D'Agostino offered more details on El Turco Julián's obsession. "He tortured the Jews brutally, boasted of being a Nazi, used to play German marches and planned to search into every firm in which Jews may participate. For that reason he interrogated a member of the local board of directors of Kodak".

At El Olimpo, the concentration camp under the command of the navy, captains amused themselves by obliging a Jewish lady to promenade along a corridor while striking cans and shouting "I bill fifty percent in white (legally), I bill fifty percent in black (underhandedly)".

- - -

On May 24 the witness María Mercedes Fontanela told the court that on November 1978, she and her husband were arrested.

--Are you clear on the reason of such arrest?, inquired Justice member Valerga Araoz.

--We married, and two months later my husband lodged in our house a Jewish couple. I realized that they were very involved in ~~politic~~ politics.

When the witness was cross-examined by attorney José Orgeira, defender for general Viola, he wanted to know more data on "such Jewish couple which brought problems". Not on such couple "very involved in ~~politic~~ politics".

AMERICAN JEWISH
ARCHIVES

- - -

From Alejandra Tadei's home abductors took away a copy of Marcos Aguinis' novel "La cruz invertida", crying out that such book was subversive (Marcos Aguinis, Jewish, present undersecretary of Culture of the Federal government). At the Mansión Seré (a concentration house) where she was transferred, her interrogators of the Air Force were very interested in a variety of subjects. "I represented Argentina in the chess Olympiads which took place in Israel. They were very anti-Semitic", the 24 years old young lawyer said. "I am not Jewish", she immediately explained, though nobody asked her.

- - -

Among the prisoners who share the Mansión Seré ~~room~~ with him, witness Miguel Romano named Rafael Carlos Eldestein. José Ignacio Garona, defender for aviation general Agosti asked him ~~how~~ how much time did "Selestein" stay there. "Eldestein", corrected him Romano. "How much time did you share the room with Silverstein?", insisted Garona. "Eld-estein", corrected him with a furious expression Justice Arslanian. "For certain names I...", gibbered Garona. As to avoid further difficulties, he ~~asked~~ asked: "How much time did you live in company with that man?".

- - -

When Jorge Candeloro, a ~~lawyer~~ lawyer, was abducted from his home in Neuquén, a city in the south of the country, and the house surrounded by Federal Police forces, María Orbanich went to it to accompany his wife. She was asked to show her identification papers. Then, she was looked with ~~attention~~ attention and asked: "Are you Jewish?". Before the court Mrs. Orbanich explained: "I am Yugoslavian".

The daughter of the murdered Uruguayan senator Zelmar Michelini was kidnaped in Buenos Aires and taken to the Automotores Orletti concentration camp, ~~man~~ managed by Secretary of Informations, general Otto Paladino. At the interrogations room Margarita Michelini saw Hitler's a portrait. Under such portrait people used to be tortured.

- - -

Guillermo Puerta, imprisoned in La Perla concetration camp, under the supervision of the command of the Third Army Corps, was interrogated by army-captain Barreiro, who used to oblige to be called by the nicknames Hernández and Rubio. "He smilingly told me that according to my family name, my ancestors must be Spaniards. He then asked me what was my job, defining me as an intellectual member of the bourgeoisie. According to your family name you ~~man~~ must be an anarchist. Leftists have Jewish family names", he explained didactically.

Perla Feldman nee Wainstein expounded that at the same place "my husband was forced to receive a swastika engraved on his bald head. Due to the struggle they succeeded only partially".





The American Jewish Committee

HOUSTON CHAPTER • 3930 Kirby, Suite 290 • Houston, Texas 77098 • (713) 524-1133

President:
Arthur S. Berner

Vice-Presidents:
Sandra Block
Marc Shapiro

Secretary-Treasurer:
Gary E. Rosenthal

Immediate Past President:
J. Kent Friedman

BOARD OF DIRECTORS:

Andrew Alexander
Nancy Friedman Atlas
David P. Bell
F yn Borg
Donald Brodsky
Larry W. Buck
Thomas Falk
Martin Fein
Stuart Ferer
Richard Frankoff
Gloria Goldblatt
Daniel Gordon
Alan S. Gover
Mickey Graubart
Marc Grossberg
Joseph Kaplan
Martha E. Kaplan
Molly Ann Kaplan
Milton Klein
Ruth V.H. Lack
Robert Landauer
David Lerman
Herbert A. Lesser
Steven Levy
Elton Lipnick
Julia Mazow
Miriam Mendell
David Mincberg
Gary Polland
Elaine Proler
Barry Putterman
Regina Rogers
Enid Rosenfeld
Myrna Schaffer
Arthur Schechter
Lionel Schooler
Ira B. Shepard
Gideon Toepfitz
Norma Levine Trusch
David Turkel
Roy Walter
Shirley Warshaw
Jack Weingarten
Dolores Wilkenfeld
Cynthia Wolff

ADVISORY BOARD:

Reuben W. Askane
Harold Falik
Aaron J. Farfel
Eleanor Freed
Noel Graubart
M. Robert Hecht
Irvin Kaplan
Ann Kaufman
Stephen M. Kaufman
Jack Lapin
Max Levine
Linda K. May
Muriel Phillips
Al Schulman
Malcolm Sher

Area Director
Ellen R. Cohen

Asst. Area Director
Sheldon Blehwass

Southwest Regional Director
Milton I. Toblan

July 10, 1985

Hermilo Lopez Bassols
Consul General of Mexico
2502 Fannin, Suite 200
Houston, Texas 77002

Dear Consul General Bassols:

On behalf of the American Jewish Committee, I would like to take this opportunity to thank you for meeting with us, and for being so very generous with your time. Houston is indeed fortunate to have a man of your stature and experience in our city.

We were very impressed with your candor and greatly appreciate your strong support for the State of Israel. We also welcomed your clear condemnation of any form of terrorism, your willingness to urge the Soviet Union to loosen its reins on immigration, and your cooperation in looking into the Guadalajara situation. We are sensitive to your country's position regarding statements made at the United Nations, but would only caution that silence leads to verbal violence -- from which physical violence easily follows.

We join you in your concern over Mexico's portrayal in the media and will encourage members of our own community, as well as the general community, to visit Mexico and promote your country's positive image. I would like, as well, to reiterate that the facilities of our Jewish community, including the Jewish Community Center and Goldberg B'nai B'rith Towers, are non-denominational and open to everyone.

On a more personal note, my wife, Dr. Cathy Mincberg, is a member of the Houston Independent School Board and of the Houston Community College, and is extremely concerned about educational opportunities for the minority communities. On her behalf, permit me to offer the services of her office should you have specific concerns regarding education for members of your constituency. I would also like to reiterate that the services of our AJC office or it's Executive Director, Ellen Cohen, are at your disposal -- as well as my own business and those of my other colleagues, David Neuberger, Hal Gordon, and Sara Simon.

Hermilo Lopez Bassols
Consul General of Mexico
July 10, 1985

Page 2.

It was a pleasure to make your acquaintance and I look forward to further such meetings.

AMERICAN JEWISH
ARCHIVES

Kindest regards,

David M. Mincberg, Chairperson
International Affairs Commission

DMM:ab

bcc: David Neuberger
Hal Gordon
Sara Simon
Art Berner
✓ Marc Tanenbaum



OCT 2 1985

copies to: David Harris
David Gordis

memorandum

THE AMERICAN JEWISH COMMITTEE

date: September 23rd, 1985

to: Marc H. Tanenbaum

from: Sergio Nudelstejer

subject: Earthquake in Mexico and its consequences within the Jewish Community

Please find enclosed a report of the happenings of the first five days after the two earthquakes that shook Mexico City. This report, more than pointing out the damages in Mexico City, which you must know through the information media, gives a painful view of how it affected the Jewish Community in Mexico City. In later reports I will be in the position of giving a more ample and detailed view of the happenings.

Receive my best cordial regards and my sincerest wishes for a happy and healthy New Year.



The American Jewish Committee

OFICINA PARA MEXICO Y AMERICA CENTRAL Av. Ejercito Nacional 533-302 Mexico, D.F. - Tel. 531-07-33, 531-47-76 - Cable: Wishcom, Mexico

EARTHQUAKE LEADS TO DISASTER IN MEXICO CITY

Jewish Community Sufferes Damages Caused by the Catastrophe

The earthquake that shook all of Mexico City this last Thursday, September 19th, at 7:20 in the morning, has been the worst ever suffered here throughout the entire history of this country. It affected different areas of the city, some of them with a large population and some others of a population of scarce means. Until today, when I am writing this report, it has been officially informed that 750 buildings have totally or partially been affected, among them a certain number of hotels. Up to this moment, the Mexican Government has officially announced 5,000 dead; a large number of people that are still buried under the debris; an unknown number of people who have disappeared.

From the first moments of the disaster, the Jewish Community through its representative body the Comité Central Israelita de Mexico (Central Jewish Committee of Mexico) offered and gave help to all needy, mainly to the great number of people who lost their homes. For this purpose they organized four asylum centers or shelters in different parts of the city and among the most needy. The community provided these shelters or asylum centers with cots, blankets, hot food, medications, and First Aid services. Also, a large group of Jewish youth works as volunteers at the Mexican Red Cross and with the Volunteer Corps. A group of Jewish building engineers gave their knowledge and heavy equipment to help out wherever necessary; Jewish M.D's and medical students have been working in places where their services have been required, so much so, that the Jewish presence in this crucial moment has been strongly felt.

In so far the after effects of this tragedy within the Jewish Community itself, we can say that the building of the Ashkenazi Kehila in ACapulco Street Number 70 has been seriously damaged, specially from the first through the fourth floors. The Great Synagogue inside this building is in fairly good condition. This building housed the following offices:

MAYNARD I. WISNER, President ■ DONALD FELDSTEIN, Executive Vice-President
HOWARD I. FRIEDMAN, Chairman, Board of Governors ■ THEODORE ELLENOFF, Chairman, National Executive Council ■ ROBERT L. PELZ, Chairman, Board of Trustees ■
E. ROBERT GOODKIND, Treasurer ■ MERVIN H. RISEMAN, Secretary ■ ELAINE PETSCHKE, Associate Treasurer ■ ALFRED H. MOSES, Chairman, Executive Committee ■
Honorary Presidents: MORRIS B. ABRAM, ARTHUR J. GOLDBERG, PHILIP E. HOFFMAN, RICHARD MAASS, ELMER L. WINTER, ■ Honorary Vice-Presidents: NATHAN APPLEMAN, MARTIN GANG,
RUTH R. BODDARD, ANDREW GOODMAN, JAMES MARSHALL, WILLIAM ROSENWALD ■ MAX M. FISHER, Honorary Chairman, National Executive Council ■ MAURICE GLINERT, Honorary Treasurer
■ Executive Vice-Presidents Emeriti: JOHN SLAWSON, BERTRAM H. GOLD ■ Vice-Presidents: MORTON K. BLAUSTEIN, Baltimore; EDWARD E. ELSON, Atlanta; RICHARD J. FOX, Philadelphia; ROBERT D. GRIES,
Cleveland; RITA E. HAUSER, New York; HARRIS L. KEMPNER, JR., Galveston; JOHN D. LEVY, St. Louis; HAMILTON M. LOEB, JR., New York; LEON RABIN, Dallas; GORDON S. ROSENBLUM, Denver;
JOHN H. STEINHART, San Francisco ■

the Comité Central Israelita de México (Jewish Central Committee); the Mexican Council of Jewish Women; the B'nei Brith; the Jewish Agency; the ~~Keren~~ Keren Kayemeth Leisrael; the Zionist Federation; the Hebrew-Idish Seminar for Teachers; the Ashkenazi Kehila; the Rabbinate; and a Kosher Restaurant. Till this moment, the building remains closed and will stay so until it is officially established the range of the damage and how soon can it be repaired. We know of no other Community Center of Synagogue in Mexico City or throughout the Mexican Republic that might be damaged.

We do know of six members of the Jewish Community that died: two couples that went down with the building where they lived and two other people that died of a heart attack produced by the hysteria and impact of the moment. They were all buried in the Jewish Cemetery this last Sunday.

We also know that in several of the buildings that fell down, specially in the residential areas such as Roma, Hipodromo, Condesa and Colonia del Valle, lived many Jewish families, but up to this moment nothing has been reported or established as to their whereabouts and it can very possibly be that some of these people are still lying under the debris.

Certain sections of downtown Mexico City where heavy industries, small factories, clothing stores, etc. were to be found, suffered heavy losses and great damage. Among these, many belonged to Jews and unfortunately went down during the earthquake, disappearing and causing great financial wreckage.

Israel, the same as many other countries all over the world, among the the USA, sent two planes with medicines, special equipment for disaster zones, as well as trained personnel who immediately contacted the Mexican Government and are working in serach of bodies and cleaning up the wreck.

The Jewish Community has identified itself with its fellow-citizens in these moments of grief, pain, loss and suffering, but has high hopes that all, together, will reconstruct all that the two earthquakes with Nature's force destroyed.

Mexico City, September 23rd, 1985

OCT 17 1985

CONSEJO CENTRAL COMUNITARIO HEBREO DE PANAMA

APARTADO POSTAL 6-6292 El Dorado
PANAMA, REP. DE PANAMA
TELEFONO: 26-0760

CONGREGACIONES

SOC. ISRAELITA DE BENEFICENCIA
SHEVET AHIM, PANAMA

SOC. AGUDATH AHIM, COLON

CENTRO ISRAELITA MAGEN DAVID,
DAVID

AFILIADOS

B'NAI B'RITH "IRVING ZAPP" DE PANAMA

W.I.Z.O. "YARDENIA"

W.I.Z.O. "SARA HANONO"

W.I.Z.O. "REBECA SIEFF"

W.I.Z.O. "HATIKVA"

INSTITUTO ALBERTO EINSTEIN

ACADEMIA HEBREA DE PANAMA

TNUAT NOAR MACABI B' PANAMA

CLUB LAS MAÑANITAS

CENTRO CULTURAL HEBREO DE PANAMA

COMITE DEL KEREN HAYESOD

COMITE DE IGROT

Panama, October 3, 1985

Rabbi Marc H. Tanenbaum
Director
International Relations Department
The American Jewish Committee
165 East 56 Street
New York, N.Y. 10022
U. S. A.

Dear Rabbi Tanenbaum:

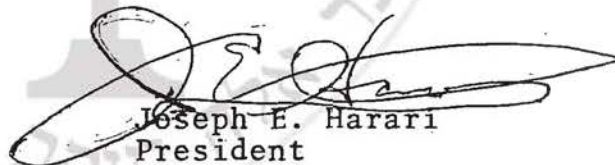
Thank you for your good wishes and receive from
Joyce and me a warm Shana Tova.

It is for me a honor to accept your kind invitation
to address a session of the National Executive
Council of the A.J.C., on Sunday Morning, November
10 this year.

Even though the present situation of Jewish Communities
in Central America is a difficult issue, it could be
focus at the light of the FEDECO point of view. The
most important challenge now, I think, is to avoid the
FEDECO disappearing, because the exodus of Jewish
Communities in Central America.

Consequently, as a FEDECO Governor, I am very interested
in this important meeting.

Sincerely,


Joseph E. Harari
President

cc: Marcel Ruff

/na



The American Jewish Committee

Institute of Human Relations • 165 East 56 Street, New York, N.Y. 10022 • 212/751-4000 • Cable Wisicom, N.Y.

October 16, 1985

Mr. Marcel Ruff, President
FEDECO
Apartado Postal 502
Guatemala, Guatemala

Dear Marcel,

In Marc Tanenbaum's absence, I hasten to respond to your letter of September 30th.

We are all delighted that you will be joining us for the National Executive Council session in Miami next month. Your participation will add an important dimension to our meeting, and we are looking forward to the opportunity to introduce you to our officers and members from around the country.

I enclose the tentative schedule for the N.E.C. and would call to your attention two particular sessions. On Saturday morning, November 9th, we will have an informal breakfast at which we would like to discuss the current situation in Central America, and programmatic possibilities for A.J.C., as seen from the perspective of the Jewish community leaders from the individual countries in the region. Gustavo Prifer, Mario Permuth, Yosef Harari, among others whom we are waiting to hear from, are expected to attend. The breakfast will be followed by a Shabbat service.

On Sunday morning, November 10th, we will have a major plenary session, to be held on an off-the-record basis, on Central America. The principal participants will be, in addition to yourself, Ambassador Fernando Berrocal, Costan Rican Permanent Representative to the United Nations; Ambassador David Samudio, Jr., Panamanian Permanent Representative to the United Nations; and Sergio Nudelstejer. The chairman of the session will be Mr. Edward Elson of Atlanta, Georgia, who is an officer of A.J.C. and outstanding civic leader. It will last two hours, the first hour of which will be presentations by the speakers, to be followed by comments from our other Central American guests, discussion and questions from the audience.

HOWARD I. FRIEDMAN, President ■
THEODORE ELLENOFF, Chair, Board of Governors ■ ALFRED H. MOSES, Chair, National Executive Council ■ DAVID M. GORDIS, Executive Vice-President ■
EDWARD E. ELSON, Treasurer ■ SHIRLEY M. SZABAD, Secretary ■ DAVID H. PEIREZ, Associate Treasurer ■ RITA E. HAUSER, Chair, Executive Committee ■
Honorary Presidents: MORRIS B. ABRAM, ARTHUR J. GOLDBERG, PHILIP E. HOFFMAN, RICHARD MAASS, ELMER L. WINTER, MAYNARD I. WISHNER ■ Honorary Vice-Presidents: NATHAN APPLEMAN, MARTIN GANG, RUTH R. GOBDARD, ANDREW GOODMAN, RAYMOND F. KRAVIS, JAMES MARSHALL, WILLIAM ROSENWALD ■ MAX M. FISHER, Honorary Chair, National Executive Council ■
Executive Vice-Presidents Emeriti: JOHN SLAWSON, BERTRAM H. GOLD ■ Vice-Presidents: NORMAN E. ALEXANDER, Westchester; HOWARD A. GILBERT, Chicago; ALAN C. GREENBERG, New York; ROBERT H. HAINES, New York; CHARLOTTE G. HOLSTEIN, Syracuse; ANN P. KAUFMAN, Houston; ROBERT L. PELZ, Westchester; IDELLE RABIN, Dallas; BRUCE M. RAMER, Los Angeles; DAVID F. SQUIRE, Boston; RICHARD L. WEISS, Los Angeles ■

Mr. Marcel Ruff, President
October 16, 1985
Page 2

In addition to these two sessions devoted exclusively to Central America, we hope you will feel free to attend other sessions of interest to you and the gala dinner on Saturday evening at which we would like to invite you to sit as an honored guest at the dais. (Please note that dais guests are asked to wear a tuxedo or dark suit.) There will also be opportunity for casual get-togethers and further discussion on issues of mutual concern during the course of the four days.

Please advise us of your travel arrangements. In the meantime, I shall make reservations for you at the Hyatt Regency Hotel from November 7th to 10th, but these dates can, of course, be changed to accommodate your schedule.

I would also appreciate receiving a copy of your biography at your earliest convenience.

If there is any way in which any of us can be of assistance in your preparations for the N.E.C., please do not hesitate to contact me.

With best wishes.

Sincerely,



David A. Harris
Deputy Director
International Relations Department

DAH:CH
Enclosure

cc: Marcel Ruff



FEDERACION DE COMUNIDADES JUDIAS DE CENTROAMERICA
Y PANAMA

c.70/85

September 30, 1985

Rabbi Marc H. Tanenbaum
Director,
International Relations Department
The American Jewish Committee
165 East 56 Street
New York, N.Y. 10022, U. S. A.

Dear Rabbi Tanenbaum,


I confirm my letter to you of last month, thanking you for your letter dated July 29th., in which you invited me to speak during the National Executive Council session of the A. J. C. in Miami Beach, on November 10th, mentioning to you that I was considering the possibility of being present for this occasion.

Shortly ago I had the pleasure of talking with Sergio Nudelstejer when he called me from your offices, when he visited you in New York, and confirmed the fact that I would be most happy to accept your kind invitation and shall be present for such an event.

Could you kindly send me a schedule of the Meeting. I understand that it will run from the 7th. to the 10th. of November. When would you want me to assist?

I take this opportunity to send to you and your whole family, Eva's and my own best wishes for a good New Year. LE SHANA TOVA.

Cordially,


Marcel Ruff
President

c.c. Sergio Nudelstejer
Gobernadores

11-10-1985

THE AMERICAN JEWISH COMMITTEE

date October 11, 1985
to George Gruen
from David A. Harris
subject N.E.C.

Howard Friedman has indicated that he would like to highlight the international terrorism issue as one of the principal themes in his major address at the N.E.C. Accordingly, would you please prepare a maximum of two pages of key themes to be addressed, incorporating your own extensive work with respect to the phenomenon in the Middle East and the discussion at the last Steering Committee on the issue. Rita should be able to locate for you Marc's summer correspondence with Vice President Bush and Ambassador Oakley on the subject of terrorism and the specific suggestion for a national conference. Sidney may also have some thoughts on international legal instrumentalities, covenants, etc. that we may want to propose.

The deadline imposed on us from "the 8th floor" is Wednesday, October 16th.

Many thanks.



DAH:CH

cc: Shula Bahat
Marc Tanenbaum

From *Mad*

W.U. APR 28 1986
5205 MILL
RENO NV 89502 21AM

Western Union Mailgram®



1-014221A111 04/21/86 ICS IPMRYNJ RNO NYAA
02851 RENO NV 04-21 0320P PST RYNI

MR HOWARD I FRIEDMAN , PRESIDENT
THE AMERICAN JEWISH COMMITTEE
165 E 56TH ST
NEWYORK NY 10022

AMERICAN JEWISH
ARCHIVES

1-177591G111 04/21/86
ICS IPMIIHA IISS
IISS F M TRT 21 1758
PMS NYK NY
TNB287 DFN654 111610248700
UTNX CO CR8J 145
SANJOSECR 145/141 21 1657 VIA TRT
MR. HOWARD I. FRIEDMAN
PRESIDENT THE AMERICAN
JEWISH COMMITTEE
165 E. 56TH STREET
NEWYORK, NEWYORK
ESTIMADO SENOR:

EN NOMBRE DEL SENOR PRESIDENTE ELECTO, DR. OSCAR ARIAS SANCHEZ,
LA COMISION DEL TRASPASO DEL PODER EJECUTIVO SE COMPLACE EN
INVITAR A USTED, A LOS ACTOS Y CEREMONIAS DE LA TOMA DE POSESION
DEL CARGO DE PRESIDENTE DE LA REPUBLICA, QUE SE LLEVARAN A CABO
LOS DIAS SIETE, OCHO Y NUEVE DE MAYO PROXIMO.

SE ESPERA LA LLEGADA DE LAS MISIONES E INVITADOS ESPECIALES
EL DIA SEIS DE MAYO PROXIMO. SE HA PREPARADO PARA SU SALIDA EL
DIA NUEVE.

LAS INVITACIONES PARA LOS ACTOS Y RECEPCIONES LES SERAN ENTREGADAS
A SU INGRESO AL PAIS.

EN ESPERA DE SU RESPUESTA A LA MAYOR BREVEDAD POSIBLE, LO SALUDO
CON TODA CONSIDERACION.

RODRIGO MADRIGAL NIETO
VICEPRESIDENTE DE LA COMISION
DEL TRASPASO DEL PODER EJECUTIVO.
3174 CPE CR

COL 165 56TH SENOR: 3174
NNN
1759 EST

18:22 EST

MGMCOMP

cc: *Tanenbaum*

5241 (R 7/82)

MAR 28 1986



Old Country Barn

3/23/86

Gentlemen,

I was shocked, as a Jew, to read that the American Jewish Committee supports Reagan's attempts to give more arms to the Contras. I thought there was a description in Jewish writings that clearly defines the basis for a "just war". Reagan's war surely does not meet these requirements.

It is difficult enough to try to understand my country's domestic and foreign issues, to be able to distinguish between extreme differences in ^{the} philosophy of Communism vs. Democracy and to recognize real military threats from the threat of a threat. The recent statements of Reagan,



Old Country Barn

1a

Burhanon, Regan, etc have contained so many lies, red smear statements and distortions that it has tended to completely obscure the real issues in Nicaragua. It was very reminiscent of the "red baiting" scare tactics of Senator McCortley in the early 1950's. I urge you to recognize that the use of such tactics poses a much greater threat to the Jewish Community and to American Democracy than Nicaragua ever could constitute in this age of the atomic bomb and intercontinental missiles.

A retraction of your position is certainly in order.

Sincerely,

Stanley Tannenbaum

STAN TANNENBAUM
18A CELTIS PLAZA
CRANBURY, NJ 08512



The American Jewish Committee

Institute of Human Relations • 165 East 56 Street, New York, N.Y. 10022 • 212/751-4000 • Cable Wishcom, N.Y.

January 17, 1983

I hope you have already received the list of hotels and rates. This morning I spoke to our travel agent who told me that the air transportation from Miami and return to Miami is \$793. In order to insure that the money for the airline tickets will be received in time, the AJC is paying the agent. Therefore, in addition to the _____ for the hotel deposit, would you add _____, totaling _____. Checks should be made out to the American Jewish Committee.

If you have any specific needs -- special meals (kosher, vegetarian, etc.), seating (smoking, non-smoking, first class, etc.) -- please let me know as soon as you can.

I have enclosed an article by Sergio Nudelstejer regarding Central America that appeared in the 1974-75 American Jewish Year Book. In the introductory paragraphs regarding the general situation in each country, the information is outdated, notably in the cases of El Salvador and Nicaragua. Nevertheless, the sections regarding the Jewish community -- its history, its makeup, its activities -- are informative and interesting and I am sure will be helpful in preparing for our mission.

By the end of next week I hope to be able to send you a complete schedule including meetings and tours.

Cordially,

David Geller
Director of Special Projects
Foreign Affairs Department

DG/es

Enclosures
83-560-4

[start]

Original documents
faded and/or illegible



Central America

In 1821 the small republics of Central America—Guatemala, Honduras, El Salvador, Nicaragua, and Costa Rica—became independent of Spain. For these nations, which have geography, history, and language in common, it has been a turbulent century-and-a-half. There has been bitter economic, political, and territorial rivalry between them, which has given way to solidarity only in times of human suffering brought on by earthquakes and hurricanes that periodically ravage the region. Political life in the republics was dominated by the army, allied with landowners and big business. For many years the governments of Guatemala, El Salvador, Nicaragua, and Honduras have been headed by generals. Only Costa Rica had an elected government.

All the countries face serious problems of unemployment, poverty, disease and illiteracy. Their economies, which are largely dependent on agricultural production, are shaken by fluctuating world commodity prices. Generally, the governments appear to lack the desire, as well as the funds, to solve their social problems.

In an attempt to promote their economic growth, the five republics, with a total population of less than 17 million, formed the Central American Common Market in 1961. Its start was so encouraging that it was hailed as a model for developing nations. But its success was short-lived. The market has been crippled ever since 1969, when two of its members—El Salvador and Honduras—went to war. The immediate cause was reports of atrocities committed by Honduras against Salvadorans living there, after El Salvador defeated Honduras in a soccer game. Political nationalism, nurtured by both military régimes, escalated until El Salvador's army invaded Honduras to save the more than half a million Salvadorans in that country. Four days of fighting brought 20,000 casualties. El Salvador's army withdrew only after the Organization of American States sent military observers to patrol the border. Despite diplomatic efforts, peace has not yet been restored. Trade between the two countries stopped, and Honduras, unable to cope with its growing trade deficit, left the market.

The future of the Central American countries depends on the rescue of the Central American Common Market for the economic integration of the area and on social reform.

Guatemala

The election of President Kjijel Langerud ushered in a new era in the country's political and social development. Outgoing President Colonel Carlos M. Arana Osorio (1970-1974) of the Partido Institucional Democratico (PID; Institutional Democratic party), established by right-wing military sectors, succeeded to some extent in pacifying the country by using the army and the police to put down the decade-old fighting between the left and right guerrillas. A state of siege imposed in November 1970 failed to put a stop to this internal warfare, which left an estimated 1,000 dead, including moderate political and labor leaders, Communists, students, professors, journalists, and other opponents of the government. The siege was lifted a year later; and while internal peace was not fully restored, no major terrorist incidents occurred.

With world agricultural prices rising, Guatemala's economic statistics brightened, though this meant little to the largely impoverished masses. There was also some progress in implementing the government's ambitious development program. In recent years the number of agricultural workers has declined, while industrial and other urban labor has shown an increase.

JEWISH COMMUNITY

The origin of the Guatemalan Jewish community can be traced back to 1848. Documents in the archives of the Inquisition in Mexico City, where the Inquisition had its seat until 1821, indicate that Marranos had lived in the country as far back as the colonial period.

The first Jewish immigrants, who came from Germany and were related to each other in varying degrees, were the forerunners of industrial development in Guatemala. In 1870 they organized the first communal group, and were joined by a small number of Sephardi Jews who arrived a few years later. By 1917 the settlement comprised some 40 Jewish families, who gathered on some occasions, especially to celebrate Rosh Ha-shanah and Yom Kippur. The first Jewish

cemetery, whose beginnings can be traced to 1915, was located within the general cemetery of Guatemala City. The earliest gravestone, dated June 6, 1903, was that of Sofia Alexander. In the 1920s, there was an influx of East European Jews, most of whom, however, considered Guatemala as a place of transit until they could immigrate to the United States.

The first synagogue, named Maguen David, was constructed in 1924-25 by the Sephardi community, which in those days numbered 70 families.

By 1929 the Ashkenazi community had its own board of directors; its first president was Julio Siedler. It was not until 1965 that the Ashkenazim built a Hebrew Center, with a synagogue and social hall; they had occupied rented premises since 1930. The Jews of German origin, who in 1930 numbered only 100, organized a Jewish Society for Welfare and Protection (*Sociedad Israelita de Protección y Beneficencia*). By 1943 their number had increased to 250. This group later established the Reform Beth-El congregation, of which all Jews of German origin were now members.

The influx of refugees from Nazi persecution made possible for the Jews of Guatemala to contribute to the commercial and industrial development of the country by establishing large department stores, import and export businesses, and textile, plastics, toy, and leather-goods factories.

Communal Life

At present, the community numbered some 300 families (about 1,200 people), most of them Guatemalan-born and some third-generation natives. Intermarriages reached a high of 28 per cent in 1963.

The representative institution, the Central Board of the Jewish Community of Guatemala, consisted of the three existing congregations: Maguen David (Sephardi); Hebrew Center (Ashkenazi) and Beth-El (Jews of German origin). Its current president was Roberto Stein. The Central Board had jurisdiction over all matters pertaining to the organization and the safety of the community, which it represented in official business with the authorities. The Jewish Sport Club provided for several communities a gathering place for social and sports activities. The patriarch of the Jewish community, the 92-year-old Enrique Engel, continued to be active and very much concerned about the fate of the Jews in that country.

Religious services were held in the three synagogues of these communities on the Sabbath and on holidays, but attendance has

cemetery, whose beginnings can be traced to 1915, was located within the general cemetery of Guatemala City. The earliest gravestone, dated June 6, 1903, was that of Sofia Alexander. In the 1920s, there was an influx of East European Jews, most of whom, however, considered Guatemala as a place of transit until they could immigrate to the United States.

The first synagogue, named Maguen David, was constructed in 1924-25 by the Sephardi community, which in those days numbered 70 families.

By 1929 the Ashkenazi community had its own board of directors; its first president was Julio Siedler. It was not until 1965 that the Ashkenazim built a Hebrew Center, with a synagogue and social hall; they had occupied rented premises since 1930. The Jews of German origin, who in 1930 numbered only 100, organized a Jewish Society for Welfare and Protection (Sociedad Israelita de Protección y Beneficencia). By 1943 their number had increased to 250. This group later established the Reform Beth-El congregation, of which all Jews of German origin were now members.

The influx of refugees from Nazi persecution made possible for the Jews of Guatemala to contribute to the commercial and industrial development of the country by establishing large department stores, import and export businesses, and textile, plastics, toy, and leather-goods factories.

Communal Life

At present, the community numbered some 300 families (about 1,200 people), most of them Guatemalan-born and some third-generation natives. Intermarriages reached a high of 28 per cent in 1963.

The representative institution, the Central Board of the Jewish Community of Guatemala, consisted of the three existing congregations: Maguen David (Sephardi), Hebrew Center (Ashkenazi) and Beth-El (Jews of German origin). Its current president was Roberto Stein. The Central Board had jurisdiction over all matters pertaining to the organization and the safety of the community, which it represented in official business with the authorities. The Jewish Sport Club provided for several communities a gathering place for social and sports activities. The patriarch of the Jewish community, the 92-year-old Enrique Engel, continued to be active and very much concerned about the fate of the Jews in that country.

Religious services were held in the three synagogues of these communities on the Sabbath and on holidays, but attendance has

considerably fallen off. At the time of writing, none of the congregations had an ordained rabbi.

The only Jewish school in Guatemala, the Instituto Albert Einstein, under the direction of Dean Pablo Kopolowicz, was built in 1957. The current enrollment in its kindergarten, elementary grades, and high school was 150 students. It offered, in addition to the required secular curriculum, courses in Hebrew and several Jewish subjects.

Civil Rights

The constitution of Guatemala, whose population of almost six million was 90 per cent Catholic, guaranteed freedom of worship for all. Although Jews enjoyed full equality, some newspapers and periodicals now and then published antisemitic, and more recently, anti-Zionist material. This was especially so during the 1973 Yom Kippur war when, for example, the Guatemala City *Impacto* (October 21, 1973) carried an article claiming that the Jewish community had sent \$25 million to Israel—which was later denounced by the *El Salvador Reporte* as a violation of law—and that 10,000 volunteers were standing ready in Central America to fight for Israel. Ten days later, *La Nación* carried antisemitic remarks allegedly made by Benjamin Franklin, to which the author appended a statement supporting the Arab states. Other publications joined the campaign, among them *Ultima Hora* and *El Imparcial*. Understandably, the Jewish community was alarmed.

For the last three decades, there has been no immigration of Jews to Guatemala, except for a few relatives of Guatemalan Jewish citizens who were permitted to enter the country. Among young Jews there was a group of quite successful professionals who had official standing with the government. The community's relationship with the Catholic church was positive, with frequent contact between the two.

Relations With Israel

The government of Guatemala actively supported the creation of the State of Israel in 1947, through the efforts of its representative in the United Nations, Jorge García Granados, who was a member of the Comisión Especial de las Naciones Unidas para Palestina (Special UN Commission for Palestine). Dr. García Granados described his tireless labors in the book, *Así Nació Israel* ("Thus Was Israel Born"), published in 1949.

Since then, the ties between the two countries have been very close. Former President Arana paid an official visit to Israel in 1972. The Guatemalan-Israeli Cultural Institute has been successful in fostering cooperation between the two nations. In this area Erich Heinemann, honorary general consul of Israel in Guatemala, was making an outstanding contribution.

The present Israel ambassador in Guatemala was Brigadier General Itzhak Pundak.

El Salvador

Colonel Arturo Armando Molina, who was sworn in as the republic's new president in 1972 after a stormy electoral campaign, faced innumerable serious economic and political problems. Although the country enjoyed gains from its high-grade coffee in European and other markets, its almost four million people still suffered from their war with Honduras, despite diplomatic talks in Mexico City. The economic burdens resulting from the 1969 war, and the subsequent paralysis of trade with Honduras, called for badly needed reforms of the semi-feudal land tenure system and the hardly less outmoded industrial enterprise in the larger towns. All this was aggravated by the perennial problem of overpopulation. The country had one of the highest population densities in Latin America—39.3 per cent for the urban population.

JEWISH COMMUNITY

Jewish life in El Salvador dates back to the first half of the 19th century, when a group of French Sephardi Jews settled in the country. They were followed by other French Jews, mostly Alsaticans, in the second half of the 19th century and by some East European and Oriental Jews in the 1920s. A small number of refugees from Nazi Germany arrived after World War II. Their total remained quite small, with the present Jewish community counting some 120 families, or 369 persons.

The Comunidad Israelita of El Salvador, officially established in 1944, has been the central communal and representative body. Besides its current president, George Salomon, the outstanding leaders in organizing and maintaining Jewish life have been Herbert de Sola and

Eugenio Liebes, both deceased. Liebes was president of the Jewish community for many years. The Jewish cemetery, established in 1945, was supervised by the Hevra Kaddisha.

The community's synagogue and social center were established in 1950. In earlier years, services and Jewish activities took place in the homes of community members. Since 1958, religious life has been maintained by Rabbi Alexander Granat. Besides teaching religion and Bible to boys in preparation for their *bar-mitzvah*, he has been giving a course on the Bible and its origin to non-Jews, thereby improving Christian-Jewish relations.

No Jewish school existed in El Salvador. Its school-age children, numbering some 30, were taught Hebrew by a volunteer teacher, Mrs. Perla Meissner.

The El Salvador Zionist Organization was founded in 1945, and WIZO, the Women's International Zionist Organization, somewhat later. The community also had a youth group, called Noar Shelanu.

Civil Rights

The constitution guaranteed freedom of worship to all Salvadorans, who were predominantly Catholic. The government has taken a firm stand against discrimination and fostered a healthy relationship among the various religious groups. Very sporadically, the press has carried some antisemitic references, and a number of anti-Jewish books and brochures have been published.

Some Jews have excelled and held high public positions. Among these were Carlos Dreyfus, who became governor of the State of San Salvador; Benjamin Bloom, who donated to the country a modern children's hospital bearing his name; and, more recently, Ernesto Freund, who was director of the El Salvador Board of Tourism.

Relations With Israel

The Israel-El Salvador Cultural Institute, founded in 1956, brought about an active cultural interchange between the two countries. At the same time, Israel honorary general consul in El Salvador, Ernesto Liebes, worked to impart wider knowledge of Israeli culture. Brigadier General Itzhak Pundak, Israel ambassador to El Salvador as well as to Guatemala, did much to bring about close relations between the State of Israel and El Salvador.

Honduras

Chief of State Colonel Oswaldo López Arellano, who had been constitutional president from 1965 to 1971 and returned to power in a bloodless military coup in December 1972, initiated a popular revolution in an effort to save the country's rich natural resources and to achieve an agricultural reform. Having dissolved the National Congress and political parties, and set aside the constitution, he has adopted a so-called national development program to institute urgent reforms in the still primitive banana-exporting economy. After the 1969 war, a number of public-works projects were initiated with foreign aid. Relations between Honduras and El Salvador remained strained, since no settlement could be reached on frontier demarcation despite a series of talks between their respective diplomats at Mexico City.

The population of Honduras was 2,952,000, with 317,000 in Tegucigalpa, its capital. The 1970 annual income per capita was \$251. The illiteracy index was 43 per cent. The great majority was Catholic; all other religions enjoyed freedom of worship.

JEWISH COMMUNITY

Marranos lived in Honduras since colonial times, when the country was part of the Capitanía General de Guatemala (General Captaincy of Guatemala). The proceedings of the Inquisition attested to their presence. Very little else was known about them.

Historical sources recorded that a Jew, named Jacobo Baiz, who lived in this country (1843-1899) and, as confidant of President Marco Aurelio Soto, averted an expedition of mercenaries allegedly prepared in the United States against Honduras.

A small number of Jews reached Honduras in the 19th century. Immigrants from Central Europe began to arrive in 1920. Another few families from Poland came in 1928. In 1935 Honduras opened its doors to German Jewish scientists and educators, but very few came. Four years later, the government restricted the entry of Jews. However, many Jews were saved during World War II when Honduran consuls issued visas and passports to them, often illegally. Thus, in the years before and after World War II, the Jewish community grew. By 1947 it numbered 129; another 64 Jews came a year later. The newcomers gathered in private homes for religious services and social and communal activities, particularly to aid more recent immigrants.

There was some emigration of Jews in the years following, so that the community today numbered 150. Of these, 86 lived in Tegucigalpa, the capital of Honduras; 53 in San Pedro Sula, a commercial and industrial center, and the rest were scattered in other cities like Choluteca, Comayagua, and Tela. According to the 1967 census, 42 of the 86 Jews of Tegucigalpa were children below the age of 18. Of these, 22 were offsprings of mixed marriages.

Communal life was minimal. The Comunidad Hebrea de Tegucigalpa sponsored some educational activities for young people. Its president was Helmut Seidel. WIZO and a youth organization, Maccabi Hatzair, carried on limited activities, as did the Keren Kayemet le-Yisrael.

Honduras had no Jewish schools. Youngsters and children wishing to study Jewish subjects gathered in private homes to do so. They generally participated in camp activities as well as in youth seminars, which were annually organized in different countries of the region by the Federation of Jewish Communities of Central America and Panama.

Honduras had only one synagogue, built 15 years ago in the city of San Pedro Sula. There was no rabbi or spiritual leader; religious services were conducted by a member of the community.

Civil Rights

Predominantly Catholic like the other Central American republics, Honduras guaranteed freedom of worship to all other religions. There was no overt anti-Jewish discrimination, though from time to time the press carried antisemitic material. A large group of Palestinians living in San Pedro Sula has been used politically to express antisemitic and anti-Israel sentiments. While the community's relations with the Catholic Church have been good, there has been no dialogue between the two.

Relations With Israel

Relations between Honduras and Israel have been excellent, mainly as a result of the work of the Israeli-Hondurian Cultural Institute. Israel Ambassador to Honduras Eli Nevo was also ambassador to Costa Rica, and had his office in the Israel embassy in San José.

Nicaragua

The earthquake that virtually destroyed the republic's capital, Managua, on December 23, 1972, left an estimated 10,000 dead and 20,000 injured, and destroyed the homes of about half the city's 400,000 inhabitants as well as most of the government and business buildings. The country's small industrial sector, which was located in the suburbs, was affected only insofar as Managua's communications and utilities had been knocked out.

The disaster's political consequence was the public reemergence of General Anastasio Somoza Debayle, whose family has dominated Nicaraguan politics and economics since the 1930s. He had been president from 1967 to 1972, and was barred by the constitution from seeking immediate reelection. With the cooperation of the opposition Conservative party, he set up a triumvirate of one of its members and two of his own Nationalist Liberal party that was to rule for an interim period. During that time it was to revise the constitution to enable Somoza to run for a new term, beginning in December 1974. But as chief of the Armed Forces, he was able to seize power earlier to deal with the national emergency.

JEWISH COMMUNITY

Before the earthquake, some 50 Jewish families, totaling 250 persons, lived in the country, most of them in Managua. After the tragedy, a number of families emigrated, reducing the present community to 150. Fortunately, there were no Jewish victims, only some losses of homes and businesses.

The community can be traced back to 1848 when the first immigrants arrived from France (Alsace), Germany, and Holland. Others arrived years later, at the end of World War I, from Poland, Hungary, and Rumania. As in the other Central American republics, Inquisition proceedings indicated the presence of Marranos during the Spanish period.

Some of the early Jewish settlers achieved prominence. Delisle Krauss, a journalist from Bavaria who came to Nicaragua as a very young man, became a general in the army. He died in New York City in 1925. Carlos Huek, who had been finance minister of Nicaragua, and A. Raczkiewsky, who became mayor of Managua, were of Jewish descent. Huek called himself a "Catholic Jew." The late René Schick

have come to the country to advise in the establishment of agricultural settlements and cooperation in farming. And Nicaraguans went to Israel to receive training in modern farming methods and to study community organization. Two agricultural colonies were given the names "Israel" and "Jerusalén" in recognition of the assistance given. After the earthquake, a group of Israeli technicians were asked to come to Nicaragua to make a special study of planning and rebuilding the city of Managua.

The Nicaraguan-Israeli Cultural Institute, with its multiple activities, was doing much to enhance understanding and cooperation between the two countries.

Costa Rica

Considered the Switzerland of the Americas, Costa Rica has been the most advanced and democratic among Central American nations. Its regular army was abolished in 1948, and its reestablishment was forbidden by the constitution. Guardia Civil (Civilian Guard), consisting of 1,000 members and 700 coast guards, maintained peace and security in the country. There were a large number of schools, with an elementary school educational program that reduced illiteracy to only 11 per cent.

Costa Rica's President Daniel Oduber, elected in 1974, succeeded President José Figueres Ferrer, who had held the office twice before (1948-49 and 1953-58).

The population of Costa Rica was 2,050,000, with 400,000 living in the capital, San José. Although the basis of the economy continued to be agriculture, with coffee and bananas the important crops, there has been considerable growth of manufacturing in recent years. The annual per capita income was \$565. The state religion was Roman Catholicism, but other religions enjoyed full freedom.

JEWISH COMMUNITY

The first Jewish immigrants of Costa Rica were Sephardim from Curacao and Aruba, who began to arrive at the end of the 18th century. This group disappeared through assimilation. The present Jewish community was founded by Turkish and Polish Jews, who began to flow into the country in the 1920s. They were followed by German and

Gutiérrez, Nicaragua's president from 1963 to 1966, also was of Jewish origin.

The central communal organization, the Congregación Israelita in Managua, was the focal point of Jewish life. All the Jewish women belonged to WIZO, which was founded in 1941. Nicaragua also had a B'nai B'rith lodge.

The only synagogue, Beth El, and its adjoining social hall were built in 1964. There was no rabbi; community members conducted Sabbath and holiday services. Now and then, a rabbi or cantor has been invited from abroad to officiate during the High Holy Days. The structure was destroyed in the earthquake. Quite a number of children and young people have been sent to study in the United States, some of them at the Yeshivath Torah Vodaath in Brooklyn.

The Jewish cemetery of Managua, established in 1935, was managed by the Hevra Kaddisha. It is noteworthy that some Jewish tombs found in the cemetery of the city of Granada date back to the year 1848.

Civil Rights

As in the other republics, the vast majority (94.1 per cent) of the 2,086,000 Nicaraguans were Catholic. There was neither religious nor racial discrimination, but there were sporadic antisemitic attacks in the press. Relations between the Jewish community and the Catholic and Protestant sectors were cordial.

Relations With Israel

Relations between Nicaragua and Israel have been very close since the establishment of the state. Nicaragua was one of the first countries to support the creation of Israel, and has been one of its staunchest supporters in the United Nations ever since. When former President Schick visited Israel before his death, he was officially received by then President Zalman Shazar. Nicaragua had a nonresident Israel ambassador, Eli Nevo, also ambassador to Honduras, whose offices were in the embassy at San José, Costa Rica. A distinguished member of the Jewish community was Max Nahman, honorary consul of Israel in Nicaragua.

Israel has developed a diversified technical aid program in Nicaragua. Among the public institutions receiving such aid were the Instituto Agrario and the Banco Nacional de Nicaragua. Israeli experts

Austrian refugees between 1936 and 1938. Costa Rica was traditionally opposed to foreigners, and in 1937, when the Refugee Economic Corporation acquired a tract of land on which to settle Jews from Central Europe, a court ruled that the purchase of land by a foreign company for purposes of settlement was illegal. Internal unrest led to two other restrictions against Jews. In 1948 Jewish legal status and immigration permits were investigated, and all visas granted to Jews before April of that year were canceled. And in 1952, during agitation for a law restricting commercial activities to Costa Ricans, Jewish homes and institutions in San José were attacked. At the end of World War II, about 70 families, mostly young people who survived the Nazi holocaust, were permitted to enter the country.

The present-day community numbered some 1,500, most of whom lived in San José. A few established themselves in different parts of the country. Their representative communal organization, the Centro Israelita Sionista de Costa Rica (Jewish Zionist Center of Costa Rica) of which all Jews were members, was founded in 1930. Its president was Abraham Meltzer. Other active organizations were WIZO; the Jewish Women's Welfare Association, which did all kinds of charitable work throughout the country; B'nai B'rith; the Zionist youth organization Hanoar Hatzioni; an Atid youth group, and a Jewish sports center, where young and old gather for both social and sport activities.

Outstanding was the work carried on at the Chaim Weizmann Institute, the only Jewish school in Costa Rica, which had 350 pupils of whom 15 per cent were non-Jews. It consisted of kindergarten, and elementary and secondary grades. Its staff consisted of the director, Professor Yehuda Rzezask, and 35 teachers, 5 of whom taught Hebrew and Jewish culture. The school's curriculum complied with the requirements set by the Ministry of Public Education, thus permitting its graduates to continue their studies at universities. The Jewish studies curriculum qualified students to continue advanced studies in the United States or in Israel. The Ministry of Public Education of Costa Rica recognized Hebrew as one of the foreign languages in the school curriculum, thus enabling students to receive credit for Hebrew, and to take a final examination in that language toward the bachelor's degree.

The Costa Rican Jewish community had only one synagogue, Shaarei Zion in San José, which was founded in 1930 and recently rebuilt. For the first time since its founding, it had an Orthodox rabbi. The community also had a cemetery and a Hevra Kaddisha.

Civil Rights

The attitude of government toward the Jewish community has been most cordial. There was no discrimination or persecution of any kind. As in the other republics of the region, here too there has been sporadic publication of an antisemitic brochure or book, or an antisemitic article in the press.

The Confraternidad Judío Cristiana, devoted to interfaith understanding, has been active in San José. It published a bulletin entitled *Shalom*, sponsored courses and conferences, and did Jewish defense work. It maintained a large, well organized Jewish library.

There have been several meetings in behalf of the Jews in the Soviet Union. One organized in San José in March 1973 and chaired by Dr. Benjamin Nuñez, dean of the University of Heredia and former Costa Rican ambassador to Israel, was attended by representatives from all Latin American countries. The most recent meeting, the Reunion of Latin American Women, took place in April 1974 and was chaired by Costa Rica's first lady, Mrs. Karen Figueres.

Relations With Israel

Relations between Costa Rica and Israel were very friendly, dating back to the strong diplomatic and political support for the establishment of the state. Former President José Figueres called on Israel twice to bring about even closer relations. The Israeli-Costa Rican Cultural Institute has been doing important work in promoting better understanding and closeness. Israel, on its part, has given Costa Rica technical and scientific aid in various fields.

Panama

This small republic, situated on the isthmus that links America's northern and southern continents, has been going through a period of relative political calm. General Omar Torrijos Herrera, who in 1969 unseated the elected government and ruled until 1972 as commander-in-chief of the country's National Guard, has been confirmed as supreme leader with wide powers by an Assembly of Community

Representatives elected with Torrijo's sanction. Also in accordance with his wish, his appointee, Demetrio B. Lakas, was elected president of the republic.

Panama's population was 1,619,000, of whom 93 per cent were Catholics. Freedom of worship was guaranteed to all others. Forty-seven per cent of the population was urban, with nearly one-third living in Panama City and Colón. The illiteracy index was 20.6 per cent. Per capita annual income was a relatively high \$667, mainly as a result of the economic stimulus provided by the Panama Canal.

Construction of the Canal, begun in 1880 by the French engineer De Lesseps, was finished in 1914; it was opened on July 12, 1920. In 1971 alone, 14,617 ships passed through its gates.

Panama has granted the United States limited jurisdictional authority over the Canal Zone, a strip of land extending for a distance of five miles on either side of the waterway; but a convention signed in June 1967 that modified one signed in 1920 gave Panama effective sovereignty over it by providing for joint administration of the Canal. The treaty was broadened and ratified in 1974. The Canal Zone was a free port and one of the world's important trading centers. Its civil government, health department, and security were headed by a governor, who also was president of the Panama Canal Company, an agency of the United States government charged with the maintenance and operation of the canal.

JEWISH COMMUNITY

It has been said that the Jewish community of Panama was the oldest in Central America. The first Jews who arrived in Panama in the 16th century were of Dutch and Portuguese origin. In 1876 their number was increased by immigrants from Curaçao, Jamaica, Saint Thomas, Barbados, and the Virgin Islands, who settled in the city of Colón on the Atlantic coast and established the Kol Kodesh Yaacov community.

When work on the Panama Canal began in 1880, there was an influx of Europeans; Panama City became an active center. The Kol Shearit Israel community, founded in 1876, attracted Jews of Dutch and Portuguese origin as well as newcomers from the Antilles.

In the years before and after World War I, Sephardi Jews came from North Africa, the Balkans, and several countries of the Middle East. There was also an Ashkenazi immigration from Poland, Russia, and Rumania, and the community grew when Austrians and Germans began to arrive just before World War II. A few years later, the Ashkenazi group founded the Bet El congregation, while the various

Sephardi Jews joined the Shevet Ahim congregation, founded in 1931 and now the largest congregation in Panama.

The present Jewish population was 2,500, of whom 2,200 lived in Panama City, and the rest in Colón, Chitré, David, Bocas del Toro, and elsewhere.

The Jewish community of Panama has been a very active one, with a variety of institutions, among them WIZO, B'nai B'rith, the Zionist Organization of Panama, and a number of youth groups. The Hebrew Central Council was the central coordinating institution for Kol Shearit Israel, Bet El, Shevet Ahim, and the Human Rights Committee of B'nai B'rith. It was founded in 1964 by Moshe Mizrahi, who has remained active to this day. Its president, Manuel Perelis, has been promoting closer ties and joint programs among all sectors of the Jewish community.

Panama had four synagogues: those of the Kol Shearit Israel, Bet El, and Shevet Ahim communities, and a fourth in the Canal Zone that has been established and maintained by the National Jewish Welfare Board in the United States. The Kol Shearit Israel synagogue was Reform; its spiritual head has been Rabbi Joseph Melamed. The Bet El and Shevet Ahim congregations were Orthodox. The pulpit of the former was vacant; Zion Levy was rabbi of Shevet Ahim. The rabbi of the Reform synagogue in the Canal Zone, A. Grinspan, ministered to the small group of Jews living in that part of the country. Kol Shearit Israel and Shevet Ahim each had their own cemeteries.

The three communities of Panama jointly financed the establishment in 1953 of the Albert Einstein Institute, a state-recognized Jewish day school comprising kindergarten, elementary school, and high school. The Institute's enrollment was slightly more than 900 pupils, one-third of whom were non-Jews including the sons of Panama's government officials. The school had a teaching staff of about 50. Some of the instructors of Hebrew and Jewish subjects came from Israel, but were hired on a limited-time basis. Others were graduates of the Albert Einstein school who had received their pedagogic training in Israel. The school's director, the well-known intellectual and educator Dr. Heszal Klepfisz, had been professor at the National University of Panama. The school's reputation and prestige as an educational center was excellent throughout the country.

Civil Rights

The Jewish community enjoyed full religious freedom and the high regard of the government and the Panamanian people. There was no discrimination or overt antisemitism. A very few incidents of this kind

could be traced to individuals or groups having neither political power nor roots in the republic.

Numerous Jews have held high public posts, among them Dr. Max Del Valle, who was vice-president of the country and a presidential candidate; Eli Abbo, presidential secretary; Sholem Clikberg, economic adviser to the president; Herbert De Castro, founder of the National Symphonic Orchestra, and a number of members of the Assembly of Community Representatives like Moshe Cohen and Nessim Bassan.

The Jewish community's relations with the Catholic church have always been marked by mutual understanding and solidarity.

Relations With Israel

Through the activities carried out by the Panama-Israel Cultural Institute close ties of friendship have been established between the two countries. Mordechai Arbel was Israel ambassador to Panama.

Federation of Jewish Communities of Central America and Panama

In 1963 a group of leaders of various Jewish communities of Central America met in the city of Panama to discuss Jewish life in their respective countries. At this meeting the idea was born to establish a federation that would unify all communities of the area and direct joint efforts in various fields of Jewish activities. Then and there the participants established the Federacion de Comunidades Judías de Centro-América y Panamá (Federation of Jewish Communities of Central America and Panama; FEDECO) as an instrument to serve and unify its affiliates, the six Jewish communities. The charter, which designated the Federation as the permanent representative body of the Central American communities, provided that it encourage closer cooperation and mutual assistance among its constituents to create a favorable climate for educational, cultural, and communal interchange; that it, above all else, give utmost attention to youth problems and to the continuity of organized Jewish life in the republics. The Federation was also empowered to maintain close ties with Jewish communities all over the world and with international Jewish

[end]

Original documents
faded and/or illegible





THE AMERICAN JEWISH COMMITTEE

7750 Clayton Road, Suite 103
St. Louis, Missouri 63117
(314) 847-2519

- Gene DuBow
- Harold Applebaum
- Adam Simms
- Marcia Turken
- Marc Tanenbaum
- Irving Levine
- Gary Rubin
- David Harris
- Jim Rudin
- Judy Banki

FOR YOUR INFORMATION **HARRIET S. BOGARD**
West Central Area Director

(Black paper)

The St. Louis Sentinel

Thursday, August 29, 1985

Letter to the Editor:

Day after day, the headlines report dire events south of the U.S. border: Insurgency and counter-insurgency, staggering economic pressures, widespread drug traffic--the list of problems plaguing that part of the world seems endless. But there is good news to balance the bad. And the most exciting is the restoration of constitutional government in countries where repression and terrorism have long prevailed.

In the past year and a half, free elections have replaced repressive military regimes in Argentina, Brazil, Uruguay, Perue, and Bolivia. With the exception of Uruguay, these countries do not have strong democratic traditions. In Argentina, the recently defeated military regime restored to a ruthless state terrorism to combat anti-government terrorism; and in the other countries, the people have also lived with political turmoil or military dictatorship for decades on end.

These countries are now attempting to deal with their massive problems through democratic pluralism and the rule of law. Argentina has already demonstrated its commitment to constitutional processes by bringing to trial the generals and admirals accused of the worst violations of human rights. And the other newly elected governments are also pledged to institute meaningful human-rights protections. They need all the encouragement and help the U.S. can give them--for if they succeed, the people of Latin America may come to believe there are effective alternatives to the terrorism and repression that rule their lives.

Sincerely,

J. David Levy, President
St. Louis Chapter
American Jewish Committee

CENTRAL AMERICA: A BACKGROUNDER

Sergio Nudelstejer, Director,
Mexican and Central American Office
International Relations Department
American Jewish Committee

For the last several years, Central America has become a very special focus of attention. With the problems of the international debt crisis, and political and social upheaval in Central America, this area is frequently in the headlines of the newspapers. The principal underlying causes of the conflict are the political and economical instability in the region.

Geographically, Central America comprises the following countries: Guatemala, El Salvador, Honduras, Belize, Nicaragua, Costa Rica and Panama, with Nicaragua the largest (57,143 square miles) and El Salvador the smallest (8,260 square miles). Guatemala is the most populous (7.7 million) and Belize the least (160,000).

The Central American conflict has been accentuated by the social and political ideology of the Sandinista regime in Nicaragua. The attitude of the Government of Nicaragua clearly shows its pro-Cuban and pro-Soviet stance. Neighboring countries such as Honduras and Costa Rica feel threatened by the Nicaraguan army and there have been a number of clashes, which may well lead to an explosion in the region.

The "Contadora" group, formed by representatives of Mexico, Panama, Colombia and Venezuela, has tried to find a viable solution to the Central American conflict. To this end, it has met a number of times with the governments of the five countries of the area (excluding Belize), looking for a way to reach an acceptable solution. In fact, it is currently meeting and will continue to do so through the first part of November. Recently, the Contadora Group has gained the support of other Latin American countries, known as the "Lima Group," which includes Argentina, Brazil, Peru and Uruguay.

When the Sandinistas came to power by overthrowing the Somoza government in 1979, there were no more than a dozen Jewish families left in the country; virtually all the others -- some 40 families -- had departed voluntarily to rebuild their lives elsewhere. Two members of the Jewish community were placed under arrest and accused of being supporters of the Somoza regime, but were later freed. Today there remain only three Jewish couples in Nicaragua.

The one synagogue that exists in the capital city of Managua is at present in the hands of the government and a high-ranking member of the Sandinista Party has officially said that his government is ready to refurbish and restore the synagogue and give it back to the Jewish community. In the absence of a Jewish community, however, the problem is who will accept responsibility for the building.

With regard to the Sandinista Government's relations with Israel, Israel's arms sales to the former Somoza regime have left a bitter legacy in Nicaragua, one which the PLO is continuously using for its anti-Zionist and anti-Israeli purposes. During the revolution against the Somoza dictatorship, the PLO gave military support and training to the Sandinistas and today they maintain an office in Managua with a large staff, seeking to spread their influence to other countries in Latin America.

El Salvador is another country that has for many years suffered the attacks and subversion of strong guerrilla groups whose aim has been the overthrow of the different governments, including the present regime of Jose Napoleon Duarte, who was elected president through democratic elections.

Some other countries in the area are moving towards a democratic form of government. Guatemala, for example, is expected to hold free elections in November, and is seeking to change from a military regime to a freely-elected government. Elections will also soon be held in Honduras and Costa Rica, the latter, of course, being a long-standing model of democracy in Latin America.

The Jewish Communities in the Area

Most of the Central American countries have small Jewish communities. In Guatemala, there are approximately 1,500 Jews; in El Salvador, from an earlier Jewish population of 300 only 100 remain; the Jewish community of Honduras has about 150 people; Nicaragua's original 130 Jewish members now number only seven; the Jewish community of Costa Rica totals 2,500 people; and Panama has the largest Jewish population in Central America -- about 5,000.

More than twenty years ago, a Federation of Jewish Communities of Central America and Panama, known by its acronym FEDECO, was formed with the purpose of uniting the different Jewish communities, improving their programs of education and youth groups, and permitting an exchange of information on developments in the respective communities. From FEDECO's beginning, the American Jewish Committee has collaborated closely and AJC representatives have attended almost all of FEDECO's bi-annual meetings.

Imbued with a deep sense of Jewish identity and concern about their future, especially about the younger generations, some of these communities, with great effort, maintain Jewish schools, synagogues, rabbis, youth movements, Jewish sports centers and a strong feeling of kinship

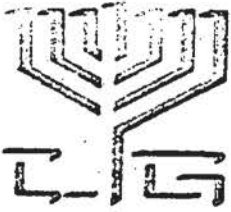
with the State of Israel, as well as very good relations with other Jewish communities in Latin America and in the United States. AIC during two decades has been in permanent contact with these individual communities, trying to assist them through programming, distribution of materials and delegation visits.

It should be noted that both Costa Rica and El Salvador have moved their embassies from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem, notwithstanding the threat of political and economical pressures from the Arab world, and, with the exception of Nicaragua, all the countries of Central America enjoy close bilateral relationships with Israel. At the UN, for example, these countries have demonstrated strong support for Israel.

Although the Jewish communities in Central America are relatively small in size, they maintain a very active Jewish life and are considered by each of their governments to be an integral part of the fabric of their country, active in the economic, social and cultural spheres, and seeking to make a contribution to the development of the region. At the same time, like their fellow citizens, they are deeply troubled by the conflicts in the area and the threats such instability pose for the future.

October 1985
9980-(IRD-4)
11/5/85 gn/sm





COMUNIDAD JUDIA DE GUATEMALA
APARTADO POSTAL 502, GUATEMALA, CA

SOME HISTORICAL AND SOCIOLOGICAL CONSIDERATIONS ABOUT THE
JEWISH COMMUNITY OF GUATEMALA, AND IT'S ENVIRONMENT

There are two reasons to consider the present condition of the Jewish Community of Guatemala, and its previous history, as an enlightening story in the stream of the Jewish life in the Diaspora, namely:

1. Migrations in, at least, different areas of the world, in different epochs, brought along different mentalities, which never merged, still present through their second generation representatives. Up to very recently, with the superpower's confrontation in Central America, and the economical crisis, these Jewish groups have been challenged to solve their own cultural differences, in order to face the dangers of extinction, assimilation and imported antisemitism.
2. Guatemala, the country where Jews have been dwelling as such more than one century is a two-fold society: one integrated by descents of spaniards that intermingled with the original inhabitants, during four hundred years, which, together with a limited amount of foreigners, formed the modern Guatemala Republic, 163 years ago; the second, comprising by 2/3 of the countrie's population are pure indian descents, that developed their culture -originated more than five thousand years ago- in this area, called Mesoamerica.

Thus, for more than a hundred years, Jews have been exposed in Guatemala, to two different concepts of life, besides their own: one, clearly european and christian (catholic predominantly), and the other, a traditional indian culture struggling for survival as a civilization, although interrupted and contaminated, not weaker in identity and it's set of values, than the prior one.

The former society is also contaminated by the values of the USA and Mexican civilization, that come along through TV programming, advertising and consumer's products and habits. The national identity of this piece of the society, is less defined than that of the indian portion, which has a strong identity.

In recent years, the nucleus of the indian people in the highlands of the country, has undergone a horrible experience, For more than six consecutive years, the left political organizations that decided to change the official society through revolution, selected and prepared this indian population for subversion, with training, money and organization that came from abroad.

Complete indian families were hired by these organizations that selected efficiently those indian communities known for their proved aggresiveness, to work in the building of hidden hospitals, warehouses and underground shelters; some worked as courriers, and women prepared adecuate clothing and cooked for the incipient undercover army.

Some indian towns collaborated willingly, others merely sold food and knitware; some did not oblige, and when open operations started, these non cooperative towns were badly hit by the "guerrilla": goods were confiscated, men were to provide slave work for them, government civil officials were murdered, health centers and other official buildings were put on fire, roads were blocked by cutting trees, and vehicles were destroyed so that men and products couldn't move.

It was a siege, and a state of war activated, with the direction and initiative in hands of the "guerrilla". It took some time for the Guatemalan Army to respond. When this response came, it included an international position of neutrality in the Central American conflict, regarding Nicaragua, to which the Soviet counterpart had to correspond with a suspension of logistic aid to the subversive.

This lack of aid, plus an effective counter action from the Guatemalan Army, forced the "guerrilla" out of towns and roads forcing them to flee to the mountains, where they still have their hide-outs and military camps. The vacuum of power was then filled by the Army in a very effective action, but employing a type of state terrorism system, exerted over the "guerrilla", that involved the indian population of the area.

As a result of the threat and manipulation of the "guerrilla", plus the terrorism applied by the Army, thousands of indians were killed

and towns were burnt. The traditional indian life and culture was fully distressed, and thousands of refugees escaped to Mexico. Now the remaining portions of the indian communities and some thousands of refugees were organized in civil patrols to fight the "guerrilla"; mainly women and orphans are coming back to restore life in new towns that are being built by the Army, who now feeds them and - protects them, against the "guerrilla".

During this ordeal, in these towns, the traditional indian mentality had to be abandoned. The ancient religious experience of their, elders, couldn't give a solution to this new challenge, that came to them from a foreign society, and couldn't protect them from death and extinction of complete communities.

A new "truth criteria" is originating in the new towns, built by the Army, together with agencies of development, with the opposition of the Catholic Church, whose leaders can not predict to what form of life this new organization is conducting, and what means of control there will be in the future.

These indian communities could not use their traditional paradigm of life, to face this new and horrible reality, in spite of their strong identity, their sense of belonging, and their healthy values. One way or the other, the paternalistic action of the Army and the governmental agencies, is implanting solutions to the crises, and originating a new paradigm, that might replace the old one.

Now, we should go back to the Jewish life in Guatemala; a compact historical survey shall precede to the presentation of the actual situation of this diminishing Jewish Guatemalan Community shattered by the winds of war, that torment the country's national community.

The existence of Jewish families in Guatemala at the time of the Iberic conquest and early colonization, is revealed by documents of the Spanish Inquisition (El Tribunal del Santo Oficio) that indicate that trials had been initiated against Jews in Guatemala from 1566 to 1572. Because of earthquakes and heavy volcanic activity, these trials had taken place in Mexico. In one of these trials, a certain Francisco Millán, son of Portuguese Jews originated in Utrera, revealed the existence of more than thirty people among them - artisans, teachers, etc. of Jewish origin established in Guatemala. A large amount of converse Jews (despectively called "marranos": - swine), had come to Guatemala when the kings Felipe II and Felipe IV authorized their migration in exchange for money, to this American area. The largest portions of this Jewish migration came to this area, from 1601 to 1625, when the risk of being discovered, judged, confiscated, tortured and burned alive by the "Santo Oficio", was greater in Europe than in the new Continent. By anyhow, they - couldn't live openly as Jews, during this Spanish reign.

By 1865, when Quetzaltenango (actually the second largest city) was the commercial and cultural center of the already independent - "República de Guatemala" (Guatemala City by the time was only an - administrative center) was the time when German Jews arrived to the

country and established themselves in that city and were active in trade and commerce. After the earthquake in Quetzaltenango of 1902, most of them decided to move to Guatemala City and reinstall their bussiness there.

This german migration brought with them the nationalistic ideology of the new German nation. They considered themselves as "germans of Jewish faith".

From the years 1920 to 1930, there was a considerable migration of Sefardic Jews, that came from Palestine (at the time in economical depression), Egypt, Syria and other countries of that area.

After but almost at the same time, Ashkenasi Jews arrived from Rusia, Checoeslovaquia, Hungary and Poland, mostly via Cuba, trying to get to Mexico and the USA.

The first signs of an organized Jewish life in Guatemala, start in 1913, when the Sociedad Israelita de Beneficencia was founded - legally with the Government authorization by the german colony, - with the objetctives of establishing a Jewish Cemetery, and provide help to Jews. This remained the only Jewish organization until - 1930, when the Sefardic Jews established the Congregation: Sociedad Israelita Maguen David, and the Ashkenassi group formed the -- "Asociación Centro Hebreo de Guatemala". Both Congregations have legal by laws authorized by the Government.

The Maguen David Society took the initiative to build the first - synagoge, but all groups contributed. It was inaugurated in 1938.

After a failed attempt in 1934, in 1946, the Zionist Organization was started with its legal by laws and active membership. WIZO had existed since 1941 and it was quite active, independently, up to very recently. Now it conforms with: Macabi, B'nai B'rith, - Keren Hayesod, Keren Kayemet, Igrot, Centro Hebreo, Maguen David and Bet-El, the: Consejo Central de la Comunidad Judía de Guatemala.

Twenty years ago, the Community had more than fifteen hundred souls, and several organizations were very active, such as the MACABI, and MACABI HATZAIR, a social and sport Club called Centro Deportivo - Israelita (C.D.I.), and an integrated school for nursery and elementary education named "Instituto Einstein", with an average of 120 pupils.

Five years ago, neither one of these institutions existed actively anymore. The total population of the Community decreased to 750 - people, with scarcely two hundred families. Some of the families left the country because the economical conditions deteriorated - rapidly with the internal war, bad prices for exports, exaggerated expenditures of the Government, that originated a fall of the - national product index plus 5.7% up to minus 3%, the destruction of the Central American Common Market, plus other maladies. These - conditions were similar but not worse than those of other - Latinamerican countries.

Another group went to live in Israel: fifty people just in 5742. They were young and productive persons of high cultural level -

appreciated in Israel. Actually the originally Guatemalan Jews - living in Israel total more than 100.

Very few families left the country because of political risk. Only those which had experienced kidnappings (four prominent Jews were murdered) or received threats of kidnappings.

Probably the largest single cause for the shrinking of the Community has been assimilation, and the Community's leadership is aware of the problem.

The three religious Congregations are still alive, but not very - active. There coexist three different rites (orthodox, conservative, and reformist) but not a Rabbi.

The Central Council of the Community could hardly meet to take - actions.

Then, a group of activists originated by the Council, decided to - create an Association of individuals to act in parallel to the - Council of institutions. This decision originated a revitalization of many activities. During 5743 and 5744, the weekly meetings of the CJG (Comunidad Judía de Guatemala), joined more than fifteen - persons. A Committee of Organization takes care of external - relations of the CJG, and various other Committees cope with - internal problematic. An orthodox Rabbi for the Congregations and a couple of Israeli teachers for the Sunday school are about to - be hired by the Community.

The revival of the leadership of the Community is coincidental with the deterioration of the international world image of Guatemala. The New Left that has to cover the manipulation of the "guerrilla", and several churches and institutions for human rights, have attacked the people of Guatemala, along with its military regime. The aid for development was interrupted and the Jewish Communities of the USA were active in this position, acting accordingly to human rights violations. The Organization Committee of the CJG contacted the Latinamerican Jewish Leadership and AJC, ADL, HIAS, WJC and NJCRAR, in USA, calling for a Convention of FEDECO (Federación de Comunidades Judías de Centroamérica y Panamá), a regional institution founded 23 years ago, that was agonizing for the past four years in Costa Rica, in Jan. 1984. This emergency call became a very important meeting for the whole American Jewish World. The image of Guatemala in the mass media of the Continent started slowly to change in benefit of truth and its people, and in this process the leaders of the CJG never had to compromise with the Government of the country.

The CJG and FEDECO were invited (an exception in 40 years) to the Convention of NJCRAC in Washington and to the Conventions of the AJC in New York and Miami, to the meetings of COSLA in Caracas, and the CJL in Sao Paulo and Argentine. The President of the CJG was invited (in what should be considered a great honour) to coordinate one of the workshops of the last World Conference for Jewish Education in Jerusalem, June 1984.

MABAT the bi-monthly publication of the CJG is considered a good expression of the Community, and other book and publications have been made.

The CJG and FEDECO are aware of the activities of the P.L.O. in the Latin American area, specially the opening of new offices, the strong penetration into the arab communities, their financing in the mass media of articles against Israel and the reinforcing of the Jewish stereotype, intending to press and dilute with antisemitism the positive Jewish influence in behalf of this Continent.

The leaders of CJG and FEDECO consider that most of the challenge to the survival and vital activity of the Jewish Community of Guatemala (a very friendly country of Israel) might be answered by developing new creative ideas and nullifying the internal cultural differences. In the same way that tradition alone was not enough to save the indian people of the Guatemalan highlands from the powers of death and destruction, tradition alone will not be enough to save this small Jewish Community from present assimilation and the starting of provoked antisemitism.

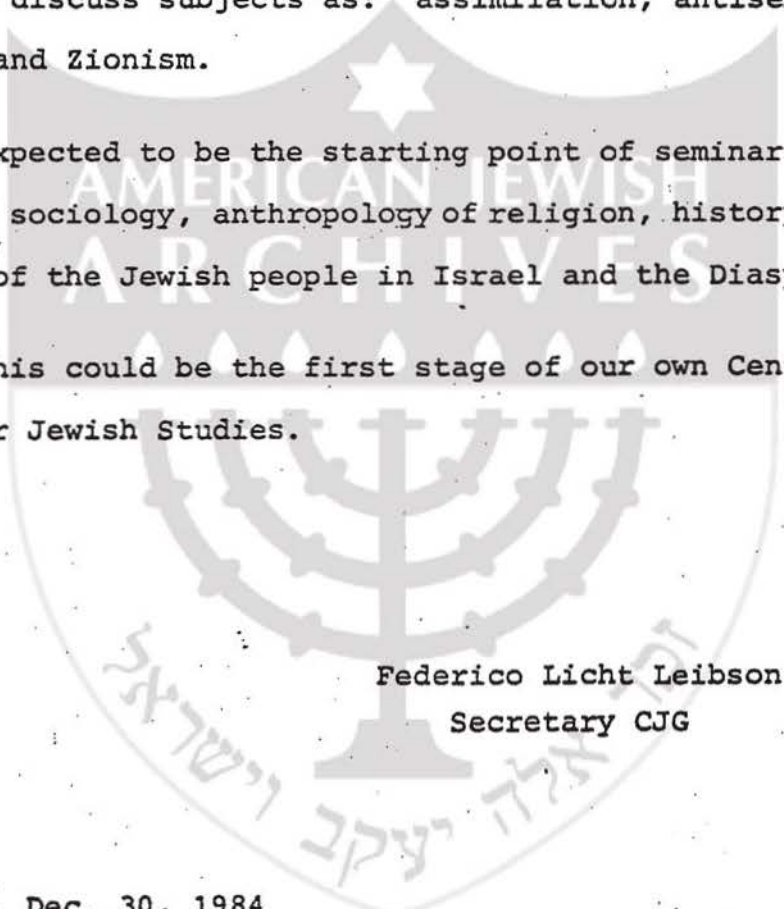
But in the same reasoning that the new paradigm for the indian people of the newly build towns should include a non-rational content related to their cosmovision, the new paradigm of the Jewish Community of Guatemala should also carry a non-rational element of faith, based in its ancient history, the Jewish religion and

philosophy, and the experience of the Jewish political action, -
such as Zionism.

Following this line of thought, the CJG in organizing for end -
Feb. 85 the 1st. Cultural Encounter of FEDECO, intended to feel,
learn and discuss subjects as: assimilation, antisemitism, -
religion and Zionism.

This is expected to be the starting point of seminar about -
identity, sociology, anthropology of religion, history and -
problems of the Jewish people in Israel and the Diaspora.

Perhaps this could be the first stage of our own Central American
Center for Jewish Studies.



Federico Licht Leibson
Secretary CJG

Guatemala, Dec. 30, 1984

memorandum

THE AMERICAN JEWISH COMMITTEE

date 10/3/85
to Marc Tanenbaum
from Nancy Merjos
subject INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS STAFF AT
NEC MEETING

In accordance with David Gordis' instructions, I am sending you the reservation forms for your staff going to the NEC Meeting in Miami. Please distribute as indicated.

For budgetary reasons, department heads are being asked to strictly limit the number of people on their staffs coming to Miami, and also to reduce the number of days each person stays in Miami to the absolute minimum necessary. In your case, this will apply to Jacob who can stay one night only, and George Gruen who can stay two nights. Jacob could be asked to stay longer, depending on guests coming from Latin America.

Please return these forms to me as quickly as humanly possible, as fares are going up all the time and seats on planes are getting scarce.

Many thanks for your cooperation.

NM
Enclosures

Nancy

1985 National Executive Council Meeting

Schedule of Weekend Events

THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 7

10:30 AM

COMMISSION MEETINGS

- Jewish Communal Affairs
- International Relations
- Interreligious Affairs
- National Affairs

12:30 PM

BUFFET LUNCHEON

1:30 PM

BOARD OF GOVERNORS MEETING (for Board members only)

4:30 PM

OPENING PLENARY SESSION

"Jewish Pluralism-Preconditions & Prognosis"
Dr. David M. Gordis

"Religious Pluralism - Renewing the Commitment"
Professor Harvey Cox, Harvard Divinity School

6:00 PM

DINNER

7:00 PM

Boat ride to Vizcaya Museum

MIAMI CHAPTER RECEPTION

FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 8

7:30 AM

CONTINENTAL BREAKFAST

8:15 AM

CONCURRENT SESSIONS

- "Intermarriage & Conversion-Identities in Transition"
Professor Egon Mayer
- "Pay Equity - The 80's Social Justice Issue?"
Ray Marshall, Former Secretary of Labor

10:15 AM

PLENARY SESSION

"Catholic-Jewish Relations-Perspectives & Prospectives"
Father John Pawlikowski
Reverend William M. Lewers, U.S. Catholic Conference

12:15 PM

CONCURRENT LUNCHEONS

"ACTION WHERE YOU ARE" Workshops

- A. "Counteracting Anti-Semitism & Extremism"
- B. "Projecting AJC's International Agenda"
- C. "Reaching out to Intermarrieds"
- D. "New Directions in Interreligious Dialogues"

2:00 PM PLENARY SESSION
NEC Business Meeting
"Toward Peace in the Middle East"
Wolf Blitzer, The Jerusalem Post

4:00 PM MEETING OF CHAPTER LEADERS AND NATIONAL OFFICERS
DINNER HOSPITALITY AT THE HOMES OF MIAMI CHAPTER MEMBERS

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 9

8:00 AM BOARD OF TRUSTEES BREAKFAST
(for Trustees only)

10:00 AM SHABBAT SERVICES - Devoted to Jewish Pluralism -
Focus on the Jews of Central America
ONEG SHABBAT
"How Judaism Differs" - Video Tape featuring
Rabbi Arthur Hertzberg
Dr. David M. Gordis

12:30 PM PLENARY LUNCHEON
"Jews As Americans-A Dream Fulfilled?"
Charles Silberman, Author

2:30 PM CONCURRENT COMMITTEE MEETINGS

- Energy Committee
- National Membership Cabinet
- Soviet Jewry Task Force
- Women's Issues Committee

5:00 PM APPEAL FOR HUMAN RELATIONS COCKTAIL RECEPTION
Honoring David Fleeman

7:00 PM PRE-DINNER RECEPTION

7:30 PM NATIONAL EXECUTIVE COUNCIL DINNER
A Tribute to:
Ambassador Allan Keyes, Assistant Secretary of State
(Designate)
Dame Nita Barrow, Convener, The Nairobi Forum
In recognition of their accomplishments in Nairobi

PRESIDENT'S OPEN RECEPTION
Coffee, Dessert & Cordials

SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 10

8:00 AM PLENARY BREAKFAST
"Acculturation of Immigrants - The New Challenge"
Mayor Fredrico Pena of Denver

10:30 AM PLENARY SESSION
"Central America - What Role for the U.S. & AJC"
Dr. Fernando Berrocal, Ambassador of Costa Rica to UN

1:00 PM ADJOURNMENT

THE AMERICAN JEWISH COMMITTEE

date October 11, 1985
to George Gruen
from David A. Harris
subject N.E.C.

Howard Friedman has indicated that he would like to highlight the international terrorism issue as one of the principal themes in his major address at the N.E.C. Accordingly, would you please prepare a maximum of two pages of key themes to be addressed, incorporating your own extensive work with respect to the phenomenon in the Middle East and the discussion at the last Steering Committee on the issue. Rita should be able to locate for you Marc's summer correspondence with Vice President Bush and Ambassador Oakley on the subject of terrorism and the specific suggestion for a national conference. Sidney may also have some thoughts on international legal instrumentalities, covenants, etc. that we may want to propose.

The deadline imposed on us from "the 8th floor" is Wednesday, October 16th.

Many thanks.



DAH:CH

cc: Shula Bahat
Marc Tanenbaum ✓

11/10/85 10:00 AM

THE AMERICAN JEWISH COMMITTEE

date October 11, 1985
to Marc H. Tanenbaum
from David A. Harris
subject See below

Sergio called today and we spoke for an hour about a number of things, including:

1) He is sending you a report on those meetings in Venezuela that took place after your departure.

2) He has been in touch with our Central American invitees to the NEC and we have an excellent response. To date, Marcel Ruff representing FEDECO, Mario Permuth, president of the Guatemalan community, Joseph Harari, president of the Panamanian community, and Gustavo Prifer, president of the Costa Rican community are coming. Sergio is awaiting word from Honduras, and we are inviting Ernesto Freund to represent the Salvadoran community. Sergio will arrive in Miami on November 6th and remain until the 11th, acting as host for the Central American guests.

3) Sergio is preparing a backgrounder on Central America, both regionally and country-by-country for the N.E.C.

4) He is also preparing an update on the situation in Mexico. There have not been additional Jewish victims, the community is rebuilding the Ashkenazi Kehila which will take about six months, and the community has given the Mexican Government a contribution of approximately \$100,000 for relief efforts, but, on the other hand, there have been some disturbing press reports that Jewish employers of businesses damaged during the earthquake have not acted correctly towards their employees. Sergio will provide full details in his report.



Jacobo Kovadloff Director, South American Affairs and Spanish Media

Date: October 17, 1985

To: Marc H. Tanenbaum

- For your information
- Thought this would interest you
- For your approval
- As requested
- As promised
- Your comments, please
- Please return
- Let's discuss

Remarks: I think the NEC meeting in Miami will be an excellent opportunity to discuss Idelle Rabin's suggestion.

Jacob

NORTHEAST CATHOLIC PASTORAL CENTER FOR HISPANICS, INC.

UNDER THE AUSPICES OF THE R. C. BISHOPS

EPISCOPAL REGIONS I, II, III & IV

1011 FIRST AVENUE, NEW YORK, N.Y. 10022

(212) 751-7045

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

BISHOP RENE A. VALERO, D.D.
Honorary Chairman
Rep. Hispanic Affairs of NCCB/USCC

BISHOP PETER A. ROSAZZA, D.D.
(Rep. of Episcopal Region I)
Hartford, Conn.

BISHOP FRANCISCO GARMENDIA, D.D.
(Rep. of Episcopal Region II)
New York, N.Y.

BISHOP JEROME A. PECHILLO, T.O.R.
(Rep. of Episcopal Region III)
Newark, N.J.

BISHOP SEAN O'MALLEY, O.F.M., CAP.
(Rep. of Episcopal Region IV)
St. Thomas, Virgin Islands

MR. ELOY ACOSTA
Chairman

REV. MSGR. THOMAS CRAVEN
Vice-Chairman

BISHOP JEROME A. PECHILLO, T.O.R.
Treasurer

SR. VERONICA MENDEZ, R.C.D.
Recording Secretary

MR. CARLOS VAZQUEZ
Correspondence Secretary

REV. EMILIO ALLUE, S.D.B.

REV. HUGH BURNS, O.P., S.T.L.

BRO. MIGUEL CAMPOS, F.S.C.

REV. MSGR. FELIPE CARVAJAL

MR. ENRIQUE CODAS

MRS. LUISA CULLINA

DEACON ISMAEL GALARZA

REV. MSGR. OTTO GARCIA, J.C.D.

REV. JOHN J. GRABISH

REV. LAWRENCE LYONS, S.S.E.

MRS. MARIA J. MACHICADO

SR. MARY OLIVIA ORTIZ, C.S.S.F.

MRS. LYDIA RIVERA

MR. JOSE A. STAGNARO

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR:
MR. MARIO PAREDES

September 11, 1985

REGIONAL OFFICE
AND
PASTORAL CENTER

Cordially invites you to a Conference on

Peace, Justice and Reconciliation in El Salvador

Keynote speaker: His Excellency, Most Reverend
Arturo Rivera y Damas
Archbishop of San Salvador

(The Archbishop will speak in Spanish with a
simultaneous translation in English).

Time: Wednesday, September 25th, at 7:30 PM

Place: New York Catholic Center
1011 First Avenue (at 56th Street), 9th floor
New York, NY 10022

Coffee and refreshments will be served

R.S.V.P.: (212) 751-7045

LUIS MARTÍN
Edmund J. and Louise W. Kahn Professor of History

7 de junio de 1985

FYT
Luis Martín
9-12-85

Eminentísimo Miguel Obando y Bravo
Cardenal-Arzbispo de Managua
Managua, Nicaragua

Eminencia:

Le envío esta carta a Su Eminencia como invitación oficial para participar en una conferencia internacional que se celebrara en nuestra universidad los días 6 y 7 de marzo de 1986. La conferencia va a explorar la función de la Iglesia en los problemas sociales, económicos, y políticos de Latino America. Esperamos la participación de varios teólogos e intelectuales latinoamericanos que disertaran sobre tópicos específicos de sus propios países.

Su presencia y participación, Señor Cardenal, nos traería la voz de la Iglesia Universal y un punto de vista oficial sobre los problemas que hoy acucian a la Iglesia en Latino América. Su Eminencia podría ofrecer el discurso principal (keynote speech) en el almuerzo oficial de la conferencia con la presencia del claustro y las autoridades académicas de la universidad. Esperamos que también estaran presente el Obispo Católico de Dallas, los Obispos de otras iglesias cristianas, y sacerdotes y ministros del norte de Texas.

Naturalmente nuestra universidad correrá con todos los gastos de viaje y estancia. Esperamos que Su Eminencia pueda aceptar nuestra invitación para que la voz de jerarquía católica sea escuchada en este ámbito universitario tan ansioso de conocer la realidad de la iglesia en Latino América.

Esta carta la llevará personalmente a Su Eminencia el Profesor Hugo Murillo de San José, Costa Rica, que será uno de los participantes

- 71 75 4

Telefono

Eminentísimo
Miguel Obando y Bravo

-2-

7 de junio de 1985

en la conferencia, y podrá de palabra darle más detalles de nuestros planes.

Respetuosamente quedo de Su Eminencia, seguro servidor,



Luis Martin
Kahn Professor of History

LUIS MARTIN
Edmund J. and Louise W. Kahn Professor of History



8 March 1985

Most Reverend John O'Connor, D.D. Ph.D.
Archbishop of New York
1011 First Avenue
New York, New York 10022

Dear Archbishop:

I am writing to you at the suggestion of Msgr. Robert Rehkemper, Vicar General of the Dallas Dioceses, and in your capacity of Chairman of the Committee for Social Development and World Peace.

Our University, Southern Methodist University, is preparing an International Conference on "The Church in The Social and Political Conflicts of Latin America Today." The conference will take place on the 7 and 8 of March, 1986. We expect half a dozen theologians and church activists from Latin America to share with us the views of those working in the field.

We are in the process of identifying a member of the Catholic hierarchy who could be our keynote speaker and address with some authority the topic, "The Church in Latin America: The Vatican's Hopes and Concerns." We want the official voice of the Church to be heard in our conference, and a prominent member of the Latin American episcopacy could perhaps speak with greater authority on this topic than a professor or priest. Could your Excellency suggest some possible names, and how to contact them?

The person we envision should be articulate and capable of making his presentation in English. The

Most Rev. John O'Connor, D.D.Ph.D.
Page Two
8 March 1985

University will of course, pay for all the expenses
and even offer a speaking fee if this should be
necessary.

Thank you for your kind attention to this request.

Sincerely,

Luis Martin
Kahn Professor of History

mcd





The American Jewish Committee

Institute of Human Relations • 165 East 56 Street, New York, N.Y. 10022 • 212/751-4000 • Cable Wishcom, N.Y.

October 14, 1985

Mr. Ernesto Freund
#2 Grove Isle
Apt. 702
Coconut Grove, FL 33133

Dear Mr. Freund:

It is our honor and pleasure to invite you, as a distinguished leader of the Jewish community of El Salvador and a close friend of the American Jewish Committee, to attend the annual National Executive Council meeting in Miami. It will take place from November 7th to 10th at the Hyatt Regency Hotel.

The meeting provides a forum for intensive discussion of current international and domestic issues of particular concern to the American Jewish community. One of the major topics of this year's session will be the vital Central American region, its relationship to the United States and the situation of the Jewish community in the area. Among those participating in these discussions are Dr. Fernando Berrocal, Costa Rican Ambassador to the United Nations; Arq. David Samudio, Jr., Panamanian Ambassador to the United Nations; Marcel Ruff, President of FEDECO; and Sergio Nudelstejer, Director of AJC's Mexican and Central American Office. Leaders of the Central American Jewish communities, including Gustavo Prifer of Costa Rica, Helmuth Seidel of Honduras, Mario Permut of Guatemala and Yosef Harari of Panama are also expected to attend. Your attendance at the sessions devoted to Central America and, indeed at the entire N.E.C., would enhance consideration of the important issues before us.

We very much hope you will be able to join us in November, and we look forward to your early acceptance of this invitation.

With best wishes.

Leo Nevas, Chairman
International Relations
Commission

Rabbi Marc H. Tanenbaum
Director, International
Relations Department

Howard I. Friedman
President

bc: Marc H. Tanenbaum

memorandum

THE AMERICAN JEWISH COMMITTEE

date: October 14, 1985
to: Staff
from: Mario Nunez
subject: National Executive Council Meeting
November 7-10, 1985
Hyatt Regency, Miami

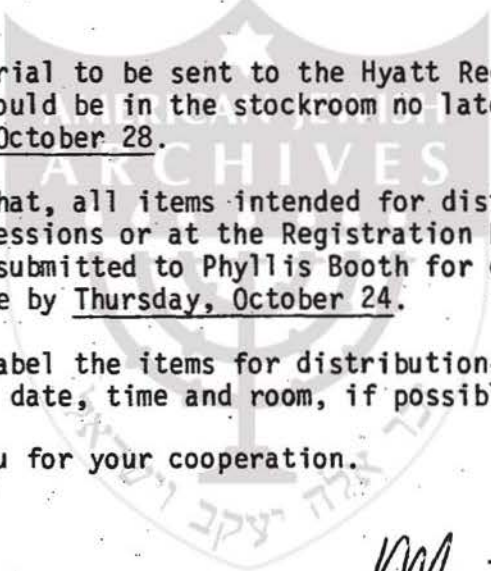
All material to be sent to the Hyatt Regency in Miami should be in the stockroom no later than Monday, October 28.

Before that, all items intended for distribution-- at the sessions or at the Registration Desk-- must be submitted to Phyllis Booth for central clearance by Thursday, October 24.

Please label the items for distribution--e.g., session, date, time and room, if possible.

Thank you for your cooperation.

MN/pcb





The American Jewish Committee

Institute of Human Relations • 165 East 56 Street, New York, N.Y. 10022 • 212/751-4000 • Cable Wishcom, N.Y.

November 6, 1985

Mr. Jacob Kovadloff
c/o Hyatt Regency Hotel
Miami, Florida

Dear Jacob,

First of all, congratulations on what I understand was a very excellent meeting in Brazil. Knowing how much work went into the planning and preparation, you deserve a great deal of credit for its successful outcome:

I also wanted to bring to your attention the enclosed article from the Washington Post (November 2). If you have not already seen it, it will no doubt be of interest. Further, you may want to consider a response in the form of a letter to the editor. For example, there is the disturbing reference to the American Jewish community: "From the closer and richer United States has come nothing except some recent 'propaganda,' said (Adela) Dworin." In addition, there is the reference to Cuba's support for the Zionism/racism resolution (incorrectly referred to as the "1976 U.N. resolution"), without the slightest hint of the fact that Cuba not only supported the resolution but was one of the key non-Arab sponsors and played an important lobbying role, if I am not mistaken, in its passage. Sidney dwells on this matter in his recent paper on Zionism/racism, a copy of which you will find in the kits being distributed at Thursday's Steering Committee meeting.

I wish you a successful NEC and look forward to seeing you next week.

Best regards.

Sincerely,

David A. Harris
Deputy Director
International Relations Department

DAH:CH
Enclosures

cc: Marc H. Tanenbaum

HOWARD I. FRIEDMAN, President	ALFRED H. MOSES, Chair, National Executive Council	DAVID M. GORDIS, Executive Vice-President
THEODORE ELLENOFF, Chair, Board of Governors	ROBERT S. JACOBS, Chair, Board of Trustees	DAVID H. PEIREZ, Associate Treasurer
EDWARD E. ELSON, Treasurer	SHIRLEY M. SZABAD, Secretary	RITA E. HAUSER, Chair, Executive Committee
Honorary Presidents: MORRIS B. ABRAM, ARTHUR J. GOLDBERG, PHILIP E. HOFFMAN, RICHARD MAASS, ELMER L. WINTER, MAYNARD I. WISHNER	Honorary Vice-Presidents: NATHAN APPLEMAN	
MARTIN GANG, RUTH R. GODDARD, ANDREW GOODMAN, RAYMOND F. KRAVIS, JAMES MARSHALL, WILLIAM ROSENWALD	MAX M. FISHER, Honorary Chair, National Executive Council	
Executive Vice-Presidents Emeriti: JOHN SLAWSON, BERTRAM H. GOLD	Vice-Presidents: NORMAN E. ALEXANDER, Westchester; HOWARD A. GILBERT, Chicago; ALAN C. GREENBERG, New York;	
ROBERT H. HAINES, New York; CHARLOTTE G. HOLSTEIN, Syracuse; ANN P. KAUFMAN, Houston; ROBERT L. PELZ, Westchester; IDELLE RABIN, Dallas; BRUCE M. RAMER, Los Angeles.		
DAVID F. SQUIRE, Boston; RICHARD L. WEISS, Los Angeles		

Minutes
Steering Committee
of the
Commission on International Relations
September 9, 1985
Leo Nevas, Chairman, Presiding

In Attendance

Norman Alexander
Morton Blaustein
Donald Blinken
Robert Cutler
Joseph Durra
Edward Elson
Suzanne Elson
Howard Friedman
Susan Gitelson
Harold Goldberg, Jr.
E. Robert Goodkind
Bee Hoffman
Robert Jacobs
Gerald Jeremias

Richard Maass
Ken Makovsky
Alfred Moses
Leo Nevas
Bruce Ramer
Henry Sherman
Carol Betty Siegler
Leon Silverman
Abe Silverstein
Cedric Suzman
Charles Temel
Carolyn Tumarkin
Maynard Wishner
Morton Blaustein
Donald Zahn

Staff

David Gordis
George Gruen
Allan Kagedan
Jacob Kovadloff
Haskell Lazere
Harry Milkman
Rita Reznik
Marc Tanenbaum

Marc Tanenbaum opened discussion of a proposed White House Conference on terrorism. At a meeting with Ambassador Robert Oakley, the State Department counter-terrorism coordinator, AJC leaders suggested that a conference on terrorism be held to encourage greater public awareness and understanding of the issue. Ambassador Oakley conveyed the suggestion to Vice President Bush who responded in a letter to AJC suggesting further discussion. The question was whether we should proceed with the idea for such a conference, and, if so, what our approach should be.

Charles Temel agreed with the idea of a conference. Needed was a broadly-based coalition to support it. Two key problems in combatting terrorism are the lack

of American public consensus on the issue, and the improper media treatment of it as evidenced by coverage of the recent TWA hijacking.

Henry Sherman said that we must ensure that the terrorism question is not seen as a "Jewish" issue, as the Bitburg controversy was. Therefore, AJC should act in coalition with a broad range of groups regarding terrorism.

Gerald Jeremias argued that the issues of the media's role during a terrorist crisis and government policy are separate. Our focus should be on government policy.

Charles Temel responded that while, admittedly, government policy is our paramount concern, media activity is also significant in that the media can undercut the political will of the American population to resist terrorism.

Leo Nevas, who was involved with the International League for Human Rights effort in bringing the cases of kidnapped Americans in Lebanon to the UN Secretary General's attention, noted that no government had sought UN assistance. In addition, the families of the kidnapped Americans were very frustrated with what they saw as a lack of State Department attention to their family members' cases. This neglect demonstrates the need for heightening public consciousness about terrorism.

Marc Tanenbaum said that it has always been AJC's hope that its role in promoting public awareness of terrorism will, in time, "wither away." At this juncture, we must help to create a constituency to work against terrorism, in order, at least, to encourage the U.S. government to treat this matter systematically. For further planning, it would be useful for the International Relations Steering Committee to appoint a small subcommittee to follow up on the possibility of a conference on terrorism.

Leo Nevas, expressing the consensus of the group, said that the International Relations Steering Committee favored proceeding with discussion of a conference on terrorism, and would seek to involve other groups in planning it. In addition, the Steering Committee would create a subcommittee to investigate the issue further.

* * * *

Leo Nevas opened discussion of the agenda item on Soviet Jewry by reporting on a recent meeting with Deputy Assistant Secretary of State Mark Palmer, a Soviet affairs specialist, and on the September 8-9 session of the International Council of the World Conference on Soviet Jewry.

Mark Palmer was not hopeful about future prospects for human rights in the Soviet Union in general, and in particular the condition of Soviet Jews. Gorbachev is a disciple of the late Yuri Andropov, and it is illusory to believe he is any more flexible on human rights. Under him, repression may well increase; however, to put a "good" face on this Gorbachev may permit more Soviet Jews to emigrate. The perception at the International Council on Soviet Jewry

was similar; nonetheless it was felt that the current situation required new strategies and considerable international focus on the French and American meetings with the Soviet leadership.

Marc Tanenbaum added that State Department officials pointed out that Gorbachev has been receiving excellent press in the United States and elsewhere, and that this has placed the U.S. in a defensive position with regard to the Gorbachev-Reagan summit meeting. The Soviet leader's charm and pleasing demeanor belie his true character. Mark Palmer, who is centrally involved in planning for the Reagan-Gorbachev summit, asked for suggestions regarding short and long term strategies on the Soviet Jewry issue, and AJC will be in touch with him on this.

Marc Tanenbaum also mentioned that, recently, representatives of AJC, AJCongress and ADL had worked out a division of labor for seeking meetings with foreign heads-of-state and foreign ministers who will be attending the current UN General Assembly session, to discuss such issues as Soviet Jewry and Zionism equals Racism.

Gerald Jeremias suggested that it would be helpful for the Soviet Jewry movement to speak in terms acceptable to the Soviet leadership.

Leo Nevas responded that this had been the approach of the National Conference on Soviet Jewry, specifically its position of keeping the Soviet Jewry issue separate from other Soviet human rights problems.

Richard Maass said that the National Conference had had a difficult time maintaining this distinction and that the Union of Councils for Soviet Jews was dropping it. Also, there had been several signals to Gorbachev, since he took power, that it might be possible to act on the Jackson-Vanik Amendment in return for increased emigration, but the Soviet government did not respond.

Leo Nevas, concluding discussion of Soviet Jewry, said that the proposal for an AJC leadership visit to Kishenev in the spring of 1986 to mark the 80th anniversary of a pogrom there -- as well as AJC's 80th anniversary -- elicited a favorable reaction from Mark Palmer, although he said that the Soviets would resist this visit if AJC sought official status, and that any AJC delegation should, therefore, travel as a tourist group.

Finally, Mr. Nevas mentioned that since our last meeting Mervin Riseman, an outstanding Soviet Jewry advocate, who had led AJC's National Soviet Jewry Task Force, had passed away. The International Relations Steering Committee, at Mr. Nevas' suggestion, recorded its profound sorrow at Mr. Riseman's death and expressed its deepest sympathy to his family.

* * * *

David Gordis, reviewing the current situation of AJC's Israel Office and future AJC plans, noted that the Director of the Israel Office, Dr. M. Bernard Resnikoff, is planning to retire, and that he (David Gordis) and Marc Tanenbaum are interviewing potential successors; they will announce their decision soon.

Dr. Gordis also discussed plans for an Institute of Human Relations in Israel. Currently, the Israel Office functions as a "quasi-diplomatic" mission that conveys our support for, or dissent from, certain Israeli positions to members of the Israeli government and opinion-shapers in Israel. It has two primary programmatic foci: 1) Israel-Diaspora relations, pursued by the Institute on American Jewish-Israeli Relations, and 2) partnership with organizations which seek to ease intergroup tensions in Israel. A subcommittee chaired by Leo Nevas is considering a proposal for an Institute of Human Relations in Israel (originally dubbed "Center for Pluralism in Israel"), which would institutionalize AJC cooperation with intergroup relations organizations there. The Israel Office's physical location is unsatisfactory, and alternative office sites are being investigated.

George Gruen raised several questions for discussion regarding U.S. Middle East policy. Referring to the possibility of Assistant Secretary of State Richard Murphy's meeting with Palestinian members of a joint Jordanian-Palestinian delegation, Dr. Gruen asked whether the 1975 U.S. agreement to not talk to the PLO until it accepted UN Resolution 242 would exclude the State Department's quietly "sounding out" the PLO by talking with Palestinian leaders whom the State Department considers credible. He also raised the question of what the relationship is between PLO membership and membership in the Palestine National Council. Considering the U.S. pledge to Israel that it will meet with Palestinians only as a prelude to direct Palestinian negotiations with Israel, and the differences in opinion between Shimon Peres and Yitzhak Shamir, Dr. Gruen asked whether it was advisable for AJC to comment on this issue. Regarding the proposed arms sales to Jordan and Saudi Arabia, Dr. Gruen noted that the AJC has not completely opposed the sale of stationary defensive arms to Jordan but we have objected to the sale of mobile weapons with offensive capabilities.

Marc Tanenbaum said that the proposed arms sales may lead to a confrontation between Congress and the Administration, and that the proposal worries the American Jewish community. He suggested that AJC make available the latest information on the Middle East military balance.

Robert Cutler asked about the status of a proposed meeting of representatives of the American Jewish Congress with King Hussein.

David Gordis replied that Prime Minister Shimon Peres had approved the visit.

Leo Nevas commented that Peres expressed "no objection" to the meeting, which should be distinguished from his approving it.

David Gordis said that the American Jewish Committee's current position regarding U.S. arms sales to Arab countries is not particularly aggressive and perhaps should be reconsidered. Saudi Arabia, while offering U.S. bases to forestall Soviet aggression in the Persian Gulf, continues to support PLO terrorism. He also noted that Yitzhak Shamir and his Likud Party appear hostile to talks with a joint Jordanian-Palestinian delegation, and that the signal that Peres is sending is a "blinking light" which may turn "red" should the possibility of this meeting grow stronger.

Charles Temel said that the AJC should oppose arms sales to Jordan, which has avoided the Camp David peace process, and continues to promote the flawed concept of an international conference with Soviet participation. Reports indicate that Yassir Arafat is personally directing PLO terrorist operations against Israel from Amman, and it is doubtful whether King Hussein would be able to guarantee into whose hands American arms might fall. AJC should recommend economic assistance but oppose arms sales to Jordan.

Al Moses agreed that the AJC should oppose arms sales to Jordan based on Hussein's apparent unwillingness to move without Arafat's approval and to negotiate with Israel.

Leo Nevas, having determined that the Steering Committee unanimously opposed arms sales to Jordan and Saudi Arabia, recommended that a statement on this matter be drafted for presentation to the Board of Governors. He added that as far as the Jordanian-Palestinian initiative is concerned, AJC should follow the Israeli government's lead.

Cedric Suzman queried whether there is any viable alternative Palestinian leadership to the PLO.

George Gruen responded that West Bank Palestinians express seemingly contradictory sentiments: On the one hand, they accept the existence of Israel, and on the other, they assert that Arafat is their leader. They seem to assume that Arafat is slowly moving toward a two-state solution. King Hussein wants an autonomous, but not an independent, Palestinian state. Some Mideast observers believe that while Hussein and Arafat dislike each other, they dislike Assad more, and may therefore reach an agreement that is acceptable to Israel.

Marc Tanenbaum reported that either Richard Murphy or Robert McFarlane will address the upcoming National Executive Council in Miami. He also mentioned that, as part of AJC's effort to combat Kahanism, we are publishing and distributing a study of Kahane and his Kach party by Hebrew University Professor Ehud Sprinzak.

* * * * *

Jacob Kovadloff reported on his recent visit to South America. Brazil, he found, is the most progressive Latin American country in interreligious relations. Brazil's National Conference of Bishops publicly supports improved Catholic-Israeli relations, including Vatican recognition of Jerusalem as the Israeli capital. In Brazilia, Mr. Kovadloff met with the Minister of Education, who professed a deep knowledge of the history of Brazilian Jews. Mr. Kovadloff also circulated among the Steering Committee an invitation to a conference hosted by the National Conference of Bishops of Brazil, and co-sponsored by the Brazilian Jewish confederation and AJC, which will take place November 2-5 in Sao Paulo. The upcoming conference, which Jews from Argentina and Uruguay will attend, will be a milestone in the history of Catholic-Jewish relations.

Marc Tannenbaum added that AJC hopes to send an American delegation to Sao Paolo. He also reported that the Jacob Blaustein Institute sponsored a conference in Costa Rica, which was attended by the Ministers of Education of twelve Latin American countries, on the subject of human rights education.

Jacob Kovadloff noted that for the first time since the AJC office in Buenos Aires was closed, Argentine Jews have a public educational program on Jewish themes and have published a Jewish scholarly book. In addition, Argentine notables have gone on record against the infamous "Zionism is racism" resolution.

* * * *

Regarding South Africa, Leo Nevas said that the American Jewish Committee has called upon President Reagan to support the House-Senate Conference anti-apartheid bill. Recently, Leo Nevas, Marc Tanenbaum and David Harris met with Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs Chester Crocker, who was "extremely receptive," and who informed them of President Reagan's pending endorsement of sanctions (intended to delay proposed legislation). Mr. Crocker told the AJC delegation that AJC has a service to render to the South African government: to inform it of the broad U.S. public opposition to apartheid. Mr. Nevas added that the Jewish community of South Africa is eager for a small, low-key visit from AJC to demonstrate concern for their situation, and for us to gain a better understanding of their present condition.

Marc Tanenbaum pointed out that Helen Suzman, a leading member of the Progressive Federal Party, supports a moderate approach toward dismantling apartheid. Ms. Suzman urged that American Jews come to South Africa as soon as possible to express their solidarity with South African Jewry.

Leo Nevas added that Chester Crocker offered to brief an AJC delegation prior to their departure.

Cedric Suzman congratulated the AJC for being ahead, rather than behind, the events unfolding in South Africa. During an interview on National Public Radio Helen Suzman said that sanctions against South Africa are irrelevant; its economy is self-destructing anyway. U.S. banks fear turmoil and this is more influential than any possible sanction. South African business leaders, including a number of Jews, may meet with members of the African National Congress -- something akin to Israelis meeting with Arafat. Such dialogue is the only way to avoid bloodshed.

Carol Seigler asked if there are any other anti-apartheid religious groups with which AJC could affiliate.

Marc Tanenbaum responded that AJC was once affiliated with the Center for Interfaith Responsibility, but discovered that it promoted many Third World interests, including leftist opposition to Israel.

* * * *

Suzanne Elson, co-chair of the AJC delegation to the NGO forum in Nairobi, reported that the Jacob Blaustein Institute (JBI) report on Palestinian women was tremendously helpful in combatting Arab propaganda, and bringing balance to discussions. The report was distributed to the official U.S. delegates -- who said it was the best-prepared material they received, to the Israeli delegation, and to Jewish members of other delegations. In addition, Ms. Elson's roommate in Nairobi, the legal counsel for NOW, distributed the JBI report during her daily press conference. Nairobi provided an opportunity for informal, unpublicized dialogue between Palestinian, Jewish and American Black women which will continue in Israel. AJC should be proud of its contribution to Nairobi.

Carolyn Tumarkin commented that although the Blaustein report did not change the tenor of workshops, it was very well received by media people, many of whom described it as the best source of information they received. She added that Maureen Reagan referred to the entire conference as an "orgy in hypocrisy," and that the question remains whether the deletion in the final conference document of an invidious reference to Zionism constituted a victory, or merely the absence of defeat.

Morton Blaustein noted that while in Nairobi Maureen Reagan called the conference a disaster, yet upon returning to the U.S. she called it a success. At what point did her change of heart occur?

Leo Nevas said that Maureen Reagan, Alan Keyes, and Dame Nita Barrow have been invited to the National Executive Council meeting in Miami, and will be presented with special awards for their efforts at Nairobi.

Marc Tanenbaum called attention to an AJC letter to Secretary of State George Shultz commending the Nairobi U.S. delegation, and also commended the skill and preparation of the AJC delegates and other American Jewish women who attended the conference. The JBI report has been presented to the UN Secretary-General's office, which is presently studying it, the Israeli Foreign Ministry, the U.S. State Department, and many Nairobi Conference delegates. It has been a valuable information tool in combatting anti-Zionism.

Cedric Suzman said that we should also acknowledge the role of the Kenyan delegation which was determined to make the conference a success, and urged that we send an expression of our appreciation to Kenya.

Leo Nevas added that, as part of AJC's outreach efforts to foreign diplomats, several AJC women are organizing social meetings in their homes with UN delegates to promote better mutual understanding.

* * *

Prepared by Allan L. Kagedan and Harry Milkman

85-570-16
B074 (IRD-3)
10/9/85/smm

CHAIRMAN'S TALKING POINTS:
Central American Session
National Executive Council
Miami, Florida
November 10, 1985

* As we meet today, it should be recalled that November 10th marks a sad 10th anniversary. It was 10 years ago today that the U.N. General Assembly passed the infamous Zionism is Racism resolution, a black mark, if ever there was one, on the U.N. and a libel against the Jewish people. It is worth noting that both Costa Rica and Panama - the countries represented by our distinguished diplomatic guests - opposed the resolution, together with other Central American countries, including El Salvador, Honduras and Nicaragua, while Guatemala abstained.

* Our topic today, Central America, is a region that has been very much in the news in recent years and is likely to continue to be so for a very long time. It demands our attention and requires our understanding.

* Comparatively little is known about the region despite its proximity. Most Americans are unable to distinguish between the countries and, therefore, tend to make generalizations without recognizing the political, economic and social differences from country to country.

* Recognizing the importance of the region, President Reagan, in an address to Congress in April 1983, said:

"Central America's problems do directly affect the security and the well-being of our own people. And Central America is much closer to the United States than many of the world trouble spots that concern us. So as we work to restore our own economy, we cannot afford to lose sight of our neighbors to the south...

El Salvador is nearer to Texas than Texas is to Massachusetts, Nicaragua is just as close to Miami as Miami is to Washington ...But nearness on the map doesn't even begin to tell the strategic importance of Central America, bordering as it does on our Caribbean - our lifeline to the outside world. Two-thirds of all our foreign trade and petroleum pass through the Panama Canal and the Caribbean. In a European crisis, at least half of our supplies for NATO would go through these areas by sea."

The President then went on to elaborate the four principal American goals in our foreign policy towards the Central American region, goals that the Administration has frequently re-iterated:

1) "In response to decades of inequity and indifference we will support democracy, reform and human freedom..."

2) "In response to the challenge of world recession and, in the case of El Salvador, to the unrelenting campaign of economic sabotage by the guerillas, we will support economic development..."

3) "In response to the military challenge from Cuba and Nicaragua - to their deliberate use of force to spread tyranny - we will support the security of the region's threatened nations..."

4) "We will support dialogue and negotiations - both among the countries of the region and within each country..."

* Although we do not have an American perspective in Central America at today's plenary session, as the focus is meant to be a Central American perspective of Central America, it is obviously of significance to an understanding of the region to be aware of United States goals and policies in the region. Of course, to state the obvious, U.S. policy in Central America is the subject of considerable controversy within our own country and elsewhere. How effective has American policy been in promoting regional security and development?

* Democracy has, unquestionably, experienced significant headway in the region. As Secretary of State George Shultz said in Indianapolis in April 1985, "... the transition to democracy is succeeding everywhere in Central America, everywhere, that is, except Nicaragua." He cited forthcoming elections in Guatemala and Honduras, the "triumph of democracy" in El Salvador, the vibrancy of Costa Rica's example, and the move from military to civilian regime in Panama. But how serious a threat does Nicaragua pose to the region, and particularly to its immediate neighbors whose numbers include Costa Rica? And to what extent has Nicaragua's anti-Israel, anti-Zionist stance, and the presence of a large PLO office in Managua, succeeded in affecting policy and public opinion in other countries in the region?

* One of the principal hopes for achieving a peaceful solution to the conflict in Central America rests with the Contadora Process. The Process was initiated in January 1983 when the foreign ministers of Colombia, Mexico, Panama and Venezuela met on Contadora Island in Panama, which in turn led to agreement on a Document of Objectives among the four Contadora members and the five Central American countries - Costa Rica, Nicaragua, Honduras, El Salvador and Guatemala. The Document identified 21 political, security and social-economic goals to be attained. Since then, the Contadora Group has continued to meet, and, indeed, is in session now as we meet in Miami, to search for a solution. It has gained the important support of several South American and West European countries, and the United States, despite recently-expressed reservations about the Process, has indicated it still backs the effort. Private groups, most notably the Inter-American Dialogue, chaired by Ambassador Sol Linowitz and former OAS Secretary-General Galo Plaza, have called for a greater U.S. commitment to the Contadora Process. We are fortunate to have a Panamanian representative at this session who may well want to address the Contadora issue and bring us up-to-date on its progress. Can ways be found to insure implementation among the signatories, and especially Nicaragua, of the 21 points which, inter alia, call for respect for human, civil, political and other rights; the reduction and eventual elimination of "foreign military advisors and other foreign elements..;" "free access to fair and regular elections..;" "refraining from inciting or supporting acts of terrorism..." etc.

* And in the midst of this vital region live Jewish communities - from but a literal handful remaining in Nicaragua to some 5,000 in Panama. How are they affected by these political, economic and social events? How do they see their future? What additional role do they feel that we, Americans, American Jews and members of AJC, can play in strengthening the forces of democracy and the security and well-being of the Jewish communities?

* These are some questions that our speakers will be addressing in the first hour of our program, and we then look forward to questions from our audience and the participation of our special guests representing the individual Central American Jewish communities.



David A. Harris
November 1, 1985

DAH:RPR

CHAIRMAN'S NOTES:
Central American Session
National Executive Council
Miami, Florida
November 10, 1985

- * The plenary session will take place on Sunday, November 10th beginning at 10:30 a.m. in the Tuttle Monroe Room, which is located on Level One in the Hyatt Regency. The meeting is scheduled to conclude at 1 p.m.
- * The principal speakers are Ambassador Fernando Berrocal, Permanent Representative of Costa Rica to the United Nations, and Ambassador David Samudio, Jr, Permanent Representative of Panama to the United Nations. Their biographies are attached. Each has been asked to speak for 15 minutes, offering a Central American perspective of Central America today and future prospects for regional stability and political and economic development.
- * Costa Rica and Panama both have excellent bilateral relations with Israel and have demonstrated consistent support for Israel at the United Nations. In the case of Costa Rica, it should be further noted that Costa Rican President Luis Alberto Monge (pronounced Mon-hay) has returned from a week-long state visit to Israel only last month, and, of special significance, that Costa Rica was the first country to move its embassy back to Jerusalem, in May 1982, a fact of special appreciation among Jews everywhere.
- * In both cases, as will be discussed later in the session, there are active and thriving Jewish communities which live in an environment of respect for pluralism and religious tolerance.
- * The third speaker, who will be asked to offer a Central American perspective on the condition of the Jewish communities, is Marcel Ruff, president of the Federation of Central American Jewish Communities (more commonly referred to by its acronym FEDECO). AJC has enjoyed very close relations with FEDECO since the latter's founding some 20 years ago. Most recently, several AJC lay and staff members attended the FEDECO bi-annual meeting in Guatemala in 1984, and, subsequently we were honored to have Moises Sabbaj, vice-president of FEDECO, address our Annual Meeting in May 1984 in New York. Sergio Nudelstejer is preparing biographical notes on Mr. Ruff, who has been asked to speak for 10 minutes.
- * Completing the dais will be Sergio Nudelstejer, AJC's Director of the Mexican and Central American Office, located in Mexico City. Sergio, who has been the director since the Office's founding 20 years ago, is a leading figure in the Mexican Jewish community and enjoys very close relations with leading governmental figures, including President de la Madrid and Foreign Minister Sepulveda. He has travelled extensively in the Central American region and maintains frequent contact with the representatives of the Jewish communities, seeking, where possible, to assist in the strengthening of programming. In July, he, together with Sidney Liskofsky, director of the Jacob Blaustein Institute for the Advancement of Human Rights, attended a Blaustein-sponsored conference on human rights education that attracted government officials from more than a dozen Latin American countries, held at the Inter-American Institute for Human Rights in San Jose, Costa Rica.

Most recently, Sergio, after contending with the destructive Mexican earthquake in September and its aftermath, organized, together with the Venezuelan Jewish community, a major Catholic-Jewish dialogue, marking the 20th anniversary of Nostra Aetate, Vatican Council II's Declaration on the Jews, at which Marc Tanenbaum spoke, and which attracted considerable public and media attention. This conference took place in Caracas in early October (1985).

Sergio has also written important books on Franz Kafka and Albert Einstein, which received extensive praise in the Spanish-speaking world, and he is a regular journalist and literary critic for a leading Mexican newspaper and magazine.

- * Sergio's purpose on the panel is to act as a resource and as AJC's expert on Central America. Although he has no formal part on the agenda, please feel free to call on him for comment, clarification, questions or summary.
- * Additionally, there will be representatives of four Central American Jewish communities seated together for the session. They are: Gustavo Prifer of Costa Rica; Yosef Harari of Panama; Mario Permut of Guatemala; and John Claude Kahn and Ernesto Freund of El Salvador. Sergio is preparing brief biographies of each of the five to permit you to introduce them. We are not inviting them to make formal statements but would like to encourage them to both raise and respond to questions after the first part of the program is concluded.
- * Sergio Nudelstejer is also preparing several questions for your use to facilitate discussion in the second half of the program.

David Harris
November 1, 1985

THE AMERICAN JEWISH COMMITTEE

date October 11, 1985
to Steering Committee of the Commission on
International Relations
from Leo Nevas, Chairman

I am pleased to enclose several items of interest, including:

- 1) A memo on the PLO terrorist attack in Cyprus and Israel's response;
- 2) Reports on the impact of the Mexican earthquake on the local Jewish community;
- 3) An update on the kidnapped Lebanese Jewish Leaders;
- 4) Material on the forthcoming Pan-American conference on Vatican Council II and Catholic-Jewish relations, co-sponsored by AJC, in Sao Paulo, Brazil;
- 5) A note from Secretary of State Shultz to Marc Tanenbaum;
- 6) Minutes of our meeting of September 9th;

Our next meeting will take place on Thursday, November 7 at 10:30 a.m. at the Hyatt Regency Hotel in Miami, Florida as part of the four-day National Executive Council. It will be the first of several sessions of particular interest to members of the Steering Committee. There will also be a report on the AJC leadership mission to South Africa, October 9-18, at the Board of Governors (November 7), plenary sessions focusing on the Middle East and Central America (November 8 and 10, respectively) and an informal breakfast with Jewish leaders from Central America (November 9).

Special guests who will focus on international issues include Assistant Secretary of State for Near Eastern Affairs Richard Murphy; Costa Rican Ambassador to the United Nations Fernando Berrocal; Panamanian Ambassador to the United Nations David Samudio; Assistant Secretary of State-designate for International Organizations Alan Keyes; Nairobi NGO Forum Convenor Dame Nita Barrow; and Jerusalem Post Washington Correspondent Wolf Blitzer.

I very much hope you will be able to join us for what promises to be an exciting and stimulating N.E.C.

85-550-90

LN:CH