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[Hong Kong], 23-24 March 1987.

CONFIDENTIAL



HONG KONG - 23-24 MARCH, 1987

JOINT CONVENORS:

PROFESSOR YORAM DINSTEIN

ISI J. LEIBLER, C.B.E.

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THE SECOND ASIAN JEWISH COLLOQUIUM

HONG KONG - 23/24 MARCH, 1987

INTRODUCTION

1. The Second Asian-Jewish Colloquium in Hong Kong in March, attended by 32 distinguished academics, scholars and intellectuals from Asia and the Jewish world (APPENDIX 1) was more successful than the first Colloquium in Singapore in September 1984. The calibre of individual scholars was noticeably higher, the proceedings, papers and discussion were better planned and more relevant, (APPENDIX 2) the local, international, Israeli and Jewish press coverage was vastly greater and the establishment of the prestigious Steering Committee has provided a continuity mechanism not available to us after Singapore. If the Colloquium in Singapore could be described as a promising idea, in Hong Kong it took a major step towards becoming an ongoing and institutionalised feature of international Jewish life.
2. The Hong Kong meeting was also more successful than we could have expected because of the last-minute inclusion of the former American, Sidney Shapiro, from Beijing. Shapiro,

born Jewish in New York, and a Chinese citizen since 1963, was the first, albeit "exotic", Chinese scholar to attend a Jewish international conference since 1949. More on the "Shapiro factor" - later in this report.

3. In setting out the reasons for concluding that the Colloquium succeeded, the report which follows will also explain why we are encouraged by the progress made towards establishing a more resonant Jewish "ideas presence" in the region and why we believe that there is very considerable scope for further activities. If handled sensitively these developments could lead, over time, to important changes in such areas as Chinese-Jewish cultural relations with the inevitable feedback into other areas of concern to World Jewry; improved contact with Indian intellectuals and opinion-makers; greater, and more sympathetic, awareness in Japanese academic circles of Jews and Israel; expanded exchange with influential educational authorities in South Korea; and a generally wider acceptance of an international Jewish dimension in the thinking of elites throughout the South-East Asia region.

4. It should be emphasised that these are long-term goals, that what is under discussion is a process in which there will inevitably be setbacks and disappointments and where progress is sometimes glacier-like if measured by the usual Western expectations of change. But the modest achievements of the Colloquium, and its associated spinoffs thus far, indicate clearly the considerable scope for expanded effort in the region.

#### BACKGROUND

5. The genesis of the Colloquium idea lay in the convergence of two related developments. The first was the growing awareness through the 1970's amongst sections of Australian Jewish leadership that Asia's growing economic and geopolitical importance in international affairs was fast becoming a factor which would have significant consequences for world Jewry and Israel. At the same time this was accompanied by a recognition that the small and scattered Jewish communities throughout the region were unlikely to sustain themselves or play any wider role on behalf of

Jewish interests unless they were given significant assistance, and that the Australian Jewish community, by far the largest in the region, was logically placed, geographically and in terms of its resources, to take the lead on this question. The second concurrent development was the growing understanding within some Israeli academic circles that although Asia was increasingly critical in the international arena, Israel's profile in the region was extremely low. Except for individual contacts between specialised scholars there was no ongoing opportunities for ideas exchange between Asian and Jewish intellectuals.

6. Following discussions in 1981 in Australia and Israel between Professor Yoram Dinstein, at the time Rector of the University of Tel Aviv, and Isi Leibler, President of the Executive Council of Australian Jewry and, at the time, the Chairman of the then just established Asia Pacific Jewish Association, agreement was reached to explore the possibility of holding a seminar somewhere in Asia for an invited group of Asian and Jewish scholars. In meetings held in Israel, in which other academics participated, notably Professor Zwi Werblowsky, Professor of Comparative

Religion at the Hebrew University, the Colloquium idea was further developed, invitees agreed upon and a program drawn up for the first meeting. Singapore was chosen for the first venue in 1984. The organisational and logistics arrangements were handled by the Melbourne-based offices of the Asia Pacific Jewish Association.

7. The Singapore Colloquium has been the subject of earlier reports presented by Isi Leibler to meetings of the World Jewish Congress in Vienna in January 1985 and in Jerusalem in January 1986. While it certainly succeeded in demonstrating that the basic idea was viable, featured some notable exchanges between the Jewish and Asian scholars present, and raised considerable interest in international Jewish circles where news of the conference was disseminated, the Singapore Colloquium's impact was limited by two factors: for reasons to do with the sensitive political situation Singapore faced even then (two years before the Herzog visit) the local press, taking its cue from government, totally ignored the conference. This news blackout extended to the international media based in Singapore with the result that outside the international

Jewish press the Colloquium story was virtually ignored. A second problem was that the First Colloquium, perhaps because it was an unknown quantity, did not adequately attract the level of positive responses from some of the first-rank scholars we would have preferred to welcome. Both these problems, especially the first, were largely overcome at the Second Colloquium.

THE ROAD TO HONG KONG

8. An important outcome of the Singapore Colloquium was the unanimous agreement by those present that the exercise should be repeated two years later. For a variety of organisational reasons a suitable date could not be found in 1986 and early 1987 was therefore agreed upon. Venue was an important consideration and, as early as 1985, Isi Leibler and APJA Vice-President, Sam Lipski, met in Israel with senior representatives of the Foreign Ministry, former President Katzir at the Rehovot Institute, Abe Harman, President of the Hebrew University as well as Professor Dinstein and other academics to review the choices. There

was widespread agreement that if it were possible Tokyo was a preferred option, followed by a venue in India.

9. From the equivocal response of the Japanese academics at the Singapore Colloquium it was always clear that Tokyo would not be an easy location to pin down. Other venues in Japan - Osaka, for example - were also considered but a decision to proceed with further inquiries was delayed until the visit to Japan by then Foreign Minister Yitzhak Shamir in late 1985. Unfortunately, whatever else the visit may have achieved, it did not change the basic prevailing attitudes towards any Israel-connected project in the Japanese Foreign Ministry from which the key Japanese academics tend to take their cue. While they felt free to attend a Jewish conference anywhere else, even in Jerusalem, helping to organise one in Japan turned out to be too much to ask. The consensus, especially after some on-the-spot investigations by Professor Werblowsky was that, while it might be possible to stage a conference in Japan, it would create antagonism and be shunned by the very people we wanted to attract. The Japanese media would ignore it and there would be a general policy of non-co-operation. Japan was dropped. (This does

not preclude consideration of Japan as a venue for a future Colloquium).

10. The next choice explored was India. A formal letter of inquiry was sent to the Indian Ambassador in Canberra asking if a conference was held in India would the Indian government undertake to issue visas to Israeli scholars. Similar informal inquiries were made through World Jewish Congress contacts with Indian diplomatic sources in New York and London. The answer was a clear no. Any possibility of India was immediately foreclosed.
11. The next choice was Manila. Although the initial decision in favour of the Philippines was made before the Marcos regime was overthrown, the assumption of power by Corazon Aquino reinforced our interest in Manila as a worthwhile venue. Hotel bookings were made and invitations were sent out to an expanded list of scholars. Invitees were chosen on the basis of recommendations from Professor Dinstein and Professor Werblowsky. The APJA leadership also nominated scholars on the basis of familiarity with the region. Additional names were sought from Israeli ambassadors in

Asia. While these were eventually forthcoming, in many cases it took weeks, sometimes months, before replies to repeated requests were rerouted through the Israel embassy in Canberra and received by the organisers in Melbourne.

This process proved immensely frustrating and, at one stage, because replies had not been received from key countries in the region it endangered the staging of the Colloquium on the given dates. We strongly suggest that a more direct form of communication should be established with Jerusalem so that the unnecessary delays which occurred should not be repeated.

12. Unfortunately, while the Phillipines presented a number of advantages on paper, in reality it soon became apparent that Manila was perceived by a considerable number of the invitees as a "trouble-spot" and less than safe. As a result it was agreed that a change of venue was necessary if both the numbers and quality of invitees were not to suffer. Bangkok was considered as an alternative but if "security" was seen to be a problem in Manila it was unlikely to be much less of a perceived obstacle in Thailand. Holding a conference of the Colloquium type in Asia presents a number

of basic problems in terms of logistics, airline bookings, communications and hotel arrangements. While it certainly makes a critical difference when one of the convenors, Isi Leibler, has the backing of his large travel organisation throughout the region, the basic problem of limited venues remains. Therefore, from an administrative and costs point of view, Singapore presented many attractions. Furthermore despite the known difficulties associated with Singapore it was felt that holding the Colloquium there, especially after the setbacks associated with the Herzog visit, would be making a positive statement about the possibility of productive relations between Asians and Jews, Israelis amongst them, and making it in Singapore where the balance had to be redressed. New letters of invitation were despatched accompanied by apologies for the change in arrangements.

13. Regrettably the choice proved unacceptable in Foreign Ministry quarters in Jerusalem where, to sum up the opinion in simplistic terms, the assessment was made that Singapore needed a "breathing-space" to get over the fallout from the Herzog visit. The holding of the Colloquium, it was argued,

would put additional pressure on the Singapore authorities. With only three months to go Leibler, while in Singapore, had to reorganise the arrangements for the third time and move the Colloquium to Hong Kong. Immense pressure had to be applied by Leibler to obtain accommodation, let alone discounts in the Hong Kong hotels. In common with all first-class hotels in Hong Kong, it was booked out for the particular week due to an international football competition and other events. For the third time, invitations were despatched.

14. As it happened all the invitees took kindly to the changes and the APJA professional staff were able to handle the logistics. But this is not the point at issue. While this report is not the place to canvass the questions raised by the choice of Singapore, and then its rejection, it is clear that a breakdown of communications did occur with Jerusalem. We believe it is essential that a revised system of liaison, as mentioned above in connection with contacts with ambassadors in the region, needs to be established.

THE CHINA CONNECTION

15. The possibility that the Chinese might be willing to send a scholar to the Colloquium was first raised directly with appropriate officials in Beijing during a visit by Isi Leibler and Sam Lipski in October 1985. The universal answer was that it might be considered, but not much encouragement was forthcoming. The most "positive" response came from Dr. Li Shenzhi, Vice-President of the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences and Director of the Academy's Institute of American Studies. (Our subsequent contacts with Li Shenzhi are the subject of another report - a summary of which follows). (APPENDIX 3).
16. Aware that Li was coming to Australia on a lecture tour of universities, which we had arranged as "silent partners", we wrote to him formally in his capacity as a Vice-President of the Academy to ask if the Academy would nominate a scholar to speak on Kai Feng Jewry to the Colloquium. On the eve of his arrival in Australia in early March (just three weeks before the conference was due) in a formal telex communication signed as a Vice-President of the Chinese

Academy of Social Sciences, Li advised that, if we sent an invitation to Sidney Shapiro in Beijing, he would be able to attend. (APPENDIX 4). We did so immediately by return telex. No reply was received and when Li arrived he admitted that he did not rate our chances of Shapiro being allowed to come as more than 50-50. Just 10 days before the Colloquium, having resigned ourselves to yet another disappointment, the Cultural Attache in the Australian Embassy in Beijing telexed an inquiry on behalf of Shapiro who had come to ask about his "missing" invitation. It had, in fact, been sent some 12 days earlier. Isi Leibler telephoned the Cultural Attache and then spoke directly to Shapiro who, as it turned out, had just an hour earlier finally received the telexed invitation. It had gone astray in the Beijing bureaucracy and had only turned up that morning. The problem now was obtaining a visa from the Hong Kong authorities in time for Shapiro to travel. The Australian Prime Minister's office was approached and immediately agreed to intervene via the British Ambassador in Beijing to ensure that the Hong Kong authorities moved quickly. The intervention obviously helped. Shapiro arrived in Hong Kong two days ahead of schedule.

18. The Shapiro story, in much of its exotic detail, can be gleaned from the accompanying press clippings. (APPENDIX 5). From our point of view the fact that he finally came to the Colloquium was the most important feature of all. It was clear from his private conversations with us that his attendance had been approved at a very high level of the Chinese government. Although he did not specify, he indicated that it was just below Deng Xiaoping level. In public, at his press conference, he made three significant points: first, although he did not speak for the Academy of Social Sciences, the "scholarly community" in China was aware of his invitation and approved his participation in the Colloquium. Secondly, they were aware of the purpose of the Colloquium, the role of the regional Jewish body and its connection with the World Jewish Congress, and approved the idea of cultural exchange between Jews and the people of Asia. (Shapiro referred on a number of occasions to his meeting in New York with Israel Singer of the World Jewish Congress). Thirdly, he looked forward to more such exchanges between Chinese and Jewish scholars.

19. Shapiro created widespread media interest in Hong Kong. In addition to the local English and Chinese language newspapers he was interviewed by Reuters, Agence-France Presse, Hong Kong English and Chinese language Radio, and appeared on Hong Kong English and Chinese television in special interview programs. The international Jewish and Israeli press also took up his story. The actual paper he delivered, on what Chinese scholars had written about Kai Feng Jewry, turned out to be somewhat of an anti-climax and did not, it must be said, overly impress the academics with its scholarly weight. We were hardly surprised that the media did not rush to report on it. At every point we emphasised to Shapiro that we did not want to endanger any further contacts with him or others in Beijing by "over-exposing" him. Indeed, we telephoned him in advance in Beijing to clear releasing his details to the media on arrival in Hong Kong. While we were certainly anxious to publicise him as much as possible, we were prepared to keep him "under wraps" if that was the condition of his coming. We need not have worried. Shapiro not only cleared media coverage he lapped up every opportunity and obviously enjoyed his celebrity status. By nature, and by the

accumulated experience of 40 years in China, Shapiro is a survivor and a cautious cultural apparatchik. That he should feel free to speak so openly about contacts between China and Jews - albeit on the scholarly, cultural and educational level - is, in our view, a strong indication of an important shift in policy in Beijing. It is for others to interpret the significance, if any, of the timing of Shapiro's attendance in Hong Kong and the Chinese Xinhua news agency release about the Tamir-LiLuye meeting at the United Nations. But we have no doubt that the decision to let Shapiro come was taken against a wider backdrop of re-assessing relations with Israel and the Jewish world.

20. As indicated clearly in the report on Li Shenzhi's visit to Australia there is no suggestion of such a re-assessment leading to early recognition of Israel and diplomatic relations. Indeed, the over-active pursuit of such a goal could, in the short and medium-term, be counter-productive. But the careful cultivation of contact with the Jewish world through such vehicles as the Colloquium, invitations to Chinese students to undertake Jewish studies at Western universities, Chinese scholars to attend Jewish cultural

events, and Jewish scholars to visit China, can make significant contributions to a changed awareness. As Shapiro, somewhat to our surprise, agreed to be a member of the international steering committee for the Third Colloquium, (APPENDIX 6) we believe there is potential for further development of the connection. We intend to pursue this matter on a visit to Beijing, tentatively scheduled for July, to explore whether it might be possible for Shapiro, and others in the future, to come to Jerusalem should the steering committee, for example, happen to be holding a planning meeting there. We also hope, in the not too distant future, to hold an Asian Jewish dialogue in Beijing.

#### THE COLLOQUIUM

21. Although Shapiro's last-minute arrival added a special dimension of interest for the media, the Colloquium discussions themselves and the presence of such an impressive group of VIP's in Hong Kong created widespread interest. Again, the accompanying clippings give some idea of the topics which attracted press attention. In addition

a series of radio interviews with Professor Yoram Dinstein, Malcolm Fraser and Sam Lipski dealt with different aspects of the Colloquium theme and the idea behind the meeting. We invited David Landau of the Jerusalem Post, Shaul Ben Haim of Maariv, and Edwin Eytan of Yediot Achronot to represent the Israeli press. Landau and Eytan also reported the Colloquium for the Jewish Telegraphic Agency. Susan Bures, Editor of the Australian Jewish Times, was also present as were "stringers" for other Jewish publications, including the London Jewish Chronicle.

22. It would be an invidious, and impossible task, to try to summarise the two days of discussions. It was generally agreed, however, that the standard of discussion and most papers was high and a significant improvement on Singapore. Indeed, some of the exchanges between scholars were quite brilliant and would have graced any international academic conference. We note this, not to express surprise, but to emphasise how important it is to concentrate on the individual calibre of the scholars invited and their ability to articulate their ideas, not just on paper but in verbal exchange. In one case, that of Masao Morimoto from Japan,

we found ourselves in the embarrassing position of having invited a guest who could not express himself at all in English beyond a few basic words even though he can apparently write it. While we were prepared to go to extraordinary lengths to accommodate a Chinese scholar if he had needed an interpreter, and are prepared to do so at future Colloquia, we believe it is pointless for scholars from any other country to be invited who cannot speak English and who have not been checked out to ensure that they can.

23. The opening statement by Leibler at the beginning of the Colloquium follows (APPENDIX 7). However a full transcript of papers, discussion and additional material being especially prepared, will appear in book form in a comprehensive Colloquium publication which we intend to circulate widely. But it should be noted that, in addition to the more timeless issues discussed, the questions of recent manifestations of Japanese and Malaysian anti-semitism, as well as prospects for peace in the Middle East, also came up and drew press comment.

24. As comments by the participants at the time, and correspondence since has confirmed, the Colloquium succeeded at an informal social level as much as it did at the formal level of papers and plenary discussions. We believe that this is, in many ways, as important an outcome as any. It was demonstrated at the closing dinner of the Colloquium when Ram Jethmalani, the colorful and entertaining Indian advocate, spoke eloquently about his support for Israel and the Jewish people. Using every rhetorical trick learnt over more than 40 years as a barrister, Jethmalani gave an unforgettable closing speech. But he was clearly genuinely moved by the occasion and he succeeded in winning widespread applause from all of the Asians present when he declared it was essential to ensure Israel's survival.

#### THE THIRD COLLOQUIUM

25. We intend to investigate the possibility of holding the next Colloquium in Beijing. While both convenors are committed to making every effort to stage it there next time, Professor Dinstein is less optimistic than Isi Leibler about

the prospects. Even more important than an early decision on venue is confirmation of a date in the third week of March, 1989. The date is crucial to enable us to approach some of the key people, a number of Nobel Laureates amongst them, who have expressed interest in attending the Colloquium but who were already booked in advance for the previous ones by the time they received the invitations.

26. We have tentatively proposed to call a meeting in Jerusalem next October/November of as many members of the Steering Committee as can attend. But, because of the considerable costs involved, this will only take place if the Chinese agree to send Shapiro.

#### CONCLUSION

27. We believe that the Hong Kong meeting vindicated our hopes in undertaking the Colloquium venture in the first place. This is not so much because of what it actually achieved - which although valuable in itself, we see only as a

beginning - but because of what it demonstrated can be achieved.

28. In order to proceed to the Third Colloquium, to take advantage of the openings which have been established in China, to explore the contacts in Japan and India, to re-assess what might be possible in Singapore, South Korea, Thailand and the Philippines, the Colloquium will have to professionalise its planning and organisational arrangements. For the first two Colloquia these have been handled by the limited resources of the APJA, in addition to Leibler's travel organisation, Jetset Tours. It should be noted that APJA is in turn heavily subsidised by the Australian Institute of Jewish Affairs. At best it can make available the part-time services of two professionals and the part-time backup of one secretary. While this can suffice for the first year or so in the lead-up to the conference, in the last six to nine months prior to the Colloquium, which has to be set up in a third country with no local staff to assist, at least one full-time professional organiser and a full-time secretary becomes essential. In addition, as we learned in Hong Kong, despite the generous

assistance of Israel Consul-General Reuven Merhav and his staff, considerable resources for the conference secretariat in such areas as word processing, photocopying and communications are essential. Furthermore, wherever the next conference is held, but especially if it should turn out to be Beijing, advance travel by the professional staff to make on-site arrangements will be vital.

29. We believe that, in the circumstances, a total review of the affordable budget available for the Colloquium, is now essential. It is not feasible for the Australian Institute of Jewish Affairs and Jetset Tours to continue to subsidise the Colloquium. It should have the continuity and predictability of a reasonable budget allocation behind it to enable the hiring of minimal professional staff. At present the combined subsidies of the World Jewish Congress and the Jewish Agency do not cover the cost of air fares and hotels for invitees.

30. At the same time we take this opportunity to thank the World Jewish Congress, especially Edgar Bronfman and Israel Singer, not only for their financial resources but also for

their continued support of the Colloquium idea. Singer was to have participated in Hong Kong but had to participate in meetings in Moscow at the last moment relating to Soviet Jewry.

We also thank our other "mechutan", Akiva Lewinsky of the Jewish Agency, who readily understood why improving the Jewish world's contact with Asia was a project worthy of his committed support.

We look forward to greeting them both at the Third Colloquium.

April 1987.

# THE SECOND ASIAN-JEWISH COLLOQUIUM

HONG KONG

MARCH 22-24, 1987

## PARTICIPANTS

ABRAMOV, S. Zalman:

Doctor of Law. Member of Parliament (Knesset) of Israel, 1959-1977. Former National Chairman, Israeli American Society and Public Council on Soviet Jewry. Member of Israeli Delegation to the United Nations, 1975 and 1977. Former Vice-President, World Jewish Congress.

CAMPOS, Paulo C.:

Professor of Medicine. President, National Academy of Science and Technology, Philippines, since 1978. Graduate and Post-graduate of University of the Philippines, Johns Hopkins and Harvard Schools of Medicine and of Oak Ridge Institute of Nuclear Medicine. Member and Sometime President, Philippines National Research Council's Governing Board and UNESCO National Commission of the Philippines Technical Group on Science and Technology. Member and fellow of medical and scientific associations. Knight Commander, Knights of Rizal.

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EZEKIEL, Nissim:

Professor of English, University of Bombay. Noted poet, writer and editor. Recipient of several awards, including Australian Government Cultural Award (1977) and National Association of Letters (1983).

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President, International Institute of Rural Reconstruction. Professional Lecturer, University of the Philippines, Institute of Public Health. Chairman, Mindanao Agricultural Resettlement Agency (Ministry of Agrarian Reform-NCCP Joint Project). Graduate in Medicine, Science, Public Health and Management Accounting. Recipient of numerous honours, author of books and articles and trustee of several foundations.

FRASER, Malcolm:

The Right Honourable Malcolm Fraser, C.H. Second-longest serving Prime Minister of the Commonwealth of Australia (December, 1975 - March, 1983). Elected to Federal Parliament in 1955. Chairman of Government Members' Defence Committee (1963-1965) and Member of Joint Parliamentary Committee on Foreign Affairs (1962-1966). Appointed to Ministry in January, 1966 (Army portfolio) and to Cabinet (Minister for Education and Science) in February, 1968. Became Minister of State for Defence in November, 1969. Co-Chairman (1985-1986) of Commonwealth Committee of Eminent Persons on South Africa. Currently Member of Interaction Council for Former Heads of Government and Chairman and Chief Executive Officer of Asian-International Counselling Service Ltd.

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Member of Knesset (Parliament) of Israel. Chairman, Knesset Energy Committee and Member of Knesset Foreign Affairs and Defence Committees. Appointed (1973) Chairman, International Department of Israel's Labour Party. Deputy Chairman (8th Knesset) of Knesset Economic Committee. Served variously in 9th, 10th and 11th Knesset as member and subsequently Chairman of Foreign Affairs, Defence and Energy Committees. Chairman, Israel Centre for Energy Policies. Instrumental in re-establishment of diplomatic ties between Israel and Spain.

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JETHMALANI, Ram:

Advocate, Supreme Court of India. Member of Indian Parliament (1977-1984). National Vice-President of Bharatiya Janata Party (leading opposition political party in India). Sometime Professor of Government Law (Bombay University). Held Chairmanship of the Bar Council of India. Appointed (1973) Vice-President of World Peace through Law Centre and President of the Centre's Asia Section. Member of International Bar Association.

KHANAL, Yadu Nath:

Formerly Professor, Tri-Chandra College. Member-Secretary, Nepalese Delegation to 1955 Bandung Conference and member, Nepalese Delegation to UN General Assembly (1959 and 1960). Held positions of Home Secretary, Foreign Secretary, Advisor to Foreign Ministry and Chairman of Public Service Commission. Also Nepalese Ambassador to India, U.S.A. and China. Recipient of several honorary degrees, titles and decorations (including K.C.V.O. (U.K.)).

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Chairman, John F. Kennedy Foundation of Thailand; International Law Association of Thailand; Board of Trustees and Executive Committee of Asian Institute of Technology; Policy Council of Thailand's Institute of Foreign Affairs; UN Trusteeship Committee of General Assembly: Committee on S.W. Africa. Former Deputy Prime Minister (1981-1983). Foreign Minister (1958-1971). President of Prince of Songkhla University Council and Thailand's Ambassador to the UN., U.S.A., Cuba and Guatemala. Co-founder of ASEAN, PECC, ASA and ASPAC. Recipient of awards and decorations from 14 countries.

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Professor of English, Hosei University, Japan. Senior Fulbright Researcher (Columbia University: American-Jewish Culture). Author and translator. Translations include Kenneth Clark's Civilization and works by George Orwell.

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President, Asia Pacific Region, World Jewish Congress since 1981, Member of Executive and Governing Board, World Jewish Congress since 1978. Chairman, Asia Pacific Jewish Association since 1980. President of the Executive Council of Australian Jewry, 1978-80 and 1982-85. Chairman of the Australian Institute of Jewish Affairs since 1983. Chairman and Managing Director of Jetset Tours Pty. Ltd. since 1963. Author of Soviet Jewry and Human Rights (1963), Soviet Jewry and the Australian Left (1964) and The Case for Israel (1972).

LEIFER, Michael:

Reader in International Relations, London School of Economics and Political Science. Currently Visiting Professor of Political Science at National University of Singapore. Former Visiting appointments include University of the Philippines, Australian National University and Cornell University. Member, Research Board, Institute of Jewish Affairs (London). Author and editor of books, articles and essays in field of international politics in the Asia-Pacific region.

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Director, The International Center for University Teaching of Jewish Civilization, Jerusalem. Doctor of Law and Social Sciences (Buenos Aires University). Former Assistant Chairman, Public International Law, Buenos Aires University. Head of Latin-American Desk (1963-1966) and Executive Director, Israeli Branch (until 1983) of World Jewish Congress. Lecturer at Haifa and Tel-Aviv Universities and Researcher, Hague Academy of International Law. Advisory (1981) to Israel Delegation to UN General Assembly. Former Consultant to UNESCO Division on Human Rights and Peace. Author in field of human rights, racial and religious discrimination, Israel, and problems of minorities.

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MURAOKA, Takamitsu:

Chairman, Department of Middle Eastern Studies, University of Melbourne. Fellow of the Australian Academy of Humanities. Fellow of the Institute for Advanced Studies (Hebrew University). Editor of Abr-Nahrain. Doctoral degrees in linguistics and classical (Semitic) philology, Tokyo Kyoiku University and Hebrew University. Author/translator of numerous books, essays and articles in the following areas: Hebrew (classical and modern) language and literature, Greek, Aramaic, Syriac, Japanese.

ROSEN, David:

Dean, Sapir Center for Jewish Heritage, Jerusalem. Director, Inter-Religious Affairs, B'nai B'rith (Israel) Anti-Defamation League. Executive Member, Israel Inter-Faith Association. Doctoral Graduate of Trinity University (Dublin) and the University of Cape Town. Former Chief Rabbi of Ireland. Former Executive Member, Conference of European Rabbis and World Conference of Synagogues and Congregations. Former President, Irish Friends of Hebrew University and Irish Council for Christians and Jews. Patron, I.S.P.C.C. and UNICEF (Ireland). Former Senior Rabbi, Green and Sea Point Hebrew Congregation (Cape Town).

SHAPIRO, Sidney (SHA BOLI):

Graduated from St. Johns Law School, New York. Studied Chinese at Cornell, Columbia and Yale Universities. A Chinese citizen since 1963. Translator of Chinese literature into English - more than 20 volumes of novels, poetry and short stories published in Beijing and distributed internationally. Author of An American in China, Jews in Old China. Member of the Chinese Writers' Association, the Chinese People's Political Consultative Council, the Council of the Translators' Association, and the Chinese Association of Pacific Basin History.

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SIDORSKY, David:

Professor of Philosophy, Columbia University, New York. Doctoral graduate in Philosophy (Columbia). Vice-President, American Society for Political and Legal Philosophy. Member of Editorial Boards of Midstream, Middle Eastern Review, Social Philosophy and Policy, Forum. Member, Administrative Council of Blaustein Institute for Human Rights. Advisory Scholar, Ethics and Public Policy Center (Washington, D.C.). Author and editor of several books and essays in fields of philosophy, social philosophy, the history of philosophical thought, etc.

SUDARSHAN, George:

Professor of Physics and Director of the Center for Particle Theory, University of Texas at Austin. Director, Institute of Mathematics and Science, Madras. Doctoral graduate, Rochester University. Research Fellow, Harvard University. Former faculty member, Rochester and Syracuse Universities. Honorary doctorates, Wisconsin, Delhi and Chalmers University (Sweden). Awarded national decoration (India) and recipient of First Third World Prize for Physica (1986).

SUWANAGUL, Kasem:

Rector, Chulalongkorn University, Bangkok. Senator, Parliament of Thailand and President, University Council of Sukhothai Thammathirat University. Doctoral graduate, New York University. Former Thai Minister of University Affairs, Professor of Political Science, Dean of Faculty of Political Science at Chulalongkorn University and Acting Rector, Khonkaen University. Member of Advisory Council for Institute of South-East Asian studies (Singapore), of several university councils and academies and of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs' Policy Council (Institute of Foreign Affairs). Recipient of several national decorations and awards.

TAM, Yue-Him:

Graduated from the Chinese University of Hong Kong. Doctoral graduate, Princeton University. Presently Senior Lecturer in History at The Chinese University. Director, All China Association for the Studies of Sino-Japanese Relations.

TAN, Nalla:

Consultant in Community Medicine, Primary Health Care, Health Education, Adolescence and Sex Education. Former Associate Professor, Faculty of Medicine, National University of Singapore. Counselling Consultant. Author of numerous publications and several books. Outstanding Woman of the Year Award (1975). Involved in Singapore's Public and Social Service.

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WANG, Gungwu:

Vice-Chancellor of the University of Hong Kong. Doctoral graduate of School of African and Asian Studies, University of London. Professor of History, University of Malaya (1963-1968). Former Professor of Far Eastern History, Australian National University (ANU) and Director of the ANU Research School of Pacific Studies. Research and publications in the field of Chinese and South-East Asian History.

WERBLOWSKY, Zwi:

Martin Buber Professor of Comparative Religion. Doctoral graduate of the University of Geneva. Former Chairman, Department of the History of Jewish Thought and Dean of the Faculty of Humanities (1956-1969) at the Hebrew University (Jerusalem). Held Visiting Professorships at Universities of Kokugakuin, Tsukuba, Melbourne, Brown, Chicago, Harvard and Stanford; and Fellowships of The Institute of Advanced Religious Studies of the University of Notre Dame, The Netherlands Institute for Advanced Study in Humanities and Social Sciences, the Center for the Study of Democratic Institutions (Santa Barbara) and the Japan Foundation. Former Chairman of Israel Interfaith Association, Israel Universities Study Group for Middle Eastern Affairs and Israel National Committee for UNESCO. Presently Editor of Numeri and General Secretary of IAHR (International Association for the History of Religion).

YOU, Tae-Yeung:

Director, The Saemaul Institute, The Kon-Kuk University (Seoul) and Associate Professor, Kon-Kuk University. Doctoral graduate, Hebrew University and Sometime Lecturer, Ben Gurion University of the Negev. Presently Member of Policy Advisory Committee of the Prime Minister and of the Minister for the Interior. Vice-President, National Association of Saemaul Research Professors. Executive Director, The Korean Association of Middle East Studies. Vice-President, Korean-Danish Society and General Secretary, Korea-Israel Friendship Society. Advisory Committee Member, National Federation of Agricultural Co-operatives.

# THE SECOND ASIAN-JEWISH COLLOQUIUM

HONG KONG, 22-24 MARCH, 1987

## P R O G R A M

THE JEWS AND ASIA: OLD IDENTITIES AND NEW IMAGES

### SUNDAY, 22 MARCH:

- 6.30 pm: Colloquium participants and delegates to APJA Conference are cordially invited to cocktails as guests of the President of the World Jewish Congress Asia Pacific Region, Mr. Isi J. Leibler, C.B.E., to mark the opening of the Colloquium.
- 8.00 pm: Registration of participants in Secretariat office.

### MONDAY, 23 MARCH:

- 9.30 am: SESSION I: CULTURAL PERCEPTIONS - SELF AND OTHERS
- Chairman: Sir Zelman Cowen (Oxford University)
- Welcoming Remarks: Mr. Isi J. Leibler, C.B.E.
- Opening Presentation Papers:
- . Professor Y. Khanal (Nepal) -  
'The Perception by a Culture of itself and of other Cultures'
  - . Mr. Zalman Abramov (Israel) -  
'Self-perception of Judaism: Religion or Nationality?'
- Discussion Opener: Professor Wang Gungwu  
(University of Hong Kong)
- Discussion
- 11.00 - 11.15am: Morning Tea Break

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**Venue:**  
Holiday Inn, Harbour View  
70 Mody Road, East Tsim Sha Tsui,  
Kowloon, Hong Kong  
Tel: (3) 7215161 Telex: 38670 Facsimile: (3) 695672

**Asia Pacific Jewish Association:**  
GPO Box 5402 CC,  
Melbourne,  
Victoria, Australia 3001  
Tel (03) 602 1622 Telex: AA31838

MONDAY, 23 MARCH (continued):

11.15 am: Discussion continues

12.45 - 2.30 pm: Luncheon

2.30 - 5.30 pm: SESSION II: THE EMERGENCE OF STEREOTYPES

Chairman: Professor Takeshi Muramatsu  
(University of Tsukuba, Japan)

Presentation Papers:

- . Professor Kasem Suwanagul  
(Chulalongkorn University, Bangkok) -  
'The Emergence of Stereotypes'
- . Dr. Natan Lerner (The International Center for  
University Teaching of Jewish Civilisation) -  
'Stereotypes and Group Libel'

Discussion Opener: Professor George Sudarshan  
(University of Texas at Austin)

Discussion

3.45 - 4.00 pm: Afternoon Tea Break

4.00 pm: Discussion continues

8.00 pm: Dinner at outside venue (to be advised)

TUESDAY, 24 MARCH:

9.30 am: SESSION III: THE STRANGER PHENOMENON IN SOCIETY

Chairman: The Rt. Hon. Malcolm Fraser, C.H.  
(former Prime Minister of Australia)

Presentation Papers:

- . Professor Tetsu Kohno (Hosei University, Japan) -  
"To be 'Alien' or 'Semi-alien' in a Homogeneous  
Nation"
- . Professor David Sidorsky  
(Columbia University, New York) -  
'The Alien in Literature'

TUESDAY, 24 MARCH (continued):

SESSION III continues:

Discussion Opener: Rabbi David Rosen  
(Sapir Center for Jewish Heritage)

Discussion

11.00 - 11.15am: Morning Tea Break

11.15 am: Discussion continues

12.45 - 2.30 pm: Luncheon

2.30 pm: SESSION IV: IDENTITY AND NATIONAL IDENTITY

Chairman: Professor Yoram Dinstein  
(New York University) -

Opening Presentation:

- . Professor Zwi Werblowsky  
(Hebrew University, Jerusalem) -  
'Identity and National Identity'
- . Professor Lau Teik Soon  
(National University of Singapore) -  
'The Problem of Identity in Minority and  
Majority cultures'

Discussion Opener: Dr. Nalla Tan (Singapore)

Discussion

3.30 - 3.45 pm: Afternoon Tea Break

3.45 pm: Discussion continues

5.15 pm: Closing Remarks:

- . Mr. Isi J. Leibler, C.B.E.
- . Professor Yoram Dinstein

5.30 pm: Close of Session

7.00 pm: Drinks and Savouries, followed by Dinner.

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THE VISIT OF DR. LI SHENZHI TO AUSTRALIA

3 - 16 March 1987

BACKGROUND

I met Dr. Li Shenzhi on my previous visit to Beijing on 20th October 1985. I was first introduced to him by H.P. Kong, an overseas Chinese living in Hong Kong who personally enabled me to meet a number of very senior personalities in the People's Republic of China.

Kong had a large coterie of friends from his days at Yenching University, a Protestant missionary college, in pre-revolutionary China. He was active in radical politics and, as a consequence, his father, a Kuomintang official, sent him to the United States in 1947 to finish his studies. He had no further contact with his mainland Chinese friends until the 1980s. Many of them like, Dr. Li Shenzhi, assumed top leadership roles after the Revolution.

Kong lives in Hong Kong, has an American "green card" and was regarded as an influential friend of the Taiwanese government. He is wealthy, having inherited and then developed real estate and other interests in Hong Kong, as well as in the United States and Canada. He owns a school in Hong Kong. His principle business is an in-bound travel organisation and it is through his travel ventures that I have become quite close to him over the past decade.

Of his influential friends in Beijing Dr. Li struck me as the most impressive. Li is about 64, currently the Vice President of the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences and Director of the highly prestigious Institute of American Studies. This position makes him the key advisor to government on any matters relating to the United States. This gives him the status in China which is equivalent to a senior deputy minister. He has access to Deng Xiaoping, who personally rehabilitated him, and accompanied him on his visit to Washington. He travels extensively and visits the United States on an average twice a year.

He was very close to the late Chou En Lai, the urbane and sophisticated Chinese Foreign Minister who survived the Cultural Revolution. He was Chou's principal speech writer.

As a consequence he was personally involved in some of the most momentous developments that took place in China from the Revolution. He personally met Stalin in 1952 and was directly acquainted with many of the leading personalities who guided China during the turbulent period following the Revolution.

He was a major casualty early in the Cultural Revolution, and purged as a rightist. He and his family spent 21 years in "internal exile" and were forced to carry out the most menial jobs in the rural outback. He was extremely fortunate to survive.

His children, who grew up during this period, were denied any form of education, a matter to which he refers with even more intense bitterness than to his own suffering and degradation during that terrible period. For example his youngest son - one of four children - is now at Columbia University, New York completing a Ph.D. in economics. But Li is quick to point out how hard it has been for him since he worked as a steelworker for many years and could not study. At the same time he is obviously proud that, despite the difficulty, his son completed his Master's degree at Columbia in record time. Not surprisingly he is somewhat cynical about ideology and the Chinese system as a whole. Yet he remains a Chinese nationalist, or more correctly, patriot and traditionalist.

He has met his counterpart from the Soviet Union, Georgi Arbatov, the Director of Moscow's American Institute, on a number of occasions and receives repeated invitations to visit the Soviet Union which he was obliged to decline for political reasons.

He paved the way for me to develop contacts for my Jewish pursuits in Beijing. Through Li I gained access to individuals and officials whom I would never have met through normal channels.

During my visit he indicated that if handled properly he could arrange for an observer or even possibly a participant from Beijing to attend the Asian Jewish Colloquium so long as the thrust of the publicity and content was not politically sensitive or related to the Middle East.

As a consequence early this year I wrote him a letter and received a somewhat exciting response. Regrettably, on arrival in Australia two days later, he told me that time was against us and it was unlikely that Shapiro would now be able to attend. But, to our surprise and delight, on the last day Li was in Australia we heard, first through the Cultural Attache at the Australian Embassy in Beijing and then directly through a phone call to his Beijing home, that Shapiro did indeed want to come to Hong Kong and had been wondering why he had not heard from us. In fact we had telexed a formal invitation to him on 2nd March which did not reach him until 12th March. At the time of the writing of this report it appeared he would indeed come to the Colloquium. If it comes off it will be a real piece of cultural history in the making. And Li will have been directly responsible.

The background to Li's visit in Australia is relevant. In Beijing I asked him whether he would be willing to accept an invitation to visit Australia. He said he would appreciate an invitation but to speak on a Jewish theme would not be appropriate as he had no claim for specialisation in this area and it would obviously be perceived as politically inconsistent with his role.

He would, however, willingly accept an invitation from a university to lecture on Sino-American relations. He made it clear to me that his main object for a visit would be to escape the world of reality and have a holiday. Through our contacts in the academic world it was arranged for Professor Claudio Veliz, a Professor of Sociology at LaTrobe University in Melbourne to invite him to lecture to a series of seminars and he accepted.

As soon as H.P. Kong learned that his friend was coming he arranged to arrive in Australia at the same time and spend the first few days with him.

After discussions

I arranged for  
to visit

Australia with a view to setting up an informal meeting at my home where Dr. Li and could meet and exchange views. I also suggested to emphasise the informal nature of his visit to Australia.

Dr. Li arrived on Tuesday 3rd March directly from Beijing and the flight from Hong Kong with H.P. Kong arrived about the same time.

I spent the first evening with Dr. Li, H.P. Kong and Sam Lipski and we finalised his programme in Australia making a number of adjustments to the initial schedule and substituting sight-seeing for activities such as visits to schools with Chinese language courses for which he obviously had no interest.

On his first day I arranged for Dr. Li to meet former Prime Minister Malcolm Fraser who was about to leave for Israel and would be participating at the Asian Jewish Colloquium in Hong Kong in two weeks. They had a useful exchange but Dr. Li was a little bewildered when, at the close of discussions, Malcolm Fraser asked if he could look forward to meeting him in Hong Kong for the Asian-Jewish Colloquium. Li replied that he knew nothing of Jewish culture. But Dr. Li's knowledge of Jews must have been considerably broadened by what he witnessed in Australia.

He arrived the same day as the Soviet Foreign Minister Shevardnadze came to the country. He saw front page headlines relating to Jewish demonstrations against the persecution of Jews in the Soviet Union. He was present when I had to excuse myself to take a call from the Prime Minister who wished to convey to me the nature of his discussions with the Soviet Foreign Minister in relation to Soviet Jews and the Middle East. (Hawke told me he spoke for half an hour with Shevardnadze on Soviet Jewry and close to one and a half hours on the Middle East.) Dr. Li was also aware that the Prime Minister would be addressing a small group of Jewish businessmen at my home the following weekend.

The dinner at my home was very satisfactory. I arranged for and Dr. Li to go touring together the next day in order to enable to possibly explore other areas with Li. I believe

that information extracted from Dr. Li (without any pain) was extremely useful.

#### THE GENERAL POLITICAL SITUATION

One should not misinterpret the moves by Conservatives in the Chinese leadership as anything other than a temporary regression. Chinese society is undergoing traumatic transformations and inevitably one must expect zig-zags. Chairman Deng Xiaoping was forced to make some concessions to the old guard because of the nihilistic nature of public dissent by the students. The problem with the students were that they were not disciplined or sensitive to the need for some self-imposed restraint. However, to suggest that there was a danger of a reversal to the days of the Cultural Revolution was absolute nonsense. Not even the most extreme Conservative would contemplate anything like this. In somewhat more reserved terms he made the same point to his academic seminar on "Socialism with Chinese Characteristics" at LaTrobe University. The seminar, conducted over a dinner, was attended by members of Melbourne's academic and business establishment.

At the private dinner he was more specific noting it would take at least ten years, and there would be much internal struggle, before China really broke away from totalitarianism. He emphasised that Deng Xiaoping was more radical than Gorbachev but reiterated that the Chinese system was still a totalitarian regime. At his seminar he said his biggest concern was that the Chinese leadership was in danger of developing a "nomenklatura" on Soviet lines with the sons of top officials inheriting power and status. China could only succeed if there were a real "meritocracy".

Private enterprise and the provisions of land to peasants had been very successful. However there was a need for a "psychological" revolution in urban areas. People who had been eating from a common rice-bowl in the towns and cities for over 30 years could not adjust to private enterprise as quickly as peasants who instinctively wanted their own land.

People were nervous and some would lose jobs and positions but this way a far cry from a reversal to Maoism.

In relation to the future of Hong Kong, China had no ideological problem in maintaining a capitalist Hong Kong. The problems would arise from the stifling impact of inefficient and even corrupt Chinese bureaucrats. Over a period of time this could lead to the decline and ultimate downfall of post 1997 Hong Kong as a central commercial trading centre.

The relationship with America was strained because of Taiwan but, by and large, satisfactory. Taiwan would not reunite with China in the short term. Taiwan would continue to generate Sino-

American tensions but the American relationship was solid enough to survive.

The suggestion that a rapprochement with the Soviets is imminent was simply not true. There was a massive increase in trade with the USSR; an easing of tensions on Sino/Soviet borders; but the Cambodian problem was insoluble in the immediate future. Even if the Soviets wished to make concessions they were unable to control the Vietnamese who were not just Soviet vassals.

Gorbachev was a moderniser and a reformer who wished to strengthen the existing system. Shevardnadze might survive but it was rumoured that he was not in favour with Gorbachev.

#### ISRAEL AND JEWISH MATTERS

Dr. Li emphasised that he was no expert on Jewish or Israeli matters. However his phenomenal grasp of the total Chinese picture enable him to provide extraordinary insight into Chinese policy.

The problem with Israel originated with Mao Tse Tung late in 1949. Dr. Li was personally present and remembered Mao telling a small group of Chinese leaders that Israel was a small country and there were many Arabs. China had to be practical. Mao said "we will develop relations with all countries who recognise us but the one exception will be Israel".

Dr. Li said that, in effect, this policy remained in place now. Nor was there any suggestion of a policy review in the near future.

Dr. Li emphasised that Israel was categorised with two other countries; South Africa and South Korea. There were genuine pressing needs for China to recognise and enter into diplomatic relations with South Korea. Korea had major economic implications for Chinese development. But even here China was dragging her feet. Dr. Li stressed that South Korea was far more economically important to China than Israel or South Africa. Besides, recognition of South Korea would not have the same negative impact on Third World countries that a move towards Israel could have.

There were a number of reasons why China maintained its "non recognition" stance on Israel.

- (a) Foreign policy matters of this nature are only dealt with at the level of Deng Xiaoping. Nobody else would dare touch such a matter. Dr. Li did not believe that anybody would even raise the question of Israel with Deng Xiaoping because it was so trivial, and they realised it would irritate him.

- (b) China was obsessive in its fear of offending any nations in the third world or alienating what it saw as friends and allies in the Third World. This has been the hallmark of the policy since the days of competition with the Soviets. The absence of diplomatic relations between China and Korea despite the massive economic and political price that China has to pay for not moving quicker is simply due to a desire not to offend North Korea, an old ally.
- (c) China was barely providing any assistance or support to the Arabs. The very fact that China realised that it was not acting like a super-power in the Middle East made it even less likely that any kind of initiative would be undertaken that would offend the Arabs.
- (d) China had massive internal problems. Foreign policy, other than initiatives having a critical impact on the country, were not subject to a process of review. Dr. Li again stressed that any movement in relation to Israel required the personal involvement of Deng Xiaoping.

For example, even if the Soviet Union recognised Israel, China would be unlikely to follow suit with immediate recognition even if this meant China would be excluded from participating at an international conference on the Middle East. Dr. Li felt China would recognise Israel after the Soviet Union but it would probably be at least a year before they acted unless there were other pressing factors necessitating a move.

The most important factor of all is that China sees itself as the third force between the United States and the USSR and consequently considers its relationship with the Third World as the linchpin of its foreign policy. Anything which would be perceived to possibly have a negative impact on its relationship with Third World countries is to be avoided. The Arabs are regarded as Third World countries. Israel is regarded as a bastion of the West. This perception would not change unless the majority of Arab countries (in addition to Egypt) entered into diplomatic relations with Israel.

The current position was that Deng Xiaoping was personally in control of this matter. Nobody in China had persuasive access on a matter such as this. The suggestion that Deng Xiaoping's son (the paraplegic) could be used as an intermediary was dismissed as out of the question because in China it would be considered obscene for a son to become involved in a matter which was essentially within the province of his father.

Dr. Li said there were only two people who could influence Deng Xiaoping. These two were Americans; either former President Richard Nixon or Henry Kissinger. However he did not feel that either could persuade Deng Xiaoping to move on the question of

Israel. He wagered that Henry Kissinger would not even accept a commission to raise the matter because he understood the political situation far too well to take up a lost cause which would be regarded by Deng Xiaoping as an irritant.

Dr. Li emphasised that interventions from other statesmen or Western leaders via ambassadors or even efforts to speak directly to Deng Xiaoping on this subject would not succeed and could be highly irritating. In many cases discussions of this nature with Ambassadors and Chinese statesmen would not even be conveyed to the next level of seniority.

After the death of Deng Xiaoping there might be opportunities. But there is every probability that the status quo would remain.

In a nutshell: efforts to encourage China to open diplomatic relations with Israel were useless and probably counter-productive. Diplomatic relations could emerge in a different political environment, i.e., a peace settlement with the Arabs or, at least, Soviet recognition.

That was not to suggest that Chinese were hostile towards Israel. Most Chinese, well versed on the international scene, are either neutral or are positively disposed towards Israel. In fact, most civil servants would regard it as obligatory to explore with all groups, including Israelis, ways and means in which business relations can be developed that can be beneficial to China. The only prerequisite was that such moves should not be publicly exposed or seen to be divergent from broad government policies. In this particular case this means the policy of non-recognition of Israel.

Dr. Li emphasised that Deng Xiaoping was aware and endorsed China's trading relations with Israel so long as such trade did not create political waves. Many people in the commercial field would trade with Israel or accept Israel technological assistance. But not if it was exposed to the world. For that reason the charade of importing Israeli merchandise (including defence equipment) through third parties has been maintained despite substantial progress on bi-lateral commercial and technical relations.

Tourism from Israel to China is totally irrelevant. China has a limited tourism infrastructure. Israelis are now permitted to come to China as minority components of tour groups of other nationalities, for conventions and international gatherings, and occasionally for business. This reflects the reality that in principal there are no limitations to strictly commercial and technological relations with anyone. However if such activities conflict with formal policies and are publicised they would be brought to a stop.

There is virtually no export from China to Arab countries. Yet even if Israel could absorb millions of dollars of Chinese export

produce, this would not be a wedge by which to bring about recognition. The Chinese responsible for commercial dealings would undoubtedly back out rather than risk being accused of undermining official policy.

There is also confusion over Jewish international finance. China recognises that they are already deeply involved with Jewish businessmen and consider this has no bearing on their political relationship with Israel. They assume Jews would behave like Chinese and differentiate between economic and political issues.

Dr. Li kept stressing the relevance of China's inferiority complex as a superpower. The primitive nature of her economy and social development also contributes towards a rigidity in foreign policy initiatives. There is little likelihood of a change in the status quo on matters perceived to be of trivial importance such as Israel.

Dr. Li emphasised that even if China had to pay a massive commercial price for not recognising Israel the nature of the regime was such that they could cope more easily with a commercial disaster rather than the subtle intricacies of taking up the subject of Israel at a political, as distinct from commercial, level with Chairman Deng Xiaoping.

Dr. Li said that, in his opinion, unless there were dramatic international changes, he could not foresee any changes in the short term. The death of Chairman Deng Xiaoping would not necessarily lead to a change.

He felt that at other levels, efforts would meet with a warm response, i.e., in addition to commercial and technological, even cultural interchanges on a Jewish level would, if handled with intelligence and restraint, be acceptable. However the climate at this very moment was not ideal for any new experiments.

He saw initiatives such as the Asian Jewish Colloquium as totally "irrelevant" in Chinese eyes. He guaranteed that at a future Colloquium or similar conference or academic gathering he would ensure participation of a Chinese person as long as it would not be a political forum. Dr. Li regretted he did not have more notice on this occasion. At that stage, prior to Shapiro's acceptance, he felt Shapiro would have been able to attend had there been an additional two or three weeks leeway. Dr. Li said had he been aware of our ability to provide an interpreter and that we were willing to accept a participant whose contribution would not have been quite as specialised as Kei Feng Jews, he could have provided alternative Chinese candidates.

On the other hand he asked "what is the point of it all. It makes no difference to the reality". I explained that, in our perception, it was an important step forward in terms of normalisation to have a representative from China attending an international Jewish meeting.

Dr. Li implied that our desire for a "Chinese participant" had the same sense of unreality as the Chinese with words and symbols as distinct from realities. The tradition of adhering to political symbolism would remain the major obstacle in bringing about diplomatic relations. Persistent direct attempts to lobby towards this objective could create irritation and become counter-productive by having a negative impact on the real progress that is taking place on a commercial, technological and people to people level.

There is one very stark conclusion to this assessment from Li. Much of the shadow-boxing that is taking place on the political levels in Israel in relation to China is illusory and may be harming, rather than assisting, the development of positive Sino/Israeli relations. If Dr. Li's evaluation is accepted there is a need for a total strategic rethink of Israeli and Jewish policy in this area.

#### AFTERWORD

The above assessment was written before we learned that Shapiro was indeed planning to come to Hong Kong and before he had our final dinner with Dr. Li. It remains valid. But in our concluding conversation some interesting new avenues were opened up in discussions with my brother Mark Leibler and Sam Lipski. They deserve special attention.

1. In trying to answer the question: Where do we go from here? We asked Dr. Li whether he would be willing to consider hosting influential scholars from the West who were also interested in Jewish affairs. We made it clear that we would arrange for such visits to China to be financed from our end or through our associates. He said he would like to think about the idea, giving the impression that we might have to wait for quite a time before he responded. In fact, just five minutes later, as if out of the blue, he turned the proposal around and made it clear that it would be far more desirable for Chinese scholars to come to the West and study Hebrew and Judaism. This could be undertaken in Australia or any country in which there were suitable facilities.
2. We are convinced this was far from an improvised response and believe that Li had been thinking about the proposal for some time. He was fully aware that we would want to follow up and, considering other comments he made while here, it fits in with his wider concerns. These relate to a profound anxiety about the standards of scholarship in Chinese universities today. At the LaTrobe University Seminar he readily admitted that a whole generation of Chinese academics now teaching in Chinese universities were mostly hopeless since they had "graduated" during the Cultural Revolution. While the problem was not so acute in the science and

technology faculties he left no doubt that he considered much of the humanities and social sciences "a vast wasteland". When one of the local university vice-chancellors present asked what, if anything, Australian academics could do to help, Li said in effect, and in the most diplomatic way, "Sponsor as many scholarships as you can for Chinese scholars-undergraduates, graduates and professors to come to Australia".

3. In suggesting that we sponsor Chinese students to study Hebrew, Li had two motives which he expressed in the mixture of elliptical and direct styles he adopted whenever he deemed appropriate. The first was entirely future-oriented. While repeating his belief that there was no early prospect of recognition of Israel he quoted a Chinese proverb - it may have lost something in translation - which ran something like: "The river flows at its own pace, but the water is not always the same". He was referring to the inevitability of recognition of Israel, even if it takes another 10 or 20 years. When the day finally comes he wants people in the Chinese Foreign Ministry to know something about Israel, be able to read and speak Hebrew, and be able to deal formally with the Jewish state. Until that day comes there is a second motive. He seemed to be genuinely apologetic that he was so ignorant of the Jews and Jewish affairs. More than that. He was apologetic that virtually nobody else in any position of influence in China knew anything. It offended him as a Chinese decision-maker and as a scholar. (He repeated on a number of occasions that the Chinese leaders did not know enough about the outside world.) He said, for example, that in contrast to Christian clergy in the West, Chinese Christian clergy did not study any Hebrew or History or Ancient Israel and thought that some of the younger Christian clergy in China should be amongst the first scholars to be invited to study abroad.

We propose, therefore, that the most serious consideration be given to the establishment of a foundation which sponsors Hebrew and Jewish studies for Chinese scholars in the West. We further propose that the idea will be taken up as a development project by the Asian Pacific Region of the World Jewish Congress and the Australian Institute of Jewish Affairs and that other appropriate international Jewish bodies should be invited to participate.

3. It seems, from other remarks Li made, and from our own limited experience when in Beijing that if "Jewish affairs" has any "home" in the Chinese government it is in the Ministry of Religions and that within that department Jews would be assigned to the Christian clergy to handle. This, in turn, tied in with his promise that he would talk to his colleague and fellow Vice-President of the Academy of Social Sciences about his discussions with us in Australia. This Vice-President, whose name was not clearly spelt out for us,

is, according to Li, himself a Christian clergyman and the most knowledgeable man in Beijing on religious affairs. Li said that while he could arrange any contacts on political and international issues we would have to rely on the other man for setting up the most useful meetings on the development of Chinese-Jewish contacts. We shall, of course, follow up and make contact with him. We hope that he, together with Li, will help us to set up our next visit to Beijing so that it is most productive. Ironically, as Li reminds us, he had wanted to introduce us to his colleague when we were in Beijing in 1985 but he was out of town and did not return until after we had left. If Li's assessment is correct, his colleague could become the most valuable point of contact we have so far had. We expect to hear more about him from Sidney Shapiro in Hong Kong.

4. Another intriguing area opened up by Li, and a theme to which he returned on a number of occasions, was the role of Chinese-Americans and Jewish-Americans. He emphasized repeatedly that many Chinese-Americans when visiting China had tried to impress on the Beijing leadership that if they wanted to have better relations with the United States they had to have good relations with American Jews. (Li clearly agreed with them.) But he noted that although the Chinese leadership had heard the constantly recurring message, and were willing to accept its validity, they had not done anything about it.
5. It was in this context that he raised the role of Congressman Stephen Solarz. He clearly considered him to be of the utmost importance in shaping Congressional opinion on the Taiwan issue and deeply concerned that Solarz was too pro-Taiwan. This surprised us since it does not equate with Solarz' other positions on foreign affairs which are, of course, more left-liberal. But according to Li, Solarz takes a pro-Taiwan position for purely electoral reasons since his New York district either has Chinese-American voters or he is subject to the Taiwan lobby which is strong in New York. Li said he met Solarz on Capitol Hill some four years ago but could not have a coherent conversation with him since he was constantly interrupted by roll-calls from the floor of the House of Representatives.
6. If Solarz does hold the pro-Taiwan position attributed to him, Li believes he could persuade him to modify his views. Li believes he could persuade him. Li reiterated that he was seriously concerned that the Taiwan issue could deteriorate into a serious confrontation if all parties do not compromise. He sees four parties involved; Beijing, Kuomintang Taipeh, Washington, and the "people of Taiwan". If Solarz could be encouraged to become more "moderate" on Taiwan this would in turn help the "moderates" in Beijing to overcome the Taiwan hard-liners who, if successful in closing an option for peaceful reunification with Beijing, could ultimately

precipitate military action. Although Li did not put it quite this way he was in effect saying that in Leninist terms Solarsz, by insisting on supporting the right of Taiwan to self-determination, was encouraging a situation which could lead to disaster. There was a clear implication from what Li said that if "better relations" between Jews and China were desired, a change by Solarsz might have some significant payoffs.

At this stage, since we are not aware of Solarsz' actual position on the issue we are merely reporting what Li conveyed, and make no further comment.

7. Li has never been to the United Kingdom and would welcome an invitation from a leading university there to lecture or hold seminars on Sino-American relations, Chinese Culture, the development of Socialism in China or related topics. He would not be available to travel until late in 1988 or 1989. We indicated that we would take the matter up with our friends at Oxford or other universities and try to arrange for an invitation.

To sum up: Li Shenzhi's visit to Australia was a valuable exercise which provided informed insights into critical areas of Chinese policy on Israel and the Middle East, offered new avenues to explore in the area of Chinese scholarly contacts with the Jewish world, set up the participation of Sidney Shapiro at the Asian-Jewish Colloquium, and has laid the groundwork for another visit to Beijing in the next 6-12 months which should prove even more productive in the slow, patient, but necessary development of Chinese-Jewish contact.

# ASIA PACIFIC JEWISH ASSOCIATION

G.P.O. Box 5402CC, Melbourne, Victoria, Australia 3001.

Tel: (03) 602 1622

Telex: AA31838.

14 January, 1987.

Dr. Li Shenzhi,  
Vice-President  
Chinese Academy of Social Sciences,  
Jianguomennei Dajie 5 Haeo  
BEIJING  
CHINA.

Dear Dr. Li,

I write to you as a consequence of our discussion in Beijing during our meeting in October, 1985. You may recall that on that occasion I raised with you the possibility that, if a suitable occasion presented itself, you might suggest the name of a Chinese scholar who could participate in an appropriate international cultural conference.

As such an occasion has now arisen with the forthcoming Second Asian-Jewish Colloquium to be held in Hong Kong March 23 and 24, 1987, I was wondering whether you might indeed be able to suggest a suitable scholar from a Chinese institution of learning who could attend. As you will know, there is growing interest in the history of the Kai Feng Jews. An academic who could present a paper outlining the remarkable history of this Jewish community, how it was able to co-exist in China free of anti-Semitism for all those centuries until it assimilated, would be extremely useful.

The Colloquium to be held in Hong Kong will bring together some 40 distinguished scholars of international standing from a dozen countries including Australia, the United States, Israel and Europe as well as leading Asian academics and intellectuals from Japan, Singapore, South Korea and India, amongst others. Amongst them are Rabbi David Rosen, Jerusalem; Professor Masao Morimoto, Tokyo; Professor Edgardo Angara of Manila; Dr. Thanat Khoman, former Thai Minister for Foreign Affairs; and Prof. Kasem Auwanagal of Bangkok. Also attending will be Malcolm Fraser, the former Prime Minister of Australia and Sir Zelman Cowen, the former Governor-General of Australia.

Those participating will represent both the sciences and humanities and will be discussing the general theme of 'The Jews and Asia: Old Identities and New Images'. We believe that this encounter between Jewish and non-Jewish scholars provides a unique opportunity for dialogue and constructive ideas exchange. The first Colloquium,

.../2

Dr. Li Shenzhi  
14 January, 1987

Page 2.

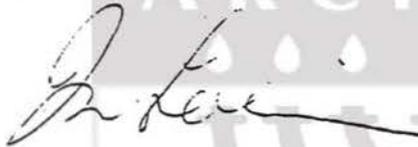
held in Singapore in 1984, was a most successful venture and were we able to have the privilege of a scholar from China it would enhance the Second Colloquium very considerably.

Naturally, as a guest of the Colloquium the invitee would have all travel and accommodation expenses paid by the Colloquium organisation which is sponsored by the Asia Pacific Jewish Association.

I must apologise that we have left our request so late. Unfortunately the final arrangements for a location for the conference were not made until recent weeks and I was reluctant to write to you until we knew that the conference would definitely be held in Hong Kong. Now that it is, we would be delighted to welcome anyone you suggest might be able to participate and contribute to our discussions.

I look forward to hearing from you at the earliest opportunity.

Yours sincerely,



ISI J. LEIBLER, C.B.E.  
Chairman



MESSAGE TELETYPE

TELETYPE MESSAGE

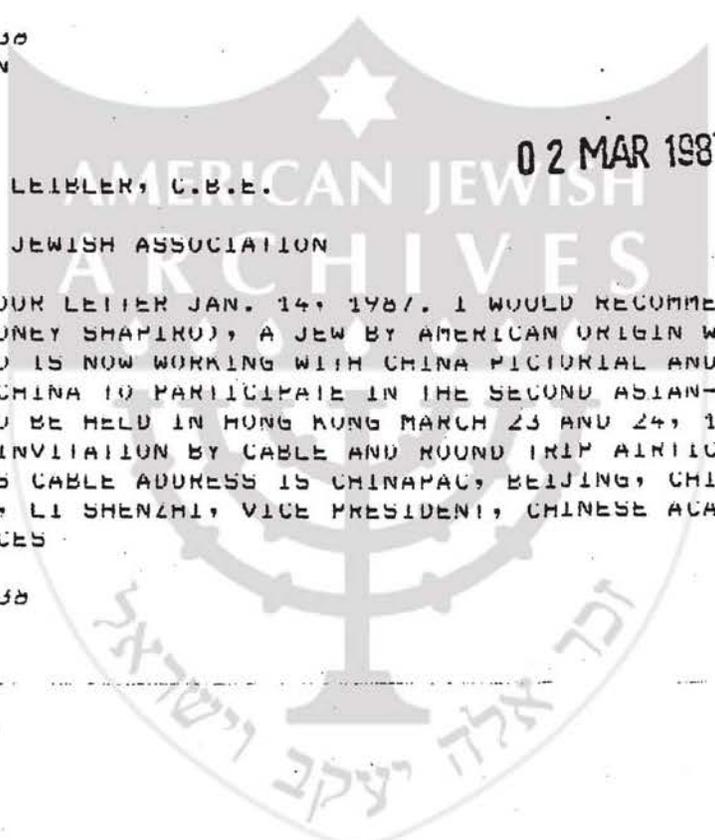
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02 MAR 1987

PROF. ISI J. LEIBLER, C.B.E.  
CHAIRMAN  
ASIA PACIFIC JEWISH ASSOCIATION

THANKS FOR YOUR LETTER JAN. 14, 1987. I WOULD RECOMMEND PROF. SHA BOLI (SIDNEY SHAPIRO), A JEW BY AMERICAN ORIGIN WITH CHINESE PASSPORT, WHO IS NOW WORKING WITH CHINA PICTORIAL AND AUTHOR OF JEWS IN OLD CHINA TO PARTICIPATE IN THE SECOND ASIAN-JEWISH COLLOQUIUM TO BE HELD IN HONG KONG MARCH 23 AND 24, 1987. PLEASE SEND FORMAL INVITATION BY CABLE AND ROUND TRIP AIR TICKET TO HIM DIRECTLY. HIS CABLE ADDRESS IS CHINAPAC, BEIJING, CHINA. BEST REGARDS, LI SHENZHI, VICE PRESIDENT, CHINESE ACADEMY OF SOCIAL SCIENCES

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## THE SECOND ASIAN-JEWISH COLLOQUIUM

March, 1987

### NEWS RELEASE

A unique intellectual forum, bringing together leading Jewish and Asian scholars, will be held in Hong Kong on March 23 and 24, 1987.

The Second Asian-Jewish Colloquium, jointly sponsored by the World Jewish Congress and the Asia Pacific Jewish Association, follows the extremely successful inaugural dialogue which took place in Singapore in 1984. The first meeting dealt with the theme "Cultural Interaction: Old Societies, New States".

Following on this theme, the Second Colloquium will be based on the topic "The Jews and Asia: Old Identities and New Images". Included in the discussion will be a number of sub-topics related to the central theme, such as "The 'Stranger' Phenomenon in Society", "The Emergence of Cultural and National Stereotypes" and "The Problem of Identity in Minority and Majority Cultures".

The Colloquium has attracted over 30 distinguished scholars and intellectuals representing a wide range of disciplines in the sciences and humanities from Australia, Hong Kong, India, Israel, Japan, South Korea, Nepal, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, the United States and Europe.

Those attending include Sir Zelman Cowen, Provost of Oriel College, Oxford University and former Governor-General of Australia; Dr. Thanat Khoman, Chairman of the John F. Kennedy Foundation of Thailand and former Foreign Minister of Thailand (1958-1971); Prof. Tetsu Kohno, Professor of English at Hosei University, Japan; Prof. Wang Gungwu, Vice-Chancellor of the University of Hong Kong; Prof. Zwi Werblowsky, Martin Buber Professor of Comparative Religion, Hebrew University, Jerusalem; Prof. Nongyao Chaiseri, Rector, Thammasat University of Bangkok; The Rt. Hon. Malcolm Fraser, C.H., former Prime Minister of Australia and Co-Chairman of the Commonwealth Committee of Eminent Persons on South Africa; Prof. Masao Morimoto, Chairman of the Board of Trustees, Hokkaigakuen University, Japan; and Professor David Sidorsky of the Department of Philosophy, Columbia University, New York. (A full list of participants is attached.)

The convenors of the conference are Professor Yoram Dinstein, Pro-Rector, Tel-Aviv University (currently at New York University) and Isi J. Leibler, C.B.E., President of the Asia Pacific Region, World Jewish Congress.

**Venue:**

Holiday Inn, Harbour View  
70 Mody Road, East Tsim Sha Tsui,  
Kowloon, Hong Kong  
Tel: (3) 7215161 Telex: 38670 Facsimile: (3) 695672

**Asia Pacific Jewish Association:**

GPO Box 5402 CC,  
Melbourne,  
Victoria, Australia 3001  
Tel (03) 602 1622 Telex: AA31838

# THE SECOND ASIAN-JEWISH COLLOQUIUM

19 March, 1987

## NEWS RELEASE

A distinguished translator of Chinese literature into English, Professor Sidney Shapiro (Sha Boli) is coming from Beijing to participate in the Second Asian-Jewish Colloquium to be held in Hong Kong on March 23-24, 1987.

Professor Shapiro, a Chinese citizen since 1963, has lived in China since 1947. His participation in the Colloquium was arranged following a request to Dr. Li Shenzhi, Vice-President of the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences in Beijing.

It is the first time since 1949 that a Chinese scholar of such standing has participated in a conference convened by an international Jewish organisation.

The convenors of the conference, Professor Yoram Dinstein and Isi J. Leibler, have welcomed the attendance of Professor Shapiro and said that it would add considerably to the international interest surrounding the gathering of leading Jewish and Asian scholars.

Professor Shapiro was born in New York city in 1915. He is a graduate of St. Johns Law School and studied Chinese at Cornell, Columbia and Yale Universities. He is a member of the Chinese Writers' Association and the Chinese People's Political Consultative Council (China's highest national advisory body).

A press conference to brief news media representatives about the Second Asian-Jewish Colloquium will be held, as previously advised, on Friday, March 20, 1987 at 12 noon.

The briefing will now take place in Suite 1844 at the Holiday Inn, Harbour View, and NOT in the Constable Room.

Arrangements for interviewing Professor Shapiro and other guests at the Colloquium can be made at the press conference or by contacting Danielle Charak or Kaye Bignell at the Conference secretariat, Room 246 at the Holiday Inn, Harbour View, tel: (3) 721.5161.

**Venue:**  
Holiday Inn, Harbour View  
70 Mody Road, East Tsim Sha Tsui,  
Kowloon, Hong Kong  
Tel: (3) 7215161 Telex: 38670 Facsimile: (3) 695672

**Asia Pacific Jewish Association:**  
GPO Box 5402 CC,  
Melbourne,  
Victoria, Australia 3001  
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## Sign of slight thaw in Peking's attitude to Israel

# Chinese Jewish official at Asian-Jewish Colloquium

By DAVID LANDAU  
Jerusalem Post Correspondent

HONGKONG. — The man who is now perhaps the only Jewish citizen of China — and is certainly Peking's only Jewish official — arrived in Hongkong yesterday to attend the second Asian-Jewish Colloquium.

Prof. Sha Boli, or Sidney Shapiro as he was formerly known, is a New York-born linguist and translator who has lived in China since 1947. He is a member of the Chinese Writers Association and the Chinese People's Political Consultative Council, China's highest national advisory body.

His advent here to attend the colloquium is regarded as a favourable gesture by Peking towards the colloquium which is jointly sponsored by the World Jewish Congress and the Asia Pacific Jewish Association.

There are six delegates from Israel, among them MK Micha Harish. colloquium organizers Isi Liebler and Sam Lipski of Australia were plainly elated that Sha/Shapiro had come. They said his participation had been arranged by Dr. Li Shenzhi, vice-president of the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences in Peking.

Sha/Shapiro, 77, studied Chinese at Cornell, Columbia and Yale universities in the U.S. before deciding to make his life in the fledgling People's Republic. Today, he is a noted translator and writer.

The colloquium brings together scholars and public figures from several Asian countries — including Israel — and from Australia and the U.S. The theme at the Hongkong gathering will be "cultural interaction: old societies, new states."

Well-placed China-watchers, meanwhile, report a slow but discernible and steady diminution in the stridency of China's public hostility towards Israel.

These observers say a careful analysis of China's UN performance over recent months shows "that Peking no longer automatically jumps to the lead in denigrating or condemning Israel."

Especially significant in this context was China's decision last autumn not to attach its name to the list of states seeking to challenge Israel's credentials to the General Assembly.

These observers, stationed in Hongkong, feel that diligent efforts by Israel to pinpoint areas of common interest will result, over a period of five to seven years (if present trends in China continue) in significant progress towards real normalization of relations.

# ASIA PACIFIC JEWISH ASSOCIATION

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21 March, 1987

## NEWS RELEASE

**HONG KONG:** A new "Rabbinical fraternity", to be known as the Asia Pacific Rabbinical Association, has been established to strengthen Jewish life throughout the small communities of the region.

The new body, APRA, was formed at the Biennial Conference of the Asia Pacific Jewish Association which met in Hong Kong Sunday, March 22. The Association will comprise rabbis in the Asia-Pacific region with a convenor in Australia, a liaison member in Jerusalem, and representatives of regional communities which do not currently employ rabbis. Rabbi Ronald Lubofsky of Melbourne was appointed as the convenor of APRA and Rabbi David Rosen, Dean of the Sapir Center for Jewish Heritage in Jerusalem, will be the Israeli liaison member.

Also participating in the Hong Kong Conference were Rabbi Meir Bensoussan (Hong Kong), Rabbi Isaac Ben Zakin (Singapore) and Rabbi Michael Schudrich (Japan).

According to the outline of principles presented to the APJA Conference after the rabbis met independently, the new body aims to "facilitate and strengthen Jewish life throughout the region".

However, the APRA proposal said that although the rabbis at the conference considered APRA's establishment as "important and necessary", it cannot serve "as a replacement for a full time professional in all Jewish communities".

It therefore urged "all communities to strive their utmost" to engage their own Jewish professionals.

Rabbi Lubofsky as convenor will be responsible for all contact and communication between component members.

A "working relationship" is to be established between APRA and the Melbourne or Sydney Batei Din for the purpose of administering and regulating matters of conversion and divorce.

"For the purpose of deriving maximal benefit from the various resources and appropriate institutions in Israel a direct line of communication" will be maintained with Rabbi Rosen.

..../APRA intends

Incorporating the Jewish communities of:

Australia, Hawaii, Hong Kong, India, Japan, Korea, New Zealand, Papua New Guinea, Philippines, Singapore, Sri Lanka, Taiwan, Thailand

Asia Pacific Jewish Association  
News Release - Hong Kong: 21 March  
Add One/

APRA intends to hold a conference as soon as practicable and probably in Australia.

It will deal with the administration of Jewish religious affairs with particular attention to the needs of communities without religious leadership.

Ends.



"THE SOUTH CHINA MORNING POST", MARCH 21, 1987.

## Chinese American scholar to speak at Asian-Jewish forum

By ZELDA CAWTHORNE

ONE of China's most distinguished and unusual citizens is in Hongkong to attend a forum for Asian and Jewish intellectuals.

He is Professor Sidney Shapiro, better known as Sha Boli in his adopted country which he serves as a member of the Chinese Writers' Association and the People's Political Consultative Council - China's highest national advisory body.

Last minute news that Professor Shapiro will speak at next week's Second Asian-Jewish Colloquium - permission for him to attend was given following a request to the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences in Beijing - assured intense interest at a press conference yesterday.

As the organisers noted, this will be the first time since 1949 that a Chinese scholar of such standing has participated in a conference convened by an international Jewish organisation.

"I am here as a private

person, although at the same time it is obvious that the Chinese academic world knows about and fully supports this conference," said Professor Shapiro, author of *An American in China* and more pertinently, 1984's *Jews in Old China: Studies by Chinese Scholars*, which he translated, compiled and edited.

Now 72, the native New Yorker arrived in China in 1947, married a local girl - the couple are now grandparents - and was finally granted citizenship in 1963.

Like many intellectuals, Professor Shapiro and his family suffered hardships during the Cultural Revolution, but were later restored to favour.

"There they are," said Professor Shapiro proudly showing a family snapshot taken in his Beijing apartment.

"That's my wife Fengzi (her name means Phoenix),

my daughter and son-in-law - both doctors - and my granddaughter."

Convened by Professor Yoram Dinstein, pro-rector of the Tel Aviv University and Mr Isi Leibler, Asia Pacific region president of the World Jewish Congress, the forum has attracted more than 30 eminent scholars and intellectuals from a dozen countries.

Included in the star-studded list are Sir Zelman Cowen, provost of Oriel College, Oxford University, and former governor-general of Australia; Dr Thanat Khoman, chairman of the John F. Kennedy Foundation of Thailand and former foreign minister; and Mr Malcolm Fraser, former prime minister of Australia.

Central theme of the Second Asian-Jewish Colloquium, being held next Monday and Tuesday, will be "The Jews and Asia: Old Identities and New Images."



Professor Shapiro



ISI Leibler...not our concern

## Jewish scholars to stay out of synagogue row

By Seth Faison

PROMINENT Jewish scholars meeting in Hongkong will ignore the problems facing the territory's only synagogue, which may soon be torn down so that a high-rise apartment complex can be built in its place.

"It's not our concern," said Mr Isi Leibler, President of the Asia Pacific Region of the World Jewish Congress, and co-convenor of a conference that has attracted Jewish academics from around the world.

The impending demolition has fueled a bitter controversy among the territory's Jewish community, many of whom are trying to block it.

Mr Leibler said that the principal aims of the conference, the Second Asian-Jewish Colloquium, was to "project the presence of Jewish culture in Asia."

"We are hoping that in a small way we can commence a role here for Jews, who play a pivotal role already in the West and the Middle East," he said.

But when asked if preserving an historical and religiously important synagogue would not be a constructive way of protecting Jewish culture in Hongkong, Mr Leibler said, "No, it's not a religious concern."

A letter signed by the two Chief Rabbis of Israel in 1985 forbade on religious grounds the destruction of the synagogue.

Mr Leibler at first did not believe that such a letter, a copy of which has been obtained by *The Standard*, actually exists.

Persuaded that it might, he questioned how much weight it would carry.

"(The rabbis) have absolutely no authority outside Israel. You know, the Jewish religion is not like Catholicism. There isn't any Pope who has authority over synagogues worldwide," he said.

A member of the local Jewish community disagreed.

"From a religious point of view, the fact that the rabbis made the ruling, is binding on everyone involved," said Mr David Buxbaum, a Hongkong-based lawyer.

Mr Leibler countered: "Judaism has never considered a building to be the most sacred thing."

Other Jewish scholars expressed a little more sympathy. "Oh yes, I've visited that synagogue. It's quite beautiful," said Professor Yoram Dinstein, Pro-Rector of Tel Aviv University, who is also co-convenor of the conference.

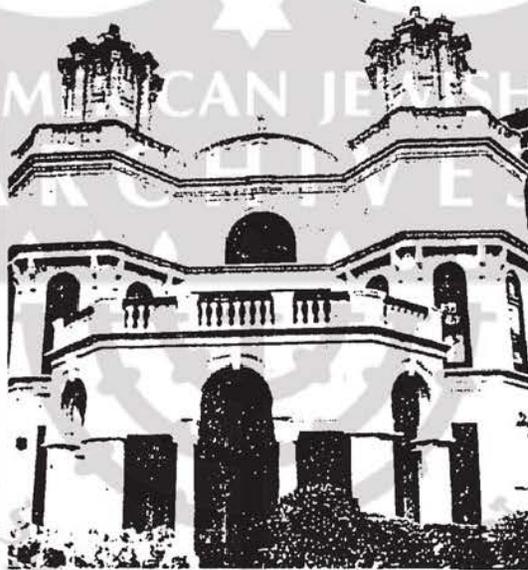
"But this sounds to me like a local affair, not of concern to an international conference," he said.

"When was it built? Around the turn of the century? Well, in Israel, we have things that are 3,000 years old. Archaeologists aren't even interested in things that are less than 1,500 years old," he said.

Mr Leibler agreed: "No, I don't think this is an issue that we can consider."

The conference will discuss a range of highly academic subjects.

They include: "The Jews and Asia: Old Identities and New Images"; "The 'Stranger' Phenomenon in Society"; and "The Problem of Identity in Minority and Majority Cultures".



THE Synagogue...plan to pull it down

# ASIA PACIFIC JEWISH ASSOCIATION

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22 March, 1987

## NEWS RELEASE

HONG KONG: The Asia Pacific Jewish Association has strongly condemned recent anti-Semitic statements by the Prime Minister of Malaysia and other spokesmen for the Malaysian Government.

In a resolution passed at the end of its one-day conference in Hong Kong, APJA expressed "outrage at the attacks on Israel, Jews and Judaism made in recent months by the Malaysian Government and Prime Minister".

APJA delegates said they were "confident that all people of good will in our region join us in deploring such expressions of religious and racial intolerance".

The APJA Conference, attended by some twenty (20) representatives of twelve (12) communities in the Asia-Pacific region, was the curtain-raiser to the Second Asian-Jewish Colloquium which opened here Monday.

The key discussion at the APJA Conference centred around questions of Jewish education, especially in the smaller communities where there were requests for assistance from Jewish volunteers from Australia, the United States and Israel to spend a year in the smaller communities on volunteer service.

The proposal was commended by a number of delegates as a version of a "Jewish peace corps". Other issues which received attention at the APJA Conference included -

- . proposals for youth from regional communities to visit Israel, aided by scholarships where necessary, for a one-year stay;
- . publication of a Jewish traveller's guide to the Asia-Pacific region;
- . the establishment of a statistical and demographic profile of the region's communities to be made available on computer;
- . the investigation of reports into the status of the Jewish community in Rangoon, Burma.

APJA Chairman, Isi Leibler, in his opening remarks on Saturday evening at a dinner hosted by the Hong Kong Jewish community, said he did not expect the small Jewish communities of the region to survive past the next generation.

.../However he said

Asia Pacific Jewish Association News Release

Hong Kong: 22 March 1987

Add One/

However he said where there was "even a single Jew", APJA had a responsibility to give whatever aid and assistance it could.

Hong Kong community Chairman, Robert Dorfman, said APJA and its activities can ensure a "better quality of Jewish life for our communities" if they work and plan together.

This sentiment was echoed by APJA President Leslie Caplan, who said the small communities should be encouraged to work together as well as with larger communities like Australia.

Hebrew University Professor Zwi Werblowsky said the APJA initiative arose from the imagination to see the problem of a vast area with a vast diversity of cultures and small Jewish communities.

He said there should be a continuity of this imaginative initiative to offset the problems of these small communities being rotating communities without the "accumulated mass of Jewish history and community experience" of more settled communities.

Ends.



SUNDAY MORNING POST, MARCH 22, 1987

## Police on alert for Jews' meeting

TIGHT police security has been imposed on today's meeting of regional Jewish delegates at the Jewish Recreation Club in Robinson Rd in Mid-Levels.

About 30 delegates from small Jewish communities in Asia and the Pacific have gathered in Hongkong to discuss mutual issues of interest and concern, such as closer regional co-operation.

The delegates have come from as far away as India, Vanuatu, Australia and New Zealand, a spokesman said.

"We are all small communities with common interests and there are things we could share, like Jewish VIPs visiting the region.

The police, as is normal in sensitive security situations, have declined to confirm or deny whether security has been put in place. However, given the constant terrorist threat to Jewish communities worldwide, the *Sunday Morning Post* understands that police security exists near the conference hall.

Horse trainer Kerry Kam

meanwhile, who has been attacked twice in the streets in less than a month, was still being given around-the-clock protection by Jockey Club security officers yesterday.

"He is not being protected by police officers," a police spokesman said. "However, the Organised and Serious Crime Squad is investigating the attacks."

Mr Kam was attacked in Happy Valley on February 27 and March 13.



# 自京來港出席學術會議 沙博理談中國近況

## 指出反資產階級自由化在健康進行

【本報訊】全國政協委員、作家沙博理，昨日在港表示，他在電視上看到胡耀邦出現在人大開幕大會主席台上，感到很高興。他認為這說明中國反對資產階級自由化的工作正在健康進行。

沙博理原是美籍人，從業律師，一九四七年來到中國，在中國生活、工作至今，長期從事翻譯和寫作，著有《一個美國人眼中的中國》、譯作有《水滸傳》及《金作品》等。其妻鳳子，亦為有名女作家。

沙博理於本月十九日來港，他此行是出席一個澳大利亞學術機構在港主辦的第二届亞太地區猶太人國際會議。會議在尖沙咀海景假日酒店舉行，有十多個國家、地區的學者數十人出席。沙博理在會上作

了「古代中國的猶太人」的學術報告，他曾就此專題出版過著作。談及內地近日開展反對資產階級自由化問題時，沙博理表示，從一個翻譯工作者的角度，他覺得

「Tradition」的譯法未能準確表達出中文的原意，中國要反對的是資產階級的某些政治觀點和方法，而不是要反對「自由」。他說，事件開始來得太突然，因此文藝界初時有點緊張，但後來領導上一再解

釋，事情只限於中共黨內，而且對象也不是一般的黨員，事情被控制未有擴大化，大家後來也就比較放心了。沙博理表示，他相信鄧小平、趙紫陽和其他中央領導人，都是堅持經濟上的改革、開放政策的，所不同者只是改革的具體方法和步伐快慢不一，但不會是決不繼續，只要改革、開放分子，這一點是很清楚的。所以知識分子可以安心工作。沙博理是極少數被選出任全國政協委員的外國血統人士之一，他將於今天趕返北京參加政協會議。

TRANSLATION ATTACHED

TRANSLATED FROM A CHINESE COMMUNIST NEWSPAPER IN HONG KONG  
WHICH IS REPRODUCED THROUGHOUT THE MAINLAND

MONDAY MARCH 23RD, 1987

Author Mr. Sha Boli and a member of the National Congress was in Hong Kong yesterday and revealed that he was very pleased to see Wu Yu Bang appointed to the Board of Chairmen of the Peoples National Congress opening ceremony as seen from the television. He considered that China's Anti-bourgeois Freedom Campaign was proceeding smoothly.

Mr. Sha Boli, an American and a practising lawyer, came to China in 1947 and ever since then started on his new life and work. He was involved in translation for a long time and also does literary work. One of his publications includes "A Foreigner's View of China", and translations include the famous Chinese novel "A Hundred and Eight Heroes" by Tan Chuk Yan and the works of another Chinese author, Pa Chin. His wife, Feng Tzu is herself a famous author in China.

Mr. Sha Boli arrived in Hong Kong on the 19th of this month and the purpose of his visit was to attend the Second Jewish International Conference of the Asian Region arranged by one of the Australian academic organisations here in Hong Kong. The conference was held in the Harbour View Holiday Inn in Tsim Sha Tsui and attended by scholars from over ten countries and regions.

Mr. Sha Boli produced an academic review on the subject "Jews & Judaism in Ancient China" in the conference and also introduced his own work on this particular subject which has already been published.

In discussing the Anti-bourgeois Freedom Campaign in China recently, Mr. Sha Boli also revealed that from the point of view of a translator, he felt that the West's interpretation of "Anti-bourgeois Freedom" does not strictly correspond with that of the Chinese meaning. What China really objects to is the political ideas of the bourgeois but not freedom itself.

He also said that the incident came about so suddenly and that the literary circles were very anxious during the initial period of the purge. However, the matter was only dealt with within the Communist Party as explained by the Party leadership. The object was not ordinary members of the party itself and that everything was under control, he assured.

Mr. Sha Boli also believed that Deng Xiao Ping and Zhao Zhe Yang and other officials of the Central Government would insist on economic reform and internal liberation policy. The only difference was the method and pace of reform. Irrespective of the pace, the importance of intellectuals is vital in the reform. Intellectuals can therefore allay their fears and continue to concentrate on their work.

Mr. Sha Boli is one of the few foreigners being invited to the National Political Congress. He will leave for Peking today to attend a government meeting.

N.B. Mr. Sha Boli is the Chinese translation for Mr. Shapiro.



# Anti-Semitism in Japan key topic at Colloquium



Journalist Sam Lipsky ... here as observer.



**Sinclair at large**  
phone Kevin direct on 0-6388616

AMONG the many questions being addressed today by scholars at the second Asian-Jewish Colloquium is the perplexing issue of the sudden outbreak of anti-Semitism in Japan.

Why, in a country with virtually no Jews, is there anti-Jewish feeling? This phenomena has caused much speculation and nobody seems to have any answers why a spate of books pouring hatred on Jews have suddenly become best-sellers in Japan.

It is partly to clear up misconceptions about one another that scholars from many lands are meeting at the Holiday Inn Harbour View Hotel.

This is the second such gathering; the first took place in Singapore in

1984 but because of political realities (probably based on the bizarre speculations of Malaysian Prime Minister Dr Mahathir Muhammad on "international Zionist conspiracies") this year there are no participants from Kuala Lumpur.

The rest is well represented, however.

It is an honourable list. Hongkong represented by Vice Chancellor Wang Gungwu of the University of Hongkong; history lecturer Tam Yue-him of the Chinese University, is playing co-host. And there are distinguished delegates from Thailand, Japan, Britain, America, the Philippines, India and Korea.

As one would expect, there is a sizeable eminent group of Israelis.

But the dominant group comprises Australians, headed by a former prime minister, Malcolm Fraser, who is not Jewish, and a former governor general, Sir Zelman Cowen. The main conference organiser is Dr Isi Leibler of Melbourne, president of the Asian Pacific Region of the World Jewish Congress.

The Australian presence is of interest. One of the observers of the Colloquium is the distinguished Australian journalist Sam Lipsky, more noted in his homeland for his incisive reporting than his private interest in Jewish affairs.

With 90,000 Jews, Australia is by far the largest community in the Asia-Pacific region, Mr Lipsky explains.

As such, it casts a helping eye over the other Jewish groups in Asia.

For example, there are but 6,000 Jews in India, where there has been an historic community in Cochin for many centuries. In Singapore, the number is 200 families. In Manila, 50.

Basically, Lipsky says, the Jews of Australia help to keep alive the interest in Judaism and things Jewish in the smaller communities scattered through the Far East.

## China sends Shapiro

QUIETLY, with little fanfare, history is being made in the Holiday Inn Harbour View Hotel. Among those attending the Colloquium is a soft-spoken man named Sidney Shapiro, more widely known as Sha Boli.

His presence is interesting because while born a New York Jew, Professor Sha/Shapiro has been living in China since 1947, a citizen of the Peoples' Republic since 1963.

He is one of the most noted of the tiny and dwindling number of aged "foreign friends" who forsook the lands of their birth to seek their destinies in China. As with his old friends Dr Ma Haide (also born a New Yorker but 'al Arab) and New Zealander Rewi Alley, Sidney Shapiro hitched himself to the red star before the communist victory in China.

He lived through the

hard years; unlike other expatriates in Beijing he was not jailed during the Cultural Revolution but his wife was detained for four years.

What is interesting about Professor Shapiro's presence at the gathering of distinguished scholars is that an invitation was extended to the Chinese Academy of Social Science for them to send an observer to the Colloquium and they responded by nominating the distinguished Jewish-born scholar.

Organisers of the forum stress they did not ask for Sidney Shapiro by name. But their delight when he was nominated by China was hard for them to disguise.

Said Professor Yoram Dinsteim of Tel Aviv University, one of the prime movers of the Colloquium: "We are very glad to see him." It is the first time since 1949 that China has sent such a distinguished Chinese scholar — indeed, any representative at all — to an international Jewish organisation.

What makes it interesting from a political point of view is that the Asian-Jewish Colloquium comes firmly under the umbrella of the World Jewish Congress.

And the Congress is the governing body of



Yorum Dinstein ... comparing Jews of the world.

Zionism, the movement that sprang from Eastern Europe towards the end of last century and spearheaded the drive for a Jewish homeland in the Holy Land.

Beijing, of course, pursues a steadfastly anti-Israeli course, holding that Palestinians had a rightful claim to the land and were dispossessed. But China also holds firmly to the stance that while being opposed to the State of Israel it is certainly not anti-Jewish.

The presence of Professor Shapiro at the Colloquium indicates China has for once, refreshingly, put scholarship ahead of politics.

After 40 years in China, Sidney Shapiro retains a keen sense of self-deprecatory humour. The only excuse he had to be at the gathering was the fact that he had edited the book *Jews in Old China*, he said, nothing that if he had written it himself the book would not have been so good.

His presence in Hongkong was brief; he has to return to Beijing for the scheduled meeting of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Council of which he is a member.

## Meaning of word

ANYWAY, newsmen at a press conference asked themselves, what is a colloquium?

It's a Latin-based word

for an academic seminar. If businessmen hold them, they are called conferences.

## 300 in HK?

HOW many Jews are there in Hongkong? Nobody seems to know.

People up at the Ohel Leah Synagogue in Robinson Road say about 300 families are linked to the community. These include such distinguished local names as Kadoorie.

But there are many more people of Jewish descent in Hongkong than those with connections with the social and religious community centred on the gracious old place of worship.

## Siamese twins

YORUM Dinstein compares the Jewish communities of Israel and Asia to Siamese twins.

Those in West Asia look west to Europe, he maintains. Those in East Asia look east.

There is little dialogue between the two, he comments. Which is why the present Colloquium is aimed at explaining Jews to Asia scholars.

The theme of the meeting, which began today and ends tomorrow, is "The Jews and Asia; Old Identities and New Images."



Sidney Shapiro and Isi Leibler ... Important mission.

יום שני, כ"ב באדר תשמ"ז - 23.3.1987

# הנציג הסיני סיפר בדיחות באידיש לעמיתיו היהודים

פרופ' סידני שפירא, יהודי, חבר במועצה העממית המייצגת בסין, משתתף בסמינר יהודי בהונג'קונג • שפירא, המוכר בסין כ"שהיבולי", הופיע בכינוס במעיל-מא

שא. היקף הסדר בין ישראל לסין - אף שהוא חשוב ליציאתם הישראלים - אינו אלא טיפה בים הסיני, הסינים יעדיפו לנתק יחסים אלה, אם הם ייחשפו.

פרופ' שפירא, שלדבריו מעולם לא העלים את יהדותו, אמר אתמול, כי לרוב אנשי-הדת הסיניים, שהוא מכיר, ידע חלקי בלבד על ישראל. הם בקושי מבחינים, אמר היהודי הסיני, בין יהודים לבין אנשים אחרים מן המערב. אחרים ממשלתפי הכינוס, הבאים בקשרי מיסוד עם עמיתים סיניים, אישרו את דבריו. להם ביר לסינים מהי ישראל ומהי יהדות, אמרו, זוהי משימה כמעט בלתי אפשרית.

יוזמת הסמינר היהודי היא האגודה היהודית באסיה ובאירופה האוקיינוס השקט, שלרוב כיום מתבריה קשרים מיסודיים הדוקים עם סין. באגודה חברות 12 קהילות יהודיות, שאחדות מהן זעירות ביותר. בקהילות תאילנד, לרונגמא, 85 משפחות בלבד, בקלדוניה החדשה 80, ובכל ארץ מהאיים הבאים איי פיג'י, פאפואה וגינ'אה החדשה - 15 משפחות.

הנציגים בסמינר החליטו להמשיך ולהרק את הקשרים ביניהם. הם יקיימו מוסדות יהודיים מרכזיים, יזמינו מודרניזציה ורובנים וישלחו את ילדיהם ללימודים לישראל.

הסמינר, כי פרופ' שפירא ישתתף בו. לבוש במעיל-כותנה כחול, הזומה בגיורתו למעיל-מא הסיני הירוק, נראה אתמול פרופ' שפירא. כמו בבית" בין העסקנים היהודיים בסין עוזה העניגית לרגל פתיחת הסמינר, שנערכה במועדון היהודי המקומי. הוא ישב בין חברי הכנסת לשעבר ולמן שניאור אברמוב וביני, סיפר בדיחות באידיש, אך נזהר שלא לנעת בנושאים פוליטיים.

דיפלומטים מערביים ומומחים לענייני סין בהונג'קונג אמרים, כי התנגותו של שפירא מסמלת את עמדתה של סין עצמה היא מעוניינת בשיפור היחסים הכלכליים והתרבותיים עם יהדות העולם ובעקיפין עם ישראלים, אך עדיין אינה מוכנה לסטות ממדיניותה המצודה רת ביחס לישראל. לרובי אותם מומחים, גם אם תחוש בדיה"מ את יחסיה הדיפלומטיים עם ישראל, אין כל ביטחון, שסין תלך בעקבותיה. שינוי במדיניותה יבוא, לפי דעה זו, רק שנים אחדות לאחר שיוני בעמדה הסובייטית.

מומחה בעל קשרים במקינו אמר אתמול, כי המנהיג הסיני, דנג סיאופנג, הוא היחיד, שברו הו להכריע בעניין הקשרים עם ישראל, אך איש מעוזיו אינו מצו להעלות בפניו את הגר

- מאת אדוויין איתן, שליח המיוחד להונג'קונג -

נציג סיני בכיר, פרופ' סידני שפירא, הודיע בסין גם בכינוס, החבר שהיבולי, יבאם היום בבגס של אירגון יהודי המתקיים בהונג'קונג. זה הפעם הראשונה מאז 1949, שאזרח סיני בעל מעמד כה בכיר משתתף בכינוס יהודי.

פרופ' שפירא נולד בניר-יוזק, שם למד משפטים באוניברסיטת ייל. הוא מתגורר בסין מאז 1947 וחבר באגוד המופרים הסיניים וכמועצה העממית המייצגת - מן המוסדות הדו-שוכים ביותר בסין. הוא נשוי לאשה סינית ואב - וגם סב - לילדים סיניים.

פרופ' שפירא מעיד על עצמו, שבמובנים רבים נשאר יהודי טיפוסי מברוקלין. אני הוא זה שתביא לסין את הבייגל היהודי, אמר אתמול. אני אופה אותם בעצמי, ורבים מידידי הסינים למדו לאהוב אותם.

פרופ' שפירא בא להונג'קונג כדי להשתתף בסמינר היהודי האסיאתי, שבו משתתפים גם אישים מישראל, בידיעתם ובאישורם של שלטונות סין. מנן הנשיא של האקדמיה לית למציעים הוא שהודיע אישית לירד

# Chinese open to Jewish studies

By DAVID LANDAU

Jerusalem Post Correspondent

HONGKONG. - China has hinted that it would like its academics to study Hebrew and Judaism in Western universities, and a group of leading Australian Jews proposes to launch a foundation to help facilitate this.

The hints were dropped during recent informal contacts between the Jewish activists and key Chinese academics, who are also involved in Beijing government policy making.

The Australian Jews, led by tourism tycoon Isi Leibler of Melbourne, want to involve the World Jewish Congress in their effort. Leibler, who has travelled to Beijing at the head of an Australian Jewish delegation, believes that a serious cultural dialogue between the two peoples would contribute, in the long term, to political normalization between the People's Republic and the Jewish People.

Top Chinese academics have indicated to Leibler and his associates that they are aware of, and concerned over, their country's profound unfamiliarity with Hebrew scholarship and Jewish affairs at the academic level. They expressed their active interest in sending young scholars abroad to attempt to fill this lacuna.

One small but symbolic step in the direction of cultural dialogue is the participation here this week of Chinese Jewish writer Sidney Shapiro in the Asian-Jewish colloquium, a biennial event organized by Leibler and his Australian Institute of Jewish Affairs.

Shapiro, an American who moved to China in 1947 and recently produced a book on the ancient Jewish community of Kai Feng, told *The Jerusalem Post* that while he did not represent Beijing at the colloquium,

his presence at the gathering was indeed intended as a goodwill gesture by China.

Meanwhile, Israel's top China-watcher yesterday appealed to Asian Jewish communities to help Israel by providing a framework for a preliminary dialogue with China and other regional states with which Israel has no formal relations.

Reuven Merhav, consul-general in Hongkong, told the Asia Pacific Jewish Association that the Chinese recognize Jewish solidarity - with world Jewry and with Israel.

While a move towards diplomatic recognition was not imminent, Merhav said, there were niches where Israel and China could usefully trade and cooperate. He urged Jewish businessmen in this region to help Israel identify such niches.

Merhav charged that Israeli governments had neglected the vast and growing potential of Asia. Jerusalem should send out its best diplomats, he said, and they should buckle down to learn the realities of the region.

"MAARIV", 23RD MARCH, 1987.

## "איין סיכוי לשדל את סין לכונן יחסים עם ישראל"

מאת שאול בן-חיים,

שליח "מעריב" להונג-קונג

"כל הנסיונות לשדל את סין לכונן יחסים עם ישראל הם חסרי סיכוי, ואולי אפילו מזיקים. אין בדעת הסינים לעסוק בסוגיה זו, גם אם חסובייתים ישנו את מדינותם. אפילו בשל כל לא תשותף סין בוועידה בינלאומית לשלום במזרח התיכון - אם אומנם תכונס כזו את". זוהי מסקנתו של איסי לייבלר, ממנהיגינה הבולטים של יהדות אוסטרליה ונשיא הסניף האסיאני של הקונגרס היהודי העולמי.

לייבלר, שביחד עם מרופ' יורם דינשטיין יזם את רבי-השיח האסיאני השני בחונג קונג, מתבסס על מידע ממקור שהוא מסרב למרס. לדעתו של לייבלר, גורסים מנהיגי סין כי אל לה לעשות צעד כלשהו שיזיק לה בעולם חשלישי. ישראל מוזהה בתפיסה הסינית כגיזרה מערבית, בעוד הערבים הם חלק מאותו עולם שלישי שאת הנהגתו חומדים הסינים. מכאן, אומר לייבלר, "כל עוד אין שלום בין ישראל לארצות ערב פרט למצרים, אין לציפות לשינוי בעמדת סין".

זאת ועוד: "אין לראות בכך יחס סיני עויין כלפי ישראל. זוהי פשוט דוגמה לפראגמטיזם של פקין, ואינה סותרת מגעים בלתי ישיים במישור הכלכלי-טכני, או קשרים במישור מדעי או תרבותי".

כדוגמה אפשר להביא את יחסם של הסינים עם דרום קוריאה. הסחר בין הדרום קוריאה לים לסינים גדל מאוד גם בלא יחסים פורמליים. התנאי היחיד הוא שקשרים אלח יתנהגו לו בציונה, בלי פרסומים שרק ירגיז את הציפון קוריאנים, בני בריתם של הסינים.

מכאן ניתן לגזור נורה שווה עם המורח התיכון, למרות שאין כמעט שום יחסי מסחר בין סין לעולם הערבי. יחסים גלויים עם ישראל היו מרתיחים את הערבים, וזהו מחיר שהסינים אינם מוכנים לשלם כיום.

איסי לייבלר, שכבר ביקר בסין והוא יוזם עתה, אחרי בואו של משתתף סיני לדב'שיח בהונג קונג, לנסות לפתח קשרים בין ארגוני המוסדות בסין, בטוח כי יבוא יום והמדיניות הסינית בשאלת ישראל תשתנה בכל זאת. הוא מצטט פתגם סיני: "למימי הנחר קצב משלהם, אך אין הזרם זחה תמיד", וחוא מפרשו כך שהשינוי יכול לבוא, אפילו יגזול התהליך שנים לא מעטות.

בינתיים היא מכונן את המרץ שלו לאפיק של מציאת מימון להבאת סטודנטים ומדעינים סיניים לאוסטרליה, כדי ללמוד שם לימודי יהדות ואת השפה העברית. לדעתו תיענה הצעה כזאת בחיוב.

כאשר שאלתי את לייבלר מה הוא מייפץ לממשלת ישראל, השיב: "טוב תעשה ממשלת ישראל אם תחדל מן הוויכוח הפנימי העיקר על קשירת יחסים דיפלומטיים עם פקין".

T R A N S L A T I O N

"MAARIV"

SHAUL BEN HAIM

23 MARCH, 1987

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There are no prospects of influencing China to establish relations with Israel.

All attempts to convince China to establish relations with Israel lack any real prospects of success and may even be damaging.

The Chinese do not wish to deal with this issue even if the Soviets change their policy, and China will not participate in an international conference in the Middle East even if such a conference should eventuate. This is the conclusion reached by one of the most active Australian Jewish leaders and the President of the World Jewish Congress, Asia Pacific Region, Isi Leibler.

Leibler together with Yoram Dinstein convened the Second Asian Jewish Colloquium in Hong Kong. Leibler draws his information from sources he cannot name in greater detail.

According to Mr. Leibler's opinion the Chinese leaders are reluctant to take any steps which might damage their standing in the Third World. The Chinese view Israel as a follower of the West but consider the Arabs part of the Third World whose leadership they are courting.

Mr. Leibler said: "As long and as there is no peace between Israel and the Arab countries (apart from Egypt) one cannot expect any change in the Chinese position. Furthermore one should not read in this a hostile Chinese attitude to Israel.

This is simply an example of Beijing's pragmatism and it is not contrary to indirect moves in the economic and technical spheres or contact in the scientific and cultural fields".

As an example we can refer to the relations between China and South Korea. Trade between the two has very much increased without formal relations.

The only condition is that any contacts should be made quietly without publicity which would anger the North Koreans, allies of the Chinese.

One can draw the same conclusion in relation to the Middle East, in spite of the fact that there is almost no trade between China and the Arab world.

Open relations with Israel would only provoke the Arabs. The Chinese are not prepared to pay this price today.

MAARIV

SHAUL BEN HAIM

23 MARCH, 1987

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Mr. Leibler has already visited China and now, after the participation at the Asian Jewish Colloquium of a Chinese academic, is working towards opening up lines of communication between his organisation and Chinese institutions.

Mr. Leibler is sure "the day will come when Chinese policy on the Israeli question will change nevertheless".

"The river flows at its own pace but the current is not always the same".

He claims that a change may come even if the process takes many years.

Meanwhile he is directing all his energies towards finding finance to bring Chinese students and scientists to Australia for Jewish studies and Hebrew language courses. In his opinion such a project will receive a positive response from Chinese quarters.

When I asked Isi Leibler what advice he would offer the Israeli government he replied:

"The Israeli government would do well to stop the internal rivalry over the importance of establishing diplomatic relations with Beijing".

## THE SECOND ASIAN-JEWISH COLLOQUIUM

March 24, 1987

### NEWS RELEASE

HONG KONG: The Second Asian-Jewish Colloquium concluded in Hong Kong today with the establishment of a high-level Steering Committee which will help to plan the next Colloquium to be held in two years' time.

The Steering Committee comprises Colloquium members from eleven countries, including Professor Sidney Shapiro (Sha Boli) from China.

Professor Shapiro, a distinguished translator of Chinese literature into English, came from Beijing to participate in the two-day Colloquium which was based around the theme "The Jews and Asia: Old Identities and New Images".

A paper on the history of the Kaifeng Jewish community in China, delivered by Professor Shapiro, aroused widespread interest at the conference. (Kaifeng, a Jewish community in China which no longer survives, has recently attracted growing international attention.)

It was the first time since 1949 that a Chinese scholar had presented an account of the Kaifeng Jews to an international Jewish conference.

Other members of the Steering Committee include Sir Zelman Cowen, Provost of Oriel College, Oxford University and former Governor-General of Australia; The Rt. Hon. Malcolm Fraser, C.H., former Prime Minister of Australia and Co-Chairman of the Commonwealth Committee of Eminent Persons on South Africa; Mr. Ram Jethmalani, Advocate, Supreme Court of India; Prof. Takeshi Muramatsu, Dean of the College of Comparative Culture, University of Tsukuba, Japan; Prof. David Sidorsky of Columbia University, New York; Prof. Zwi Werblowsky, Martin Buber Professor of Comparative Religion, Hebrew University, Jerusalem; Prof. Wang Gungwu, Vice-Chancellor of the University of Hong Kong; Prof. Paulo Campos, President of the National Academy of Science and Technology of the Philippines; Prof. Yadu Khanal, Professor Emeritus, Tri-Chandra College, Nepal; Professor Tae-Yeung You, Director of the Saemaul Institute, the Kon-Kuk University, Seoul; and Dr. Thanat Khoman, Chairman, John F. Kennedy Foundation of Thailand.

The Colloquium convenors, Professor Yoram Dinstein, Pro-Rector, Tel-Aviv University and Isi J. Leibler, C.B.E., President of the Asia Pacific Region, World Jewish Congress, have extended invitations to scholars from other countries in the region to join the Steering Committee.

.../cont'd

**Venue:**  
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70 Mody Road, East Tsim Sha Tsui,  
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The Second Asian-Jewish Colloquium  
News Release, Hong Kong: 24 March, 1987

Pge 2

Professor Dinstein and Mr. Leibler said it was particularly gratifying that the Third Colloquium would benefit from such a distinguished Steering Committee.

"We believe any academic conference would be privileged to enjoy such high-calibre scholarly patronage. That it has happened in our own case in the relatively short time since the Colloquia began in 1984 'suggests we are fulfilling a worthwhile rôle."

The convenors said that the role was providing a forum of ideas for leading Jewish and Asian scholars to discuss matters of common concern reflected in the contrasting cultural experiences of their varied societies.

The full proceedings of the Hong Kong Colloquium will be published late this year and the venue for the Third Colloquium is expected to be announced at the same time.

Ends.



"MAARIV", 24TH MARCH, 1987.

# "ישראל היא בת הברית הטבעית של הודו"

## כך אומר סגן מנהיג מפלגת האופוזיציה ההודית

בהודו, טוען, כי יחסה של הודו כלפי ישראל - המתבטא גם בחרם הספורטיבי, נוגד את החוק והשכל הישר.

אנו יושבים באיזור מוכה ישנעון - הוא אמר בשיחה מיוחדת - אני חרד, לכן, שאם מישהו ייצא מדעתו וישתמש בנשק גרעיני - זה יקרה אצלנו. הפאקיסטאנים בהחלט מסוגלים לעשות זאת.

פרופ' ג'תמאלאני היה רוצח שהודו נפאקי: סטאן יסכימו בדבר איסור על נשק גרעיני. אך זו אינה דעת הכלל. השבועון "אסיאוויק", למשל, סבור, שאין כל רע שגם הודו וגם פאקיסטאן יהיו חמושות בנשק גרעיני - כך יי ווצר איזון שימנע עימות צבאי נוסף בין שתי המדינות. כלומר - בעל המאמר אינו גורס שמדובר במדינות מטורפות.

היתה זו אינדירה גאנדי שנתנה להודו את היכולת הגרעינית. בנה ראניב הולך בעקבר תיה, מתעקש ג'תמאלאני. אני קורא למי משלת הודו לשקול מחדש את מיכלול מדיני יותה במערב אסיה. מתוך התחשבות באינטרס הלאומי ההודי.

### מאת שאול בן-חיים, שליח "מעריב" בהונגקונג

ישראל היא בת הברית הטבעית של הודו, הניצבת לפני סכנת פצצת גרעין פאקיסטאנית. אני בטוח שרבים מאוד בארצי היו רוצים לראות את חיל האוויר ההודי מחקה את ישראל ומפציץ את הכור הפאקיסטאני.

כך אמר סגן נשיא מפלגת האופוזיציה ההודית ג'אנאטה וחבר הפרלמנט, רם ג'תמאלאני, אחד ממשתתמי הרבישיח היהודי-דיאסיאני, שריכוזו בהונגקונג כשלושים מדענים מרוב ארצות היבשת, מישראל ומארה"ב.

ג'תמאלאני סיפר, כי כתב מאמר שהופיע בימים אלה בעתון רב החפוצה "אכספרס", וכי קיבל כבר קריאת טלפון מעורך העתון שסיפר לו על שטפון של מכתבי קוראים.

המאמר התייחס גם לאפשרות שהודו תסרב להתייצב מול טוניסאי ישראל על גביע דייוויס. ג'תמאלאני, הנחשב גם לאחד מעורכי-הדין החשובים ושימש כיו"ר לשכת עוה"ד

T R A N S L A T I O N

MAARIV

SHAUL BEN HAIM

24 MARCH, 1987

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Israel is India's natural ally according to the Deputy Leader of the Indian Opposition Party.

"Israel is the natural ally of India which is facing the danger of a Pakistani nuclear bomb".

"I'm sure that many people in my country would like to see the Indian airforce follow Israel's example and bomb the Pakistani nuclear reactor".

So said Ram Jethmalani, Member of Parliament, Member of the Indian Janata Party and one of the participants at the Asian Jewish Colloquium in Hong Kong which brought together over thirty academics from most Asian countries, Israel and the United States.

Jethmalani said he had written an article which appeared in the widely circulated paper Express. The editor phoned him to inform him of a flood of letters received in response to that article. The article referred to the possibility that India would refuse to play Israel in the Davis Cup.

Mr. Jethmalani, seen as one of India's most distinguished Jurists and at one stage chairman of the Indian Bar Association, claims that India's relationship with Israel will also express itself in a sport boycott. "This is contrary to law and common sense, he said".

"We sit in a region which suffers from a touch of insanity", he said in a special interview. "I'm afraid that if someone takes leave of his senses, nuclear weapons could be used in our country. The Pakistanis are definitely capable of doing that".

Mr. Jethmalani would like India and Pakistan to ban nuclear weapons. This is not everybody's opinion.

Asia Week sees it as normal that India and Pakistan should both be armed with nuclear weapons, a situation it sees as a balance which will prevent a military confrontation between the two countries.

This shows that the writer of the article does not consider that we are discussing countries capable of crazy acts.

It was Indira Ghandi who gave India the nuclear capability: her son Rajiv follows in her footsteps".

.../2

MAARIV

SHAUL BEN HAIM

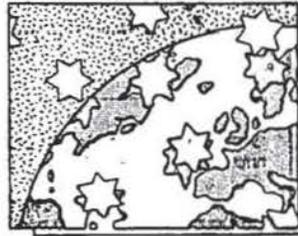
24 MARCH, 1987

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Mr. Jethmalani reiterates: "I call on the Indian government to review again her policy in West Asia taking into consideration the Indian national interests".



## עולם יהודי



### הנג קונג: בית-כנסת מול בית-כנסת

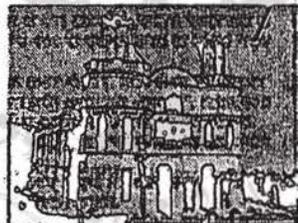
מאת שאול בן-חיים,  
שלח-מטיב להנג קונג

200 המשפחות היהודיות המרכיבות את הקהילה היהודית של הונג קונג, הן מיקרו קומוניסטים יהודים. עשה גם יש להן שני בתי כנסת.

עד לעת האחרונה התפללו יהודי המושבה רק בבית הכנסת הישן (שנבנה ב-1902) הרי דוע בשם "אוהל לאה". עד שבא אנשי הר"ב מליובאביץ' והקימו קהילה נפרדת עם רב אחר. בוסן האחרון הם התפללו באולם שבמלון "הילטון" המקומי.

בית הכנסת החדש יותר דווקא מושך מתפלים. אמורים כי בגלל שבת האחרון היה מסר של המנהלים שם גדול מזה שבא לקבל את מי השבת באוהל לאה.

אוהל לאה שומר בימים אלה במרכז של ריבונות. אחרי התלכדות רבות החלט להזיז את הבניין הישן (שזיך במסגרת מקומית) וכן את המעוון של הקהילה, כדי לפנות מקום לפיתוח מבני מגורים חדשים. מחיר האדמה כאן גבוה יותר מאשר בשדה הרד מישית במינצ'וק, לכן אין מתחשבים באד רים היסטוריים.



אוהל לאה - מחירי המגורים

למי פירסום בעתון המקומי "סטאנדארט", קיימת מחלוקת עמוקה בקהילה. המתנגדים לעיון הפיתוח מה אמילו לזכרים הראשיים של ישראל בבקשה למסוק הלכה אם מדע להורס בית תפילה. הרבנות של ישראל פס קה לתובת המשרשים, אלא שפסיקה זו אי ה מתקבלת על דעת חבר הנאמנים של "אר הל לאה" ובראשם הלורד כדורי, הנגיד של הקהילה.

הלורד גורס כי הקהילה צריכה לחקם קרן שתחזיק את מסדותיה לשנים רבות. הוא עצמו הקים קרן כזאת אבל כספיה הלכים ואוזלים. הוא כבר בן יותר משמונים, לכן עלה העיון של עיסקת שתפזר את כל הב עיוון: בית הכנסת ייבנה מחדש במסגרת השלובת המסורית. כך גם המעוון, שאף יורחב ותשטף לו ביטת לחיה ושאי אבד רים המקובלים בימינו.

דבריו של כדורי דוחים את ההשקפת כאר לו יש לכדורי עין מסחרי בעיסקת. לדברי הם, "כל דאגנו לעתיד הקהילה אתרי שיר שתלק מן העולם".

הקורסים אמורים להניע לבית הכנסת חד מעוון בסוף השנה. חבר הנאמנים של הקהילה מקווה שכאשר יוקם כאן המעוון חד דש הוא ימשוך בחוזה גם את חפי הקהילה שעברו אל "מחנה ליובאביץ'".

# שאל בן-חיים (הונג-קונג) "ישראל כ" תוצר אסיאני"



יחסי ישראל עם הקהילות היהודיות באסיה קיבלו בשבוע שעבר מימד חדש ומעניין. מה שהחל כרבי-שיח מדעי דרשנותי בין אנשי מדע וציבור, הופך עתה למר סגור-קבע, שסיכוי מדיני בצידה.

בחודש יוני הבא תתכנס בירושלים מזכירות קבועה של נציגים חשובים מארצות אסיה עם עמיתים מישראל והפגורה היהודית. לא עוד התכנסות מדעית בנושאים היוליים אלא מיסגרת, היכולה לקיים דרשית מתמשך, הקושר את השני היהודי עם מדינות, שבדרך כלל אינן מקיימות מגעים עם ישראל. המושב השני של הרבי שיח היהודי-אסיאני, שנפתח זה עתה בהונג-קונג, הוליד הפיכה כזאת: הצטרפותו של נציג מסין העממית. לבואו קדמו מגעים בין מארגני הרבי-שיח לבין נציגים סיניים. ההתייחסות של פקין לנושא הוכיח גם בתום הדיונים, שלא היתה זו החלטה מקרית. סידני שפירא, היהודי-הסיני היחיד, שהשתתף בדיונים, רואיין על-ידי התקשורת. הסינית וסיפר על הרבי-שיח. דבריו ראו אור בביטאון סיני רשמי.

אין ספק, שמוכיחות קבועה של מסגרת מדעית-תרבותית כזאת תביא קש לנצל את הפעילות ולהמשיך במגעים עם האקדמיה הסינית, ששיגרה את שפירא להונג-קונג.

נתפס ונאמן מובן - נחזה על הסף. בעינינו קל לזהות את ישראל, הנראית להם כעמדה קדומנית אחרונה של הטכנולוגיה הצבאית המערבית. מוכרים יותר לאסיאנים מדינות ערב, המשתייכות לנוש "העולם השלישי", שגור קרוב יותר. זהו היסוד הראשון, שעליו בנו ראשי הרבי-שיח ויחמיו את המיפגש היהודי-אסיאני. שני היוזמים, איסי לטבל, מראשיה של יהדות אוסטרליה, ונורף יורם דינשטיין מאוניברסיטת תל-אביב, צרפו אליהם אנשי מדע ומדינה מדוברי ארצות אסיה. אם ראשית הדרך היתה כיוס מדענים אסיאנים, המכירים את ישראל ותומכים בה, הרי שכבר עתה נוצר פתח להרחבת המסגרת. השתתפותו של ראש ממשלת אוסטרליה לשעבר, מלקולם פרידלנד, היא דוגמה לכך.

עתה אפשר לחרוג אל מעבר לנושאים המדעיים, אף מעבר לסתם רצון לערוך היכרות בין ישראל והעם היהודי - אפשר לבקש אפילו מכה משותף וזה מצוי בהיסטוריה משותפת של עמים עתיקים. אך שי מדע אינם מתקשים למחוח את קו ההקבלה בין עמים קדומים כסין, הודו, ישראל ומצרים. משפטן הודי, שהשתתף ברבי-שיח, הביע, למשל, דעה, כי בעיני אסיאני היהדות והאיסלם הם תוצר אסיאני. האם לא נוצרו במערב. של היבשת הזאת?

משמע, יש בסיס איתן, שעליו אפשר לפתח את הרבי-שיח בין יהודים לאסיאנים. חקר העבר, שיצביע על ענין משותף, המנותק מן הפוליטיקה של ימינו. לשון אחר: ההיסטוריה היהודית עתיקה-היוסין מד ייבת תגובות וסיסמות עכשוויות.

כאן טמון הסיכוי המעניין ביותר. מי שראה בישראל מדינת מצורעים כדוגמת דרום-אפריקה, סיוואן, צ'ילה ואחרות, המסמשות מטרה לועמם של כל חסידיו "העולם השלישי", יוכל עתה לראות את ישראל אל באור אחר - כחברת-כבוד של קבוצת העמים העתיקים. בעיני אסיאניות זו בוודאי התאגדות מכובדת יותר ליחושלים. סין, למשל, כבר אותתה, כי אינה רואה פסול בקשרים מדעיים עם מדענים מישראל. היא מחייבת מגעים גם עם מוסדות יהודיים ונראה, שנושא התרבות הוא כלי-דכב נוח, שעליו אפשר להסיע גם "מוצרים" אחרים.

ישראל תצא נשכרת מכל אלה. אך על העוסקים ביחסי ישראל-אסיה להשכיל לנצל את הסיכוי תוך מתן סיוע לנף החדש, בלי לנסות לשלוט בו.

הנשיא ג'ון קנדי המנוח יזכר בהיסטוריה המדינית כמנהיג שידע להביא להפרייה הדדית בין אנשי מדינה ומדע. הצמד ויקסון-קיסינג'ר הביא אומנות זו לדרגת מיצוי עליונה. וגם אז היה יעדס סין העממית. אשר לו - קשה להצביע על מנהיגים בירושלים, ששיתפו פעולה עם מדענים ולא מן הנמנע, שדווקא אסיה תשמש קרקע פוריה לנסיון כזה.

באסיה אין יודעים הרבה על ישראל. הדבר נכון אפילו לגבי אותן מדינות, כמו יפאן, שבה יושבת נציגות ישראלית רשמית. אסיה אינה מתייחסת לישראל משום שאנו רחוקים מכדי לעורר ענין. יהודים, בתור שכאלה, מוכרים לאסיאנים. מוכרים דיים כדי שישמשו אפילו מוקד לאנטישמיות. זו אינה זקוקה אפילו לקהילה יהודית גדולה כדי שתפרוץ בארץ כמו יפאן.

ומי שמתייחס ליהודים ולמדינתם עושה זאת כאל גרורה מערבית. לומר, כאל נטע זר, שאינו מובן דיו. במונחים אסיאניים מה שאינו

## קבוצת מדענים יפאנים נגד האנטישמיות בארצם

מודאגים מהספר של מאסאמי אונו, אם אתה מבין את היהודים,  
אתה מבין את העולם כולו, שנמכר ביותר מ-600 אלף עותקים

### מאת שאול בן חיים,

שליח משיב' בהונגיקונג

רת של ישראל ויפאן. הוא מזכיר תיאור  
ריה ישנה כאילו היפאנים הם בעצם  
צאצאי עשרת השבטים ומצא הקבלות  
בין סיפור פרי המקרא לאגדות יפאניות.  
קונו ועמיתיו מסחישים כי האנטישמיות  
יובאה ליפאן מן המערב. כאשר תורגם  
המחזה "הסוחר מוונציה", קיבלוהו הי-  
פאנים כפשוטו.

העובדה שבוקאי יהודי מיסן את בניית  
הצי הרוסי במלחמת יפאן-רוסיה, נזקפה  
לרעת היהודים, שהוצגו ככוח הכלכלי  
הקובע בעולם. גם הקומוניזם הוצג כתר-  
היהודית.

אירס הנאצים בימי מלחמת העולם השני  
יה נקלט גם ביפאן, למרות שארץ זו נתנה  
אחר כך גם מקלט לנרדפי גרמניה הנא-  
צית. אחרי מלחמת ששת הימים היו אלה  
הערבים ותומכיהם ביפאן, שליבו רגשות  
אנטי-יהודיים.

הגל האחרון קשור אלי, כך סבורים משי-  
קיפים, להתמודדות הכלכלית של יפאן  
נגד ארצות הברית. כלומר - האנטישמיות  
ות התפרש כצעד נגד המערב והיהודים  
כמכוני הכלכלה.

עבודת המחקר של פרופ' קונו עסקה גם  
בשנאת זרים ביפאן, וכדוגמא הביא את  
גישתם השלילית של היפאנים כלפי המר-  
עוט הקוריאני היושב ביפאן.

קבוצת מדענים יפאנים, המשתתפים  
בו' שיח יהודי-אסיאי בהונגיקונג, הח-  
ליטו לפתוח במסע נגד גילויי אנטישמיות  
ות בארצם. אין להקל ראש במה שמתר-  
חש, אומר אקיפומי איקדה, קצין מחקר  
לענייני מזרח תיכון במכון לפיתוח הכלכלי  
לה בטוקיו. "אנו מנהלים כבר מגעים עם  
אחד העתונאים הגדולים שם, ומדווחים  
על הדאגה העמוקה שהובעה ברב-שיח".

המדובר בספר פריעטו של מאסאמי אונו  
-אם אתה מבין את היהודים, אתה מבין  
את העולם כולו". זהו כתב פלסתר אני-  
טישמי נוטף רעל, שנמכר כבר ביותר מ-  
600 אלף עותקים.

האנטישמיות ביפאן, שבה אין למעשה  
קבולה יהודית, הוא דבר חמור, קבע  
פרופ' קור יורם דינשטיין, אחד משני  
המארגלים את הרב שיח המדעי. המשי-  
תתפים היפאנים מסכימים עמו. יפאן וה-  
אנטישמיות גם שימשה נושא להרצאות  
תיהם המדעיות.

פרופ' טסטו קונו, שהוא גם דובר יידיש,  
שפה שלמד בניו יורק, והוא מתבל את  
משפטיו ב"אויזוויו", פירסם מחקר מע-  
מיק, המבקש להוכיח קשרים בין המסר

# יהודי בממשל הסיני משתתף ברב-שיח של הקונגרס היהודי

כרב שיח המדעי, הנפתח בהשתתפות אנשי מדע ומדינה מרוב ארצות אסיה, הוא ירצה על הנושא המעסיק אותו ברוב שנותיו במקיני ההיסטוריה של יהודי סין בקאונג.

ד"ר שפירא מספר, שאמצעי התקשורת בסין, המרבים לדווח גם חדשות בינלאומיות, עשירים קים לא אחת גם בנושאי המזרח-התיכון ויר שראל. הוא אינו עוסק בפוליטיקה, אך כשר הוא מדבר על המצב העכשווי במולדתו המ אומצת, הוא מדגיש את התהליך המתמשך של נסיונות לתקן עוולות.

לדוגמא, הוא מביא את בעיית המיחשוב בסין. עד-כא לא נמצאה דרך להכניס את השפה הסינית למחשב, כיוון שסין "מתחשבת" והולכת - משתמשים שם באנגלית, וזו הפיכה לשפה הזרה החשובה ביותר שהדור הצי עדין שוקד על לימודה. ואגב לימוד, באוניברסיטה של פקין לומדים גם עברית.

40 שנה בסין, לימדו אותי על הדמיון העצום בין שני העמים העתיקים - העם הסיני והיהודי - בשניהם חשיבות לתא המשפחתי, וזאת הערה חשובה. כשבאתי מניו יורק לסין, התלוצצתי שאני נמלט מצפירוניה של נסיכה יהודית-אמריקאית. הוא אמר, ועיניו נוצצות בשקבנות, נשאתי אשה סינית, והנה גיליתי שמרצא משפחתה ב... קאונג, הייתכן שבסופו של דבר, ולכדתי על ידי נסיכה סינית-יהודית?

## מאת שאול בן-חיים שליח "מעריב" מחזן קונג

ד"ר סידניו שפירא, או כפי שהוא נקרא בסין, שא בו לי, ישתתף מחו בר-שיח מדעי, הנערך בהוצ' קונג, על ידי הסניף האסיאני של הקונגרס היהודי העולמי.

זו הפעם הראשונה שד"ר שפירא, יהודי המתגורר בסין, בא לכנס כזה. הוא אינו מסתיר את שמחתו ואף התרגשותו, משום שגם הוא רואה בכך "סימן מעודד".

בראיון עמו הוא סיפר: "כאשר נתקבלה הזמנה של איזו ליבלר, נשיא הסניף האסיאני של הקונגרס היהודי, אושרה הנסיעה על ידי האקדמיה הסינית למדעים סוציאליים. עמיתי ציטטו הודיעה רשמית שקבעה, שאין כל מניעה למגישת אנשי מדע ותרבות סיניים עש אנשי מדע פגשוראל".

אך סידניו שפירא החי כבר 40 שנה בסין, חזר גם ימים קשיח בעת המהפכה התרבותית, ובראו לקונגרס הוא עוד סימן לתהפוכות העתים בסין.

5 שנים ברוח ל-מפעל-המיינעצה העליונה, מן הכולל אנשי מדע ותרבות מחוץ למיסד הלימודי הם פועלים במקביל לדיוני 3000 חברי הפרלמנט. מקבלים את הצעות הממשלה המונחות לפני הפרלמנט ויכולים להביע את דעתם עליהן.



**SPECIAL TO THE JTA  
EFFORT BY CHINESE ACADEMICS TO  
STUDY ZIONISM AND HEBREW TO BE  
AIDED BY GROUP OF AUSTRALIAN JEWS  
By David Landau**

HONG KONG, March 23 (JTA) -- The People's Republic of China has hinted that it would like its academics to study Hebrew and Zionism in Western universities, and a group of leading Australian Jews proposes to launch a foundation to facilitate this.

The hints were dropped during recent informal contacts between the Jewish activists and key Chinese academics who are also involved in the Beijing government policymaking.

The Australian Jews, led by tourism tycoon Isi Leibler of Melbourne, want to involve the World Jewish Congress in their effort. Leibler, who has travelled to Beijing at the head of an Australian Jewish delegation, believes that a serious cultural dialogue between the two peoples would contribute, in the longer term, to political normalization between the People's Republic and the Jewish people.

Top Chinese academics have indicated to Leibler and his associates that they are aware of, and concerned over, their country's profound unfamiliarity with Hebrew scholarship and Jewish affairs at the academic level. They expressed their active interest in sending young scholars abroad to attempt to fill this lacuna.

**A Step Toward Cultural Dialogue**

One small but symbolic step in the direction of cultural dialogue is the participation here this week of Chinese Jewish writer Sidney Shapiro in the Asian-Jewish colloquium, a biennial event organized by Leibler and his Australian Institute of Jewish Affairs.

Shapiro, an American who moved to China in 1947 and recently produced a book on the ancient Jewish community of Kai Feng, told the Jewish Telegraphic Agency that while he did not represent Beijing at the colloquium, his presence at the gathering was indeed intended as a goodwill gesture by China.

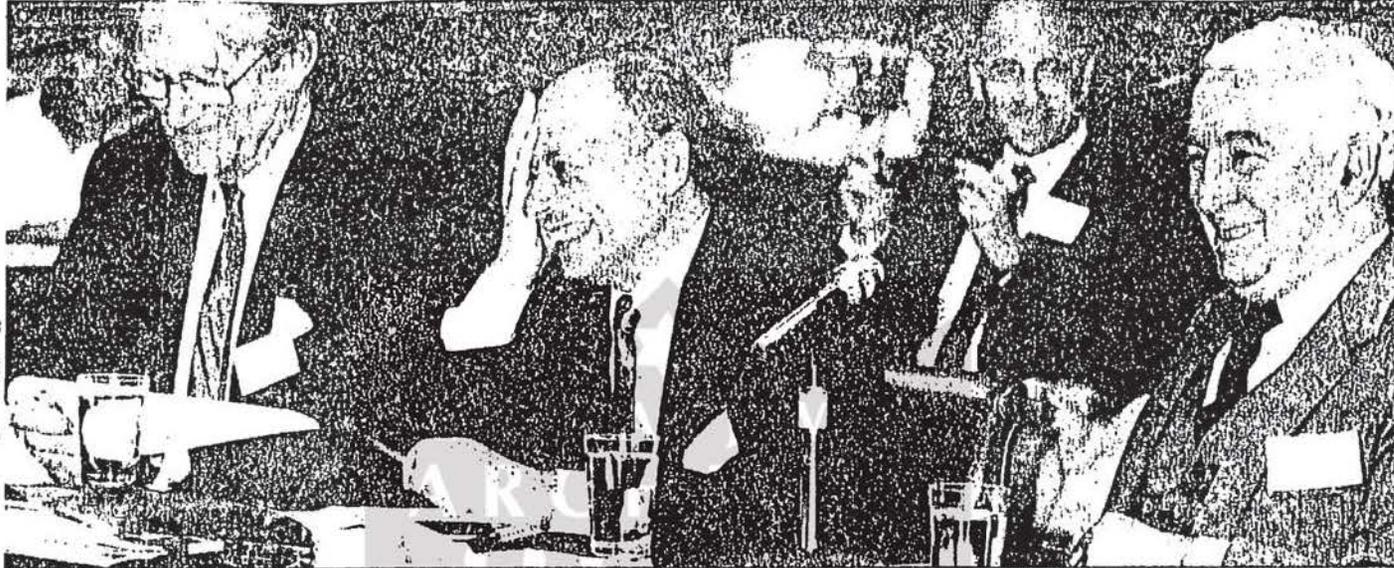
Meanwhile, Israel's top China-watcher Sunday appealed to Asian Jewish communities to help Israel by providing a framework for a preliminary dialogue with China and other regional states with which Israel has no formal relations.

**Areas Of Israel-China Cooperation**

Reuven Merhav, Consul-General in Hong Kong, told the Asia Pacific Jewish Association (APJA) that the Chinese recognize Jewish solidarity -- with world Jewry and with Israel. While a move towards diplomatic recognition was not imminent, Merhav said, there were niches where Israel and China would usefully trade and cooperate. He urged Jewish businessmen in this region to help Israel identify such niches.

Merhav charged that Israeli governments had neglected the vast and growing potential of Asia. Jerusalem should send out its best diplomats, he said, and they should buckle down to learn the realities of the region.

The APJA embraces a dozen small -- some tiny -- Jewish communities under the leadership of Australia.



At yesterday's meeting (from left): Former Australian Prime Minister Mr Malcolm Fraser, co-convenor of the meeting Mr Isi Leibler, and former Governor-General of Australia Sir Zelman Cowen.

## Japan's anti-Semitic wave condemned

By ZELDA CAWTHORNE

A BIZARRE form of anti-Semitism currently in vogue in Japan provoked blistering condemnation yesterday at the Second Asian-Jewish Colloquium being held in Hongkong.

"This is paranoia of the highest degree and I for one am not prepared to regard it as anything less than exceedingly dangerous," said co-convenor Professor Yoram Dinstein in reference to Japanese author Masami Uno whose latest best-seller, *If You Understand Jews You Can Understand The World*, has already been snapped up by nearly 600,000 Japanese.

Among other things, Uno — not the only Japanese writer propagating virulently anti-Semitic views, as revealed in the current issue of *Newsweek* — has written that

Jews caused the Great Depression of the 1930s and are currently plotting another one for 1990, that the scope of the killing of Jews in World War II was exaggerated, and that America is a "Jewish nation" whose major corporations are under the control of Jews.

Said Professor Dinstein, pro-rector of Tel Aviv University and former Israeli Consul in New York: "What I find mind-boggling is that this kind of thing has arisen in a country which has no indigenous Jews, past or present — that books by people like Mr Uno are being read by people who wouldn't know a Jew from a pink elephant.

"Unlike some, I don't believe this matter should be

swept under the carpet. It must be exposed and fought."

Former Australian Prime Minister Mr Malcolm Fraser said he had not previously been aware of Masami Uno and his ilk, but suggested their popularity might have its roots in causes other than racial.

Added Mr Fraser: "I would like to know, why now? Why the emphasis on Jews in the United States? Why have no other country's multinationals been mentioned (in Uno's book)? Can it in any way be seen as a reflection of the trade problems between the US and Japan?"

Others who joined the fray included professor of comparative religion Zvi Werblowsky, who called

Japan's anti-Semitism "a transmuted form" that was "totally alien and out of context with reality", and noted Indian writer Professor Ezekiel Nissim who suggested that some kind of international vigilance group be formed.

Also under fire at yesterday's forum was Malaysian Prime Minister Dr Mahathir Mohamad who caused international outrage last year when he repeatedly accused unnamed "Jewish-owned" foreign publications of attempting to destabilise Malaysia.

Political scientist Professor Michael Leifer, currently at the National University of Singapore, noted that while Dr Mahathir's "obsession" may have been politically ex-

pedient for a time, it was instructive to note that his political opponents found it equally useful to exploit the issue.

It was no coincidence that soon after, the Malaysian Prime Minister found his arguments were indefensible, added Professor Lerner.

On a different note, former Governor-General of Australia Sir Zelman Cowen cautioned against excessive uses of the law in cases of racial and group libels.

Sir Zelman said that in his capacity as chairman of the British Press Council, he had often encountered both sides of the argument — namely, that some found racial references irrelevant and prejudicial, while others argued that such references were unquestioned fact.

Wednesday, March 25, 1987 The Jerusalem Post

## Former Australian PM

# Palestinian status quo may be preferable

By DAVID LANDAU

Jerusalem Post Correspondent  
HONGKONG. - Former Australian prime minister Malcom Fraser suggested here yesterday that since a solution to the Palestinian problem would involve for Israel a sacrifice of either its democracy or its Jewishness, or its security - "it might be as well to carry on" with the present situation.

Fraser was speaking at the "Asian-Jewish Colloquium," a gathering of intellectuals and public figures which ended last night.

A liberal who was premier from 1975 to 1983, Fraser appeared to be responding obliquely to the present-day Australian leader, socialist Bob Hawke, who recently recommended negotiations between Israel and the PLO.

The Israeli-Palestinian issue was raised at the colloquium by another eminent Australian, Sir Zelman

Cowen, former governor-general (1977-82). In a discussion on "national identity," Cowen observed that Israel "may be unique" in having a significant national minority in its midst "that will not fight for it."

Earlier, the lone Chinese participant at the colloquium, Prof. Sidney Shapiro, agreed to serve on the steering committee which has been formed to plan the next session, in two years' time. The Australian Jewish organizers of the parley saw this as another small but significant sign that the authorities in Peking favour an ongoing cultural dialogue with the Jewish world.

Shapiro delivered a paper recalling the research that went into his book *Jews in Old China: Studies by Chinese Scholars* (which was published in 1984 in New York). He said that after the Cultural Revolution the Peking government actively encour-

aged such quests for scholarly knowledge.

Beyond his prepared paper, Shapiro remained silent during the colloquium's formal proceedings, though he mingled freely with the delegates in informal, social settings.

One focus of the deliberations was a current upsurge of anti-Semitism in Japan. A book entitled *If You Understand the Jews You Can Comprehend the World* has reportedly sold close to 600,000 copies, and is one of several hate-treatises resurrecting the hoary calumnies of Jewish world-domination.

A Japanese participant at the colloquium, Prof. Akifumi Ikeda of the Tokyo Institute of Developing Economies, warned that the phenomenon was too ominous to be dismissed as mere passing fad. He urged academics in this own country and in the region to speak out firmly against this form of venal racism.

SOUTH CHINA MORNING POST

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 25, 1987

## Academic critical of Japanese

By ZELDA  
CAWTHORNE

DISCRIMINATION in Japan against its 700,000-strong Korean community and other minority groups was vehemently denounced yesterday by one of the country's leading academics.

Professor of English at Hosei University, Tetsu Kohno, told the second Asian-Jewish Colloquium in Hong-kong:

"The Japanese are crazy about Korean ceramics and porcelains, but this does not lead to respect of Korean residents in Japan.

"However indistinguishable from the Japanese in looks, however well-behaved or intelligent, they must register as aliens and be fingerprinted for police use."

A Japanese national born to a Korean father and a Japanese mother, Professor Kohno said that because of discrimination, many Koreans - even after four generations in Japan - still felt compelled to maintain ties with their own country.

Ironically, members of Japan's growing "diaspora" - particularly the children of foreign-based businessmen - were also coming in for rough treatment, Professor Kohno said.

"When they return to enter high school or sit for college-entrance exams, their peer group in Japan classifies them in one of three ways: non-Japanese, abnormal Japanese and passable Japanese."

In reply, Professor Takeshi Muramatsu, dean of the College of Comparative Culture at Tsukuba University, said that while he sympathised with Professor Kohno's views and would like to see a positive approach to the problems faced by foreign groups, he felt that "no nation or people are No 1 - and we are a bit more complex than a baseball team."

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 25, 1987

SOUTH CHINA MORNING POST

## Beijing, Tel Aviv ties thaw

TEL AVIV: Israel Radio has quoted China's ambassador to France as saying Israeli scientists and specialists were being allowed to attend international meetings in China in spite of a lack of diplomatic relations between the two countries.

Such a statement could be Beijing's first indication of Chinese contacts with Israel. They have never had diplomatic ties, but press reports have revealed close secret military and commercial ties and a warming relationship.

China's gesture to Israel is not unique, observers said, as the South Korean Government has already been sending its officials to China to attend international meetings. Reciprocal sports meetings have also been taking place in the two countries while China was fully represented at the Asian Games last year and intends to participate at the Olympics in Seoul next year.

The Chinese Ambassador to France, Mr Zhou Jue, was quoted as telling the radio's Paris correspondent that China drew a distinction between ties with the Israeli people and Israel's Government.

He was quoted as saying China supports an international peace conference on the Middle East and demands Israel withdraw from the occupied West Bank and Gaza captured from Arab control in 1967.

In Paris, a spokesman for the Chinese ambassador could not be reached immediately for comment on the radio report.

-Reuter.

## THE SECOND ASIAN-JEWISH COLLOQUIUM

26 March, 1987

### NEWS RELEASE

HONG KONG: The recent emergence of anti-Semitism in Japan and Malaysia, two countries with no tradition of significant Jewish settlement or anti-Jewish prejudice, came under review this week at the Second Asian-Jewish Colloquium.

The Colloquium, a forum of leading Asian and Jewish scholars, met in Hong Kong only days after Newsweek magazine reported on the recent spread of anti-Semitic books and magazines in Japan. The publications blamed Jews for Japan's economic problems, alleged that Jews run the United States, and that having been responsible for the 1930s depression, will create another depression in the early 1990s.

Professor Yoram Dinstein, Pro-Rector of Tel-Aviv University and one of the Colloquium convenors, said he found the expressions of anti-Semitism in Japan both mystifying and disturbing. While he agreed with the views of other Colloquium participants that anti-Semitism in Japan was different to the historical anti-Semitism of Europe and the West, it was nonetheless a dangerous phenomenon.

The recent attacks on Jews in Israel by the Malaysian Prime Minister, Dr. Mahatir, also came under criticism.

Professor Michael Leifer, Visiting Professor at the University of Singapore, said that although Dr. Mahatir had directed his anti-Semitic remarks towards Islamic elements in Malaysia's political system, there was evidence to suggest that he had been influenced by anti-Semitic publications originating in the United States. These publications emphasised "the international Jewish conspiracy" and "the power" of Jews to control and manipulate the news media.

Issues of racial prejudice, treatment of minorities and cultural stereotypes were the main themes of the two-day Colloquium which attracted more than thirty distinguished international scholars from a dozen countries in Asia as well as from Israel, the United States, Australia and Europe.

Professor Tetsu Kohno, Professor of English at Hosei University, Japan, described the continuing prejudice and discrimination against the Korean community and other minority groups in Japan. "However indistinguishable from the Japanese in looks, however well-behaved or intelligent, Japanese of Korean origin must register as aliens and be finger-printed for police use."

.../cont'd

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Asian-Jewish Colloquium  
Press Release: Hong Kong, 26 March 1987

Pge 2

Professor Kohno, a Japanese national born to a Korean father and a Japanese mother, speaks Yiddish and Hebrew, which he picked up during his studies at Columbia University, New York. He quoted from a children's song by the Yiddish writer I.L. Peretz which declares that "colour does not matter, black and white and brown are all the same".

This was not true in Japan, Professor Kohno said, because many Koreans, even after their families had lived four generations in Japan, were still not accepted and maintained ties with Korea. Unfortunately they were not fully accepted there either.

In response, Professor Takeshi Muramatsu, of Tsukuba University, Japan, said that although sympathetic to Professor Kohno's views, no nation or people was free of racial prejudice. "We are a bit more complex than a baseball team", Professor Kohno said.

The treatment of Israel's Arab minority was raised by the Israeli Parliamentarian Micah Harish, M.K., who discussed the problems associated with Israel's Arab citizens facing Army service. The compromise of not compelling Arabs to serve in the Israeli Army was not a completely satisfactory solution but the only workable one in the present circumstances. Sir Zelman Cowen, former Governor-General of Australia and now Provost at Oriel College, Oxford, raised the question of how such a situation could be allowed to go on indefinitely without Israel creating a significant problem of internal alienation for its largest minority group.

The Colloquium concluded with a farewell dinner at which Ram Jethmalani, a leading Advocate and constitutional lawyer from New Delhi, made an eloquent appeal to his fellow delegates from Asia to join the Jewish representatives present in support of Israel.

Ends

# Chinese Jewish official at Asian-Jewish Colloquium

By DAVID LANDAU  
Jerusalem Post Correspondent

HONGKONG. — The man who is now perhaps the only Jewish citizen of China — and is certainly Peking's only Jewish official — was in Hongkong this week to attend the second Asian-Jewish Colloquium.

Prof. Sha Boli, or Sidney Shapiro as he was formerly known, is a New York-born linguist and translator who has lived in China since 1947. He is a member of the Chinese Writers Association and the Chinese People's Political Consultative Council, China's highest national advisory body.

His advent here to attend the colloquium is regarded as a favourable gesture by Peking towards the colloquium which is jointly sponsored by the World Jewish Congress and the Asia

Pacific Jewish Association.

There are six delegates from Israel, among them MK Micha Harish. Colloquium organizers Isi Liebler and Sam Lipski of Australia were plainly elated that Sha/Shapiro had come. They said his participation had been arranged by Dr. Li Shenzhi, vice-president of the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences.

Sha/Shapiro, 77, studied Chinese at Cornell, Columbia and Yale universities in the U.S. before deciding to make his life in the fledgling People's Republic. Today, he is a noted translator and writer.

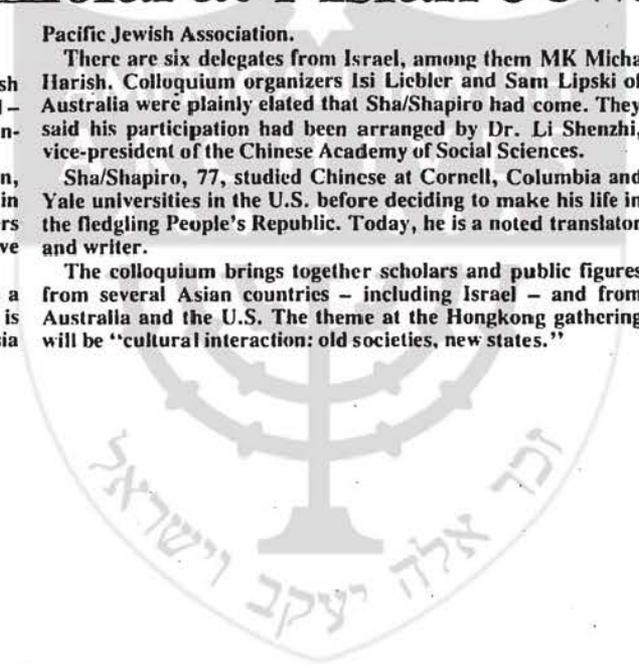
The colloquium brings together scholars and public figures from several Asian countries — including Israel — and from Australia and the U.S. The theme at the Hongkong gathering will be "cultural interaction: old societies, new states."

Well-placed China-watchers, meanwhile, report a slow but discernible and steady diminution in the stridency of China's public hostility towards Israel.

These observers say a careful analysis of China's UN performance over recent months shows "that Peking no longer automatically jumps to the lead in denigrating or condemning Israel."

Especially significant in this context was China's decision last autumn not to attach its name to the list of states seeking to challenge Israel's credentials to the General Assembly.

These observers, stationed in Hongkong, feel that diligent efforts by Israel to pinpoint areas of common interest will result, over a period of five to seven years (if present trends in China continue) in significant progress towards real normalization of relations.



# AUSTRALIAN JEWISH TIMES

EDITOR: SUSAN BURES

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## Jewish identity in Asian region

*In the past few years, pronouncements by Malaysian Prime Minister Dr Mahatir and other members of his government against Israel and the Jewish people have become frequent and vociferous.*

A visit to Malaysia by the New York Philharmonic Orchestra was cancelled because it intended to play music by Jewish composers.

The attacks on President Herzog's visit last year to Singapore went beyond criticism of Israel to crude denunciation of Jews and alleged Jewish influence.

Dr Mahatir has claimed that there is an international Jewish conspiracy directed against Malaysia and more specifically, that the international press and especially the Asian Wall Street Journal, the editor of which happens to be a Jew, is dominated by Jews aiming to undermine the stability of Malaysia.

The Malaysian government has thus become the only one in the Asian Pacific region to act and react in this way.

The Australian Jewish community has made its views known to the Australian government on this issue and this week in Hong Kong it has been joined by smaller Jewish communities in the region who through the Asia Pacific Jewish Association (APJA) have now made the issue of Malaysia a joint concern.

*The growing sense of regional Asia-Pacific Jewish identity is both strengthened and expressed by the APJA resolution condemning Malaysian government anti-Semitism.*

In both its elements it is, therefore, a significant step for the APJA, and for the smaller Jewish communities of the region, also a brave one as some are in countries where the democratic freedoms we expect and accept in Australia are diluted.

The sense of true regionalism, one of the palpable outcomes of this APJA conference, has helped support the stand taken on Malaysia.

Anti-Semitism wherever it occurs is unpalatable; when it occurs in a region where tolerance has been the norm it is the more unacceptable.

*The APJA resolution thus focuses on a new element in Asian political culture and one which rightfully demands condemnation.*

# Sam Lipski — PARTISAN



As someone involved with the Asia Pacific Jewish Association I do not pretend to be objective about its role in bringing together the scattered Jewish communities of this vast and varied region. But I think that anyone who cares about Jewish life in all its many splendored richness, diversity and plurality, not to mention its often farcical divisiveness, petty acrimony and plain akshness would have to be stirred at the sight of delegates from a dozen and more small communities sitting around the same table in Hong Kong and talking about the same, yet different, problems. How to maintain Jewish identity when there is barely a minyan? Or when there is a minyan but only a hundred or two hundred families, as in Hong Kong, or Bangkok or Singapore? Or when the community is larger, as in New Zealand, but you have ended up with a Jewish day-school where there are twice as many non-Jewish students as there are Jews? What do you do to encourage barmitzva boys and batmitzva girls to go on with their Jewish studies? Do you import shlichim from Israel, Australia, the United States? Or do you try to train your own by sending them to Israel? And what about the religious questions of brit milah, mikvah, a Jewish cemetery, conversion, someone to be chazan on Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur? If you live in Manila and want to have kosher meat for Pesach, and if you are the colorful Ezra Toeg, one of the com-

munity leaders of Philippine's Jewry, you send a telex to Michael Cohen, APJA's executive director, asking him to confirm when the travelling shochet from Australia will be coming so that he "can get the cows ready". (That's what the telex said.) In Hong Kong you fly in kosher Empire chickens and ducks from the United States along with wine from Israel. But what if you are one of two Jews in Sri Lanka? Or a dozen in Papua New Guinea?

Talking of food, as I often do, visitors to Hong Kong are missing out, in more ways than one, if they do not pay a visit to the Jewish Recreation Centre in Robinson Road to sample some of the first-rate meals they serve in the centre's restaurant. The Sephardic shule is, of course, the centre's main attraction, and even I would not promote the kitchen ahead of it. But unfortunately the shule is on the Hong Kong side and for those who stay on the Kowloon side, and do not travel on Shabbat, it is a problem. But whether you can get to the shule on Shabbat or not, if you want to see it, and at the same time have an excellent meal from a menu combining Sephardi, Chinese, and European styles, all kosher under strict supervision, then Robinson Road is a must. If you get to see the marvellous looking Chinese chef, who was nearly driven frantic until he grasped the do's and don'ts of kashrut, you will see a man who is a walking advertisement for his

culinary skills. In coming to the centre you will not only eat well, you will also have an opportunity to learn something about a most interesting Asian Jewish community, currently experiencing a few stresses and strains as a result of trying to cope with some internal competition for what one leader of the community pointedly called "market share".

The problem is that the competition is not for rice futures but for Jewish posteriors on pews. In polite circles this is better described as competition for neshomehs, souls: in this case between Lubavitch, the Yoineh-come-latelys and the established community. The community's rabbi is Orthodox but not Lubavitch. But he replaced the previous rabbi whose contract was not renewed and who was Lubavitch, and still is, Lubavitch, that is, and in Hong Kong. Lubavitch runs a minyan at Hong Kong Hilton; the community davens at the shule. This is not quite the joke about two Jews, three shules, but it's getting close. I'm waiting for the Belzer Rebbe, with his emphasis on computerisation, to discover Hong Kong Jewry, all 250 families, and set up at the Mandarin. Who knows, maybe Satmer will get into the act with a minyan at the Peninsula. Then the Belzer Rebbe and the Lubavitcher Rebbe and, dare one say, the Satmerer Rebbe can hold a summit at the Regent and divide up the territory between them. What worries me, however, is

whether Deng Xiaoping has heard about all of this and where, if forced to choose in a three-way contest between Belz and Lubavitch, he would end up. My guess is that since the venerable Deng cannot any longer proclaim reform, does not want to be labelled conservative, and cannot afford to be just orthodox, he would go for the exotica and give Chabad sole neshomeh collection rights for 50 years after 1997.

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Sidney Shapiro, the former New York lawyer who went to China 40 years ago and stayed for the revolution and all that followed, has a story to tell which, for once, deserves the description "fascinating". He has been telling some of it this week in Hong Kong, where he has been a guest of the Asian Jewish Colloquium. He can claim many unique distinctions: the only New York Jew to travel on a Chinese passport and the only member of the Chinese Consultative People's Assembly to have had a barmitzva. But whatever changes he has undergone, some things remain the same. When he was interviewed by the reporter for the South China Morning Post, Zelda Cawthorne (formerly Zelda Pakula of Melbourne) he told the story of how he had married his Chinese wife and had had a son and a daughter — "both doctors", he noted as he went on to talk of his granddaughter. I wonder — how do you say "my son and daughter, the doctors" in Mandarin?

# Malaysian anti-Semitism condemned

**HONG KONG: The Asia Pacific Jewish Association (APJA) has condemned "in the strongest terms" expressions of anti-Semitism by Malaysia.**

# condemned

**BY SUSAN BURES**

In a hard-hitting resolution it expressed "outrage at the attacks on Israel, Jews and Judaism made in recent months by the Malaysian government and prime minister".

APJA representatives condemned these statements "in the strongest terms" and were "confident that all people of goodwill in our region join us in deploring such expressions of religious and racial intolerance".

More than 20 representatives of 12 communities in the Asia Pacific region were delegates at the one-day conference last Sunday.

The APJA conference preceded the Second Asian-Jewish Colloquium held here on Monday and Tuesday.

Other issues of importance resolved by the APJA were

- investigation of reports that there is an active synagogue in Burma;
- publication of a Jewish traveller's guide to the region;
- arrangements for groups of children from Asian and Pacific Jewish communities to visit Israel, aided by scholarships where necessary, with a preferred goal of a year's stay for each child.

The small communities were anxious that a scheme be established whereby Jewish students from Australia, the United States and other major countries spend a year in the smaller communities on voluntary service.

The concept was expressed as a kind of "Jewish peace corps".

These students would be "Jewishly educated" and would volunteer their efforts for at least one year.

Any student wishing to pursue Asian studies at universities in these small communities would also be helped by the communities

possibility to give whatever assistance it could.

Hong Kong community president Robert Dorfman said the APJA and its activities can ensure a "better quality of Jewish life for our communities" if they work and plan together.

This sentiment was echoed by APJA president Leslie Caplan, who said the small communities should be encouraged to work together as well as with larger communities, such as that of Australia.

Hebrew University Professor Zwi Werblowski said the APJA initiatives had arisen from the imagina-

## Asia Pacific Jewish Association meeting

in return for some form of voluntary service.

Asia Pacific Jewish Association chairman Isi Leibler said in his opening remarks at a dinner hosted by the Hong Kong Jewish community that he did not expect the small Jewish communities of the region to survive past the next generation.

However, he said where there was "even a single Jew", the APJA had a res-

tion to see the problem of a vast area with a vast diversity of cultures and small Jewish communities.

There should be a continuity of this initiative to offset the problems of their being "rotating communities" without the "accumulated mass of Jewish history and community experience" of settled communities.



• Prof Zwi Werblowski

# היהודי שלנו בפקינג

בסין יש קהילה יהודית של איש אחד: סידני שפירא, פרופסור בן 72, חבר מועצת העם והאקדמיה הסינית למדעי החברה. לאחרונה התירו לו השלטונות להשתתף בסמינר יהודי בהונג קונג. מומחים אומרים, שמדובר בפריצת דרך

ותרגומים. השלטונות רואים כי מומחה זר על אף אורחותי הסינית, והודות לכך אני רשאי להחזיק את מחצית משכורתי במטבע זר".  
שפירא מוסיף בחיך ונצנוץ בעיניו, "כמו כל היהודים הטובים, אני מצליח להפיק את הטוב ביותר משני העולמות".  
בעת מהפכת התרבות היתה המשפחה בצרות. אישתו הוכנסה תחילה למעצר בית ואחרייכן נשלחה למחנה לשם חינוך מחדש.

כיום חור המצב לגורמליות והחיים היומיומיים השתפרו מאד. בשוק האיכרים אפשר להשיג ספע של פירות וירקות טריים. המחירים גבוהים קצת יותר מאשר בתנויות הממשלתיות, אבל הסחורה שווה את ההוצאה הנוספת: האוכל טרי ואין תורים".

## סבא יהודי טיפוסי

בתו, רופאה, נשואה לרופא, ויש להם בת. שפירא הוא סבא יהודי טיפוסי, אבל הוא ממנהר להסביר: "בנידון זה הסינים הם כמונו. הערכים המשפחתיים חשובים להם מאד וברוך כלל נשמרים היטב".

האם יודעים עמיתו שהוא יהודי ומה משמעות הדבר לגביהם?

"ברור כי עמיתי החוקרים באקדמיה למדעים יודעים את הכל על היהדות, ואלה העוסקים בהיסטוריה יהודית בסין מתמצאים היטב ככל ההיסטרים של היהדות.

"לגבי האדם ברחוב, ואפילו הוא רופא, עורך דין או פקיד בכיר, היהדות היא חסרת כל משמעות. במשך שנים הופתעתי שוב ושוב כל אימת שאמרת שאני יהודי ואנשי שיחי השיבו: כן, אבל לאיזה זרם אתה שייך - הקתולי, האוונגלי או הפרסביטריאני? לגביהם לא היתה למונח יהודי כל משמעות, חוץ מאשר השתייכות לעולם המערבי, הנוצרי".

הסיני הממוצע יודע ושומע מעט מאד, אם בכלל, על ישראל. יש התעניינות מועטה בסין בענייני המזרח התיכון. לסינים יש מספיק בעיות משלהם, במרינה שגורלה כגודל יבשת שלמה. גם חרשות החוץ מתרכזות בעיקר סביב המתרחש במוסקבה או בוושינגטון. שאר ארצות תבל נידאות כפרובינציאליות זעירות בהשוואה לעוצמת ממריה של סין. רק בתקופות של משברים חמורים, כמו מלחמת מפרסמים העיתונים והטלוויזיה ידיעות מן המזרח התיכון. לגביהם התמונה ברורה: ישראל האימפריאליסטית נלחמת נגד הערבים הלוחמים למען עצמאותם".



■ שפירא, שמחד להתאהב ב"נסיכה יהודיה", התחתן לבסוף עם מהפכנית סינית. בתצלום: שפירא ומשפחתו

"YEDIOT", MARCH 27TH, 1987.

הנראה כגשר מתקפל, ואחרי הארוחות אנתנו מסלקים אותו ויושבים אל שולחנות הכתיבה שלנו הניצבים זה מול זה, עם מכשיר הטלפון באמצע. יש לנו הסקה מרכזית ומקרר חשמלי גדול למדי, אשר אותו אנתנו מחזיקים במסדרון בקירבת חדר השינה שלנו, אף שהוא לפעמים עושה רעש. קרוב לוודאי שיכולנו להרשות לעצמנו לרכוש מכונת, אבל זו טרחה רבה מדי והדבר אינו שווה את הכסף. גם אשתי וגם אני פרשנו לגימלאות, אבל אנתנו עדיין עובדים: כותבים מאמרים, ספרים

הנעשה בסין, מדגישים כי הסינים לעולם אינם עושים דבר ללא סיבה טובה.

שפירא עצמו מתבטא בזהירות מרובה יותר. במהלך שיחותיו עם נשיא האגודה היהודית של אסיה האוקיאנוס השקט, איסי לייבלר, עם הקונסול הכללי הישראלי בהונג קונג ראובן מרחב, עם ח"כ מיכה חריש ועם אחרים ממשלתפי הוועידה, הזהיר שפירא בפירוש, כי בתחום הפוליטי והדיפלומטי אין לצפות לפריצת דרך רצינית, כל עוד אין ישראל מגיעה לכלל הסכם שלום עם כל הערבים, לרבות הפלשתינים.

כאשר משתתפי הסמינר לחצו עליו בשאלות, כמו: מה אנתנו יכולים לעשות כדי לשפר את היחסים עם פקיסג' הדיגיש שפירא חוזר והדיגש, כי ישראל יכולה לשפר את יחסי הסחר הדיסקרטיים עם סין, את קשרי התרבות ואת שיתוף הפעולה הטכני. אבל בתחום הדיפלומטי אין לצפות לכל שינוי של ממש עד אשר יושג שלום עם הערבים.

בניגוד לסברותיהם של רבים ממשתתפי הסמינר, אין שפירא שותף לטודות-מדינה חשובים ולתהליכים של קבלת החלטות פוליטיות בסין. אולם הוא חי בסין זמן ממושך די הצורך כדי לחוש את הרושם, להרגיש את מצב-הרוח הפוליטי ולהבחין אם חל שינוי בכיוון שאליו מנסבת הרוח.

הוא הגיע לסין ב-1942 לאחר שלמד את הלשון הסינית באוניברסיטאות ייל וקורנל, במיסגרת משימה מיוחדת שהוטלה עליו על ידי הצבא האמריקני. אחרי המלחמה חיפשתי משהו חדש, אתגר כלשהו. הייתי עורך-דין ומשפטן, והדבר שרציתי להימנע ממנו בכל מחיר היה - חיי פרקליט יהודי בברוקלין, הנשוי לנסיכה יהודיה נאה שנבחרה למענו על ידי אימו, ושכל תלומה הוא לקנות מכונת גדולה יותר ובית גדול יותר.

הוא הגיע לשאנחאי עם 200 דולר בכיסו והתחיל לעבוד כעורך דין בשירות חברות אמריקניות שהיו עדיין נוכחות בעיר. אולם היה זה סופו של עידן בסין: כוחותיו של המרשל צ'אנג קאי שק היו נכסיה מלאה וצבאו המהפכני של מאו עמד לכבוש את המדינה כולה.

שפירא, אשר רצה להימנע מלשאת נערה יהודיה נאה, התאהב במהפכנית סינית יפה, פנגזי, שהיא כיום רעייתו. פנגזי היתה שחקנית, מבקרת תיאטרון וגם עיתונאית, שעבדה בעיתון מחתרתי קומוניסטי. הוא ברח יחד עימה משנחאי. לאחר נידודים רבים התיישבו לבסוף בפקינג.

### עצרו את אשתו

במשך קרוב לארבעים שנה עבד כסופר ומתרגם. נבחר לאקדמיה הסינית למדעי החברה ולמועצת העם הפוליטית המייעצת - מעין בית לורדים בן 2000 חברים, המתכנס פעמיים לשנה. הוא אורח סיני מאז 1963 ומנהל חיים נוחים, אך תנאי חייו רחוקים מאד מאלה של דרגי השלטון העליונים.

יש לנו בית נאה ונוח יחסית ליד אגם בעיר הפנימית בפקינג. יש בו סרקלין גדול למדי, שבו אנתנו גם אוכלים את ארוחותינו והמשמש גם כחדר-עבודה לאשתי ולי. אנתנו אוכלים על שולחן

### מאת אדווין איתן, הונג קונג

אחת השאלות הראשונות שסאל אותי שא בולי, פרופסור סיני מכובד בן 72, כאשר נפגשנו השבוע בהונג קונג, היתה: האם אתה מכיר מסעדה יהודית טובה בסביבה מעדינה? אני מת לאכול כבר קצוק, מלפפון כבוש וכריך פטרמאי.

פרופ' שא בולי הוא אקדמאי סיני בלתי שיגורתי. שמו האמיתי הוא סידני שפירא, יליד ניר-יוק. בשערו הלבן והמסופח ומשקפי המתכת שלו אפשר היה לחשוב אותו בנקל לפרופסור אמריקני, לולא חליפת הכותנה הכחולה שלו לפי הסיגנון הסיני, שאותה הוא נוהג ללבוש באירועים רשמיים. הוא אחר מחצי תריסר יהודים זרים החיים זה ארבעים שנה בסין.

### מדוע התמוגג

למעשה, סיפר לי, אני משער כי פרט לישראל אפשטיין (יהודי אמריקני יליד וורשה, אשר הוציא לאור במשך שנים רבות את העיתון בלשון האנגלית "סין המשוקמת") אני היחיד שנותר בחיים מן הקבוצה המקורית.

במשך תקופה ארוכה חי בפקינג אדם אחר בשם שפירא, גם הוא סופר, אבל הוא מת לפני חודשים אחרים. כהן בעל שני האקדחים, יהודי בריטי אשר שירת כסומר ראש של מאו ונהג באורח מסורתית להחזיק שני אקדחים תחת בית שחיו, מת גם הוא לפני שנים מספר.

כיום אני למעשה קהילה יהודית בת איש אחד בפקינג, אם לא מביאים בחשבון אנשי עסקים דיפלומטים הבאים לביקור, אומר סידני שפירא. רק לעתים רחוקות הוא נפגש עם מבקרים כאלה, באירועים חברתיים ולפעמים אפילו בסדרים.

אפשר כי מצב זה של העדר המגע עם יהודים מסכי מדוע הפיק פרופסור סידני שפירא, שא בולי, הנאה כה רבה מן ההשתתפות בסמינר היהודי האסייתי מטעם האגודה היהודית של אסיה והאוקיאנוס השקט? שהתכנס בהונג-קונג; מדוע התמוגג כל כך מן הפגישות עם עסקנים יהודיים והתחככות עם נציגים ישראליים, ומדוע היה כה להוט לאכול לפחות ארוחה יהודית טובה אחת?

בהונג-קונג, אכן מצאתי מעדינה יהודית ג'יפוסית, ב'וורלי', השייכת לישראלי ושמו טרי פיאסטנוביץ, כיום תושב תל-אביב. המסעדה היתה מלאה כדי מחציתה באנשי עסקים סיניים ששתו יין כרמל" ואכלו חומוס וטחינה. שא בולי, אשר לא שמע כפי הנראה על האוכל המזרחי המקובל כיום בישראל, התבונן סביבו בתימהון. אינך רוצה לספר לי כי גם זה מעדן יהודי? מעולם לא שמעתי על זה.

עצם העובדה שפרופ' שפירא בא להשתתף בסמינר היהודי האסייתי התפרשה על ידי מומחים כפריצת-דרך, במסדרונות הוועידה-התהלכו שמועות בקרב הצירים: אם השלטונות הסיניים הירשו לו לבוא ואפילו נתנו את ברכתם להשתתפות, כנראה שיש לרבר משמעות דיפלומטית רצינית. יהודים אלה, העוקבים אחרי

T R A N S L A T I O N

YEDIOT ACHRONOT

27 MARCH, 1987

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One of the first questions which Sha Boli, a respectable Chinese Professor, aged 72, asked me when we met this week in Hong Kong was "Do you know a good Jewish delicatessen? I'm dying to eat chopped liver with a pickle and a pastrami sandwich". Professor Sha Boli is an unusual Chinese academic. His real name is Sidney Shapiro a native of New York, his white hair is well groomed and he wears metallic glasses. One could easily think of him as an American Professor were it not for his blue cotton suit in Chinese style which he used to wear in his official capacity. He is one of the half dozen foreign Jews who have been living in China for the past forty years.

What caused him to talk?

He told me: "Besides Israel Epstein, an American Jewish native of Warsaw who, for many years, edited the English language newspaper China Reconstructed, I am the only one who remained alive from the original group. For a long time a man by the name of Shapiro, also a writer, lived in Beijing but he died a few months ago.

Cohen, "the man with two pistols", a British Jew who was Mao's bodyguard and used to carry traditionally two pistols under his arms, also died a few years ago. By now I am actually the Jewish Community of one in Beijing if you don't take into account business people and diplomats who come visiting", says Sidney Shapiro. Seldom does he meet such visitors at social functions and sometimes even at a Pesach Seder. Possibly the lack of contact with Jews explains why Professor Shapiro, Sha Boli, derived such pleasure from participating at the Asian Jewish Colloquium convened in Hong Kong by the World Jewish Congress Asia Pacific Region.

Why did he so much enjoy meeting Jewish leaders and Israeli representatives and why was he so keen to eat at least one good Jewish meal?

In Hong Kong I found a typical Jewish delicatessen, Beverly, that belongs to an Israeli, Teddy Piapantowicz.

The restaurant was half full with Chinese business people who drank Carmel wine and ate Houmous and Techina.

Sha Boli who had never heard of oriental food which is today customary in Israel, looked around in amazement.

"Do you mean to say this is also a Jewish delicatessen? I never heard of such a thing", he said.

T R A N S L A T I O N

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The fact of the matter is that Professor Shapiro's participation at the Asian Jewish Colloquium was interpreted by experts as a breakthrough.

In the conference corridors rumours were circulating amongst the delegates that if the Chinese authorities permitted him to come and even granted their blessings for his participation it seems we can read senior diplomatic implications into these events.

Jewish observers who follow what goes on in China feel the Chinese never do anything without good reason.

Shapiro himself, during his conversation with the President of the Asia Pacific Region of the World Jewish Congress, Isi Leibler; Israeli Consul General in Hong Kong, Reuven Merhav; Member of the Knesset, Micha Harish; and other participants of the conference, expressly cautioned that in the political and diplomatic field you cannot expect a breakthrough "as long as Israel does not reach a peace agreement with all the Arabs and particularly with the Palestinians". When the participants posed questions such as: "What can we do to improve relations with Beijing?" Shapiro emphasised repeatedly that Israel can improve trade relations with China, cultural contact and technical co-operation but on the diplomatic arena one cannot expect a real change till peace is reached with the Arabs.

Contrary to the opinion of many participants of the seminar Shapiro is not a party to important state secrets and to making political decisions in China but he has been living in China long enough to feel the pulse, the political climate and to notice changes in the way the wind blows.

He arrived in China in 1947 after studying Chinese at Yale and Cornell, a special task allotted to him by the American Army. "After the war I was looking for something new, a challenge. I was a lawyer and a jurist and the thing I wanted to avoid at all cost was the life of a Jewish lawyer in Brooklyn married to a Jewish American princess, picked for me by my mother and whose life would be to buy a bigger car and a bigger house."

He arrived in Shanghai with \$200 in his pocket and began working as a solicitor for American companies which still operated in the city.

But that was already the end of that China. The forces of Marshall Chiang Kai Chek were in full retreat and Mao's revolutionary army was about to conquer the whole country.

T R A N S L A T I O N

YEDIOT ACHRONOT

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Shapiro fell in love with a beautiful Chinese revolutionary, Pergazi, who is today his wife.

Pergazi was an actress, a theatre critic and also a journalist who worked for an underground communist paper.

He ran away with her from Shanghai and after many wanderings they settled finally in Beijing.

His wife detained:

During close to forty years he worked as a writer, interpreter and was elected to the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences and to the Chinese People's Political Consultative Council, something akin to the House of Lords, which has two thousand members and meets twice a year.

He has been a Chinese citizen since 1963 and leads a comfortable life but his lifestyle is far from that of the ruling upper ranks.

"We have a nice comfortable house by the lake inside the city of Beijing.

There is a big living room where we also eat our meals. As well it serves as a study for my wife and myself.

We eat on a table which has folding legs and after the meals we remove it and bring in our desks which stand opposite one another with the telephone in between.

We have central heating and a refrigerator which we keep in the corridor close to our bedroom, even though it does cause some noise.

It is quite possible that we could afford to buy a car but it's too much bother and not worth the money.

My wife and myself are already on pensions but still work, write articles, books and translations.

The authorities see in me a foreign expert in spite of my Chinese citizenship and thanks to this I am allowed to keep half my salary in foreign currency".

Shapiro added with a smile and a twinkle in his eye: "Like any good Jew I succeed to get the best of both worlds".

TRANSLATION

YEDIOT ACHRONOT

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27 MARCH, 1987

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During the cultural revolution the family was in trouble. His wife in the beginning was under house arrest and subsequently was sent to a camp for re-education.

Today the situation is back to normal and day to day living has much improved. In the farmers' market one can buy plenty of fruit and vegetables, at slightly higher prices than at government stores but without queues and the merchandise is fresh.

A typical Jewish grandfather

His daughter, a doctor married to a doctor, has one daughter. Shapiro is a typical Jewish grandfather. He hastens to add: "In this respect the Chinese are like us - family values are very important to them and are generally well preserved".

Do his colleagues know that he is Jewish and of what importance is this to them?

"It's clear that my colleagues who do research in the Academy know everything about Jews and those who deal with Jewish history in China are very well aware of all the nuances in Judaism. To the man in the street, even a doctor, a lawyer, a high official, Judaism has no meaning.

For many years I was surprised when I said I was Jewish to be asked: "Yes, but to what stream do you belong, Catholic, Presbyterian?"

The Chinese have no concept of the term "Jew" other than that of belonging to the Christian Western world.

The average Chinese knows and hears very little about Israel. In China there is very little interest regarding activities in the Middle East. The Chinese have enough problems of their own. In a country the size of a continent the foreign news concentrates mainly on Washington and Moscow. All the other countries of the world look like small provinces compared to the size of China. Only at times of acute crisis such as war does the news publicise the Middle East.

To the Chinese the picture is clear - imperialist Israel is fighting the Arabs who are carrying on a struggle for their independence.

YEDIOT ACHRONOT  
EDWIN EYTAN  
27 March, 1987

Sunday, March 29, 1987 The Jerusalem Post

## Step towards int'l conference

# China announces talk with Israel

*Compiled from reports by DAVID LANDAU in Hongkong, WALTER RUBY at the UN, and agency dispatches.*

China's official announcement yesterday that a high-level meeting had taken place between Chinese and Israeli officials was greeted in Hongkong as a significant development in the two countries' delicate relationship.

Diplomats and other China-watchers stressed that the Xinhua news agency report of the meeting was unprecedented. The meeting itself is believed not to be the first of its kind.

Xinhua reported, on its Chinese-language service, that Foreign Ministry Director-General Avraham Tamir met with the Chinese permanent representative to the UN, Li Luye, at UN headquarters in New York on Friday.

The Chinese agency and the Israeli spokesman at the UN said the talks focused on Middle East peace efforts and a possible international peace conference.



Avraham Tamir (IPPA)

"It was in a UN context rather than a bilateral context, and one of a series of meetings being held with members of the Security Council," Israeli UN spokesman Eyal Arad said.

The meeting was held at Israel's initiative and was arranged by the two countries' UN missions, he added.

Arad said although Israel was the seventh country to recognize the Peking government following the

1949 Communist revolution in China, the two countries had never established diplomatic relations.

Israel has shown growing interest in establishing diplomatic ties with China in recent years, and there have been reports of trade contracts through third countries.

Also taking part in Friday's meeting between Li and Tamir were Avi Primor, deputy director-general of the Foreign Ministry in charge of African and Asian affairs and Israeli UN ambassador Binyamin Netanyahu.

The Xinhua report said: "Israel requested to meet with representatives of the permanent members of the Security Council, including China." The Chinese agency thus carefully set the encounter within a UN framework.

"Tamir and Li discussed the Middle East situation at UN headquarters. Li explained China's positions on the Middle East - that it supports an international peace conference on the Middle East under UN auspices and that the PLO is entitled to take part in such a conference."

The reference to an international conference must be especially gra-

(Continued on Back Page)

(Continued from Page One)

tifying to Tamir and to his minister, Peres, who has long advocated this approach to peacemaking.

But Prime Minister Shamir expressed "displeasure" yesterday over recent moves by Foreign Ministry officials aimed at setting up an international peace conference.

Interviewed by Israel Radio, Shamir referred to the "campaign led by senior Foreign Ministry officials currently abroad to promote an international conference."

He stressed that the government "had not endorsed and has never accepted" such a move.

Government sources in Jerusalem said yesterday that the Tamir-Li meeting indicated that China had not changed its traditional positions on Israel and the Middle East.

According to the preliminary report received last night in Jerusalem, it seems that the Chinese diplomat did not mention the possibility of establishing formal ties with Israel.

But Foreign Ministry officials said they hoped that the meeting would open the door for additional public contacts between the two countries. They added that the Chinese had made the meeting public because they did not want to be left behind

the Soviets if talks on a conference take a practical turn.

Peres, meeting with visiting Japanese reporters on Friday, said Israel still insisted that China and the Soviet Union establish ties with it as a condition for taking part in a peace conference.

Asked in an Israel Radio interview if a breakthrough on ties was near, Peres replied: "Not yet. We are conducting what is called softening-up activity."

Meanwhile, commentators in Hongkong stressed the importance of China's official announcement of the meeting.

"They need not have reported the meeting," said Yao Shingbun, China editor of the *Hongkong Standard*. "The fact that they chose to do so is certainly significant."

David Chen, China editor of the prestigious *South China Morning Post*, said Beijing's action "indicates China's willingness to take steps towards improving relations with Israel - although those steps may not bring full diplomatic ties."

He said the relationship was similar to an earlier stage of the dialogue between Beijing and Seoul which, after years of gradually intensifying

commercial and informal political contacts, had led to a broad spectrum of pragmatic ties.

But just as China's links with North Korea precluded, in its view, full normalization with South Korea, said Chen, China still believed its large Moslem minority was reason enough to rule out full ties with Israel.

Diplomatic observers here emphasize China's self-perception as the leader of the nonaligned world as the major factor inhibiting its relationship with Israel.

Hence, these observers said, Beijing's effort to couch this latest development within the UN context - so as not to rankle important Third World states.

Informed sources told *The Jerusalem Post* that the meeting had been "in the works" for some time and the timing had been determined by the Chinese.

*Wolf Blitzer adds:*

U.S. officials yesterday welcomed China's decision to openly acknowledge its latest diplomatic exchange with Israel. "It certainly is an important development," a State Department source said. "It's a good sign."

## CHINA-ISRAEL



## Profile: Sidney Shapiro

# Passion that survived the madness

By ZELDA CAWTHORNE

A JOURNALIST friend had glibly described Sidney Shapiro as "one of those ageing Marxist-Leninists".

Tact combined with mild impudence seemed the best tactic. "One of my journalist friends called you a Marxist-Leninist," I said. "How does that grab you?"

The chief attraction at last week's Second Asian-Jewish Colloquium threw back his head and roared with laughter.

"Oh boy, is that rich! When I first went to China, the only Marx I was familiar with was Groucho."

That was 40 years ago. Today Sidney Shapiro is a glowing advertisement for the People's Republic; expansive, brimming with humour and fit as a fiddle at 72. He is also a lot wiser, but not conspicuously sadder. Times were tough for a while, but these days he has only minor complaints.

"Marmalade and good cheese - I sure miss those. We can get something that's fairly close to Edam, but there's not much variety in Beijing."

To political analysts, his presence at the colloquium, sponsored by the World Jewish Congress and the Asia Pacific Jewish Association, held special significance in the light of increasing signs of rapprochement between China and Israel - the first time since 1949 that a Chinese scholar of such standing had participated in a conference convened by an international Jewish body, as the organisers noted.

To those unfamiliar with his amazing story, Professor Sidney Shapiro, aka Sha Boli, also presented a living enigma.

How on earth did this professed non-communist ("I've never joined the Party"), this one-time American lawyer, come to live in China? Indeed become of its most respected and privileged citizens?

The short answer is tenacity. You don't survive traumas like seeing your wife thrown into prison and being separated from your only child without a very superior brand of backbone. And you don't get to be a member of China's highest national advisory body without a few qualifications.

Sidney Shapiro, member of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Council, Chinese Writers Union, Chinese Translators Association and Chinese Society of Pacific Region Histor-

ry, has plenty. It's where he got them that's interesting.

Born into a New York Jewish family - his father's people came from Russia, his mother's from Poland - the young Sidney followed in his father's footsteps and became a lawyer. Then World War II came and he joined up. Little did his superiors in the US Army know they were about to provide a free education for a future citizen of China.

"I got into the Army's special training program and applied to do French at Cornell University, but the quota was full and I was told I had 'volunteered' for Chinese."

"To my surprise, I enjoyed it - in fact I became more and more fascinated."

"About nine months later some brain in the Pentagon had me transferred to a cryptography program involved in breaking Japanese codes, and by then I was thoroughly hooked."

Peace brought further opportunities. Under the GI Bill, Sidney Shapiro was able to polish his Mandarin - first, a couple of terms at Columbia University, followed by another one at Yale - then it was decision-making time.

## Disintegrated

"I was getting a bit long in the tooth - 31 already - and knew what I didn't want to do: go back to being a New York lawyer."

"In 1947 I made up my mind. I simply got on a freighter bound for Shanghai - your actual slow boat to China. I arrived a month later on April Fool's Day."

"I had two great commercial ventures. In my pocket I had a letter from *Variety* saying if I ever wrote anything and they ever printed it, I *might* get paid. Failing that, I would offer my services to one of the four American law firms in Shanghai."

The film industry had disintegrated, so there went *Variety*. Option two didn't work out much better. By mid-1948, recalls Shapiro, merchandise was sitting in warehouses and foreign trade had ground to a halt. He could have gone back to the States, but China and the enchanting Fengzi - "Phoenix" in English - had already claimed him.

"I met Fengzi on my second day in Shanghai. I'd been told to look her up by one of her girlfriends who had given me

Mandarin lessons in exchange for English ones at Yale, so I did. We married in 1948 and our daughter was born two years later."

By then the Shapiros were in Beijing. Daily their fears had mounted - as 1949 loomed, Shanghai was no place for an American capitalist whose Chinese wife had edited a liberal cultural magazine and was a former actress - and at first they had planned to flee to the "liberated areas" via Tientsin (Tianjin). In the end they found sanctuary in Beijing's College of Chinese Studies.

"As I recall, Yale used to run it through the North American Council of Churches and as I knew a couple of the heads, I asked them if we could sort of hide out in the place. 'You can have the whole bloody compound if you look after it for us,' they said, so the college became home."

Complacency ended with the Cultural Revolution. Their daughter was put to work in a paper mill and Fengzi was bundled off to one of the notorious May 7 Schools, whose "curriculum" was for intellectuals and erring cadres.

"She was never physically abused - if anything, she was treated solicitously because of her age - but it was still very tough for her. Most mornings, she and the others worked on the land - utterly useless, because it was marshland - and the afternoons were devoted to polemics and 'confessions'. It was a great madness."

"Fengzi coped with it all. She's a peppery little gal."

The madness ended and the Shapiros were reunited. Happily, the paper mill had no lasting effect on their daughter who not only became a doctor, but married one - "while they were still studying, what's more, broke all the rules" - and today has a 10-year-old daughter.

By Chinese standards, the Shapiros enjoy the good life ("half a house with a small garden; rare as hens' teeth") and thanks to his foreign expert status, "Sha Boli" has been able to visit the US - twice with Fengzi - at regular intervals since 1971.

"We'll be off again in September - this time for the US-China Friendship Association - and I hope to see some of the people I've met at the colloquium. Getting invited to Hongkong was a real windfall. When

## FEATURES



Sidney Shapiro: "When I first went to China, the only Marx I was familiar with was Groucho."

the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences in Beijing asked me if I'd like to go, I said 'You bet!' quick as a bunny."

Four decades in China haven't dulled Sidney Shapiro's wit or intellect. His autobiographical *An American In China* was recently followed by *Jews In Old China* (subject of his paper for the colloquium) and he is currently working on a new book, *The Law and Lore of Chinese Criminal Justice*.

Even better known in some quarters is Sha Boli the movie star. To date there have been

three cinematic triumphs — *The Sian Incident* ("I played Australian W.H. Donald"), *After The Armistice* and *Eagles Of The Sky*.

"The kids down my lane recognise my talent, though I'm sorry to say my wife tends to play it down. 'The perfect talking prop' she calls me. I ascribe it to professional jealousy."

The biggest milestone came in 1963. In that year Sidney Shapiro finally became a citizen of the People's Republic.

"Citizenship didn't just

mean things like the ability to travel," he reflects.

"Suddenly I found myself on a completely different plane — not just 'friend', but 'brother'. It was right for me. I'm passionately fond of China and things Chinese.

"I'm also very American in that I've always valued my independence and coming to China didn't change that.

"In the States I never felt the urge to join the Elks or the Masons and I still believe in doing my own thing."



• Malcolm Fraser, Isi Leibler, Sir Zelman Cowen and Professor Yoram Dinstein pictured at last week's Asian Jewish Colloquium in Hong Kong.

## TOP PLANNERS FOR NEXT ASIAN JEWISH DIALOGUE

**Former Australian Governor-General Sir Zelman Cowen and former Australian Prime Minister Malcolm Fraser will be on the steering committee planning the Third Asian Jewish Colloquium scheduled for March, 1989.**

This was announced at the closing session of the second Colloquium, which concluded in Hong Kong last week.

Chinese Professor Sidney Shapiro (Sha Boli) has also agreed to be part of the steering committee.

Professor Shapiro, believed to be the only New York Jew who is a Chinese citizen, was a surprise inclusion among the Asian and Jewish scholars at the second Colloquium.

He delivered a paper on Chinese research into the history of Chinese Jewry.

Other members of the steering committee include scholars from India, Japan, the United States, Israel, Hong Kong, the Philippines, Nepal, Korea and Thailand.

Colloquium conveners Isi Leibler, president of the World Jewish Congress Asia Pacific Region, and Professor Yoram Dinstein, pro-rector of Tel Aviv University, said it was "particularly gratifying" that the third Colloquium "would benefit from such a distinguished steering committee".

"We believe any academic conference would be privileged to enjoy such high-calibre scholarly patronage," they said.

"That it has happened in our own case in the relatively short time since the Colloquia began in 1984 suggests we are fulfilling a worthwhile role."

The Colloquia provide "a forum of ideas for leading Jewish and Asian scholars to discuss matters of common concern reflected in the cultural experiences of their varied societies".

At the end of the Colloquium Mr Leibler said he had felt a "sense of frustration" during the two-day meeting that the format prevented organisers "maximising the presence" of some of the scholars.

However, the "chemistry of interaction" had been effective, he said.

Professor Dinstein said the second Colloquium made it clear that "this is a successful venture, rather than an adventure".

It had been particularly interesting that "there is so little which disunites us and so much which unites us".

The Colloquium theme was The Jews and Asia: Old Identities and New Images.

Topics discussed included the cultural perceptions of self and others, the emergence of stereotypes, the "stranger phenomenon" in society and the concept of identity and national identity.

More than 30 scholars from 12 countries participated.

The Colloquium followed the Asia Pacific Jewish Association Regional Conference, also in Hong Kong.

# Surprise guest at Asia Pacific Jewish confab

**HONG KONG:** A New York born Jew who has been a Chinese citizen since 1963 was a surprise guest at last week's second Asian-Jewish Colloquium.

Professor Sidney Shapiro (Sha Boli) was attending the Colloquium following a request to Dr Li Shenzi, vice-president of the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences in Beijing.

He is a distinguished translator of Chinese literature into English.

The second Asian-Jewish Colloquium was

held in Hong Kong on Monday and Tuesday.

More than 60 Asian and Jewish scholars and guests attended.

Other special guests were former Australian Prime Minister Malcolm Fraser and former Australian Governor-General Sir Zelman Cowen.

Professor Shapiro has

lived in China since 1947.

It is the first time since 1949 that a Chinese scholar of such standing has participated in a conference convened by an international Jewish organisation.

Colloquium conveners Isi Leibler and Professor Yoram Dinstein said Professor Shapiro's attendance "added con-

siderably to the international interest surrounding the gathering of leading Jewish and Asian scholars".

Professor Shapiro was born in New York City in 1915.

A graduate of St Johns Law School, he studied Chinese at Cornell, Columbia and Yale Universities.



• Prof Sidney Shapiro

He is a member of the Chinese Writers' Association and the Chinese People's Political Consultative Council (China's highest national advisory body).

Professor Shapiro has translated more than 20 volumes of novels, poetry and short stories from Chinese into English, which have been published in Beijing and distributed internationally.

An authoritative work on the Kaifeng Jews, titled *The Jews in Old China*, is one of his works.

# Rabbis form regional group

**HONG KONG:** Rabbis meeting during the Asia Pacific Jewish Association (APJA) regional conference here have formed an Asia Pacific Rabbinical Association (APRA).

It was endorsed by APJA members at the one-day conference on Sunday.

The association will consist of rabbis in the Asia Pacific region with a convener in Australia and representatives of regional communities which do not have rabbis.

Melbourne's Rabbi Ronald Lubofsky was appointed APRA convener.

The body intends to "strive to facilitate and strengthen Jewish life throughout the region".

However, the APRA proposal said although the rabbis at the conference considered APRA's establishment as "important and necessary", it cannot serve "as a replacement for a full-time professional in all Jewish communities".

## STRIVE

It, therefore, urged "all communities to strive their utmost" to engage their own Jewish professionals.

As convener, Rabbi Lubofsky will be responsible for all contact and communication between component members.

A "working relationship" will be established between APRA and the Melbourne or Sydney Batei Din for the

purpose of administering and regulating matters of conversion and divorce.

APRA intends to hold a conference as soon as practical, probably in Australia.

## RESOURCES

"For the purpose of deriving maximal benefit from the various resources and appropriate institutions in Israel, a direct line of communication" will be maintained with Rabbi David Rosen, dean of the Sapir Centre for Jewish Heritage in Jerusalem and director of Inter-religious Affairs, B'nai B'rith (Israel) Anti-Defamation League.

It will deal with the administration of Jewish religious affairs with particular attention to the needs of communities without religious leadership.

Rabbis present at the conference in Hong Kong were Rabbi Ronald Lubofsky from Melbourne, Rabbi David Rosen (Israel), Rabbi Meir Bensoussan (Hong Kong), Rabbi Isaac Ben Zakin (Singapore) and Rabbi Michael Schudrich (Japan).



• Rabbi Ronald Lubofsky

# HONG KONG MEET

## Racial prejudice in many nations

**HONG KONG:** Recent emergence of anti-Semitism in Japan and Malaysia, two countries with no tradition of significant Jewish settlement or anti-Jewish prejudice, came under review this week at the Second Asian-Jewish Colloquium.

The Colloquium, a forum of leading Asian and Jewish scholars, met in Hong Kong only days after 'Newsweek' magazine reported on the recent spread of anti-Semitic books and magazines in Japan.

The publications blamed Jews for Japan's economic problems, alleged that Jews run the United States, and that having been responsible for the 1930s depression, will create another depression in the early 1990s.

Professor Yoram Dinstein, Pro-Rector of Tel-Aviv University and one of the Colloquium convenors, said he found the expressions of anti-Semitism in Japan both mystifying and disturbing.

While he agreed with the views of other Colloquium par-

## — Professor

ticipants that anti-Semitism in Japan was different to the historical anti-Semitism of Europe and the West, it was nonetheless a dangerous phenomenon.

### FROM U.S.

The recent attacks on Jews in Israel by the Malaysian Prime Minister, Dr Mahatir, also came under criticism. Professor Michael Leifer, Visiting Professor at the University of Singapore, said that although Dr Mahatir had directed his anti-Semitic remarks towards Islamic elements in Malaysia's political system, there was evidence to suggest that he had been influenced by anti-Semitic publications originating in the United States.

These publications emphasised "the international Jewish conspiracy" and "the power" of Jews to control and manipulate the news media.

Issues of racial prejudice, treatment of minorities and cultural stereotypes were the main themes of the two day Colloquium which attracted more than thirty distinguished international scholars from a dozen countries in Asia as well as from Israel, the United States, Australia and Europe.

Professor Tetsu Kohno, Professor of English at Hosei University, Japan, described the continuing prejudice and discrimination against the Korean community and other minority groups in Japan.

"However indistinguishable from the Japanese in looks, however well-behaved or intelligent, Japanese of Korean origin must register as aliens and be finger-printed for police use".

Professor Kohno, a Japanese national born to a Korean father and a Japanese mother, speaks Yiddish and Hebrew, which he picked up during his studies at Columbia University, New York.

He quoted from a children's song by the Yiddish writer I. L. Peretz which declares that "colour does not matter, black and white and brown are all the same".

### DEEP-SET

This was not true in Japan, Professor Kohno said, because many Koreans, even after their families had lived four generations in Japan, were still not accepted and maintained ties with Korea. Unfortunately, they were not fully accepted there either.

In response, Professor Takeshi Muramatsu, of Tsukuba University, Japan, said that although sympathetic to Professor Kohno's views, no nation or people was free of racial prejudice. "We are a bit more complex than a baseball team," Professor Kohno said.

The treatment of Israel's Arab minority was raised by the Israel parliamentarian Micah Harish, M. K., who discussed the problems associated with Israel's Arab citizens facing Army service.

The compromise of not compelling Arabs to serve in the Israel Army was not a completely satisfactory solution but the only workable one in the present circumstances.

Sir Zelman Cowen, former Governor-General of Australia and now Provost at Oriel College, Oxford, raised the question of how such a situation could be allowed to go on indefinitely without Israel creating a significant problem of internal alienation for its largest minority group.

The Colloquium concluded with a farewell dinner at which Ram Jethmalani, a leading advocate and constitutional lawyer from New Delhi, made an eloquent appeal to his fellow delegates from Asia to join the Jewish representatives present in support of Israel.

# צווייטע אזיע-יודישע קאנפערענץ

האנגיקאנג - אויף דער לעצטער יודיש-אויסישער קאנפערענץ, וואס איז דא אפגעוואלטן געווארן צווישן 23טן און 24טן מערץ היי, איז געקומען צום אויסדרוק די לעצטע אנטערסטישע אויסברוכן אין יאפאן און מאלאיע, אין וועלכע די יידן זענען געמאכט געווארן פאראנטווארטלעך פאר דער עקאנאמישער דעפארטע אין 1930 און אין דער דערווארטונג פון א פרישער דעפארטע, אנהויב 1980.

אין דער קאנפערענץ האבן יודישע מיטבאטייליקע די אנגענומענע יודישע שרעקליכע אקארמישע פארשטייטע איבער גאר דער וועלט.

פראפעסאר יורם דנישטיין, דער פראיעקטאר פון חל-אביבער אויף דער היינטיגער וועלט, און באשט דער אנטעמיסטיזם וואס זעט ווי בילט אן אין יאפאן טראגט אן אנטערסטישע ווי דער אנטעמיסטיזם אין אייראפע און אין דער מערב-וועלט -

איז ער אבער שטארק באאומדאיקנדיק און געפערלעך. ער האט זיך באווערט אפגעשטעלט אויפן אנטעמיסטישן אויסברוך פון מאלאיע פונעם מיניסטער ריי מאהאטיר. פראפעסאר מיכאל ליפער, גאסט פראפעסאר פון סינגאפורע אוניווערסיטעט, האט באמערקט, אז באשט ריי מאהאטיר האט געהערט זיינע אנטעמיסטישע באמערקונגען צו די איסלאמישע עלעמענטן אין מאלאיער פאליטישן סיסטעם, אויב אבער אין זיי געהערן אן אנדערע פון זיין ווערן באוויקט פון די פארשידענע אנטעמיסטישע פובליקאציעס אין אמעריקע.

## א יאפאנער וואס רעדט יודיש און העברעאיש

פראפ. טעטסן קאהנא, פראפעסאר פון ענגליש אין האסיי-אוניווערסיטעט, יאפאן, און פון א קארעאישן פאטער פריי פון פאראווארטן.

דער ישראלידיקער חיב מיכה חורש האט באוויזן די פאלעסטינעזער פראגע אין ישראל און דעם פאראלעלע קעגן וואס מען איז אריינגעשטעלט, ווען עס האנדלט זיך וועגן אראבישן מיליטערישן דינסט אין צה"ל. דערווייל איז עס נאך פולקאם נישט געלייזט געווארן. ס'ער זלמן קאהנען, געווענליך גובערנאטאר פון אויסטראליע, און איצט דעקאן פון אריעל-קאלעדזש, אקספארד, האט אריינגעהויבן די פראגע ווי אזוי קאן זיך אזוי וויכטיקע פראבלעם שלעפן אזוי לאנג און ווען וועט עס ישראל ליוון.

## געשאפן א 'דיכטליניע' קאמיטע

די קאנפערענץ האט פארן שליסן געשאפן א 'דיכטליניע' קאמיטע, וועלכע מענט איפמאכען כוחות ווען צוגרייטן אין צוויי יאר ארום דעם וויסן קאמיטע. די קאמיטע באשטייט פון פארשטייער פון 11 לענדער, אריינגעריכט פראפעסאר סידנעי שאפירא, שא באלי פון נייע פראם, שאפירא איז אן אנגעזעענער איבערזעצער פון דער נייעווער ליטעראטור אין ענגליש און שטאמט פון פעקין. ער האט געהאט צוגעברייט אן ארבעט ווען קעפינגער יודישער



פון לינגט: פראפ. טודנעי שאפירא, אויף ליבלער און פראפ. יורם דנישטיין.



מעלקאם פרידער



זעלמן קאהנען

פון טרייטשאנדרא קאלעדזש, נעפאל; פראפ. טאעיענע יאן פון קאן-קוק אוניווערסיטעט, סעול, קארעע, און ריי טהאנאט קהאמאן פון דער קענעדי פונדאציע, טהיילאנד. געשלאסן די קאנפערענץ האבן די קאנפערענץ פראפ. יורם דנישטיין פון חל-אביבער אוניווערסיטעט און מר. אויף ליבלער, פונדאציע פון אזיע פאעזישן ראיאן ביים יודישן וועלט קאנגרעס, וועלכע האבן געדאנקט אלע אנטווערענע פאר זייער ביהשטייער און אונטערזעצער פון די עוואלדיקע וויכטיקייט פון דעם און קאנפערענץ, דער מיינונגס-אויסטיישן פון די אלע אנטווערענע נעמען וועט דינען איינצושטעלן א קאנפערענץ פון פארבעסערן די באצייאונגען צווישן אלע פאראינטערעסירטע צדדים. אין א געהויבענער שטימונג און מיט באזעצונגען, איז די לעבנס-וויכטיקע קאנפערענץ געשלאסן געווארן.

קהילה אין כינע, וועלכע עקזיסטירט שוין נישט מער, אבער האט אריינגערייבן אן אינטערנאציאנאלע פאראינטערעסירונג. אין דער 'דיכטליניע' קאמיטע בא' טייליקן זיך אויך סער זלמן קאהנען, מר. מעלקאם פרידער, געווענליך אויסטראלישער פונעם מיניסטער; מר. רעם דזשעטמאלאני, אדוואקאט, פון אינדיע; דישן העכסטן געריכט; פראפ. טאקעש מוראמאטו פון טוקובא אהווארסיר טעט, יאפאן; פראפ. דוד טיבאט פון קאלאמביא אוניווערסיטעט, ניו-יארק; פראפ. צבי ווערבלאחסי פון ירושלים פון אוניווערסיטעט, ירושלים פון אוניווערסיטעט; פראפ. פאלא קאמפאס פון מיליפיער אקארעמיע פאר וויסנשאפט און טעכנאלאגיע; פראפ. יאדו קהאנאל

# Leaders for next time

**HONG KONG: The Second Asian-Jewish Colloquium concluded in Hong Kong with establishment of a high-level steering committee which will help to plan the next Colloquium to be held in two years' time.**

The steering committee comprises Colloquium members from eleven countries, including Professor Sidney Shapiro (Sha Boli) from China.

Professor Shapiro, a distinguished translator of Chinese literature into English, came from Beijing to participate in the two-day Colloquium which was based around the theme "The Jews and Asia: Old Identities and New Images".

A paper on the history of the Kaifeng Jewish community in China, delivered by Professor Shapiro, aroused widespread interest at the conference. (Kaifeng, a Jewish community in China which no longer survives, has recently attracted growing international attention.)

It was the first time since 1949 that a Chinese scholar had presented an account of the Kaifeng Jews to an international Jewish conference.

Other members of the steering committee include Sir Zelman Cowen, (Provost of Oriol College Oxford University and former Governor-General of Australia); Malcolm Fraser, (former Prime Minister of Australia and co-chairman of the Commonwealth Committee of Eminent Persons on South Africa); Mr. Ram Jethmalani, (Advocate, Supreme Court of India); Professor Takeshi Muramatsu, (Dean of the College of Comparative Culture, University of Tsukuba, Japan); Professor David Sidorsky, (Columbia University, New York); Professor Zwi Webrowsky, (Martin Buber Professor of Comparative Religion, Hebrew University, Jerusalem); Professor Wang Gungwu, (Vice-Chancellor of the University of Hong Kong); Professor Paulo Campos,

(president National Academy of Science and Technology of Philippines); Professor Yadu Khanal, (Professor Emeritus, Tri-Chandra College, Nepal); Professor Tae-Yeung You, (Director of the Saemaul Institute, Kon-Kuk University, Seoul); and Dr. Thanat Khoman, (chairman John F. Kennedy Foundation of Thailand).

## INVITES

Colloquium convenors, Professor Yoram Dinstein, (Pro-rector, Tel-Aviv University) and Isi J. Leibler, (pres. Asia Pacific Region, World Jewish Congress), have extended invitations to scholars from other countries in the region to join the steering committee.

Professor Dinstein and Mr. Leibler said it was "particularly gratifying the Third Colloquium would benefit from such a distinguished steering committee.

"We believe any academic conference would be privileged to enjoy such high-calibre scholarly patronage. That it has happened in our own case in the relatively short time since the Colloquia began in 1984 suggests we are fulfilling a worthwhile role."

The convenors said the role was providing a forum of ideas for leading Jewish and Asian scholars to discuss matters of common concern reflected in the contrasting cultural experiences of their varied societies.



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## Far East rabbis set up 'fraternity'



Organisation men. Mr Isi J. Leibler (left) president of the Asia-Pacific region of the World Jewish Congress, and Professor Yoram Dinstein, pro-rector of Tel Aviv University, his fellow convenor of the colloquium which followed the conference, with Professor Sha Boil of Peking, who participated in the colloquium

From ANNE GODFREY  
Hong Kong

Some 30 delegates from Australia and the small Jewish communities in the Asia Pacific region, including New Zealand, Thailand, Singapore and New Caledonia, discussed the nature of their communities at a conference in Hong Kong at the end of last month.

The various communities are members of the Asia Pacific Jewish Association (Apja), which is centred in Melbourne, Australia. Apart from Australia, the problem of Jewish identity for young people was common to all.

The Australian delegation reported that, in Melbourne, the largest Jewish community in the region, 70 per cent of Jewish children attended Jewish day schools. There are some 40,000 Jews in Melbourne.

In New Zealand, there are two Jewish day schools in communities with fewer than 1,500 Jews.

The conference approved a resolution in support of Israel, and another criticising the Soviet Union and Syria for their treatment of their Jews.

A third resolution was passed condemning racist attacks on Jews during the past 12 months by the Prime Minister and Government of Malaysia.

A parallel meeting of rabbis in the region agreed to set up a "fraternity" to assist communities without a minister. It will be known as the Asia Pacific Rabbinical Association and it will help with services and conversions under the auspices of the Australian Beth Din.

Rabbi Ronald Lubofsky, of Melbourne, was appointed the convenor, and participants include Rabbi Meir Bensoussan of Hong Kong, Rabbi Benzakin of Singapore, and Rabbi Michael Schudrich of Japan.

A two-day colloquium followed the conference. The participants included Mr Malcolm Fraser, the former Australian Prime Minister.

# ASIAN, JEWISH SCHOLARS HAD HONG KONG GOAL

The Second Asian-Jewish Colloquium in Hong Kong, which brought together more than 30 distinguished academics, scholars and intellectuals from Asia and the Jewish world, was a significant advance on the first Colloquium in Singapore in 1984.

If the Colloquium in Singapore, although certainly successful for a new venture, could be described as a promising idea, in Hong Kong it took a major step towards becoming an ongoing and institutionalised feature of international Jewish life.

It is now possible, for the first time, to speak of a continuing forum where Asian and Jewish intellectuals can discuss ideas and issues of common concern.

These may include the roles of minorities in majority cultures, racial prejudice against Jews, Chinese, Koreans or other "outsiders", how modern States live with ancient traditions, the impact of universal culture on local cultures, where Israel fits in the thinking of Asia - all subjects which came up in Hong Kong.

Whether in the scintillatingly brilliant presentation of Professor David Sidorsky of Columbia University on "The Alien in Literature", or the moving account by Professor Tetsu Kohno, himself a Korean-Japanese, of the plight of the Korean minority in Japan (complete with reference in Yiddish to poetry by Y.L. Peretz), the Colloquium provide all present with an intellectual treat.

## INSIGHT

But the issues raised, formally and informally, range far beyond the obvious. We hope they will, over time, have a practical impact in the way Asians relate to Jews - and vice-versa - well beyond the conference room.

What made Hong Kong a success, however, was more complex and interesting than the conference programme. Certainly the calibre of the individual scholars was if anything higher, in many cases, than those already outstanding academics who came to Singapore.

The papers and discussion were better planned and the international news media coverage was noticeably more extensive. Israel was directly represented by senior journalists from the "Jerusalem Post", "Maariv", and "Yediot Achronot".

The key, however, was the added dimension of excitement created by the last-minute inclusion in the Colloquium of a former American, Sidney Shapiro, from Beijing, Shapiro, a Chinese citizen since 1963 and resident of China since 1947, is a former New York Jew - the only one to travel on a Chinese passport.

Shapiro, whose Chinese name is Sha Bo Li, is a leading translator

By ISI J. LEIBLER

• *Isi Leibler is president of the Asia Pacific region of the World Jewish Congress and former president of the Executive Council of Australian Jewry.*

into English of Chinese literature. He is a member of the Chinese Peoples Consultative Assembly, the highest national advisory body to the Chinese government.

This unusual man, who occupies his own unique place in modern Chinese - and Jewish - history, arrived in Hong Kong following protracted negotiations with the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences in Beijing. These negotiations date back to my visit there in 1985, and continued under sensitive circumstances literally up to the day Professor Shapiro's flight arrived in Hong Kong.

We were delighted to welcome him because his paper on the now lost Jewish community of Kai Feng provided us with the first occasion since 1949 that a scholar from China has attended an international Jewish conference.

## VALUES

Furthermore, it is just as noteworthy that Shapiro underlined the sanction that the Chinese scholarly community at the highest official level had now given to the possibility of moe such cultural and academic contacts.

The Colloquium, Shapiro told a Hong Kong news conference, was known to Chinese scholars, and its aims of fostering dialogue between the Jews and Asia was deemed a worthy one.

Confirming this historic shift in attitude in Beijing to world Jewry, Shapiro joined eminent intellectuals and statesmen, including Australia's Sir Zelman Cowen and Malcolm Fraser, Hong Kong University Vice-Chancellor, Wang Gang Wu, Japan's Professor Murumatsu, former Thai Foreign Minister Dr. Thanat Khoman and others from Asia and the Jewish world, to form the Colloquium steering committee.

We have every reason to believe that Shapiro's attendance in Beijing can become the beginning of a new and continuing process of exchange

in which Chinese students and scholars will come to centres of Jewish studies in the West and Jewish scholars will come to China to extend the awareness in the world's most populous nation of Jews and Judaism.

This was only one of the vistas opened up at the Hong Kong Colloquium. In addition to China, it is clear that all the countries of Asia - to a lesser or greater degree - are ignorant of Jews, Judaism and the role of Israel in contemporary Jewish life.

What the Colloquium demonstrated was that an ideas forum can do something, however modest, to make up for that lack of Jewish presence.

For example, the sudden emergence of significant anti-Semitism in some sectors of Japanese society, was widely canvassed by the Jewish and Japanese scholars present.

## IMPACT

It was explained, set in context - and roundly condemned. It made news in the Hong Kong press and on the international news agency wires. The Japanese press picked it up. Here, for the first time, an Asian issue affecting Jews was being discussed in an Asian-Jewish context.

The Colloquium did not conclude with any ringing resolutions or motions. Scholarly "ideas" conference do not operate that way, and we do not intend to turn the Colloquium into a political exercise.

But the absence of resolutions does not mean that a project such as the Colloquium cannot point to any real "achilles". We believe we can, and if the contact established with Beijing, to be followed up with future visits by myself, and others to China, was the only such outcome, it would be sufficient for the present.

But, following Hong Kong, we look ahead with optimism for other possibilities.

We believe there is a basis for improved contact with Indian intellectuals and opinion-makers; greater, and more sympathetic, awareness in Japanese academic circles of Jews and the dangers of anti-Semitism for Japan itself; expanded exchange with influential educational authorities in South Korea and a generally better acceptance of an international Jewish dimension in the thinking of elites throughout the South-East Asia region.

These are, undoubtedly, long-term goals. We think of a process in which there will inevitably be set-backs and disappointments. We know, too, that in Asia progress requires patience and progress is sometimes glacier-like if measured by the usual Western expectations of rapid change.

But the modest achievements of the first two Colloquia point towards what is possible in extending Jewish contact with Asia in ways which will be mutually enriching.

# Asia-Pacific meet



• Pictured at the Second Asian-Jewish Colloquium in Hong Kong Mr Isi Leibler (pres., Asia Pacific Region, World Jewish Congress, a convenor), Professor T. Munamatsu, Japan), and Professor Yoram Dinstein (co-convenor of the conference).



• A unique intellectual forum brought together leading Jewish and Asian scholars in Hong Kong for the Second Asian-Jewish Colloquium, jointly sponsored by the World Jewish Congress and the Asia Pacific Jewish Association. Pictured: Professor Nissim Ezekiel (University of Bombay), addressing the seminar, with Professor G. Sudarshan (University of Texas), Professor Kasem Suwan-gul (Thailand).



• (l-r) Mr Malcolm Fraser (former Australian Prime Minister), Mr Isi Leibler (pres., World Jewish Congress Asia Pacific region), and Sir Zelman Cowen (former Governor General of Australia) at the second Asian Jewish Colloquium in Hong Kong.



• (l-r) Professor Sidney Shapiro (academic participant, Second Asian-Jewish Colloquium, with convenors Mr Isi Leibler and Professor Yoram Dinstein.



• Mr Isi Leibler (convenor, Second Asian-Jewish Colloquium with Professor Sidney Shapiro, of Beijing, an academic participant.

THIRD ASIAN-JEWISH COLLOQUIUM

INTERNATIONAL STEERING COMMITTEE

COVENORS:

ISI J. LEIBLER, C.B.E.  
President, Asia Pacific Region,  
World Jewish Congress

PROFESSOR YORAM DINSTEIN  
Pro-Rector, Tel-Aviv University

AUSTRALIA

THE RT. HON. MALCOLM FRASER, C.H.  
Former Prime Minister of Australia  
Co-Chairman of the Commonwealth  
Committee of Eminent Persons on  
South Africa

INDIA

RAM JETHMALANI  
Advocate, Supreme Court of India

ISRAEL

PROFESSOR ZWI WERBLOWSKY  
Martin Buber Professor of  
Comparative Religion, Hebrew  
University, Jerusalem

JAPAN

PROFESSOR TAKESHI MURAMATSU  
Dean, College of Comparative  
Culture, University of Tsukuba,  
Japan

PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF CHINA

PROFESSOR SIDNEY SHAPIRO (SHA BOLI)  
Member, Chinese People's Political  
Consultative Council  
Member, Chinese Writers'  
Association, Beijing

UNITED KINGDOM

SIR ZELMAN COWEN  
Provost of Oriel College, Oxford  
Former Governor-General of Australia

UNITED STATES

PROFESSOR DAVID SIDORSKY  
Professor of Philosophy, Columbia  
University, New York

THIRD ASIAN-JEWISH COLLOQUIUM

INTERNATIONAL STEERING COMMITTEE

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HONG KONG

PROFESSOR WANG GUNGWU  
Vice-Chancellor of the University of  
Hong Kong

NEPAL

PROFESSOR YADU KHANAL  
Professor Emeritus, Tri-Chandra  
College, Nepal

PHILIPPINES

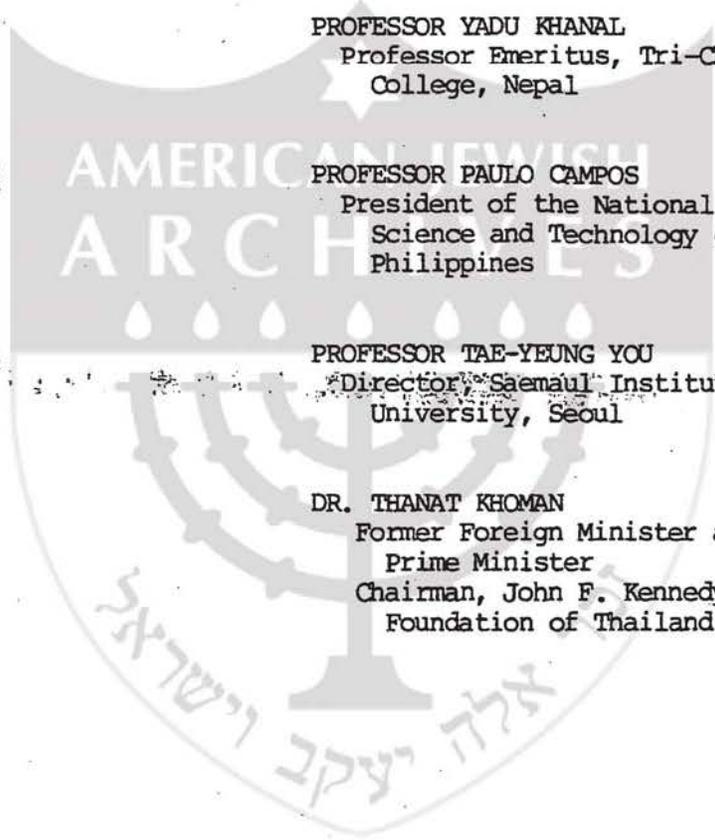
PROFESSOR PAULO CAMPOS  
President of the National Academy of  
Science and Technology of the  
Philippines

SOUTH KOREA

PROFESSOR TAE-YEUNG YOU  
Director, Saemaul Institute, Kon-Kuk  
University, Seoul

THAILAND

DR. THANAT KHOMAN  
Former Foreign Minister and Deputy  
Prime Minister  
Chairman, John F. Kennedy  
Foundation of Thailand



TRANSCRIPT OF OPENING REMARKS FOR ASIAN JEWISH COLLOQUIUM

HONG KONG MARCH 1987

By Isi J. Leibler

Distinguished members and guests of the Colloquium, Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is just two and a half years ago since the First Asian-Jewish Colloquium met in Singapore and resolved to meet again - within two years.

We are a little late but we are here. For the delay, and for the inconvenience we may have caused to many of you by changing the venue of our gathering, not once but twice, let me say formally, as I have said informally to some of you: We apologise.

We are grateful for your understanding and co-operation. As convenors, I and Professor Yoram Dinstein, to whom I am grateful for wise counsel during some difficult periods of decision, are both delighted to welcome you here in Hong Kong. We are confident that the next two days will be a productive and memorable experience for all of us.

At our first meeting in Singapore we explained why we believed this forum was worthwhile. Some of you who were at that first meeting will recall that we started from a basic datum of history: Unlike Western Civilization, in which Jews and Judaism were part of the economic, cultural and religious fabric, and which therefore, for better and, all too often, for worse, had interacted with the Jewish dimension, Asian Civilization had no such contact or awareness.

Whether it was at the level of the most significant religious, political or philosophical movements or at the level of popular or mass culture, in the West, the Jew and Judaism have had a distinctive resonance. We can see the ripples and hear the echoes of that resonance in the arts and literature, and today in the media, throughout the Western world. At a different level and, it must be said, to a lesser degree, much of the Islamic world, has been shaped by its interaction with the Jews and Judaism. Even when Jews have suffered as a result of this centuries long interaction between cultures it has nevertheless been a central fact of their history. The result has often been, for Jews, a love-hate relationship with Western predominantly Christian civilisation as well as with Middle Eastern, predominantly Islamic, societies. Asia by contrast is virtually a tubula rasa, a clean slate upon which Jews have barely left an imprint.

The point could be illustrated in many ways. But it was recently highlighted for me most vividly in an article in the New York

Times Magazine written by that paper's Israel correspondent, Thomas Friedman.

Friedman sought to answer the question: Why the fascination in the Western news media with Israel? Why, he asked, did Israel occupy almost as much space as the Soviet Union? Why did such a small country of four million people loom so large in Western consciousness?

As you might expect Friedman offered a number of explanations: Israel's geo-strategic position in a region of vital interest; the relationship between the United States and Israel; Israel's openness to the international media and so on.

But the decisive explanation offered was that Israel is central to the oldest, most familiar "super story" of Western civilization. The Bible is its first edition. By "super story" Friedman meant the narratives which record the experiences and shape the values of a culture. He then went on to quote an Israeli political theorist Yaron Ezrahi who had this to say:

The Bible, the original super story, still constitutes the controlling myth of Western civilization, history and religions. No other story, no other vocabulary, no other framework of understanding can match its familiarity. It was the Jews who wrote the first story and put themselves at its centre.

The consequences are relevant to our deliberations here. It means that not only does the familiarity of the biblical super story contribute to the receptivity in the West to news coming out of Israel; it establishes the relevance of the news.

Friedman reminds us that Hinduism, Buddhism, and other Eastern religions do not need to account for the Jews and, not surprisingly he concludes, news from Israel does not have the same prominence in Asia as in the West.

As a general statement of comparison with the West that may be true. But it needs to be qualified. In those parts of Asia where Western influence is growing, and where the free flow of information is not inhibited or restricted for political or ideological reasons, then prominence of Jewish issues in the news media has also been growing.

The difference is, however, fundamental. The news about the Jewish people which is presented in the press, seen on television, or heard on the radios around Asia may read, look or sound the same as it does in the West.

But the cultural mindset, the historical-perceptual baggage, and the allusive-imaginative vocabulary which people in Asia bring to that news are quite different. The civilizational trace-elements which, after all, largely determine how that news is translated into understanding and acted upon, are totally different.

Up to this point, most Jewish and, I would expect, most Asian observers called upon to analyse the question would accept my outline. But there is, of course, a mirror image to what I have presented.

Jews understand the news from the West instinctively; when we are not making it we are living it.

Even in Israel where half the population does not originate in the West but in North Africa and the Middle East the ascendant cultural norms and the language of societal discourse are overwhelmingly Western.

The result is that we do not see developments in Asia in the same way as we do those in the West. Not only do our histories fail to connect; the geography of our demography has a vast gap in it.

As many of our guests know there are virtually no Jews in Asia. Historically, there were exceptions, such as the Kai Feng Jews in China about which we shall be hearing more from Professor Sidney Shapiro who has come here from Beijing, and the Jewish communities of India. But today there are only small communities, mostly of expatriates, scattered through the major countries and some of the smaller ones.

But, putting Australia and New Zealand to one side, there are less than eight thousand Jews in all of Asia. When you consider that of those, some six thousand live in India, you can see that both cultures - the Jewish and the Asian - are the victims of a distinctive isolationism in their perceptions of each other.

Despite their isolation from each other there is, however, a parallel between Jewish civilisation and those of East and Near East Asia. They both share a continuity and longevity of great historical traditions. For Jews, as for Asians, the maintenance of centuries old national cultures has posed dilemmas, not the least being how to establish a nation state within the contemporary nation state system while preserving other traditions.

In this context I want to refer to a theme I raised at the first Colloquium. I said then that we Jews were a small people, that we were not reluctant to say that we seek friends, desire understanding and had learnt the bitter lessons of standing alone. All the same while wanting to broaden the circle of friendship as a matter of enlightened self-interest we believe we have something to offer. If I may emphasise the point made in the 1984 remarks:- A broadening of the dialogue between ourselves can be mutually beneficial, not because, as the cliché now has it, dialogue of any kind in international relations is a good thing. It is, rather, because we believe we have something to say to Asia which is worth hearing. Our experience as an ancient people, which has preserved its basic identity while taking part

in the vanguard of change and innovation, might be beneficially transmitted to Asia.

The Colloquium is a modest contribution to overcoming that tyranny of isolation and separation. We hope that by providing a forum for ideas exchange all of us can benefit and that as a result each of us can take back to our societies some sense of the richness and variation of our difference perceptions of our own cultures and of each other.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Since the first Colloquium in Singapore in September, 1984, some far-reaching changes have occurred in Asia which have a significance far beyond the region. May I refer to only some of them:-

In the Philippines we saw the revolutionary force of "People's Power" overthrow a government and lead to the first faltering steps towards a constitutional democracy.

In China we have seen the continuing story of perhaps the most dramatic shift in direction of a whole society that the 20th century has witnessed.

In Japan expenditure on Defence passed the symbolic one percent mark and immediately raised questions about that Asian super-power's future direction.

In the Soviet Union a new leader, Mikhail Gorbachev, made his Vladivostok speech in which Moscow's determination to be seen as an Asian-Pacific power was underlined as it was in the visit to the region just a fortnight ago by the Soviet Foreign Minister.

In India, just weeks after our first Colloquium concluded, Mrs. Indira Gandhi was assassinated and her son Rajiv succeeded her.

And here in Hong Kong the Sino-British joint decision envisaged a future where China would take over in 1997 and then abide by the principle of "one nation, two systems" - "Socialism with Chinese characteristics" living alongside "Capitalism with Hong Kong" characteristics.

Now this is NOT a political conference and yet all the significant developments to which I have referred are political. I mentioned them because, when discussion turns to Asia nowadays it inevitably revolves around the great political and economic changes which are transforming the region.

The changes are, indeed, momentous. There can be little doubt that with its vast resources of population and the enormous potential already displayed by its economies and societies Asia will become the fulcrum of global power in the decades which lie ahead.

The Jewish people, ever mindful of how their own destinies are bound up with history and world events, cannot ignore such momentous changes in the game of nations.

Yet while those changes form the inescapable backdrop against which our Colloquium takes place, I believe that our canvas is a much wider, and deeper, one than that painted by the headlines which grab our attention. There are, I believe, benefits in this form of scholarly and intellectual exchange which are independent of politics: There is, first, the benefit of better people to people understanding. At the most basic level this is still a worthwhile objective and endeavour. Secondly, a greater understanding of Judaism can often lead to a better understanding of Christianity and Islam and hence Western society and some of the great revolutionary forces now at work, especially in the Middle East but also increasingly in Asia. Thirdly, in studying East and Near East Asia we see through a Not So Distant Mirror, to adapt Barbara Tuchman's title, the West in clearer relief.

It was in that wider sense that I spoke at the outset of this Colloquium as being a microcosm of encounters between two civilisations.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

In welcoming all of the distinguished guests who have accepted our invitation it would be an invidious task to single out any one in particular.

But I would ask your indulgence if I do single out some.

I believe all of you would want me to say a special welcome to Sir Zelman Cowen, former Governor General of Australia, and Malcolm Fraser, former Prime Minister of Australia.

Any conference would deem it an honour to welcome either man. But when we have the privilege to greet a former head of state and former head of government it is something of a special occasion. Our thanks to you, Sir Zelman, and to you, Malcolm, for being with us.

I also want to welcome Professor Sidney Shapiro, a distinguished Chinese scholar who comes to us from his home in Beijing. His presence here at this Colloquium, in its own way, makes history. We hope he will be able to welcome many more of his colleagues from China at future Colloquia.

In closing may I thank once more the co-sponsor of this Colloquium, Professor Dinstein; Professor Zwi Werblowsky, who contributed to the planning of this program; the President and Secretary General of the World Jewish Congress who have provided direct and welcome support for this venture; my honorary colleagues throughout the region in the Asian Pacific Jewish Association, in particular Association President, Leslie Caplan; and the professional staff of the Association.

And now Ladies and Gentlemen, let me conclude by recalling that I began my remarks to the First Colloquium by quoting the comment attributed to President John F. Kennedy at a dinner he gave for all of the Nobel Prize Winners then alive in the United States.

President Kennedy said that the White House had not seen such an illustrious collection of intellects since Thomas Jefferson had dined alone.

I should like to formally open this Colloquium by quoting another remark of President Kennedy's which may be even more appropriate.

In referring to modest beginnings when confronted with formidable tasks President Kennedy made famous the Chinese proverb: "Even a journey of a thousand miles must begin with a single step".

We made our first step in Singapore; we begin our second here today in Hong Kong.

