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Israel, 1992-1995.

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American Jewish Archives website.

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September 7, 1994  
2 Tishri 5755

The Honorable Yitzhak Rabin  
Prime Minister of Israel  
Jerusalem, Israel

Dear Mr. Prime Minister:

The American Reform movement has strongly supported your government and publicly endorsed its peace initiatives in the United States. We have worked to build political support in the Congress and Administration, and have made successful efforts to minimize the influence of those in the Jewish community who oppose your government's policies. The Union of American Hebrew Congregations recently urged all its rabbis in over 850 synagogues, representing a million and a half Jews, to speak about the peace process during the Holy Days, and build enthusiastic and wide-spread grass roots support.

We are, however, deeply concerned about the potential consequences of the ongoing negotiations with Shas. While we understand your desire to widen the coalition and strengthen your hand in future peace initiatives, we fear that the price you may pay to bring Shas into the government will cause grave harm to the character of Israeli society and bring lasting damage to Israeli-Diaspora relations.

The price that Shas is demanding - enshrining the religious status quo in a basic law and overturning Supreme Court decisions which are inconsistent with the new basic law - is in reality a fundamental change in the status quo. The status quo itself is anti-democratic, and your party should be at the forefront of the effort to change legislation which is inconsistent with democratic, pluralistic values. But to enshrine what has always been a political decision, temporary and limited to the life of the government, in a basic law, is to set back the cause of democratic enlightenment for years. To agree to overturn Supreme Court decisions would seriously undermine the rule of law.

September 7, 1994  
The Honorable Yitzhak Rabin  
Page two

For American Jewry and its relationship with Israel, the consequences of your agreeing to Shas' demands would be severe. It would diminish enthusiasm for the peace process, and make it very difficult for most American Jews to continue to be its primary advocate. Moreover, there would be significant further erosion in the feelings of partnership and mutual destiny with Israel that we labor so hard to instill. For many American Jews, succumbing to Shas' demands would be further indication that Israel is unwilling to accept their authenticity as Jews - despite being part of the vast majority of world Jewry which is not Orthodox.

We wish you strength and wisdom in your stewardship of the peace process in the years ahead. At the same time, we urge you to refrain from actions which will corrode the character and soul of the Jewish people.

With all our very best wishes for a shana tova u'metuka.

Bivracha,

Alexander M. Schindler

envelope marked  
personal & Conf.



COPY

✓

RABBI ALEXANDER M. SCHINDLER • UNION OF AMERICAN HEBREW CONGREGATIONS  
PRESIDENT 838 FIFTH AVENUE NEW YORK, NY 10021-7064 (212)249-0100

*Good*

February 6, 1995  
6 Adar I 5755

Consul General Colette Avital  
Israeli Consulate  
800 2nd Avenue  
New York, NY 10017

Dear Ambassador Avital:

Some time ago, I made inquiry in behalf of one of my congregants concerning Siemens. At the time, and after making your own inquiries, you gave them a clean bill of health.

Alas, my congregant just sent me the enclosed.

This is not by way of a complaint, merely to let you know for future reference. Hubner's response to Scharf made me cringe.

I hope that you are well.

Sincerely,

Alexander M. Schindler

907276  
2750

## POST LETTERS

### GERMANS LAG IN COMPENSATING WWII SLAVES

ERIC Breindel's excellent Op Ed column of Jan. 19 described the struggle of Hugo Princz to be compensated by both the German government and German firms for his forced labor during World War II ("Germans stick to 'principle' — and the price is decency").

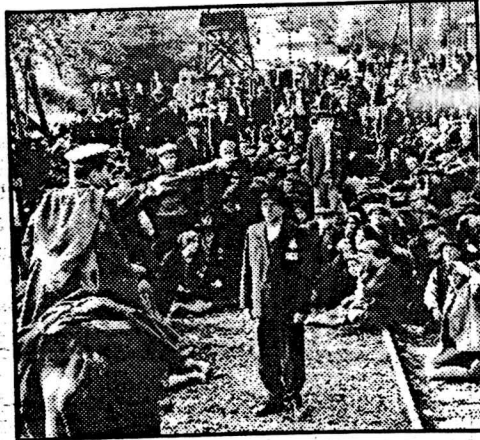
One must remember that many German firms were beneficiaries of concentration-camp slave labor and these companies, like the German government, are unwilling to compensate former slave laborers. Remarkably, many of these same firms conduct business in the United States through U.S.-based subsidiaries.

I recently contacted the Siemens company on behalf of my father, a Holocaust survivor, regarding compensation due him for work he performed for Siemens while he was interned at the Plaszow concentration camp (the camp in "Schindler's List"). Siemens was a Nazi contractor and was engaged in a number of building projects at Plaszow. My father, working under Siemens personnel, was forced to construct railroad platforms at Plaszow — probably the same platforms from which many of his family members and friends were subsequently transported to their deaths.

The letter that I received from Siemens in response to my request speaks volumes about the firm and, I suspect, about Germany as a whole and its reluctance to accept any measure of moral responsibility for its past actions. One Joachim Hubner of Siemens informed me that the Jewish workers used by Siemens during that time "were employed on a voluntary basis" (sic) and "remunerated in accordance with the regulations at the time."

Considering that Nazi regulations specifically prohibited Jews from carrying any currency and that my father, along with his fellow inmates, were systematically starved and beaten in Plaszow, the very insinuation by Herr Hubner that Jews were employed on a voluntary basis is outrageous and unconscionable.

The Simon Wiesenthal Center in L.A. informed me that Siemens has regularly maintained that its Jewish laborers were "volunteers" and is infamous for non-payment of compensation to former slave laborers. Further, the Center claims that Siemens is only one of a number of German



**LIBERATED:** Jewish slave laborers in Plaszow concentration camp are freed by Soviet cavalry in this scene from "Schindler's list."

firms operating in the U.S. that have not compensated slave laborers.

Since these firms are conducting business in the U.S., I would suggest that greater legislative efforts be made to pressure them to come to terms with their Holocaust victims.

JOSHUA SCHARF, Short Hills, N.J.

ERIC Breindel's column of Jan. 19 was very interesting. It brought to mind the story of a woman, since deceased, who was a U.S. citizen, born in Detroit, and taken back to Poland as an infant when her father and mother purchased a farm in Nakonowo, Poland. When Adolf Hitler's forces invaded Poland this woman, in her teens, was taken, along with her sister, who was born in Poland, and transported to Germany. There they were forced to work on farms for the duration of the war (about six years).

That woman was my wife's sister. We brought the family to America after the war.

JOHN R. DOZIER, JR., Maspeth

HUGO Princz and family received criminal treatment from Germany during WWII. They were also betrayed by us — their countrymen. You say that he is now the only living American who went through the Holocaust as a U.S. citizen. How many others did we fail? SUSAN SCHLOMANN, Freeport



COPY

file or  
discard

RABBI ALEXANDER M. SCHINDLER • UNION OF AMERICAN HEBREW CONGREGATIONS  
PRESIDENT 838 FIFTH AVENUE NEW YORK, NY 10021-7064 (212)249-0100

*Israel*

✓

October 21, 1994  
16 Heshvan 5755

Rabbi Helene Ferris  
Temple Israel of Northern Westchester  
Glengary Road  
Croton-On-Hudson, NY 10520

Dear Helene:

We have just received the enclosed response to Alex's letter to Sam Hollander. I thought you would be interested in having a copy.

I love their comment about sensitivities to others, what about our sensitivities?

Be that as it may, I hope all is well with you and Alan.

With warm regards, I am

Sincerely,

Edith J. Miller  
Assistant to the President

encl.

October 12, 1994  
WL.163

Rabbi Alexander Schindler  
Union of American Hebrew Congregations  
838 Fifth Avenue  
New York, NY 10021-7064  
USA

Dear Rabbi Schindler,

Thank you for your letter of October 5, 1994 to Mr. Shmuel Hollander, who has forwarded your letter to my office.


The Government of Israel recognizes that the issue of the right of women to partake in public prayer services at the Western Wall is of great importance not only to the citizens of Israel, but to Jews everywhere. I appreciate your concern in the matter and would like to update you on the recent decision taken by the Government.

Following the ruling of the High Court of Justice on May 17, 1994, the Directors-General Committee on Prayer Arrangements at the Western Wall, headed by the Director-General of the Prime Minister's Office, Mr. Shimon Sheves, is exploring ways to enable freedom of assembly and prayer at the site. It also agreed, however, that the sensitivities of others must be respected, and any offense to these sensitivities must be minimized.

The Government is committed to finding a solution by the end of the year, and has appointed the Prime Minister's Adviser on the Status of Women, Nava Arad, as an observer.

The Government is optimistic that with mutual tolerance, goodwill and respect, a satisfactory agreement can be reached.

Sincerely Yours,

  
Sara Ben-Shaul (Weiss), Adv.  
Committee Coordinator

October 5, 1994  
30 Tishri 5755

Samuel Hollender, Esq.  
Legal Advisor to the Prime Minister  
Office of the Prime Minister  
Jerusalem, Israel

Dear Mr. Hollender:

On behalf of the more than 850 Reform synagogues of the United States and Canada, I write to place before you the commitment of Reform Judaism to the right of women to gather at the Kotel, adorned by tallitot if they so choose, and with Torah in hand in order to pray and study together as a community of Jews.

As you and the members of the Commission you chair gather to deliberate on procedures to be followed in allowing women to pray collectively at the Kotel, I urge you to bear in mind the significant issue of religious pluralism. American Reform Jews and our counterparts in the burgeoning congregations of the Israel Movement for Progressive Judaism are deeply committed to religious pluralism as well as to the rights of women. To deny women the right to stand with the Torah at the Kotel to pray with solemnity and kavanah is alien to all that our faith stands for. It permits a small but vocal minority the right to determine the rights of women who serve Israel in a multitude of ways, including service in her armed forces.

May you be guided in your deliberations with understanding and concern for the rights of Jewish women, be they citizens of Israel or those who visit from foreign shores, for all who wish to meditate and pray at the Kotel which is so important a part of our history as a people.

With every good wish and eagerly awaiting your positive response, I am

Sincerely,

Alexander M. Schindler

cc: Rabbis Richard G. Hirsch & Uri Regev

*Helene Ferris*



✓

October 5, 1994  
30 Tishri 5755

Samuel Hollender, Esq.  
Legal Advisor to the Prime Minister  
Office of the Prime Minister  
Jerusalem, Israel

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With every good wish and eagerly awaiting your positive response, I am

Sincerely,

  
Alexander M. Schindler

cc: Rabbis Richard G. Hirsch & Uri Regev

October 5, 1994

Edie to Ammi

Note the enclosed....Helene Ferris requested that Alex write - he asked me to urge ARZA to write as well... and please share your letter with Helene Ferris.

9/28/94

Dear Rabbi Schindler,

Would you please write a similar letter to Mr. Hollander on behalf of Women of the Kotel. We need all the clout we can get!

Thanks so much.

Hebe Ferris

I'd appreciate a copy. Thank again.



THE  
UNITED  
SYNAGOGUE OF  
CONSERVATIVE  
JUDAISM

The Association of  
Conservative  
Congregations

August 26, 1994

Shmuel Hollander, Esq.  
Legal Advisor to the Prime Minister  
Office of the Prime Minister  
Jerusalem, Israel

Dear Mr. Hollander:

We write to you in your capacity as Chairman of the recently appointed governmental Commission to determine the procedure by which women can collectively gather for prayer with Torah and tallit at the Kotel.

The United Synagogue of Conservative Judaism, the association of 800 Conservative congregations representing nearly 2 million Conservative Jews in North America, is committed to religious pluralism throughout the world. Religious pluralism in Israel is an important concern for us and holds a significant position on our agenda. Thus, we want to express our sentiments in favor of the rights of women to gather for public prayer at the Kotel as one issue on that agenda.

We urge the Commission which you chair to recommend a process which would enable women to collectively gather for prayer at the Kotel with Torah and tallit. Representatives of The United Synagogue of Conservative Judaism are prepared to appear before the Commission in order to provide public testimony. It is our conviction that Halacha will support the permissibility of women to pray together with dignity and meaning.

We look forward to hearing from you with a positive response.

Sincerely yours,

*Alan Ades*

Alan Ades  
International President

*Jerome M. Epstein*  
Rabbi Jerome M. Epstein  
Executive Vice President

AA:JME/m

cc: Ze'ev Rosenberg, Esq.  
Dr. Pesach Schindler

Hollander.Ltr

Rapaport House  
155 Fifth Avenue  
New York, NY  
10010-6802  
212 • 533 • 7800  
Fax: 212 • 353 • 9439

Rabbi Helene Ferris

**Temple Israel**  
of Northern Westchester

Glengary Road, Croton-On-Hudson, N.Y. 10520

יועץ ראש הממשלה ומנהל הלשכה  
Head of the Prime Minister's Bureau

September 21, 1994  
ט"ז בתשרי התשנ"ה  
9Q.1694

Rabbi Alexander M. Schindler  
President  
Union of American Hebrew Congregations  
838 Fifth Avenue  
New York, New York 10021-7064  
U.S.A.

Dear Rabbi Schindler,

On behalf of the Prime Minister, Mr. Yitzhak Rabin, thank you for your letter of September 7, 1994.


We have a long-standing commitment to strong ties with the Diaspora and to encouraging active Jewish support for Israel. We especially value the efforts of the Union of American Hebrew Congregations and will continue to cultivate the unique relationship between us.

In its basic guidelines this Government agreed to the tradition of tolerance and the freedom of conscience and religion. It remains committed to upholding this agreement.

We trust that, together, we shall do the utmost to meet the challenges ahead and work for Israel and the Jewish people.

Best wishes for the New Year.

Sincerely yours,

  
Eitan Haber

SAC

August 10, 1994  
3 Elul 5754

Her Excellency Colette Avital  
Consul General of Israel  
200 Second Avenue  
New York, NY 10017

Dear Colette:

This is in response to your letter of August 9 concerning the Israel Relief Mission to Rwanda. I am pleased that the mission has been extended for it has done an extraordinary job in this great humanitarian effort.

We have raised over \$300,000 for this relief effort and have channelled it through the JDC. Indeed, funds are still coming in; thus I feel another request for assistance will be counterproductive.

Again I salute Israel on an outstanding mission of mercy.

With warm regards, I am

Sincerely,

Alexander M. Schindler



CONSULATE GENERAL  
OF ISRAEL IN NEW YORK

CONSUL GENERAL

הקונסוליה הכללית של  
ישראל בניו יורק

קונסול כללי

August 9, 1994

Dear Friend,

Having received positive response to my letter of July 20th, I am writing to inform you that the Israel Relief Mission to Rwanda has been extended by four weeks.

The mission, which includes a field hospital consisting of some 50 doctors and another 30 technicians, will continue its efforts until the High Holidays. The Israeli team is operating day and night, working under extremely difficult conditions, to save as many human lives as possible.

As you probably know, the expenses incurred by the Government of Israel are now assessed at 30-40 million shekel (between 10-13 million dollars). Therefore, we would be very grateful if members of your organization would assist us in these humanitarian efforts. Should your organization want to participate in this endeavor, a special fund has been established for this purpose. Contributions, made payable to "Israel Leman Plitai Rwanda," may be sent to my attention at the Israel Consulate, 800 Second Avenue, New York, NY 10017.

Thanking you for your support and assistance, I am

Sincerely,

*C. Avital*  
Ambassador Colette Avital  
Consul General

*fu*  
Tell her we  
raised about \$200,000.  
and channelled it  
through IDC so  
that an additional  
\$200,000 would be raised  
for the fund  
without being taken  
as a contribution  
Nonetheless, fund  
of efforts of Israel.

Q  
June 7, 1994  
28 Sivan 5754

Her Excellency, Ambassador Colette Avital  
Consulate General of Israel  
800 Second Avenue  
New York, NY 10017

Dear Colette:

It was gracious of you to write on the occasion of my becoming a recipient of an Honorary Doctorate from the College of the Holy Cross. Your congratulations and good wishes mean a great deal to me.

It was especially gratifying to read your warm words of commendation for my service to the Jewish people and the UAHC's commitment to the State of Israel. Many thanks.

With warm regards, in which Rhea joins, I am

Sincerely,

Alexander M. Schindler



CONSULATE GENERAL  
OF ISRAEL IN NEW YORK

CONSUL GENERAL



הקונסוליה הכללית של  
ישראל בניו יורק

קונסול כללי

May 27, 1994

Rabbi Alexander M. Schindler  
President, Union of American  
Hebrew Congregations  
838 Fifth Avenue  
New York, NY 10021-7064

Dear Rabbi Schindler,

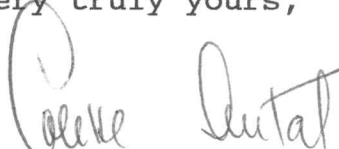
I would like to congratulate you on the honorary doctor of laws degree which you received from the College of the Holy Cross.

Your leadership of Reform Judaism has been characterized by a commitment to preserving and strengthening Jewish communities throughout North America. In addition, the UAHC has long maintained an unswerving dedication and devotion to the State of Israel, and its eternal capital Jerusalem.

I wish you and the UAHC continued success in the future.

Very truly yours,

212006

  
Ambassador Colette Avital  
Consul General

April 11, 1994  
30 Nisan 5754

Shimon Peres, Foreign Minister  
Foreign Ministry of Israel  
Jerusalem, Israel

Dear Minister Peres:

These are unsettling times for our people and we all pray the difficulties in attaining peace will be overcome so Israel may move forward to that cherished goal. We stand firmly with you and the Israeli Government.

It pleases me to tell you that under separate cover a copy of our newest video, "A Conversation with Shimon Peres," is being sent to you. We are very pleased with this video and I trust you, too, will find it to be to your liking. It certainly will give its viewers a wonderful look at Peres the man and the principles which guide your life.

With all good wishes and warm regards, I am

Sincerely,

Alexander M. Schindler

## MEMORANDUM

**TO:** Rabbi Alexander Schindler  
**FROM:** David P. Kasakove  
**RE:** Shimon Peres Cassette Tape  
**DATE:** April 7, 1994

---

Alex,

Enclosed is "A Conversation with Shimon Peres" video cassette on PAL .

I assume you will want to send this tape to Shimon Peres?

Thanks

*David*

*Mac 2*

*4/8  
sent tape back to Kasakove  
promised a letter.*

September 28, 1993

The Hon. Colette Avital  
Consul-General, State of Israel  
880 Second Avenue  
New York, NY

Dear Ambassador Avital:

The Young Professionals' Social Action Committee, People With A Purpose, of the New York Federation of Reform Synagogues, is planning to hold a special Shabbat Worship Service on Friday Evening, 12 November 1993. It is our intention to hold a dialog following the Service on the subject of the prospects for peace in the Middle East. Rabbi Alexander M. Schindler, President of the UAHC will serve as the moderator. Tentatively, we are planning to conduct the Service at Congregation Rodeph Sholom of New York City.

We would like to have you present the Israeli position in a dialog with a representative of the Palestinian position. If you agree to participate, would you find it compromising your position to have the Palestinian be an official member of the PLO? I would not invite anyone to represent the Palestinians without giving you the courtesy of giving your opinion.

Please let me know at your earliest convenience whether you will be able to participate in this event.

Sincerely,

Rabbi Allen S. Kaplan  
Director, NYFRS

*By Hand  
if not  
made  
no response!*



May 12, 1993  
21 Iyar 5753

Her Excellency Ambassador Colette Avital  
Consul General of Israel  
800 Second Avenue  
New York, New York 10017

Dear Colette:

I've had nothing but wonderful reports about your participation in the Reform movement's alternate program at Central Synagogue last Sunday. Everyone with whom I spoke was impressed that you not only came and spoke beautifully, but that you remained for the entire program. What a magnificent expression of support for the rights of all Jews to celebrate Israel and this special 45th Anniversary!

As a matter of fact, this letter is being dictated from the West Coast but I could not delay my words of gratitude until my return next week. Rhea and I left the city early Friday for engagements in Los Angeles, among them graduation at HUC-JIR. Our daughter received her Master's Degree and that date has been on my calendar for months. Thus, I simply could not be in New York on Sunday. Believe me, I was torn and wanted to be at our program.

With deepest gratitude and warm regards, I am

Sincerely,

Alexander M. Schindler



RABBI ALEXANDER M. SCHINDLER • UNION OF AMERICAN HEBREW CONGREGATIONS  
PRESIDENT 838 FIFTH AVENUE NEW YORK, NY 10021-7064 (212)249-0100

*a*

February 10, 1993  
18 Shevat 5753

Her Excellency The Israel Ambassador  
Colette Avital  
Consul General of Israel  
200 Second Avenue  
New York, NY 10017

Dear Colette:

I was most impressed by your presentation to our Executive Committee. You are superb! We New Yorkers, indeed the American Jewish community, could not have a finer representative of the State of Israel.

I am deeply grateful to you for taking the time from your very busy schedule to address us and I am delighted that our top leadership from every section of the United States and Canada had an opportunity to hear you.

May you have the strength to fulfill those tasks which you have set for yourself.

With repeated thanks and every good wish, I am

Sincerely,

Alexander M. Schindler

08/10/92

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# ACTIVITY REPORT

TRANSMISSION OK

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RABBI ALEXANDER M. SCHINDLER • UNION OF AMERICAN HEBREW CONGREGATIONS  
PRESIDENT 838 FIFTH AVENUE NEW YORK, NY 10021-7064 (212)249-0100

August 10, 1992  
11 AV 5752

The Hon. Shimon Peres  
Foreign Minister  
Foreign Ministry  
Jerusalem, Israel

Dear Shimon:

Following the WZO Congress I spent a few days in London and Boston before returning to my desk. Thus, this is my first opportunity to convey to you and your entire family my heartfelt condolences on the tragic death of your nephew Uzi. You have been in my heart and thoughts since I first learned the sad news and while I know mere words cannot serve to ease the pain of your loss, I write that you may know Rhea and I are thinking of you and all your dear ones.

It is my fond hope the beautiful memories you hold dear will be for a blessing always.

With deepest sympathy, I am

Sincerely,

Alexander M. Schindler



Q

August 20, 1990  
29 Av 5750

His Excellency, The Israeli Ambassador  
Moshe Arad  
Embassy of Israel  
Washington, DC 20008

Dear Moshe:

I regret that your tenure as Ambassador of Israel to the United States has come to an end. You have served with great devotion, intelligence and understanding and our community has been most fortunate in having the benefit of your leadership. You will be sorely missed on the American scene, personally as well as in your official capacity.

I much regret that we didn't have an opportunity to spend too much time together socially. Alas, the frenetic schedules which rule our lives made that difficult. But I am certain our paths will cross often in the future, certainly in Israel if not here in the U.S. And I do look forward to a continued association.

There will certainly be many opportunities to wish you well face-to-face and I do hope to see you before you leave for Israel. Alas, the luncheon planned by the Presidents' Conference conflicts with the meeting of the UAHC Executive Committee so I am unable to attend. I do hope you understand my absence and forgive me.

Rhea joins me in wishing you and Yaffa well. May the future bring much joy and fulfillment to you both. With every good wish and warm regards from house to house, I am

Sincerely,

Alexander M. Schindler