

**A quote worth Remembering...**

*If Poland does not "take steps toward restitution of Jewish property stolen [by the German Nazis and Soviet communists] during the Second World War ... [Poland] will be publicly attacked and humiliated" ... "They're gonna hear from us until Poland freezes over again; the time is now..." (1996)*

**Rabbi Israel Singer,  
General Secretary  
World Jewish Congress**

**Night of the Long Knives**

*From Norman Finkelstein's website*

Finkelstein comments: The three key figures in the shakedown of Swiss banks and European governments were Israel Singer, Burt Neuborne and Alan Hevesi. It has now been publicly acknowledged that all three are wretched crooks. One can't help but wonder, however, what happened to the TWENTY BILLION DOLLARS that, according to Edgar Bronfman, the World Jewish Congress extracted in the great Holocaust compensation racket. Simon Wiesenthal stated that about 10,000 Jewish survivors of the concentration camps, labor camps and ghettos were still alive in the year 2000. Dividing 10,000 into \$20,000,000,000 = \$2,000,000. Yet, most actual survivors report receiving either a pittance or nothing at all. On another sobering note, as pro bono Holocaust huckster Burt Neuborne fights in court to get his fair share of the Holocaust booty (well, Jesus, didn't he suffer?), his advocate is NYU professor Sam Issacharoff. Sam is my old Trotskyist sparring partner from college days. Back then everyone to the right of Mr. Permanent Revolution (he went on to head up the Spartacist Youth League) was a "petty-bourgeois" of one stripe or another. Now he's grazing in greener pastures, defending Holocaust hucksters. Both my late parents survived the death camps, while every member of their respective families on both sides was exterminated. They never received one cent of the Holocaust compensation monies collected by American Jewish organizations beginning in the early 1950s. But Burt Neuborne will get several million dollars. And now Sam will get a cut of Burt's cut. Who could have imagined back in college that Sam the Trot would one day be capitalizing (!) on my late parents' horrific suffering. O tempora, o mores. Sam can be reached at: samuel.issacharoff@nyu.edu.

**Bronfman:  
Singer took money**

03.20.2007 | *The Jewish Telegraphic Agency*

**By: Michael S. Arnold**

*(JTA Editor Lisa Hostein and Staff Writer Ben Harris in New York, and Correspondents Dinah Spritzer in Prague and Florencia Arbiser in Buenos Aires, contributed to this report.)*

In a letter intended to ease distress over the firing of World Jewish Congress official Israel Singer, the group's president wrote that Singer was fired because he was taking money without proper authorization or documentation.

NEW YORK (JTA) — World Jewish Congress President Edgar Bronfman says he dismissed Rabbi Israel Singer from the organization last week because Singer was taking money without proper authorization or documentation.

Bronfman made the allegations in a March 14 letter to European Jewish Congress President Pierre Besnainou. It came after WJC affiliates in Europe, Latin America and Israel expressed dismay about being notified in a conference call earlier that day that Singer - who had held a variety of top positions in the WJC over the past 30 years - had been fired.

Singer "helped himself to cash from the WJC office, my cash," Bronfman wrote in the letter, a copy of which JTA obtained.

"We thought we had that all cleared up, and then we discovered that he was playing the same game in Israel, taking cash from the office and never accounting for it."

He continued, "The final blow came when we discovered that he was playing games with his hotel bills in Jerusalem."

"Please understand that this was much harder on me than anyone else," Bronfman wrote. "It took me many weeks of crying to find out I was so badly used by a man I used to love."

Attempts to reach Singer on Tuesday afternoon through his attorney, Stanley Arkin, were unsuccessful.

On Monday, before JTA received the letter, Arkin had said: "We are currently trying to engage in an intelligent, constructive, and balanced dialogue with the WJC and its principals. Several previous statements made in the media have been strident and false. After more than three decades of his life spent at the core of the WJC and its many accomplishments, Israel Singer has much to say and at the appropriate time will make sure that history will chronicle with accuracy the story of this organization and the people who worked with him."

The latest developments come as the fallout from Singer's abrupt dismissal last week continue to roil the Jewish world.

Singer has been a major figure in Jewish life over the past three decades. A former chairman and secretary-general of the WJC - and a top official of the Claims Conference and the World Jewish Restitution Organization - he played a major role in winning billions of dollars from European banks and governments in restitution for victims of the Holocaust. He also helped to uncover the Nazi past of Kurt Waldheim, a former Austrian president and United Nations secretary-general.

Officials at the Claims Conference told JTA that Singer's status at the WJC has no bearing on his role there at least until July, when new directors and officers are elected.

Julius Berman, chairman of the Claims Conference, said he did not think the restitution negotiations with European governments would be affected by these developments.

"The substance of the arguments we make are much more powerful than the identity of the person who makes them," Berman said.

Founded in Geneva in 1936, the WJC is the umbrella organization for more than 100 local communities and is the putative representative of world Jewry.

The affair has brought to a head accusations by WJC affiliates that the organization suffers from a lack of transparency and democracy. Bronfman's letter was intended to quiet unease among WJC affiliates over the way Singer was terminated, but several sources from WJC affiliates told JTA off-the-record that they found the letter unconvincing.

In the course of a conference call March 20, members of the European Jewish Congress' executive board called on the WJC to hold a steering committee meeting by early May so that Besnainou could have input into the agenda for a WJC governing board meeting set for June 10-12 in Brussels.

In a confidential pre-call memo to EJC board members obtained by JTA, Besnainou wrote: "The decision to brutally dismiss Israel Singer is one of the last elements in this long list of unilateral and non democratic decisions."

However, several EJC members have said that the organization was now trying to move away from its initial harsh public comments and calm things down so that discussions with the WJC could take place outside the media spotlight.

The Latin American Jewish Congress also registered its displeasure with the decision, and Jack Terpins, its president, came to New York this week to talk to Singer and WJC Secretary-General Stephen Herbits.

"We're not taking sides in this fight," Terpins told JTA. "What we do not support is the way in which the decision was taken. It's unfortunate that we had to wash this dirty laundry in public."

Herbits rejected accusations that Singer's firing was handled improperly.

"Whoever says we don't have governance doesn't know what they are talking about. It is grandstanding of the worst order. There is no one more dedicated than I to proper governance," Herbits told JTA.

Israeli WJC officials, for their part, were further incensed by Bronfman's announcement on the March 14 call that Bobby Brown, director-general of the Israel branch, had been fired and the branch's funding cut off.

In the hours after the call, the European and Israeli affiliates submitted letters of protest to Bronfman. Besnainou conveyed his "strong disappointment" with the call and urged Bronfman not to take any action beyond ordering an audit of the Israeli branch, or the Europeans would consider withdrawing temporarily from the WJC.

The Israeli branch issued a similar threat, calling the conference call illegal because the Israelis' microphones apparently were inoperable, leaving them unable to voice opposition to the proceedings. Besnainou also reported trouble with his microphone.

Herbits denied any suggestion of foul play with the microphones and said an inquiry was under way.

Besnainou's letter appeared to have prompted Bronfman's response, in which he spoke of the difficulty of the decision but stressed his conviction that Singer had to go.

"That decision will stand. There are no threats that can make me change a path that means the integrity of the WJC," he wrote. "To reverse that decision would tell the world that while we want to clean up our act, we don't really mean it."

Singer has been under a cloud since the revelation several years ago that he secretly transferred \$1.2 million of WJC money to a Swiss bank account. The money subsequently was returned, but critics say the transfer was never fully explained.

A number of investigations were launched in the wake of that revelation. A 2006 report by the New York State Attorney General's Office found no evidence of criminality on Singer's part, but assailed the organization for lax record keeping and said Singer had violated his fiduciary duties by moving money around without proper authorization.

In 2005, a report by the accounting firm Price Waterhouse Coopers sought to analyze a decade's worth of financial documentation from WJC's Geneva office but was unable to account for \$3.8 million of WJC money. A separate Internal Revenue Service investigation into the organization's finances is under way.

In explaining WJC's action, Herbits told JTA that the WJC was continuing to comply with reporting requirements established by the New York Attorney General's Office, and that the information that had emerged since the initial probe essentially had forced the organization's hand.

In an interview with JTA, Herbits said he understood that people were upset about the process of the firing, but insisted that the substance of the action was correct. Bronfman made a similar distinction in his letter to Besnainou.

"Perhaps I should have consulted with the entire group before I made that painful decision," Bronfman wrote. "The reason I didn't is I knew that so many of you would have a real problem facing Israel's sickness and my need to start the cleaning process where it had to start."

"Please be calm. And think it through," he concluded. "I have only the best interest of the WJC in mind." □

**Polish priest rejects criticism after alleged anti-Semitic comments**

In a July 12, 2007 Associated Press article written in the International Herald Tribune - Europe: A Polish Roman Catholic priest on Thursday rejected criticism leveled against him and his conservative media empire after tapes surfaced in which he allegedly made anti-Semitic comments and called the Polish president's wife a "witch."

The Rev. Tadeusz Rydzyk, a powerful priest who runs a conservative-nationalist media empire that includes the ultra-Catholic station Radio Maryja and the national Nasz Dziennik newspaper, was allegedly caught on tape suggesting that Jews are greedy and Polish President Lech Kaczyński is subservient to Jewish lobbies.

The Polish weekly "Wprost" published excerpts from a lecture Rydzyk allegedly delivered this spring at a journalism school he established in the central Polish city of Toruń.

In the lecture, Rydzyk allegedly criticizes Kaczynski for bowing to pressure to compensate people - many of them Jews - for property nationalized by the postwar communist government.

"You know that it's about Poland giving U.S. \$65 billion dollars" to the Jews, Rydzyk reportedly said. "They will come to you and say: give me your coat. Take off your pants. Give me your shoes."

In an interview in Nasz Dziennik published Thursday, Rydzyk suggested the tapes were doctored to damage Radio Maryja during celebrations marking the 15th anniversary of the station's foundation at Jasna Gora, site of a Catholic shrine.

"Once they learned that the prime minister would be at Jasna Gora (for the celebrations), they prepared, they assembled some fictitious story," he said. "Besides, it's very easy to put together something like that. With the help of a computer one person can do it quickly."

He says he "never spoke against the first lady," but then appears to suggest he did indeed make the comments, only that "Wprost" twisted their meaning.

"If journalists distorted my words and the first lady has suffered or is suffering because of that, I'm very sorry about it," he said.

Rydzyk reportedly criticized the first lady for her support of abortion rights and was quoted as saying: "You witch! ... If you want to kill people, do it to yourself first."

Both President Lech Kaczyński and Prime Minister Jarosław Kaczyński, the president's twin brother, have sought to downplay the comments, saying they need to be absolute certainty the tapes are authentic before commenting on them.

However, international groups have slammed Rydzyk and called on Poland's leaders and the church to condemn the priest.

"Anti-Semitic content broadcast on Radio Maryja continues to include ugly stereotyping, conspiracy theories, claims that Jews were responsible for communist-era repression and accusations that Jews are using the Holocaust to leverage compensation payments from Poland," Anti-Defamation League leaders Glen S. Lewy and Abraham H. Foxman said in a joint statement.

Meanwhile, another leading Jewish human rights group called Rydzyk's reported remarks "outrageous," and even compared the priest to Hitler's chief of propaganda.

"This is outrageous - a Josef Goebbels in a collar," said Rabbi Marvin Hier, the founder and dean of the Los Angeles-based Simon Wiesenthal Center. "Once again, anti-Semitism has been injected into the mix of making the Jews, yet again, the scapegoats of another political crisis."

"Father Tadeusz Rydzyk is not merely an individual - as a priest he speaks for the Catholic church and it is the church that must discipline him." □

**Polish Women's Alliance  
Out of state members****WE NEED YOU**

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