

OUR MAN IN HAIFA

CARL ALPERT



The Stars Look Down and Laugh

HAIFA -- If the answers are to be found in the stars, surely all bone fide astrologers should come up with the same predictions. But to judge from the wide range of political, economic and military forecasts, it appears that Israel's astrologers are each using a different set of stars. The public is apt to become confused, not knowing which of the soothsayers can be relied upon.

Your columnist provides the service required. Twelve months ago, when the clairvoyants and crystal gazers were revealing their predictions for 1982, dire or auspicious, we carefully collected their words of wisdom, saved them, and last week took them out to compare the predictions made in 1981 with the realities of the 1982 we already know so well. Alas, few of them did well.

One of Israel's leading astrologers, Han Pecker, foresaw war for Israel - but against Jordan or Syria. He was convinced that Hussein would fall. The country would experience the worst financial crisis in its history, and at least one bank would collapse. Extending his vision overseas, Pecker predicted that Russia would invade Iran and a Balkan state; both Reagan and Mubarak would be in danger. To his credit, he foresaw a sharp confrontation between the U.S. and Israel which would endanger American economic aid to Israel. The domestic stock market would soar (it certainly has); 1982 would be a year of huge demonstrations, and of many strikes which would tie up industry. On one event he was almost pinpoint perfect: November 8, he said, would be a dangerous day. As a matter of fact, the catastrophic blast in Tyre, in which 90 lives were lost, took place on November 11.

Another highly popular astrologer is Herzl Lipshitz, but he had a bad year indeed. According to him, during 1982 the Sinai withdrawal would not be completed; Israel would enter a golden era, and its name and reputation in the world would be enhanced; Ezer Weizmann would make a political comeback and drop out of sight again; Syrian President Hafez Assad, Jordan's King Hussein and Iran's Ayatollah Khomeini would all be out of office, for one reason or another in 1982. Lipshitz did predict that Russia's Leonid Brezhnev would disappear, and that there would be fighting along Israel's northeastern front this year.

One of the cabinet members was rash enough to try his hand at the forecasting business. Finance Minister Yoram Aridor declared that in 1982 exports would grow by 15% (they dropped instead), and that inflation would be kept to 90% (it rose to 135% instead).

Ruth Eli prophesied that in the latter part of the year there would be some dramatic event which would restore Israel's confidence, rebuild morale and national morality. Well, as of this writing, there is still a short time to go before December 31.

Perhaps the best record was turned in by star-gazer Miriam Spector, though she was not perfect. She foretold isolation of Israel in the world, with some of the country's best friends criticizing it. Anti-Israel hostility would be widespread, and our good name would suffer. At home there would be galloping inflation and a real bull market on the stock exchange. Terrorist activity would continue, but she saw no war until 1984. Two years ago, our records show, she asserted that the Moslem revolution in Iran would succeed; that Israel's inflation would continue; that Peres had no political chances -- and whoever would be elected President of the United States would be assassinated in office. (They tried!) On the other hand, last year she predicted that Shimon Peres would become Prime Minister.

Miriam Benyamini, who in the previous year had assured her public that Labor would win the Israel elections, that Israel would strike oil, and that Khomeini would be finished, this year announced that Arik Sharon would become a moderate and would advocate giving up occupied territories. She also told that before the year was up Dayan would make headlines in a dramatic way - how, she did not say.

On one subject most of the astrologers agree. From 1982 to the middle of 1983, when Saturn meets Pluto, a very dangerous situation will exist, leading possibly to a vast world war. Chilling thought. Hopefully, this prediction will be as accurate as most of the others.

WOMAN HOSPITALIZED FEARS FOR SON'S LIFE

NEW YORK -- The National Conference on Soviet Jewry has received word that Mrs. Ida Milgrom has been hospitalized in Moscow, as a result of extreme emotional stress.

She had hoped to meet with prison officials to obtain information on her son's condition and planned to remain there until the authorities would release details. Mrs. Milgrom, who has described her son as "courageous" and a "fighter" for his rights, fears that the hunger strike could lead to Shcharansky's death.

Her fears are shared by Shcharansky's wife, Avital, who lives in Jerusalem and who has been in the United States for the past

eight weeks on her husband's behalf. Mrs. Shcharansky has not seen her husband since 1974 when she was permitted to emigrate.

Super Sunday 1983

NEW YORK, N.Y. -- With less than two months remaining before United Jewish Appeal's third annual National Super Sunday on January 23, 1983, planning is moving into high gear, according to Jerome J. Dick, UJA Super Sunday National Chairman.

On Super Sunday '83, which marks the opening of the "public phase" of the 1983 UJA/community campaign in many areas, volunteers all over the United States will make tens of thousands of telephone calls in an attempt to reach as many Jewish households as possible and seek their commitments to the Regular Campaign and Israel Special Fund.

"Super Sunday '82 was a huge success," said Dick, a UJA National Vice Chairman who was also chairman of the first two national phoneathons. "More than 35,000 volunteers in 139 U.S. communities raised almost \$26.9 million to meet Jewish needs in Israel, around the world and in their own communities. That was a record amount for a one-day mass appeal.

"Our goal for Super Sunday '83," he continued, "is to involve 160 communities and raise \$30 million -- to reach more people and raise more money in a single day than ever before. Our goals are higher because Jewish needs are greater. Super Sunday this year will seek crucial additional pledges to the Israel Special Fund to help the Jewish Agency maintain vital humanitarian and educational programs endangered by the enormous economic impact of 'Operation Peace for Galilee'."

With such a mandate, in addition to the record demands of the Regular Campaign, Dick said, "Super Sunday represents a challenge -- and an opportunity -- of historic proportions."

Among the event's attractive and proven campaign benefits, Dick indicated, is its effectiveness in reaching out to potential new volunteers and new givers and in creating community-wide involvement.

Although most communities are holding Super Sunday on the January 23rd national date, some have scheduled the event for other dates, depending on their own individual campaign calendars.

Happy Hanukkah

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