

# JTA daily news bulletin

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Published by Jewish Telegraphic Agency / 165 West 46th Street / New York, New York 10036

Vol. LXI - 66th Year

Thursday, April 14, 1983

No. 72

**At The Gathering Of Jewish Holocaust Survivors;  
FROM ALL OVER THE U.S. SURVIVORS  
GATHERED TO RECALL THE PAST AND TO  
VOW THAT IT WILL NEVER HAPPEN AGAIN**  
By Helen Silver

WASHINGTON, April 13 (JTA)-- They could be your average group of tourists to the nation's capital with their cameras, raincoats, and I.D. badges except that those badges said "American Gathering of Jewish Holocaust Survivors," and the hometowns listed were Lodz, Kovno, Warsaw, and other European towns. The I.D. cards also bore the names of Bergen-Belsen, Buchenwald, Maidanek, Auschwitz, Birkenau and other Nazi death camps.

The 15,000 survivors and their relatives who assembled to attend this conference here represented "an unparalleled number of participants not only of survivors but in the history of the American Jewish community," according to a Gathering official.

To help house the delegates, over 400 people in the area offered their homes, including non-Jews, many of whom sent flowers. Hundreds of volunteers, both Jewish and Christian, organized by the United Jewish Appeal Federation of Greater Washington, helped with many tasks. At noon today, the closing day, Washington churches of all faiths rang their bells as a token of their solidarity.

One of the primary tasks of the Gathering at Washington's huge new downtown convention center was the process of matching survivors to long-lost friends and relatives. A computer containing names of 35,000 Holocaust survivors was set up to facilitate this task. The first two people to be reunited were Ellie Oking from Philadelphia with his relative Sidney Bachner of California. Soon there were additional reunions; most, however, did not locate the loved ones they sought, lost so long ago.

## Multi-Faceted Activities

Throughout the three days, the crowds attended plenary sessions and workshops, visited the numerous booths of the major American Jewish organizations and other institutions such as Yad Vashem, and just enjoyed mingling with one another.

One section of the huge center which attracted many visitors was the exhibit, "The Artist as Witness: Art By Survivors." In many different media the artists, Holocaust survivors, had chronicled their heart-searing memories of the doomed ghettos and the indignities, punishments and death in the camps of Hitler's "Final Solution."

Many of the conferees also examined the scale model of the future United States Holocaust Memorial Museum to be established in two old U.S. government buildings near the Washington Monument on the mall. The transfer of these buildings which resemble concentration camp barracks took place today when Vice President George Bush presented the keys to the famed writer, Elie Weisel, chairman of the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Council.

Another feature of the Gathering was the continuous showing of several films about the Holocaust and taking of videotape testimonies for the Yale University Documentary and Research Center.

The second day of the gathering was devoted to discussing the role of children of survivors, the second generation. These young people attended in large numbers and many brought their children to include the third generation. The Jewish Telegraphic Agency asked some delegates how they felt about attending the conference and the inclusion of the second generation.

Esther and Abe Feigenbaum of Chattanooga, Tenn., who both lived in the Kovno Ghetto, expressed a positive opinion about the value of the huge reunion of survivors. Mr. Feigenbaum said, "My feeling is that the second generations, children of Holocaust survivors, must assume the responsibilities of making sure it is not forgotten for future generations, for posterity."

Helen Milich of Flushing, N.Y., who was sent from Lodz, Poland, to several internment camps, was liberated when she was 19 years old and came to the U.S. in 1949. She felt somewhat sadly that the Gathering "was almost like reliving those days ... there are no words." Although she is proud of the life she made for herself in the U.S. and her fine family, she said, "There is still so much heartache, so much turmoil inside you because you know that your life would have been entirely different."

One of the two-generation families attending, that of Esther Elbaum of Whitestone, N.Y., herself a survivor and widow of a survivor, also used the Gathering for a family reunion. Her three children and daughter-in-law came from both east and west coasts.

Her son, Stanley Elbaum of Woodland Hills, Ca., said, "The children of survivors have to carry on and continuously promote the fact that the Holocaust will never die. The only way that it will live on is by the children of the Holocaust survivors being involved in this type of event ... Next year the children of Holocaust survivors are staging a conference themselves."

## 'A Happening'

Like most conferences, the Gathering was a mixture of formal speeches and informal discussions, asking questions and pondering the right future policies -- but it will be many a day before Washington, a city which hosts hundreds of conventions each year, sees a conference as unique, emotional, and appreciated as the American Gathering of Jewish Holocaust Survivors. It could be truly described as "a happening."

**ISRAELI OFFICIAL REJECTS VIEW THAT  
WEST BANK SETTLEMENTS ARE A BARRIER  
TO ARABS AGREEING TO TALK TO ISRAEL**  
By David Friedman

WASHINGTON, April 13 (JTA) -- Dan Meridor, secretary of the Israel Cabinet, rejected today the argument that the Israeli settlements on the West Bank are a barrier to Jordan and other Arab countries agreeing to negotiate with Israel.

Meridor, in a discussion sponsored by the American Enterprise Institute (AEI), said that the United States offered King Hussein of Jordan to "put heavy pressure" on Israel to freeze the settlements if Jordan

entered the negotiations. But when Hussein announced Sunday that he would not join the talks, he blamed the Palestine Liberation Organization, not Israel, because the King considers the PLO a "greater danger" to his regime than Israel, Meridor declared.

He said that Hussein could have put Israel in a "very difficult position" with the United States. But he noted that Hussein, unlike the "courageous" late Egyptian President Anwar Sadat is "afraid" because he remembers what happened to Sadat and to his own grandfather and brother, all of whom were assassinated. Meridor stressed that the main concern of the Arab regimes is with "survival."

He emphasized that the U.S. needs to give "very substantial backing" to Lebanon and Jordan if it wants them to negotiate with Israel and not wait for "a consensus" of the Arab world or the backing of the PLO or Saudi Arabia. He said if the U.S. was not seeking Saudi approval, Israel would now have a normalization agreement with Lebanon.

#### The Road To Peace

"If you want peace, you have to do it step by step, one by one," Meridor said. He said the only consensus in the Arab world is "hostility" to Israel as a non-Arab state. He said Sadat defied the Arab consensus in seeking peace with Israel and if the U.S. had waited for Saudi approval before seeking a peace treaty, Israel would still be in Sinai.

Harold Saunders, who was Assistant Secretary of State for Near Eastern and South Asian Affairs when the Camp David agreements were negotiated and is now a resident scholar at the AEI, said that the U.S. believed that one of the reasons the Arabs refused to join the Camp David process was that the continuing settlements on the West Bank meant that the negotiations were not "serious." He suggested that as a "confidence-building step" Israel put a freeze on the settlements.

Meridor rejected this, noting that Israel did freeze settlements for three months after the Camp David agreements, and the Arabs did not join in the negotiations. He also said that after President Reagan's September 1 peace initiative, Israel announced the establishment of five new settlements. But after that, for months, no new settlements were announced and still there was no Arab movement toward negotiations, he said.

The Israeli official stressed that if Hussein comes to the negotiations without preconditions he could discuss the settlements, borders or anything else. But he noted that Israel could not enforce a Jordanian law that prohibits Jews from living in any part of Judaea and Samaria.

#### The Camp David Framework

But Meridor stressed that Hussein would have to come to the talks under the Camp David process. He said Israel would accept Palestinians as part of the Jordanian negotiating team. But he pointed out that whenever an Arab is willing to talk to Israel he is branded as a traitor, and in some cases, assassinated. He said with the decline of the PLO, perhaps more Palestinians will be willing to negotiate.

Meridor explained that Israel rejected the Reagan initiative even though it was based on the Camp David agreements because it was worded in a manner in which to accept it, meant approving all of its proposal. He said if someone wanted Israel to reject it, it could not have been presented in a better form. He added that Israel also rejected it because of the "way it was done," with the Reagan Administration discussing it secretly with Jordan

without Israel's knowledge in violation of a U.S. agreement with Israel.

Meridor, who was named to his job a year ago, is in the U.S. to explain Israel's position to officials and the media. Asked if Premier Menachem Begin is playing a lesser role, Meridor said that he is somewhat subdued since the death of his wife, Aliza, last November, but that there is no change in the "firmness" of his ideas or in his handling of the government.

#### ARIDOR URGES JORDAN TO START TALKS WITH ISRAEL WITHOUT PRECONDITIONS By Yitzhak Rabi

NEW YORK, April 13 (JTA) -- Israel's Finance Minister, Yoram Aridor, called on Jordan last night "to free itself" from the chains of the extremists in the Arab world and start negotiations with Israel without any preconditions.

"There is no chance for peace based upon the consent of the PLO," Aridor told an Israel Bond Dinner last night at the Pierre Hotel here. "So let us go back to the Camp David accords and ask Jordan to join the negotiations under the framework of Camp David," the Israeli Minister said, adding that in order to achieve peace Hussein should show the courage of the late Egyptian President Anwar Sadat.

Aridor charged that Israel's insistence on direct negotiations and its desire to have full peace with its neighbors are not "understood" by the United States and other countries. "We want peace and normalization of relations with Lebanon and we are told that time is not ripe for peace between the two countries. We want peace with Jordan and we are told 'stop the settlements,'" Aridor said.

He recalled President Reagan's statement in 1981 that the settlements are not illegal. "Why should we be requested to stop something that is legal?" Aridor asked, turning to the audience, he said: "Would you agree that any part in the U.S. be closed for the Jews? Why should Jews be barred from settling any place in Eretz Yisrael?"

Aridor said that in spite of the friendship between Israel and the U.S. and all the thanks Israel owes America, Israelis themselves will continue to decide on matters concerning their security. He added that the help given to Israel by the U.S. "should never be used to pressure us or used as a weapon against us."

Last night's dinner was attended by members of the Mediterranean-Dead Sea Canal Founders and the Prime Minister's Club. At the end of the evening it was announced that \$8.8 million in new 1983 Israel Bonds commitments and cash payment on previous commitments were made during the evening.

The dinner also served as the occasion for honoring David Zysman for his 35 years of dedicated service to Israel. Zysman, one of the founders of the Israel Bonds in 1951, is leaving the organization to accept the position of vice president of Yeshiva University.

#### SHULTZ WOULD LIKE TO SEE ARAB LEAGUE REVOKE RABAT MANDATE TO PLO By David Friedman

WASHINGTON, April 13 (JTA) -- Secretary of State George Shultz indicated yesterday that he would like to see the Arab League revoke the 1974 Rabat conference mandate in which it gave the Palestine Liberation Organization the sole power to represent the Palestinian people.

"I wonder if it is not going to become apparent to people that when you seem to give such power to a radical group you have made a mistake," Shultz said at a press conference. The Secretary did not explicitly call for the Arab League to revoke its mandate, but noted that such power when given should be "exercised con-

structively." He said that there is a saying in the U.S. that applied to this: "Use it or lose it."

Shultz stressed that the U.S. is "determined to stick with" President Reagan's September 1 peace initiative. He said it offers "a historic opportunity for peace." He added that the U.S. was "disappointed" when King Hussein of Jordan announced he would not join negotiation especially since it appeared he was ready to announce his decision to join the talks. But he stressed that the U.S. agrees with Hussein that he had to reject the new proposal which was made by the PLO.

However, Shultz, said that for Hussein to join, he needs the support of his "brothers in the Arab world" in order to make any agreement reached "meaningful." He said that Hussein would need Palestinian representatives on any negotiating team.

But Shultz made it clear that these Palestinians would not be members of the PLO. He noted that the Palestinians on the West Bank have "not had a happy life." But he said the way to improve their lot is not through violence but through negotiations for peace. Shultz stressed that there is no "alternative" to negotiations.

He said "almost by punctuation" a PLO moderate was murdered in Portugal. He was referring to the assassination of Dr. Issam Sartawi who was gunned down last Sunday in the lobby of the hotel where the Socialist International was holding its congress, to which he was a delegate. The Secretary of State said that "the message" from this is that the end result of a Palestinian murdered by another Palestinian "does nothing for the Palestinians."

On other matters, Shultz said he had no plans to go to the Middle East himself. When asked whether increased pressure was needed on Israel, the Secretary replied with a terse "No." He said that the "key to peace is that itself; that is the incentive that has to drive people."

#### POPE PAYS TRIBUTE TO MEMORY OF JEWS WHO DIED IN THE WARSAW GHETTO

ROME, April 13 (JTA) — Pope John Paul II paid tribute today to the memory of the Jews who died in the Warsaw Ghetto uprising 40 years ago. They were "our brothers and sisters who suffered with us the tests of the terrible Nazi occupation and received a cruel death," the Pontiff told some 40,000 people in St. Peter's Square gathered for his weekly general audience.

The Warsaw Ghetto uprising "was a desperate cry for the right to live, to be free and for the salvation of human dignity," the Pope said. He repeated the words he said when he visited the site of the Auschwitz death camp in 1979 that it was most tragic that the Jews "who first received the command not to kill" were themselves victims of terrible bloodshed over the centuries.

The Polish-born Pope spoke in his native language and prayed to the Madonna of Jasna Gora, a religious icon especially sacred to Polish Catholics. A delegation from the Polish government attended the audience, headed by the minister of religions, Jerzy Kubersky.

#### REFORM RABBI RECEIVES ASSURANCES THAT PLO WILL NOT TAKE PART IN THE WARSAW GHETTO CEREMONIES

NEW YORK, April 13 (JTA) — A delegation of 24 leaders of the Union of American Hebrew

Congregations (UAHC) left tonight for Poland after receiving assurances that there was no truth to news reports that a representative of the PLO would place a memorial wreath at the Warsaw Ghetto monument at ceremonies marking the 40th anniversary of the ghetto uprising next Tuesday.

Rabbi Alexander Schindler, president of the UAHC and leader of the delegation, said he had cabled the organizers of the commemoration that "the participation of those who murder Jewish women and children and who celebrate the slaughter of innocents would make a hideous mockery of everything for which this commemoration stands." He asked for assurances that Fud Yassim, chief of the PLO mission in Warsaw, who had said he would place a wreath at the monument, would not be permitted to do so.

In reply, Schindler said today, he received a telephone call from Szymon Szumiel, director of the Jewish State Theatre in Poland and a member of the organizing committee, "categorically denying" the report and calling it "a provocation." Szumiel said that only Jewish organizations and Polish groups that had fought against the Nazis would be permitted to lay wreaths at the monument.

"Based upon these assurances," Schindler said, "we decided to go ahead with our mission."

#### BERMAN URGES REAGAN TO RENEW U.S.-ISRAEL MEMO OF UNDERSTANDING

NEW YORK, April 13 (JTA) — Julius Berman, chairman of the Conference of Presidents of Major American Jewish Organizations, has sent a telegram to President Reagan urging him "to renew the U.S.-Israel Memorandum of Understanding" as "the most appropriate response to the refusal of Jordan to enter the Camp David process."

Berman said that response should also include revocation of the ban on the sale of F-16 jet fighters-bombers to Israel and restoration of "the American-Israeli alliance as the foundation stone of our country's policy in the Middle East."

The memorandum of understanding for strategic cooperation was signed in November, 1981 by Defense Secretary Caspar Weinberger and the then Israeli Defense Minister, Ariel Sharon. It was suspended by the U.S. in December, 1981 after the Knesset voted to annex the Golan Heights.

Berman sent his telegram to Reagan after the Jordanian Cabinet announced Sunday that it would not negotiate with Israel on behalf of the Palestinians because of unacceptable conditions demanded by the Palestine Liberation Organization.

Berman told the President, "Four years of unsuccessful attempts to cajole, bribe, beg, beseech, implore and importune King Hussein of Jordan to come to the peace table have ended in failure. Once again the Arab world has refused to accept the legitimacy of the State of Israel and rejected the possibility of peace with the Jewish state."

Berman said that by renewing the memorandum of understanding and lifting the ban on the F-16s the U.S. "would serve notice to the world that America stands by its friends and supports those who are committed to peace. Such a step would also serve notice that if Jordan expects to retain its friendship with America, it must negotiate in good faith without further delay ... That is the only effective way to get King Hussein to talk peace."

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CORRECTION: A story from Toronto in the April 8 Bulletin on Prime Minister Andreas Papandreu of Greece should have stated that he received an honorary doctor of laws degree from York University, not New York University.

## CONSERVATIVE RABBIS REJECT BY A NARROW MARGIN THE MEMBERSHIP OF A REFORM-ORDAINED WOMAN RABBI IN THE RABBINICAL ASSEMBLY

DALLAS, Tex., April 13 (JTA) — American Conservative rabbis, meeting at the 83rd annual convention here of their Rabbinical Assembly, rejected yesterday by narrow margins the application of a Reform ordained woman rabbi for membership by the first roll-call vote in the history of the RA. A vote of approval would have made Rabbi Beverly Magidson the first woman Conservative rabbi.

The name of Rabbi Magidson, a hospital chaplain ordained by the New York school of the Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion in 1979, was submitted to the convention along with the names of six male rabbis.

There are two procedures for admission to the RA and to formal status as a Conservative rabbi. One is by ordination by the rabbinical school of the Jewish Theological Seminary of America. The other is by a process in the RA for rabbis ordained under other Jewish auspices. During the past 40 years, some 500 rabbis have been admitted by that process.

Magidson and the six male rabbis all had been examined and approved by the RA membership committee, the RA executive council and circulation of their applications among all 1,150 RA members. The final step is a 75 percent vote of approval at an RA convention.

### 'An Extra Dimension'

Rabbi Wolfe Kelman, RA executive vice president, had told the Jewish Telegraphic Agency, prior to the vote yesterday, that because applicants had passed the tests of approval by the RA membership committee and its executive council, the 75 percent acceptance vote at conventions was routine but that since Magidson was a woman, her application had "an extra dimension."

Kelman's suggestion that Magidson's application presented a problem was borne out by results of the voting at the convention yesterday. The six male rabbis were admitted by the required 75 percent of the votes of rabbis "present and voting."

For Magidson's application, two votes were taken. She failed the required 75 percent by close margins. On the first ballot, 278 rabbis voted, 206 for and 72 opposed, three short of the required 75 percent. That vote was by the procedure of each of the 278 rabbis present standing and indicating his position orally.

The unprecedented roll-call tally took place on the second vote when an additional seven rabbis came in for the vote, which was 210 for and 75 opposed, four short of the required 75 percent.

Magidson said, in a telephoned statement from her home in St. Louis, that she would apply again for admission but did not indicate whether it would be at the 1984 convention. Rabbi Kelman said he had no information as to whether she would apply next year.

### A Bitterly Fought Issue

The issue of admitting women to the Conservative rabbinate has been one bitterly fought in recent years, with three successive RA conventions going on record in favor of the Jewish Theological Seminary ending its policy of refusing to accept women as rabbinical candidates.

Rabbi Arnold Goodman of Atlanta, Ga., RA president, commenting on the voting on Rabbi Magidson, said: "It is a tribute to the members that they are willing to take a public position on this most sensitive issue."

Goodman, who voted for Magidson's acceptance, also said that "obviously the admission of women rabbis will come." He added that "it is obvious that an overwhelming majority of the members support admission of women into the Rabbinical Assembly, and I feel this vote reflects the feeling of our total membership."

He expressed the hope that the issue would continue to be debated within the Conservative movement and called upon the Jewish Theological Seminary, "as the training institution of the movement, to reassess its current policy in the light of today's voting and to ordain women as rabbis in the Conservative movement."

### Summary Of Opposing Views

Kelman summarized the opposing views expressed during the three hours of heated debate that preceded the voting. He said that those Conservative rabbis favoring Rabbi Magidson's admission supported "an equalization of the role of men and women in Judaism so that women can participate fully in the religious life of the Jewish people."

He said those opposing such a step believe that it would be "a revolution in traditional practice which ought not to be done lightly." He also noted that some Conservative rabbis feel that the RA should not admit women as members as long as the Jewish Theological Seminary refuses to ordain them.

### U.S. DELEGATIONS IN ISRAEL

#### STUDYING LESSONS OF LEBANON WAR

TEL AVIV, April 13 (JTA) — Two American armed forces delegations are now in Israel, studying the lessons to be learned from the fighting in Lebanon, according to Maariv today. One delegation represents the U.S. Air Force, and the other is made up of ground forces experts, the paper said. Other delegations and experts are scheduled in the coming weeks and months, the paper said.

The Defense Ministry has not confirmed the presence here of the American delegations. But an earlier refusal to allow such study missions, imposed by former Defense Minister Ariel Sharon as a sign of displeasure with the Administration's attitude towards Israel, has been overturned by his successor, Moshe Arens.

### RESOLUTION ON SHCHARANSKY

WASHINGTON, April 13 (JTA) — A resolution in the House calling for the Soviet Union to immediately release Prisoner of Conscience Anatoly Shcharansky and allow him to emigrate to Israel was passed unanimously yesterday.

The resolution, which was introduced by Rep. Richard Ottinger (D. N.Y.), and which had 219 co-sponsors, also urged President Reagan and Secretary of State George Shultz to raise the issue "in strongest terms" with Soviet officials. The resolution expressed the opinion of the House and does not carry the force of law.

Ottinger said the U.S. must bring up the subject of Shcharansky and other imprisoned Soviet Jews at the April 19 negotiations on the Helsinki human rights accord in Madrid. The lawmaker said the Soviet treatment of Shcharansky "clearly violates Soviet obligations under international law and makes a mockery of their stated commitment to the Helsinki agreement."