

**KOHL CALLS FOR PROBE INTO NAZI  
PAST OF BITBURG REGION DISTRICT  
ADMINISTRATOR WHO IS TO PARTICIPATE  
IN CEREMONIES AT BITBURG CEMETERY**

By David Kantor

BONN, May 2 (JTA) -- Chancellor Helmut Kohl today hastily called for an investigation into the Nazi past of Fritz-Rudolph Gasper, the district administrator of the Bitburg region, who is scheduled to participate with Kohl and President Reagan in the wreath-laying ceremonies at the Bitburg war cemetery Sunday.

Kohl acted after Deputy Foreign Minister Alois Mertes informed him that he had received information from the Jewish community in Bonn that Gasper had been an SS member. Gasper later confirmed this. In a telephone interview he said he was recruited into the Waffen SS on June 1, 1943 with the rank of "Unterscharfuhrer", the equivalent of sergeant.

He also confirmed that before that he had been a member of the Hitler Jugend. But, according to Gasper, a de-Nazification court in Koblenz issued him a certificate on November 25, 1948 attesting that he had been forced to join the SS. The certificate has been sent to the Chancellery here for further study to confirm Gasper's claim.

Gasper, who is 60, served in a Waffen-SS tank unit known as "Hitlerjugend." Members of that division will be among the 1,000 former SS officers who will be holding a reunion in the Bavarian town of Nesselwang tomorrow.

Gasper denied that his unit participated in the Battle of the Bulge in the Ardennes in December 1944 during which Waffen SS massacred more than 100 disarmed and bound U.S. prisoners of war. He said it was stationed south of Warsaw at that time. The Waffen SS men buried at Bitburg took part in the Battle of the Bulge.

**Urging By Theologians**

In another development today, a group of German Roman Catholic and Protestant theologians and scholars has urged Chancellor Kohl and Reagan not to visit the Bitburg cemetery Sunday. In a letter to the two leaders, the group said the visit would amount to an act of "suppression of German history" and would add to the sufferings of Nazi victims. Among the signatories were Helmut Gollwitzer of Berlin and Dorothee Soelle of Hamburg.

Meanwhile, government spokesman Peter Boenisch said today that Kohl and Reagan, at their first private meeting, confirmed their intention to go to Bitburg in order to focus on the development of democracy in Europe since the end of World War II and German-American friendship.

According to Boenisch, Reagan told Kohl that the American people and government have rejected the thesis of collective guilt and that this goes back to the time of the Nuremberg war crimes trials.

**ARCHBISHOP O'CONNOR FEELS REAGAN  
WAS ILL-ADVISED TO VISIT BITBURG**

NEW YORK, May 2 (JTA) -- Disclosing that he

sent a telegram to the White House last Sunday urging President Reagan not to visit the military cemetery in Bitburg where Nazi SS troopers are buried, Archbishop John O'Connor of New York said yesterday "I am not convinced that he (Reagan) was advised to do the right thing."

O'Connor, who spoke in response to a question after a youth rally at Yankee Stadium in The Bronx, said, however, that he praised the President on his decision to visit the Bergen-Belsen concentration camp site during his current German visit.

The Archbishop, who often recalls the strong effect a visit to the Dachau concentration camp several years ago had on him, said that he is willing to forgive but never to honor or forget those who perpetrated the crimes during World War II.

He stated: "I cannot forget it as a Christian and I am grateful that it is our Jewish brothers and sisters who keep reminding us. It must be seared into our memories."

**VANDALS DAUB ANTI-SEMITIC GRAFFITI ON  
GRAVESTONES IN U.S. MILITARY CEMETERY**  
By Edwin Eytan

PARIS, May 2 (JTA) -- An American military cemetery overlooking the Normandy beaches was desecrated last night by vandals who smeared anti-Semitic graffiti on gravestones and on a monument engraved with the names of 9,836 American soldiers who died during the Allied landings in Normandy on June 6, 1944. About 100 of them were Jews.

The cemetery, facing Omaha Beach, was visited by President Reagan last June during the Allied commemoration of the 40th anniversary of "D-Day". The desecrations are believed to have been motivated by the world-wide protests against Reagan's visit to the German military cemetery at Bitburg Sunday.

Cemetery staff members who went to the war monument to raise the flag this morning found it covered with slogans in thick black ink, such as "Reagan Equals a Jew", "Zionists are Nazis" and, the largest of all, "Reagan Don't Give in to the Jews." Several of the daubings were signed "PLO."

**TOP GERMAN OFFICIAL DEFENDS  
REAGAN'S VISIT TO BITBURG**

By Yitzhak Rabi

NEW YORK, May 2 (JTA) -- A top West German official who represents the Bitburg electoral district in the German Bundestag defended today President Reagan's visit Sunday to the military cemetery in Bitburg where Waffen SS soldiers are buried and said that had the President decided to withdraw his visit it would be considered by the German people as buckling to domestic pressure.

The official, Dr. Alois Mertes, Minister of State in the Foreign Office of West Germany, referred to the Bitburg visit after he addressed the 79th annual meeting of the American Jewish Committee at the Waldorf Astoria Hotel where more than 250 Jewish leaders participated. The five-day meeting will conclude Sunday.

The German Minister said in reply to a reporter's question, that the German people view the visit by

Reagan to Bitburg as a "mourning ceremony." He said that the Germans make a distinction between various members of the Waffen SS, suggesting that not all of the Waffen soldiers were Nazis.

"For us this issue (Waffen SS) is more complicated," he said. But asked why the German government could not transfer the site of Reagan's visit to another cemetery where no Waffen SS soldiers were buried, he replied, "There are very few military cemeteries in Germany without Waffen SS."

Mertes, who was invited to address the AJC annual meeting long before the Bitburg controversy had erupted, did not directly refer to the Bitburg visit in his speech today. But he vowed that the German people "will never forget" the atrocities of the Nazi regime. "Hitler misused our own people, in particular the loyalty of the German soldiers toward their country," he declared.

"We do not want to forget the villainy of the National Socialist dictatorship. This is especially true of the genocide of the Jews which was obviously beyond the rationale of war, victory or defeat. It constituted in itself an exclusively criminal proclivity for annihilation," Mertes said.

Mertes, who served in the German army during the war, said that the electorate of the Bitburg district voted only in small numbers, about 17 percent of the voters, in the election that elevated Hitler into power in 1932. "If voters in all electoral districts at the time had cast their ballots this way, Hitler would never have come to power," the German official declared.

Turning to the Middle East, he reiterated his government's strong support and commitment for the State of Israel. "As a German, I would like to stress that it is essential to us in East and West (Germany) never to forget that Germany's special responsibility for Israel is an element of credibility and ethics in any good German foreign policy," he said.

The speech by Mertes was interrupted several times by applause. At the conclusion of his address, he received a standing ovation.

#### ANTI-NAZI OFFICER OF THE GERMAN ARMY HONORED AT YAD VASHEM

By Gil Sedan

JERUSALEM, May 2 (JTA) -- An anti-Nazi officer of the German army, who at great risk to his own life saved the lives of hundreds of Jews during World War II, was honored at a ceremony at the Yad Vashem Holocaust Memorial here today.

Eighteen visiting mayors from West Germany and the United States each placed a white rose at the tree planted in memory of Maj. Eberhard Helmrich in the area of the Yad Vashem reserved for The Righteous Among Nations. The mayors are attending the Jerusalem Conference of Mayors sponsored by the American Jewish Congress.

The white roses are symbolic of the White Rose Movement, a small but dedicated group of Germans, including high-ranking military officers, who defied the Nazi regime and resisted it during the war. Most of them were caught, tortured and executed by decapitation.

Helmrich, in charge of a Wehrmacht quartermaster unit in Drohobycz, Galicia, established a farm to supply food for German troops in the area. He employed about 300 healthy young men and women, 90 percent of them Jewish. He promised that if they did their job well, he would look after them.

Each time Helmrich received a request from the SS for a "selection" for deportation to death camps, he managed to convince the Nazis that the farm could not meet its quotas if any of his workers were taken. He also bribed gestapo agents to keep silent. Because of his personal intervention, Helmrich's workers were saved from deportation during the autumn of 1942 and the winter and summer of 1943, when the Nazi death machinery was operating at its maximum.

Helmrich prepared forged documents in his cellar which saved the lives of at least 100 Jewish young women. The documents identified them as Ukrainian gentiles and as such they were transferred to Germany to work as domestics.

Helmrich also provided food to the Jewish hospital in the Drohobycz ghetto when most of its patients were dying of malnutrition.

Speaking at today's ceremony, Barry Yaker, a vice president of the AJC, hailed the tribute to Helmrich as a meaningful act of reconciliation between the officials of American and West German cities representing millions of citizens of both countries.

He hailed Helmrich for helping to pave the way for a reborn democratic Germany. The forthcoming visit by President Reagan to the Bitburg cemetery where Waffen SS are buried is having just the reverse effect, he said. It is provoking divisiveness, anger and resentment.

#### HOUSE UNITS VOTES ADDITIONAL \$1.5 BILLION IN AID TO ISRAEL

WASHINGTON, May 2 (JTA) -- The House Appropriations Subcommittee on Foreign Operations voted 12-0 yesterday to provide an additional \$1.5 billion in economic aid which Israel has been seeking. The action, which must be approved by the full committee, followed Secretary of State George Shultz's notification to the subcommittee chairman, David Obey (D. Wis.), that the Reagan Administration has ended its opposition to the aid and approves of Israeli Premier Shimon Peres' economic recovery plans. But the Administration still has not made a formal request for this additional aid. There is speculation that the announcement could come after Shultz arrives in Israel on May 9.

#### 2 EGYPTIAN PUBLISHERS TO PARTICIPATE IN JERUSALEM BOOK FAIR NEXT WEEK

By Gil Sedan

JERUSALEM, May 2 (JTA) -- At least two Egyptian publishers will participate in the Jerusalem Book Fair to be held here from May 5-10. But they will come as individuals, not an official delegation -- apparently because the Cairo authorities have not been very encouraging and because they are concerned about their sales in other Arab countries.

This year's fair has attracted about 1,000 publishers from 40 countries. They will put on display some 100,000 books. The countries represented include Turkey, Hungary, Ireland and Brazil.

The main event of the fair will be presentation of the Jerusalem Prize for literature to a writer whose works have given expression to the freedom of man in society. This year's recipient is Czechoslovakian-born Milan Kundera.

In contrast to other book fairs, which are mainly for the sale of republication and distribution rights, the Jerusalem Book Fair will stress a series of cultural events for the publishers and the general public.

## PERES SAYS U.S. MADE NO CONDITIONS FOR PROVIDING ADDITIONAL \$1.5 BILLION

By Gil Sedan

JERUSALEM, May 2 (JTA) — Premier Shimon Peres, stressing that the U.S. has made no conditions for providing an additional \$1.5 billion in economic aid to Israel, disclosed today that Israel has in fact rejected certain recommendations by the Reagan Administration to improve its economy.

He said the suggestions turned down called for a large scale devaluation of the Shekel and abolition of linkage to the consumer price index and to the Dollar. Addressing students at Tel Aviv University, Peres said that while Israel acknowledged that such measures might help cure its economy, they could not be taken because they would result in massive unemployment. Earlier in the week, Peres estimated that 150,000 Israelis would be made jobless if the American plan was adopted.

The Premier also stressed that most of the economic aid Israel will receive from the U.S. will be spent to service Israel's huge debt to the U.S. for arms purchases. Not one dollar will be used to raise the living standards of Israelis, Peres declared. If any funds are left over after debt repayment, they will be used to increase Israel's foreign currency reserves which is essential to a stable economy, he said.

The U.S. has informed Israel that it will provide the \$1.5 billion in economic aid, in addition to \$3 billion in economic and military assistance already approved for fiscal 1986, all of it grants. A formal announcement is expected when Secretary of State George Shultz visits Israel May 9. (Related story, P.2.)

But yesterday, only a day after the additional aid was confirmed, newly released figures showed that Israel suffered a severe setback in its fight against inflation last month along with a further diminution of its scarce foreign currency reserves. The government, it was disclosed, was forced to print 148 billion Shekels in April in sharp contrast to March when no new currency was printed.

### Foreign Currency Reserves Reduced

At the same time, foreign currency reserves were reduced by another \$44 million and stand at \$2.86 billion, far below what economists consider the danger point.

The injection of relatively large amounts of currency into the economy was required because the public withdrew some 50 million more Shekels from its savings accounts than it put in and because of a rise in government spending. Treasury sources insisted however that government spending actually shrank by 15 percent compared to the average of the previous three months.

Another reason to print more money was the steady drop in tax revenues. In the past few years, tax revenue has fallen by 14 percent, laying an increasingly heavy burden on wage earners.

In his address at Tel Aviv University, Peres assailed opponents of Israel's participation in research for the U.S. Strategic Defense Initiative (SDI), popularly known as "Star Wars." Israel was one of only three non-NATO countries invited by the U.S. to participate.

Peres said the project has tremendous political and technological significance. He also stressed the very strong contacts between Israel and the U.S. in general and specifically, the personal contacts with President Reagan. He said the U.S. is giving economic aid in order to have a strong, democratic ally in the Middle East.

## HOUSE MAJORITY LEADER TELLS ARAB-AMERICAN LOBBY GROUP THAT 'PALESTINIANS' AND ISRAEL SHOULD MUTUALLY RECOGNIZE EACH OTHER

By Judith Kahn

WASHINGTON, May 2 (JTA) — House Majority Leader Jim Wright (D. Tex.) told an Arab-American lobby group today that there should be mutual and simultaneous recognition between Israel and "the Palestinians."

Noting that Palestinians have refused to recognize Israel's right to exist, Wright said at a luncheon address to the National Association of Arab-Americans that "at the same time, the Israelis say that the Palestine Liberation Organization is committed to their destruction and refuses to recognize their right to exist as a nation behind peaceful borders."

But, in calling for "mutual acceptance on both sides," Wright was careful to avoid any direct reference to the PLO. He said "the Palestinians must publicly say 'yes, we do recognize your existence and your right to exist in peace, in a secure border,' at which the same time the Israelis must say 'let us sit down'" with the Palestinians.

Speaking to reporters, Wright would not specify who it is that he thought Israel should recognize, and seemed to back away from his suggestion that recognition be simultaneous.

"Ultimately, the Palestinians must acknowledge Israel's right to exist," Wright said. He added that "at that time, Israel must be willing to talk with their representatives and work out a harmonious relationship." He declined to say whether by Palestinian representatives, he meant the PLO.

The luncheon today was part of a three-day annual conference of the Arab-American lobby group that will also feature Sen. Majority Leader Robert Dole (R. Kan.) and a satellite address by Jordan's King Hussein.

The Jewish Telegraphic Agency was told that this was the first time that a House or Senate majority leader had been scheduled to address a conference of the Arab-American group.

## CATHOLIC APPOINTED TO VATICAN UNIT FOR DIALOGUE WITH WORLD JEWRY

By David Friedman

WASHINGTON, May 2 (JTA) — Dr. Eugene Fisher, director of the National Conference of Catholic Bishops' Secretariat for Catholic-Jewish Relations, has been appointed to a five-year term on the four-member Vatican's Liaison Committee for dialogue with leaders of world Jewry.

The 41-year-old Fisher is the only American and only lay person on the committee which is the Vatican's official link between its Commission for Religious Relations with the Jews and the International Jewish Committee on Interreligious Consultations.

The other members of the committee, which has met every 18 months since 1971 with its Jewish counterpart, are: Archbishop Marcos McGrath of Panama; Auxiliary Bishop Gerald Mahon of Westminster, England, and Dominican Father Bernard Dupuy of the Centre Istinia in Paris.

At the next meeting October 28-30 in Rome, the Catholic and Jewish leaders will commemorate the 20th anniversary the Second Vatican Council's declaration on the relationship of the Catholic Church to non-Christian religions which declared the common spiritual patrimony of Jews and Christians and repudiated anti-Semitism.

## 18 WOMEN RABBINICAL CANDIDATES TO BE ORDAINED IN MAY AND JUNE Includes First Woman Conservative Rabbi By Ben Gallob

NEW YORK, May 2 (JTA) — The 18 women rabbinical candidates to be ordained this month and next — including the first woman Conservative rabbi in American Jewish history — will bring to 110 the number of American women ordained as rabbis since the process began in the Reform movement 12 years ago.

Moreover, the annual survey of the status of woman as rabbis conducted by the Jewish Telegraphic Agency indicated that, based on enrollments in the three seminaries — the Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion (HUC-JIR), the Reconstructionist Rabbinical College (RRC), and the rabbinical school of the Jewish Theological Seminary of America (JTS) — continuing additions to the pool of women rabbis are virtually assured for the future.

The HUC-JIR announced here today the names of the 12 candidates who will be graduated in ceremonies here and in Cincinnati. The JIR campus is located in New York. The HUC campus is located in Cincinnati.

The RRC, which had no women ordainees at the end of the 1983-84 academic year, announced that five women would be named as rabbis next month.

A spokesperson for the JTS told the JTA that there are now 20 women candidates enrolled at various academic levels at the JTS rabbinical school. Amy Eilberg, who was one of the first class of women admitted for the 1984-85 year to the JTS rabbinical school, will be one of the 12 graduates who will be ordained May 12 at the JTS.

Rabbi Gardan Tucker, the JTS rabbinical school dean, had reported previously that rabbinical candidate Eilberg had received enough rabbinical school credits for courses she had taken at the JTS to be qualified in May. Depending on a variety of factors, rabbinical training at the JTS rabbinical school requires four to six years of study.

Agreement on acceptance of women at the rabbinical school climaxed a bitter struggle of nearly a decade within the Conservative movement, led by its rabbinical arm, the Rabbinical Assembly, to accept women for ordination.

The RA set the stage for Eilberg's admission by adoption of an amendment earlier this year by a vote of 363-267, guaranteeing acceptance by the RA of any graduate, man or woman, from the JTS rabbinical school. The large number of opposition votes was considered some indication that though RA members had led the fight for women's admission, much resistance continues, particularly within the JTS faculty, the JTA was informed.

### The Reform Ordainees

The seven Reform women ordainees to be graduated June 1 at the Pine Street Temple in Cincinnati are:

Lauri Ellen Coskey of Beverly Hills, Cal.; Rachel Conrad Hertzman of Louisville; Karyn Schwartz Kedar of Baltimore; Carissa Natalie Krans of Cincinnati; Julie Ringold Spitzer of Jacksonville, Fla.; Susan Gail Warshell of Highland Park, Ill.; and Judith Ida Zabarenko of Rockford, Ill.

The five Reform women ordainees to be graduated June 9 at Temple Emanu-El here and their home towns are:

Barbara Elka Abrahamson of St. Paul; Marla Feldman of Toledo; Dayle Friedman of Denver; Linda Henry of New York City; and Barbara Goldman-Warrell of Evanston, Ill.

Nine men will be ordained as Reform rabbis in New York and 11 men in Cincinnati.

### The Reconstructionist Graduates

The names and hometowns of the five women to be named Reconstructionist rabbis June 9 at Temple Sinai in Dresher, Pa. are: Sandra Berliner of Toledo; Deborah Brin of Minneapolis; Bonnie Goldberg of Brooklyn; Andrea Gouze of the Bronx; and Vivian Schirn of Los Angeles and Beverly Hills.

Three men will be graduated as Reconstructionist rabbis at the Temple Sinai ceremonies.

There are currently 34 candidates in their first year of Reform rabbinic studies in Jerusalem — ten women and 24 men. The other years and enrollments are: second year — 31 students, 11 women and 20 men; third year — 41 students, 13 women and 28 men; fourth year — 35 students, 14 women and 21 men.

There are three men and four women in the 1984-85 preparatory year studying for the Reconstructionist rabbinate; six men and seven women in the first year; five men and four women in the second year; two men and three women in the third year; and three men and five women in the fourth year.

The RRC, founded in 1968, graduated its first woman rabbi in 1974. An RRC spokesman said Linda Holtzman, an RRC graduate, became, in 1979, the first woman rabbi of a Conservative congregation.

A continuing shortage of rabbis for Conservative pulpits has prompted the RA in recent years to accept more than 500 applicants for RA membership via convention endorsement. But until October, 1983, the JTS had barred women from its rabbinical school.

### AMERICAN JEWS FORM NEW GROUP TO AID THIRD WORLD COUNTRIES

NEW YORK, May 2 (JTA) — An American Jewish organization has been formed to help suffering non-Jews in Africa, Asia and Central America, it was announced here yesterday at a news conference.

Lawrence Phillips, chairman of the new group, the American Jewish World Service, who is also the chairman of the Phillips-Van Heusen Corp., said the service was formed because there was no Jewish organization "dealing exclusively with development projects for non-Jews throughout the world."

The purpose of the organization, he said, and its primary objectives, would be to develop health facilities and peasant agricultural programs. The first project of the organization will be an emergency airlift of a pleneload of medical and agricultural supplies to Mozambique, where 100,000 people were reported to have died of famine-related causes last year.

Elie Wiesel, chairman of the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Council and a Holocaust survivor, told the news conference that "hunger is one natural disaster that can be helped by man."

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NEW YORK (JTA) — More Soviet Jews were permitted to emigrate to Israel during April than in any month since July 1983, with 166 leaving, the National Conference on Soviet Jewry reported Thursday. The total includes over 100 Jews from Moscow, a city where there has been little emigration movement in recent years.