

KARL LINNAS DEPORTED

By Susan Birnbaum

NEW YORK, April 21 (JTA) -- At 8:06 p.m. Monday, a Czechoslovak airliner left New York with accused Nazi war criminal Karl Linnas aboard. This put the cap on a long-drawn-out procedure to effect the deportation of the man who was commandant of the Tartu, Estonia, concentration camp where over 12,000 men, women and children were murdered during World War II.

Linnas was flown to Prague, and from there to the Soviet Union, following a refusal Monday by the U.S. Supreme Court to stay Linnas' deportation. The high court voted Monday morning 6-3 against granting the stay. Justices William Brennan, Harry Blackmun and Sandra Day O'Connor registered the dissenting votes in favor of the stay.

Before boarding the plane, the 67-year-old Linnas, a coat covering his handcuffs, shouted to the press: "Tell the American people what they are doing is murder and kidnapping."

(In Moscow, Soviet Foreign Ministry spokesman Gennady Gerasimov said Tuesday that Linnas may be allowed to appeal his 1962 Soviet death sentence.)

Charges Against Linnas

Linnas was sentenced to death in absentia in the Soviet Union in 1962 for wartime atrocities. Since 1951, Linnas lived quietly in Greenlawn, Long Island. He was granted U.S. citizenship in 1960, after concealing his wartime activities upon entering the country under the Displaced Persons Act of 1948.

Linnas was charged by the U.S. Justice Department of directing firing squads at prisoners kneeling before pits that served as mass graves, and of personally shooting camp inmates.

Following investigations by the Justice Department's Office of Special Investigations (OSI), Linnas was stripped of his citizenship in July 1981 by U.S. District Court in Westbury, L.I., a decision he appealed numerous times through several courts. He was ordered deported on May 29, 1983. After losing a bid to the Board of Immigration Appeal, he took his case to the Supreme Court, which refused four times since last December to hear his appeal.

Representatives of Jewish organizations blamed U.S. Attorney General Edwin Meese for refusing to sign off on the deportation papers. Linnas was represented by former U.S. Attorney General Ramsey Clark.

There had been charges in some quarters that Soviet evidence used in the Linnas case may have been fabricated, but FBI experts and the courts which examined the evidence verified its authenticity. Elan Steinberg, World Jewish Congress executive director, pointed out.

"There has never been one instance when a document (in a war crimes matter) supplied by the Soviet Union has been fabricated or forged," Steinberg said. He added that the OSI and the WJC had requested the documents, the Soviets never offered them voluntarily. Last week, Linnas came within hours of receiving political asylum from Panama, which retracted its offer

after the swift intercession of the World Jewish Congress and other leading Jewish legal activists, including Menachem Rosensaft, chairman of the International Network of Children of Jewish Holocaust Survivors, and Brooklyn District Attorney Elizabeth Holtzman, who as a Congresswoman authored legislation for the deportation of Nazi war criminals.

WJC officials, who learned during the first Passover seder last Monday night of the decision by Meese to deport Linnas to Panama, immediately contacted Panamanian officials in the U.S., as well as members of the Panama Jewish community. On Tuesday, WJC general counsel Eli Rosenbaum, together with Holtzman and Rosensaft, flew to Washington to meet with officials at the Panamanian Embassy.

Early Wednesday, the Panamanian Embassy announced that the deportation plans would be delayed, and later that day the Panamanian Consul General in New York issued a second statement saying that Linnas' request for asylum had been denied. This brought to 17 the number of countries that rejected Linnas' bid for asylum.

Flurry Of Last-Minute Appeals

According to Rosensaft and Rosenbaum, on Monday Linnas' lawyers went through a flurry of last-minute appeals. They first tried to block his deportation a final time in U.S. District Court in Washington D.C. before Judge Thomas Hogan.

Turned down, they appealed to a three-judge panel of the U.S. Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia and were again refused, and Monday night, while Linnas was already on the plane, minutes before departure, a final appeal for a stay made to Chief Justice William Rehnquist was denied, bringing Linnas' total court appearances to 13.

"He has gotten every possible benefit of due process of law," said Rosensaft, a sentiment echoed by Holtzman, who said, "Karl Linnas has had more than due process. He's exhausted the entire justice system."

Within moments of hearing of Linnas' deportation, a Holocaust survivor, Ernest Zelig, president of Bnai Zion, notified the Jewish Telegraphic Agency of his satisfaction on the case's outcome, saying, "I am grateful at the Supreme Court's decision to deport the convicted Nazi war criminal, Karl Linnas. He has received due process, something he denied his 12,000 innocent victims at the Tartu concentration camp."

'Better Late Than Never'

Benjamin Meed, president of the American Gathering and Federation of Jewish Holocaust Survivors, who was preparing to mention the case Sunday at a commemoration in New York of the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising, said, "Thank God. I think we should be proud of the action of our government. It's not enough, and it's quite late, but better late than never. I would say that this will probably encourage further actions against Nazi war criminals in the United States.

"This is not a question of vengeance; it's a question of going through the judicial process. The books of the U.S. should remain open, so that we can't say that we did not take action

against known war criminals, Nazi collaborators and Nazi murderers." Meed praised the "devotion" of OSI director Neal Sher in seeing through the process.

Rosenhaft said he was "glad it's over. I feel relief. I don't feel any joy, I certainly don't feel a sense of victory, but a sense of having done the very least and perhaps the only thing we can do for Linnas' victims and for all the other victims of the Holocaust, which is to bring their killers to justice. We can't bring them back to life, we can't make their agony and their suffering any less.

"The only thing we can do for them is to make sure that their murderers are brought to justice and are not able to live out their days in freedom knowing they have gotten away with it. We talk a great deal about keeping alive the flame of remembrance. But we never forget that that particular flame cannot exist without the flame of justice."

Rosenbaum, a former war crimes prosecutor for the OSI, said it was "a great relief that Karl Linnas' four decades as a fugitive from justice have at last come to an end. And that history has finally caught up with Karl Linnas. But it's inappropriate to say that anyone is happy, because it's not going to bring back any of his victims."

DALLAS HAS A JEWISH MAYOR

By David Friedman

WASHINGTON, April 21 (JTA) — Annette Strauss, a member of the Dallas City Council for 15 years, was elected mayor Saturday, the first Jewish woman to be elected mayor of a Texas city.

The 63-year-old Strauss, who will be sworn in May 4, is also the second Jewish woman to become mayor of a major city. The first was Dianne Feinstein of San Francisco.

Strauss won a runoff election with 56 percent of the vote, defeating Fred Meyer, a businessman and former chairman of the Dallas County Republican Party.

Republicans Have Usually Been Elected

Although the election was nonpartisan, Strauss, a Democrat, was considered the liberal candidate in a city that has usually elected Republican businessmen as mayor, according to Jimmy Wisch, editor and publisher of the Texas Jewish Post.

Wisch said she got support throughout the city, but was especially popular among Jewish, Black and Hispanic voters.

Strauss, a public relations consultant and former fashion model, is married to Theodore Strauss, a brother of Robert Strauss, former National Democratic Party chairman and briefly Middle East negotiator for the Carter Administration.

She and her husband are members of Temple Emanu-El, a Dallas Reform temple. She is a former chairwoman of the Women's Division of the Jewish Federation of Greater Dallas and a member of the boards of the temple sisterhood and the Greater Dallas chapter of the National Council of Jewish Women. She is also a member of the American Jewish Committee and has received its Humanitarian Award.

MATZOH ORIGINALLY BOUND FOR JEWS IN THE USSR WILL INSTEAD BE DISTRIBUTED TO POOR IN WASHINGTON

By Judith Colp

WASHINGTON, April 21 (JTA) — The unleavened bread which links Passover and Easter as it symbolizes both the Jewish exodus from Egypt and the Last Supper took on a modern binding of the two religions here Sunday.

Several truckloads of matzoh originally bound for Jews in the Soviet Union will instead be distributed by a local church near the White House which feeds hundreds of people.

"With a little imagination you can see the connection," said Rev. John Steinbruck of Luther Place Memorial Church, who began distributing the matzoh right after conducting Easter services. "If the matzoh can't be used by Jews leaving for an Exodus out of Egypt, which in the contemporary meaning is the Soviet Union, why not let it be used... by the homeless?"

"The (Soviet) Jews are people who are being systematically destroyed while the homeless are also people who are being brutalized and raped," he said.

The Union of Councils for Soviet Jews (UCSJ) had packed the 1,500 tons of matzoh for hundreds of Soviet refuseniks in the Soviet Union, but the individual parcels were twice rejected by the Soviet Embassy. The UCSJ offered the matzoh to Steinbruck, who has strong links with the city's Jewish community and has worked on behalf of Soviet refuseniks.

Steinbruck said he was struck by the symbolism evoked in the request:

"Easter and Passover have a commonality in that they are both intended to sustain, nurture and maintain life and not death. . . The two traditions are linked, so let's make the best of them. We're mutually committed to each other's survival," he said.

"The matzoh is the first appetizer for feeding the hungry. Just as it sustained the Jews coming out of Pharaoh's mud pits, someday (there will be) a promised land for those who are (hungry)," he added.

Steinbruck said although the matzoh might be strange to many of the poor, he had no doubt that it would be eaten. "Hungry people aren't too discriminating," he said.

113 LAWMAKERS URGE GORBACHEV TO RELEASE WALLENBERG OR TO PROVIDE PUBLIC ACCOUNTING OF HIS FATE

By David Friedman

WASHINGTON, April 21 (JTA) — More than 100 members of the House have signed a letter urging Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev to free Raoul Wallenberg, the Swedish diplomat who saved thousands of Hungarian Jews from the Nazis during World War II.

The letter, signed by 113 Congressmen, urged Gorbachev to release Wallenberg, who was arrested by the Red Army outside Budapest in January 1945, or provide a "full, complete and public accounting of his fate."

"We believe he still lives and we urge that he be permitted to leave the Soviet Union," said the letter which was mailed last week to the Soviet

Embassy here for forwarding to Gorbachev. Rep. Tom Lantos (D. Cal.), who initiated the letter, said he felt this was a good time to make another effort at gaining Wallenberg's release in view of the Soviet Union's recent moves in increasing Jewish emigration and releasing political prisoners.

"We're hopeful that the Soviet leaders will respond favorably on this issue as they have on a number of other human rights cases," Lantos said. "The Wallenberg case would be a perfect opportunity to demonstrate the policy of glasnost" or openness.

The Soviets have long claimed that Wallenberg died in Lubyanka prison in 1947. However, there have been numerous reports from persons released from Soviet labor camps that they have seen a Swedish prisoner fitting Wallenberg's description.

Lantos and his wife, Annette, both of whom were saved by Wallenberg in Hungary, have long led the effort to bring public attention to the Wallenberg case.

Lantos initiated the move in which Wallenberg was named an honorary citizen of the United States in 1981. A street in front of the planned U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum has been named Wallenberg Place.

PNC CONFERENCE IN ALGERIA BODES ILL FOR THE MIDDLE EAST PEACE PROCESS

By Gil Sedan

JERUSALEM, April 21 (JTA) -- The five-day conference of the Palestine National Council, which opened in Algiers Monday under the chairmanship of Yasir Arafat, bodes ill for the Middle East peace process and particularly for those in Israel and elsewhere who support an international peace conference with Palestinian participation.

The PNC, which calls itself the Palestinian parliament in exile, is controlled by Arafat's mainstream Palestine Liberation Organization which has been split by dissension and violence since the last PNC conclave in 1984. At this, its 18th session, a great show is being made of reuniting the dissident factions under the PLO umbrella.

Extremist groups such as George Habash's Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine and Naif Hawatmeh's Democratic Front which broke with the PLO years ago, are represented at the Algiers meeting this week. Even more important is the presence of Syrian-backed terrorist organizations, including the Palestine National Salvation Front, PLO dissidents who drove Arafat's forces from Lebanon in 1984 and attempted more than once to assassinate the PLO chairman.

Whether the display of unity is genuine or cosmetic, Arafat willingly paid the price. He is less flexible and more intransigent in his demands. He declared null and void his 1985 accord with King Hussein of Jordan which called for a joint Jordanian-Palestinian delegation to negotiate with Israel in the framework of an international conference. He is also expected to cool relations with Egypt.

Arafat still calls for an international conference, with the participation of the five permanent members of the United Nations Security Council. But he demands an independent Palestinian delegation of his own choosing. That would require Israel to recognize the PLO, which it will never do. Actually, the Arafat-Hussein rapprochement

has long been a dead issue. "The pact with Jordan has been shelved since February last year," Hanna Seniora, editor of the East Jerusalem Arabic daily Al-Fajr wrote Tuesday. It was in fact abandoned by Hussein who noted in February 1986 that after a year of negotiations with Arafat, the PLO was an unreliable partner.

Hussein still adheres, at least publicly, to the notion that the PLO is the sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian people. But now the PLO appears to be moving to the extreme.

There were hints in Algiers that Arafat is seeking peace with the most dangerous, most wanted Palestinian terrorist, the shadowy Abu Nidal whose hit squads, operating under a variety of flatulent names, are held responsible for a long string of bombings, hijackings and assassinations in Europe and the Middle East. His victims include ranking PLO officials, and Arafat was said to head his death list. He himself has been condemned to death by the PLO.

Now the PLO chief is speaking of intensifying terrorist attacks in Israel and ending them "outside the occupied territories." This was seen as an oblique invitation to Abu Nidal whose antipathy for Arafat stems from the latter's alleged "softness" on Israel.

The Abu Nidal group is not represented at the PNC meeting. According to Arab sources, other factions opposed his presence. But should a rapprochement occur, Israel would face a dangerous escalation of terrorist attacks in the months ahead.

Relations In Israel

Defense Minister Yitzhak Rabin has linked the recent Katyusha rocket attacks on Galilee and the attempted infiltration of Israel Sunday by a three-man terrorist gang to the PNC meeting.

Premier Yitzhak Shamir reacted strongly to the PNC meeting Tuesday. "The worst of our enemies are sitting somewhere discussing how to unite, how to harm us and how to take Jerusalem from us," Shamir told a Jerusalem audience. "We shall tell them that the people of Israel are united. We are one front. Their conspiracy will fail." As far as Israel is concerned, there no longer seems any point to work out some complicated formula that would allow for Palestinian representation at peace talks in tandem with Jordan. But Arab observers in East Jerusalem were insisting publicly Tuesday that the developments in Algiers did not necessarily doom the peace process.

But off-the-record comments by Arabs expressed concern that a reunited PLO would adopt a headline that will scuttle the Middle East peace process. Well informed Arabs admitted that the idea of an international conference suffered a severe blow by Arafat's demand for separate PLO representation.

But the PNC conference has won wide approval among rank-and-file Arabs in the administered territories. According to one observer, "there is nothing like national unity to cheer up the popular spirits, even if it is doubtful how much real benefit the local population will derive from the closed ranks."

Arab newspapers in East Jerusalem hailed the show of unity. Al-Fajr carried a front-page cartoon Tuesday showing two Arabs congratulating each other in Algiers. Walls in East Jerusalem were covered with freshly painted slogans acclaiming the newly achieved unity.

WAGRO LEADER SAYS THE NEXT GENERATION MUST JOIN HOLOCAUST SURVIVORS TO KEEP THE FLAME ALIVE
 By Susan Birnbaum

NEW YORK, April 21 (JTA) -- The youth are the bearers of future memory of the Holocaust, says Benjamin Meed, president of the American Gathering and Federation of Jewish Holocaust Survivors as well as of WAGRO, the Warsaw Ghetto Resistance Organization.

Meed spoke on his expectations for Sunday's ceremonies commemorating the 44th anniversary of the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising, as well as his disappointment in the organized Jewish community for not doing all it could to work year-round to remember the Holocaust.

This year, for the first time since the annual commemoration of the Warsaw Ghetto uprising began, children of Holocaust survivors will play prominent roles in the ceremonies. Cochairmen are Rabbi Herschel Schacter and William Donat, a child survivor, whose father, Alexander, founded the Holocaust Foundation Library.

"I go to funerals of Holocaust survivors too often," Meed told the Jewish Telegraphic Agency, expressing concern for the passing of the generation of survivors. Although, he said, "I am seeing an interest in the Jewish community in remembering the Holocaust, I think it's not enough. They should be more involved."

However, Meed made sure to praise the Jewish Community Relations Council of New York, which, through its own Holocaust commission, has gotten increasingly involved in commemorative and educational activities in the last three years.

Says Holocaust Is Being Commercialized

Generally, though, he thinks that "The Holocaust is being used for commercial purposes by everyone," Meed said, "but when it comes to action, it's left to the survivors."

Meed, who survived both the Warsaw Ghetto uprising and the Polish uprising a year later after hiding as a Christian in Nazi-occupied Warsaw, feels keenly the need to perpetuate the memory of what happened to the Jews during World War II by actively publicizing it and working toward this memory year-round, not only on certain days of memorials. "I am a survivor," Meed said. "I'm involved in organizing this (the Warsaw Ghetto commemoration) 25 years in New York City. It's a lifetime."

Largest Commemoration Expected This Year

Meed, and other survivors, started work for WAGRO with only 180 people. Since then, activities have tripled, he said, "90 percent through the work of Holocaust survivors." This year, the ceremonies, to take place at the Felt Forum of Madison Square Garden, will be the largest commemoration ever in New York of the six million Jewish victims of the Holocaust, said Meed. They are expecting 7,000 to come to the Forum, which seats only 6,000. "People will be in the streets listening on loudspeakers," he said.

Meed's wife, Vladka, also a survivor of the Warsaw Ghetto and an author of Holocaust literature, will be guest speaker Sunday in Israel, where 25,000 people are expected to converge on Kibbutz Lohamei Haghetot, the Ghetto Fighters' Kibbutz.

Meed said this year will witness the largest participation in events in the world commemor-

ating the Holocaust. A million people this year, he said, are attending commemoration ceremonies throughout the United States, a figure he has come up with through his activities as co-chairman of the Days of Remembrance of the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Council. The Days of Remembrance are the seven days following the 27th of the Hebrew month of Nissan. In Israel, the date is commemorated as Yom Hashoah.

There will be events in 50 states, Meed said. There are about 60,000 Jewish Holocaust survivors throughout the nation, he emphasized. "What I am interested in is not so much about the Holocaust but what did we do with our lives after the war? How did we become part of the community? That is the work that occupies me 365 days a year. It's not only the commemoration that I'm doing. I've devoted my entire life to this."

Impact Of Demjanjuk Trial

Meed says that the trial of John Demjanjuk has helped keep the memory alive in Israel. "I think that bringing Demjanjuk to trial in Israel does two things: First, it's saying that we Jews are not taking vengeance. We are bringing the person to court. And it will be up to the court to decide Demjanjuk's fate."

"But at the same time, people all of a sudden were awakened, not by the trial, but by testimony of the Holocaust survivors, witnesses who told the story. Demjanjuk was not the only murderer in Treblinka. Unfortunately, we cannot get our hands on them. But from the witnesses who were there, what was done to us -- 850,000 people -- it's very difficult for anybody to understand what that means. Not only that they were killed, but that it was arranged to erase the trace of everything that happened there. God forbid, if the war would have been six months longer, there would have been no survivors, and there would be no witnesses. So that is why it is so important, and that's why when the young Israelis are coming to court, they're not coming just to see Demjanjuk. They're coming to listen to the story of the Holocaust survivors, to listen to the total story. Demjanjuk is just a symbol of the murders, but not the whole thing. But the story of the survivors is what awakened the interest of the young generation in Israel."

'A Jewish National Tragedy'

Meed said he wants the Jewish community to understand that "this is not just a matter which should concern Holocaust survivors. They should understand that this is a Jewish national tragedy, and the work must be continued by the Jewish people to be remembered, for generations. And we did the job, but the rest of the community, and the youth, have the duty to be more involved. I am commending those who are involved, but it isn't enough."

The second generation, said Meed, should "be part of us right now" so that it is assured that the memories will be ongoing, that they will not fade. "We don't want to leave a vacuum."

NEW YORK (JTA) -- The World Union for Progressive Judaism, in a message of support to President Raul Alfonsin of Argentina, praised his efforts "to strengthen democracy, enhance the cause of freedom and bring to justice those found guilty of human rights abuses during the period when Argentina was under military rule."