

# JEWISH LEADERS REACT TO REPORTS OF ANTI-SEMITES IN BUSH CAMPAIGN

By Howard Rosenberg

WASHINGTON, Sept. 8 (JTA) -- Jewish leaders reacted with alarm Thursday following a report in the Washington Jewish Week that said Vice President George Bush has appointed an ethnic coalition for his presidential campaign that includes a Holocaust revisionist and people with fascist associations.

The leaders of the ethnic outreach campaign include:

- Jerome Brentar, co-chairman, a Croatian American who has been active in groups that deny the Holocaust took place;

- Florian Galdau, honorary chairman, a Romanian Orthodox priest described by Nazi hunter Simon Wiesenthal as New York chief of Romania's anti-Semitic, pro-Nazi movement, the Iron Guard, which is still in existence; and

- Philip Guarino, vice chairman, a Catholic priest who has been listed as a member of P-2, a conspiratorial Italian group led by longtime fascist Licio Gelli, with whom Guarino is close.

Late reports Thursday evening said Bush had dismissed Brentar from the campaign.

Bush's American Nationalities Coalition also includes Laszlo Pasztor, who served in Hungary's pro-Nazi, anti-Semitic Arrowcross regime as a junior envoy to Berlin, though he has since expressed regret over that period of his life.

Still others have been identified as longtime agitators against the Office of Special Investigations, the Justice Department's Nazi-hunting unit, and have been quoted as making anti-Semitic statements.

Abraham Foxman, national director of the Anti-Defamation League issued a statement Thursday, calling for "an immediate investigation by the Bush campaign of the backgrounds of members of its ethnic coalition who are known anti-Semites and have been linked to Holocaust revisionist and anti-OSI activities.

"There is no place in any political campaign for anti-Semites. The league urges that these persons be summarily removed."

Chris Gersten, executive director of the National Jewish Coalition, said, "Obviously it creates a very serious problem."

He said that if some of the individuals mentioned as anti-Semitic are indeed so, "then I'm confident that the Bush campaign will make the appropriate decision."

There was no official comment from the Bush campaign nor from the White House as of late Thursday afternoon.

Albert Vorspan, senior vice president of the Union of American Hebrew Congregations, attacked the Bush committee in a statement Thursday, saying Bush "should either renounce the entire committee or remove all the rotten apples from the barrel."

Calling the composition of the committee "both outrageous and frightening," Vorspan said "the suspicion will grow that a Bush administration will be soft on anti-Semites and intends to dismantle the Office of Special Investigations, thus putting an end to the honorable efforts by the United States government to apprehend and

bring to justice the Nazi perpetrators of crimes against Jews and others during World War II."

Henry Siegman, executive director of the American Jewish Congress, called the presence of this minority in the group a "shocking revelation. It suggests a high degree of either insensitivity or incompetence on the part of George Bush's staff.

"I'm sure George Bush is personally unaware of the sordid personal history of these people. But now that he has been made aware of them, we have every right to expect him not only to remove these people but to repudiate what these people stand for."

## BUSH, DUKAKIS TAKE SIMILAR STANDS AGAINST PLO STATE, ANTI-SEMITISM

By David Friedman

BALTIMORE, Sept. 8 (JTA) -- Vice President George Bush and Gov. Michael Dukakis have both rejected the concept of a Palestinian state, and have pledged to make the Middle East peace process a high priority if elected president.

In speeches delivered less than two hours apart to the 34th biennial convention of B'nai B'rith International here Wednesday, the two presidential candidates also soundly condemned anti-Semitism and all forms of racism.

This condemnation was more than routine since at the Republican National Convention in New Orleans last month, Jewish Republicans had charged that while the Republican platform rejected anti-Semitism, the Democratic platform was silent on the issue.

Dukakis noted that on Nov. 9, the day after the presidential election, the 50th anniversary of Kristallnacht will be observed, marking the day when the Nazis broke the windows of Jewish homes and stores throughout Germany and Austria.

Dukakis said this event, which inaugurated the Holocaust, was greeted with indifference by the world.

"It is up to all of us, public officials and private citizens, to speak out forcefully against anti-Semitism, racism, and every form of bigotry, whether in Boston, Chicago, Los Angeles or New York, or anywhere else in America," the Massachusetts Democrat said.

"That is a responsibility we all share, but it is especially the responsibility of the president of the United States."

Bush declared that as the United States approaches the next century, "it's time to leave the tired old bigotry baggage behind us. There is no room in this country for racism or for anti-Semitism. Not in New York, not in Chicago, not anywhere in this great country."

The Republican candidate stressed that "it's the duty of every American, especially those who aspire to leadership, to condemn it wherever and whenever it appears. I condemn anti-Semitism now and I will always condemn it."

Bush said he will continue the Reagan administration's support for the Justice Department's Office of Special Investigations, which hunts down and prosecutes Nazi war criminals who entered the United States illegally.

The statement on the OSI was not in Bush's

prepared text, and was apparently inserted because of a story appearing in the Washington Jewish Week Thursday regarding the composition of the Bush '88 Coalition of American Nationalities, an ethnic coalition working for the Bush campaign.

The B'nai B'rith convention has since 1974 become a traditional forum for the Democratic and Republican presidential candidates to outline their positions on issues of Jewish concern.

While Bush was frequently applauded, the reception by the 1,200 convention delegates was louder and warmer for Dukakis.

Both candidates stressed that peace can only come about through direct negotiations, and both promised to prevent any imposed solution on Israel.

Dukakis said that if elected, one of his first steps will be to appoint a special Middle East negotiator with instructions to "use every ounce of your energy to convince Arab leaders to negotiate peace with Israel."

Both candidates promised to strengthen the strategic alliance with Israel, but they indicated a difference in their approach to the Arab countries.

"Even as strategic cooperation with Israel has gone forward, we have forged a stronger relationship with Egypt, Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, and other (Persian) Gulf states," Bush said.

He said this demonstrated that "we can work constructively with those states and not diminish our relations with Israel. This is in our interest and it is also in Israel's interest."

But Dukakis noted that the Reagan administration has "sold AWACS to Saudi Arabia, Mavericks to Kuwait, Stingers to Bahrain and billions of additional dollars worth of sophisticated arms to Arab countries that refuse to make peace with Israel."

#### 'No' To Arab Shopping List

He said that while Bush and his vice presidential running mate, Sen. Dan Quayle of Indiana, have supported these sales, "Lloyd Bentsen and I are going to say 'no' to Arab shopping lists that endanger the security of Israel."

While Bush did not mention Jerusalem, Dukakis said "the Republican ticket does not acknowledge Israel's sovereignty over its capital -- an undivided Jerusalem. We do."

Both candidates vowed to continue to press for the emigration of Soviet Jewry. Bush pointed to a large sign in the convention hall which said "Mr. Gorbachev: Where Do Soviet Jews Apply For Glasnost?"

"That sign says it all," Bush said.

Dukakis did not refer to the sign, but he said, "Mr. Gorbachev, if glasnost can open Soviet society, why can't it open the doors to free emigration by Soviet Jews?"

While the issue of the separation of church and state was a major source of contention between the presidential candidates at the B'nai B'rith convention four years ago, it was only briefly mentioned Wednesday.

Bush said that despite their differences, Americans agree on many things, including "reverence for the principle of separation of church and state."

Dukakis said the American dream must be defended "against those strident voices from the radical right who would undermine the constitutional principles of individual liberty and the separation of church and state."

In a speech to the convention Monday, Richard Murphy, assistant secretary of state for Near Eastern and South Asian affairs, said that the Palestinian uprising on the West Bank and Gaza Strip "has shattered the illusion that the status quo is tenable" for either Israel or the Arab states,

"Force is not the answer, intimidation is not the answer, deportation of Palestinians is not the answer," he said in a warning to Israel.

But he also called on the Palestinians to "face reality" and reject the lead of extremists who threaten violence and extremism against those who seek a dialogue with Israel.

#### **U.S. DENIES PERES INVITATION HAS A POLITICAL MOTIVATION** By David Friedman

WASHINGTON, Sept. 8 (JTA) -- The White House denied Thursday that President Reagan's offer to meet in New York later this month with Israeli Foreign Minister Shimon Peres and his Egyptian counterpart, Ismat Abdel Meguid, was an attempt to boost Peres in Israel's current Knesset election campaign.

"This meeting is a natural follow-up to the extensive peace efforts" that Secretary of State George Shultz has undertaken in the Middle East in the last several months, White House spokesman Marlin Fitzwater said.

He said that Reagan has asked the two foreign ministers to meet with him after the president addresses the United Nations General Assembly on Sept. 26.

Fitzwater said that the invitations to Peres and Meguid were sent to them as heads of their country's delegations to the General Assembly meeting. Reagan also plans to meet in New York with other foreign leaders attending the General Assembly session.

If Premier Yitzhak Shamir or any other Israeli official were heading the delegation, he would have been invited, the spokesman added.

#### **SHAMIR ATTACKS REAGAN INVITATION AND URGES ISRAELIS TO IGNORE IT** By David Landau

JERUSALEM, Sept. 8 (JTA) -- Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir has publicly criticized President Reagan's planned meeting later this month with Israeli Foreign Minister Shimon Peres and Egyptian Foreign Minister Ismat Abdel Meguid. Peres is Shamir's rival in the Nov. 1 election here.

The meeting reportedly will take place on Sept. 26 in New York, where Peres, Meguid and Secretary of State George Shultz will be attending the United Nations General Assembly. President Reagan is to host the meeting himself.

The Israeli premier charged Thursday that President Reagan's personal involvement, so close to the Israeli election, is "not a usual thing."

The meeting itself, Shamir told an Israel Radio interviewer, is unlikely to produce any progress in the peace process, especially since it is a one-time conference between the three countries. "You can't expect miracles from one meeting," the premier observed drily.

Shamir invited Israeli citizens to "take account of the circumstances" in which the meeting is to be held and "not pay too much heed" to what would be, after all, merely a corridor encounter on the margins of the General Assembly.

## PERES, SHEVARDNADZE TO DISCUSS RECIPROCAL CHAMBERS OF COMMERCE

By David Landau

JERUSALEM, Sept. 8 (JTA) -- A further warming of relations between the Soviet Union and Israel and a first step toward direct trade between the two countries is appearing on the horizon, as informed sources here are saying there could be an opening of chambers of commerce soon in each country.

Informed sources here indicate that bilateral chambers of commerce will be a subject of discussion when Peres meets with his Soviet counterpart, Eduard Shevardnadze, during the United Nations General Assembly in New York, which begins Sept. 20.

Earlier this summer during a visit to Leningrad, Daniel Gillerman, president of the Israel Federation of Chambers of Commerce, broached the subject of the establishment of mutual chambers of commerce in Leningrad and Tel Aviv with Soviet authorities.

At about the same time, the Soviets announced they would be exporting television programs to Israel.

The topic surfaced again during talks between Nimrod Novik, a foreign policy adviser to Foreign Minister Shimon Peres, and Gennady Terasov, a Soviet Foreign Ministry specialist on the Middle East.

Meanwhile, the head of the Israeli consular mission to Moscow, Meron Gordon, was back in Israel this week to brief Israeli leaders on the status of Soviet-Israeli relations. He consulted with both Peres and Premier Yitzhak Shamir Thursday before returning to Moscow.

According to speculations in the press here, members of the Moscow delegation return frequently to Israel for debriefings, because they lack protected communication equipment through which diplomatic reports are normally sent.

## ISRAELI COURT RULES SHIN BET MUST REPORT ON DEATH OF ARAB

By Hugh Orgel

TEL AVIV, Sept. 8 (JTA) -- The High Court of Justice ruled Wednesday that within two weeks, the Shin Bet, Israel's secret service, must hand over a detailed report on the circumstances surrounding the death of Awad Hamdan to the deceased's family.

Hamdan was arrested in July by Shin Bet investigators, on suspicion that he had joined Al Fatah, the military arm of the Palestine Liberation Organization, while studying in Jordan.

He died in Jenin prison two days after his arrest, while the circumstances surrounding his death remained unclear.

His relatives said they discerned signs of violence on the body, and demanded the autopsy report and death certificate. They also asked to be informed of the reason for the youth's death.

After the attorney general and the Shin Bet refused to comply with the request, Hamdan's family appealed to the high court.

In the course of the deliberations, Attorney General Yosef Harish decided to place one of Hamdan's Shin Bet interrogators on trial on charges of intentional manslaughter.

Yediot Aharonot noted Thursday that Wednesday's high court decision constitutes the first time in years that an appeal by Arabs from the territories has been accepted.

## ONE ARAB DEAD AS VIOLENCE SURGES IN WEST BANK VILLAGES AND GAZA CAMP

By Gil Sedan

JERUSALEM, Sept. 8 (JTA) -- Soldiers shot and killed a Palestinian man Thursday during a clash in the West Bank Arab village of Silat el-Khartiya, as Arabs in the territories observed another day of their general strike.

Clashes also were reported in the village of Sair, near Hebron, and in the Gaza Strip.

The violence began early in the morning as an army troops entered Silat el-Khartiya to carry out a number of arrests. They were met by a crowd of masked men carrying knives, clubs and stones.

After the Arabs attacked, the soldiers responded with live fire. One of the attackers was killed, and another was injured and taken to Afula Hospital.

In Sair, soldiers fired tear gas in and around the homes of the village, according to Arab sources. The sources said a 2-week-old baby died on his way to the hospital as a result of tear gas inhalation. The army spokesman said the report was being checked.

In the Gaza Strip, residents of the Shati refugee camp attacked soldiers with stones. The army responded by firing tear gas and imposing a curfew on the camp. There were no reports of injuries.

Meanwhile, the army continued large-scale arrests in the town of Kalkilya, for the third consecutive day.

In Nablus, indictments were presented in military court against 20 Arabs accused of participating in an attack on Jewish hikers last April in the Arab village of Beita. A Jewish teen-ager and two villagers were killed in the confrontation.

The army also announced that it would press charges against an officer, two soldiers and a military doctor, in connection with the death of a Gaza youth in jail seven months ago.

The soldiers will be charged with causing grave bodily harm, and the doctor with not carrying out a proper diagnosis of the youth's injuries.

## EBAN URGES EUROPEAN LEADERS TO BE SKEPTICAL OF PLO INITIATIVE

By Yossi Lempkowitz

BRUSSELS, Sept. 8 (JTA) -- Knesset member Abba Eban met here Wednesday with Belgian leaders and in Madrid on Thursday with Spanish Premier Felipe Gonzalez.

He came here as part of a diplomatic mission to persuade European leaders not to endorse purported plans by the Palestine Liberation Organization to declare an independent Palestinian state in the West Bank and to set up a government in exile.

Eban chairs the Knesset Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee. His meetings with European leaders came as members of the 12-nation European Parliament in Strasbourg, France, prepared to host PLO leader Yasir Arafat for a series of closed-door meetings next week.

Eban, representing Foreign Minister Shimon Peres, met Wednesday with Belgian Prime Minister Wilfried Martens and Foreign Minister Leo Tindemans.

Eban was to fly to Rome on Friday. He said he may visit France and Great Britain after the Rosh Hashanah holiday next week.

# NEW CENTRIST ORTHODOX GROUP: A SPLINTER OR A BRANCH?

By Andrew Silow Carroll

NEW YORK, Sept. 8 (JTA) -- Can established Orthodox rabbinic groups absorb or encourage the opinions of an emerging arm of "centrist" rabbis, or is a separate body needed to provide support for those rabbis who think Orthodoxy has turned too far to the right?

The more than 50 centrist Orthodox rabbis who last month attended the first conference of the Fellowship of Traditional Orthodox Rabbis (FTOR) did not seem prepared to reject either question.

On the one hand, their presence at the two-day conference held at New York's JFK Airport indicated their dissatisfaction with major Orthodox organizations like the Union of Orthodox Jewish Congregations of America or the Rabbinical Council of America. They feel their voices are not being heard in the halls of those institutions.

On the other hand, nearly all signaled a reluctance to break completely from those groups, and know both the RCA and the O.U. have come out against efforts to form what the organizations call "splinter" groups.

Yet members of the FTOR spoke of their new entity as a "support group" and a "forum for ideas" rather than a splinter organization.

"We're embryonic," said Rabbi Ephraim Zimand, of the Traditional Congregation in St. Louis.

"We're not going to issue decisions but make available all of the relevant acceptable opinions. We'll provide an open-minded platform where you can exchange ideas without feeling put down if you had a minority opinion."

The FTOR represents the avant-garde of centrist Orthodoxy, which is attempting to combine adherence to halacha, or Jewish law, with a commitment to Zionism, a dedication to secular education and involvement, and a willingness to at least conduct dialogues with members of non-Orthodox Jewish movements.

## Right-Wing Agenda

Although these centrists are hardly unanimous to the extent they are prepared to move to the left, they are nevertheless joined by a belief that Orthodoxy has taken a decided, and unwelcome, turn to the right.

They find solace in the words of Rabbi Norman Lamm, president of Yeshiva University, who said earlier this year that the right-wing Orthodox in the United States and Israel "have set the religious agenda" for too long.

Lamm, however, has no connection with the new group, and declined to be interviewed for this article.

The FTOR began in August 1987 under the initiative of Rabbi Stanley Wagner of Denver, and Ben Zion Kaganoff of Chicago.

According to Wagner, of Congregation Beth Hamedrosh Hagodol, the intention was to create a group that identified with what he calls "Traditionalist rabbis."

Wagner defined "Traditionalists" as rabbis who are liberal in their interpretation of Jewish law or who even make sacrifices in terms of halacha. A frequently cited example of the latter is the lack of a mehitza, the fence or curtain that separates men and women worshippers.

Wagner said at least 100 rabbis, most with mixed-seating synagogues, have expressed an

interest in joining the organization.

Although they advocate a liberal approach in many areas, the most important issues seem to be conversion to Judaism and divorce.

Rabbis and laypersons fear that Orthodox and non-Orthodox groups may take such different legal approaches to the processes of one group that the Orthodox may not even recognize the Jewishness of a child born of a non-Orthodox, or even liberal Orthodox, conversion or remarriage.

The unity issue is at the root of the "Who is a Jew?" debate in the Israeli Knesset. Orthodox parties and their American supporters would have Israel's Law of Return extended only to those converted under Orthodox auspices.

Wagner acknowledges that his left-wing Orthodox approach is similar in some ways to that of Conservative Judaism's right wing, with which he retains close professional ties.

## Centrality of Orthodoxy

But whereas "Conservatism is trying to hold the line against further erosion of halachic norms," rabbis in the FTOR are firmly committed to the centrality of Orthodoxy.

FTOR endorses co-educational Jewish high schools and tolerates mixed-seating synagogues, because "they may become valuable instrumentalities in authentic kiruv," or outreach, according to a resolution discussed at last month's meeting.

"If I had my way, Orthodox rabbis would fill every pulpit in the country," said Rabbi Joseph Ehrenkranz, spiritual leader of Congregation Agudath Sholom in Stamford, Conn., and the first chairman of FTOR.

Still, the new organization represents a challenge to both the O.U. and the RCA, the two rabbinical organizations to which most of the FTOR's rabbis belong.

Last month, RCA President Rabbi Max Schreier wrote the entire membership that the RCA "would not allow splinter groups within Orthodoxy to set the agenda of the Orthodox community."

Wrote Schreier: "We appeal to our colleagues to come back to the RCA and cease their separatist efforts."

Rabbi Binyamin Walfish, executive vice president of the RCA, said that the "tragedy" of the FTOR is that there is already a place for left-of-center rabbis within the RCA.

The RCA is democratic, Walfish said, within the bounds of halacha. "I've begged them to do it under the auspices of the RCA," he said.

The O.U. takes an identical position to the new group as the RCA, according to Rabbi Pinchas Stolper, executive vice president. "If there are rabbis who feel they have special agendas, it should be addressed within the O.U.," he said.

Stolper said the O.U. also has an outreach program that maintains contact with synagogues that do not preserve halachic standards, but wish to associate with Orthodoxy.

Said Rabbi Stewart Weiss, of Tifereth Israel Congregation in Dallas, Texas, "Many of these rabbis are giving their lives to their congregations, some in the real 'sticks.' They want to bring a sense of Torah-true tradition to people. And they need a larger organization that gives them support."

Reminder: JTA will not publish Daily News Bulletins dated Sept. 13 and 14. Shanah Tovah!