

## **HUSSEIN PROMISES FRENCH LEADER HE'LL KEEP PEACE PROCESS MOVING**

By Edwin Eytan

PARIS, April 17 (JTA) -- Jordan's King Hussein told French President Francois Mitterrand here Monday that he will do whatever he can to keep the peace process moving.

Hussein, who stopped in Paris for a meeting with the French president, left this afternoon for Washington, where he is due to confer with President Bush on Wednesday.

According to French and Jordanian sources, the two leaders agreed that the main priority is to keep the peace process going and to avoid a continuation of the status quo.

Both reportedly agreed that Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir's plan for elections in the West Bank and Gaza Strip should be explored thoroughly.

Hussein was earlier reported to favor such elections, on the condition that they be held under international supervision and be followed by an international peace conference.

Hussein and Mitterrand reviewed the Middle East situation in light of the intense fighting in Lebanon and the U.S. administration's current round of diplomacy with the leaders of Israel and a number of Arab countries.

Mitterrand is also due to confer with Bush and Secretary of State James Baker next month after his scheduled meeting here with Palestine Liberation Organization leader Yasir Arafat.

Hussein is accompanied on his trip to Washington by Jordanian Prime Minister Zaid Rifai and Foreign Minister Marwan el-Kassem.

## **ARAFAT MAY USE PARIS VISIT TO BACK ELECTIONS CONCEPT**

By Edwin Eytan

PARIS, April 17 (JTA) -- Yasir Arafat is due to arrive in Paris for an official visit early next month, and informed sources say the Palestine Liberation Organization leader plans to use the occasion to welcome the Israeli proposal for elections in the territories.

But Arafat is expected to call for international supervision of the elections by the United States and the 12-nation European Community. Israeli leaders are said to be opposed to international supervision.

The sources said Arafat will arrive in Paris for a 24-hour stay during the first week in May. He will be greeted with a protocol "less than that granted to a visiting prime minister, but more than that normally given the head of a national liberation movement."

PLO representatives who visited Paris last week to prepare for the visit told French officials that Arafat "will take a constructive stand on the peace process and will welcome the election plan."

It is expected that Arafat will go much further during his visit than he did Sunday in Tunis. He was quoted there as saying that he would favor elections under United Nations supervision only after an Israeli army withdrawal from the territories.

Mitterrand, who is due to meet with Presi-

dent Bush on May 18, will be the first leader of a major Western country to receive the PLO leader.

## **Jewish Demonstration Uncertain**

The leaders of France's main Jewish organizations are publishing in the Tuesday edition of the daily newspaper *Le Monde* an open letter addressed to Mitterrand, asking him to reconsider his decision.

The letter is signed by Theo Klein, president of CRIF, the representative body of French Jewry; David de Rothschild, the president of the FSJU, France's Jewish federation of welfare funds; Chief Rabbi Joseph Sitruk; former Chief Rabbi Rene Samuel Sirat; and a dozen other prominent Jewish personalities.

France's Jewish organizations have not yet decided on whether to call for a mass demonstration against the visit. Some community leaders fear that such a spectacle could be counterproductive in view of growing public sympathy here for the Palestinians and negative press coverage of Israel's methods in suppressing their uprising in the territories.

Others insist on holding a mass demonstration to show the French government that the Jewish community feels strongly about this issue and that the PLO should not be given any international recognition.

It seems likely that no communitywide demonstration will be staged, but that several organizations, such as the local Herut and Betar branches, will hold demonstrations of their own.

## **SHAMIR OPPOSED TO PARTICIPATION OF EAST JERUSALEM ARABS IN VOTE**

By David Landau

JERUSALEM, April 17 (JTA) -- Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir said Monday that he was opposed to allowing East Jerusalem Arabs to participate in the proposed elections in the administered territories.

Addressing the Knesset Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee, Shamir also said that Israel would prevent the elected Palestinian representatives from "dealing with any issue outside the agreed scope of negotiations, such as an independent Palestinian state."

Shamir explained that the elected representatives would only be authorized to negotiate an interim autonomy plan for Palestinian self-rule in the territories.

The prime minister thereby distanced himself on these two key points from Vice Premier Shimron Peres. The Labor Party leader has spoken in favor of allowing East Jerusalem residents to vote and has said that the elected representatives should not be limited to negotiating an interim arrangement.

But Peres told journalists Sunday that he would allow such participation only on the condition that East Jerusalem Arabs exercise their right to vote outside the city.

Jerusalem Mayor Teddy Kollek also said Sunday that he would favor allowing East Jerusalemites to vote in the referendum.

East Jerusalem was unilaterally annexed by the Knesset shortly after the Six-Day War in 1967

and therefore is part of Israel under Israeli law, unlike the West Bank and Gaza Strip. Arab residents can vote in municipal elections, though most boycotted them in February.

The issue of the eligibility of East Jerusalem Arabs to vote in the special referendum and the terms of reference of the elective body are likely to be major hurdles as Israel, the United States and the Palestinians prepare their positions on the election scenario in the weeks ahead.

#### **'Seize This Opportunity'**

Several Likud ministers and politicians farther to the right have come out strongly against Israel allowing East Jerusalem Arabs to vote. They believe this would compromise Israel's sovereignty over the city.

Peres was taciturn during the Sunday Cabinet meeting, but told reporters later that he supported political elections in the territories as "a referendum to represent a point of view, not administrator affairs."

Some Likud ministers and National Religious Party leader Avner Shaki urged Shamir at Sunday's Cabinet meeting to proclaim the elections as municipal, not political.

Peres said he could accept an international presence during the elections, but not international "control or supervision."

Asked whether the Palestinians will back the election plan, the Labor leader said that the Palestine Liberation Organization "can say yes, no or something in the middle. In my assessment, if it says something in the middle, the residents of the territories will participate in the elections."

"If I were a resident of the territories, I would seize this opportunity," he said.

Likud and Labor will now separately prepare detailed positions on the election proposal before a special Cabinet committee convened by the prime minister begins work on drafting an official document outlining the scenario.

#### **LEVINGER INDICTMENT MOTIVATED BY POLITICS, RIGHT WING CHARGES** By David Landau

JERUSALEM, April 17 (JTA) -- The Israeli political community is preparing for what could be the celebrated political trial of the year, when Rabbi Moshe Levinger faces charges of manslaughter before a Jerusalem District Court bench.

No date has yet been set for the hearing. But in the wake of the formal indictment issued last week, right-wing politicians have been quick to brand the decision to prosecute "tendentious" and politically motivated.

Knesset member Yuval Ne'eman, head of the ultranationalist Tehiya faction, went so far as to comment that the State Attorney's Office is "full of leftist and anti-Zionist elements."

Knesset member Gula Cohen, also of Tehiya, asserted that political considerations were behind the decision to charge Levinger with manslaughter for the shooting of an Arab shopkeeper in Hebron last Sept. 30.

And Uri Ariel, chairman of the Judea-Samaria-Gaza Settlers Council, urged the State Attorney's Office to "get on with more important things" -- such as prosecuting public figures who have broken the law forbidding contacts with the PLO.

There was no explicit mention of Dorit Beinisch, whom Justice Minister Dan Meridor recently confirmed as state attorney, despite a

wave of criticism from Meridor's own Likud bloc and the settlement movement. Beinisch was deputy state attorney under Yona Blatman, who retired last year.

But plainly some of the critics of the decision to prosecute Levinger felt that Beinisch was personally responsible.

The Justice Ministry coldly dismissed the charges and imputations of political influence in the decision to prosecute.

#### **Charged With Wanton Damage**

The indictment says Levinger and his family were stoned in their car while driving through downtown Hebron. They stopped and complained to army personnel. But then Levinger drew his revolver and began advancing up a busy street, firing as he went.

Kayed Salah, 42, was showing a customer some shoes in his window when the rabbi's bullets struck him. He died later in the hospital. Customer Ibrahim Bali was injured.

Levinger is also charged with causing wanton damage to property along the street. He is said to have overturned several stalls belonging to Arab merchants.

A hard-line Likud politician, Knesset member Michael Eitan, said it would not be Levinger in the dock, but rather "those who don't let Jews move safely through Judea and Samaria."

On the left end of the political spectrum, Knesset member Yossi Sarid of the Citizens Rights Movement spoke of a wanton act of killing by Levinger and said he looked forward to the trial.

Levinger lives with a group of families in the restored Avraham Avinu Synagogue neighborhood of downtown Hebron, not far from the wholesale vegetable market. He settled in the predominantly Arab city back in 1968.

Levinger is considered one of the foremost leaders of Gush Emunim, the militant religious settlers movement.

#### **THREE MORE DEAD IN TERRITORIES, INCLUDING TWO TEEN-AGED YOUTH** By Gil Sedan

JERUSALEM, April 17 (JTA) -- Three Palestinians died Monday in clashes with the security forces, the latest casualties in a new wave of violence in the territories that has claimed the lives of 11 Palestinians in the past five days.

Among the victims reported shot to death by Israeli soldiers Monday were a 13-year-old girl and a 14-year-old boy. A third Palestinian died Monday of earlier injuries.

The teen-agers were fatally wounded as rock-throwing protests erupted during funerals for earlier victims of army action in the West Bank and Gaza Strip.

The victims were identified as Rafideh Khalili Ahmad Abu Laban, 13, of the Dehaishe refugee camp near Bethlehem, and Kayed Mousa Salama, 14, of the Jabalya refugee camp in Gaza.

The army on Monday lifted the curfew over the village of Nahalin, site of the killing of at least four Palestinians last Thursday, during a raid on the village by border police units.

Villagers, still visibly shocked over the bloodshed, raised black flags of mourning over houses and complained to reporters that arrests in the village have continued.

In Jerusalem, a Palestinian human rights group appealed to the United Nations to launch an investigation into the Nahalin killings.

## ITALY MAY UPGRADE PLO'S STATUS; GREECE PRESSED TO RECOGNIZE STATE

By Ruth E. Gruber

ROME, April 17 (JTA) — Italy will soon upgrade the Palestine Liberation Organization's diplomatic status, the PLO representative here said in an interview published Sunday.

"The question has been under discussion and now we are in the phase of defining the new terminology," Nemer Hammad told the newspaper *La Repubblica*.

"A number of formulations have been examined, among them 'general delegation of Palestine' or 'permanent delegation of the Palestinian state,'" he said.

But Hammad, who said he will meet this week with Italian Foreign Minister Giulio Andreotti, said he does not believe Italy will actually recognize a Palestinian state in the near future.

"I think that the status of the PLO representation in Italy will be raised, in a way that will be a step forward with respect to the current situation, without, however, going all the way to full recognition," he said.

Hammad's interview was published a week after a delegation from the Italian Parliament went to Tunisia to meet with PLO leader Yasir Arafat.

"Undoubtedly that represented a manifestation on the part of the Italian people, represented by their Parliament, of a recognition of the Palestinian people and their right to self-determination and a state," he said.

In Athens, meanwhile, the Greek Foreign Ministry is coming under pressure from Arab diplomats to recognize Israel and a Palestinian state simultaneously.

The Arabs are said to want such a move to take place before the June 18 elections in Greece. They fear the incumbent Socialist Party of scandal-ridden Prime Minister Andreas Papandreu will lose to the opposition Liberal Party, which favors normalizing relations with Israel and opposes recognizing the proclaimed Palestinian state.

Kostas Mitsotakis, the Liberal Party leader, reiterated last week that, if elected, his party would recognize Israel immediately upon taking office and would follow the European Community's lead with regard to the proclaimed Palestinian state.

(JTA correspondent Jean Cohen in Athens contributed to this report.)

## POLES LIVING NEAR AUSCHWITZ OPPOSE CONVENT'S RELOCATION

By Yossi Lempkowitz

BRUSSELS, April 17 (JTA) — More than a thousand residents of Oswiecim, the Polish city near the former Auschwitz death camp, reportedly have expressed their opposition to the removal of a Carmelite convent from the camp.

In addition, the 1,375 citizens of Oswiecim who signed an open letter published last week in a Catholic weekly denounced what they termed the "intolerable pressures" exerted by "groups of Jews" in order to force the nuns to leave the convent.

The Poles, whose letter was printed in "Slow Powzechne," called demands to oust the nuns from the convent "illegal" because, they said, the building that houses the convent was legally leased to the nuns by the local authorities.

They also asserted that the convent is

located outside the compound of the concentration camp.

The convent building straddles the fence that forms the death camp's perimeter. The building itself, a former theater, was used by the Nazis to stock the Zyklon B gas used for mass extermination of Jews and others deported there.

Catholic leaders who signed a Feb. 22, 1987, accord with Jewish representatives calling for the convent's relocation to a site away from the camp agreed with the Jews that, for all purposes, the building is on the Auschwitz site.

The letter's publication, in a pro-government Catholic newspaper, is seen as another sign that local Polish authorities are responsible for the delay in the convent's removal. Under the agreement, it was to have been removed by Feb. 22.

Earlier this year, the head of the Jewish delegation that signed the accord, Theo Klein of France, referred to "internal Polish Church difficulties" as being the main reasons why the Carmelite nuns had not yet vacated the convent.

Jewish visitors to the site in recent weeks reported that the nuns have erected a 23-foot cross alongside the convent, which they described as "looming" over the site of the death camp.

Jewish groups, supported by many Catholic leaders, feel that a Catholic presence on the site is inappropriate, considering the overwhelming number of Jews who died at Auschwitz.

The situation has been aggravated further by what is regarded as strident Christian language used in a fund-raising appeal on behalf of the convent.

A statement by the founder of the Church in Distress in Konigstein, West Germany, the Rev. Wilfried van Straaten, described the convent as "a spiritual fortress and a guarantee of the conversion of strayed brothers from our countries, as well as proof of our desire to erase outrages so often done to the Vicar of Christ."

## GERMAN ARMY DRAFT EXEMPTION FOR SOME JEWS COMES UNDER FIRE

By David Kantor

BONN, April 17 (JTA) — A number of young West German army recruits have recently protested a decision by the Defense Ministry to exempt Jews from the draft if their parents or even grandparents suffered under the Nazis.

Former Defense Minister Rupert Scholz — who was relieved of his position last week in a governmental shakeup — made the decision last year. He told journalists last week that protest letters keep coming into his office, but he added that the decision, while very difficult to make, was the correct one.

"This is a very sensitive issue," he said, "and I felt I had the duty to take into consideration the arguments of the Jewish community."

The West German Jewish community asked Scholz for the exemption after young recruits of the "third generation" of Nazi victims opposed the draft on the grounds that they couldn't deal emotionally with wearing German uniforms. Formerly, the exemption applied only to the second generation.

The Jewish community said that appearing in such uniforms in front of their grandparents would be a shock to both sides.

West German non-Jewish recruits who protested Scholz's decision say that if Jews chose to live in this country, they should be treated as any other citizen.

# 10,000 SOVIET JEWS IN ITALY EXPECTED AT LUBAVITCH SEDERS By Susan Birnbaum

NEW YORK, April 17 (JTA) -- Some 10,000 Soviet Jews waiting in Italy will sit down this week to what is for most of them their first Pesach seder ever.

The Chabad-Lubavitch organization is making the seders and has sent in rabbinic student volunteers from New York and Israel to lead them.

Like the Hasidic tale of the Jew who still remembered the tree in the forest, but no longer remembered the prayer, for most of these Soviet Jews, "it was a tradition to remember the matzah, but not all the halachot," said Rabbi Yitzhak Chazan, the Lubavitcher rebbe's emissary in Rome, who is overseeing the giant operation.

Chazan, in a telephone interview from Rome, said "80 percent might know the details of Pesach" and "some maybe remembered to get matzah, but not to keep kosher for Pesach."

But of all the 9,600 Soviet Jews now in Ladispoli and surrounding Italian towns, only "about 1 to 2 percent" have ever experienced a Pesach seder, Chazan estimated.

That is how many Jews are now registered in the transit center in Rome, he said, but Jewish agencies are expecting a full 10,000 will be gathered in the Italian towns by Wednesday night, when Passover begins. "Each day, there are 100 arrivals," Chazan said.

## Already Know 'Four Questions'

Lubavitch, which is working in tandem with the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee, has been holding classes for these Soviet Jews on the meaning of Passover, the festival of freedom.

Of the Soviet Jewish children in the Italian towns who have been attending schools administered by Lubavitch and the Joint, "most already know the 'Ma Nishtana' (Four Questions), even those who came out two weeks ago," said Chazan.

In the town of Santa Marinella, Lubavitch announced it would begin distributing a kilo (2.2 pounds) of matzoh to each family representative at about 9 a.m. last Sunday. "We had a crowd of about 800 to 900 by 6 a.m.," said Chazan. "The local residents didn't understand what was going on. They called the police."

Monday afternoon, he said, about 800 people gathered in the town's main square for a lecture about what the seder will be. Tuesday, there was to be a communal "bedikat chametz" (search for the chametz) in each of the towns in which the refugees are temporarily living.

The seders Lubavitch has arranged for them will be gargantuan. A seder for 1,200 will take place in an athletic field in Ladispoli, which the town's mayor has let them use at no charge.

In Santa Marinella, 1,800 Soviet Jews will sit down in two rooms of one building.

Although it is a time of frustration for the Soviets "waitniks," most of whom wish to come to America as refugees, the time being spent in Ladispoli and other towns may turn out to be a blessing in disguise.

Chazan likened this time to the 40 years the Jews spent wandering in the desert after leaving Egypt, unlearning their past and preparing themselves anew for entry into a Jewish life.

"It's a good moment for them to get closer to Yiddishkeit," he said. "I think most of them don't get to know something if they go straight to America."

# UNITED SYNAGOGUE CONDUCTS SEDER FOR PEOPLE WITH AIDS By Michael Kellman

NEW YORK, April 17 (JTA) -- At a model seder conducted Monday by the United Synagogue of America, there were more than four questions being asked.

Instead of merely reading through the Haggadah and reciting the formulas, this seder dealt with a real problem facing the Jewish community. Why was this seder different from all other seders? Because most of its participants are suffering from the AIDS virus.

"The seder is a ceremony of order," began Rabbi Jerome Epstein, the leader of the seder. "AIDS, however, interrupts the seder, the order in our lives."

The purpose of this seder, said Epstein, was to "join in solidarity with those whose life's order has been forcibly altered."

Every part of the service was related in some way to the plight of people with AIDS.

The prayer "Let all who are hungry come and eat, let all who are in need come and celebrate," was used to teach the need for tolerance and compassion. Just as we were slaves in Egypt, we cannot today be "slaves to indifference, fear and prejudice," the service read.

In addition to the staff members of United Synagogue who worked on the seder, there were also seven members of United Synagogue Youth who helped with the preparations. United Synagogue is the congregational arm of Conservative Judaism.

According to Shira Epstein, a high-school senior from New Rochelle, "this experience made us feel more comfortable" with the disease, acquired immune deficiency syndrome.

## 'Just Like Regular People'

Beth Fisch, another USY member, agreed. "I can say to my friends that I sat at the same table as an AIDS patient and they're just like regular people... regular Jews."

That awareness is crucial to people with AIDS, who often face prejudice at synagogues and Jewish organizations.

Bud Berman, who has AIDS, pointed out that while many churches have special food programs for AIDS patients, only one synagogue in New York, the Stephen Wise Free Synagogue, has done anything in that respect.

While many praised this effort on the part of United Synagogue, all agreed that this is not enough.

"It doesn't stop with a seder or a Purim celebration," said one participant.

"We in the Conservative movement have a challenge," Rabbi Epstein explained. "Each day there are more and more sufferers. We look at this as a beginning."

With this beginning, United Synagogue plans to begin new programs on the behalf of AIDS patients in all of its member congregations.

Some of the plans include information sessions on AIDS to better inform congregants about the disease, providing meals to people with AIDS and helping local AIDS service organizations.

JTA will not publish the Daily News Bulletin on Thursday and Friday, April 20 and 21. We wish our readers a joyous Pesach.