



WOMEN IN 9 NORTH AMERICAN CITIES CONDUCT SHACHARIT SERVICE IN UNITY

By Susan Birnbaum

NEW YORK, April 24 (JTA) -- Some 200 Jewish women from all four major branches of Judaism, and nearly every political ilk and age group, filled the Bnai Zion hall here Monday morning, where they conducted a full Shacharit service with not a word or melody excised.

They davened "in" unity and simultaneously with their sisters in Jerusalem and at least eight other North American cities.

In Philadelphia, about 35 women gathered across the street from the Liberty Bell. In Montreal, 80 women prayed in the Spanish-Portuguese Synagogue.

Services also were held in Baltimore, Boston, Seattle, Toronto and Teaneck, N.J. Another service reportedly was held in Vancouver, but that could not immediately be confirmed.

The women's prayer services, incorporating all the rites of Pesach, the counting of the Omer and the Monday morning Torah reading, were intended to show solidarity with the women involved in recent clashes at the Western Wall in Jerusalem.

There, the Women's Kotel Tefillah, which includes many Orthodox Jewish women, has been physically attacked on several occasions by ultra-Orthodox men and women enraged to see women conducting services.

The idea for the services was actually conceived long before the spate of clashes by Rivka Haut, a member of the Women's Tefillah Group of Brooklyn, which coordinates prayer groups for halachically observant women.

Each service ran a little less than two hours and included different readings and niggunim (melodies). In Montreal, they read from the works of the late Rabbi Abraham Joshua Heschel as well as a poem by Hannah Senesh, the Hungarian Jewish wartime hero and martyr.

"The Wall Is For All Of Us"

The New York gathering brought together women from the mainstream and women from fringe groups, older women, younger women and even children.

Organizers and participants included author and psychologist Phyllis Chesler; former Congresswoman Bella Abzug, who chairs the International Jewish Feminist Network set up last December in Jerusalem; and Harriet Kurlander, director of the American Jewish Congress Commission for Women's Equality.

Marion Shulevitz, who at 56 plans to be ordained a Conservative rabbi next month, recalled being harassed at the Wall in Jerusalem by Orthodox women. "The wall is for all of us," she said.

Rabbi Nina Cardin, one of about 10 leaders of the New York service, read from Pirkei Avot (Ethics of the Fathers), which noted that women had been present on the Temple Mount.

Cardin, who was ordained a Conservative rabbi last year by the Jewish Theological Seminary of America, handed out a tambourine symbolizing the timbrel, the instrument Jewish women carried into the Sinai after the Exodus from

Egypt. It was signed by all to be sent to the Jerusalem women's group.

The services emphasized not only solidarity among Jewish women but "a unique bridge of differences among the different branches of Judaism."

"We are all Orthodox in that we all have the same true opinion concerning the rights of all Jewish women to pray to their God without fear for their safety," said Rabbi Helene Ferris of New York's Stephen Wise Free Synagogue, a leader of the service here.

"We are Conservative as we strive to preserve the teachings of our tradition," she said. "Reconstructionist in our understanding that our religion will survive only if it exists for us and not the other way around, and we are Reform Jews as we strive to change our male-oriented tradition to a more egalitarian one."

In Montreal, the women sent a petition protesting the treatment of the women at the Wall to the Jerusalem women's group as well as Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir and the Chief Rabbinate, Norma Josephs of the Montreal Tefillah Group reported.

Haut said the Women's Tefillah Group has contacted major Jewish organizations to send letters and telegrams decrying the attacks on women at the Wall to Shamir, the Chief Rabbinate, Religious Affairs Minister Zevulun Hammer and Jerusalem Mayor Teddy Kollek.

FOREIGN CORRESPONDENTS PUSHED TO USE PALESTINIAN PRESS CARDS

By Hugh Orgel

TEL AVIV, April 24 (JTA) -- Palestinians in the administered territories have recently been demanding that foreign correspondents covering the West Bank and the Gaza Strip obtain press cards issued by what they call the "Palestinian Press Office," Israel Radio reported Monday.

Foreign correspondents have been asked to submit photographs and personal details to local Arab correspondents in the territories. They, in turn, convey the material to the "Palestinian Press Office," which is said to be situated in Jerusalem.

The radio said that correspondents who covered the recent border police raid in the West Bank village of Nahalin were stopped by local residents and required to present "Palestinian Press Office" press cards. Those who did not have them were told to obtain them quickly so that they would not be thrown out of the area.

"Numerous foreign correspondents have since obtained the press card," Israel Radio reported.

Police Minister Haim Bar-Lev said the police would investigate whether any illegalities had occurred and, if so, measures would be taken. He said the "Palestinian Press Office" was probably operating out of East Jerusalem.

Right-wing Knesset members reacted immediately to the report, saying that any foreign correspondent accepting or using a West Bank press card should be thrown out of the country.

Robert Slater, chairman of the Foreign Press Association in Israel, told a television interviewer that there was nothing new in the disclosure.

He said a small number of FPA members

have applied for and received the Arab press cards, but most have expressed satisfaction with the press identification cards issued by their own media or the official cards issued by Israel's Government Press Office.

Slater speculated that since the police and some West Bank settlers began using bogus press cards a few weeks ago, more FPA members may have obtained the Arab press cards to prevent molestation by rioters.

ARAB-JEWISH TENSIONS SEETHE IN HEBRON AND RAMALLAH AREAS By Gil Sedan

JERUSALEM, April 24 (JTA) -- Tension in the territories shifted to Hebron on Monday, after a bus carrying Jewish passengers came under attack by Palestinian rock-throwers there.

A curfew was imposed on downtown Hebron, after the bus, carrying passengers from Petach Tikva, was attacked opposite the local vegetable market. The incident occurred just a few yards away from the Avraham Avinu compound, site of the renewed Jewish settlement in the heavily Arab city.

A number of passengers got off the bus and vandalized local vehicles in response to the attack. When the army rushed in to intervene, a number of passengers clashed with the soldiers. Two were detained, as were a number of Arabs. No one was reported hurt.

The incident in Hebron was the latest in a series of events that have raised the level of tension between Jews and Arabs living in the West Bank.

Police on Monday questioned two residents of the Jewish settlement of Nilli, northwest of Ramallah, who were suspected of having rioted in the neighboring Arab village of Kharbata on Saturday night.

The two allegedly set fire to two Arab shops and fired their guns in the direction of houses in the village, apparently in reaction to the stoning of Jewish cars in the vicinity of the village earlier Saturday.

Army officers who witnessed the riot wrote down the license plate numbers of the cars that were spotted on the scene. Police initially said 15 residents of the settlement were suspected of perpetrating the riot, but only two were brought Monday to the Ramallah police station for questioning.

U.S. Criticizes Uprising

On Sunday, several hundred members of the Temple Mount Faithful attempted to penetrate the mount, which is the third holiest site to Moslems.

Police turned the Jewish group away, allowing only small numbers inside, for fear that they would upset the precarious calm that pervaded the area since Moslem worshippers gathered there peacefully for noon prayers on Friday.

Knesset members Geula Cohen of Tehiya and Michael Eitan of Likud managed to enter the site carrying Israeli flags. Cohen complained that while tourists were free to visit the site, Israelis were limited.

Riots continued in the territories throughout the weekend. A 7-year-old boy was injured when soldiers fired rubber bullets during a clash in Khan Yunis in the Gaza Strip.

The Tel Aviv-Jerusalem train was stoned Monday, close to Beitar, south of Jerusalem. There were neither casualties nor damage.

In Washington, the State Department expressed "deep concern" Monday over the increased violence in the West Bank and Gaza Strip.

"The increasing tension in the territories runs directly counter to the cause of peace," said department spokeswoman Margaret Tutwiler.

The United States "strongly urges all sides to exercise restraint," and is "determined to work with all parties to break out of the current confrontation and to replace violence with political dialogue and accommodation," she added.

ISRAEL AND U.S. PUSHING ITALY TO ENDORSE SHAMIR ELECTION PLAN By David Landau

JERUSALEM, April 24 (JTA) -- Israel is pressing the visiting leaders of Italy to give their backing to Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir's proposal for Palestinian elections in the West Bank and Gaza Strip.

At a working session Monday with Italian Prime Minister Ciriaco de Mita and Foreign Minister Giulio Andreotti, Israeli Foreign Minister Moshe Arens urged Italy to encourage other European Community governments to back the Shamir plan.

Both Shamir and Arens are to meet with key European leaders during the weeks ahead. Shamir is invited to Britain and Spain, and Arens is to address the European Community Council of Ministers in Brussels on May 22.

The United States is also apparently trying to drum up European support for the Shamir plan. Israeli newspapers reported Monday that U.S. Secretary of State James Baker had sent a letter to his European Community counterparts asking them to support the Shamir proposal.

Israeli and Italian sources said de Mita and his delegation had not explicitly dismissed the election proposal. But they have not concealed their doubts, wondering aloud whether elections are an adequate response to the current unrest and opportunity for progress toward peace.

In remarks at an official dinner Sunday night, de Mita warned that "a possible and undesirable fading away of these openings would imply tragic consequences for all."

FRENCH JEWS PLANNING MASS VIGIL AS ARAFAT MEETS WITH MITTERRAND By Edwin Eytan

PARIS, April 24 (JTA) -- The French Jewish community has called for a massive vigil here on May 2, the day Palestine Liberation Organization leader Yasir Arafat is scheduled to meet with French President Francois Mitterrand.

The vigil will take place in front of the Rue Copernic Synagogue here, where four people were killed and a dozen wounded in an October 1981 terrorist attack.

CRIF, the representative body of Jewish organizations in France, has also called for special funeral services to be held on the eve of Arafat's arrival on the spots where terrorist attacks have been carried out in recent years.

While the organized community is vigorously protesting Arafat's visit, a number of Jewish intellectuals are reported to be planning a meeting with the PLO leader.

Unconfirmed reports say that a group led by Daniel Barenboim, an Israeli citizen and a former conductor of the Paris Symphony Orchestra, will meet with Arafat.

PROTESTERS OUTNUMBER SKINHEADS AT HITLER CELEBRATION IN IDAHO

By David Volk

COEUR D'ALENE, Idaho, April 24 -- Over 1,000 demonstrators marched in protest here against a celebration of the 100th anniversary of Hitler's birth, dwarfing less than a hundred Skinheads and white supremacists who were gathered for the commemoration.

There were no disturbances and no major arrests, as the marchers conducted a seven-mile Walk for Racial Equality on Saturday, watched over by Idaho state police on foot, in squad cars, on horseback and from helicopters.

The Skinheads present were responding to the invitation of Richard Butler, head of the Aryan Nations church, to come to observe the April 20th anniversary of Hitler's birth.

About 15 Skinheads made the trip to the church's Hayden Lake, Idaho, compound for a three-day national conference that included a cross-burning on Saturday night.

Of the more than 1,000 people who participated in the protest march, only about 50 were Jewish. Many of them attended the event with other groups, such as the Rainbow Coalition, the United Front Against Fascism and gay rights organizations.

Some spent part of the day walking behind a Jewish banner, but no Jewish groups were in evidence despite the New Jewish Agenda's last-minute decision to co-sponsor the event.

Some of the Jewish demonstrators who participated in Saturday's rally decried the lack of Jewish involvement in the protest as part of a disturbing trend.

"There is a definite lack of mainstream Jewish participation in progressive movements," said demonstrator Ilene Samowitz, who participated as a member of a Seattle-based lesbian rights group.

Pointing out what she sees as a decreasing Jewish involvement in even basic civil rights organizations, Samowitz said many American Jews have turned their attention to the Palestinian uprising in Israel, denouncing or supporting each new development and neglecting domestic issues.

ADL Stays Away

One of the groups who refused to participate in the demonstration was the Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rith. Spokesman Brad Rind explained it was "to deny a lot of free publicity to Butler and his gang."

"The question wasn't whether somebody's going to participate in progressive movements, it's how to respond to racist movements," said Rind, assistant regional director for the ADL's Pacific Northwest Regional Office.

His comments reflect the ongoing debate over the best strategy to deal with the presence of hate groups such as the Skinheads and the white supremacist Aryan Nations Church of Jesus Christ-Christian.

Samowitz and most of the demonstrators said they believed the best way to counter the event was with visible and vocal protest.

"Every time we have the opportunity to say 'no' (to hate groups), we should say no," she said.

Rind disagreed, saying it is better to track the groups and make available information on such groups to anyone who requests it.

"We have attempted to approach this thing

in a responsible way without (unintentionally) recruiting for these groups," he said.

Luma Nichol, one of the organizers of the anti-Skinhead protest on Whidbey Island late last year and a member of the Freedom Socialist Party in Seattle, said the only way to push neo-Nazi groups out of the Northwest is to let them know they are not wanted.

Holding counterdemonstrations any time members of such organizations gather is one of the best ways to do it. "There's no peaceful coexistence with Nazis. It's not acceptable," she said, because it only took a handful of Nazis to bring Hitler to power. "We are committed to not repeat the mistakes of the 1930s."

Not all civil rights leaders in the area agreed with her approach, though. Many activists in Coeur d'Alene, nearby Spokane and neighboring communities did not participate in the walk, choosing instead to tie orange ribbons around telephone poles, car antennas and other objects as symbols to relay the same message.

An interfaith service in Coeur d'Alene was also held, featuring Rabbi Robert Tabak, of Temple Beth Shalom in nearby Spokane, Wash.

JEWISH NEWSPAPER IN SAN DIEGO FIREBOMBED IN PRE-DAWN ATTACK

By Tom Tugend

LOS ANGELES, April 24 (JTA) -- Police have launched a full-scale investigation into the Molotov cocktail bombing of a San Diego Jewish newspaper building, which had previously been defaced by spray-painted swastikas.

The firebomb, hurled against the one-story building in El Cajon, Calif., that houses the San Diego Jewish Times, ignited a blaze early Saturday morning that shattered two barred windows and scorched the building's front wall.

Garry Rosenberg, publisher of the biweekly newspaper, said that the Molotov cocktail hit a bar protecting one of the building's front windows, which prevented the bomb from landing inside the offices.

"This is not a prank," said Rosenberg. "This was a bomb and we have people who work late. This was potentially life-threatening."

A \$2,500 reward has been offered by the newspaper and the Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rith for information leading to the arrest and conviction of the perpetrators.

The newspaper had recently taken extra security precautions, said Carol Rosenberg, the Times' executive editor, after a series of swastika daubings had occurred during the past year and threatening anti-Semitic phone calls had been made to the paper.

Anonymous phone calls over the past year have included such threats as "The bars won't stop bullets" and "Jewish newspapers don't belong in El Cajon."

"The damage (Saturday) was more psychological than physical," Carol Rosenberg said after returning to work Monday morning.

Morris Casuto, regional director of the ADL, said he had alerted police some weeks ago to possible anti-Semitic incidents in connection with the 100th anniversary of Adolf Hitler's birth on April 20.

"The act may have also been timed for the celebration of Passover, but at this point this is pure speculation," Casuto said.

(JTA reporter Marlene Goldman in New York contributed to this report.)

**KIN OF THOSE CHASED FROM AUSTRIA
RETURN TO RECAPTURE A DARK PAST**
By Martha Halpert

VIENNA, April 24 (JTA) -- For a couple of days they behaved like good kids, these American youngsters who were showcased not only for being Jewish but primarily as grandchildren of former Austrian citizens who had been chased out of their home country after the Anschluss in March 1938.

One hundred of these descendants, as young as 16 and as old as 30, had been invited for a 10-day visit to Vienna. They willingly expressed their feelings about being here in the former home of their forefathers. They gave interviews and were filmed for a television news report on the project.

But standing in front of the gate to the Mauthausen concentration camp, their patience came to an end.

Two young girls chased away the TV crew, making clear that they did not want the media present at all. They were here to commemorate and wanted to be left in peace.

The young people listened to the explanations of the guide with anger, horror and tears in their eyes. It was a wet, cold day in April when these kids from the New World heard statistical figures about the barbaric acts that had taken place in the heart of good old Europe 50 years ago.

Holding each other by their hands, embracing one another, they learned about the ghastly methods the Nazis used to exterminate people.

"I am shook up, I feel sick, imagining that 200,000 people entered this camp and exactly half of them were killed systematically," said Rachel Ruderman, a 23-year-old custom jewelry designer from New York City.

'Never Had The Stomach To Come'

Her grandfather had a small shoe repair shop in the second district of Vienna, where most of the 180,000 Viennese Jews lived before World War II.

Marjorie Zohn, a 20-year-old drama student from Boston, described her feelings as tears ran down her cheeks and her voice trembled.

"I think it's very important for me to be here," she said. "My father has never had the stomach to come here, but he told me that Mauthausen was one of the most sinister camps. So I feel that I have been here for both of us."

Dr. Leon Zelman, a survivor of Auschwitz and Mauthausen who now heads Vienna's Jewish Welcome Service, an organization catering to tourists, initiated the project and convinced Austrian Airlines to sponsor it.

"Austria has never said 'Welcome back to Vienna' to those former citizens who were forcefully driven out of this country. Now we are trying -- late but hopefully not too late -- to help bridge the horrible gaps of the past with a goodwill gesture of today," he explained.

More than 1,000 Austrian families applied to host at least one of the 100 kids participating in the program. Many potential host parents were deeply disappointed when their offer was turned down.

U.S. Ambassador Henry Grunwald, himself a young Viennese Jew expelled in 1938 from school and country, welcomed the "young ambassadors" in his home and advised them to write about their impressions of Austria.

The participants' itinerary included sightseeing tours on the Danube, visits to the Austrian Parliament and the central synagogue of Vienna, and an address by Austrian Chancellor Franz Vranitzky.

"He gave us a very heartfelt welcome," said Zohn, the drama student, "and he told us about our ambassadorial mission. We should let people know that Austria, the country and the people, have changed."

Said Zohn, "Maybe this is a step in healing, for a wound which can never be healed."

**RABBIS FROM U.S., ISRAEL, EUROPE
TO MAKE NINE-DAY VISIT TO USSR**
By Hugh Orgel

TEL AVIV, April 24 (JTA) -- The chief rabbis of Tel Aviv, Haifa and Rehovot are to be part of an international delegation of rabbis invited to visit the Soviet Union next week.

The delegation, which has been invited by the Soviet minister for religious affairs, will be headed by Romanian Chief Rabbi Moshe Rosen.

Other participants include French Chief Rabbi Joseph Sitruk; Rabbi Arthur Schneier, senior rabbi of New York's Park East Synagogue and president of the Appeal of Conscience Foundation; and Chief Rabbi Yisrael Lau of Tel Aviv, Shear Yashuv Cohen of Haifa and Simcha Kook of Rehovot. Rabbi Norman Lamm, president of Yeshiva University in New York, may also participate.

The rabbis will visit Moscow, Leningrad and Kiev from May 1 to 9. They will conduct services at Moscow's Choral Synagogue on Saturday morning, May 6, and plan to meet with high-level government officials.

Cohen told The Jerusalem Post on Sunday that he and his colleagues would be trying to establish a working relationship with the rabbis of the Soviet Union, with the possibility of sending U.S. and Israeli rabbis to Russia. The link would be a purely religious one, he said.

Cohen said he was aware that there were differences of approach and degree of observance between the Israeli rabbis and their colleagues in the Soviet Union, but he said that this could be overcome.

"The policy of glasnost (openness) presents an unprecedented opening to revive Jewish religious life in the Soviet Union," Schneier said in New York.

"When the fledgling American Jewish community entered its period of greatest population growth following the Kishinev pogrom of 1903, it was East European Jewry -- and particularly the Jews of Russia -- who supplied rabbis, scholars, religious functionaries, teachers," he said.

"Now we have the opportunity to repay that great debt by making available the resources that the Jews of the USSR want and need, so that they may study, understand and practice their Jewish heritage."

ISRAELIS LAUD SOVIET THEATER TROUPE
By Hugh Orgel

TEL AVIV, April 24 (JTA) -- The Moscow Youth Theater received a standing ovation Sunday night, when it appeared at the opening of the second Haifa Festival of Children's Theater.

It was the first Soviet theater group to perform in Israel.

The 27-member cast presented the long-banned Russian play "Heart of a Dog."