



# **PLO NOW SEEKING FULL MEMBERSHIP IN UNESCO, TWO OTHER U.N. BODIES**

By Edwin Eytan

PARIS, May 9 (JTA) -- The Palestine Liberation Organization escalated its diplomatic drive for international recognition Tuesday by applying for admission to the Paris-based United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, in the name of the "state of Palestine."

The PLO announced at the same time that it will apply for full membership in the U.N. Food and Agricultural Organization, based in Rome, and the International Labor Organization, headquartered in Geneva.

PLO officials say they need these diplomatic victories to mollify hard-liners upset by Yasir Arafat's recent conciliatory gestures toward Israel. They cite, for example, the PLO chief's remark here last week that the organization's 1964 charter, which calls for Israel's destruction, is "null and void."

In Geneva, meanwhile, the World Health Assembly was in turmoil Tuesday as it prepared to vote on the PLO's request for full membership in the World Health Organization, with the rights of a sovereign state.

The bid precipitated a crisis because the United States served notice last week it would withhold its \$73.8 million contribution to the WHO's fiscal 1990 budget if the PLO were to be admitted.

That would be a crippling blow, forcing the U.N. agency to curtail most of its health services, of which Third World countries are major beneficiaries.

## **Vote Could Come Thursday**

Dr. Hiroshi Nakajima, the Japanese physician who is director general of the WHO, has proposed a compromise resolution postponing the PLO's request for a year.

In exchange, the WHO promises to expand medical assistance to the Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza Strip, now in the 19th month of their uprising against the Israeli occupation.

The health assembly will debate the compromise resolution, said to have the full backing of the United States and Israel, on Wednesday. A vote is possible Thursday morning.

Diplomatic observers in Geneva say there is "a chance" the compromise resolution will be adopted. Before the compromise was proposed, the PLO's bid for membership appeared to be assured of approval.

Israeli diplomats said they believe the assembly "will be reasonable and adopt the compromise resolution."

Nakajima is trying to convince a majority of the 166 nations belonging to the WHO to back his resolution or abstain. Under the organization's rules, a simple majority is required for admission.

The director general's resolution makes no promises. It simply requests the director general "to improve the health conditions of the Palestinian people in the occupied territories."

The resolution does not spell out how this will be done, what role the International Red Cross will play or whether Israel has agreed to the project.

The resolution has the backing of several Western European countries and some in the Third World: Nigeria, Costa Rica, Samoa and Fiji. The Arab states officially support the PLO's request and are expected to vote for it.

But some say privately that its admission to the WHO could boomerang by reinforcing the Israeli government's determination to oppose any contact with the PLO.

## **Congressional Sentiment Strong**

In Washington, meanwhile, a Bush administration official told Congress on Tuesday that the United States was continuing to lobby in Geneva against the PLO's membership bid.

N. Shaw Smith, deputy assistant secretary of state for U.N. political affairs, said the United States was relieved that a vote on the resolution was put off until Thursday. It had originally been expected as early as Tuesday.

There is strong sentiment in Congress against the PLO campaign for recognition.

The House Foreign Affairs subcommittee on human rights and international organizations last week approved, by a 10-0 vote, a bill that would withhold U.S. funds to U.N. bodies that grant full membership to the Palestinian state. It was sponsored by Rep. Tom Lantos (D-Calif.).

The full Senate passed a resolution last week that supports Secretary of State James Baker's recommendation that the United States withhold funds from the WHO if the PLO attains membership. It was sponsored by Sens. John Heinz (R-Pa.) and Paul Simon (D-Ill.).

The resolution supports "a halt to U.S. assessed and voluntary contributions to international organizations which grant full member status to organizations that lack key attributes of statehood."

This presumably would extend to other U.N. organizations the PLO is seeking to join.

The PLO's request for admission to UNESCO was formally submitted Tuesday by Algeria, Egypt, Indonesia, Mauritania, Nigeria, Senegal and North Yemen. Arafat also sent a written request to UNESCO's director general, Frederico Mayor Zaragoza.

The United States quit UNESCO in 1984 to protest its politicization and anti-Western bias.

(JTA correspondents Tamar Levy in Geneva and Howard Rosenberg in Washington contributed to this report.)

## **PALESTINIANS WILL ONE DAY BACK ELECTION PLAN, SHAMIR BELIEVES**

By David Landau

JERUSALEM, May 9 (JTA) -- Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir believes Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza Strip will eventually accept Israel's proposal for elections in the territories.

Israel knows, from quiet contacts, that some in the territories want to reach an accord, Shamir told The Jerusalem Post in a pre-Independence Day interview published Tuesday.

"So I hope the forces will be found, perhaps with the help of neighboring Arab states, which will enter the process with us," the prime minister said.

He said the Palestinians must be made to

realize, through military and diplomatic firmness, that they have "only one alternative -- and it is a fair and reasonable one," said Shamir.

He said the Palestine Liberation Organization was exhorting the populace of the territories to spurn the Israeli election plan, telling them independence is just around the corner.

But "you can't lie to everybody all the time. The people in the territories will eventually realize that these tales are groundless -- lies and illusions," he said.

The prime minister expressed anger at the news media Tuesday for alleged "misrepresentation of events in our country."

Greeting a visiting Keren Hayesod mission, Shamir said Israel would not sacrifice its vital interests "in order to get a good press."

"We should do whatever possible to improve it," he told the overseas fund-raisers. "But let us not fall into the trap of sacrificing substance for the sake of public relations.

"Above all, we must remember that we cannot, we will not, risk our survival in order to get a good press," Shamir said.

#### U.S. JEWISH LEADER GIVES BUSH HIGH MARKS ON MIDDLE EAST POLICY

By David Friedman

WASHINGTON, May 9 (JTA) -- While President Bush's first 100 days in office have been getting generally unenthusiastic reviews, a Jewish leader said Tuesday that the president should receive 98 percent approval for his policy toward the Middle East and Israel.

Seymour Reich, chairman of the Conference of Presidents of Major American Jewish Organizations, said the reason he did not give the president a 100 percent rating is Bush's public call for an end to Israeli occupation of the West Bank and Gaza Strip, which he issued during Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak's visit to the White House last month.

While Bush's remarks were "consistent with prior policy," the context in which it was made "was harsh," since the president did not provide historical background about why Israel administers the West Bank and Gaza Strip, Reich said.

His comments were made to reporters at a National Press Club breakfast on the eve of the 41st anniversary of the State of Israel.

"Israel occupies these territories, not because of aggression that it engaged in, but because of defensive actions that it had to take as a result of wars begun by neighboring Arab countries," he said.

Reich, who is also president of B'nai B'rith International, praised Bush for having "reaffirmed the basic alliance that exists between the United States and Israel, militarily, culturally, strategically."

The president was also lauded for telling Mubarak that he did not favor an international peace conference until there are "positive accomplishments" in the Middle East.

Reich was especially pleased that Bush supports a step-by-step approach in the Middle East and has embraced Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir's proposal for elections in the territories.

The Jewish leader also gave high marks to Shamir and his election proposal.

"The overwhelming number of American Jews and Jewish organizational life is supportive of this election process," he said, contending that "op-

ponents are a distinct minority."

Past divisions in the American Jewish community over Israel were the result of a situation in which the Israeli government spoke with two voices, that of Shamir and that of Shimon Peres. "It is now clear that Shamir speaks for the government of Israel," Reich said.

#### U.S. Jews Now 'Behind Shamir'

"I think that the American Jewish community is solidifying behind Shamir," the Jewish leader said. "They are saying, 'Give this man a chance.'"

Reich also had high marks for the Bush administration's warning that if the Palestine Liberation Organization is admitted to the World Health Organization, the United States will cut off funds to that international organization. "For the PLO to come into the United Nations through the back door does not enhance the cause of peace," he said.

Reich gave low grades to PLO leader Yasir Arafat, whom he criticized for the confusion he caused by seemingly saying in Paris that the sections of the Palestine National Covenant calling for the destruction of Israel were "null and void," and then later rejecting this view.

"Again we've seen an example of rhetoric rather than action," Reich said. He said the sections can be repealed only by a two-thirds vote of the Palestine National Council. The PNC had that opportunity at its meeting in Algiers last fall and did not take it, he added.

Until this is done, the PLO position can only be seen as "first the West Bank and Gaza, and then Tel Aviv and Haifa," he said.

#### MEMORIAL DAY MARRED ONLY BY INCIDENT IN GOLAN HEIGHTS

By Gil Sedan

JERUSALEM, May 9 (JTA) -- Police used tear gas and rubber bullets Tuesday to disperse some 200 rock-throwing high-school students in the Druse village of Mas'ada in the Golan Heights.

Several police officers were hurt by rocks. The students, protesting Israel's presence in the Golan, annexed from Syria in 1980, hauled down the Israeli flag from the school building and tore it to shreds.

Ya'acov Ganot, commander of police in the northern district, said those responsible would be punished.

It was the only serious disorder in Israel as the nation observed Memorial Day for its war dead.

In the mixed Jewish-Arab city of Acre, on Haifa Bay, an Arab youth was arrested for allegedly shouting "it serves you right" at Jews observing a minute of silence for fallen soldiers.

Nearly a million Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza Strip were under curfew, which is not expected to be lifted until Wednesday night, the end of Independence Day.

Tuesday began the 18th month of the Palestinian uprising and was marked by another Arab general strike.

A Palestinian youth was killed Monday and two others were wounded in a clash with Israeli soldiers in the West Bank town of Salfit.

The trouble began when youths ambushed soldiers entering the village with rocks. The soldiers opened fire, hitting three of them. One died on the way to the hospital.

## FEDERAL COURT UPHOLDS IOWA RULING BARRING OVERNIGHT MENORAH DISPLAY

By Andrew Silow Carroll

NEW YORK, May 8 (JTA) -- The state of Iowa did not discriminate against the Lubavitch movement in 1986 when it refused to allow the organization to leave a Chanukah menorah standing on the grounds of the state Capitol overnight, a federal court ruled Monday.

The U.S. Court of Appeals for the Eighth Circuit affirmed a lower court ruling allowing the state to ask Lubavitch to take down its 20-foot candelabrum each evening after a public candle-lighting event on the Capitol grounds in Des Moines.

Chief Justice Donald Lay said there was no evidence that the state had allowed any other religious symbols to remain on state grounds overnight.

"We find Lubavitch's claim borders on the frivolous," Lay wrote in a four-page ruling.

But the court acknowledged that it did not rule on the free speech or constitutional questions raised in this and other cases involving the display of religious symbols.

When Iowa first moved to revoke permission for the menorah, it was acting on the state attorney general's advice that the display of unattended religious symbols on state Capitol grounds might violate the Establishment Clause of the First Amendment. The clause prohibits government establishment of religion.

Lay's ruling only upheld a state ordinance calling for a "thorough clean-up" after an event on Capitol grounds is concluded.

### Lubavitch 'Offended' By Ruling

Paul Zoss, attorney for Lubavitch of Iowa, said the state at first objected to the menorah as a violation of church-state separation, later changing course to invoke the "overnight" restrictions.

"Restrictions on speech should be content neutral," he said. "These restrictions are the result of the fact that it was a religious event."

"Naturally we're very disappointed in the court's decision," said Rabbi Moishe Kasowitz, director of Lubavitch of Iowa. "And we're a bit offended by the court's implication that we were bringing a frivolous suit. The lower courts did not seem to find it frivolous."

A number of Jewish groups lined up against the Lubavitch position in a friend-of-the-court brief written by the American Jewish Congress.

Marc Stern, co-director of the AJCongress Commission on Law and Social Action, said that by only prohibiting overnight displays, the Iowa ordinance did not infringe upon a group's right to speak or hold a religious ceremony of limited duration.

He said other municipalities have begun to draft similar "overnight" ordinances in order to circumvent the church-state issues raised by seasonal menorah and nativity scene displays.

The AJCongress brief was filed on behalf of the Jewish Federation of Greater Des Moines, several local synagogues and two Reform groups: the Central Conference of American Rabbis and the Union of American Hebrew Congregations.

The U.S. Supreme Court is now reviewing a case involving the display of religious symbols, including a menorah erected by Lubavitch, on municipal buildings in Pittsburgh. A decision is expected by July 1.

## FORMER SS OFFICER GETS 4 YEARS FOR KILLING OF JEWS IN MAJDANEC

By David Kantor

BONN, May 9 (JTA) -- A former SS officer has been sentenced to four years in prison for complicity in the murder of at least 60 Jews in the Majdanec death camp near Lublin, Poland.

He may also have been involved in the killing of 380 other inmates.

But the Bielefeld court that passed sentence last week decided that 77-year-old Karl-Friedrich Hoecker would be allowed to stay at home, pending a possible appeal.

The court was sure the prisoner would not try to escape, because he has strong personal ties in town and is undergoing medical treatment.

After nine months of deliberation, a panel of judges found May 3 that Hoecker was an "arm-chair culprit" whose job was to order the deadly Zyklon B gas used in the Majdanec gas chambers, where some 250,000 Jews perished.

Hoecker served at the camp in 1943. Witnesses at the trial described him as a cruel man who gladly resorted to sadistic practices in dealing with Jewish inmates.

But he told the court last month that he did not kill or hurt a single inmate during his service in Majdanec.

In 1965, Hoecker drew a seven-year sentence for his role in the killings of at least 3,000 inmates, mostly Jews, in Auschwitz. He was released in 1970, after serving five years.

## WEST GERMAN SPOKESMAN DEFENDS WAFFEN SS AS A 'FIGHTING UNIT'

By David Kantor

BONN, May 9 (JTA) -- A defense of the Waffen SS by the newly appointed government spokesman, Hans Klein, has drawn angry protests from West Germany's Jewish community.

Heinz Galinski, leader of the community, called his remarks "inappropriate, indefensible and unacceptable to survivors of the Holocaust."

But Klein, a member of Chancellor Helmut Kohl's ruling Christian Democratic Union, is standing by his words.

The government spokesman, who holds the rank of minister, was quoted by the Munich weekly Quick last week as saying that the Waffen SS, the Nazi elite force, was "a fighting unit, not criminals."

Political observers here believe Klein's defense of the Waffen SS was calculated to recapture right-wing voters who recently deserted the CDU in favor of the neo-Nazi Republican Party and other extremist factions.

Klein also defended Kohl, who came under worldwide criticism in 1986 for prevailing upon then President Reagan to place a wreath at the military cemetery in Bitburg, where members of the Waffen SS are buried along with other German war dead.

Klein said the critics acted as if the chancellor was giving the highest honors to concentration camp hangmen.

He went on to defend the men who served in the Waffen SS, who he claimed were distinct from the SS who ran the concentration camps.

At a news conference here Saturday, he said he could defend his position politically and morally. "The Waffen SS were honestly serving their country in the belief that they should defend it," Klein said.

## PERONISTS' EXPECTED RETURN TO ARGENTINA CAUSING CONCERN

By Milton Jacoby

BUENOS AIRES, May 9 (JTA) -- The expected return of Peronist leadership to Argentina is causing shockwaves to ripple through the large and important Jewish community here.

Many non-Jews as well with deep concern the possible election Sunday of Carlos Menem, the Peronist candidate, as president of the nation.

Menem is the front-runner in a field of several candidates that also includes Eduardo Angeloz of incumbent President Raul Alfonsin's Radical Civil Union.

Jorge Rubin Matzkin, the only Jewish Peronist deputy in Argentina's Congress, is a highly respected moderate voice in a party that many fear has authoritarian leanings. He attempted to allay these fears in an interview last year with the Jewish Telegraphic Agency.

Matzkin, an economic specialist with close ties to Menem, insisted that the Peronist movement, which he called the largest in South America, has "profound democratic convictions" and a strong aversion to anti-Semitism. He also was certain that relations with Israel would be unchanged, should his leader win.

According to the deputy, Menem has met with Jewish officials in Buenos Aires and would welcome such an exchange with American Jewish leaders. Matzkin also pointed out that the province of Chubut, in southern Argentina, has a Jewish Peronist governor, Nestor Perl.

But apprehensions persist. Manuel Tenenbaum, director of the Latin American Jewish Congress, indicated that no one is certain there will not be a return to authoritarian rule.

### Extremes Of Right And Left

"Menem's entourage," he said, "embraces extremes of the right and the left, and if he wins the election," the Palestine Liberation Organization "may finally gain a stronghold in Argentina."

"Many of us, Jew and non-Jew alike, are convinced that the democracy initiated by President Alfonsin has been critically weakened by the ever-growing foreign debt and our economic crisis," he said.

Inflation in Argentina today exceeds 40 percent a month.

Veteran journalist Werner Finkelstein provided a slightly different viewpoint. "I don't see that we have a Jewish problem per se," he said. "Our economic and political survival is a concern of the entire Argentine middle class."

"I don't think that our position with Israel will change, no matter which party triumphs," he said. "And as far as relations between the Jewish and Arab communities here are concerned, they are quite cordial and should remain so."

"What is fatal for all of us is the ongoing combination of bureaucracy and incompetence," he said.

Ambassador Ephraim Tari, the genial Israeli envoy here, declared that there is some progress in economic exchanges between the two nations. Argentine officials, he said, have a respect for Israel's economic stability and its "knowhow."

A commission including representatives of the Foreign Office and various ministries went to Jerusalem last June to study Israel's latest technological and economic advances.

Jacobo Fiterman, a prominent Jew and

secretary of public works for Buenos Aires, said he believes "Menem has much respect for us Jews. And many people here give us credit for more influence than we really have."

Referring to the current difficulties, he said, "Our overriding concern is to save the economic situation. And whether we are Jews or not, we all need time to ensure that our fledgling democracy works."

What the real impact of Sunday's elections on Argentina's Jewish community will be is difficult to determine, for this is a country of contradictions and surprises.

Along Calle Florida, the lively pedestrian mall in downtown Buenos Aires, the joyous strains of Hava Nagilah were heard one day recently.

The source of the music turned out to be five Indian boys from Argentina's northwest performing on their hand-carved instruments as blithe and infectious a rendition of the Jewish melody as one could ever hope to hear.

## ISRAELIS LOOK TO THE FUTURE AS THEY REMEMBER THE FALLEN

By David Landau and Gil Sedan

JERUSALEM, May 9 (JTA) -- Israelis, marking Memorial Day for their war dead Tuesday while preparing for Wednesday's Independence Day festivities, received mixed messages from their national leaders.

Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir, in a brief speech at the military cemetery on Mount Herzl, suggested that bereaved families might be consoled by the knowledge that there are "better days" ahead.

But Defense Minister Yitzhak Rabin, addressing a memorial gathering at Kiryat Shaul, near Tel Aviv, said nothing has changed since Israel fought for its independence in 1948.

"We are still involved in the battle over the right to have a hold here," he said. "This is the same war which began in 1948 and has not yet been ended."

"Our enemies have the same goal -- to get rid of us -- even if rifles, tanks and airplanes have been replaced by stones, knives and petrol bombs," the defense minister said.

President Chaim Herzog, in a televised Independence Day address, said he was "profoundly disturbed" by the "polarizing tendencies" he has witnessed, "particularly among the youth who have been ensnared by the attitudes of fanatical marginal groups completely alien to the Jewish spirit."

Herzog also warned against vigilantism. "Let's be wary of attempts by unauthorized bodies to take the law into their own hands and act in place of the bodies authorized to do so," he said.

"That way lies the ruination of the delicate fabric of our democracy, and if we damage our democratic system, our very existence is endangered," the president warned.

An ugly incident developed at the military cemetery in Sde Warburg, demonstrating the polarization Herzog warned about.

Knesset member Dedi Zucker of the dovish Citizens Rights Movement was hounded out of the cemetery because of his support for dialogue with the Palestine Liberation Organization.

"I thought that in our military cemeteries we are one big family, that one cannot distinguish between the dead of the right and the dead of the left," a shaken Zucker said.