

**CHRISTOPHER CALLS TALKS 'TOP PRIORITY'  
AS PALESTINIANS SIGNAL THEY MAY RETURN**By Deborah Kalb  
States News Service

WASHINGTON, March 23 (JTA) -- Prospects for a Palestinian return to the Middle East peace talks brightened this week with the news that a Palestinian delegation would be arriving here for a meeting Friday with Secretary of State Warren Christopher.

A State Department spokesperson said that while there was an "open agenda" for the meeting, it would include the "next steps" for a possible Palestinian return to the table.

Earlier this month, the United States had invited Israel and the Arab parties to send representatives to Washington for discussions with American officials prior to the resumption of the talks April 20.

Separately, in an appearance before the annual policy conference of the American Israel Public Affairs Committee on Tuesday, Christopher stressed the importance of the peace talks to the Clinton administration.

He called the pursuit of peace in the Middle East a "top priority" for American officials.

He noted that every Arab leader he met with on his trip last month to the Middle East "made it very clear that they are serious about pursuing peace."

He did not specifically mention the upcoming Palestinian visit.

Christopher and other U.S. officials have repeatedly said that they are prepared to play the role of a "full partner" in the talks if the parties are willing to engage in serious negotiating this time around.

In his first major policy address as secretary, at the Chicago Council on Foreign Relations on Monday, Christopher reiterated that theme and said it was "imperative that all sides act to seize this opportunity and return to the negotiating tables in Washington on April 20."

At AIPAC on Tuesday, Christopher added: "President Clinton and I are not interested in negotiations that are simply a ritual without a purpose.

"Enough time and effort has gone into the modalities of the peace process. Now it is time to turn to serious negotiations and to agreements leading up to real peace."

**Interrupts Meetings With Russian**

Christopher interrupted meetings with Russian Foreign Minister Andrei Kozyrev, whose country is in the midst of a grave political crisis, to address the 2,000 participants at the AIPAC conference.

This was the secretary's first appearance in the United States before such a large Jewish gathering.

The secretary, who visited Israel last month, called his tour of the Yad Vashem Holocaust memorial in Jerusalem "one of the most moving experiences I have ever had," and said press reports of his emerging from the memorial "choked up and solemn" were accurate.

He also said his trip to Israel made him more aware of the country's security problems.

"No one who has ever visited Israel can fail to appreciate how much the need for security shapes Israel's view of the world," he said.

"Since independence," he added, "the state of Israel has been confronted with terrorism, with Scud missiles, with war, and now with the even deadlier threat of mass destruction and weapons of mass destruction.

"No one in the area should have to live this way in the future."

Christopher was received warmly by the crowd, who stood up, cheered and waved American flags when he appeared on the podium.

In his remarks, Christopher stressed the "shared values" between the United States and Israel, including democracy and pluralism.

"These shared values have provided an absolutely essential solid sustenance for the relationship between the United States and Israel," he said.

**Kind Words For AIPAC**

Christopher had kind words for AIPAC, saying, "I value this organization.

"You and other leaders will have access to me as much as I can possibly give through my tenure as secretary of state," he said.

The U.S. commitment to the peace process, voiced by President Clinton as well as Christopher, has been welcomed by the Israelis, who have already accepted the invitation to return to the talks April 20.

But the Palestinians have said they will not come back to the talks until all the Palestinians deported by Israel in December are returned.

The United States and Israel worked out a compromise solution, which was accepted by the U.N. Security Council, under which 101 of the 415 men would be returned at once and the rest by the end of the year.

One Arab American leader said Tuesday that "things were on the verge of being resolved" in some areas of concern "hindering the resumption" of the peace talks.

Khalil Jahshan, executive director of the National Association of Arab Americans, said it was not a question of "all or nothing" -- i.e., the return of all the Palestinians before the April 20 resumption of talks.

Rather, the point, he said, was to ensure that there were "steps" being taken "to show the problems are being resolved consistent with" the U.N. resolution calling for the return of the Palestinians.

Jahshan said the Palestinian group arriving in Washington on Friday, headed by Faisal Husseini and reportedly including Hanan Ashrawi, would have "a loaded agenda" in their talks with State Department officials.

Topics for discussion include the peace process, U.S. relations with the Palestinians and Israeli relations with the Palestinians.

The Arab parties to the peace talks are scheduled to meet Sunday in Damascus to discuss whether to accept the invitations to the talks next month.

AIPAC estimated that 45 U.S. senators and 85 representatives attended their banquet Monday night. The speakers were Sens. Barbara Mikulski (D-Md.) and Don Nickles (R-Okla.).

## JEWISH SETTLER KILLS AN ARAB AS VIOLENCE IN ISRAEL CONTINUES

By Cynthia Mann

JERUSALEM, March 23 (JTA) -- A Jewish settler shot and killed a 20-year-old Palestinian whose feet and hands had been bound after he had stabbed another settler in the West Bank.

The shooting in Susia, a Jewish settlement south of Hebron, occurred against a backdrop of rising right-wing calls for vigilantism against Palestinian terrorism, which has shaken this country in a recent wave of violence.

In a separate incident, two Israeli park custodians were injured when Arabs shot at them in the northern Negev.

In the Susia incident, settler Yoram Shkolnick said he shot the Palestinian who was bound because he spotted a concealed grenade and feared the Palestinian planned to use it.

The incident began Tuesday morning when two settlers became suspicious of a Palestinian walking around their settlement and took him to the police for questioning.

On the way to the police in the settlers' jeep, the Palestinian stabbed one of them in the shoulder. The two settlers grabbed the man's knife, got him out of the jeep and bound him, the army said.

Shkolnick arrived on the scene later, responding to a radio call for help. He then shot the Palestinian several times at close range.

Police have detained Shkolnick and are questioning him about the shooting.

The army confirmed that a grenade was found on the Arab's body and said he had been wanted by Israeli security forces for three years for alleged participation in violent demonstrations.

The incident came a day after Israeli tempers flared over stabbings carried out at a high school courtyard by a Palestinian from East Jerusalem.

Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin, under intense political fire for the wave of violence, called on the public Tuesday to fight back by doubling the number of volunteers in the nation's civil guard.

### Calls For Self-Defense

He also urged high schools to organize self-defense programs for teen-agers to avert an attack similar to what occurred Monday.

Police Minister Moshe Shahal echoed the call, stressing the importance of the civil guard as an adjunct to the regular security forces in the fight against terrorism.

"We are calling on the people to defend themselves by volunteering," said Shahal. He said he would like to see thousands more "guarding themselves, their neighborhoods.

"This, I think, is the spirit of the country and we have to renew it," the police minister said.

The guard has roughly 40,000 volunteers, down sharply from the 150,000 it boasted in the 1970s, Shahal said.

Outgoing Israeli President Chaim Herzog called on the country to unite and allow the security forces to wage the war on terrorism.

He said the recent violent anti-government demonstrations undermined the fight against Arab violence.

Meanwhile, an Israeli officer was imprisoned for two weeks on Tuesday and suspended indefinitely in connection with the killing of a 10-year-old Palestinian boy the day before.

The boy apparently was shot while playing with a toy gun near an army outpost in the Gaza Strip.

Also Tuesday, the Jerusalem municipality decided to transfer responsibility for school security from the Education Ministry to the police in the wake of Monday's schoolyard attack.

## NETANYAHU APPEARS POISED TO WIN LIKUD PRIMARY

By David Landau

JERUSALEM, March 23 (JTA) -- On the eve of Wednesday's primary elections for the leadership of the Likud party, the American-educated former Israeli U.N. Ambassador Binyamin Netanyahu appeared poised to win out over his party rivals.

Despite some late slippage in his support, polls still showed Netanyahu, known also as "Bibi," far ahead of his main rivals, former Foreign Minister David Levy and Knesset member Zeev Binyamin, or "Benny," Begin.

But the real question centered around whether Netanyahu, a former deputy foreign minister as well, could clinch victory in this first round of polls by capturing more than 40 percent of the vote.

If Netanyahu failed to do so, then he might face trouble in a second round if two or more of the losers lined up behind one candidate in an effort to block Netanyahu.

Last-minute appeals to the party's own Court of Honor and to the nation's High Court of Justice for a postponement of the polling were swept aside earlier in the week and logistical arrangements were being finalized for the 220,000-odd dues-paying members to vote.

Reports said that all the candidates except for Netanyahu were in favor of postponing the election for what they claimed were technical reasons and irregularities in preparations for the primary.

Begin told supporters Sunday that Netanyahu's own polls were showing slippage in his popularity.

"Popularity is fickle and transient," Begin proclaimed. He noted how Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin's popularity at the time of the Knesset elections last summer has rapidly eroded in recent weeks.

The other candidate in the Likud race is former minister Moshe Katsav. Former Defense Minister Ariel Sharon has been a passive observer, but said he reserves the right to run against the winner before the next Knesset election.

Netanyahu's first challenge if he is elected will be to prevent David Levy and his supporters from seceding from the Likud.

In a four-way television debate last week, redolent with bitter recriminations, Levy assailed Netanyahu for having publicly accused him of attempting to blackmail Netanyahu and his wife.

Levy has demanded unsuccessfully that the police inquiry into these charges be wound up before the Likud membership goes to the polls.

Levy has maintained that Netanyahu should withdraw from the race if his charges against Levy prove unfounded.

For his part, Levy pledged to quit political life if they prove true.

Most political pundits felt Netanyahu performed at less than his best in the television battle last week. Many gave high points to the soft-spoken Katsav.

## JEWISH LEADERS PLEDGE SUPPORT IN MEETING WITH BOSNIAN PRESIDENT

By Larry Yudelson

NEW YORK, March 23 (JTA) -- American Jewish leaders have promised to increase their lobbying of the U.S. government to take a stronger role in saving Bosnia-Herzegovina.

They made this pledge in a meeting Tuesday with Alija Izetbegovic, president of Bosnia-Herzegovina.

The meeting was called by Izetbegovic to thank the Jewish community for its leading role in trying to mobilize American support for Bosnia.

It came as the United Nations was discussing whether to enforce no-fly zones over Bosnian territory, which would open the way for NATO troops to shoot down Serbian airplanes.

Those discussions were in the context of the continuing wrangling over the proposed peace plan for Bosnia, which would divide the country into 10 different ethnic cantons.

The National Jewish Community Relations Advisory Council, which organized the meeting, last month adopted a strong resolution regarding Bosnia.

It calls for no-fly zone enforcement, limited air strikes to lift the siege of Sarajevo and other cities, and -- if there is no progress in the peace negotiations -- lifting the arms embargo on the former Yugoslavia.

Lifting the embargo is a high priority for Bosnian officials, who say the embargo cripples their ability to defend their people, while not impeding the better-armed Serbs.

During the course of the nearly hour-long meeting, the pained expressions on several of the dozen Jewish participants showed how seriously they took the parallels drawn by the Bosnian president between the "ethnic cleansing" suffered by the Moslem Bosnians today and the genocide inflicted on the Jews 50 years ago.

The Jewish leaders were clearly frustrated at how little the community's position had succeeded in changing that of the American government, or in stopping the ongoing killing.

"All we have done is pass pious resolutions," lamented Rabbi Alexander Schindler, president of the Reform movement's Union of American Hebrew Congregation. "Even as we are talking, people are dying."

Izetbegovic, as well as U.N. Bosnian Ambassador to the Mohamed Sacirbey, responded that no, the resolutions and the show of support mattered.

The Jewish officials said they would step up their activity in the political sphere.

The first result of this renewed resolve is likely to come next week, at a previously scheduled meeting in Washington between Jewish leaders and members of the National Security Council.

The crisis in Bosnia is likely to be elevated to near the top of that meeting's agenda, said Jewish leaders.

## BOSNIAN MOSLEM REFUGEES TO BE HOUSED IN KIBBUTZ AFTER ARABS WITHDRAW AID

By Hugh Orgel

TEL AVIV, March 23 (JTA) -- The 84 Bosnian Moslem refugees brought to Israel in a mercy operation a month ago are to be housed in Kibbutz Beit Oren on Mount Carmel for the remainder of their stay here.

The refugees were first supposed to have been sheltered by the Israeli Arab villages of Tira and Umm el-Fahm.

But Israeli Arab leaders withdrew their support for the government's plan, after having first pressed for the opportunity to rescue Moslem orphans from the fighting in the former Yugoslavia.

The Palestine Liberation Organization and other Palestinian leaders had reportedly pressured the Israeli Arabs to withdraw their offer of aid for fear they would be helping boost Israel's public image and draw attention away from the conflict with the Palestinians.

The Bosnian refugees were already on their way to Israel, with the cooperation of the French Jewish community, which had chartered aircraft for the mercy flight, when news was received of the Tira and Umm el-Fahm withdrawal.

Under hastily arranged procedures worked out by Environment Minister Yossi Sarid, of Meretz, the families were housed, upon their arrival February 15, at the field school of the Society for the Protection of Nature in Israel near Kibbutz Ma'agan Michael.

Some of the refugees have already been provided with work with the Jewish National Fund and on nature conservation projects at the nearby Ma'agan Michael nature reserve.

But under a new agreement worked out over the weekend between Sarid's Environment Ministry, which is dealing with the refugees, and Kibbutz Beit Oren, the Bosnian families are to be housed in vacant apartments at Beit Oren.

## JEWISH GROUPS ARE ORGANIZING PRO-YELTSIN RALLY IN MOSCOW

By Larry Yudelson

NEW YORK, March 23 (JTA) -- A consortium of Jewish groups in Moscow are helping to organize a major demonstration on Sunday, March 28, to warn against the dangers of a coalition of nationalistic and pro-Communist forces, according to the National Conference on Soviet Jewry.

Fears of such a "brown-red" coalition comes as Russia faces a constitutional crisis, in the wake of a bitter struggle between Russian President Boris Yeltsin and the republic's conservative Parliament.

The crisis began Saturday, when Yeltsin assumed nearly unlimited emergency rule and called for a constitutional referendum. On Sunday, the Parliament declared Yeltsin's move unconstitutional.

For Russian Jews, who overwhelmingly support the reform and democracy platforms of Yeltsin, the crisis has created deep concerns, but not panic.

One opponent of Yeltsin daubed on the Russian White House, as the Russian Parliament building is known, "Yeltsin is a Zionist."

And at a Communist rally there on Saturday, anti-Semitic slogans such as "Down with the Kikes and Masons" and "Jews Out of the Government" were displayed, according to the National Conference.

"Seeing these slogans makes us worried," Mikhail Chlenov, co-chairman of the Vaad, the Russian Jewish communal organization, told the National Conference.

He also reported that when a group of Jews who came to the White House to demonstrate for Yeltsin asked where the rally was, they were told, "Kikes to the left, Russians to the right."

**FIRM FINED FOR BOYCOTT VIOLATION AS ANTI-BOYCOTT EFFORTS GAIN STEAM**

By Deborah Kalb  
States News Service

WASHINGTON, March 23 (JTA) -- The U.S. government has imposed a fine of \$83,000 against a New York-based company for allegedly complying with provisions of the Arab boycott against companies doing business with Israel.

The Commerce Department imposed the civil penalty against Kanematsu USA Inc., an exporter of timber, steel and agricultural products, alleging that the firm agreed not to do business with firms that have commercial ties with Israel.

Federal law bars companies from complying with unsanctioned boycotts directed at countries friendly to the United States.

Kanematsu did not admit that it had violated U.S. law, but it agreed to pay the fine.

Efforts to press for a quick end to the Arab boycott of Israel have been picking up steam here in recent weeks, as administration officials from President Clinton on down, as well as members of Congress, have voiced their concern about the boycott and its economic effects.

Last week, Rep. Carolyn Maloney (D-N.Y.) introduced legislation barring U.S. weapons sales to countries participating in the boycott of Israel.

Maloney's legislation joins other boycott-related bills pending in Congress, including one introduced in January by Rep. Charles Schumer (D-N.Y.) that would bar participating countries from receiving most-favored-nation trade status.

Following his meeting last week with visiting Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin, Clinton called for an end to the boycott, saying it would benefit the economies of both the United States and Israel.

Some say the Maloney bill has little chance of passage because the United States is not likely to halt lucrative arms sales to Arab countries, the primary target of the legislation.

But many who follow boycott-related issues agree that the legislation makes a strong statement about the importance of ending the boycott.

Will Maslow, who edits the newsletter Boycott Report for the American Jewish Congress, said this week that anti-boycott forces should be focusing on the secondary boycott of companies doing business with Israel.

While the primary boycott concerns countries that boycott Israel itself, the secondary boycott deals with the blacklisting of companies that do business with Israel.

**HOLOCAUST SURVIVOR'S REPARATIONS DON'T COUNT AS INCOME, HUD SAYS**

By Deborah Kalb  
States News Service

WASHINGTON, March 23 (JTA) -- An 83-year-old Holocaust survivor has won a battle with the U.S. government over whether her reparation payments from the German government should count as income.

The Department of Housing and Urban Development decided last week that reparation payments should not be considered part of a survivor's income.

The decision, which brings HUD's policy into line with that of other government agencies, means that Fanny Schlomowitz of Phoenix, Ariz., will again qualify for low-income rent.

Schlomowitz's rent in her federally sub-

sidized, low-income senior citizens housing unit skyrocketed from \$63 to \$227 a month last year after the complex's manager told her that HUD considered the reparation money part of her income.

"This was very unfair," Schlomowitz said on Friday, explaining that her money situation was very tight because of high medical bills. "I couldn't afford anything."

Residents of her housing complex generally pay 30 percent of their income in rent. Schlomowitz receives a \$377 monthly Social Security payment and about \$500 a month from the German government.

She said that she certainly did not consider the reparation money to be income. "I didn't work for it. I didn't earn it. I just suffered for it," she said.

The reparation money is compensation for injuries Schlomowitz suffered in Budapest during the war when Nazis beat her, hit her over the head with a rifle and kicked out some of her teeth. She was pregnant at the time.

Since then, she has had dizzy spells and headaches.

Last month, Schlomowitz sought the help of Sen. Dennis DeConcini (D-Ariz.).

The senator sent a letter to HUD Secretary Henry Cisneros, stating that HUD's interpretation of laws concerning reparation payments "is grossly unfair to those who suffered through the most appalling event in modern history."

DeConcini also wrote to President Clinton.

On March 18, HUD announced it was changing its policy.

**MORRIS ABRAM TO BECOME CHAIR OF WJC'S NEW U.N. WATCH PROJECT**  
By Tamir Levy

GENEVA, March 23 (JTA) -- After completing four years as the U.S. ambassador to the United Nations offices here, longtime Jewish activist Morris Abram is staying on in Switzerland to serve as chairman of the new "U.N. Watch" project of the World Jewish Congress.

In that role, Abram will be responsible for monitoring and combating anti-Semitism at the United Nations and the other international organizations located here.

The WJC has held consultative status to U.N. bodies for 40 years, but the project is a new attempt to focus its monitoring efforts.

Despite the repeal by the U.N. General Assembly of its infamous resolution equating Zionism with racism, and the growing normalization of Israel's status at the world body, some sentiments remain from the days when Israel-bashing was commonplace.

In addition, U.N. bodies based here are sometimes used as forums for undisguised anti-Semitism.

"U.N. Watch will cooperate with all non-governmental organizations in the fight against racism, intolerance and human rights violations of whomever, wherever, in the conviction that mankind should be united against inhumanity," Abram told the Jewish Telegraphic Agency.

Abram has served as national president of the American Jewish Congress, president of Brandeis University and chairman of the National Conference on Soviet Jewry.

He is also a past chairman of the Conference of Presidents of Major American Jewish Organizations.