

VOL. 71 - 76th YEAR

TUESDAY, MARCH 30, 1993

NO. 60

**PEACE NOW AFFILIATE GAINS ENTRY
TO PREMIER JEWISH UMBRELLA GROUP**

By Larry Yudelson

NEW YORK, March 29 (JTA) -- Americans for Peace Now was accepted as a new member of the Conference of Presidents of Major American Jewish Organizations on Monday, culminating weeks of unprecedented lobbying on both sides of the issue.

The closely watched vote, which came after two hours of late-afternoon debate, was 27-10, with eight abstentions. Another two of the members present did not cast ballots.

The Conference of Presidents also voted Monday to grant full membership to the Council of Jewish Federations, which formerly had only observer status.

For Peace Now, admission to organized American Jewry's premier umbrella grouping caps a meteoric rise to respectability from the dovish movement's more humble grass-roots origins.

That process began last summer with the elevation of some of the movement's leaders in Israel to posts in the new Labor government. And in the United States, several of Peace Now's leaders are either members of the Clinton administration or have considerable influence with it.

"This vote recognizes the American Jewish community's commitment to inclusion of all pro-Israel voices," Gail Pressberg, APN's president and chief executive officer, said in a statement issued immediately after the vote.

"We look forward to working with our colleagues in the conference on issues of concern to Israel," said Letty Cottin Pogrebin, APN co-chair.

There was no immediate reaction from groups opposing APN's admission. That campaign was led by the Zionist Organization of America, which had charged that APN's views were outside the Jewish community's consensus.

But those supporting APN's entry, including the Anti-Defamation League and the American Jewish Congress, maintained that the Jewish community's umbrella should be wide enough to cover a group that strongly supports Israel and whose dovish positions are supported both in the government corridors in Jerusalem and a significant portion of American Jewish public opinion.

**PALESTINIANS REJECT OFFER ON TALKS,
BUT AMERICANS HAVE NOT YET GIVEN UP**

By Deborah Kalb

States News Service

WASHINGTON, March 29 (JTA) -- Palestinian negotiators reportedly have rejected a package of U.S. proposals aimed at convincing them to return to the peace table.

But the United States still appears to be optimistic that all of the Arab parties, including the Palestinians, will show up here April 20, when the ninth round of bilateral talks with Israel is scheduled to begin.

So far, the Israelis are the only party to have accepted a joint U.S.-Russian invitation to resume the bilateral talks, which have been stalled since Israel deported 415 Palestinians to Lebanon in December.

In an effort to persuade the Palestinians to

rejoin the talks, Secretary of State Warren Christopher and his aides met here Friday with Palestinian leaders Faisal Husseini and Hanan Ashrawi.

Christopher reportedly offered them a set of concessions, including a speedier return of the deportees, a commitment from Israel not to deport Palestinians in the future and an easing of various restrictions on Palestinians in the territories.

But the offer was contingent on the Palestinians agreeing to return to the talks.

Ashrawi appeared to reject the U.S. offer Monday. Speaking in Amman, Jordan, the Palestinian spokeswoman said, "Human rights and other issues are basic rights; they are not issues for blackmail, negotiations or pressure."

"We feel that in order to remove obstacles" to peace, she said, "there has to be a commitment followed by concrete steps."

The State Department had no immediate reaction to her remarks.

Representatives of the four Arab parties to the peace talks -- Syria, Lebanon, Jordan and the Palestinians -- convened in the Syrian capital of Damascus this past weekend and agreed to postpone a decision about whether to return to the negotiations with Israel on April 20.

In Cairo, Egyptian Foreign Minister Amre Moussa told reporters Sunday that no decision would be made until after Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak meets with President Clinton in Washington on April 6.

Mubarak met Sunday with Palestine Liberation Organization leader Yasir Arafat. The PLO plans meetings in Tunis in the next week to discuss whether to support a return to the peace talks.

Egyptian Envoy Optimistic

Despite the mixed signals from the Arab side, the United States is putting its best face on the issue.

At the State Department, spokesman Richard Boucher termed the meetings with the Palestinian delegation late last week "useful and productive."

He said that the United States remained "encouraged that all the parties will decide to resume the talks."

Maher El Sayed, the Egyptian ambassador to Washington, also expressed optimism about the future of the talks, saying Monday that the negotiating parties "are on the threshold of a new Camp David."

Speaking at an American Jewish Committee luncheon forum, the ambassador said the U.S. talks with the Palestinians, which continued on Saturday, "have resulted in an optimistic view about the possibility" of negotiations resuming April 20.

Egypt, the only Arab country at peace with Israel, has played an important role in encouraging the parties to return to the talks.

But both El Sayed's and Boucher's comments were made before reports of Ashrawi's rejection of the U.S. offer.

At his briefing Monday, Boucher did not offer many specifics about the discussions with the Palestinians last Friday and Saturday, in which Russian officials also took part. "I can't address any points in detail," he said.

Reporters at the briefing pressed him for

information on what the United States may have said to "sweeten the pot" for the Palestinians.

Boucher said the deportation issue had been discussed and that a U.S.-Israeli agreement on the return of the deportees, hammered out in January, did not rule out further steps by Israel.

No Policy Change On Jerusalem

But he did not specify what such steps would be and he repeated the U.S. position that the agreement is "consistent with the United Nations resolutions" calling for the return of the deportees.

Boucher was also asked whether the U.S. position on the status of Jerusalem had changed, because of reports that the Palestinians were pleased about something the United States had said on the subject.

The spokesman responded that the U.S. position on Jerusalem has not changed.

The United States has said in the past that Jerusalem should remain united, but that the city's final status should be determined in negotiations between Israel and the Arabs.

The United States had invited all the parties to Washington for consultations prior to the resumption of the bilateral talks, and the meetings with the Palestinians fell into that category.

Those meetings lasted a total of more than four hours. They included two one-on-one sessions between Christopher and Hussein, lasting a total of 70 minutes.

SETTLER IN GAZA STABBED TO DEATH IN SECOND SUCH ATTACK IN TWO DAYS

By Cynthia Mann

JERUSALEM, March 29 (JTA) -- For the second day in a row, Palestinians stabbed to death a Jewish settler in the Gaza Strip on Monday.

The attack brings to 13 the number of Israelis killed by Arabs in March, which has turned out to be one of the bloodiest months since the intifada began more than five years ago.

Shaya Deutch, 38, was stabbed in his greenhouse in the Kfar Yam settlement and died of his wounds an hour later.

The Gaza Strip had been sealed off from Israel proper since early Monday morning in reaction to the stabbing a day earlier in which Yehuda Gawi, 49, was murdered by two Arab construction workers who were building a new home for him.

After the latest attack, security forces sealed off the area surrounding the Kfar Yam moshav and set up roadblocks as part of their manhunt for the attacker.

Settlers have become increasingly frustrated with the deteriorating security situation and have stoned Arab-owned vehicles in the Gaza Strip after the attacks.

Some 2,000 people flocked to Gawi's funeral in Ashkelon on Monday, many of them attending as a display of solidarity against Palestinian violence.

Demonstrations against the security situation also took place in Jerusalem on Monday, one day after a jogger was stabbed and moderately injured on the Tayelet walkway near the Armon Hanatziv neighborhood.

Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin said the attacks only strengthened his government's resolve to move forward with a plan to separate the residents of the territories from Israelis.

FAR-RIGHT NATIONAL FRONT FAILS TO WIN SEAT IN FRENCH PARLIAMENT

By Michel Di Paz

PARIS, March 29 (JTA) -- French Jewish leaders said they were generally pleased that Jean-Marie Le Pen's far-right party won no seats in nationwide parliamentary elections, but some warned that the party's loss of its single seat might create dangerous pressure by denying it an "outlet for excess steam."

Although Le Pen's National Front party won 12.5 percent of the popular vote in last week's elections, the party failed in that first round, and in a second round of runoffs this week, to win enough votes in any single constituency to earn a seat in the Parliament.

In the second round of voting Sunday, a coalition of two conservative parties completed its trouncing of the ruling Socialist Party.

The Socialists won only 70 of the assembly's 577 seats, down from 271, while the center-right coalition amassed 484 in an electoral landslide.

Although the Communists and allied candidates won just 9 percent of the first round popular vote -- less than Le Pen -- they secured 23 seats because of the way they were concentrated in those districts.

Jean Kahn, president of CRIF, the umbrella organization of French Jewry, said he expected "good things out of the new majority, regarding the relations between France and Israel."

"When looking back at the way Roland Dumas (the former Socialist foreign minister) treated Israel, one can expect only good things to happen, and certainly not bad ones," Kahn said.

A 'Pressure Cooker Without Outlet'

Regarding Le Pen's knockout loss, one Jewish leader, who preferred not to be named, said the National Front's defeat was on the whole a positive development, but gave rise to some concern.

"It's like a pressure cooker without outlet for the excess steam. The National Front is here to stay, at least for a while, as long as the economic situation doesn't get better.

"To keep all this dissent under pressure may become dangerous someday," the Jewish figure said.

The new government is being quickly formed to take over from the Socialists. On Monday, President Francois Mitterrand appointed Edouard Balladur as the country's new prime minister.

Balladur, 64, is a close friend of Jacques Chirac, who lead the Gaullist Rally for the Republic, the larger of the two parties in the conservative coalition.

Jewish leaders noted that Balladur has visited Israel twice.

The Jewish community also closely followed the outcome of the election in Sarcelles, a suburb north of Paris where about 20 percent of the population is composed of Sephardic Jews.

"The War of the Jews" in that district pitted four Jewish candidates against each other: Dominique Strauss-Kahn, the outgoing Socialist Cabinet minister for foreign trade; Pierre Lellouche, the right-wing Tunisian-born defense adviser to Chirac; the Moroccan-born Fanny Mergui, who ran with the Environmentalists; and Henri Cukierman for the Communist Party.

Lellouche won the bitter battle, but only after a second-round duel with Strauss-Kahn, who was openly supported by Israeli officials.

JACKSON AND CONSERVATIVE LEADERS CALL FOR CONFERENCE ON TOLERANCE

By Debra Nussbaum Cohen

LOS ANGELES, March 29 (JTA) -- The Rev. Jesse Jackson and the rabbis of the Conservative movement are calling on other religious and Jewish communal leaders to join them at a conference on tolerance and social justice that they hope to convene in Washington late this year or in early 1994.

The plan was announced at the 93rd convention of the Rabbinical Assembly, held here March 21-24, exactly 25 years after the Rev. Martin Luther King Jr. and Rabbi Abraham Joshua Heschel addressed Conservative rabbis at the same gathering in 1968.

Blacks and Jews must work together for the future because they form "a coalition that has shared blood and common graves, bound by history and destiny," Jackson told the convention audience of about 1,000 rabbis and guests.

He was referring to the 1964 killings of James Chaney, Andrew Goodman and Michael Schwerner, the three young men -- two Jewish and one black -- who were murdered while in Mississippi helping register blacks to vote.

We must form the "core of a non-exclusive coalition of conscience for change," he said, citing the fact that blacks and Jews are the first groups to be attacked by bigots.

"The same group that comes after one of us in the morning comes after the other in the afternoon. We have no choice but to coalesce for mutual survival," he said.

The goal of the proposed conference, according to Rabbi Gerald Zelizer, president of the 1,400-member rabbinic body, will be to bring together the "leadership of all religions to reduce ethnic and religious stereotypes in this country."

Clinton Will Be Asked To Host

He said that Jackson and the Rabbinical Assembly will ask President Clinton to host the conference, but that even if he declines it will be convened.

"We need to draw our constituents back into the sacred partnership," said Zelizer, who then quoted Heschel by saying that "to be deaf to the cry is to condemn ourselves."

Jackson articulated an agenda for the conference which echoes the priorities he has long attempted to bring to national attention: police brutality; the war against drugs; the negative impact on U.S. workers of the North American Free Trade Agreement; the Religious Freedom Restoration Act; and the plight of the Haitians fleeing their native island who are being turned away by the United States.

He also cited the problems of racism and bigotry among young people of different ethnic groups on college campuses as an issue requiring the attention of religious leaders.

In a private interview with the Jewish Telegraphic Agency held in his hotel suite before he spoke to the assembled rabbis, Jackson said he has not yet scheduled the dates for the trip to Israel he is planning to make at the invitation of Israeli Foreign Minister Shimon Peres.

When asked what he wants to see in Israel, and with whom he wants to meet, Jackson said that he plans to "maximize dialogue with the broadest cross-section of people," and to "be a contributing factor to peace."

Jackson was condemned by almost every

leader in the Jewish community for meeting with Palestine Liberation Organization leader Yasser Arafat and for calling New York "Hymietown" during the 1984 presidential campaign.

Despite an apology for the Hymietown remark and repeated attempts on his part to reach out to the Jewish community over the last few years, Jackson is still considered suspect by some.

An Orthodox man attending the convention disrupted Jackson's address by screaming, "If you were white you'd be called a Nazi and a fascist, but because you're black you're not."

Two members of the audience tried to remove the heckler, Rabbi Nachum Shifren, director of the Los Angeles-based Center for Jewish Activism, but he resisted and had to be nearly wrestled to the ground before being dragged out.

Hotel security guards finally escorted Shifren off the premises.

Jackson seemed frustrated by the fact that even some more moderate members of the Jewish community cling to his past offensive remarks and are suspicious of working with him on issues of common concern.

He responded tersely to a Conservative rabbi, Steven Lerner of New York, who asked him about addressing anti-Semitism in the black community.

"Let me be. I didn't come to give an analysis of black issues," said Jackson.

And before his address, he met privately with 10 Rabbinical Assembly members who objected to his being asked to speak.

One of the participants, Rabbi David Ebstein, of Congregation Beth Emet in Herndon, Va., said he was pleased with what Jackson had said during their meeting.

"If he's done teshuvah (repented), that's great. We can help him and he can help us."

When asked in the interview with JTA why recently he seems to be addressing many more Jewish groups than he has in the past, Jackson said that he was only responding to the invitations he gets.

He acknowledged that since his speech condemning anti-Semitism in Brussels last September at a conference sponsored by the World Jewish Congress, he had gotten more invitations from Jewish organizations.

"I don't know why," he said. "Our positions have been kind of consistent. If you endure in a struggle to build bridges, you begin to see the fruits of your labors."

"I have always advocated a must-talk policy," he said. "There's no hope in not talking."

HERZOG CONGRATULATES CHINESE LEADER

By Hugh Orgel

TEL AVIV, March 29 (JTA) -- Outgoing President Chaim Herzog sent a congratulatory telegram Monday to the new Chinese president, Jiang Zemin.

Jiang, who is also leader of the Communist Party and chairman of the Central Military Commission, was elected to the post Saturday by the National People's Congress. There was no other no candidate.

Herzog met with Jiang during his recent visit to China.

In the telegram, Herzog recalled their meeting and said he was impressed with the positive attitude demonstrated by the new president regarding the problems which face the Middle East and the State of Israel.

ARGENTINES HAVE FAVORABLE VIEWS ABOUT JEWS, NEW SURVEY INDICATES

By Victoria Verlichak

BUENOS AIRES, March 29 (JTA) -- A survey on discrimination and anti-Semitism conducted in Argentina at the end of last year shows that 69 percent of those polled favored a multiethnic society while just 28 percent said they preferred one that is homogeneous.

Results of the poll of 1,900 persons in different parts of the country, which covered several other aspects of public opinion, were presented last week to Argentine President Carlos Menem by a delegation from the American Jewish Committee.

Menem told members of the AJCommittee fact-finding mission, which was accompanied by local Jewish leaders, that he "will continue working toward securing the climate of tolerance that we are now living in this nation."

The poll, sponsored by AJCommittee and the DAIA, the umbrella group representing Argentine Jewry, also showed that 82 percent of those questioned said that the national origin or religion of the people they had contact with in their jobs or neighborhood were unimportant.

The survey, conducted by a local consultant, Edgardo Catterberg & Associates, indicated a generally positive attitude toward Jews.

"While Argentina is widely perceived as a country in which anti-Semitism is endemic, this survey comes up with a much more positive picture," said David Singer, director of research for the AJCommittee.

"Negative attitudes toward Jews clearly exist, but they are far outweighed by favorable sentiments," Singer added.

Comparisons To Other Minorities

The poll sought to compare popular attitudes toward Jews with those toward Argentina's other minorities, such as Italians, Koreans, Arabs and Paraguayans.

When questioned about which group had within it the "spirit of progress," Jews came out ahead, with Italians, Koreans, Arabs and Paraguayans behind in that order.

In terms of dedication to family, Jews ranked second behind the Italians and ahead of Koreans and then Arabs.

Although 15 percent of those polled said they thought Jews provoke hostility, those questioned put Koreans slightly higher in this category, at 16 percent. Paraguayans (13 percent), Arabs (11 percent) and Italians (5 percent) followed.

When asked about which group had "more money," 74 percent ranked Jews in the first place.

Questions about how well-integrated into society the different groups are showed that only Koreans are perceived as being less integrated into Argentine society than Jews.

More than 70 percent of those polled said they did not mind having Jewish neighbors, but 8 percent were against it.

About 18 percent said they were against intermarriage with Asians. Some 14 percent said they were against intermarriage with Jews, but 80 percent said they would accept it.

In general, the AJCommittee delegation said it was pleased with the poll results.

"The inquest's findings were better than those in Poland, Slovakia, Austria and Russia,"

Singer said, referring to countries in which AJCommittee has conducted similar surveys.

The AJCommittee delegation, which was on a tour of various Latin American countries, expressed its gratitude to Menem because he was one of the few leaders who "reconciled his sentiments with his actions," said delegation head Lawrence Thorpe.

Menem, who is of Syrian origin, is the first Argentine president ever to have visited Israel in an official capacity and to have received an Israeli president while in office.

The AJCommittee delegation held high-level discussions with other top officials and diplomats during its stay in Buenos Aires.

It met with Foreign Minister Guido Di Tella and discussed the government's decision to open the state's secret files on Nazi war criminals who were given refuge in Argentina.

ARGENTINA JAILS NAZI SYMPATHIZER LINKED TO '91 CEMETERY DESECRATION

By Victoria Verlichak

BUENOS AIRES, March 29 (JTA) -- Nazi sympathizer Carlos Schellnast has been sentenced to eight months in jail for "activities of racial discrimination" in Argentina.

The 46-year-old Schellnast was a suspect in the investigation of the desecration of 112 tombs in the Jewish cemetery of Berazategui, a suburb south of Buenos Aires, in June 1991.

Investigators were never able to charge him and others with the actual incident, although a police search of Schellnast's house and those of other suspects revealed weapons and explosives among anti-Semitic literature and propaganda glorifying Adolf Hitler and Nazism.

In Schellnast's sentencing, Judge Orfeo Maggio applied, for the first time, a 1988 anti-discrimination law that condemns all action in which racial hatred is expressed in any way toward any community.

The judge's decision was significant because Schellnast was convicted not on the basis of his participation in the attack on the cemetery--which could not be proven -- but because of his statements inciting anti-Semitism and racism.

Schellnast was held responsible for various racist activities, including exhibition of printed material with swastikas and making comments such as "we have to kill all Jews."

JEWISH COMMUNITY OF BERLIN ELECTS HEAD OF UNITED CITY

By Igal Avidan

BERLIN, March 29 (JTA) -- Jerzy Kanal has been elected chairman of Berlin's Jewish community in the first contest for the post held since the once separate East and West Berlin communities were reunited.

The community of about 9,000 voted Sunday between Kanal's Liberal Jewish Bloc and an opposition list headed by Moishe Waks, 41, former director of the community youth center.

Kanal, 71, a businessman who formerly served as vice chairman of the Berlin Jewish community, had taken over as chairman following the death last July of Heinz Galinski.

Galinski had led the West Berlin Jewish community since 1949 and headed the entire country's Jewish community since 1988.

The current head of the country's Jewish community is Ignatz Bubis.