

## ASPIN'S RESIGNATION DEPRIVES COMMUNITY OF LONGTIME FRIEND

By Deborah Kalb

WASHINGTON, Dec. 16 (JTA) -- The swift departure of Defense Secretary Les Aspin deprives the Jewish community of what one official called an "intimate" relationship.

President Clinton has nominated retired Adm. Bobby Ray Inman to replace the strongly pro-Israel Aspin.

Aspin has long been viewed as a friend of the Jewish community, both in his brief tenure at the Pentagon and during his long service in the House of Representatives.

Inman is not as well-known to Jewish leaders as is Aspin, but some Jewish officials contacted Thursday said they thought Inman was a good choice to head the Pentagon.

Inman, a career Navy intelligence officer, headed the National Security Agency during the Carter administration and held a top post at the Central Intelligence Agency early in the Reagan administration.

Jewish organizations were lauding Aspin on Thursday, following his announcement Wednesday that he would step down by Jan. 20.

"We deeply regret his resignation," said Malcolm Hoenlein, executive vice president of the Conference of Presidents of Major American Jewish Organizations.

Hoenlein praised Aspin's "ready accessibility, sympathetic ear and courageous voice," and characterized the relationship between Aspin and the Conference of Presidents as "intimate."

Aspin's short stewardship of the Pentagon was a stormy one, marked by conflicts with the military bureaucracy over the Clinton administration's policy on liberalizing rules on gays in the military.

He also came under fire on Capitol Hill and elsewhere for his policies concerning U.S. forces in Somalia.

Although Aspin, the former chairman of the House Armed Services Committee, was recognized as a defense expert, he was viewed by some in the Pentagon as overly professorial and not part of the military culture.

### Always A Good Friend

But he was viewed as a solid friend of Israel, and Jewish groups have always liked him.

During Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin's recent visit to Washington, Aspin pledged that the Pentagon would support Rabin's quest to maintain Israel's strong defense capability.

And in June, Aspin told leaders of the American Israel Public Affairs Committee that the United States would work with Israel to counter threats from Islamic extremism and from the spread of weapons of mass destruction in the Middle East.

"Les Aspin always has been a good friend on issues we deeply care about" including Israel and national security, said Thomas Neumann, executive director of the Jewish Institute for National Security.

"I hope he will continue to remain active" in policy-making, said Neumann, whose group concerns itself with defense-related issues. "He

was absolutely excellent on everything." Neumann said that during Aspin's tenure at the Pentagon, he had always been "most responsive" to the institute's concerns.

The group honored Aspin in 1992 with its Henry Jackson Distinguished Service Award.

Aspin also won the 1990 Jewish War Veterans' Congressional Medal of Merit.

"We basically had the highest regard for him," said Edward Blatt, national commander of the veteran's group.

But Blatt said his organization disagreed with Aspin's stand on military cutbacks, especially in light of the instability in Russia and the threat from North Korea.

"Inman," Blatt said, "is a military man, and might see things a little differently."

Blatt praised Clinton's choice of Inman, saying it was "wise" because of Inman's experience.

Hoenlein of the Conference of Presidents also said he thought Inman "will make a good secretary."

## SETTLERS FURIOUS AT ARMY ORDERS DESIGNED TO QUELL DISORDER BY JEWS

By Cynthia Mann

JERUSALEM, Dec. 16 (JTA) -- Jewish settlers reacted angrily this week to army orders saying Israeli soldiers have the right to arrest settlers who commit acts of violence.

The orders, contained in a 14-page pamphlet issued by the Israel Defense Force this week, set ground rules for soldiers when dealing with settlers in the West Bank and Gaza Strip whose protests against the Israeli-Palestine Liberation Organization accord breach the law.

In addition to granting the power of making military arrests, the orders allow the army to impose curfews on settlements.

Spokesmen for the settlers have complained that the pamphlet is yet another example of how the government is working hand-in-hand with the PLO to harm the settlers.

"This sort of thing is psychological warfare by the government," said settler spokesman Shai Bazak.

Zvi Katzover, the leader of the local council of Kiryat Arba, a settlement near Hebron, said the army "should not even dream" of arresting protesters.

Last week, settlers killed three Palestinians near Hebron in retaliation for the murder by militant Palestinians of an Israeli father and son.

The pamphlet was drawn up by the IDF judge advocate general in consultation with the attorney general and police force.

It was issued in the wake of public criticism that the army has not done enough to quell the illegal acts of settlers.

Members of Likud joined settlers groups in calling the instructions illegal, saying soldiers had no right to take on the role of policemen.

Military and legal experts point out that there is nothing new in the instructions, which merely compile and clarify existing orders.

Curfews, they point out, have never been imposed on Jewish settlements, and may never be.

Legal affairs analyst Moshe Negbi told Israel

Radio that the instructions are legal. The army has always had the power of arrest under military law in the territories, but these powers have so far only been applied to Palestinians, he said.

Negbi said he was not surprised at the settlers' response because "they got used to the situation in which the military laws in the territories were enforced" unequally in their favor.

"It is a credit to the Israeli army that all those laws and regulations which are in power in the territories should be and would be applied equally to all offenders and to all people who infringe on the public peace, whether they are Palestinians or Jewish settlers or Israeli citizens," he said.

Meanwhile, the Council of Jewish Communities in Judea, Samaria and Gaza has pledged a campaign of protest against the orders.

"This will encourage civil strife and is turning the army, a bunch of 18-, 19-, 20-year olds, into police, which they were never intended" to be, a council officer said on Israel Radio.

*(Contributing to this report was JTA correspondent Hugh Orgel in Tel Aviv.)*

#### LABOR PARTY MAKES PITCH TO GAIN U.S. JEWS' SUPPORT By Cynthia Mann

JERUSALEM, Dec. 16 (JTA) -- The Labor Party is trying to catch up with the Likud's efforts to sell the party line on the peace process to American Jews.

Labor Party operatives are determined to fight any erosion of American Jewish support for the Israel-Palestine Liberation Organization accord, which, surveys showed, was overwhelming in the wake of the Sept. 13 signing.

But the party of Israel's ruling coalition was left reeling from the recent public relations blitz in the United States by Likud luminaries, including its chief and their biggest nemesis, Benjamin Netanyahu.

Laborites lament that they have no one who possesses Netanyahu's Americanized communication skills.

The climax of the latest Likud campaign came with former Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir's call to oppose the peace policies of the elected Israeli government.

Shamir made the call, which outraged the Labor Party, before the Conference of Presidents of Major American Jewish Organizations in November.

For the past six months, Labor has been claiming it has awakened to the importance of close ties to American Jews after years of neglect, during which Likud saturated the arena with its people and ideology.

"In the Labor Party, there was total detachment," conceded Isaac Herzog, a lawyer and son of former President Chaim Herzog.

Herzog is chairman of the party's "America desk," formed earlier this year to right the mistakes and to make and keep close connections to Jews and others in the United States.

"We ignored this political arena (because) we didn't understand" its importance, he said.

The party is strongly trying to change this.

Almost every government minister has been to the United States within the past six months.

In addition to Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin and Foreign Minister Shimon Peres, the list of visitors includes Trade Minister Michael Harish, Justice Minister David Libai, Housing Minister Binyamin

Ben-Eliezer, Health Minister Chaim Ramon and Police Minister Moshe Shahal, who was due to visit this week.

The party also has been encouraging mainstream Jewish organizations, like Israel Bonds, to tap young, charismatic Knesset members for their events.

"Many of the organizations don't know our people," said Stanley Ringler, director of the party's America desk.

At the same time, he noted, there are logistical problems with dispatching the legislators.

Labor enjoys a small Knesset majority, making it difficult to spare members, even to sell the party's message abroad.

#### 'Likud Tried To Correct The Damage'

As another prong of the strategy, the Labor Party had a big presence at the General Assembly of the Council of Jewish Federations last month in Montreal.

"We decided to (make) a clear political declaration that we are interested in this community," Herzog said. But this, he noted wryly, is what set off the latest contest with the Likud, which was not present at the G.A.

"Likud tried to correct the damage," Herzog said, by sending "a massive flood" of its leaders, starting with Shamir, who stunned Labor party officials with his call for government opposition.

Herzog noted that Labor was disturbed that there was "no clear counter-reaction to the call" and termed Shamir's action "unprecedented."

Shamir, Ringler said, "cynically exploited the Jewish public trust" that, even now, is placed in him because he held Israel's top position.

Statements by Likud leaders against the PLO accord make an impact because, while there is very broad support for the accord among Jews, "it is not deep," he said.

"There is a great difficulty for Jews to absorb change in policy, especially the necessity to deal with the PLO," Ringler said.

Hagai Meir, a young Knesset member the Labor Party is trying to promote, was in the United States this month to speak for Israel Bonds and to debate Likud party members on the peace process.

Before he left Israel he said his party was "terribly concerned by the Likud propaganda" against the peace process in the United States in recent weeks.

"I'm going to persuade American Jewry to give a chance to this process and to tell them that the risks are calculated risks and that the Israeli Army is strong enough, even if it fails," he said.

"We are facing lots of troubles" in Israel, he noted, "but we don't have to give in to the expectations of the rejectionists who want to murder both Jews and the peace process. We have to proceed."

"We want American Jewry to believe the peace process is the right thing to do right now and the recognition of the PLO was the only chance to proceed," he said.

"We are tightening any linkage we can with the Diaspora," said Herzog.

Ultimately, he said, he wants American Jewry to understand that Labor is "a movement that carries the weight of history" and considerable achievement.

"I don't think the Jewish community is right wing. It just hasn't been (exposed) to us."

## FBI PROBE TARGETS AMERICANS WHO AID NEO-NAZIS IN GERMANY

By Steven Weiss

WASHINGTON, Dec. 16 (JTA) -- FBI Director Louis Freeh took a step toward combatting religious and ethnic hatred this week by ordering an investigation of Americans accused of assisting German neo-Nazis.

The Anti-Defamation League's national chairman, Melvin Salberg, and its national director, Abraham Foxman, praised the investigation.

Freeh said Thursday on ABC Television's "Good Morning America" that, during his trip to Germany this week, German law enforcement authorities requested he look into American involvement in the dissemination of neo-Nazi materials.

"We're looking at a couple of cases in the United States where people may be working, aiding and abetting criminal activities" in Germany, Freeh said.

Reports indicate that the Germans presented Freeh with proof that certain Americans acted in collusion with German neo-fascists.

Freeh announced the investigation Tuesday from Germany.

The investigation is likely to focus upon Gary Lauck of Lincoln, Neb., the editor of a German-language newspaper called "NS Kampfruf," which means "Nazi battle cry."

Lauck's newspaper glorifies Adolf Hitler and offers Germans a mail-order catalog of Nazi propaganda, including flags with swastikas and recordings of Hitler's speeches.

The Associated Press reported Tuesday that German officials have identified Lauck as the most important supplier of Nazi propaganda to German neo-Nazis.

In a letter sent to the FBI on Wednesday, the ADL said, "Lauck has used the United States postal system as one of his means of supplying German neo-Nazis with thousands of pieces of propaganda that are prohibited by law in Germany."

German law makes it illegal to publish hate mail.

The ADL also sent a letter to U.S. Postmaster General Marvin Runyon urging him to use international postal regulations to stop Lauck's activity.

"We're not going to prosecute people for ideas, no matter how despicable they are," Freeh said Thursday. "But when they either violate U.S. law or foreign law, we will vigorously prosecute them."

## GERMANY EXPECTS JEWISH IMMIGRANTS AS RUSSIAN ELECTION PROMPTS FLIGHT

By Miriam Widman

BERLIN, Dec. 16 (JTA) -- Ignatz Bubis, the head of Germany's Jewish community, expects a surge of Jewish immigration here following the successes Sunday of right-wing candidates in the Russian elections.

"I expect that the wave of immigrants from Russia will increase," Bubis said Tuesday.

He called Sunday's election results "a cause for worry."

Russian ultranationalist Vladimir Zhirinovskiy -- whose fascist and anti-Semitic rhetoric has provoked concern among Jewish groups monitoring the former Soviet Union -- made a surprisingly strong showing in the parliamentary elections.

Bubis said that while anti-Semitism has traditionally been stronger in Ukraine than in Russia, "something like that seeps over."

He said he was worried about the increasing popularity of right-wing parties, not only in Eastern Europe but as a worldwide phenomenon.

In the last several years, about 500,000 Jews have immigrated to Israel from the former Soviet Union, while about 15,000 have come to Germany.

In Berlin, the Jewish community has nearly doubled, now numbering about 10,000, as a result.

Following the collapse of the Berlin Wall in November 1989, immigration to Germany was relatively easy.

German immigration procedures have since changed. Jews wishing to immigrate must now apply for an entry permit before leaving the states of the former Soviet Union.

## OHIO MANUFACTURER TO PAY PENALTY FOR VIOLATION OF ANTI-BOYCOTT LAWS

By Deborah Kalb

WASHINGTON (JTA) -- Another American company, F.E. Myers Co., an Ohio manufacturer of industrial hoses, has agreed to pay a fine for allegedly violating U.S. anti-boycott laws.

The U.S. Commerce Department announced that it was imposing a \$65,000 civil penalty on the Ashland, Ohio, company for 10 alleged violations of the Export Administration Act relating to the Arab economic boycott of Israel.

The Arab boycott has become one of the hottest Middle East topics here in the past few months.

Administration officials and members of Congress have called for its removal, calling it both anachronistic and an impediment to Middle East peace.

Both houses of Congress voted overwhelmingly last month to urge the Arab League to end the 47-year-old boycott.

But the league recently voted to retain it despite the increased pressure to end it, particularly in light of the mutual recognition accord signed by Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organization.

The Commerce Department has been penalizing American companies allegedly complying with the boycott, which affects both Israel and companies doing business with Israel.

The department's Office of Antiboycott Compliance said it had imposed a total of \$6,805,450 in penalties for boycott infringement in fiscal year 1993.

The money was collected in 37 separate consent agreements from American companies or their overseas subsidiaries, the office said.

While the primary boycott involves direct trade with Israel, the so-called secondary and tertiary boycotts involve blacklists of companies doing business with Israel and companies doing business with those companies.

The department has alleged that F.E. Myers cooperated with Saudi Arabian requests for information on its suppliers.

F.E. Myers allegedly refused to do business with a supplier after learning the supplier was blacklisted.

In addition, Myers allegedly provided prohibited information about other peoples' business dealings relating to the boycott.

F.E. Myers agreed to pay the penalty but neither admitted nor denied having violated the law.

## BATTLE LINES DRAWN ON FUNDING FOR PRIVATE, PAROCHIAL SCHOOLS

By Steven Welss

WASHINGTON, Dec. 14 (JTA) -- The Orthodox Jewish community stands across the divide from most Jewish groups on a method of school financing that also raises the potential for state involvement in religion.

At issue is whether the government should finance private and parochial school education, thus giving parents the choice to pull their children from public schools that already receive government funds.

Parental choice initiatives have struggled onto several state ballots in recent years, and although they have been defeated, the idea is retaining support as several states prepare to consider it.

The Jewish community is split over the issue, which would allow government funds in the form of vouchers to be used to finance private and parochial school education.

If enacted, school voucher proposals would dramatically change the way schools are funded in America, calling for some government funds normally directed to public schools to be given instead to private schools.

"This is an expanding issue -- it's not going to go away," said Jerome Chanes, co-director for domestic concerns for the National Jewish Community Relations Advisory Council.

Indeed, while school voucher proposals have already been defeated in California, Colorado, and Oregon, observers expect the issue to be considered in states including Georgia, Michigan, Ohio and New Jersey in the near future.

### Wide Discontent Over Public School System

California hosted the most recent fight over parental choice, which saw Proposition 174 attract nationwide attention before November voters sent it to defeat.

Jewish groups participated actively in the California race, often facing each other across the battle lines amid arguments over church-state separation and parental choice over which school their children attend.

The school voucher idea was borne out of discontent for America's public schools, which many believe have deteriorated to the point of ineffectiveness.

Under proposed voucher plans, government money would be allocated in the form of vouchers to parents, who could then choose the private school where they wanted the funds -- and their child -- to go. The funds would help offset their child's tuition at that school.

Several mainstream Jewish groups have worked against school vouchers, while the Orthodox community, which often sends its children to private day schools, has solidly backed the idea.

In California, more than 15 major Jewish groups led by the American Jewish Committee, American Jewish Congress and Anti-Defamation League formed the Jewish Coalition Against the Voucher, an organization that campaigned heavily for Proposition 174's defeat.

The coalition joined major teachers' unions in turning voters against the measure by a 7-3 margin. Member groups hope to spread the anti-voucher wave to the rest of the nation.

On the opposing side, pro-voucher forces including the fervently Orthodox group Agudath Israel recently formed Americans for School

Choice, a national organization designed to work with activists in trying to promote school choice proposals.

Orthodox Jewish groups disagree with the rest of the Jewish community on two issues: the effect of vouchers on church-state separation and the Jewish community's long-standing support of public school education.

On the first issue, groups opposed to school vouchers argue that government financing of private religious institutions violates the First Amendment's mandated division between church and state.

"Government funding of any religious institution constitutes support of that religion and an entanglement of the government with religion," said Sammie Moshenberg, Washington representative of the National Council of Jewish Women.

"It is not proper for the government to aid schools of one particular religion, even if it's ours," said Sam Rabinove, legal director of the American Jewish Committee.

Groups opposing vouchers believe that government funds bring government regulation, which could seriously limit the religious activity of Jewish day schools.

"We don't want the government to decide which private schools can receive government funds and which cannot," said Michael Lieberman, associate director of the Washington office of the ADL.

"Government funds inevitably come without strings at first, but later come regulation and oversight," said Marc Stern, co-director of legal affairs for AJCongress.

Orthodox groups, who have long sent their children to private schools for Jewish learning not provided in public schools, disagree that a church-state problem exists.

David Zwiebel, general counsel of Agudath Israel, said that because government money in the form of vouchers would go directly to the parent under the voucher system, he sees no First Amendment problem.

"It is constitutionally permissible for the government to provide parents with a voucher" so that they may choose their children's schools, Zwiebel said.

Zwiebel dismissed government regulation as a worry because religious institutions are already exempt from many federal laws, such as anti-discrimination statutes that allow religious schools to hire only members of their own faith.

Another ground for opposition to school vouchers by mainstream Jewish groups is the traditional Jewish support for public school education.

A school voucher system, opponents argue, will take money and students away from public schools and thus further their decline.

## ANCIENT INGOTS FOUND OFF HAIFA COAST

By Hugh Orgel

TEL AVIV, Dec. 14 (JTA) -- Archaeologists working under water have uncovered more than 60 rare copper ingots, dating from the Late Bronze Age, the Antiquities Authority reported this week.

It is believed that the copper, used to make weapons and utensils, was part of a cargo of a ship that sank off the coast of the Haifa area around 3,500 years ago.

The copper, weighing nearly half a ton, has been sent for analysis to determine its age and where it was mined.