

**MEETING WITH RABIN ON ELECTIONS,  
ARAFAT CONDEMNS TERRORIST ATTACKS****By David Landau**

JERUSALEM, Sept. 25 (JTA) -- In the wake of a stabbing of an Israeli youth by an extremist Palestinian, Palestine Liberation Organization Chairman Yasser Arafat has condemned all acts of terrorism committed by opponents of the Israeli-Palestinian peace accord.

The stabbing on Sunday occurred shortly before a meeting between Arafat and Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin at the Erez border crossing between the Gaza Strip and Israel.

In the attack, Ya'acov Fischer, a 17-year-old resident of the Neveh Dekalim settlement in southern Gaza, suffered multiple stab wounds in the neck and stomach. He was later reported to be in moderate condition.

The terrorist, identified as Mustafa el-Kaled, 18, of Khan Yunis, a nearby Gaza village, was shot dead by a guard to the settlement who spotted the attack. A leaflet found in his pocket was signed by the Islamic fundamentalist Hamas, which said the attack was a warning to Arafat not to go ahead with the autonomy program in cooperation with Israel.

But Israel and the PLO proceeded undeterred. In their first meeting in six weeks, Rabin and Arafat discussed a date for Palestinian elections in the West Bank and Gaza. Observers later said it was their most cordial meeting ever.

**Negotiations To Resume Next Week In Cairo**

The two leaders agreed that Israel-PLO negotiations would resume in Cairo at the beginning of next month and would focus on plans for the elections, as well as on other unresolved issues in the current phase of the peace process, including the stationing of Palestinian personnel at the border crossing points, and the release of more Palestinian prisoners from Israeli jails.

The Palestinian leadership has been pressing for early elections for a governing council. Under the terms of the Declaration of Principles signed last year in Washington, the elections are to take place after Israel withdraws its troops from Arab population centers in the West Bank.

Israel, in turn, has been concerned about security issues in the autonomous areas of Gaza and the Jericho enclave in the West Bank.

Israeli officials also blame the delay in elections on Palestinian demands that the elected body be considered a legislature. Israel maintains that a legislature is an attribute of sovereignty, and that the Declaration of Principles provided only for the election of an executive body.

Rabin told reporters after the meeting that he had "not gone into details" with Arafat over the size and nature of the governing council to be elected in the upcoming Palestinian vote.

"We have to know what will be elected, and what will be the spheres of responsibility of the elected body," the prime minister said.

Rabin and Arafat spent an hour alone at their meeting, which was seen as especially significant, since their meetings in the past have

been conducted in a frosty and sometimes outright hostile atmosphere.

Rabin and Arafat said they will meet again in a month's time.

Contributing to the unusually relaxed atmosphere at their meeting, Arafat gave Rabin an ancient Torah scroll from Yemen.

Arafat also scored points with Israeli public opinion by lashing out at the stabbing attack that occurred earlier in the day.

"I consider this a terrorist act, and we cannot stand unmoved," Arafat said during a joint news conference with Rabin.

"This is an aggression and a challenge not only to the Israeli side but also to the Palestinian side, and we will take all measures to prevent its recurrence," he added.

Fischer had lived in Neveh Dekalim with his family for only six weeks before the stabbing incident took place.

At the time of the attack, Fischer had been standing near the entrance to the settlement to catch a ride to Beersheba.

He later said from his bed at Beersheba Hospital that he had seen a Palestinian riding a bicycle toward him, but that he had paid no special attention to him.

"But when he came alongside me, he pulled out a knife and slashed at me, cutting my neck and stomach," Fischer said.

The strong language used by Arafat, observers agreed, was intended to allay Rabin's concerns that Palestinian authorities were lax when it came to dealing with violence against Israelis.

Sparked by these same concerns, several hundred residents of Neveh Dekalim and other Jewish settlements in the Gaza area went to the Erez meeting place to urge Rabin not to continue what they said were "useless talks" with Arafat while the Palestinian Authority did nothing to halt terrorist attacks against Jewish residents in Gaza.

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

**CROSSING THE JORDAN TO SETTLE?  
EXTREMIST JEWS CONSIDER SUCH A MOVE****By Larry Yudelson**

NEW YORK, Sept. 25 (JTA) -- Offering King Hussein an unexpected -- and unwanted -- peace dividend, right-wing Jewish groups are looking into establishing settlements in Jordan.

These groups argue that the time has come to implement the ideology of Zionist leader Vladimir Jabotinsky, who more than 70 years ago advocated Jewish settlement on both sides of the Jordan river.

And, they say, they plan to send delegations to Amman to look into buying real estate.

The Kingdom of Jordan is not amused.

A government spokesman denounced the plan as "an irresponsible act which by no means serves Arab-Israeli peacemaking."

Peacemaking, however, does not seem high on the agenda of the would-be settlers.

"It's a big gimmick," conceded Mike Guzof-

sky, who heads the extremist Kahane Chai in New York and hopes to send a delegation to Amman soon.

"We're saying there is no peace, and Jordan is not moderate. If such a tiny thing, like Jews wanting to buy a little land and settle there, causes an uproar, then it's proof this isn't much of a peace," he said, referring to the Washington Declaration, ending the state of war between Israel and Jordan.

The declaration was signed in July by Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin and Jordan's King Hussein.

Guzofsky said he is organizing the effort for Kahane Chai after Binyamin Ze'ev Kahane, son of the late Rabbi Meir Kahane, announced the idea earlier this month in Israel and sparked the Jordanian government protest.

"We think it will be a lot easier for us to do it from the U.S.," explained Guzofsky.

Kahane Chai is banned as an extremist organization in Israel.

The early Zionist thinker, Jabotinsky, broke with the labor-dominated Zionist Organization in 1923, and the Revisionist Zionist movement he led fathered today's Likud Party.

Throughout the years, Jabotinsky's youth movement, the Betar Zionist Youth Organization, kept "both banks of the Jordan" as a slogan.

Now, Betar leaders plan on moving forward with Binyamin Kahane's initiative, though they say they are working independently of both Kahane and Guzofsky.

"Jabotinsky's dream has always been (Jewish settlement on) both sides of the Jordan river," said Ronn Torossian, national coordinator of Tagar, Betar's college wing.

"We feel with this breakthrough in peace, we have the ability to do this," said Torossian, a student at the State University of New York in Albany.

Leading the way is Betar's Cleveland chapter.

"Yes, it's possible, and we should do as much as possible to get Jews to live in biblical Israel," said Daniel Lubitz, the chapter's director and a student at Cleveland State University.

#### A 'Silly And Counterproductive' Scheme

"Right now in Cleveland, we're setting up a delegation of people to travel to Jordan to buy land. We have people who have the ability to invest in real estate in Jordan," Lubitz said, adding that he has people who have agreed to put up the airfare for the delegation.

"It is a feeling of accomplishment, as Jabotinsky is actually coming true," he said.

Abraham Foxman, a Betar member in his youth and today national director of the Anti-Defamation League, denounced the scheme as "silly and counterproductive."

He said that Jabotinsky's concept of "both banks of the Jordan, as annunciated and when annunciated, was both prophetic, and ideological and political.

"Today it is a nostalgia concept, and anyone who takes it verbatim, literally, is fantasizing or smoking something," he said.

Foxman noted that Benjamin Netanyahu, who as leader of the Likud Party is the successor to Betar ideology, has just met with Jordanian Crown Prince Hassan "to talk about how the two countries could live together."

Torossian, however, said that his organization "categorically rejects the so-called peace agreement between Israel and Jordan," just as it rejects the peace initiative between Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organization.

Calling Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin "a swindler, a liar," Torossian added, "We intend to raise any voice we can to get Rabin out of office, and see the Jewish state remains safe.

"The prime minister feels this is peace," he said, "then we're going to test this peace process."

He said that "Jordan is occupied Jewish territory. Jews lived there in the times of David; we were promised it in the Balfour Declaration."

The Balfour Declaration, issued in England in 1917, stipulated the establishment of a Jewish national homeland in Palestine.

Jordanian government officials are condemning the proposed moves by the right-wing Jews.

"I see their statement as very provocative and irresponsible and uncalled for," said Rania Atalla, director of the Jordan Information Bureau in Washington.

"Coming to Jordan to erect settlements and referring to Jordan as occupied Jewish territory is anti-peace," she said.

Asked whether Jews could move to Jordan or receive Jordanian nationality, Atalla said, "The way we deal with non-Jordanians is based on nationality, not religion."

She said she was unsure of naturalization procedures, adding, "I think we do it on a case by case basis."

#### **INFLATION CONTINUES A MONTHLY PATTERN** By Hugh Orgel

TEL AVIV, Sept. 25 (JTA) -- Israel's cost-of-living index rose 1.1 percent in August, marking the sixth consecutive month in which inflation increased by at least 1 percent.

The Central Bureau of Statistics, which issued the August cost-of-living report on Sept. 14, said that inflation in Israel is now estimated to be running at 14.5 percent annually.

According to the bureau, fruit and vegetable prices rose faster than housing costs, with both categories together comprising nearly two-thirds of the August rise in the index.

In recent months, the bureau cited steadily rising housing costs as being the chief culprit for the country's inflation woes.

#### **ZHIRINOVSKY SCORES VICTORY IN COURT** By Lisa Glazer

MOSCOW, Sept. 25 (JTA) -- In a sharp slap to the foes of Vladimir Zhirinovsky, a Moscow district court recently ruled that comparing the ultranationalist leader to Adolf Hitler is libelous.

The Tverskoy inter-municipal court, according to the Itar-Tass news service, ruled Sept. 16 that reformist leader Yegor Gaidar and the newspaper Izvestia had libeled the politician when the newspaper published Gaidar's article, "Betting on Rascals."

The article included allegations that Zhirinovsky was a fascist and likened him to Hitler, said Itar-Tass.

The court ordered both Gaidar and Izvestia to pay 500,000 rubles -- some \$217 -- to Zhirinovsky.

## EEOC WITHDRAWS HARASSMENT GUIDELINES, SPARKING JEWISH CALLS FOR ANOTHER TRY

By Matthew Dorf

WASHINGTON, Sept. 25 (JTA) -- A decision by the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission to withdraw workplace harassment guidelines widely viewed as flawed is drawing mixed reactions from Jewish groups.

The EEOC voted last week to withdraw comprehensive racial, gender and religious harassment guidelines from consideration in response to protests across the political and religious spectrum.

Orthodox Jewish groups active in the debate expressed "profound disappointment" over the decision, citing the immediate need for such guidelines. At the same time, the American Jewish Congress, the American Jewish Committee and the Anti-Defamation League declared the EEOC decision the best resolution possible.

Most Jewish organizations agreed, however, that new guidelines should be drafted, something that EEOC officials said is not in the wings.

EEOC last year drafted comprehensive workplace harassment guidelines, in which it sought to define unlawful religious harassment as any conduct -- verbal or physical -- that "denigrates or shows hostility or aversion toward an individual because of his/her religion."

Evangelical Christians and many members of Congress fought the guidelines, fearing employers would ban all religious expression in the workplace in order to avoid harassment claims.

In June, the Senate voted unanimously to urge the EEOC to withdraw religion altogether from the guidelines.

Though also concerned about the guidelines as they were written, Jewish groups across the spectrum, in conjunction with a broad coalition of other religious organizations and the American Civil Liberties Union, disagreed that the guidelines would force employers to ban all forms of religious expression. So this coalition lobbied to include religion in the guidelines.

### Letter-Writers Questioned The Guidelines

Like all federal agencies, when the EEOC wants to propose rules or guidelines, they are published in the Federal Register and are subject to a comment period by all interested parties.

The EEOC received over 100,000 letters commenting on the harassment guidelines, according to an EEOC official. The letters mostly concerned the guidelines pertaining to religious harassment, with some letter-writers questioning the specifics of the guidelines and others wondering whether religious harassment warranted the same protection as other forms of harassment, according to the official.

By withdrawing all the guidelines -- rather than just the controversial religious guidelines--the EEOC avoided singling out religious harassment, a move some have argued would have given the impression that religious harassment is less important than other forms of harassment.

Still, Orthodox groups are concerned that the lack of religious harassment guidelines could pose problems for Orthodox Jews, according to Abba Cohen, Washington director of Agudath Israel.

Cohen said he was "profoundly disappointed"

by the EEOC's decision. "Unfortunately we in the Orthodox Jewish community are all too often the victims of religious harassment," he said.

Cohen acknowledged that there were problems with the proposed guidelines, but "the answer was not to scrap them, but to fix them."

Cohen called upon the EEOC to write new, "very clear and very strong guidelines."

In contrast, AJCommittee's legislative director and counsel, Richard Foltin, called the withdrawal "the best resolution of the situation given where we are today," but agreed with Cohen, along with representatives of ADL and AJCongress, that new harassment guidelines are needed.

ADL's Washington representative, Jess Hordes, said that EEOC's decision not to single out religious harassment bolsters the Jewish organizational view that such guidelines need to be included in overall guidelines on harassment.

Mark Pelavin, AJCongress' Washington representative, agreed.

"Religious harassment guidelines are important and should be treated in broader harassment guidelines," he said.

## JDC ALLOCATES \$1 MILLION TO BUENOS AIRES JEWISH COMMUNITY

By Susan Birnbaum

NEW YORK, Sept. 25 (JTA) -- The American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee has allocated \$1 million to the Jewish community of Argentina for the profound needs it has incurred since the July 18 terrorist bombing that leveled the Jewish community building in Buenos Aires and killed 99 people.

Of that sum, one-quarter will be paid out in the form of regularly scheduled salaries to the families of those who lost members in the bombing, Milton Wolf, president of the JDC, said in a telephone interview from Buenos Aires.

Wolf said that two months after the mass explosion shook the community here, emotional and psychological factors are continuing to take a toll on Argentine Jewry, which numbers over 200,000.

The JDC president, who met with a broad spectrum of community leaders, said that security remains tight at Jewish institutions in Argentina.

He said the JDC contingent witnessed heavy security at a Jewish day school they visited as well as at the bomb site itself, where his group said Kaddish for the dead before "the astonished eyes of the heavy police force that is still guarding the site."

Wolf said that \$1 million cannot redress the terrible damage wreaked by the bombing, for which no one has been brought to justice, but that this is just the first allocation in an ongoing effort to help the Jews of Buenos Aires.

JDC officials will be working with local community leaders to assess their needs, said Wolf, a former U.S. ambassador to Austria.

"About the only thing that has been determined is that the initial funds will be directed to the dependents of those killed in the explosion, because there is no way for those people to carry on and survive financially without getting some financial assistance," he explained.

The allocation includes \$200,000 from donations that came to the JDC "Open Mailbox" and \$800,000 of standing JDC funds, Wolf said.

**BEHIND THE HEADLINES:**

**AS DEBATE OVER ETHNIC GAP CONTINUES,  
NEW BELLS RING FOR SEPHARDI TEEN-AGERS**  
By Michele Chabin

JERUSALEM, Sept. 25 (JTA) -- Do Sephardi children from poor neighborhoods receive an inferior education compared to their middle- and upper-class Ashkenazi counterparts?

As the government and Sephardi activists continue to debate this decades-old question, a group of teachers and parents has assembled to open two schools for underprivileged Sephardi teenagers.

The brainchild of Kedma, the Israel Association for Equal Education, the two junior high schools began operating in poor Jerusalem and Tel Aviv neighborhoods in early September.

The grass-roots organization, partially funded by the Ministry of Education, was created in 1992 by a group of mostly Sephardi intellectuals and educators who hoped to provide enriched educational programs to the kids who need it most.

Clara Yonah, principal of the new Kedma intermediate school in the Gilo section of Jerusalem, believes such measures are needed because poor children in Israel, and Sephardim particularly, "have traditionally received short shrift from the education system."

For decades, she said, "educators have assumed that most children from lower-class neighborhoods were unsuited for an academic education, and were therefore placed in vocational high schools.

"There was the assumption -- a completely false assumption -- that children from large Sephardi families did not receive encouragement and attention at home, due to both social and cultural reasons, and that they were a lost cause before they even entered school," she said.

Though she agrees that many Sephardi children now receive a good education, due in large part to the higher standard of living among many Sephardim, Yonah contends that "Israeli secondary education remains elitist."

**Problems For Those 'Shipped' To Better School**

To prove her point, Yonah said that only 20 percent of working-class Mizrahi (Sephardi) and 12 percent of Israeli Arab high school students now finish high school with a full bagrut, or matriculation certificate, which is a prerequisite for all college study and most skilled jobs here.

Yonah, one of five children from a poor Sephardi family, said those underprivileged children who do excel in school are routinely "shipped out" of their neighborhoods and sent to academic high schools in more affluent neighborhoods.

Yonah, now in her 40s, recalls her own experience as a gifted child growing up in Patt, one of the poorest neighborhoods in Jerusalem.

"I was an excellent student, at the top of my class in junior high school, and I was given the opportunity to go to a good high school outside the neighborhood," she said. "From the first day at my new school, I found myself way behind the other students, due to the inferior education I had received earlier."

She recalls feeling culture shock, as well as shame for her poor performance in school.

"It was the first time I came face to face with Ashkenazi society, and it came as a big

shock to realize that there were two Israels," she said. "One Israel had what it needed, the other didn't," she said.

If the teachers and parents associated with Kedma have their way, Sephardi children from poor neighborhoods will no longer feel inferior.

Both of the new schools, which serve 12- to 15-year-olds in their own communities, were designed to instill a sense of ethnic pride in the teens as well as provide a top-notch education, officials with the schools said.

Determined to help the kids catch up with their peers in other, better schools, Kedma decided to limit each class to 25 kids. The national average is about 40 per classroom. And, in order to provide more individualized instruction, the organization is providing two full-time teachers in the subjects of Hebrew, math and English.

While most schools end at 12:30 or 1 p.m., Kedma's schools provide lunch -- paid for by parents, municipality and the Education Ministry -- followed by an afternoon enrichment program and homework sessions led by Kedma teachers.

The teachers, who had to complete a special six-month training program as a prerequisite, say commitment doesn't stop when the teens go home.

Ezra Avnaim, an enthusiastic young art teacher at the Jerusalem school, said the program is a "totally encompassing experience, for the teachers, students and parents."

**Attention Given To An Eastern Perspective**

Prior to the school's opening earlier this month, Avnaim and the other teachers conducted home visits. "Now that school has started, I talk to the child, and if necessary to the parents, to learn if the child is having problems in a certain subject, for example," he said.

Another thing that makes Kedma schools unique is the attention given to Eastern subjects.

"In a regular school," Avnaim said, "I would be teaching art from a European perspective. Here, instead of being Eurocentric, I started the year with a study of art in India and China."

The reason is simple, he said. "I looked at the population of the class and found that all but a handful of students' families hail from the Middle East. In order not to favor one group over another, I chose countries that are exotic and unfamiliar to everyone. "The history teacher is doing the same thing, so the learning is multidisciplinary," he added.

Kedma's perspective has already led to some interesting questions, according to Avnaim. "Did you ever wonder how the Jews of the Middle East were affected by the Holocaust? Israeli schools approach the subject from a European perspective, forgetting that all Jews were affected, one way or another."

Yonah, the school's principal, said that such an approach "gives the kids pride in their backgrounds and heritage."

Nechama Shriki, mother of 12-year-old Gili, agrees. "I like the Mizrahi emphasis, and the fact that the classes are so small," said Shriki, whose family lives in Patt.

Shriki said Gili has always floundered in school. And of her two older children, "one is getting out of the army and struggling to pass his bagrut, and the other never did bagrut and is a mechanic. Given the opportunity, both would have done the exam before entering the army."