



NEWS AT A GLANCE

■ **Israel's Interior Ministry refused to grant Israeli citizenship to Jonathan Pollard, who is serving a life sentence in the United States for spying for Israel. Pollard lawyer Mordecai Dfry said the decision reflected Israel's refusal to accept what he described as its moral and legal responsibility in the case. [Page 3]**

■ **Secretary of State Warren Christopher said the absence of the U.S. ambassador from last week's Jerusalem 3000 opening ceremonies was not intended as a boycott of the event. In a letter to the Conference of Presidents of Major American Jewish Organizations, Christopher wrote, "We feel certain that there will be other appropriate opportunities for the ambassador and other embassy officials to participate."**

■ **Israel's Religious Affairs Minister Shimon Shetreet said Israel would maintain overall responsibility for security at Jewish holy sites in the West Bank. Palestinians have demanded that their police be stationed at the areas at the start of the interim phase of Palestinian self-rule in the West Bank. [Page 3]**

■ **Sen. Alfonse D'Amato (R-N.Y.) introduced legislation to cut off Iran's ability to purchase equipment for its energy industry. The move reflects an attempt to prevent Iran from raising the capital to purchase four nuclear reactors from Russia and from continuing its funding for terrorist groups.**

■ **The Senate Appropriations Committee is expected to include the Middle East Peace Facilitation Act in the foreign aid appropriations bill Thursday. The measure would extend waivers allowing U.S. foreign aid to the Palestine Liberation Organization for six months as well as allowing diplomatic contact with its leaders.**

■ **Anti-peace process activists continued to plan protests in front of the White House to mark the second anniversary of the Sept. 13, 1993, signing of the Declaration of Principles between Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organization. The two sides are still hoping to sign an interim self-rule accord in Washington before the Jewish holidays.**

BEHIND THE HEADLINES

Christian right's political might fuels concern among U.S. Jews

By Matthew Dorf

WASHINGTON (JTA) — "You're going to have a big, big say about what happens in '96," Sen. Bob Dole (R-Kan.) told about 4,000 cheering activists at the Christian Coalition's annual conference here last week.

At the same "Road to Victory" gathering, the Rev. Pat Robertson, the founder of the 1.7 million-member grass-roots organization, reiterated his goal that his group gain control of the Republican Party in all 50 states.

It is this "say" that Dole pledges and the power that Robertson seeks which continue to fuel concern in the Jewish community over the growing influence of the religious right in American politics.

The coalition's conference capped off a year that has seen a profound shift between the Jewish community and the Christian Coalition.

Jews and evangelical Christians opened new channels of communication and agreed to tone down personal attacks and to respect each others' right to engage in political activity.

Ralph Reed, the Christian Coalition's executive director, apologized for past insensitivities to Jews and pledged at Jewish gatherings to work to eliminate evangelical references to America as a "Christian nation."

As part of the truce, Jewish groups agreed to respect the Christian Coalition's place on the domestic political scene.

But for all the goodwill and talking taking place, the agenda of the mainstream Jewish community and the Christian Coalition is as much at odds today as it was at this time last year, when the Anti-Defamation League sparked a war of words between the two communities with its report labeling the religious right "an assault on tolerance and pluralism in America."

Agenda remains the same

Some of the rhetoric may have changed, but the agenda of the pre-eminent religious right organization remains the same: prayer in schools through a constitutional religious equality amendment, a limit on abortions and federal funds for charities and religious schools.

The Christian Coalition is supported by some in the Jewish community, but the more prevalent Jewish sentiment echoes that of the American Jewish Congress, which in a recent report called the Christian Coalition "dead wrong" in its "Contract With the American Family."

Republican leaders have embraced the 10-point legislative agenda, which is modeled after the GOP's "Contract With America."

The family contract calls for a religious equality amendment, the elimination of federal funding for the arts, a disbanding of the Education Department, tax-funded vouchers for use in private and parochial schools, and a ban on late-term abortions.

In a telling sign of the coalition's political muscle, Speaker of the House Newt Gingrich (R-Ga.) restated his pledge at last week's conference to bring all the contract's measures up for a vote in the House.

Dole made a similar pledge for the Senate.

But this agenda is not good for America or the American Jew, according to the AJCongress, which issued its report just days before the conference.

In its report, "Whose American Family?" AJCongress warns: "With allies such as [the Christian Coalition], the family may really be an endangered species."

The coalition's platform is "too narrow, too shallow and too partisan to be of any real help to America's families."

"There is no one 'American family,'" said AJCongress President David Kahn, "and to claim that the Christian Coalition's hodgepodge of hot-button issues for religious political conservatives would help most families is absurd."

The AJCongress report, prepared by Marc Stern, co-director of the agency's Commission on Law and Social Action, analyzes each of the planks in the coalition's contract.

AJCongress charged that the coalition's current agenda is the latest

incarnation of a stealth campaign by the coalition. "The contract reflects a skillful attempt by the Christian Coalition to select issues with popular resonance, but on which massive grass-roots opposition is unlikely," the report says.

"Those choices are more likely to lead to success and popular acceptance for the coalition" that would "help establish and secure the Christian Coalition's place in contemporary politics."

The report notes that missing from the coalition's contract are some of the more hotly contested — though still-central — elements for the conservative Christian movement, such as an outright ban on abortion and anti-gay legislation.

The contract is "a floor, not a ceiling," the report warns, and is "best seen as the first round of demands of the Christian Coalition and its allies in Congress."

The ADL has taken a softer stance.

"Pragmatically, things may not have changed but there is a much better understanding" between Jews and the Christian Coalition, said Abraham Foxman, ADL's national director.

"Yes, there is still a concern about pluralism, but there is less danger because there is less stealth politicking and there is a relationship where we can call each other if there is a stepping out of bounds."

Foxman acknowledged that the Christian Coalition's influence "could be" dangerous down the road. But, he said, "we will keep fighting in the courts and in public to minimize any threat."

In contrast to those who expressed concern over the growing political strength of the Christian Coalition, some Jewish activists praised the coalition.

Rabbis Yechiel Eckstein, founder and president of the International Fellowship of Christians and Jews, and Daniel Lapin, founder of Toward Tradition, spoke at the Christian Coalition's conference last week.

"Certainly, there are some Jews who promote higher taxes and bigger government to solve our country's problems," Lapin told the coalition's conference.

"Let them speak as liberals, not as Jews," said Lapin, an Orthodox rabbi who was featured prominently on the dais at the conference's gala banquet at which right-wing politician Pat Buchanan spoke.

Goodwill put to the test

Later in the day, Eckstein, who brokered the original truce between the Jewish community and evangelical Christians, told the gathering, "This is a critical moment in history."

"God has given us the opportunity to reverse this 2,000-year relationship and replace enmity with love and divisiveness with cooperation," he said.

"If Christians were better Christians and Jews were better Jews, we'd have a better nation," he said, issuing a challenge to the delegates: "Be truly Christlike" and "love as Jesus loved."

Eckstein plans to open a center for Jewish-Christian cooperation in Washington next month. Sen. Joseph Lieberman (D-Conn.) has agreed to be the center's honorary co-chairman.

The goodwill between the Jewish community and the Christian Coalition was put to the test recently when the AJCongress sent out a fund-raising letter labeling Christian Coalition activists as "zealots."

In a letter to AJCongress Executive Director Phil Baum, Reed charged that the AJCongress letter was "peppered with derogatory and negative references to evangelicals and the organizations that represent them."

"Your letter was filled with exaggerations, hyperbole and, sadly, examples of the very kind of anti-religious bigotry that you and I oppose," Reed wrote.

Baum later apologized to Reed, writing that he was "chastened and embarrassed to read your criticisms."

Disagreement over policy "is no excuse for deliberate misrepresentation or intemperate name calling, which is designed not to address the merits of an argument but to provoke and inflame prejudice and fear," Baum wrote. "To the extent our letter contained that kind of material, please accept my genuine regrets."

Although Reed has not responded to Baum's apology, at least one Jewish Republican is not satisfied.

Matthew Brooks, executive director of the National Jewish Coalition, a Republican group, called AJCongress' fund-raising letter, "totally unproductive, unwarranted and dangerous for our community."

"I don't put much stock in the apology. The damage is already done," he said.

Although apologetic for the fund-raising letter, Baum also used his correspondence with Reed to express discomfort with Robertson, who has been criticized by Jews for adopting many classical anti-Semitic theories in his books and speeches.

"I know of course that he has disavowed any anti-Semitic purpose or intention, but these disavowals resonate uncomfortably in the context of his other statements," Baum wrote of Robertson.

In his letter, Baum was also critical of the coalition for choosing Republican presidential candidate Pat Buchanan as the keynote speaker for its conference.

"I know that you are offended by the characterization of the Christian Coalition as 'extremist.' But matters are not helped by your selection of Pat Buchanan as a speaker," Baum said.

Tensions were also raised by the coalition's decision to invite all the GOP presidential candidates to speak at the conference except Sen. Arlen Specter (R-Pa.).

Specter, a Jewish candidate who has run on a pro-choice, anti-Christian Coalition platform, was invited to address the organization's executive board after he protested the exclusion. But Specter declined, demanding the same podium as the other candidates.

Rabbis Marvin Hier and Abraham Cooper of the Simon Wiesenthal Center sent Reed a letter protesting the decision. "Quite frankly," Specter's exclusion "creates the impression that the decision could have been based in part on the fact that Senator Specter is not of the Christian faith," the center's dean and associate dean wrote.

Leaders of the Christian Coalition "are trying to dictate the next president of the United States," Specter said at a news conference in front of the Jefferson Memorial as the conference got under way.

"The guiding principle of America is the principle of inclusion and the principle of tolerance," Specter said, adding that Robertson and Reed are "opponents of that basic principle." □

Exiled Al Fatah founder back in Gaza

By Naomi Segal

JERUSALEM (JTA) — An exiled member of the Palestine Liberation Organization's mainstream Al Fatah movement returned Sunday to the Gaza Strip.

Abu Ali Shaheen, who founded Al Fatah with PLO leader Yasser Arafat, arrived from Tunis via the Rafah crossing between Egypt and Gaza.

Shaheen, known to Palestinians as "The Ruthless," was deported by Israel in 1988 for his role in organizing the Palestinian intifada, or uprising, that began in 1987.

Crowds welcomed Shaheen to Gaza with Palestinian flags and banners.

Before leaving Egypt, Shaheen said he planned to reorganize Al Fatah upon his return to Gaza. □

Israel rejects request by Pollard for citizenship

By Naomi Segal

JERUSALEM (JTA) — Israel has rejected a request to grant citizenship to Jonathan Pollard, who is serving a life sentence in the United States for spying for Israel.

Interior Minister Ehud Barak said in a letter to Pollard's attorney, Mordecai Ofry, that he had denied the request after studying the petition of Pollard's wife, Esther, and after holding a series of consultations on the matter.

Esther Pollard had based her petition on a clause in Section 2 of Israel's 1952 Citizenship Law. The law grants state protection to people who want to immigrate to Israel, but whose effort to do so, or whose identification with Israel, is forbidden in their countries of origin.

In the past, Israel applied the law to immigration activists and Prisoners of Zion in the former Soviet Union.

But Barak said the circumstances of Pollard's case were not consistent with the traditional use of the law.

He added that he would be willing to meet with Esther Pollard to discuss the matter.

Pollard's lawyer said Barak had used a legal loophole to get around granting citizenship.

He added that Israel was shirking what he described as its legal and moral responsibility in the case.

Pollard was an American civilian intelligence analyst for the U.S. Navy when he was arrested in November 1985 outside the Israeli Embassy in Washington by FBI agents who had him and his first wife, Anne, under surveillance. Pollard later pleaded guilty to spying on behalf of Israel and was sentenced in 1987 to life in prison.

He will first be eligible for parole in November.

In July, Esther Pollard filed citizenship papers in Israel on behalf of her husband. In an Aug. 1 news release, she said Israel's granting of citizenship to her husband would show the Jewish state's willingness to take responsibility for him. □

Minister: Israel will retain security for Jewish holy sites

By Naomi Segal

JERUSALEM (JTA) — Israel will not relinquish responsibility for security at Jewish holy sites in the West Bank when Palestinian autonomy is extended to the region, Religious Affairs Minister Shimon Shetreet has pledged.

On Monday, Shetreet visited the Tomb of the Patriarchs, located in the West Bank town of Hebron, as well as Rachel's Tomb on the outskirts of Bethlehem, and said both sites would remain under Israeli control.

"If the general principles of the interim-phase agreement provide for no evacuation of settlements, certainly it implies that there will not be an evacuation of the holy sites," he said Monday.

The Palestinians have demanded that their police be stationed at the two sites as part of security arrangements to go into effect in the interim phase of Palestinian self-rule in the West Bank.

Shetreet first visited Rachel's Tomb, where he was joined by Ashkenazi Chief Rabbi Yisrael Meir Lau and Knesset member Hanan Porat of the National Religious Party.

Shetreet said Israel should maintain control over the shrine, as well as over the stretch of road linking it to Jerusalem.

But he stressed that this did not mean Israel was annexing the area. "This is not the right term, because we are basing all our policy on mutual agreement," he told Israel Radio. "We are talking about a mutually agreed

arrangement that we keep Rachel's Tomb and access to it in the hands of Israel."

Speaking later at the Tomb of the Patriarchs, Shetreet reiterated the position that Israel should maintain responsibility for the site. He added that the ability of the Palestinian police to control terror during the interim phase of Palestinian self-rule would determine future moves when the two sides reach a permanent settlement.

Meanwhile, scuffles broke out for a second straight day outside a Palestinian girls' school in Hebron on Monday. Palestinians said Jewish settlers again tried to remove a Palestinian flag flying outside the school. Police and security forces who reached the site took down the flag, saying it had been put up illegally. □

Israelis killed in terror attacks increases since accord with PLO

By Naomi Segal

JERUSALEM (JTA) — The number of Israelis killed in terror attacks in the two years since the signing of the Declaration of Principles in Washington increased by 73 percent over the number of killings in the two-year period before the accord.

The monitoring group Peace Watch, in a report issued this week, said the number of Israelis killed in attacks between September 1993 and September 1995 was 149. A total of 86 were killed in the preceding two years.

Peace Watch also said the number of Israelis killed in attacks within Israel's pre-1967 borders tripled, from 32 in the 1991-1993 period to 90 during the past two years.

In contrast, the number of Palestinians killed in clashes with Israeli security forces declined, from 114 in the 1991-1993 period to 45 in the subsequent two-year period.

Peace Watch also reported that the number of deadly attacks against Israelis declined during the past year, falling from 44 in the 1993-1994 period to 20 in the 1994-1995 period.

The higher number of fatalities despite the lower number of attacks was the result of the increased use of suicide bombers, whose attacks have proven more lethal, the report said. □

Jews outraged by booklet by New Zealand local official

By Jeremy Jones

SYDNEY, Australia (JTA) — A city council member in New Zealand who published an anti-Semitic booklet has outraged the country's Jewish community and has elicited calls for his resignation.

Cliff Tait, Hamilton City Council member, writes in the booklet "The Squeeze is On" that a Jewish conspiracy to control the world exists.

In the booklet, Tait quotes "The Protocols of the Elders of Zion," a notorious anti-Semitic tract that first appeared in the early 20th century. Tait has said Zionists believe that they are "part of an elite section of the human race" that is due "the inheritance of the world as theirs by right."

Although Tait's booklet appeared last year, he has continued to defend it by quoting from the "Protocols."

The council member of Hamilton, a city of 150,000 that is south of Auckland, denies being anti-Semitic.

Dov Bing, who is a professor of political science at the University of Waikato and a member of the New Zealand Jewish Council, has called on the Hamilton City Council to "collectively call upon Mr. Tait to tender his resignation." □

AROUND THE JEWISH WORLD**Jewish community in Peru regaining strength in numbers**

By Lucien Chauvin

LIMA, Peru (JTA) — Peru's Jewish community is slowly seeing its numbers increase after years of watching families pack their bags and head abroad in search of a more secure future.

Rabbi Guillermo Bronstein, an Argentine who has served as a rabbi in Peru since 1985, says the size of the community is roughly half what it was at its heyday in the 1970s, when Peru's Jewish population was about 5,200.

Despite the small number of Jewish families in the country, the community is active and shows signs of growth, he says.

Nearly all Jewish families now live in the capital city of Lima.

The community is divided into three congregations, which are based on different geographical roots.

The largest community, the Israeli Union, which is made up primarily of Jews of Eastern European ancestry, represents about 75 percent of the country's Jewish population.

The other two congregations, which are about equal in size, are comprised of Sephardi Jews and of Jews with Central European or German heritage.

The exodus of Peruvian Jews began in the early 1970s, when the left-wing military government of Gen. Juan Velasco nationalized the media and most of the country's industries.

During Velasco's years in office, many Jewish families disagreed with the sweeping nationalization plan of the administration, says Bronstein.

Suffocating atmosphere

"At the time, nearly all Jews were business owners, and they saw the nationalization program as a threat to their livelihood," Bronstein says.

Eduardo Vigio, a Peruvian land developer and president of the Third World Commission of the World Jewish Congress, adds that Jews left the country not because of political troubles or anti-Semitism, but because they felt suffocated by the atmosphere created under Velasco, who was in office from 1968 to 1975.

"There was a lot of censorship, and your children couldn't study where or what they wanted to study, so many people found it easier to move to countries where they could live the lives they chose," Vigio says.

The rate of emigration slowed after Velasco was overthrown in 1975, but it picked up with force in the 1980s because of governmental economic mismanagement and political violence.

"The number of people leaving reached its peak toward the end of the 1980s. Many Jewish families left Peru during Alan Garcia's government (1985-90) because of the economic chaos caused by his programs," says Bronstein.

At the same time, rising levels of terrorism at the hands of the Maoist Shining Path guerrilla movement added to the atmosphere of instability in Peru.

Although the Shining Path never openly attacked a Jewish target, terrorism and clashes with government forces in the late 1980s fueled the desire of families who wanted to leave Peru.

More than 30,000 people have reportedly been killed in 15 years of political violence in Peru.

Despite a promise by President Alberto Fujimori to eradicate the Shining Path rebels before the end of his first five-year term, he began his second term in late July amid renewed attacks by the Communist guerrillas.

Although the Shining Path still maintains a presence in Peru, it has not undermined the high popularity of Fujimori, who is credited with halting the country's runaway inflation and reinvigorating the country's economy.

There are no exact figures on how many Jews left Peru between 1973 and 1990, but Bronstein says an estimate can be drawn from the number of students enrolled at Lima's Jewish school.

The enrollment at the Leon Pinelo School, where 90 percent of Peru's Jewish families send their children, fell from 1,200 students in the early 1970s to 450 students today.

Even with the recent growth, the composition of the Jewish community today is much different from what it was 20 years ago.

Unlike in the 1970s, the typical Peruvian Jew today is middle class and holds a salaried position, Bronstein says.

"In the 1970s, the immense majority of Jews were business owners. There were very few salaried workers in the community," he says.

"Today, the majority are salaried workers. They do not have the same economic power as earlier generations. The Jewish community in Peru is not as wealthy as it was 20 years ago," Bronstein says.

Gradual improvement in Peru's economic situation is attracting the attention of middle-class Jews in countries such as Argentina, where the economy is stagnant, or in other places where anti-Semitism runs high.

Larissa and Alexander Beloserkovski came to Peru two years ago from Russia.

Anti-Semitism in Russia had increased in the past few years, causing Alexander to take a job in Peru even though he did not speak Spanish and knew little about the country, they said.

However, since they moved to Peru, the Peruvian Jewish community and Peruvians in general have been very sympathetic, says Larissa.

"When I go to the market, people say 'hello' to me. They don't treat me different because I am a Jew. We are not going to leave," she says.

In addition, Peru's Jewish community is represented at the highest levels of society.

Until he left office in July, Efrain Goldenberg, a Jew, served as the country's prime minister and foreign minister.

Vigio, who has been with the World Jewish Congress for the past 10 years, said that even though Goldenberg's position had nothing to do with his heritage, it is one more example of the changes that have taken place in Peru during the last two decades.

"The traditional power myths in Peru have been broken.

"Economic and political power are no longer in the hands of a small minority, but have been extended and represent the will of the people," he says. □

Joint aid to Bosnians considered

JERUSALEM (JTA) — Israel, Jordan and Turkey are considering a coordinated effort to aid Bosnian Muslims in war-torn Yugoslavia.

Environment Minister Yossi Sarid held consultations on the matter in Jordan last week with Jordanian and Turkish representatives.

Earlier this year, Israel and Jordan coordinated an aid airlift for Bosnian Muslims.

The effort coincided with the first anniversary of the Washington declaration that ended the state of belligerency between the two countries. □