



NEWS AT A GLANCE

■ Jewish leaders rejected a call for dialogue with Nation of Islam leader Louis Farrakhan until he renounces anti-Semitism and racism. [Page 3]

■ The Senate Judiciary Committee scheduled a hearing on religious freedom for Friday. The committee is expected to explore the controversial issue of a constitutional amendment on religious equality.

■ The United Nations marked the 50th anniversary of the end of World War II with a resolution commemorating the "untold sorrows and ravages to mankind" wrought by the war. But the statement omitted any reference to the Holocaust, despite efforts by Israel to include it.

■ The Israeli government lashed out at Syria and Iran for its support of Hezbollah activities in southern Lebanon. At a Cabinet meeting, the government voted to give the IDF "freedom of action" against Hezbollah.

■ Israel lifted its closure of the West Bank and Gaza Strip, allowing tens of thousands of Palestinians to return to their jobs in Israel. The closure was imposed prior to Rosh Hashanah to prevent terrorist attacks reportedly planned to coincide with the Jewish holidays.

■ Israel may expel a Palestinian female prisoner to Brazil. Prisoner Lamia Maarouf, a Brazilian citizen, was excluded from a recent prisoner release because she was involved in the murder of an Israeli soldier in 1984.

■ The Greek Orthodox Church of Jerusalem awarded Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin and Foreign Minister Shimon Peres a peace prize for their efforts to achieve regional peace. The church also planned to present the prize to Jordan's King Hussein and Palestine Liberation Organization leader Yasser Arafat.

■ A delegation from Italy's right-wing National Alliance Party paid homage to victims of the Holocaust at Auschwitz. Italy's Jewish community said the visit should be followed by firm efforts to rid the National Alliance of anti-Semitism.

NEWS ANALYSIS

Million Man March poses dilemma for future black-Jewish relations

By Matthew Dorf

WASHINGTON (JTA) — When the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People ousted its chairman earlier this year, there was an audible sigh of relief from the Jewish community.

Observers from all racial and religious backgrounds predicted the move would weaken Louis Farrakhan, the virulently anti-Semitic leader of the Nation of Islam, who had been warmly embraced by the former chairman, Benjamin Chavis Jr., during his brief and turbulent tenure at the helm of NAACP.

But Farrakhan has come roaring back to rise in the ranks of black leaders.

This week's Million Man March has catapulted Farrakhan to the forefront of the African American community and has secured him the seat he long coveted at the table of black leadership.

"Louis Farrakhan has gained legitimacy and captured the limelight," said Abraham Foxman, national director of the Anti-Defamation League, who in the weeks preceding the march was the Jewish community's most vocal critic of its leadership.

Murray Friedman, author of a book on black-Jewish relations and a former vice chairman of the U.S. Civil Rights Commission, agreed.

"Farrakhan has now found a way of koshering himself with the black community," Friedman said.

Farrakhan's rehabilitation has thrown new doubts on the future of already strained black-Jewish relations.

"Should Louis Farrakhan emerge as a leader of the black community, that would be a problem that cannot be understated," said Lawrence Rubin, executive vice chairman of the National Jewish Community Relations Advisory Council.

"It would be impossible for members of the Jewish community to sit down with members of the black community if Farrakhan were included," Rubin said.

In fact, that very scenario has already occurred in Washington.

A member of the local American Jewish Committee and a local rabbi publicly and loudly resigned from Mayor Marion Barry's religious advisory committee when officials invited Nation of Islam representatives to participate.

Although many Jewish organizations lauded the goals of the march, especially the effort to address the problems in the black community, they criticized — some publicly, some privately — Farrakhan's role.

Many black leaders have faced a similar dilemma. The NAACP did not officially endorse Monday's march, although many members of its leadership expressed support.

The dilemma was compounded by the enormous amount of enthusiasm in the black community generated by Farrakhan's event.

Cooling-off period needed

Farrakhan is filling a leadership vacuum in the black community, according to Arthur Magida, who is writing a biography of Farrakhan.

"Farrakhan wields enormous power, influence and has extraordinary charisma," said Magida, who has interviewed the Nation of Islam leader several times for his book.

"No one else in the black community has been able to harvest this type of energy," said Magida, a former staff member of the Baltimore Jewish Times.

This latest crisis has only reaffirmed divisions in the Jewish community over how to proceed with a once fruitful, but increasingly problematic relationship between African Americans and Jews.

Foxman speaks for many when he says, "The march will not change the fact that blacks and Jews have to sit together to fight bigotry and racism."

Others, however, argue that blacks and Jews need a cooling-off period. "The struggle now is internal for the black community," Friedman

said, referring to the most difficult economic and social issues facing African Americans.

"It may very well be that blacks and Jews need a pause from each other," he said.

But there is a line which Foxman strongly urged the black community not to cross.

"If Farrakhan becomes part of the package, I will not sit at that table," he said.

"We will not sit with a bigot to fight bigotry. We will not sit with a racist to fight racism," Foxman added.

For his part, Farrakhan is now reaching out to the Jewish community.

His chief of staff, Leonard Muhammad, sent Foxman a letter requesting a meeting with the ADL and other Jewish leaders.

Farrakhan himself requested such a meeting during his address to the Million Man March.

"In the light of what we see today maybe it's time to sit down and talk, not with any preconditions," Farrakhan said at the march.

"If the dialogue is proper, then we might be able to end the pain."

But Jewish leaders have categorically rejected a dialogue with Farrakhan.

Before any such meeting, Foxman said, Farrakhan must publicly apologize and denounce racism, bigotry and anti-Semitism.

But Farrakhan's deputies had a stern warning for the ADL in the days leading up to the march.

"We believe that the American people are being held hostage somewhat as a result of the debate constantly between the Nation of Islam and certain Jewish leaders," said Muhammad.

"I would say to the Jewish people who continue to attack" Farrakhan that "it's unwise to continue to take out full-page ads and attack this man and call him names because apparently millions of black people do not agree with you."

He was referring to a series of ads the ADL ran in major newspapers prior to the march, criticizing its leadership.

Black leaders also uncertain

For all the uncertainty in the Jewish community, many African American leaders also seem unsure how to proceed.

"Many people are going to the march pretending Farrakhan is not there," Friedman said before Monday's event.

"In a sense, this is even more dangerous for the black community than Jews.

"If Farrakhan emerges as 'the' black leader, their position will be undermined," Friedman added.

Indeed, while most black leaders endorsed Farrakhan's march, many have tried to distance themselves from the man himself.

Prior to the event, Rep. Albert Wynn (D-Md.) said he is "not marching to support" Farrakhan.

The outspoken member of the Congressional Black Caucus said he strongly disagrees with Farrakhan's "anti-Semitic and racist statements."

The former chairman of the caucus, Rep. Kweisi Mfume (D-Md.) who has embraced Farrakhan in the past, said unless Farrakhan has "a million legs, it is not his march."

But Farrakhan made clear at the march that it is impossible for anyone to separate the message from the messenger.

"There is no human being through whom God brings an idea that history doesn't marry the idea with that human being," Farrakhan said.

"Whether you like it or not, God brought the idea through me, and he didn't bring it through me because my heart was dark with hatred and anti-Semitism."

Chavis, the national director of the march, expressed similar sentiments at a news conference just days before the gathering.

"The attempt to separate the message from the messenger is not going to work."

And Muhammad said, "The people that are coming to Washington, D.C., whether they are in a position to say it nor not, are coming because they support the Honorable Louis Farrakhan, and that's a fact."

"I assure you, if they didn't support Louis Farrakhan they wouldn't be in Washington," he said, adding that the march "confirms" Farrakhan as a "leader of black people."

A few lone black leaders voiced opposition to the march.

Rep. Gary Franks (R-Conn.) was the only black member of Congress to denounce the march.

The Nation of Islam is an organization "that hides behind a veiled shield of doing what's good for their race while increasing the racial divide via their hatred for others," he said.

"To give Minister Farrakhan and his organization more prominence would be one of the worst things to happen to race relations," Franks said.

But Farrakhan has already managed to gain that prominence.

Once shunned by the national media, Farrakhan appeared prior to and after the march on a myriad of popular shows, including "Donahue," "This Week with David Brinkley" and "Larry King Live."

Although Farrakhan may have toned down his rhetoric from the days when he was quoted as calling Judaism a "gutter religion," he has not, in the view of those who study him, changed his ways.

A 'practical' anti-Semite

"What Farrakhan says privately is at odds with how he acts and speaks publicly," said Magida, who recounted that Farrakhan had apologized in private to him for that notorious comment.

Farrakhan had claimed he used the term "dirty" rather than "gutter" to describe Judaism.

Magida described Farrakhan as a "practical anti-Semite."

"A classic anti-Semite would not behave with civility to a Jew. He has been a gentleman to me and a few others that I know he has spoken to in his house," Magida said.

In fact, Farrakhan has on at least two separate occasions dined with rabbis from the Chicago area, Magida said.

But these meetings do not mean he is not an anti-Semite, Magida said.

Magida believes that Farrakhan's private apologies do not help racial tensions in the United States.

"This is a country of many quilts, and it is frayed right now in part because of Louis Farrakhan's vitriol and verbiage," Magida said.

"For him to continue to yank at the quilt in the absence of an equally strong black leadership can only hurt the United States."

No matter how intense the fallout from the march in the coming months, NJCRAC's Rubin believes that blacks and Jews can continue to work together.

"There are strong relationships in many communities between the Jewish community and black community that are strong enough to withstand the efforts of Louis Farrakhan to divide the communities," Rubin said. □

Jewish leaders reject call to dialogue with Farrakhan

By Matthew Dorf

WASHINGTON (JTA) — The majority of participants in the Million Man March cheered when Nation of Islam leader Louis Farrakhan called for a dialogue with Jewish leaders.

But calling the gesture a "public relations stunt" and "a gimmick," Jewish leaders have categorically rejected meeting with Farrakhan until he changes his ways.

"I don't like this squabble with members of the Jewish community," Farrakhan told more than 400,000 black men gathered on the National Mall here Monday for a day of atonement and reconciliation.

"It's time to sit down and talk, not with any preconditions," he said.

"You got pain, but we got pain, too. You hurt; we hurt, too," he said. "The question is, if the dialogue is proper, then we might be able to end the pain. And ending the pain may be good for both and ultimately good for the nation."

Phil Baum, executive director of the American Jewish Congress, was one of many Jewish leaders to reject the invitation.

"The notion that he can summon us to a meeting is offensive," Baum said. "It would be a terrible mistake to meet with Farrakhan. We would be placed in a defensive position of defending our history and we're not going to do that."

Farrakhan has charged, among other things, that Jews financed the slave trade and the Holocaust and that Jews are "bloodsuckers" for not reinvesting in the black community.

In rejecting the call for dialogue, Abraham Foxman, national director of the Anti-Defamation League, said, "What am I going to discuss with him — which of my neighbors are bloodsuckers, which of my ancestors had slaves in Minsk?"

Jewish leaders have said that before any meeting takes place, Farrakhan and his deputies must publicly renounce anti-Semitism, racism and bigotry and stop distributing anti-Semitic literature.

The idea of a meeting was first broached by Farrakhan's chief of staff in a letter sent to Foxman last week. It came after the ADL ran full-page ads in major newspapers denouncing Farrakhan as a bigot.

"Your repeated attacks, verbal and otherwise on Minister Louis Farrakhan and the Nation of Islam contributes substantially to the divisions in this country along racial lines," Leonard Muhammad wrote, asking for a meeting with the ADL and "other appropriate Jewish leaders."

'I'm not going to give up on dialogue'

Civil rights leader Jesse Jackson reiterated the invitation on NBC's "Meet The Press."

"I want to reach out to the leaders of the Conference of Presidents of Jews and try to facilitate some dialogue between Minister Farrakhan and other ministers to try to resolve the problem, not just wallow in it," Jackson said. "I'm not going to give up on dialogue here."

In a letter refusing the meeting, Foxman wrote that Farrakhan and the Nation of Islam "represent the very opposite of reconciliation."

"We believe that individuals and institutions can change, no matter the hatred they have exhibited," Foxman wrote. "When there are indications of change that are real, substantial and ongoing, we will be more than ready to reassess our position."

Farrakhan's call for an unconditional dialogue with

American Jews was denounced outside the Jewish community as well.

"To talk, as he did, of unconditional negotiations with the leaders of Jewish groups is ludicrous," the Washington Post said in its featured editorial the day after the march. "This is Minister Farrakhan's fight, not theirs; the abuse directed toward another group has been directed by him, not them."

But Farrakhan has stood firm. "If people are waiting for me to come to my knees, I'm sorry, that will never happen," Farrakhan told reporters after the march when asked about the ADL's response to his offer.

Jewish leaders also took issue with Farrakhan's analogy to Israel sitting down with Palestine Liberation Organization Chairman Yasser Arafat.

"If you could sit down with Arafat, where there are rivers of blood between you, why can't you sit down with us, and there's no blood between us," Farrakhan said during his two-hour speech at the march.

Responded Foxman: "I've got news for him. There were preconditions for Arafat and there are for him."

As he calls for a dialogue, Farrakhan also seems to want to debate his version of history with the Jewish community.

In an interview on CNN's "Larry King Live" on Monday night, Farrakhan reiterated his longstanding claim that he has only spoken the truth: "If the Jewish leaders can show me in truth where I spoke other than the truth, then I would have to apologize, and I'm not too big to do that. But I can never apologize for speaking the truth."

Foxman fired back, saying, "Adolf Hitler and David Duke also said they were only telling the truth."

During his speech, which was peppered with biblical references to Jews, Farrakhan denied that he harbors anti-Semitic views and declared himself a prophet.

"Whether you like it or not, God brought the idea [for the march] through me, and he didn't bring it through me because my heart was dark with hatred and anti-Semitism," he said.

Expressing the view of many in the Jewish community, Baum said he was "deeply troubled" and "shocked" that more than 400,000 people "could come to march knowing that it is being organized against a backdrop of anti-Semitism."

"There is a rise in the willingness to tolerate anti-Semitism," Baum said. "You can now say anti-Semitic statements and it won't be held against you." □

Yemen's foreign minister addresses Jewish leaders

By Daniel Kurtzman

WASHINGTON (JTA) — A top official of the Republic of Yemen held an unprecedented meeting with the Conference of Presidents of Major American Jewish Organizations in New York last week.

Abdulkarim Al-Eryani, Yemen's deputy prime minister and foreign minister, described his meeting with Jewish leaders and Yemenite American Jews as "turning a page in our relations."

He said he would support a move by the Arab League to end the economic boycott of Israel and that Yemen will establish full diplomatic relations with Israel upon completion of the peace process.

Jewish leaders praised Al-Eryani for the important role he has played in enabling Yemenite Jews to travel abroad.

"If any one person is responsible for the fact that Yemenite families have been able to be reunited with their families abroad it is Dr. Al-Eryani," said Malcolm Hoenlein, executive vice chairman of the conference. □

American Jewish journalist may be imprisoned in Turkey

*By Fran Gold
The Jewish Horizon*

WESTFIELD, N.J. (JTA) — The impending trial of an American Jewish journalist in Istanbul is attracting international attention, as prominent journalists are speaking out in her defense.

Aliza Marcus, 33, of Westfield and Scotch Plains, N.J., is charged with racial incitement for publishing an article about that country's Kurdish minority. Marcus, a correspondent for Reuters in Istanbul and a former staff writer for the Jewish Telegraphic Agency in New York, could face a maximum of three years imprisonment if convicted.

Prominent journalists already coming to her defense include retired CBS newsman Walter Cronkite, honorary chairman of the New York-based Committee to Protect Journalists, who traveled to Turkey recently to protest her arrest to Turkish Prime Minister Tansu Ciller.

The Washington Post wrote an editorial on Sept. 26 about the threat to international journalism posed by Turkey's action, and CNN did a program on the incident.

"The issue is mobilizing both international and domestic support because the implications of threatening a foreign journalist endanger the freedom of journalists around the world," said Marcus' father, Dr. Matityahu Marcus.

Marcus wrote the article in question last November about the Turkish government's 10-year conflict with the Kurds. She reported about forced evacuations, torture, destruction and the uprooting of villages and its effects on the civilian population. More than 20,000 people have been killed in the ongoing battle.

The story appeared in Turkish in the pro-Kurdish daily *Ozgur Ulke* and was transmitted around the world by Reuters.

On Sept. 21, Marcus was apprehended in her home in Turkey and ordered to appear in court. She was charged with Article 312 of the Turkish Penal Code which "prohibits provoking enmity and hatred among people by showing racial and regional differences."

Marcus appeared in court on Oct. 12. The trial has been postponed until Nov. 9 and she was permitted to leave the country. She visited the United States briefly this month, but will be returning to Turkey for the trial.

Could face three years in prison

According to the Committee to Protect Journalists, Turkey has 74 local journalists in jail, more than any other country in the world.

Marcus is believed to be the first foreign journalist to be prosecuted in Turkey for her writings.

A graduate of Columbia University's School of Journalism, Marcus went to Turkey to work at an English-language magazine after graduation. She also reported for *The Christian Science Monitor* and for a number of other publications, including *Dissent*, from Turkey. After returning to the United States, she worked for the JTA as one of the wire service's staff writers in New York.

When the opportunity to work in Turkey for Reuters came, she grabbed it so she could get more involved in world issues, her father said.

A staff writer based in Istanbul, Marcus files stories almost every day, reporting on the political, social and economic events in Turkey. She has also written stories on the Jewish community in Turkey.

Marcus learned to speak the Turkish language and "loves the people and the country," her father said.

If convicted, Marcus could face up to three years

in prison. However, her family does not believe it will come to that.

"She discharged her job as a journalist, reporting what local residents said. Turkey is a democracy and although there is censorship here and there, they believe in freedom of speech," Marcus said.

"There is an enormous amount of interest in this case," he said. "I don't think it would serve Turkey's world image to put a legitimate American journalist in jail for working on a legitimate story. At the present time, Turkey has filed an application with the European Union to join the Common Market and a case like this could hurt their chance of being accepted."

According to Marcus' attorney, Cetin Ozek, part of the defense will be that while she filed the story in Turkey, it was written by Reuters editors and transmitted from the news agency's London headquarters around the world to subscribers. Reuters stories do not carry bylines. □

European Union to discuss accord to enhance ties with Palestinians

By Joseph Kopel

BRUSSELS (JTA) — The European Union has agreed to convene a ministerial conference to discuss providing economic assistance to the Palestinians.

At a meeting last week in Luxembourg, the foreign ministers of the 15 E.U. member states said the conference would examine the economic and commercial needs of the Palestinians with an eye toward providing technical and financial assistance to the Palestinian Authority.

The European Union views the conference as part of its ongoing efforts to support the Middle East peace process.

The European Commission, the E.U.'s executive arm, has meanwhile been given the go-ahead to start exploratory talks with the Palestinian Authority on a Euro-Mediterranean association accord. Similar accords have been already reached with Israel and Tunisia.

Other non-E.U. countries in the Mediterranean are negotiating with the European Union to conclude association accords which are aimed at creating a vast Euro-Mediterranean free-trade zone.

In an effort to pursue this objective, the European Union has scheduled for the end of November a ministerial conference in Barcelona with 12 potential Mediterranean partners.

Those invited to attend the Barcelona meeting so far include Israel, Algeria, Cyprus, Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon, Malta, Morocco, Syria, Tunisia, Turkey and the Palestinian Authority.

Preparations for the conference hit snags when some of the Arab invitees said that the gathering should adopt a statement affirming the right of people to self-determination. Israel requested that this statement be carefully worded, according to a E.U. Commission source.

In addition, Syria, which has announced that it will be represented in Barcelona, requested that the conference adopt a resolution call for a "just and complete Middle East peace."

But the main disagreement between the E.U. and the Arab invitees is over the question of whether Libya should participate at the Barcelona meeting.

The Arab countries are seeking Libya's participation, but E.U. officials are balking at the idea, saying that Libya is still under U.N. sanctions imposed in the wake of the 1988 bombing of a Pan Am flight over Lockerbie, Scotland.

The issue of who will be invited to Barcelona will again be discussed by the E.U. foreign ministers at an Oct. 30 meeting in Luxembourg. □