

IN THE NEWS

Arafat's health deteriorating

Yasser Arafat was in a coma in a French hospital Thursday after his illness worsened.

Some media reported that the Palestinian Authority president had died, but hospital officials denied it.

Doctors believe Arafat is suffering from a viral infection, and said a full report would be ready Thursday.

Bush stresses Palestinian statehood

In his first post-re-election news conference, President Bush reiterated his commitment to Palestinian statehood.

"It's very important for our friends the Israelis to have a peaceful Palestinian state living on their border," Bush said.

"It's very important for the Palestinian people to have a peaceful, hopeful future."

He referred to his June 24, 2002 speech outlining his vision of an end to Palestinian terrorism, followed by a Palestinian state.

"That's why I articulated a two-state vision in that Rose Garden speech. I meant it when I said it, and I mean it now," Bush said Thursday.

Told later that Arafat reportedly was dead, Bush said: "We will continue to work for a free Palestinian state that's at peace with Israel."

Bush's terror stance is lauded by Israel

Israel's president ascribed President Bush's election victory to his war on terrorism.

"Your policy that global terrorism must be fought with determination and firmness, and that the human race must be granted the right to live free of terror, won the appreciation and support of the American people," Moshe Katsav wrote Bush in an open letter of congratulation published Thursday.

Most U.S. observers said Bush's victory resulted from voters associating him with "moral values."

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WORLD REPORT

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Richard Straus, Smithsonian Institution, courtesy of the Supreme Court

The next Congress could play a pivotal role in confirming new justices to a court that is narrowly divided on many issues, including abortion and the constitutional separation of church and state.

Republican gains could hamper community's domestic agendas

By MATTHEW E. BERGER

WASHINGTON (JTA) — Most Jewish groups say they are expecting much the same in the U.S. Congress over the next two years, with little legislative progress on their top domestic policy priorities.

At the same time, the new Congress, with 11 Jewish senators and 26 Jewish representatives, is expected to remain strongly pro-Israel.

With Republicans strengthening their hold on both the House of Representatives and Senate, liberal Jewish groups are taking solace in the fact that Republicans will

hold fewer than 60 votes in the Senate, giving Democrats an option to block legislation by filibuster.

That could be crucial over the next few years on several issues, including Senate confirmations of U.S. Supreme Court justices.

The illness of Supreme Court Chief Justice William Rehnquist and the age of others could mean several new appointments in the next few years.

But Orthodox Jews, the majority of whom voted to re-elect Bush, had a different spin. Many appreciate a social agenda that rejects abortion and promotes more federal funding for religious institu-

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**AMERICA
DECIDES
2004**

■ *Most Jewish groups fear for their legislation priorities*

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tions, often parting ways with a majority of other Jewish groups.

"The Orthodox segment was courted by the Bush campaign and very supportive at the polls of the president's re-election," said Nathan Diament, director of the Orthodox Union's Institute for Public Affairs.

"We expect to be able to pursue and promote the interests of our community — many of which are bipartisan — over the next couple of years."

But most Jewish organizations look to Democrats for support on their domestic agenda items. In the past several years, with Republicans holding majorities in Congress, and the focus on tax cuts and defense rather than domestic spending, little new money has flowed to the social welfare causes many Jewish groups advocate for.

That trend, analysts and Jewish activists say, is likely to continue.

"I think many of our domestic issues, how we fund programs, are in big trouble," said Hannah Rosenthal, executive director of the Jewish Council for Public Affairs, the umbrella group for Jewish community relations councils.

She said Medicaid, a federal health-care program for the needy and disabled, was at the top of the list of programs likely to suffer.

Other health-care priorities, as well as Social Security reform and funding for educational programs, could take hits as well.

Some Jewish officials said they expected the focus in Washington to remain on homeland security and foreign affairs, further

hampering the Jewish domestic agenda.

"The president and the country is engaged in a war against terrorism, a war in Iraq, a lot of priorities internationally that I think will engage the Bush administration for the next several years and probably not enable them to get too proactive on the domestic agenda," said Jack Rosen, president of the American Jewish Congress.

But these officials expect that the new Congress would remain supportive of Israel and Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon's plan to disengage from the Palestinians by withdrawing from the Gaza Strip and parts of the West Bank.

"By and large, the people who are coming in are people who are known to people in the community," said Howard Kohr, the executive director of the pro-Israel lobby, the American Israel Public Affairs Committee.

The Supreme Court is also on the minds of many Jews. The court may hear cases in the next few years on partial-birth abortion and the line between church and state, and as many as four seats on the bench could open up during the next president's term.

President Bush's election means it will be he who appoints any new justices in the next four years, but Democrats — who hold more than 40 seats in the Senate — could filibuster any selection they view as too conservative.

"I think that process right now, to filibuster extreme nominees, is a good measure that can be taken if need be," said Sammie Moshenberg, director of the Washington office of the National Council of Jewish Women.

Some Jewish activists said they hoped that Bush will cross party lines and reach out to moderates.

They were also encouraged that Sen. Arlen Specter (R-Pa.), a Jewish moderate re-elected to a fifth term Tuesday, will lead the Senate Judiciary Committee, which holds hearings on nominated justices.

But Orthodox leaders said they would miss Specter's predecessor at that committee's helm, Sen. Orrin Hatch (R-Utah). Hatch, a more conservative lawmaker, is being forced to vacate the committee chair because of term limits.

Diament suggested that Democrats would need to reach out to faith groups after Tuesday's elections.

Indeed, Tuesday's results suggested a majority of people in the country are comfortable with faith, and Democrats may need to work to gain a larger foothold in that community.

On the legislative front, the Orthodox Union has led Jewish groups in backing the Workplace Religious Freedom Act, a bill that would provide new protections for religious people to practice their faith at work.

The bill has languished in Congress for years and, although it made progress this year, it did not pass. Jewish groups say this legislation remains a priority, and the pro-faith tone may aid that battle.

Jewish advocates also expect Bush to continue to push faith-based initia-

tives, both through Congress and the federal bureaucracy. A stronger Republican Congress will hurt many Jewish groups that oppose the plan, and aid the Orthodox groups that back it.

Republicans also have supported a Jewish initiative to give federal homeland security funding to Jewish and other non-profit organizations, including houses of worship.

Several Jewish groups led the charge for the legislation — which has passed the Senate Governmental Affairs Committee but needs to be made permanent — but it is opposed by both the Reform and Reconstructionist movements, and the Anti-Defamation League.

With the defeat of Senate Minority Leader Tom Daschle (D-S.D.) on Tuesday, one important question looming is who will lead Democrats in the Senate.

With Bush staying on in the White House, the next Democratic Senate leader could be an important mouthpiece for the liberal and left camps, and the fight to determine who takes up Daschle's mantle may help determine who will run for president as a Democrat four years from now.

Insiders say that after Daschle's defeat, Democrats are likely to look for a senator in a safe state to be minority leader, to avoid a repeat of the Republican targeting of Daschle.

Among the names being considered are Sen. Harry Reid (D-Nev.), the Senate minority whip; Sens. Richard Durbin (D-Ill.), Hillary Rodham Clinton (D-N.Y.) and Christopher Dodd (D-Conn.).

'Many of our domestic issues are in big trouble.'

Hannah Rosenthal
Jewish Council for Public Affairs

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Ukrainian Jews vote, prepare for runoff

By VLADIMIR MATVEYEV

KIEV, Ukraine (JTA) — Gilariy Lapitzky looked bewildered when he got a ballot sheet with the names of 24 contenders who wanted to become Ukraine's president.

"I'm satisfied neither with the number nor with the quality of the candidates," the 72-year-old retired Jewish engineer from Kiev said Sunday, echoing a feeling of disillusionment that has become widespread among voters in this former Soviet republic. "So I voted against all" candidates, he said.

None of the candidates received a majority in the Oct. 31 ballot, sending the race into a runoff slated for Nov. 21.

The main battle took place between two candidates — Prime Minister Viktor Yanukovich, who received 40 percent, and the opposition leader Viktor Yushenko, who got 39 percent of the vote in this nation of 48 million people.

International observers, representing the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, the Council of Europe, the European Union and NATO, said the campaign was marked by multiple irregularities.

These groups blamed the administration of incumbent President Leonid Kuchma — which backed Yanukovich — for the problems, citing overwhelming bias in state-controlled media, the blurring

of state and campaign resources on Yanukovich's behalf, and evidence of official interference in his opponents' campaigns.

For many of Ukraine's 500,000 Jews, the election posed a difficult choice: between a Western-oriented liberal, Yushenko, who had at times allied himself with people not shy about expressing anti-Semitic views; and Yanukovich, who favors an authoritarian leadership style but promises stability based on his role in the previous regime.

Jews were among the supporters and activists in both campaigns.

"I am for continuity of the policy of President Kuchma and stability in our country," said lawmaker Aleksandr Feldman, a businessman and president of the Jewish Foundation of Ukraine, who worked for Yanukovich's campaign.

But a prominent Jewish leader said his sympathy for Yushenko was dictated by his experience as a dissident and political prisoner during the Soviet Union.

"The years I spent in prison do not allow me to act differently," Josef Zissels said.

"Yushenko is not ideal. He has ill-matched company but it is changing, getting rid of the odious figures" in his

entourage, said Zissels, chairman of the Va'ad, the oldest Jewish community group in Ukraine.

In January, Yushenko sought to demonstrate to the Jewish community that he is clean of bigotry: He called on a leading newspaper, *Silski Visti*, or Village News, a 500,000-circulation newspaper serving the nation's rural population, to apologize for an article asserting that 400,000 Jews served in the S.S. during the Nazi invasion of Ukraine in 1941.

Before requesting the apology, however,

Yushenko was among several top opposition politicians who signed a statement expressing staunch opposition to a threat by the government to close *Silski Visti* for inciting anti-Semitism.

Some observers now predict that Jews are likely to support Yanukovich in the runoff, mainly due to the fact that the Jewish community has enjoyed stability and felt generally safe during the reign of Kuchma, Yanukovich's patron.

"Probably most Jews will vote for Yanukovich because he supports stability in society," said Rabbi Yakov Dov Bleich, one of two Ukraine's two chief rabbis. ■

A prediction that Ukrainian Jews will back stability in the Nov. 21 runoff.

Probe expected in Argentine bomb case

By FLORENCIA ARBISER

BUENOS AIRES (JTA) — An Argentine federal court has released a massive report explaining its acquittal of five men accused of complicity in the 1994 bombing of Buenos Aires' main Jewish community center.

The 4,815-page report, released Oct. 29, formally clears the way for a probe of irregularities in the investigation into the attack on the AMIA center, which killed 85 and wounded 300.

The investigation was coordinated by federal judge Juan Jose Galeano. But Galeano, who is to be investigated for misconduct such as bribing a witness, will not be the only one probed.

The report also demands the investigation of former prosecutors Eamon Mullen and Jose Barbaccia; former Internal Affairs Minister Carlos Corach; former Intelligence Secretary Hugo Anzorreguy; seven legislators on a special commission created to follow the case; judges Gabriel Cavallo and Norberto Oyarbide; and the former president of the DAIA Jewish political umbrella group, Ruben Beraja.

Last September, the court acquitted the five Argentines after a three-year-long oral trial. The verdict reinforced allegations that

the investigation had been marred by ineptitude and corruption.

Former President Carlos Menem, for example, has been implicated in media reports of hindering the AMIA investigation because of his ties to Iran.

Galeano was biased and his activity in the AMIA case "was not guided toward discovering the real truth," according to the newly released records, signed by three federal judges.

The documents also said that evidence presented against the defendants constituted a compilation of sometimes contradictory conjectures that did not lead to a guilty verdict.

The records refer to a van used to bomb the AMIA building, but said it couldn't be proven that Carlos Telleldin, the auto mechanic accused of providing the van to the bombers, was aware that it would be used in the attack.

"The court considers there are not evidential elements to conclude Telleldin knew the final destiny of the van," the records said.

A new department — The Anti-Terrorist Fiscal Unity — recently was created to launch a new investigation into the bombing, headed by prosecutor Alberto Nisman, a Jew. The appointment, made before the trial even concluded, was seen as a sign of President Nestor Kirchner's determination to get to the bottom of the bombing. ■

Israeli officials delighted by Bush win

By LESLIE SUSSER

JERUSALEM (JTA) — The Israeli establishment is delighted by the re-election of President Bush.

His Democratic challenger, Sen. John Kerry, may have been seen as a good friend of Israel, but Israeli officials speak of an ideological meeting of minds between Prime Minister Ariel Sharon's Likud-led government and Bush's neoconservative-dominated milieu.

Both put a premium on the war against terror and the creation of democratic institutions as a means to world and regional peace.

Moreover, Bush's record on Israel as president is seen as impeccable, and there was some anxiety that, if elected, Kerry might have been inclined to follow a more coordinated internationalist policy leading to pressure on Israel to make concessions on the Palestinian track.

But there are concerns about pressure on Israel from a second Bush administration, too. Some suggest that Bush may seek improved ties with Europe, and that that could spell new demands on Israel.

Israeli officials hold that Bush's overall worldview, dividing the world into good and evil protagonists, allies and enemies, with Israel on the side of the steadfast allies, is a huge bonus.

Kerry, the Democrat, would probably have been more inclined to turn to the international community, and international institutions like the United Nations and the International Court at The Hague, to resolve global problems.

And that, the officials maintain, might have been detrimental to Israeli interests.

They also make much of Bush's letter to Sharon last April, in which they see a significant upgrading of the strategic understanding between Israel and the United States on the Palestinian issue.

The letter underscores agreement that the Palestinians would not have the right to return to Israel proper in a final peace settlement, that Israel would be able to keep large settlement blocs in the West Bank, and that the United States would not support any international peace plan other than the "road map," which both Israel and the Palestinians have approved.

In addition, they say, Bush, who refused to have anything to do with Yasser Arafat because of his perceived implication in

Palestinian terror, would be less likely to deal with his successors unless they carry out road map reforms.

Still, there is a mainstream assessment in the Israeli Foreign Ministry that American policy on the Israeli-Palestinian issue even under Bush will be become more proactive and more closely coordinated with Europe.

A ministry position paper warns of a possible U.S. deal with Europe over Iraq and Iran, in which Israeli concessions to the Palestinians are the payoff for European support for Washington in Iraq and the Gulf.

There are two schools of thought on a new Bush administration in the Foreign Ministry: One expects more of the same, with Bush feeling that he now has an overwhelming mandate from the American people to continue the war on terror, as well as his policies in Iraq and on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, no matter what the Europeans think.

The opposing view holds that Bush's first order of business will be to start cleaning up the mess in Iraq, and that he will need European and Arab support.

"He won't go to them cap in hand," an

official told JTA. "But he will be ready to coordinate moves with them on the Israeli-Palestinian issue in return."

What this will mean on the ground, the official said, is American insistence that immediately after its planned withdrawal from Gaza and part of the West Bank next summer, Israel be ready to enter into negotiations with the Palestinians, based on the road map.

"Bush," said the official, who asked not to be identified, "will want to see his two-state vision, Israel and Palestine, side by side, implemented before he completes his second term."

But, the official said, much will depend on the Palestinians. Bush will only push for progress if the violence stops. Otherwise, he will give Israel the same backing in its fight against terror as he has for the past three years.

On the other hand, if a new Palestinian leadership, with a sick Arafat out of the picture, does make a serious effort to curb terror, Bush, in his second term, will want to see more from Israel, the official said.

He won't pressure Israel in a crude way but he will ask "that it help the U.S. by making moves that go down well in Europe and the Arab world."



Brian Hendler

An Israeli man reads about the U.S. election results at a Jerusalem cafe.

Israelis supported Bush, but some are rueful

By DINA KRAFT

TEL AVIV (JTA) — At Itzik Sabbag's sleek hair salon with its silver walls and frosted windows, customers were split down the middle about President Bush's re-election and what it would mean for Israel.

"Divided — just like in the United States," Sabbag joked.

But like many Israelis, Sabbag, 34, is a Bush supporter all the way.

"Bush, he's an awesome guy," Sabbag said. "He will be good for the war on terror. He knows what terrorism is, he fights it and he speaks the right language to the Arab world."

Israelis have followed the U.S. election closely, watching special television coverage and reading headlines about the tight race as they wondered if their most important asset — friendship with America — would change depending on the winner.

Unlike most of the international community, Israelis tended to prefer Bush over Kerry, championing his tough talk against terrorism, his ousting of Iraqi dictator Saddam Hussein and the support he has given to Prime Minister Ariel Sharon's policies.

In a poll published last month in Ha'aretz, 50 percent of those surveyed wanted to see Bush win, while only 24 percent wanted a Kerry victory.

Sabbag, a longtime Likud Party voter in Israeli politics, hopes Bush will push harder for Israeli-Palestinian peace now that he won't have to worry about re-election — and especially if Palestinian Authority President Yasser Arafat, who is ailing, is no longer a factor.

Two stores down, Yariv Siani, 36, sat outside his nail salon shaking his head in disagreement. A chance for a real breakthrough toward Middle East peace was lost when Americans re-elected Bush, he said.

"I heard the news this morning and I was in shock. It was our one chance for change," he said of a Kerry victory. "I only foresee bad things happening now that Bush has come to power again. When the world is angry at America, Israel is always blamed."

Ben-Dror Yemini, the Op-Ed editor of the daily Ma'ariv, said he was concerned by the Bush victory. He said Bush's failure to aggressively pursue Israeli-Palestinian



Brian Hendler

An Israeli passes a store selling yarmulkes bearing the names of the U.S. presidential candidates on Wednesday in Jerusalem.

peace — a common, though not universal, perception among analysts — could lead to an even more volatile situation.

"The kind of ally he is with Sharon is a bit frightening. If he gives Sharon full support for everything, I don't really think it serves Israel's interests," Yemini told JTA.

The Bush administration has criticized many of Sharon's military moves and has blasted Israeli settlement construction. But the administration has backed Sharon's refusal to deal with Arafat and Israel's desire to retain some West Bank settlement blocs, and has blunted criticism of Israel in the United Nations.

Others foresaw fortune for Israel in Bush's re-election.

"Bush is a good president. He did good work in Iraq as far as we are concerned: Now there will not be Scuds fired on us. He may have made things harder for America, but for us he has made things easier," said Tsvika Pearl, 48, a real estate agent and part-time actor who was walking his golden retriever down a Tel Aviv street.

"America is our back," he said, smiling. "All American presidents have been good for us — Democrats or Republicans, it doesn't matter much."

Computer programmer Yoel Amar, 31, agreed.

"America has and always will be pro-Israel because its people are pro-Israel," he said.

Others felt crushed by Bush's re-election.

Dawn had barely broken when a group of Democratic Israeli-Americans huddled around a television set in a Tel Aviv living room as election results began trickling in.

Hadass Teshet, the event's host, a 34-year-old media consultant who used to work for Democratic clients in Washington, decorated her apartment with Kerry balloons, Kerry posters and miniature American flags.

She also put up posters listing battleground states and key Senate races.

But there was little to celebrate.

"I am concerned about where Israel and the peace process will be on the Bush administration's order of priorities in a second term. It's difficult to feel optimistic at this point," Teshet said.

Elsewhere in Tel Aviv, Kobi Sheteet said he was paying little attention to the U.S. elections, focusing instead on just making ends meet in Israel.

"It won't matter to me; whoever is president won't be making sure I have a job or not. Here we have to worry about ourselves," said Sheteet, sorting tomatoes at the produce shop where he works as a clerk.

**'For us he
has made
things easier.'**

Tsvika Pearl
Tel Aviv resident

Is Gaza part of Land of Israel? Hard to say

By DINA KRAFT

TEL AVIV (JTA) — The sandy strip of land known as the Gaza Strip — wedged between the flat, arid landscape where Egypt, Israel and the Mediterranean Sea meet — is something of a conundrum in Jewish history.

Depending on how one interprets the Bible, Gaza either was or was not included in the Land of Israel conquered by the Israelites; Samson is the only Israelite noted for having set foot there; and in the Middle Ages, the false messiah Shabbatai Zevi gave the area a bad name when he launched his movement from its shores.

After a contentious debate, Israel's Knesset recently voted to unilaterally withdraw from the Gaza Strip and evacuate the 7,500 Jewish settlers who live in suburban-style settlements there, where sprawling green lawns and playgrounds are protected by wire fences and military search towers.

The settler population is dwarfed by the 1.3 million Palestinians who live in densely populated Gaza, which is 25 miles long and just 6 miles wide. The settlements often come under attack by rockets and mortar fire. School buses are armored and escorted by soldiers in an area where drive-by shootings and roadside bombings are facts of life.

But the Jews who have made the Gaza Strip home in the years since settlement returned there following the Six-Day War in 1967 remain defiant and hopeful that the close-knit communities they have built will be allowed to remain.

During biblical times, Gaza was part of the land promised to the Jews but never part of the land actually conquered and inhabited by them, said Nili Wazana, who lectures on Bible studies and the history of the Jewish people at Hebrew University and is writing a book on the borders of the biblical Land of Israel.

She said there are contradictory references to Gaza in the Bible. One passage, often cited by Jewish settlers and their supporters, is a passage in Judges which says the tribe of Judah took control of the area. But other stories in the Bible contradict this — typical of the Bible, she said.

"On almost everything you will find an opinion and an opposite opinion. It was not a homogenous text, it was not written at same time, and there are competing ideologies," Wazana said. "The question of Gaza

is one of the issues where you will find different opinions."

Polls show that most Israelis are in favor of leaving Gaza. They see neither historic nor strategic reason for staying.

But to Yigal Kamietsky, the rabbi of the Jewish settler bloc in Gaza known as Gush Katif, Gaza is an integral part of biblical Israel.

"Gaza is part of Land of Israel, no less than Tel Aviv and Bnei Brak," he said. "There is no doubt it is part of the borders." He said that not only was it considered a mitzvah to settle there, but that "if we were not here, I am not sure the State of Israel would still be there."

Kamietsky was referring to the more than 4,000 rounds of mortar fire launched onto Gaza's settlements. He said Jews there act as a buffer for those Jews living within Israel's pre-1967 borders.

The one period when Jews appeared to have sovereignty over Gaza was during Hasmonean rule when the Jewish King Yochanan — whose brother was Judah the Maccabee — captured the area in 145 C.E.

Haggai Huberman, who has written extensively on the history of Jewish settlement in Gaza over the centuries, is writing a history of the Jews in Gush Katif.

He maintains that the Jews who lived there always considered themselves residents of the Land of Israel.

He says that Jews lived on and off in Gaza since the time of Roman rule, their settlement following a pattern of expulsion during times of war and conquest and return during more peaceful periods. The remains of an ancient synagogue found in Gaza date to around 508 C.E. Its mosaic floor was unearthed by archeologists and is now displayed in the Israel Museum in Jerusalem.

There was reportedly a large Jewish community in the area when the Muslims invaded in the seventh century. The Jews were noted for their skills as farmers and for making wine in their vast vineyards.

After the Spanish Inquisition in 1492 some Spanish and Portuguese Jews fled to Gaza. When Napoleon's army marched through the area they fled, but later returned in the early 1800s.

When the first wave of Zionist settlers

arrived in the region at the end of the 19th century, a group of 50 families moved to Gaza City. According to Huberman, they established good relations with local Arabs.

They stayed until they were expelled in 1914, along with Gaza's entire Arab population, by the Ottoman Turks during World War I. In 1920 the Jews returned but at this point, with Arab and Jewish nationalism on the rise, tensions simmered and the former good relations with local Arabs began to sour, said Huberman.

The major Jewish presence in Gaza on the eve of Israel's War of Independence in 1948 was a kibbutz called Kfar Darom set up in 1946. It was evacuated during the war and was among the first places to be resettled by Jews after 1967 — first inhabited by Israeli soldiers from the Nahal brigade before becoming transformed into one of several civilian settlements established in the 1970s as the settler movement gained strength.

For her part, Wazana said present-day debates over territory mirror those in the Bible.

"Descriptions of borders reflect different ideologies even back then," she said. "People have put words in the mouths of God even in biblical times. If you have an ideology, you will find the right words to support it."

The Bible is contradictory on the Gaza issue, one scholar says.



Brian Hendler

A foreign laborer works on a new house in the Gaza Strip settlement of Neveh Dekalim.

COMMUNITY

TRANSITIONS

■ Michael Ressler was named executive vice president of the United Jewish Federation of San Diego.

■ Larry Skolnick was named executive vice president of the Greater Dayton Jewish Federation.

■ Brazil's Jack Terpins, president of the Latin American Jewish Congress, became the first Latin American official to join the World Jewish Congress' steering committee.

■ Joel Weiss was named director of development-North America for the Ohr Torah Stone educational network.

■ Peter Lowy was appointed chairman of the University of Judaism's board of directors.

■ The board of trustees of the Jewish Braille Institute International elected Judy Tenney chairwoman.

■ Jerry Silverman was named executive director of the Foundation for Jewish Camping.

■ Rabbi Arthur Schneier was elected chairman of the board of Midstream magazine.

HONORS

■ Shoshana Cardin, a past president of JTA's board of directors, received the inaugural Kipnis-Wilson/Friedland Award at the United Jewish Communities' Lion of Judah conference.

■ The UJA-Federation of New York honored attorney and columnist Steven Horowitz at its East Nassau Suffolk Inaugural Dinner.

■ Matthew Benjamin and Philip Bleser received financial services industries awards from the American Jewish Congress for their service to the business community.

■ Actress Tovah Feldshuh received a lifetime achievement award at an event sponsored by the YIVO Institute for Jewish Research.

■ Construction magnate Joseph Zelazny received a Tree of Life Award from the Jewish National Fund.

■ Vic Rosenthal, executive director of Jewish Community Action, of St. Paul, Minn., received a Leadership for a Changing World award from the Ford Foundation.

■ Americans for Peace Now gave its Patricia A. Barr Shalom Award to cartoonist and playwright Jules Feiffer.

■ Prof. Ehud Shapiro of the Weizmann Institute of Science received the World Technology Award for Biotechnology from the World Technology Network.

■ Joseph Epstein, author of the short-story collection "Fabulous Small Jews," received the Harold U. Ribalow Prize administered by Hadassah Magazine.

Carlebach remembered

By E. B. SOLOMONT

NEW YORK (JTA) — Yaacov Weintraub was a teenager in the 1980s when he met Shlomo Carlebach at a weekend retreat.

Like many others, Weintraub was drawn to the singing, guitar-playing rabbi who called himself just "Shlomo." He became a devotee.

"He said, 'Take my card,' " Weintraub recalls. Weintraub took the slip of paper, and a decade and a half later he's still holding onto it.

He's hanging onto some of Carlebach's spiritual fervor as well.

With a foot-long ponytail hanging down his back and a Rastafarian-inspired kippah on his head, Weintraub sang, clapped his hands and thumped on the tables with some 85 attendees at the First International Carlebach Conference, which took place in New York City on Oct. 28-31.

The forum was held in honor of Carlebach's 10th yartzheit, or anniversary of his death, which was Sunday.

True to Carlebach's most significant legacy — his music — attendees danced to joyful niggunim, or tunes, and shook tambourines and maracas.

But while Carlebach is most known for his music, in the decade since his death a legion of healers, meditators, activists and artists have relied on Carlebach's philosophy of open-minded, inclusive spirituality to continue their leader's legacy.

"In broad words, it's an ode to Shlomo," said Hadassah Carlebach, the late rabbi's sister-in-law. "Everybody feels they own a piece of Shlomo, yet we have to give it back to him somehow."

Carlebach's greatest legacy, his followers say, was that he taught Chasidic lessons to a broad spectrum of Jews in an inclusive and open-minded way through concerts and retreats.

Their activism is also a matter of making sure Carlebach's legacy continues, since no spiritual leader has taken his place since his death.

"For me the question is, now that he is no longer alive, there are only so many times you can tell his stories without

saying, 'Well, how do we go forward in this new situation?'" said Naftali Citron, Carlebach's great-nephew and the rabbi of the Carlebach Shul in New York City.

"We love Shlomo, but his name is best served by not just stopping at what he did but continuing with his inspiration and doing more," Citron said.

Carlebach was born in 1925 in Berlin. His family later fled Nazi Germany, eventually landing in New York. There his father became rabbi of the Upper West Side's Congregation Kehilath Jacob, now the Carlebach Shul.

Carlebach was educated in the Chasidic tradition. As one of the first emissaries of the Lubavitch movement on college campuses — along with Rabbi Zalman Schachter-Shalomi, leader of the Jewish Renewal movement — Carlebach turned many Jews on to Chasidic spirituality.

Breaking away in the 1950s over his more progressive attitudes toward women's role in spiritual life and over Judaism's laws that prevent men and women from touching

each other outside of marriage, Carlebach founded the House of Love and Prayer in the San Francisco area and a moshav in Israel called Me'or Modi'im. He then returned to his father's synagogue in New York, which he made into the headquarters for his unique approach to Judaism.

Accusations of impropriety with female followers decades ago have cast a shadow on Carlebach's name in recent years, but for loyal followers, the rabbi who insisted on being called by his first name, who stood in the back of the synagogue and who called congregants brother and sister, remains a heroic figure.

In the decade since Carlebach's death, the movement has adapted to not having a leader who connected the dots among his disparate followers by sheer force of charisma, Citron said.

But to survive, Citron said, the movement will have to organize Carlebach's followers.

"It's by and large a grass-roots movement, but, yeah, we are trying to create" a more formal organization "for people in this kind of movement to come together and have organizational support if they need it," Citron said.

Followers of a
'guru rabbi' carry
on his legacy.

NEWS IN BRIEF

MIDDLE EAST

Israel kills 3 in Gaza

Israeli soldiers killed three Palestinians in the Gaza Strip. The three were killed Thursday by soldiers who saw them approaching the security fence in the central Gaza Strip, apparently carrying a bomb.

Could Bush get tough on Israel?

President Bush's backing for the Jewish state could dim during his second term in office, Israel's justice minister said. "The situation with the Bush administration will be less rosy than it is now," Yosef "Tommy" Lapid told Army Radio on Thursday. "Naturally, a president in his second term is less open to influence and could take more steps to satisfy those who are not exactly our friends."

Many in Israel believe Washington will insist on a resumption of Israeli-Palestinian talks, especially after Yasser Arafat's demise.

That could clash with Prime Minister Ariel Sharon's plan to disengage unilaterally from the Palestinians by withdrawing from the Gaza Strip and parts of the West Bank next year.

Barak is back

Ehud Barak announced that he was returning to Israeli politics. "I intend to run for the leadership of the Labor Party and lead it back to power," Israel Radio quoted Barak as telling Shimon Peres, the current Labor chief, on Thursday.

Barak, 62, a former prime minister and military chief of staff, withdrew from politics after losing the premiership to Ariel Sharon in 2001.

His term in the top office is remembered for Israel's withdrawal from southern Lebanon and for attempts to reach peace agreements with Syria and the Palestinian Authority.

Detractors accuse Barak of ruining Labor with his governing style.

Gaza general quits

The commander of Israeli forces in the Gaza Strip quit after being grilled over media leaks.

Brig. Gen. Shmuel Zakai, who resigned his commission Thursday, complained of a witch hunt in the military's Southern Command.

Zakai had been questioned by military police over a Ha'aretz report last month that cited top military sources as saying they disagreed with a Gaza sweep ordered by Prime Minister Ariel Sharon.

Ha'aretz said Zakai was not its source.

Brothers in arms

Two Palestinian brothers who planned to carry out a suicide attack turned themselves in to Israeli forces.

The military allowed publication Monday of the surrender, saying the would-be terrorists from the Ein Beit Ilma refugee camp in the West Bank cited family pressure as the reason for their change of heart.

Israeli security experts say the policy of demolishing terrorists' family homes deters future attacks.

NORTH AMERICA

Bush blesses Arafat soul

President Bush blessed Yasser Arafat's soul upon hearing an erroneous report that Arafat had died.

"My first reaction is God bless his soul," Bush said Thursday when a reporter at a press conference told him the Palestinian Authority president had died.

Bush also recommitted himself to working "for a free Palestinian state that's at peace with Israel."

Nashville man may have targeted Jews

An Iraqi American man arrested on a weapons charge said he considered attacking the Nashville Jewish community.

Ahmed Hassan Al-Uqaily, 33, of Tennessee, was charged Wednesday for trying to purchase machine guns and hand grenades, and said he was "going Jihad" because of anger over the situation in his home country, Iraq.

Al-Uqaily was arrested after an undercover sting, in which he paid an FBI agent for the weapons and ammunition. He said he was considering the Nashville Jewish community as a possible target.

WORLD

Blair: Make Middle East priority

Congratulating President Bush on his victory, Tony Blair emphasized the importance of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

"The need to revitalize the Middle East peace process is the single most pressing political challenge in our world today," the British prime minister said Wednesday.

E.U. pressed to add Hezbollah to terror list

Holland's foreign minister called on the European Union to list Hezbollah as a terrorist organization.

Bernard Bot, whose country currently holds the E.U.'s rotating presidency, said Tuesday that such a move would dry up funding from Europe for the Lebanese Shi'ite group.

However, Bot said it would be difficult to find a consensus within the European Union on the issue, since some states make a distinction between Hezbollah's "political" and "military" wings.

The E.U.'s list of terrorist organizations, which was last updated in April, includes 26 individuals and 25 organizations, including Hamas and other Palestinian groups.

Hate mail case in New Zealand

A man appeared in court in New Zealand for allegedly sending hate mail to local Muslims.

The president of the New Zealand Jewish Council, David Zwart, told JTA he had seen two of the letters and that they strongly implied they had been sent by Israelis.

One letter carried the message "Get out of Israel, Islamic pigs." But the 53-year-old man accused of sending the letters is understood to have no connection with Israel or the Wellington Jewish community.

Danish nonprofit under attack

The Simon Wiesenthal Center criticized a Danish nonprofit for giving a donation to a Palestinian terrorist group.

The group known as Rebellion gave \$8,500 to the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine, which claimed responsibility for Monday's suicide bombing in Tel Aviv.

The center also urged the Danish prime minister to ban the group.

Amen to movie posters

A French court rejected claims that posters advertising a film about collaboration between the Vatican and the Nazis defamed Christians.

The court found Wednesday that posters for the film "Amen," depicting a cross transforming into a swastika, were not defamatory.

The film, produced by Constantin Costa-Gavras, deals with the Vatican's silence in the face of the Holocaust.

In rejecting a Catholic group's claim, the court said the combination of the two symbols could "equally apply to collaboration between the Christian faith and Nazi ideology as to exposing the relations which occurred, in an inevitable manner, between Nazism and the majority religion in the countries affected by that ideology."