

IN THE NEWS

New Yorkers salute Israel

Hundreds of thousands of people marched down New York City's Fifth Avenue in the annual Salute to Israel parade.

"It's like a village," says Brigitte Dayan, a Jewish communal worker, adding, "You walk in the street and you see many people you know."

Some onlookers at Sunday's parade wore orange shirts, signifying their opposition to Israel's upcoming Gaza withdrawal.

After the parade, an estimated 1,000 people — far fewer than organizers had predicted — gathered in Central Park for a rally and concert opposing the withdrawal.

Abbas delays Palestinian elections

Mahmoud Abbas postponed Palestinian Authority parliamentary elections indefinitely.

In announcing the decision Saturday to postpone the poll, which had been due to take place July 17, Abbas cited problems in hammering out a new electoral law.

But the Islamic terrorist group Hamas, which had planned to run for the first time in the elections in the West Bank and Gaza Strip, accused Abbas of trying to prevent a defeat at the polls for his dominant Fatah faction.

Israeli officials declined comment.

Air Force chief admits religious intolerance

The superintendent of the U.S. Air Force Academy admitted that his school suffers from widespread religious intolerance.

Speaking last Friday to the Anti-Defamation League's executive committee, Lt. Gen. John Rosa said the problems exist at all levels of the academy.

Rosa said he had upbraided his deputy for sending out an e-mail promoting National Prayer Day, the Associated Press reported.

But a Jewish graduate of the school, Mikey Weinstein, said the admission was "too little, too late."

WORLD REPORT

PUBLISHED WEEKDAYS BY JTA—THE GLOBAL NEWS SERVICE OF THE JEWISH PEOPLE • WWW.JTA.ORG

With Bush more involved in Mideast, group finds itself back in the center

By RON KAMPEAS

WASHINGTON (JTA) — Long shunted to the dovish wing of the U.S. Jewish political spectrum, the Israel Policy Forum is making its way back to the center.

In fact, IPF officials say, the group hardly moved. Instead, they say, the political landscape has shifted toward a group that has promoted close U.S. engagement in the Israeli-Palestinian peace process since the Oslo process was launched in 1993.

They cite a number of factors: a change in the Palestinian leadership; Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon's commitment to leave the Gaza Strip, and the ensuing breach that has emerged in Israel and among Israel's American Jewish supporters; and President Bush's determination to push the peace process forward.

The IPF always has advocated a two-state solution, said Jonathan Jacoby, the group's executive director, though in recent years that seemed a remote possibility because of the intifada and the seemingly insurmountable gulf between Israelis and Palestinians.

"What's different now is that the Israeli government has a policy that both the American government and most American Jews are enthusiastic about," he said.

What's remarkable is that it's a binational shift: The IPF, long seen as backing the Labor Party in Israel and top-heavy with Democrats in the United States, has cultivated close relations with both the Likud in Israel and Republicans here.

At its annual dinner in New York on Thursday, the group is honoring Israeli Deputy Prime Minister Ehud Olmert — a prominent Likud member — and Gary Heiman, a leading fund-

raiser for Bush's 2004 re-election campaign.

The group's most visible presence in recent weeks was a full-page ad it initiated in the Sunday New York Times, welcoming Sharon to Washington last week and praising him for his "courageous disengagement plan."

The "victory" for the IPF is that it was just one of 27 signatories. Others include mainstream Jewish groups — the Anti-Defamation League, American Jewish Committee, American Jewish Congress, Hadassah and the Jewish Council for Public Affairs — as well as the Conservative, Reform and Reconstructionist streams.

The Conference of Presidents of Major American Jewish Organizations, the umbrella body that normally would publish such an ad, has a constitutional commitment to consensus and has been unable to overcome resistance from pro-settler constituents. Instead, the Conference of Presidents published a welcome message to Sharon that did not mention the Gaza withdrawal.

"When policies change, institutions sometimes lag in their ability to change," Jacoby said. "It was easier for us to rally support for Sharon because we didn't have to convince ourselves to change."

The executive vice chairman of the conference, Malcolm Hoenlein, declined to respond.

The ad was a major breakthrough for the IPF. Two earlier efforts to garner community support for Bush since the intifada began in September 2000 — one in October 2001, after the president openly expressed support for a Palestinian state, and another in April 2003, when Mahmoud Abbas was named Palestinian Authority prime minister — were notable for the "formers" and "pasts" that appeared on

Continued on page 2

BEHIND
THE
HEADLINES

■ With U.S. engagement in Middle East, a group finds itself in the mainstream

Continued from page 1

the signature lists. The signatories were well-known Jews, but few of them held leadership positions at the time of signing.

By contrast, the recent New York Times ad featured only current leaders.

One U.S. Jewish official doubted the seriousness of the IPF's move to the center.

"Does that support of Sharon include supporting the positions of the Israeli government on everything? On Jerusalem?" the official asked. "Or is it just on disengagement, just when it comes to Israel making a territorial concession, and when it comes to the other issues they're going to break with them?"

In any case, signatories cautioned that their participation in the ad didn't signify a new leadership role for IPF in the community.

"When there's a vacuum and you step into the vacuum, you fill a role, but that doesn't make them the new kid on the block," said Abraham Foxman, the ADL's national director. "They served an appropriate need and purpose."

IPF officials said they don't seek a leadership role in the community.

"We are a one-issue organization, to push forward the peace process and make sure that Washington is in the picture," said Seymour Reich, IPF's president.

Nevertheless, there are signs that the organization is edging back toward the American mainstream — not least in naming Reich to its top position earlier this year. Twice a chairman of the Presidents Conference, Reich is skilled at negotiating the breadth of the community.

That earned the IPF praise from Foxman.

"Seymour Reich is an activist leader," Foxman said. "He has experience and he knows how to deal with media. That will serve IPF well."

Since Reich came on board, the IPF has increased its activism in Congress, campaigning hard for direct financial assistance to the Palestinian Authority — a campaign that failed on Capitol Hill but won Bush's backing last week.

A staffer in a senior congressional Democrat's office confirmed that the IPF has established a presence on the Hill, calling the group "very helpful on policy," though lacking anything near the political clout of the American Israel Public Affairs Committee.

Another high-profile initiative is the IPF's role in getting the Campaign for American Leadership in the Middle East off the ground in April. CALME enlisted dozens of prominent Jewish and Arab Americans, academics, businessmen and retired statesmen to call on Bush to actively pursue a two-state solution.

IPF also is going out of its way to demonstrate bipartisan bona fides in Israel and the United States.

Olmert, one of the most ardent backers of the Gaza withdrawal, is the first Likud minister to address the group.

Heiman, a member of the IPF executive committee who last year attended a post-election Jewish leadership briefing with Condoleezza Rice — who at the time had just been nominated as secretary of state — said the

shift was less remarkable than it seemed.

Heiman, who chaired the Bush campaign's Jewish outreach last year in Cincinnati and whose Standard Textile Co. has plants in Israel and Jordan, recalled attending a debate in which Democrats argued that Bush, as a second-term president, was likely to pressure Israel harder.

"I nodded to myself and thought, Yeah, that's right," recalled Heiman — who thought it would be a good thing. "As a second-term president, he'll be more engaged. I know that's something a lot of people don't want to hear; they want to hear that the administration is pro-Israel

and will back Israel whatever its stance. But even if Israel is 80 percent right, it needs a little push where it's wrong."

David Twersky, international director for the AJCongress, said the old distinctions were breaking down.

"We're at a very funny moment in Israel when Ehud Olmert and Ariel Sharon are more enthusiastic about withdrawal than Ehud Barak," the former Labor Party prime minister who offered the Palestinians a generous peace deal in 2000 but now says he's concerned that militants could take over in Palestinian areas. "We're stuck with a hawks-versus-doves model, but it's no longer useful."

It confuses even the principals. Olmert recently told Heiman he was flattered that a liberal group like the IPF chose to honor him at its annual dinner, Heiman said.

"Ehud, I'm a Republican," Heiman said he told him. ■

'It was easier for us to rally support for Sharon because we didn't have to convince ourselves to change.'

Jonathan Jacoby

Executive director, Israel Policy Forum

JTA WORLD REPORT

Howard E. Friedman
President

Mark J. Joffe
Executive Editor and Publisher

Lisa Hostein

Editor

Michael S. Arnold

Managing Editor

Lenore A. Silverstein

Finance and Administration Director

Noa Artzi-Weill

Marketing Director

JTA WORLD REPORT is published five days a week, except holidays, by the Jewish Telegraphic Agency Inc., 330 Seventh Ave., New York, N.Y. 10001-5010. For more information about how to subscribe by e-mail, fax or regular mail, call (212) 643-1890, or visit our Web site at www.jta.org.
© JTA. Reproduction only with permission.

Time to fight crime?

JERUSALEM (JTA) — Israel's police chief asked the government to redirect some of its counterterrorism efforts to fighting crime.

Inspector General Moshe Karadi appeared before Prime Minister Ariel Sharon's Cabinet on Sunday to request higher budgets for the national police, which is currently more than \$125 million in debt and faces 2,000 job cuts.

With street crime spiraling, Sharon vowed action.

"We will take steps and not just talk. I want us to leave here with solutions that are put into action," he told fellow ministers.

On Saturday, Karadi said that more than four years of helping the military fight Palestinian terrorism had sapped the police's law-enforcement capabilities.

"Now that there is relative calm, we should redirect our efforts from fighting terrorism to fighting crime," he told Channel Two television. ■

THIS WEEK**MONDAY**

■ Justice for Jews From Arab countries hosts a meeting in Paris. The group is bringing together representatives from several countries to plan a public awareness campaign about Jewish refugees from Arab countries.

■ The third annual Chevra Kadisha conference sponsored by Kavod v'Nichum, a group that provides education about Jewish funeral and burial practice, continues through Tuesday in New York City.

■ The United Jewish Communities, the umbrella group for the North American Jewish federation system, concludes two days of meetings in New York. Among the topics of discussion are funding for the increased aliyah of the Falash Mura, Ethiopian Jews whose ancestors converted to Christianity.

■ Conservative movement leaders will meet with government officials in Washington, focusing on domestic issues. Leaders will meet with Homeland Security Secretary Michael Chertoff and with Elliott Abrams, the White House's deputy national security adviser.

TUESDAY

■ Legislation addressing anti-Semitic policies at the United Nations and its bodies is slated to be voted upon by the U.S. House of Representatives. The resolution calls on the United Nations to condemn anti-Semitic statements in all U.N. meetings; and urges action by the U.S. government to combat anti-Semitism.

■ Interfaith leaders from around the world gather at the Kremlin for a symposium on religion, war and peace.

■ A host of stars appears at an event marking Anne Frank's 75th birthday. Whoopi Goldberg, Natalie Portman and Lou Reed are among those scheduled to appear at the New York City event, sponsored by the Anne Frank Center USA.

WEDNESDAY

■ The Conference of Presidents of Major American Jewish Organizations is meeting with the U.N. secretary general. A group of representatives from the Presidents Conference will meet with Kofi Annan. The Presidents Conference would not reveal its agenda, but is likely to press for better treatment of Israel at the United Nations.

The Organization for Cooperation and Security in Europe holds its third annual conference on anti-Semitism, in Cordoba, Spain. The conference is preceded by a meeting of nongovernmental organizations, in Seville. Jewish groups want to see how well European governments are implementing decisions taken at the last two OSCE conferences.

THURSDAY

■ The Israel Policy Forum hosts its annual tribute dinner in New York. Israeli Deputy Prime Minister Ehud Olmert will be the keynote speaker.

Nazi hunters reach milestone

By TZVI KAHN

NEW YORK (JTA) — When a U.S. judge recently revoked the citizenship of a former Nazi concentration camp guard living in Wisconsin, it marked a milestone.

The case was the 100th successfully prosecuted by the Justice Department's Office of Special Investigations against ex-Nazis in the United States.

Josias Kumpf, 80, admitted that he served as an armed guard at the Sachsenhausen concentration camp near Berlin and at SS labor camps in France and Poland.

He also acknowledged that he was at Trawniki, Poland, during Operation Harvest Festival in 1943, in which Nazis gunned down some 7,000 men, women and children.

Kumpf said he never actively or directly engaged in murder. But Judge Lynn Adelman of the U.S. District

Court of Wisconsin said in his ruling, "In the present case, the government has demonstrated by clear, unequivocal and convincing evidence that defendant personally assisted in the persecution of prisoners."

Kumpf immigrated to the United States from the former Yugoslavia in 1956, and became a U.S. citizen in 1964.

Adelman said Kumpf's actions violated the Refugee Relief Act of 1953, which prohibits a person who had "personally advocated or assisted persecution" from obtaining citizenship.

According to the court, Kumpf guarded a pit full of Jewish prisoners who were "halfway alive" and "still convuls[ing]," with instructions to "shoot to kill" anyone who tried to escape.

"He was part of the mechanism of annihilation," said Eli Rosenbaum, the OSI's director.

Kumpf's lawyer, Peter Rogers, has said he will appeal the decision.

Since the United States lacks the legal jurisdiction to prosecute Kumpf for his deeds as a Nazi guard, Rosenbaum said the office intends to work with other countries to have him tried somewhere in Europe.

OSI was founded in 1979 to investigate those who took part in Nazi-sponsored persecution before and during World War II and who later entered the United States illegally or fraudulently.

Rosenbaum said the office's success stems from an assiduous effort to comb through the records of some 70,000 Europeans who entered the United States after World War II.

"There is a common misconception that these cases are set off by Nazi hunters or survivors," Rosenbaum said. Instead, he said, "Nearly all the cases of the past two decades trace their origins to an aggressive,

proactive approach."

That approach runs counter to traditional criminal investigations, which usually begin with evidence of a crime and then proceed to determine its perpetrator.

In contrast, OSI begins its investigations by probing government records of individuals who may have been in a position to commit crimes, and then tries to determine if they actually did.

"It's often a needle in a haystack," Rosenbaum said.

To facilitate the organization's legwork, OSI employs several professional historians, who conduct full-time research on former Nazi war criminals.

Rosenbaum noted that OSI currently is investigating about 60 other people for their possible involvement in Nazi persecution. Twenty additional cases are pending in court.

'There is a common misconception that these cases are set off by Nazi hunters or survivors. Nearly all the cases of the past two decades trace their origins to an aggressive, proactive approach.'

Eli Rosenbaum

Director, Office of Special Investigations

NEWS IN BRIEF

WORLD

Good news, bad news are linked?

The same genes that lead to a higher level of intelligence among Ashkenazi Jews also lead to higher rates of genetic diseases, a new study found.

Because European Jews during the medieval era were restricted to jobs in business — occupations that required greater mental acuity than jobs such as farming — their genetic codes over the course of some generations selected genes for enhanced intellectual ability.

But the intelligence genes, the researchers say, come with some highly detrimental side effects: the increase in the frequency of genes elevating IQ also has led to increased incidence of a cluster of distinct but similar hereditary disorders unique to Ashkenazim.

Embassy staff leave Uzbekistan

Staff members of the Israeli Embassy in Uzbekistan were instructed to leave the country.

Heightened security concerns forced the evacuation last Friday, Israeli Foreign Ministry officials told The Associated Press.

There is a growing terrorist threat in the country, which the U.S. State Department acknowledged last week.

Israeli Ambassador Ami Mel and security officials remain in the country.

A man carrying fake explosives was shot to death by security guards outside the Israeli Embassy in Tashkent last month, and two people were killed in July 2004 in joint attacks on the U.S. and Israeli embassies in Tashkent and an Uzbek government office.

The Jewish Agency for Israel also sent staff members' families home from Tashkent.

Jewish leaders named as OSCE advisers

Several American Jewish organizational leaders were named as advisers for this month's international anti-Semitism conference in Cordoba, Spain.

The State Department on June 2 named the advisers to the U.S. delegation to the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe's Conference on Anti-Semitism and Other Forms of Intolerance, to supplement a delegation led by New York Gov. George Pataki.

The advisers include Rabbi Andrew Baker of the American Jewish Committee, Stacy Burdett of the Anti-Defamation League, Betty Ehrenberg of the Orthodox Union, Daniel Mariaschin of B'nai B'rith International and Lesley Weiss of the National Conference of Soviet Jewry.

Michael Cromartie and Nina Shea of the U.S. Commission on International Religious Freedom also were named.

The conference begins Wednesday.

New U.N. liaison for Jews

Edward Mortimer was named as the United Nations' liaison to Jewish organizations.

The speechwriter and director of communications for U.N. Secretary-General Kofi Annan, Mortimer received the added responsibility last week.

The designation is not an official title, but an internal administrative move.

Michael Moller, a deputy chief of staff, previously handled Jewish issues.

NORTH AMERICA

Franklin to appear in court

The man accused of passing classified information to staffers at the American Israel Public Affairs Committee will appear in court June 13.

Plato Cacheris, the attorney for Larry Franklin, confirmed that

Franklin will appear at the U.S. District Court for the Eastern District of Virginia, but would not confirm that his client had been indicted by a grand jury under seal, as reported last Friday in The Washington Post.

Franklin is accused of passing information to Steve Rosen, AIPAC's former policy director, and Keith Weissman, a former Iran specialist for AIPAC.

Sources tell JTA both men expect to be indicted as well.

MIDDLE EAST

Hezbollah favored in Lebanon vote

Hezbollah is favored to win in elections in southern Lebanon. Voters going to the polls Sunday — the second stage in a four-round process on consecutive Sundays in Lebanon — are expected to back the fundamentalist group known for its military resistance to Israel's presence in southern Lebanon, which ended in 2000.

Hezbollah is running on a joint slate with Amal, an influential Shi'ite political party.

The voting is the first to take place in Lebanon since Syria withdrew its troops from the country earlier this year.

'An eye for an eye'

Former Israeli commandos said they killed eight Palestinian policemen in 2002 under orders to avenge a terrorist attack.

The unnamed ex-conscripts told Ma'ariv last Friday that, after losing six comrades in July 2002 attack outside Ramallah, their commanders told them to gun down policemen at three Palestinian Authority checkpoints in the area.

"It felt like this would be kind of 'an eye for an eye,'" one interviewee told the newspaper.

The army did not deny the report, saying only that the commando raids against the checkpoints targeted Palestinian Authority security forces who had abetted terrorist attacks.

Syria tests missiles

Syria tested Scud missiles recently that were detected by Israeli air defense systems.

The Syrian tests, the first since 2001, were seen by Israeli officials as a sign of defiance against the United States and others who have pushed for Syrian reform and Syria's withdrawal from Lebanon. The New York Times reported last Friday.

Israeli officials believe the missiles will be intended to break up in mid-air, dispersing chemical weapons.

Protest lockdown

Anti-withdrawal protesters glued shut the doors to government offices throughout Israel.

Police said Sunday that as many as 150 offices of the Interior Ministry and other government agencies in seven coastal cities had been jammed shut overnight by activists opposed to the looming Israeli withdrawal from the Gaza Strip and northern West Bank.

Pullout support dips

Israeli public support for the looming Gaza Strip withdrawal has hit an all-time low of 50 percent, a poll found.

According to the Ma'ariv survey published last Friday, just half of respondents said they backed the pullout, the lowest rate in polls that began shortly after Prime Minister Ariel Sharon announced it in December 2003.

The newspaper cited public fatigue with pro-settler protests that have mired much of the country as a reason for the dip.

But respondents also gave Sharon a higher-than-usual approval rating of 46 percent, signaling support for his policies in the long run.