

IN THE NEWS
Rice, Livni keeping lines open to Abbas

Israel and the United States agreed that they would maintain contact with Palestinian Authority President Mahmoud Abbas. The agreement came after a meeting between Tzipi Livni, Israel's foreign minister, and U.S. Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice.

"He is someone who personally accepts the Quartet principles," Rice said Wednesday, referring to the guidelines for peace set up by the international community. Livni agreed, saying, "Israel was and is willing to meet with Mahmoud Abbas."

The Quartet is demanding that the Palestinian government recognize Israel and reject terrorism, conditions that Hamas rejects.

Lebanon to sue Israel in int'l court

Lebanon is planning to sue Israel over an oil spill that occurred during the Israel-Hezbollah war this summer.

Israel's Army Radio reported Wednesday that the suit would be filed at the International Court of Justice in The Hague.

Katsav gets temporary suspension

Israel's president won parliamentary permission to temporarily step down in light of a police investigation against him.

The Knesset House Committee on Wednesday approved Moshe Katsav's request to be declared "temporarily incapacitated" for a period of 18 hours.

The hiatus will take effect Thursday, when the Supreme Court swears in its new president, Justice Dorit Beinisch. Katsav was to have officiated at the ceremony, but said he thought it inappropriate given the police probe.

Several former employees have accused Katsav of sexual impropriety.

He denies wrongdoing.

WORLD REPORT

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

Jewish candidates win big in primaries across United States

By RON KAMPEAS

WASHINGTON (JTA) — A slew of Jewish candidates got a pre-Rosh Hashanah blessing Tuesday in primaries across the United States.

Two Jews won their bids to become the Democratic candidates for the U.S. Senate — Ben Cardin in Maryland and Bernie Sanders in Vermont.

In other statewide races, Democrats Eliot Spitzer won his primary for governor in New York and Douglas Gansler won for attorney general in Maryland.

Jewish contenders also won a number of nominations for seats in the U.S. House of Representatives: Two Democratic nominations in Arizona, one Democratic nomination each in New Hampshire and Wisconsin and a Republican nomination in Minnesota. A man who is raising his children Jewish won a Democratic primary for a House seat in Maryland.

The abundance of Jewish Democrats now facing virtually guaranteed wins or viable races in November will be welcomed by party leaders feeling flak for abandoning Sen. Joseph Lieberman last month in Connecticut. And the national Republican Party's decision to back moderates in Rhode Island and Arizona suggests that this November's fight will aim for the center — the political stomping ground most Jewish voters prefer.

Many political pundits are predicting the Democrats will retake the House in November and possibly the Senate as well. A turnover of control could have significant impact on U.S. domestic and foreign policy.

Here's a rundown of some of the key races of Jewish interest:

In Maryland, U.S. Rep. Ben Cardin (D-Md.) defeated Kweisi Mfume, a former congressman and former director of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, to succeed U.S. Sen. Paul Sarbanes, a veteran Democrat.

Cardin, a scion of the famed Jewish philanthropic family, is a veteran of the influential House Ways and Means Committee and has a reputation for working quietly across the aisle in passing health care and pension reforms.

The winner faces Lt. Gov. Michael Steele, who represents the Republicans' best hope of getting a black candidate back into Congress.

The seat Cardin is vacating covers parts of Baltimore and its suburbs. Winning the Democratic nomination to replace him was John Sarbanes, the retiring senator's son.

Sarbanes is a Greek Orthodox lawyer specializing in health care who helped found the Institute for Christian-Jewish understanding. He is married to a Jewish woman, is raising his children as Jews and is active in the Bolton Street Synagogue.

The solidly Democratic district includes 70,000 to 80,000 Jews. One of them, Gary Applebaum, was in a tight race for the Republican nomination early Wednesday.

Douglas Gansler, Montgomery County's telegenic prosecutor, won the Democratic nomination for attorney general. He's on the board of directors for the Greater Washington Jewish Community Council and is best known for confronting Israel's legal system in the late 1990s when it protected Samuel Sheinbein, a Maryland youth who fled to Israel after murdering and dismembering

Continued on page 2

■ Primary elections featured an extraordinary level of Jewish involvement

Continued from page 1

another youth. Sheinbein is serving his sentence in Israel, and the case led Israel to adjust its Law of Return to keep out criminals.

In Rhode Island, U.S. Sen. Lincoln Chafee defeated challenger Stephen Laffey, the mayor of Cranston, in the Republican primary. Though neither candidate was Jewish, the pro-Israel community closely watched the race because of Chafee, who has been outspoken in criticizing Israel's settlement policies since he replaced his late father, John Chafee, in 1999. His opponent ran a strongly pro-Israel primary campaign.

Chafee, a member of the Senate's Foreign Relations Committee, handed Laffey ammunition last week when he delayed the confirmation of John Bolton, the strongly pro-Israel interim U.S. ambassador to the United Nations. As a reason, Chafee cited Israel's plans to expand Jerusalem-area settlements.

Chafee won with 54 percent of the vote, backed by money from the national party, which did not believe a conservative like Laffey could win the moderate state. First lady Laura Bush campaigned for Chafee.

Jewish Democrats, still smarting from Republican criticism of the party for abandoning Lieberman after he lost his party's nomination last month, were ready to seize on Chafee's win.

Ira Forman, the National Jewish Democratic Council's executive director, said Chafee's win would counter whatever fallout Democrats faced from the Jewish

community after Lieberman, the first Jew to make a viable national ticket in 2000 as Al Gore's vice presidential running mate, was bumped.

Lieberman now is running as an independent against Ned Lamont, and the Republican Jewish Coalition already has used his loss in ads aimed at drawing Jews away from their traditional overwhelming support for Democrats.

"The 'pro-Israel' Republican Party is throwing all its weight behind Chafee," Forman said. "Where's the consistency?"

A senior Jewish Republican said the party supported Chafee, who often is at odds with the White House on foreign and domestic policy, because Laffey was a sure loser.

Because Democrats stand a good chance of winning back the Senate, the official said, the party had to back Chafee, whom it would otherwise abandon to the Democrats.

Chafee now faces Sheldon Whitehouse, a Democrat running on an anti-Iraq war platform. Polls show them in a dead heat.

In other races:

- In New York, Spitzer, the maverick attorney general who made his name by prosecuting a bevy of financiers, rode into the Democratic nomination for governor, winning 81 percent of the vote against a candidate backed by Wall Street figures who resented Spitzer's interference. He is favored to win over Republican John Faso in the general election.

- In Arizona, two Jewish women won the right to stage viable bids to take Republican seats in the U.S. House of Representatives.

Gabrielle Giffords strolled to victory by a 2-1 margin, and now faces a tight race to replace U.S. Rep. Jim Kolbe, a popular Republican who is retiring from a Tucson-area district.

Giffords, a state senator until 2005, focused on health care in her campaign. Her boyfriend is Cmdr. Mark Kelly, an astronaut who piloted the most recent space shuttle mission.

Giffords now faces Randy Graf, a conservative with a tough line on immigration who beat a moderate, Steve Huffman. Like Chafee, Huffman had national party backing in a district where conservatives are unlikely to do well.

Ellen Simon, a lawyer who specializes in employee protection law, easily bested four other candidates running for the chance to face Republican U.S. Rep. Rick Renzi, who represents the central part of Arizona, in the general election. Renzi is vulnerable, having been cited by the Federal Election Commission for funding irregularities in his 2004 campaign.

- In Vermont, U.S. Rep. Bernie Sanders, the only

independent in the House of Representatives, won the chance to replace Sen. Jim Jeffords, the only independent in the Senate. Sanders votes with the Democratic caucus, and the state party placed him on the primary ballot, which he won handily.

He now faces Richard Tarrant, a Republican businessman.

- In New Hampshire, Paul Hodes — a law partner to Bill Shaheen, a prominent Arab American — was unchallenged in the Democratic primary for the Concord area's U.S. House of Representatives seat. It would be the second time in two years he faces incumbent Republican Rep. Charles Bass, but this time polls show a dead heat, a sign of frustration with the Iraq war and of Republicans' declining fortunes in New England.


- In Wisconsin, Steve Kagen, a Jewish doctor, handily beat two rivals after reportedly spending \$1 million of his own money in the Democratic primary.

Republicans already were betting on Kagen to win the nomination in the Green Bay-area seat made open by Republican U.S. Rep. Mark Green's bid for governor. The national Republican Party has run advertisements calling the allergy specialist "Dr. Millionaire" and attacking him for suing some patients for lapsed payments.

Kagen now faces State Rep. John Gard in the general election.

Also in Wisconsin, incumbent U.S. Sen. Herb Kohl, a Democrat, easily beat back a challenge.

Many political pundits are predicting the Democrats will retake the House in November and possibly the Senate as well. A turnover of control could have a significant impact on U.S. domestic and foreign policy.



Daniel J. Krifcher
President

Mark J. Joffe
Executive Editor and Publisher

Lisa Hostein
Editor

Michael S. Arnold
Managing Editor

Lenore A. Silverstein
Finance and Administration 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.

Optimism on talks, but big decision remains for P.A.

By LESLIE SUSSER

JERUSALEM (JTA) — Major obstacles still remain, but a flurry of diplomatic activity in Israel and the Palestinian territories may have broken a long deadlock in Israeli-Palestinian peacemaking.

Ever since Hamas came to power in the Palestinian Authority last January, there has been virtually no official contact with Israel. Now, after recent visits to Israel and the Palestinian territories by British Prime Minister Tony Blair and the foreign ministers of Italy, Germany, Spain and Russia, Israeli officials say they're cautiously optimistic about chances for renewing the peace process.

"We are encouraged by significant changes taking place on the Palestinian side, the international community's readiness to invest diplomatic capital and the urgency moderate Arab countries attach to the need for immediate dialogue," a senior Israeli official told JTA.

But there's a downside: The officials acknowledge that Syria and some Palestinians are trying to play a spoiler role and could torpedo any new initiative.

The spur for the European and Russian diplomacy was the Lebanon war: It highlighted the divide in the Muslim world between radicals determined to confront the West and moderates seeking a common future with America and its allies. The Europeans believe an Israeli-Palestinian accommodation will boost the moderates and take much of the sting out of radical complaints against the West.

"People everywhere now see this global movement of extremism, they see Iran putting itself at the head of it, and there is a huge strategic interest that includes America, Europe, Israel and moderate Arab and Muslim countries that want a modern future. There is a huge strategic interest in making sure that extremism doesn't succeed," Blair told Ha'aretz, implying that an Israeli-Palestinian peace deal would be a major gain for the West in this key strategic battle.

In the Israeli view, however, for a peace process to have any chance of gaining momentum, the Palestinians must accept the international community's three conditions for dialogue: Recognition of Israel, acceptance of previous Israeli-Palestinian agreements and renunciation of violence.

They also would have to release Cpl. Gilad Shalit, the Israeli soldier kidnapped near the border with Gaza in late June.

In the past, the Hamas-led Palestinian Authority was reluctant to meet any of these demands. Now Israeli officials say Hamas is feeling the effects of months of international isolation and — in the

face of widespread strikes and mounting discontent on the Palestinian street — is reconsidering its strategy.

Indeed, recent Palestinian polls show the secular Fatah movement, which lost the January election to Hamas, now leading it by a margin of almost 2 to 1.

Israeli officials are impressed by the way P.A. President Mahmoud Abbas of Fatah seems to be doing all he can to get peace talks restarted.

"Abbas is doing all the right things," the Israeli official told JTA. "He is working for Gilad Shalit's release and trying to form a national unity government that would accept the international community's conditions."

On Monday, Abbas achieved an ostensible breakthrough, reaching an agreement with P.A. Prime Minister Ismail Haniyeh of Hamas to set up a national unity government in which Fatah and Hamas would share power.

But will this government comply with the international community's conditions? Initial reports suggested that its policy would be based on a document hammered out in May between Fatah and Hamas prisoners in Israeli jails and on the Saudi plan of February 2002 for Mideast peace, both of which imply recognition of Israel.

But this might not be enough for the Israelis, who likely will continue to insist on explicit acceptance of the three conditions.

Indeed, some Israeli pundits argue that the national unity government is simply a ploy to get the international community to release frozen funds without Hamas really recognizing Israel, renouncing vio-

lence or accepting previous agreements.

But Israeli officials are reserving judgment and waiting to see whether Abbas manages to get Hamas to accept the three conditions.

"If he succeeds, we will be able to restart the peace process, the international community could free frozen funds earmarked for the Palestinian Authority and we would make reciprocal gestures," the official said.

Another reason for Israeli optimism is the positive role Egypt and Jordan are playing. Both Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak and Jordan's King Abdullah say they see renewal of the Israeli-Palestinian peace process as a top priority and are working behind the scenes to get things moving.

The two leaders met in Amman on Sunday to coordinate their moves.

But progress will not be easy, as Syria and some of the radical Palestinian groups try to undermine Abbas and the moderates. In talks with his European visitors, Abbas claimed that he had succeeded a few weeks ago in putting together a deal that included the formation of a national unity government and Shalit's release, only for it to be torpedoed by Damascus.

Moreover, according to Israel's Military Intelligence chief, Maj. Gen. Amos Yadlin, radical Palestinian groups are trying to copy Hezbollah's Lebanon model in Gaza and the West Bank rather than achieve an accommodation with Israel.

The problem is that the great divide in the Muslim world between moderates and radicals is reflected in Palestinian society and its political leadership. Where Abbas and Fatah may be on the side of the forces of modernization, Hamas is very much with the anti-Western radicals. The formation of a national unity government combining the two does not necessarily mean a pro-Western or pro-peace stance.

The Israeli official summed up the dilemma.

"Favorable international and regional conditions for a renewal of the peace process have been created, but despite the intense diplomatic flurry, the ball is still in the Palestinian court," he said. "Ultimately, they will have to choose between terror and peacemaking."

NEWS
ANALYSIS

'There is a huge strategic interest in making sure that extremism doesn't succeed.'

Tony Blair
Prime minister, Britain

NEWS IN BRIEF

NORTH AMERICA

Y.U. gets \$100 million donation

New York's Yeshiva University received a \$100 million gift.

The gift from Ronald Stanton, chairman of Transammonia Inc., will be used to set up a "revolving" fund that the university president can use to buy or improve university facilities, pay faculty salaries, give scholarships and endow faculty research.

Once the money is spent, the school will have to find benefactors to replace the funds.

Stanton's company trades, distributes and transports fertilizer materials, liquefied petroleum gases, petrochemicals and crude oil.

Fight against anti-Semitism comes to Quebec

A non-Jewish business group in Ontario called on Quebec corporate leaders to join the fight against anti-Semitism.

Tony Comper of Fighting Anti-Semitism Together made his pitch Monday in Montreal. In Ontario, a curriculum-based multimedia program called "Choose Your Voice: Anti-Semitism in Canada" already is reaching children in many schools.

The organization plans to introduce a French language, made-in-Quebec version of the program.

E-publication aimed at students

An electronic publication is being launched next month for U.S. Jewish college students.

The Jewish Student Weekly is a project of the American Union of Jewish Students, a new organization. The project is being funded by the Grinspoon Quick Turn Around Grant through Hillel.

MIDDLE EAST

Lebanon war general quits

An Israeli army general who oversaw the war on Hezbollah tendered his resignation. Maj. Gen. Udi Adam, chief of Northern Command, announced Tuesday he was stepping down.

According to Ma'ariv, the move likely will go into effect before Rosh Hashanah. Questions were raised about Adam's performance after Hezbollah managed to kill eight soldiers and abduct two others in a July 12 border raid in his area of operations, triggering an Israeli offensive in Lebanon.

Infrastructure Minister Benjamin Ben-Eliezer, called for Lt. Gen. Dan Halutz, the military chief of staff, to resign as well.

Labor's Ami Ayalon proposed that party leader Amir Peretz switch his Defense portfolio for another role in the Cabinet.

Israeli couple convicted of bombing church

An Israeli court convicted a mixed Jewish-Christian couple of bombing a church in Nazareth.

Nazareth District Court on Wednesday convicted the couple of detonating an explosive device in March in the Church of the Annunciation, which led to a riot. The couple, arrested along with their daughter after they threw fireworks in the shrine during Mass, was charged with attempted arson, assault and disorderly conduct.

Kuntar release weighed

Israel indicated a willingness to consider releasing a jailed Lebanese terrorist as part of efforts to retrieve two soldiers held hostage by Hezbollah.

After Hezbollah's chief, Sheikh Hassan Nasrallah, reiterated Monday that the soldiers abducted July 12 would not be freed unless there was an exchange including the release of Samir Kuntar, Israel's defense minister, Amir Peretz, indicated this was not out of the ques-

tion. "The matter of Kuntar is on the agenda and will be considered," Peretz told Army Radio on Tuesday.

Jerusalem previously had ruled out releasing Kuntar, who is serving a life sentence for a 1979 terrorist attack in which he murdered a father and child, while another child was smothered to death in hiding from the killer.

Out by the New Year?

Israel hopes to have all its troops out of southern Lebanon by Rosh Hashanah. Israeli sources said Wednesday that the last Israeli troops were expected to be out of former Hezbollah strongholds by Sept. 22, if handovers of territory to foreign peacekeepers and the Lebanese army go as planned.

Hostage's father trusts Blair

The father of one of the Israeli soldiers kidnapped by Hezbollah said he believes Tony Blair's vow to do "everything he could" to get his son back.

Shlomo Goldwasser, Ehud Goldwasser's father, and members of the other kidnapped soldiers' families met with Blair on Sunday in Jerusalem, Goldwasser said Tuesday.

WORLD

Arrest halted attack on Oslo synagogue

An Al-Qaida-linked terrorist cell broken up by Italian police last year reportedly was targeting the main synagogue in Oslo.

After the arrest of the Algerian-based cell, police in Norway increased security around the synagogue, the Jerusalem Post reported. The arrest was reported this week in a Norwegian paper.

Anti-Semitic text messages in Australia?

A man was charged in an Australian court with sending anti-Semitic text messages. Alan Jeffrey McConnell, 59, pleaded not guilty to stalking and using a telecommunications device to harass or threaten members of a Brisbane Jewish family in May and June. He allegedly sent three anti-Semitic text messages that appeared on the family mobile phone when being used by Zel Wolf, but they were believed to be aimed at her son Mark.

ADL: Anti-Semitism up in Poland

Anti-Semitism is on the rise in Poland, the Anti-Defamation League said.

A new report, "Poland: Democracy and the Challenge of Extremism," details several well-known incidents in Poland this year, such as the inclusion of two extremist parties in the governing coalition, anti-Semitic remarks aired on the Catholic broadcaster Radio Maryja and the refusal of the president or prime minister to repudiate the station. The ADL recommends the dismissal of Education Minister Roman Giertych, whose party has a history of anti-Semitism.

Ireland gets new Israeli envoy

Israel's new ambassador to Ireland is expected to make a priority of improved media coverage and public relations.

Zion Evrony presented his credentials Monday to Irish President Mary McAleese. Evrony follows Daniel Megiddo, who spent much of his last month in office defending Israel's war against Hezbollah.

Megiddo provoked criticism in late July when he said in an interview on Ireland's state radio station that Lebanese refugees should be prepared to escape the bombardment on foot — as refugees did in World War II — to save their lives.

Evrony's last foreign posting was as consul general in Houston, where he served from 1995 to 2002.