

The Jerusalem Report

COVERING ISRAEL, THE MIDDLE EAST AND THE JEWISH WORLD

MARCH 25, 1993

**Why Some
Top Rock Stars
Won't Play Israel**

Battle for the Likud

The Jerusalem Report



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*Front Runner Bibi Netanyahu
on the Campaign Trail*

A Final Offer from the Palestinians' Chief Negotiator

BOMBER'S TIES: Muhammad Salameh, born in the West Bank village of Bidiah in 1967, was arraigned on March 4 for the February 26 bombing at New York's World Trade Center. Ibrahim Elgabrowni, 42, was also arrested. One of the false passports found in Elgabrowni's apartment was in the name of his cousin, El-Sayyid Nosair, in prison on charges connected with the 1990 assassination of Meir Kahane. All three were active members of the Al Salaam mosque in Jersey City.

PARTIAL WITHDRAWAL OK: Syrian President Hafiz al-Asad told Secretary of State Warren Christopher, during his recent Mideast tour, that a peace agreement with Israel didn't require a full Israeli withdrawal from the Golan Heights, the New York Times reported on March 4.

COPTER RAID: Israeli helicopter gunships attacked a base of Ahmed Jibril's Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine-General Command in the Ein al-Hilweh refugee camp near Sidon, Lebanon on March 6. Four people were killed in the raid and a rubber dinghy apparently intended for use in an attack against Israel was destroyed.

They're not alone. Though RECAP is the oldest such group in the United States, men in Seattle, Portland, New York, Boston, Los Angeles and Calgary are meeting to share restoration techniques and vent their rage at having been circumcised as children — an operation they describe as a violation of human rights.

"I've been wounded. I feel like I've been raped as a child," one man confessed to the RECAP group. "I've thought about this every day since I was 5 years old," another confided after the meeting. "I'm so relieved to know I'm not alone."

Many of RECAP's members are Jewish, and while they value their heritage, they say they would never circumcise their sons. "It's ritualistic child abuse," said Leland Traiman, 40, who grew up in a traditional Jewish family in Los Angeles. "I don't believe in taking a knife to my child's genitals, regardless."

RECAP's members say circumcision not only causes lasting psychological damage but, by exposing sensitive areas of the penis, radically decreases sexual pleasure. They also cite studies contradicting the idea that circumcision is more hygienic and salutary.

Now, Jewish members say, it's time for their religion to stop what they call a barbaric, senseless custom. "There are other traditions within Judaism that have been set aside," said Derek Durst, 45, a former Jewish school teacher from Long Island. "And this one has to be as well."

Michael Arnold / San Francisco

London 'eruv' plan gets powerful support

The battle lines: On one side, Orthodox Jews of northwest London, with the support of that bastion of the British establishment, the Times. On the other side, some of the area's non-Orthodox Jews, who fear the creation of a ghetto.

At issue: The setting up of an *eruv*, a symbolic

fence around a neighborhood. Without the *eruv*, Orthodox law forbids carrying even a housekey outside one's home on Shabbat; with it, "home" becomes anywhere within the boundary.

The *eruv* controversy made national newspaper headlines last month, when the local council of the northwest London borough of Barnet turned down Orthodox residents' request to allow them to set up an *eruv* around such well-known Jewish areas as Golders Green. The council decision was praised by some local Jews, who argued that setting up tall posts to carry wires marking the boundary smacked of establishing a ghetto and would play into the hands of anti-Semites.

The council rejected Orthodox arguments that the ritual boundary would make life easier for the elderly, the infirm and young parents. Nor were opponents impressed that *eruvim* already existed in such places as Washington (including the White House), Los Angeles and Melbourne. The council's planning committee rejected the *eruv* petition from 3,500 citizens by 11 votes to seven, with two Jewish members voting with the majority.

David Schreiber, leader of the United Synagogues *eruv* committee, has pledged to continue the battle. Among his supporters: Prime Minister John Major — said to have been upset by the council decision — and several newspapers, including the Evening Standard and the Times.

"An *eruv* is not the same as an Indian reservation, a Swiss canton or a local authority," the Times declared in a long and carefully researched editorial. While accepting the need for democratic consensus on such an issue, it added: "Introduced with sensitivity and respect for others' feelings, they (*eruvim*) could be a positive addition to the nation's religious geography and help define the proper boundaries of pluralism."

Colin Bickler / London

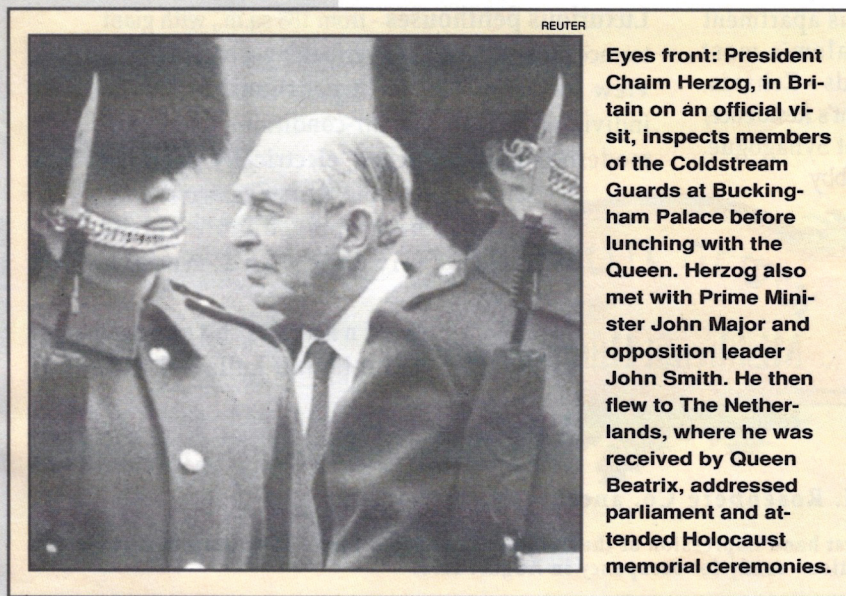
Racist attacks on the decline in France

A French government report on racism and anti-Semitism has shown a sharp decline in racially motivated attacks from 1991 to 1992.

But the report also concluded, on the basis of extensive polling, that 21 percent of the French public harbored strong racial prejudices and another third were "tempted by racism."

The hefty (688-page) report was compiled by the National Human Rights Commission, at the behest of Prime Minister Pierre Bérégovoy, to help the government fight racism. It said there were 23 attacks against Jews or Jewish-owned property in 1992, causing six injuries, compared to 40 attacks, which left five injured, in 1991.

All but two of the attacks against Jews were by skinheads or members of tiny "lunatic-fringe" extreme rightist groups who mostly vandalized synagogues or cemeteries. Nine young men, including six skinheads, were arrested and are awaiting trial in connection with the attacks.



Eyes front: President Chaim Herzog, in Britain on an official visit, inspects members of the Coldstream Guards at Buckingham Palace before lunching with the Queen. Herzog also met with Prime Minister John Major and opposition leader John Smith. He then flew to The Netherlands, where he was received by Queen Beatrix, addressed parliament and attended Holocaust memorial ceremonies.