

JAC NewsBreak

VITAL NEWS & RESEARCH INFORMATION FOR JAC LEADERSHIP CIRCLE May 18, 2007

On my mind this month...

It's hard to believe that three years have passed since I became president of JACPAC.

It has been an honor and a privilege to serve this organization and the dedicated staff and members that have



Jackie Abelman-Cohen

contributed so much to making JAC one of the most respected advocacy groups on Capitol Hill. Our recent Washington Conference was a validation of our reputation as all of the freshman members that JAC supported in 2006 took the time from their busy schedules to meet with us.

Now it is time for a new leader to assume the presidency. In spite of our hard won victories last November, our mission continues to demand our vigilance to insure that the U.S.-Israel relationship remains strong and secure and that the domestic concerns of the Jewish community are addressed. Equally important is our ongoing campaign to raise funds for the candidates that support our agenda, particularly the freshmen that are being targeted. As I announced at the Conference, the nomination is open to all JAC members. The JAC By-Laws provide that recommendations may be submitted to the Nominating Committee by any member of JAC. You will soon receive a form outlining the criteria and responsibilities of the office. The Committee will review the nominations and make its recommendation this July and the new president will assume office in September during the JAC Washington Fly-In.

I welcome your questions, thoughts and ideas. You can reach me at jackiecohen44@aol.com or (202) 364-0044.

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Israel

According to the *Jerusalem Post*, Israel will respond in a "harsh and severe" manner to the barrage of Kassam attacks on Sderot. The decision was made in a high level meeting on May 16. The Prime Minister's office issued a statement "that Israel could no longer show restraint in the face of recurrent attacks... the Hamas government is behind the terrorist action." Olmert said he will oppose the evacuation of Sderot's residents..."those are precisely the pictures Hamas wants to see." The interim report of the Winograd Commission was made public on April 30, 2007. The report singled out Prime Minister Ehud Olmert and Defense Minister Amir Peretz for poor leadership, planning and organization. Demands for Olmert's resignation followed with his approval rating falling to below 3%. The final report is due later this summer. Many Israeli political analysts expect Olmert to hold on at least until then. However, Olmert's main coalition partner, the Labor party, holds its leadership primaries at the end of May. The two front-runners, Ehud Barak and Ami Ayalon, have pledged to leave Olmert's government if elected. The Labor party's exit could lead to new general elections. And, new general elections could mean the election of a right-wing government headed by Benjamin Netanyahu. The Israeli political scene is likely to be in flux for at least the next few months. The US administration presented a "Benchmarks Plan" to Israel and the Palestinian Authority. The Israeli defense ministry opposes two items - the demand that all road blocks and obstacles be lifted across the West Bank and resumption of "safe passage" for Palestinians between the West Bank and Gaza. Israel is most concerned about the area around Nablus. A senior IDF officer told HaAretz (5/13/06) that the city is the center of terrorism in the West Bank. Defense officials, however, have said they will make an effort not to openly reject the document, but "will accept it with caveats."



United States

CHOICE

On April 18, the US Supreme Court upheld the "Partial Birth" Abortion Ban. The decision has had a band wagon effect, resulting in abortion opponents in various states "dusting off old laws and drafting new ones."

In the week following the Court's decision, a federal judge in Utah agreed to reopen a case that had kept a Utah "partial birth" abortion ban law passed in 2004 on hold. "We are not challenging this particular law any further," said Karrie Galloway, director of Planned Parenthood of Utah. "It is futile." Utah's law is almost identical to the federal ban, but it makes it easier for the state to prosecute any violations. Attorney General Jerrold Jensen said he hopes that Planned Parenthood and the Utah Women's Clinic will agree to lift the injunction, making any further court hearings unnecessary.

The North Dakota legislature passed a law that would ban virtually all abortions. In Missouri, the state Supreme Court upheld a law that "makes it more difficult for teens to obtain an abortion without parental consent." However, that unanimous ruling clarifies a 2005 law that allows lawsuits against those who "intentionally cause, aid or assist" a Missouri minor to obtain an abortion by crossing state lines where no parental consent is required. Both sides of the abortion debate found something to be satisfied with in the Court's opinion. The ruling on May 1 offered a narrow definition of the term "aid and assist" focusing on providing money for the abortion or transportation to an out of state clinic. The ruling states, "the law cannot be construed to include protected activities such as providing information and counseling." St. Sen. John Loudon, an anti-abortion advocate, said the law "was not intended to invite suits against those who are merely providing advice to pregnant teens. Instead, the law

Choice, continued

is aimed at preventing adults from providing money and transportation." Planned Parenthood lawyer, Eve Gartner, who argued the case, considered the ruling "a 100% victory for free speech."

At the same time, abortion-rights advocates are stepping up their efforts to seek laws guaranteeing women the right to terminate a pregnancy. More than 70 members of Congress have signed on as co-sponsors of the Freedom of

Choice Act, a bill that would codify the protections found in the *Roe v. Wade* decision. On April 27, New York Governor Eliot Spitzer said he would introduce legislation to shore up abortion rights in that state and "officially decriminalize the procedure." (*Chicago Tribune*, 4/27/07)

Separation of Religion and State
JAC was on the Hill on May 1st and 2nd talking to members of the House of Representatives concerning a motion that would have sent the Head

Start Reauthorization Bill back to committee with instructions to allow faith based Head Start providers that receive government funding to hire and/or fire employees based on religion. The "motion to recommit" was defeated late Wednesday afternoon by a vote of 222-195. This was a difficult vote for some members in more conservative districts, especially in the South. JAC's well informed and articulate representatives helped to defeat this attempt to remove the civil rights protections from Head

Research & Races

The JAC conference offered an opportunity to meet several new members of the House, eight of whom are vulnerable and will face tough races in 2008. Congressional races, both House and Senate, are taking a back seat to the "front and center" Presidential race which is occupying the pages of our newspapers and screens of our television sets. JAC and You worked hard to effect change in 2006 electing representatives and senators that share your concerns and values. The small margins held by the majority in both the Senate and the House make the 2008 Congressional races as important as the presidential, The freshman senators will not face voters until 2012 but the new House members have to run again in 2008. **They need your help now.**

JAC supported candidate		Status of Seat	Candidate and District Background
AZ-05	Harry Mitchell, won by 51%	Defeated GOP Rep. J.D. Hayworth.	Tempe Mayor 16 years; 8 years AZ Senate; Oldest member of 2006 Freshman Class; Most Republican district in AZ; Hayworth held seat for 12 years
AZ-08	Gabrielle Giffords, won by 54%	Open	AZ House 2 years; AZ Senate 4 years; Seat held by GOP Rep. Jim Kolbe for 22 years; 2006 opponent too radical for district; Jewish; On Armed Services and Foreign Affairs Committees
CO-07	Ed Perlmutter, won by 55%	Open	CO Senate 8 years; New district in 2002 drawn to be evenly balanced; GOP Rep. Bob Beauprez ran for Gov.; Stem Cells and Gun control were big issues in this race
FL-22	Ron Klein, won by 51%	Defeated GOP Rep. Clay Shaw	FL House 4 years; FL Senate 10 years. Shaw held the seat for 26 years; Klein took advantage of Shaw voting with Bush 83%. Jewish; On Foreign Affairs Committee.
KS-02	Nancy Boyda, won by 51%	Defeated GOP Rep. Jim Ryun	Unexpected upset; lost to Ryun in 2004; One of only two Dems in Kansas delegation; Ryun talking about rematch; On Armed Services Committee.
NY-24	Michael Arcuri, won by 54%	Open	Oneida Cty Dist. Atty. for 13 years. Moderate GOP Rep. Sherwood Boehlert held seat for 24 years. GOP holds registration advantage over Dems.
OH-18	Zack Space, won by 62%	GOP Rep. Bob Ney, indicted and convicted	Dover law director, 5 years; Ney held seat for 12 years, late resignation (1 wk before election) hampered GOP; GOP holds registration advantage.
PA-07	Joe Sestak, won by 56%	Defeated GOP Rep. Curt Weldon	Vice Admiral, U.S. Navy; Natl. Sec. Council. District trending Dem.; Ethical questions concerning Weldon's use of influence to help daughter lobbyist helped defeat 20 year Rep.

Please contribute to these JAC-endorsed candidates today! Mail this form and payments to JAC.

\$ _____ Harry Mitchell for Congress
 \$ _____ Giffords for Congress
 \$ _____ Ed Perlmutter for Congress
 \$ _____ Klein for Congress
 \$ _____ Nancy Boyda for Congress
 \$ _____ Arcuri for Congress
 \$ _____ Joe Sestak for Congress
 \$ _____ Zack Space for Congress
 \$ _____ Donation to JAC to be allocated to candidates

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 Card number _____ Exp. date _____
 Contributor's Name _____
 Address _____ Tel _____
 City _____ State _____ Zip _____
 Fax _____ E-mail _____
 Occupation _____ Employer _____

Federal law requires political committees to report the name, mailing address, occupation and employer for each individual whose contributions aggregate in excess of \$200 in a calendar year. According to law, JAC cannot accept corporate contributions. Membership, gifts, or other payments to JAC are not tax deductible as charitable contributions for federal income tax

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