



## NEWS AT A GLANCE

■ Thousands of works of art and other objects plundered by the Nazis from Jewish homes in Austria went on sale in Vienna at a special auction to aid Holocaust survivors. Proceeds greatly surpassed expectations. [Page 3]

■ Portugal acquired looted Nazi gold during World War II and tried to use it to buy coal from Poland in the winter of 1946, according to the latest documents released from the U.S. National Archives. One of the documents said the Portuguese admitted to receiving gold either directly from Germany or through Swiss middlemen acting as major launderers of Nazi assets during the war.

■ Switzerland pledged to answer by Dec. 4 accusations that it used assets of Holocaust victims to compensate Swiss citizens for property seized in Eastern Europe. It also named two historians to examine postwar Swiss deals.

■ Russia presented copies of thousands of documents on Nazi war crimes from the former KGB central archives to the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum in Washington. There are believed to be between 10,000 and 15,000 pages of documents. The papers disclose "fascist crimes during World War II and, in particular, concerning the mass extermination of Jews," a Russian official said. [Page 2]

■ Tempers flared in Hebron when a Palestinian delegation visiting the West Bank town was heckled by Jewish settlers. [Page 2]

■ The Knesset began debate on the 1997 budget and economic arrangements bill, amid threats from coalition members to vote against the budget. Opponents say that it hurts the weaker sectors of society. Finance Minister Dan Meridor urged support of the bill as a vote of confidence in the government.

■ The Union of Orthodox Jewish Congregations of America joined a friend-of-the-court brief in support of Cleveland's school-choice program. Under the program, which opponents say is unconstitutional, parents may opt to send their children to public or private schools.

## Jewish charities fare well; UJA places sixth, survey says

By Cynthia Mann

NEW YORK (JTA) — Giving to Jewish charities remains strong despite a drop in overall giving to human services, according to a newly released annual survey by The Chronicle of Philanthropy.

The giant of them all, the United Jewish Appeal, holds sixth place among the top 400 U.S. charities in the United States, despite a decline in reported income from 1994 to 1995.

UJA, which ranked fourth the year before, runs behind only such lions as the Salvation Army, the American Red Cross and the American Cancer Society.

Sixteen local Jewish federations made the 1995 top-400 list, along with Hadassah, the Anti-Defamation League and other Jewish non-profit organizations.

This is good news, according to Gary Tobin, a Jewish philanthropy expert and director of the Cohen Center for Modern Jewish Studies at Brandeis University.

"That there are so many Jewish philanthropies in the top 400, given the 2 percent [Jewish] population, is always a remarkable story in and of itself," he said.

The survey found:

- Overall charitable giving in the nation was up 5 percent, enough to make a difference with an inflation rate of 2.8 percent.
- The 138 colleges and universities on the list were the largest beneficiary group as a whole.
- Community foundations saw the biggest rise in income, more than 93 percent.
- Museums and libraries saw a 25 percent income increase over the previous year, while educational and public broadcasting groups saw a rise of 17 percent.

• Public affairs groups experienced the biggest drop of 8.2 percent. Indeed, donations to human service and international organizations fared relatively poorly, declining 5.3 percent and 2.2 percent, respectively.

In this context, Jewish federations held their own.

Debra Blum, senior writer for The Chronicle of Philanthropy, said in a telephone interview that UJA and the 16 federations on the list showed virtually no change in their "aggregate," or total income, from 1994 to 1995.

But the Chronicle's inclusion of the incomes of UJA and the federations on the same list is misleading.

In concert with UJA, local federations run the central annual Jewish fund-raising campaign. Federations keep some money at home for local service programs and allocate the rest to UJA for Israel and other overseas programs. Federations report on their tax forms their total fund-raising income, and then allocate part of it to UJA. UJA in turn includes those federation dollars as income reported on their own tax forms.

### Full picture not reflected

This is all perfectly legal. But the Chronicle's survey, which relied on these tax forms for their data, has the effect of inflating some Jewish charitable dollars and underestimating others.

For Don Kent, the associate executive director of development at the Council for Jewish Federations, the survey is confusing and does not do justice to actual Jewish giving.

It "does not reflect the full fund-raising achievement because it is inconsistent," he said.

In particular, Kent pointed out that roughly half of the 16 federations on the list have some or all of their endowment funds in separate corporations, which are not included in the tax forms from which the survey data were drawn. He called the endowment funds "the fastest-growing part of federation income."

The survey, he said, is therefore reporting "a false low."

For its part, UJA reported a 9.3 percent decline from 1994 to 1995, when total income declined from \$382 million to \$346.7 million.

But as with last year's reporting, which saw a 6 percent drop from

1993 to 1994, UJA officials said the figure reflects the drop-off in receipts at the conclusion of the special five-year \$900,000 Exodus campaign to resettle refugees.

And an upward trend is already apparent, said Gerald Nagel, UJA spokesman. The 1996 campaign, which is not accounted for in the survey, rose from \$346 million to \$359 million, while the 1997 campaign, begun in June, already shows an increase, he said.

For his part, Tobin was optimistic. "The federations are going through a fundamental reassessment and if they hold their own over the next five years, they will come out much stronger."

"If they don't go up significantly while they are repositioning themselves, it is not a terrible story," he said. "They'll have to seize issues that matter most to Jews" who show that they still have a "tremendous interest in Israel and in building Jewish communities and education here."

At the same time, Tobin was keen to emphasize the importance of the annual campaign as a vehicle for people "to participate in the culture of annual giving and a way of touching their Jewish identity."

The survey intended to show how successful charities are in attracting private dollars and do not reflect public money that may be provided.

The top federations on the list and their rankings in 1995 compared with 1994 were:

- New York: 29 (down from 25)
- Chicago: 65 (up from 73)
- Detroit: 148 (up from 216)
- Boston: 166 (down from 159)
- Pittsburgh: 172 (up from 243)
- Los Angeles: 177 (down from 151)
- Cleveland: 189 (down from 142)
- Philadelphia: 213 (down from 167)
- San Francisco: 227 (down from 225)
- Baltimore: 249 (up from 255)
- Miami: 291 (up from 332)
- Atlanta: 327 (up from 362)
- MetroWest, N.J.: 328 (down from 286)
- Milwaukee: 336 (on the list for the first time)
- West Palm Beach, Fla.: 350 (down from 307)
- Washington: 351 (down from 333)

Other Jewish non-profits on the top-400 list included:

- The Jewish Communal Fund in New York: 96 (down from 93)
- Hadassah: 120 (down from 114)
- Yeshiva University: 193 (down from 104)
- The Anti-Defamation League: 194 (down from 177)
- The U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum: 201 (down from 157)
- Jewish National Fund: 258 (down from 251)
- The Jewish Theological Seminary of New York made the list for the first time at 287.

## Tensions escalate in Hebron as negotiations plod forward

By Naomi Segal

JERUSALEM (JTA) — As Israeli and Palestinian negotiators continued efforts to reach agreement on the Hebron redeployment, tensions heightened between Jewish and Arab residents of the West Bank town.

Israeli security forces were called into Hebron on Tuesday to restore order after Jewish residents of the town shouted and spat at a delegation of visiting Palestinian officials.

The officials — including the Palestinian Author-

ity's minister of information and culture, Yasser Abed Rabbo, and Arafat adviser Dr. Ahmed Tibi — said they had come to Hebron to assess the situation firsthand.

Scuffles broke out when the Palestinian delegation toured the Arab market, adjacent to the Jewish enclave.

Each side accused the other of provoking the confrontation.

"The Palestinians visiting today are members of an organization we define as terrorists," said Noam Arnon, spokesman of the Hebron Jewish community.

Tibi said the incident provided "real proof of what we are saying all the time: these are provocateurs, and a real bomb that will explode."

"These settlers should be evacuated from Hebron for the sake of both sides," he added.

Israeli media reported Tuesday that the heads of the Israeli security services were considering carrying out pre-emptive arrests of right-wing extremists in an effort to prevent them from disrupting the Israeli troop redeployment when it is carried out.

Earlier in the day, Tibi and Rabbo attended the funeral of Hilmi Shosha, a 10-year-old Palestinian from the Bethlehem area who died this week after allegedly being beaten by a security guard from a nearby Jewish settlement.

During the funeral in the Arab village of Hussan, some 5,000 mourners vowed to avenge the boy's death. Some of the mourners later began throwing stones at Israeli cars traveling on a nearby road.

Israeli soldiers dispersed the Palestinians by firing in the air and using tear gas. Palestinian witnesses said the army also used live ammunition.

The Jerusalem Magistrates Court on Tuesday extended until Friday the detention of the Israeli security guard, Nahum Korman, who is suspected of beating the youth.

Eyewitnesses said Korman caught and beat the boy after he and other children threw rocks at his car.

Korman's lawyer rejected the charges, saying that his client only tried to resuscitate the child.

An autopsy revealed that the boy died from a brain hemorrhage caused by a sharp blow. But doctors did not specify the exact cause of death.

In Tel Aviv, Israeli and Palestinian negotiators continued discussions aimed at ironing out the final security matters still unresolved in the Hebron talks.

Palestinian officials rejected Israeli charges that they were holding up the talks.

Negotiator Saeb Erekat told reporters that Arafat, who is in Europe, had given his negotiators a mandate to complete an agreement. "We are in touch with him every hour on the hour," Erekat told Israel Radio. "His instruction is for us to reach the agreement as soon as possible."

U.S. Ambassador Martin Indyk, who attended Tuesday's talks, said he hoped that the sides could conclude an agreement before the end of the week. □

## KGB files given to Holocaust Museum

By Lev Krichevsky

MOSCOW (JTA) — Russia has presented copies of thousands of documents on Nazi war crimes from the former KGB central archives to the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum in Washington.

There are believed to be between 10,000 and 15,000 pages of documents.

The papers turned over this week disclose "fascist crimes during World War II and, in particular, concerning the mass extermination of Jews," said Nicolai Kovalyov, director of the Federal Security Service, which succeeded the KGB after the collapse of the Soviet Union. □

## AROUND THE JEWISH WORLD

**Bids — as well as tears — flood auction of looted Jewish history**

By Ruth E. Gruber

VIENNA (JTA) — Fran Laufer, a Holocaust survivor from Poland, had no intention of bidding on anything but felt the urgent need to be here, to be a part of history.

"I felt that I had to come. I just had to do it," said the New York City resident.

Laufer was not alone.

Hundreds of people flooded to Vienna this week as some 8,000 artworks and other objects looted by the Nazis from Austrian Jews went on the auction block.

The unprecedented two-day sale raised millions of dollars to help Austrian Holocaust survivors.

Christie's auction house, which on a non-profit basis carried out the sale of the so-called Mauerbach collection on behalf of the Federation of Austrian Jewish Communities, had estimated that the auction would bring in about \$3 million.

But proceeds had already topped \$5 million after fewer than one-quarter of the lots had been sold, with some pieces going for more than 10 times the estimated selling price.

One oil painting, a still life of flowers by 17th-century artist Abraham Mignon, sold for more than \$1 million.

The work had been expected to bring in less than \$75,000.

So many bids came in that the auction process was slower than half its normal pace, prolonging the first day of sale late into the night.

Said a Christie's spokesperson, "We had no idea that there would be so much interest."

"The results have surpassed our expectations and those of Christie's and other experts," said Robert Liska, vice president of the Federation of Austrian Jewish Communities.

He said that as soon as possible, an international committee would be formed to supervise the distribution and allocation of funds, and to determine who should be helped — and how.

**Allocations also for non-Jews**

"The proceeds for the sales by law will have to benefit needy victims of the Holocaust and their offspring, which entails on the one hand the care for the elderly and those who are not as fortunate as many others, but on the other hand to help build communities that have also suffered by the Holocaust," he said.

Some 88 percent of proceeds will go to Jewish Holocaust victims, with other allocations slated for non-Jewish victims.

"The sale is intended to close this chapter with the grace and dignity that the victims deserve," said Christie's Chairman Lord Handlip before beginning the first international auction of "heirless" art.

Hundreds of buyers from around the world crowded into a hall at the Austrian Museum of Applied Arts in downtown Vienna to bid on what was described as "stolen art from stolen lives."

Other buyers called in their bids through a bank of international phone lines.

The old masters and 19th-century paintings and drawings, carpets, tapestries, furniture, porcelain, books, coins and other objects had been looted by the Nazis from Austrian Jewish homes between the German annexation of Austria in 1938 and the end of World War II.

Unclaimed after the war, and in most cases coming

from homes and families that had been destroyed, the artwork was stored by the Austrian government for half a century in the 14th-century Mauerbach monastery near Vienna.

Only last year, after intense international pressure and detailed negotiations, was the ownership transferred to the Federation of Austrian Jewish Communities.

The federation then decided to auction it off for the benefit of both Austrian Holocaust survivors and their heirs.

The auction "is a symbol of the fact that truth [and] justice survives all other legal arrangements and survives time, and there is no way that anybody can think that these essential elements of daily life and history can be compromised," Liska said.

The auction is thus seen as part of new efforts by the Austrian government to recognize the nation's deep involvement in the Holocaust.

This was made clear in a remarkable speech at a reception on the eve of the auction by Austrian Chancellor Franz Vranitzky.

"We know that we Austrians were members of the SS, of the Sturmabteilung, of the Wehrmacht, that we were Nazi Party members," he said.

"We know their crimes were possible because we supported the system which made the Holocaust possible. I and many Austrians do not want to cover up and be silent."

Emotions ran high both during the weeklong exhibition of the sale items before the auction and during the sale itself.

The tragedy of the provenance of the artwork added extra significance to the individual items.

"Each one of these works of art represents a Jewish family who lost their possessions because they were Jews," said Ronald Lauder, who co-chaired the International Honorary Committee for the sale along with Edgar Bronfman, who serves as president of the World Jewish Congress.

"Every one has a story to tell about the family it came from," Lauder said.

**'Pulled every string'**

In addition to items for his personal collection, Lauder said he had bid on carpets, furnishings and other items that he planned to donate to Yad Vashem, the Holocaust memorial in Jerusalem, in order to set up a room that would recreate how a Viennese Jewish home before the war would have looked.

A number of Jewish organizations and individuals bid to buy works for Jewish museums and institutions or to consciously make them a memorial for Holocaust victims.

Joel Marmelstein, from upstate New York, said that after he read about the auction, he became determined to go.

He said he "pulled every string" so that he could bid for artworks on behalf of the Charles T. Sitrin Health Care Center and Home for the Elderly.

"It's a once in a lifetime thing, a very emotional experience," he said.

"It will probably stay with me for the rest of my life."

He bought an oil painting that he said would be proudly displayed at the Sitrin Center.

Laufer, meanwhile, the survivor from New York City, had no regrets about coming.

"My past is still with me — even when I dance, and I love to dance, and even when I smile, and I love to smile," she said.

"Look — I was so overwhelmed that this morning I put on two different colored boots!" □

## French Jews feel betrayed by Chirac's trip to Mideast

By Lee Yanowitch

PARIS (JTA) — French President Jacques Chirac upset not only Israel and the United States during his six-day visit to the Middle East.

Leading voices in France's Jewish community said this week that they felt betrayed by Chirac's overt pro-Arab positions, adding that his behavior was too biased for someone posing as a mediator.

During his trip last week, the French leader called on Israel to back the creation of a Palestinian state and to return the Golan Heights to Syria, stances firmly rejected by Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu.

And while he addressed the Palestinian legislative council, he refused to address the Israeli Knesset.

Chirac, who was campaigning for a European peacemaking role in the Middle East, also praised President Hafez Assad of Syria. His very public display of fury at Israeli police during his tour of Jerusalem's Old City was also seen by many as pandering to Arab interests.

"The mindset of the Jewish community in France today is incomprehension, disappointment and concern. The community is having a hard time understanding the French position," said Henri Hajdenberg, president of CRIF, the umbrella group of secular French Jewish organizations.

"In diplomacy, there are two types of behavior: discreet or spectacular. France has fallen into the latter, by taking sides publicly, which reflects its political points of view, not those of a mediator, who is expected to bring together the parties involved," he added.

The chief rabbi of France, Joseph Sitruk, has asked to meet with Chirac "to better understand what he meant."

"It's true that Jacques Chirac has a pro-Arab policy. He didn't hide it. I am among the individuals who deplore it," Sitruk told Jewish Radio.

Chirac was clearly following in the footsteps of his mentor, President Charles de Gaulle, who conducted a pro-Arab policy after imposing an embargo on Israel after the 1967 Six-Day War.

The sense of betrayal felt by the French Jewish community was heightened by the fact that Chirac last year became France's first president to acknowledge publicly the role of French civil servants in sending Jews to Nazi death camps during World War II. Previous postwar French leaders had refused to apologize publicly for the actions of the Vichy collaborationist regime. □

## National Front mayor opposes planned tribute to Jewish writer

By Lee Yanowitch

PARIS (JTA) — The extreme-right mayor of the French Mediterranean port city of Toulon triggered an outcry this week when he objected to a planned tribute to Jewish writer Marek Halter at a book fair in November.

Jean-Marie Le Chevalier of the National Front said the tribute was "inopportune" because Halter, a survivor of the Warsaw ghetto, was in favor of immigration in France. The Front, whose leader, Jean-Marie Le Pen, won 15 percent of the vote in last year's presidential elections, proposes sending immigrants to their countries of origin and giving French nationals priority for everything from jobs to housing.

"I am very upset," Halter said. "Since I arrived in France at the age of 14, after having lived under two dictatorships, it's the first time I have felt I was the object of racism."

Le Chevalier said he preferred to pay tribute to sex symbol Brigitte Bardot, who just published her memoirs.

Bardot, who has devoted herself to defending animal rights since retiring from acting, is married to a National Front member. She caused a controversy recently by praising Le Pen and verbally attacking Arab immigrants.

Culture Minister Philippe Douste-Blazy has proposed taking over the book fair from municipal authorities so that the tribute could take place as planned.

Several writers have openly supported Halter, whose most famous work is "Abraham's Memoirs," the story of a Jewish family's wanderings. □

## Queen invites Weizman to Britain

By Bernard Josephs

London Jewish Chronicle

LONDON (JTA) — The Queen of England has invited Israeli President Ezer Weizman to make a state visit to London in what would be the first by a president of the Jewish state.

The monarch spoke of the visit, slated for February, during a speech to the opening session of Parliament last week.

The invitation immediately sparked speculation that the queen would pay a visit to Israel. Jewish communal leaders in Britain and politicians in Israel have urged the queen to travel to Israel. The Duke of Edinburgh, Prince Charles and Princess Margaret have made private visits.

Weizman was a Royal Air Force pilot during World War II. □

## Debate on anti-Zionist motion delayed

By Hadas Altwarg

London Jewish Chronicle

LONDON (JTA) — Some 2,500 students were recently forced to abandon a debate on an anti-Zionist motion at Manchester University because of overcrowding.

The students were set to discuss a motion introduced by the school's Islamic society.

The measure's passage might have resulted in the banning of the Jewish society. The motion, which called Zionism "an incitement to religious and political bigotry," asked that the university not recognize groups aligned with "discriminatory forms of Zionism."

The meeting was postponed for two weeks. □

## Cousins may inherit land in Haifa

By Jenni Frazer

London Jewish Chronicle

LONDON (JTA) — Two cousins in England apparently are some of the heirs to valuable land in the Jewish state, an Israeli lawyer has said.

Cousins Frida Klein of Manchester and John Reissner of London, who had a male relative who is thought to have died in Auschwitz, may inherit the land that he purchased between the world wars, when Israel was still Palestine.

Many Jews in Eastern Europe at that time bought such plots of land, said Tel Aviv lawyer Menachem Amiad. "The purchase was made with the intention of finding a safe haven there," he said, adding, "Most of the people never saw Israel. The Holocaust put a tragic end to it all, because most of the buyers of land died."

Amiad has sought out the heirs of about 100 plots of land who, he said, "have no inkling of their legacy in Israel."

Klein and Reissner may be the closest survivors of Louis or Lute Moses, who had purchased land on Mount Carmel in Haifa that today is worth about half a million dollars. □