

NEWS AT A GLANCE

■ **U.S. Secretary of State Madeleine Albright called on the Palestinians to crack down on terrorism and urged Israel not to take any steps that would further deadlock the process. She also visited victims of last week's triple suicide bombing in Jerusalem. [Page 3]**

■ **Yale's student newspaper called on the university to review the request of five Orthodox Jewish students who want to be released from an on-campus housing requirement. The five say the mixed-sex atmosphere of the dormitories is inconsistent with their religious beliefs.**

■ **The Israeli woman accused of pasting anti-Islamic posters on storefronts in the West Bank in June pleaded innocent to charges against her. Tatyana Suskin, 27, is charged with a variety of offenses, including insulting religious feelings and defacing public property.**

■ **Senior Russian officials are working directly with Iran to develop missiles capable of reaching Israel, The Washington Times reported. Citing an Israeli intelligence document, the paper reported that the nuclear-capable weapons could be deployed within three years.**

■ **The World Jewish Restitution Organization established a special committee to investigate the fate of art works looted by the Nazis. Meanwhile, WJRO President Edgar Bronfman gave up his seat on the board of the fund set up by Swiss banks to aid Holocaust survivors. Bronfman's seat will be taken by Benjamin Meed, the president of the American Gathering of Holocaust Survivors.**

■ **The U.S. Department of Justice moved to revoke the citizenship of a Pennsylvania man it says participated in the Nazi murder of Jews in Poland. The complaint said Fedir Kwoczak, 76, served as a guard at two labor camps and helped to liquidate the Warsaw Ghetto.**

■ **The chief rabbi of Haifa urged Lithuania to punish its Nazi war criminals. He made his remarks at a parliamentary session in Lithuania that kicked off commemorations of the bicentennial of the death of the Vilna Gaon.**

FOCUS ON ISSUES**CJF, UJA decide to help raise funds for movements in Israel***By Cynthia Mann*

NEW YORK (JTA) — The central Jewish fund-raising establishment has decided to help raise money for Reform and Conservative institutions in Israel in exchange for a pledge of solidarity from their leadership.

It is hoped that the move will avert a swell of protest that some fear could surface at the High Holidays against what many non-Orthodox Jews perceive as official religious intolerance in Israel.

The concern is that anger over hot-button conversion legislation pending in the Knesset and another assault on non-Orthodox Jews at prayer at the Western Wall could trigger a backlash against the philanthropic campaign run jointly by the United Jewish Appeal and Jewish community federations nationwide.

The decision to help the movements is part of the strategy to head off damage to the campaign that could be instigated by rabbis on pulpits coast to coast.

A similar fund-raising effort is in the works on behalf of the modern Orthodox in Israel, according to the president of the Union of Orthodox Jewish Congregations of America, Dr. Mandell Ganchrow.

But to date, plans call for UJA and the federation system to raise up to \$10 million for each of the Reform and Conservative movements' programs and projects in Israel.

The money would be funneled through what are being designated as "supplemental gifts" that campaign officials stress would be in addition to donors' contributions to the regular annual campaign.

In return, the movement leaders are prepared to issue joint statements stressing the need for Jewish communal unity and the importance of the federated campaign.

"It's plus-plus for both sides," Rabbi Jerome Epstein, executive vice president of United Synagogue of Conservative Judaism, said of the agreement.

"We can capitalize on their sophistication" in fund raising, he said, referring to the UJA/federation campaign apparatus.

In turn, the movements "will not be going to ask people to divert their gift, but to make a meaningful gift to UJA and something supplemental" to the movements.

"For too long, there's been a false 'either/or,'" he said.

Calling on Sharansky for help

Making such common cause is clearly a relief for campaign officials, who doubtless have been haunted by memories of last year's Rosh Hashanah, when there were calls from some pulpits for a boycott of the campaign.

In subsequent months, there were repeated suggestions from some Reform and Conservative quarters that funds be diverted from the campaign directly to the movements. As a result, there were some significant pledges that were withheld throughout the country.

But now the fund-raising system has taken the offensive.

At their quarterly meeting here last weekend, leaders of the Council of Jewish Federations publicly called on Israeli minister Natan Sharansky, through an interactive satellite, to pledge that government officials would protect Jews who wish to worship at the plaza of the Western Wall.

During Shavuot and Tisha B'Av, most notably, Reform and Conservative Jews praying at the back of that plaza were harassed and dispersed by the police.

"We have an expectation of you," declared David Minkin of Atlanta, head of the CJF unity committee, to ensure that "the Wall belongs to all Jewish people" and to afford them police protection, especially during the upcoming High Holidays.

Sharansky, who holds the portfolio of Diaspora affairs in addition to being the minister of trade and industry, responded in a qualified manner that was then challenged in an unusually frank exchange.

"We in the government, and the prime minister personally," he said, will do "our best to see that not one Jew will be prevented from his right or

her right" to pray as they see fit, "as long as they don't incite" anybody.

Maynard Wishner of Chicago, former CJF president, pressed Sharansky to define what he meant by incitement.

"There is a broad area of what constitutes incitement" versus "the legitimate exercise" of rights of expression, he said.

He urged the former Soviet dissident to remember that black youths in the South during the civil rights movement were accused of "incitement" when they tried to integrate lunch counters.

Visibly uncomfortable, Sharansky repeatedly said he hoped that people would "not turn prayer into a political demonstration."

"I hope no one undertakes a provocative act to undermine the work of the committee," he added.

Sharansky was referring to the special committee appointed by the Israeli government to find a solution to the crisis sparked by the conversion bill, which would codify the existing Orthodox monopoly over conversions performed in Israel.

That committee, headed by Finance Minister Ya'acov Ne'eman, was slated to recommend a solution last month, but now has put off its next meeting until after the holidays, which fall this year in October.

The fervently Orthodox parties in the Israeli government are pushing for the enactment of the legislation when the Knesset opens in November.

For their part, leaders in the fund-raising establishment are promising to keep the pressure on Israeli politicians and their "natural allies" in Israel in the fight for pluralism to try to avert the rupture they feel the law would trigger among the Jewish people.

Meanwhile, for Dr. Conrad Giles of Detroit, the president of CJF, the agreement with the movements here is an important victory for the communal world.

But he knows that it does not ensure unity on the local level come Rosh Hashanah.

"There is absolutely no question in my mind that if the leadership of the rabbinic movements held complete sway over the message of the pulpits during the High Holidays, we'd have no concern over what's going on with the conversion bill and the Kotel and their impact on the campaign."

But, he said, "while the governing bodies of the streams are important in helping frame policy, individual rabbis will determine what they think is best for their communities.

"And that is our great concern."

Resisting an impulse

"We are angry about the lack of religious tolerance in Israel," said Giles.

But the impulse must be resisted "to send a message to Israel by reducing the flow of dollars to the campaign" which, he stressed, funds human services.

To that end, members of the CJF unity committee gathered during the quarterly to brainstorm how to get the message out to the grass roots that the federated system is trying to respond to their concerns in the battle for pluralism.

Several leaders on the national level complained that federation executives were not effectively explaining that the Jewish Agency for Israel actually spends \$17 million for programs of the three major religious streams and secular programs promoting religious tolerance.

The Jewish Agency is the largest recipient in Israel of funds raised by the campaign.

Until recently, the official figure that was circulated was closer to between \$1.5 million and \$2.5 million in

direct allocations to programs of the religious movements. The new figures reflect program spending that has been broken down in different ways.

"We've been encouraging the federations to work with their local rabbis to reach an understanding that we're on the same page" and to "recognize the importance of remaining a unified community," said Minkin, CJF's unity committee head.

The Conservative movement's Epstein agreed.

In his view, there is a "better-than-even chance" that the Ne'eman committee will not succeed and that the level of understanding reached on the national level must be reached locally.

For its part, the organized Orthodox community, which supports the Israeli conversion legislation and has objected to any diversion of campaign money to the political battle for religious pluralism in Israel, is working on its own supplemental fund-raising agreement with UJA.

Ganchrow, president of the Orthodox Union, said a meeting has been scheduled for later this month at which he expects to present a list of programs and projects in Israel that he would like to see receive campaign funding.

"I'm sure they're men of their word and they'll treat us fairly and equally," he said of the UJA leaders.

Meanwhile, Minkin's committee discussed sending a mission of Jewish industrialists, university professors and other influentials to try to convey to the Israeli establishment, before the Knesset reopens, the damage that would be caused if the conversion bill passed. □

Lithuanian leaders laud legacy of 18th-century Jewish scholar

By Lev Krichvesky

MOSCOW (JTA) — Commemorations marking the 200th yearzeit of the Vilna Gaon began this week in Lithuania amid criticism from some Jewish leaders that the country had failed to bring alleged war criminals to justice.

This week's opening session of Parliament, which was attended by Lithuanian President Algirdas Brazauskas and Prime Minister Gediminas Vagnorius, was devoted to speeches praising the legacy of the Vilna Gaon, the renowned commentator on the Talmud and Torah.

In his speech, the chairman of the Parliament, Vytautas Landsbergis, said the Gaon is a source of pride not only for Jews but for everyone in Lithuania.

"The sage Gaon, revered by Jews throughout the world, was a part of Vilnius' age of enlightenment," he said, referring to the modern name of the Lithuanian capital.

Israel's ambassador to Lithuania, Oded Ben Hur, and Haifa Chief Rabbi Sha'ar Yishuv Cohen both told Parliament that it was the duty of Lithuania's leaders to prosecute alleged war criminals.

After declaring independence from the Soviet Union in 1991, Lithuania issued certificates of exoneration to more than 50,000 Lithuanians who were convicted as war criminals by Soviet courts.

Among those pardoned were people who allegedly helped the Nazis kill Jews.

In addition, five individuals who were stripped of their U.S. citizenship and deported to Lithuania have yet to be prosecuted for alleged war crimes.

Some Jewish groups, including the Simon Wiesenthal Center and the Israel-based Association of Lithuanian Jews, are boycotting the commemoration, saying that participation would be seen as support for a government that has not yet atoned for the destruction of Lithuanian Jewry.

Nearly 94 percent of the country's prewar Jewish community perished in the Holocaust. □

Albright presses Palestinians, Israelis to restore partnership

By Naomi Segal

JERUSALEM (JTA) — U.S. Secretary of State Madeleine Albright made clear this week that it would take more than one visit by her to the region to restore the Israeli-Palestinian partnership.

In her first visit to the Middle East since taking office in January, Albright pressed both sides to make concessions in order to save the faltering peace process.

While explaining that there is “no moral equivalence between killing people and building houses,” Albright added that “Israelis and Palestinians need to restore the partnership and the reciprocity that produced” their historic agreements.

Speaking at a joint news conference with Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, Albright said achieving peace and security depended on a clear Palestinian commitment to crack down on terror.

“The enemies of peace are purposefully and relentlessly attacking Israelis. So the war against terror being waged by those who support the path of peace must also be purposeful and relentless,” said Albright, adding that the Palestinian Authority must take “unilateral actions to root out the terrorist infrastructure.”

But Albright explained during that both sides had to fulfill their obligations to restore the reciprocity needed to move the peace process forward.

“Israel should be taking steps that build confidence,” she said, referring to an American proposal that Israel temporarily freeze its construction projects on disputed land.

Netanyahu criticizes arrests of ‘sardines’

Netanyahu told reporters that Israel would be willing to consider easing the closure it imposed on the territories after the Sept. 4 triple suicide bombing in Jerusalem, but only if the self-rule authority lived up to its commitment to fight terrorism.

Netanyahu also downplayed the Palestinian Authority’s arrests this week of scores of suspected Islamic activists, saying that they should be going after the “sharks,” not the “sardines.”

Palestinian officials were critical of Albright’s tough approach toward them.

The Palestinian minister of higher education, Hanan Ashrawi, said Albright began her trip by displaying a “wholeheartedly one-sided approach.”

In Nablus, several dozen Hamas activists demonstrated against Albright’s visit, burning an American flag.

Albright was due to meet Thursday with Arafat in the West Bank town of Ramallah, and then she was to hold a second round of talks with Netanyahu.

Another meeting with the Palestinian leader was scheduled for Friday.

On Friday afternoon, Albright is scheduled to depart for the rest of her regional tour, which will include stops in Egypt, Jordan, Syria and Saudi Arabia.

Earlier Wednesday, Albright visited Hadassah Hospital’s Mt. Scopus center, where some of the victims wounded in last week’s triple suicide bombing were recovering.

One of the injured who met Albright was 19-year-old Daniel Miller of Florida, who had arrived in Israel a day before the bombing to study at a yeshiva.

He gave Albright a letter urging her to insist that Arafat crack down on Hamas militants.

Holding hands with the Israeli and American victims, Albright said she hoped her efforts could help create a safer environment.

Albright also visited the Yad Vashem Holocaust Memorial in Jerusalem, where she laid a wreath on behalf of the U.S. government for the millions who perished in the Holocaust.

Albright, who said earlier this year that she first learned she had Jewish ancestors when it was reported February in *The Washington Post*, lost more than a dozen of her relatives in the camps.

At least two of her relatives and a Czech-born friend of her father’s, Avigdor Dagan, a retired Israeli ambassador, live in Israel.

Officials at Yad Vashem planned to give Albright a list of Czech Jews deported to Nazi death camps, including some of her relatives.

At the end of her visit to Yad Vashem, Albright wrote in the guest book that it was an experience “I will never forget.”

“In this museum, in every face, in every picture, there is a warning.

“May God grant us the wisdom and the will to recognize evil wherever we see it,” she wrote. □

IDF sources: Intelligence failure behind bungled raid in Lebanon

By Naomi Segal

JERUSALEM (JTA) — Israeli military sources are saying that last Friday’s failed infiltration attempt into Lebanon was caused by faulty intelligence-gathering prior to the raid.

The raid failed because there had been no prior intelligence on whether the route taken by the commandos was mined or whether Hezbollah fighters were in the area, the sources said.

The raid by an elite unit of Navy commandos, which was countered by forces of the Lebanese army and Hezbollah gunmen, ended with 11 members of the unit dead and with a 12th missing and presumed dead.

The Israel Defense Force officially declared the 12th commando dead Wednesday, saying his burial place was unknown.

A senior Red Cross representative met with Lebanon’s prime minister this week to negotiate the return of the commando’s remains.

Hezbollah officials said they have the body parts of the soldier and would be willing to trade them for the release of Lebanese prisoners.

Last week’s loss, the IDF’s heaviest from a single military operation in 12 years, triggered renewed calls for an Israeli withdrawal from southern Lebanon.

Immediately after the failed raid, the IDF created an investigative panel, headed by Maj. Gen. Gabi Ophir, to examine all aspects of the operation. □

Israeli pilots hurt in training accident

By Naomi Segal

JERUSALEM (JTA) — Two Israeli air force pilots were hurt, one seriously, in a training accident with an F-16 fighter jet in southern Israel.

The pilots, an instructor and student, were on a training flight Sunday when a malfunction occurred, possibly because a bird flew into an engine.

The two bailed out, sustaining their injuries when they landed among cliffs near Mitzpe Ramon in the Negev Desert.

The instructor sustained moderate injuries; the student was seriously hurt.

The commander of the air force, Mag. Gen. Eitan Ben-Eliahu, appointed a commission to investigate the incident. □

Swiss fund authorized to pay Holocaust survivors very soon

By Daniel Kurtzman

WASHINGTON (JTA) — The World Jewish Restitution Organization has authorized the first payment of \$12 million from Switzerland's Holocaust Memorial Fund, paving the way for Eastern European Holocaust survivors to begin receiving restitution as early as October.

Initial payments in the amount of \$1,000 are slated to be dispersed to about 12,000 Jews living in former Soviet bloc countries — the "double victims" who suffered under Nazism and communism and never received reparations from the German government.

The 18-member Swiss Fund Council, half of whom are members of the WJRO, is expected to give final approval to the allocation when it meets in Bern next week.

Switzerland's three largest banks created the fund earlier this year amid allegations that the banks hoarded the wealth of Holocaust victims. The fund now stands at about \$116 million; additional pledges already made by private companies and the Swiss National Bank would bring the total to \$200 million.

The remainder of the fund will be distributed to other Holocaust survivors — including additional Eastern European victims — on the basis of need and age, said WJRO officials after meeting here on Tuesday.

Between 10 and 12 percent of the fund will be set aside to help non-Jewish victims of the war, such as Gypsies and homosexuals.

In a related development, former Federal Reserve Chairman Paul Volcker, who heads a special commission searching for missing Jewish assets deposited in Swiss banks, told WJRO officials that his probe would focus on 233 Swiss banks that were operating during the Holocaust era. He said, however, that auditors have come back with mixed reports as to the availability of the banks' records.

A source close to the Volcker Commission, meanwhile, said a list of dormant Holocaust-era accounts belonging to Swiss citizens, which Swiss banks are planning to release next month, is likely to contain between 100,000 and 200,000 names. Initially, the banks said the list would contain 20,000 names.

WJRO to probe Nazi-looted art

Earlier this summer, the banks published a list of more than 1,800 dormant accounts held by non-Swiss citizens.

The list of dormant accounts held by Swiss citizens is considered significant because many Jews were believed to have opened accounts through Swiss proxies or fiduciaries before and during the war.

The WJRO, meanwhile, also decided at its meeting to set up a special commission to investigate what happened to billions of dollars worth of art looted by the Nazis. Ronald Lauder, chairman of the Museum of Modern Art in New York and WJRO treasurer, was appointed to head the effort.

WJRO officials said they have evidence that 55,000 works of art stolen by the Nazis in France, many belonging to Jews, were not returned to their rightful owners after the war. Of those pieces, about 14,000 were sold at public auction after the war.

Meanwhile, Edgar Bronfman, president of the WJRO, gave up his seat on the executive board administering the Holocaust Memorial Fund.

Bronfman, who agreed to take the position after Nobel laureate Elie Wiesel withdrew from consideration, will be replaced by Benjamin Meed, president of the American Gathering of Holocaust Survivors. □

Daniel Schorr: New York Times rejected him because he is a Jew

NEW YORK (JTA) — One of America's best-known broadcast journalists revealed this week that he was denied a job at The New York Times half a century ago because he is Jewish.

"My dream of becoming a New York Times correspondent was dashed because I was a Jew," Daniel Schorr told a luncheon audience gathered here Tuesday to mark the 80th anniversary of the Jewish Telegraphic Agency, the international Jewish news service.

Schorr got his start in journalism in 1934 by working as a stringer for a JTA subsidiary, the Jewish Daily Bulletin. He later became a staff writer and assistant editor for JTA, where he worked until 1941.

Schorr went on to become part of Edward R. Murrow's legendary news team at CBS and in the 1980s served as CNN's senior correspondent in Washington. He now serves as National Public Radio's senior news analyst and as a commentator for the Public Broadcasting Service.

But back in the 1950s, Schorr's dream was to become a foreign correspondent for The New York Times. The problem was that in the aftermath of World War II, the Times was closing foreign bureaus and not hiring new correspondents. After a three-day-trial on the Times city desk, Schorr said, he was told to go to Europe and wait. Maybe something would turn up.

He chose Holland and received his "lucky break." In February 1953, a disastrous flood burst open the dikes, submerging a third of the country under water.

Schorr was there, providing front-page coverage for the Times day after day. His reports impressed the Times editors, but still no job offer materialized. He began filing reports for Murrow's CBS evening radio news broadcast and eventually received a permanent job offer there.

Before accepting the position, Schorr said, he checked once more to see if the Times would consider hiring him as a correspondent. He received a cable advising him to accept the position at CBS. Two years later, at the end of 1955, Schorr was attending a holiday party in New York, where he bumped into Emmanuel Freedman, then the Times' foreign editor. He complimented Schorr on his work for CBS and invited him to dinner.

Also at the dinner was Theodore Bernstein, then assistant managing editor for the Times. Both spoke of their regret at not being able to hire Schorr, who by this time had made a name for himself as a CBS correspondent.

'We need to have flexibility'

When Schorr asked what had prevented them from hiring him, they revealed that the Times' top editor, Turner Catledge, had issued a directive freezing the hiring of Jews as correspondents. The reason cited, Schorr recounted, was "because we might be involved soon in a Middle East war, and we need to have flexibility." Schorr's account came as a surprise to the luncheon audience, many of whom think of the Times as a paper with considerable Jewish influence.

But back then, Schorr said, the paper owned by the Jewish Sulzberger family was very self-conscious about having a too-Jewish image.

Schorr also spoke of how the Times and other mainstream news outlets ignored many of the early accounts about Holocaust atrocities that were being reported by JTA and its subsidiary, the Overseas News Agency.

He said JTA, which today serves more than 100 publications worldwide, continues to play an important role in reporting and analyzing news of particular concern to the Jewish people.

"If JTA had not been there," he said, "it would have had to be created." □