



# Daily News Bulletin

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81<sup>st</sup> Year

## TOP NEWS IN BRIEF

### Report: New deadline set

U.S. Secretary of State Madeleine Albright set a deadline of July 24 for Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu to reply to the U.S. proposal for a second Israeli redeployment in the West Bank, according to the Israeli daily *Ma'ariv*. The paper, citing a conversation the two had on Monday, reported that Albright criticized recent Israeli demolitions of Arab homes in eastern Jerusalem.

### Argentina extradites Sakic

Argentina extradited a former concentration camp commander to Croatia, where he will face a war crimes trial.

From 1942 to 1944, Dinko Sakic was commandant at the Jasenovac concentration camp, where an estimated 500,000 Jews, Serbs and Gypsies were murdered under Croatia's Nazi puppet regime.

### 'Schindler's List' on top film list

"Schindler's List" ranked ninth on the American Film Institute's listing of the 100 best American films of all time. The Holocaust epic was the only film with a distinctly Jewish theme to make the list, which was based on voting by industry professionals and American leaders.

### Right-wing station raided

Israeli police raided the offices of a right-wing pirate radio station. Authorities said the move was conducted to prove that Arutz-7 was not operating from a ship outside the territorial boundaries of Israel, as it claims. The move infuriated members of the country's settler and nationalist camps, who claimed that it was done to retaliate for a decision by Jewish settler leaders to launch a public campaign against Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and a U.S.-proposed plan to carry out a 13 percent further redeployment from the West Bank in return for security guarantees. [Page 4]

### Youths held for killing Palestinian

Two Israeli youths from a home for troubled children near Hebron were detained on suspicion of killing a Palestinian man on a West Bank road. According to police, the two youths stuck a wooden plank out the window of their van, hitting the Palestinian farmer as they drove past him.

## NEWS ANALYSIS

### Barak faces new challenge: opposition in party he heads

By David Landau

JERUSALEM (JTA) — "Midsummer madness" was how Labor Party leader Ehud Barak this week dismissed signs of dissent in the senior ranks of his party.

"I know it's only June," he said, "but apparently some of our people are feeling the heat as though it were July or August already."

Barak, who often seeks to model himself on the late Yitzhak Rabin, went on to recall that the slain prime minister, too, faced sporadic outbreaks of unrest from within the ranks of his party.

"His response was: Go out into the field and work hard — then things will look different," Barak said.

But for all his brave front, the former Israeli army chief of staff — like Rabin was before him — is plainly angry and hurt by the reports of rising dissatisfaction with his leadership in the Labor Party.

Israeli newspapers in recent days pointed to such key Labor figures as Uzi Baram and Haim Ramon, both ministers in the previous Labor government, as being less than pleased with their leader.

Baram added fuel to the flames by saying on Army Radio that while he had worked hard to get Barak elected leader he did not know if he would do so again.

The chief source of frustration is Labor's lackluster showing in recent opinion polls.

With the members of the Netanyahu government torn over the course of the peace process, and the prime minister personally unpopular around the world, the opposition might well have hoped for better poll results.

At the beginning of the year Barak was well ahead of the premier — but now the polls show him neck and neck with Netanyahu.

Coupled with the fact that an incumbent has numerous opportunities to better his image and performance in the run-up to elections, slated for 2000, Barak's current showing in the polls cannot inspire much confidence within his party.

Pundits and the public agree that Barak hasn't yet taken off.

But there is a limit to how long a plane can hurtle along a runway trying to gather speed for takeoff.

Barak has been party leader for more than a year now.

Supporters in the party who preferred him, a decorated war hero in addition to his former post as head of Israel's armed forces, to the dovish Yossi Beilin are impatient to sense the tide of public opinion turning in Labor's favor.

According to Israeli media reports this week, party discontents have begun casting around for an alternative.

No name was mentioned, but savvy observers needed none: The present chief of staff of the Israel Defense Force, Lt. Gen. Amnon Shahak, is about to retire after three-and-a-half years in the top military slot.

And the political community is abuzz with speculation that he, like many of his predecessors, is headed for politics.

Shahak is known to be far more of a moderate than Barak.

The current Labor Party chief is an avid supporter of the Oslo process crafted by Rabin, former Prime Minister Shimon Peres and Beilin during the 1992-1996 Labor governments. The tall, silver-haired and handsome Shahak, who has battled and beaten

## MIDEAST FOCUS

### Religion bill submitted

Seven Israeli legislators submitted a bill in the Knesset aimed at protecting freedom of religion for all Israelis. One of the legislators, Hagai Meirum of the Labor Party, said the bill would allow Conservative and Reform Jews to enjoy full religious rights in Israel.

### Soldiers wounded in Lebanon

Two Israeli soldiers were slightly wounded in southern Lebanon by a roadside bomb planted by Hezbollah gunmen. The two were hurt while on patrol in the western sector of the security zone.

### Israel restates stance

Israel reaffirmed that it would hold talks with Lebanon and Syria if the negotiations take place without preconditions.

The comment came from a Foreign Ministry spokesman one day after Lebanese Prime Minister Rafik Hariri told President Clinton during a meeting in Washington that a peace agreement with Israel could be negotiated in three months if Israel resumes negotiations where they left off with Syria in March 1996.

### Israeli businessman convicted

An Israeli court convicted an Israeli businessman of supplying Iran with materials for the production of mustard gas and nerve gas.

Calling Nahum Manbar a liar and a manipulator, the court found that he had harmed state security by aiding an enemy of the Jewish state.

### New IDF head visits Turkey

The incoming Israel Defense Force chief of staff traveled to Turkey for meetings with senior Turkish military officials.

The trip by Maj. Gen. Shaul Mofaz comes amid months of growing military cooperation between the two countries.

leukemia, is believed by pundits to be extremely popular.

A report in the Israeli daily Ha'aretz recently said that Roni Milo, the Likud mayor of Tel Aviv who is setting up a new centrist party, has already approached Shahak to join him.

According to some accounts, Milo is ready to hand the leadership of the new party — and the candidacy for the premiership — to Shahak.

Perhaps it was this sort of speculation that prompted an unprecedented confrontation between the army chief of staff and the prime minister at Sunday's weekly Cabinet meeting.

Reporting to the ministers on IDF intelligence assessments of policy trends within the Palestinian Authority, Shahak was suddenly interrupted by Netanyahu.

"I'll deal with that," the premier said. "You stick to military affairs."

Shahak, as deputy chief and then as chief of staff, has been briefing the Cabinet for years. This was the first such incident.

"If you do not wish to hear my report, I'll report on matters you do wish to hear about," the chief of staff retorted, and switched to Lebanon.

IDF sources later voiced outrage at their chief's treatment by the prime minister.

Two former prime ministers, Yitzhak Shamir of Likud and Shimon Peres of Labor, went on the air to voice their own tart observations regarding the quality of Netanyahu's relationship with his senior advisers at a time of crucial national security decision-making.

Shahak's Cabinet exchange with the premier could hardly have consoled Barak — particularly if the incumbent Labor leader fears, as many here believe, that leading party figures may prevail upon Shahak to join the party with a view to leading it.

Meanwhile, Barak is cleaving to the strategic course he set for himself when he assumed the party leadership: the hardening of Labor's position toward the interests of the religious parties coupled with a consistent pulling toward the center on the Jewish state's peace policy.

Barak is leading a campaign for the enlistment in the army of fervently Orthodox youths.

This move will all but ensure he and his party will get none of the votes of this growing constituency, but will likely increase his support among secular voters.

At the same time, he is always careful to articulate middle-of-the-road positions regarding the negotiations with the Palestinians, which have been stalled for more than 15 months.

This represents a deliberate effort to woo voters away from Likud's moderate wing and from its more moderate coalition partners, the Third Way Party and Yisrael Ba'Aliyah.

Barak's immediate problem is not, however, the next elections nor Shahak's potential challenge.

The Labor leader is wrestling with a tough call: Should the opposition party promise in advance that it will support Netanyahu if the premier submits a redeployment agreement to the Knesset?

Some in Labor insist the answer must be yes.

Their party, they say, cannot vote against a step forward in the peace process — even if it is a step taken by a Likud-led government and even if Labor believes with passion that Likud is not truly committed to peace.

Others, just as forcefully, warn against this.

They say it is not only legitimate but also morally right for Labor to link up with the hard-liners in the Knesset to bring the current Israeli premier down over a redeployment.

Linked to this argument, which Barak says will only be resolved when Netanyahu actually presents a redeployment agreement to the legislature, is a dispute among Laborites over whether to enter into a unity coalition under Netanyahu in order to advance the peace process in the teeth of rightist opposition.

Barak refuses such a move.

Peres, who has been grudging at best in his support for the man who succeeded him as party leader, says Labor must set aside its own party interests and join such a government — for the sake of the nation. □



## Daily News Bulletin

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## JEWISH WORLD

### Panel mulls persecution bill

The U.S. Senate Foreign Relations Committee held a hearing on legislation to combat religious persecution overseas. The House of Representatives last month approved a bill addressing the issue, but attention is now focused on the Senate's version of the legislation, which some advocates of religious freedom see as a better solution.

### Iranian speaks in Washington

The Iranian ambassador to the United Nations said his country would respect an Israeli-Palestinian peace accord if all Palestinians, including those outside the West Bank and Gaza Strip, participate in the decision-making process.

Hadi Nejad Hosseini made the comments in response to a question at a policy forum in Washington hosted by Middle East Insight magazine. It is only the second time that the U.S. State Department has permitted him to travel outside a 15-mile radius of the United Nations.

### Matchmaking service illegal

An Australian woman was informed that her planned matchmaking service for Jewish clients was illegal because it broke local anti-discrimination laws. A tribunal rejected her argument that observant Jews seek to marry other Jews and that her agency was striving to preserve Jewish culture.

### Mount Rushmore, Negev style

The owners of the Jordache jeans company reportedly plan to erect a monument to the signers of the 1979 Israeli-Egyptian peace agreement. According to the planned project, the images of President Jimmy Carter, Israeli Prime Minister Menachem Begin and Egyptian President Anwar Sadat will be chiseled from a cliff in Israel's Negev Desert.

### Religion in class prompts firing

A New York City schoolteacher was fired for airing her religious beliefs before her sixth-grade class. The teacher, who asked the students if they were ready to accept Jesus into their lives, claimed she was teaching about God, not religion, and vowed to fight the dismissal.

### Greens call for army probe

Germany's opposition Green Party said a recent parliamentary investigation into right-wing extremism in the army had not gone far enough. The investigation, concluded in April, said there were no pervasive far-right organizations operating within the German army. The investigation was launched after a series of anti-Semitic incidents within the army were reported last year.

## Italian Jewish leader ready to step down after 15 years

By Ruth E. Gruber

ROME (JTA) — For 15 years, Tullia Zevi has used her position as the leader of Italy's Jewish community to speak out forcefully against anti-Semitism and other forms of discrimination, both at home and in the international arena.

In doing so, the elegant, silver-haired grandmother has become one of Italy's most prominent and honored women, and one of the country's most respected moral voices.

This month, Zevi is expected to step down from her post as president of the Union of Italian Jewish Communities — Italy's national Jewish representative body.

A trained musician and veteran journalist, Zevi has led the union since 1983, when she became the first woman ever elected to the position.

During her tenure, she raised the profile of Italy's 35,000-member Jewish community as a symbol of pluralism and democracy, reminding Italians that Jews have lived in Italy for more 2,000 years and have maintained their identity and presence through persecution, pogrom and the Holocaust. "Minorities are the first ones to sense danger," she told an interviewer in 1995. "They are like a litmus test.

"We are evidence of Italian pluralism and the success of Italian democracy," she said. "Just as we must never be isolated within this country, so must we fight not only for ourselves, but also for the rights of people, like new immigrants, who are the weakest part of society."

When the union holds its quadrennial congress in Rome from June 21 to 23, Zevi is likely to step down as president and take up an honorary position that would free her from day-to-day leadership tasks but enable her to continue as a representative of Italian Jewry, particularly abroad. "Fifteen years as president," she said in an interview, "is a long time."

A change in position, however, will not change Zevi's stature as a moral force in Italy. Through the years, she has been repeatedly recognized by both the Italian government and numerous organizations. In 1993, Italian President Oscar Luigi Scalfaro conferred upon her one of Italy's highest honors, the Knighthood of the Great Cross, in recognition for her uncompromising stand against bigotry.

Last year she was named by Italy's prime minister to an unprecedented, high-level commission set up to probe allegations of human rights abuses by Italian soldiers.

And in November 1992 she was Italy's candidate for the European Woman of the Year prize, awarded each year to a representative of an E.U. country "whose activities have contributed to human rights and solidarity among peoples."

Zevi, born Tullia Calabi, spent her childhood and teen-age years in Milan until the anti-Semitic racial laws imposed by the Italian fascists in 1938 forced her family to flee, first to Geneva, then to Paris, then to the United States.

In the United States, she attended university and studied music, earning her living playing the harp at engagements ranging from synagogue concerts to the New York Symphony, directed by Leonard Bernstein, to the backup group of Frank Sinatra.

She returned to Italy in 1946, when she began work as a journalist and became active in reconstructing Jewish life after the devastations of the Nazis and fascists. Zevi has written that she was motivated by having been "born into a tradition of Jews living on Italian soil since the era of ancient Rome, a tradition of 70 generations that Mussolini and Hitler had failed to destroy."

Zevi reported for many years for the Jewish Telegraphic Agency, the Israeli daily Ma'ariv and the Religious News Service. One of her first assignments was covering the Nuremberg Trials. During the war, she worked for NBC in New York, in charge of special radio programs beamed to Italian anti-fascist Resistance fighters.

In recent years, she served as vice president of the European Jewish Congress in charge of interfaith relations. She has said that she "tried and tries to seek the truth behind appearances, to identify the possibilities of convergence among apparently distant or hostile realities, to denounce injustice, to defend the rights of individuals and of the weakest and most helpless groups, to promote interreligious and interethnic dialogue, to fight against intolerance and prejudice." □

## Right-wingers fume after raid on pirate radio station

By Naomi Segal

JERUSALEM (JTA) — An Israeli police raid on a right-wing radio station has left the country's nationalist and settler camps fuming at the government.

Police said the actions against the offices of Arutz-7 in Tel Aviv, its studios in the Jewish settlement of Beit El and a transmission facility near the West Bank settlement of Har Bracha were intended to prove that the station, which broadcasts from a ship off the Israeli coast, was not operating outside the territorial boundaries of Israel, as it claims.

A number of individuals active in the station's operations were also expected to be summoned for questioning.

The move, which was approved by Israel's attorney general, infuriated members of the country's nationalist camp, who claimed that it was conducted in retaliation for a decision by Jewish settler leaders to launch a public campaign against the prime minister and a U.S.-proposed plan to carry out a 13 percent further redeployment from the West Bank in return for security guarantees.

According to the Yesha Council, which represents settlers in the West Bank and Gaza Strip, the public campaign will include the establishment of a tent camp across from the Prime Minister's Office in Jerusalem that would be staffed by residents of various settlements.

"Maybe the prime minister says he was not aware of plans to raid the station, but as head of the entire establishment, he is ultimately responsible for what happens," said Aharon Domb, spokesman for the council.

Knesset member Shmaryahu Ben-Zur of the National Religious Party warned that the NRP would pull out of the governing coalition if Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu does not make good on earlier promises to grant Arutz-7 a license.

Netanyahu, meanwhile, denied that he wants to shut down the station. The prime minister met Wednesday with NRP ministers, Communications Minister Limor Livnat and other officials to discuss the Arutz-7 broadcasts.

He also denied reports that NRP minister Yitzhak Levy had threatened to resign if the matter was not resolved.

"You see that minister Levy is here with us today, as part of a special panel trying to find a solution for the problem," Netanyahu told reporters.

"The legal status of Arutz-7 has not been resolved for 10 years. I hope we will be able to." □

## Russia convicts neo-Nazi for violating hate crimes law

By Lev Krichevsky

MOSCOW (JTA) — Jews in the Russian city of Orel are expressing outrage at the recent trial of a local neo-Nazi — even though the trial resulted in only the second jail term ever issued under Russia's hate crimes law.

Igor Semyonov, leader of the local chapter of the extreme-nationalist Russian National Unity group, was sentenced to two years in prison for inciting hatred toward Jews and people

from the Caucasus Mountains. The guilty verdict was based on a videotape of Semyonov's public speeches in which he, among other things, called for "a real terror" against the Jews.

But Judge Alexander Kuznetsov refused to consider a 1993 leaflet written by Semyonov in which the author called Judaism a "misanthropic religion" and issued a warning to local Jews that a Chanukah celebration in their city might lead to bloodshed.

Jewish community leaders said Kuznetsov showed sympathy for Semyonov throughout the trial, which began last September.

"Justice wasn't done. In fact, the court found nothing wrong with the anti-Semitic propaganda Semyonov has been spreading," said Emmanuel Mendelevich, a local Jewish activist.

In the verdict, Kuznetsov said the defendant's judgment about Judaism could not be punished since the Torah and the Talmud contained misanthropic dogmas.

Semyonov was arrested in 1996 on suspicion that he and four members of his group allegedly murdered a woman and her 10-year-old son in Orel to obtain the family's apartment.

After he was arrested, police found a list of hundreds of Jews and their addresses at his home in Orel, which is located 150 miles south of Moscow.

His four accomplices received 15 years in prison for the murder, but Semyonov was acquitted.

Local Jews earlier expressed concern that anti-Semitic views were openly spread during the trial.

In the trial, Vladimir Gusev, a Russian Orthodox priest in Orel, lashed out at Jews and Judaism in his testimony at the trial. Gusev repeated the infamous blood libel charge, testifying that in accordance with the Talmud, Jews "kill children, gather blood" and use it to make matzah.

Gusev was not the only witness to make anti-Semitic statements in the trial.

A local Communist leader denied that the massacre of more than 33,000 Jews at Babi Yar in 1941 occurred.

According to court observers, all of these remarks were allowed by the judge without objection. □

## Israel may seek U.S. letter

JERUSALEM (JTA) — Israel is seeking American assurance that it will oppose the Palestinian Authority's plan to declare an independent state prior to the conclusion of final-status negotiations, according to an Israeli media report.

The Israeli daily Ha'aretz, quoting political sources, reported this week that Israel would like a U.S. proposal concerning a further Israeli redeployment from the West Bank to contain such a guarantee.

Palestinian Authority Chairman Yasser Arafat has said that he would declare a Palestinian state next May regardless of the status of the talks.

Under the Oslo accords, the final-status talks are slated to end by May 4, 1999.

In exchange for a U.S. letter of guarantee, the sources said, Israel would agree to forgo construction of new Jewish settlements — without committing to limiting the expansion of existing ones.

Such a letter, Ha'aretz reported, also would resolve the issue of an additional redeployment — a move Israel is opposed to carrying out, but one that is called for under the interim agreement with the Palestinians. □