



# Daily News Bulletin

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82<sup>nd</sup> Year

## TOP NEWS IN BRIEF

### Ronald Lauder is nominated to lead Conference of Presidents

By Julia Goldman

#### Gore criticizes Wye stance

U.S. Vice President Al Gore issued a thinly veiled criticism of Israel for suspending implementation of the Wye accord. In a speech before the Israel Policy Forum in New York, Gore called on both Israel and the Palestinian Authority to implement the accord with no new conditions.

Israel has been the sole target of criticism from the Clinton administration for imposing such conditions. The address was Gore's first speech to a Jewish audience since he formally declared his candidacy to run for president in 2000.

#### 60 senators oppose clemency

Sixty U.S. senators urged President Clinton to keep Jonathan Pollard imprisoned despite pressure from Israel to free the former intelligence analyst convicted of spying for the Jewish state. "Any grant of clemency would now be viewed as an acquiescence to external political pressures," the senators wrote in a letter to Clinton.

#### Hebron shootout kills 1

An Israeli border policeman was killed and a Palestinian seriously wounded during a shootout near the West Bank town of Hebron.

The incident took place after Palestinian gunmen opened fire on an undercover border police unit that had been investigating "suspicious activity" in the area, according to the commander of Israeli forces in the West Bank. The slain policeman, Yehoshua Gavriel, 25, was buried in his hometown of Ashdod.

#### Arab League seeks U.N. session

The Arab League is planning to ask the U.N. General Assembly to reconvene an emergency session on Israeli settlement activity. The U.N. observer for the 22-member Arab League said he hopes the General Assembly would reconvene by the end of the month. In four previous sessions on the issue, the General Assembly condemned by overwhelming majorities Israeli plans to build a Jewish housing project at Har Homa in southeastern Jerusalem.

REMINDER: The JTA DAILY NEWS BULLETIN will not be published Monday, Jan. 18.

NEW YORK (JTA) — The vote has yet to be cast, but the contest for one of American Jewry's top positions is all but decided.

Ronald Lauder, cosmetics company heir and president of the Jewish National Fund, has been named unanimously by the nominating committee of the Conference of Presidents of Major American Jewish Organizations as its choice to lead the 55-member umbrella group, which voices the American Jewish community's political concerns to the White House, Israel and other world leaders.

Although five other candidates' names remain on the ballot, Lauder, a friend of both Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and New York Gov. George Pataki, is the presumed successor to Chairman Melvin Salberg. An election is scheduled to take place during the next 30 days. Lauder would take office in June, after a short overlap with Salberg.

"If history repeats itself, that'll be the case," said Salberg, the president of the American Zionist Movement, who is finishing his second yearlong term as chairman. "I'm not aware of [a case in which] the recommendation of the committee has not been followed."

Lauder comes to the position with a powerful resume — and a close friend in conference Executive Vice Chairman Malcolm Hoenlein. But his political ties have caused concern among some conference members.

Representatives of about 20 groups that support the Oslo peace process and religious pluralism in Israel participated in a conference call Wednesday to discuss Lauder's nomination.

But since his election is almost a foregone conclusion, these organizations are focusing not on opposing him but on how he will lead the umbrella group.

Can Lauder forge agreement among their ranks, and alternatively, will he remain silent when a consensus cannot be reached on an issue, they asked.

"These are strong-willed people," said Rabbi Eric Yoffie, the president of the Reform movement's Union of American Hebrew Congregations. "He may come in with a reputation, but after the first five minutes, it doesn't mean anything."

Complimenting Salberg, Yoffie also cautioned that "it is important to have a strong, hands-on chairman who will not turn matters over to the staff, but will take an active role in bringing people together."

A relative newcomer to the conference, Lauder is a prominent businessman with an extensive philanthropic portfolio. The Ronald S. Lauder Foundation, founded in 1987, has been at the forefront of Jewish revival, education and community outreach programs throughout Europe and the former Soviet Union. He serves as the chairman of the Commission for Art Recovery and treasurer of the World Jewish Congress and is the chairman of the board of trustees for the Museum of Modern Art in New York, as well as numerous Jewish and educational institutions.

But his warm relationship with Netanyahu raised questions about his ability to represent the full conference, which has split most recently over the Israeli-Palestinian peace process. Some fear that the Israeli election scheduled for May 17 — with a potential runoff to take place on June 1 — could cause problems for the group should Netanyahu be defeated.

Lauder could not be reached for comment.

In a telephone interview, Hoenlein insisted on the chairman's obligation to be politically neutral in his official capacity, a principle reiterated by Rabbi Alexander

## MIDEAST FOCUS

### Labor Party sets primary date

Israel's Labor Party set Feb. 15 as the date for holding primary elections to determine the party's list of Knesset candidates.

Party leader Ehud Barak averted a split within Labor by agreeing during a convention of leading party officials to back down from his request to reserve four spots at the top of the list for his allies.

The party chose former Prime Minister Shimon Peres for the second spot on the list during the convention.

### Sharansky avoids endorsement

Israel's Yisrael Ba'Aliyah Party is not yet ready to endorse any prime ministerial candidate, according to the leader of the immigrant-rights party.

Trade Minister Natan Sharansky made the comment shortly before meeting one of the candidates, former army chief Amnon Lipkin-Shahak.

### Rabbis discuss pluralism battle

Israel's chief rabbis held an unprecedented meeting with the spiritual leaders of the fervently Orthodox Agudat Yisrael movement to discuss recent developments in the ongoing battle for religious pluralism.

Ashkenazi Chief Rabbi Yisrael Meir Lau acknowledged that the rabbinic groups had never met before, but said they had often cooperated regarding providing religious services to Israelis.

### Kissinger takes swipe at politics

Former U.S. Secretary of State Henry Kissinger told young Israeli and Arab activists in Tel Aviv that the peace process will "succeed despite the politicians."

Kissinger, who was in Israel this week to attend a board of governors meeting of the Peres Peace Center, also told members of the Young Leaders Network in the Middle East to eschew "day-to-day politics" and instead "get to know one another."



## Daily News Bulletin

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Schindler, president of the Memorial Foundation for Jewish Culture, who served as chairman of the conference from 1976 to 1979.

A former longtime UAHC president, Schindler's well-known leftist leanings did not keep him from expressing unwavering support for Menachem Begin's Likud government when it was elected in 1977.

Of Lauder, Schindler said, "The fact that he is close to Netanyahu is not a problem if he understands what his particular role here is."

When it comes to domestic politics, some expressed concerns that Lauder's support of Republican politicians, including Pataki and former Senator Alfonse D'Amato of New York, would pose obstacles in the conference's dealings with the Clinton administration.

Lauder ran on the Conservative Party ticket in the 1989 mayoral election in New York.

But a White House official was open to creating a relationship with Lauder.

"He's not a very big fan of the Clintons," a White House official said.

"But we will work with whoever is elected," this official said.

Rising to Lauder's defense, Morton Klein, president of the Zionist Organization of America, pointed out that the chairmanship is not a political position.

"Let's not forget that the majority of the House and Senate are Republican. The leaders of the House and Senate are Republican. Maybe there's a value [in having a chairman identified with the Republican Party]. It cuts both ways."

Lauder's ambitions for the conference chairmanship have been known for several years since his position at JNF, which he accepted in 1996, placed him in the running for the position at the conference.

He was chosen by the seven-member nominating committee, appointed by Salberg and led by former Chairman Leon Levy, the president of the American Sephardic Federation.

Other nominees in what one leader described as a "vigorously" contested challenge included Dr. Mandell Ganchrow of the Orthodox Union, Philip Meltzer of the Association of Reform Zionists of America and Robert Rifkind, the immediate past president of the American Jewish Committee. Marlene Post, the president of Hadassah, the Women's Zionist Organization of America, and Nan Rich, the president of the National Council of Jewish Women, withdrew their names from consideration. □

## Israeli police arrest rape suspect, Miss World lifts silence about attack

By Naomi Segal

JERUSALEM (JTA) — Police have arrested an Egyptian-born Israeli suspected of raping and attempting to murder Israeli Linor Abargil a month before she won the Miss World pageant.

At Abargil's request, a district court on Thursday lifted a ban barring publication in Israel of details about the case.

Abargil, 19, had previously filed for the injunction in order to aid police efforts to apprehend the suspect, Shlomo Nour.

Police detained Nour, a 43-year-old travel agent, when he arrived at Ben-Gurion Airport earlier this week.

Nour, who lives in central Israel and has a business in Italy, is accused of raping Abargil and trying to suffocate her with a plastic bag.

Abargil, who did not appear in court Thursday, said Nour attacked her last October after she went to his travel agency in Milan to arrange a flight home from a modeling job.

Nour was arrested and detained for several days, but later released for lack of sufficient evidence.

Abargil, who lives in the coastal city of Netanya, refused interviews Thursday.

But the pageant winner said in the statement she believes it was important that the matter be made public to serve as an example for other women who had undergone similar experiences.

While a publication ban was imposed in Israel, the alleged crime has been widely reported by the foreign media and on the Internet. □

## JEWISH WORLD

### U.S. firms linked to Nazis

Many American companies had closer ties to Nazi Germany than previously thought, according to a German historian.

Some 26 of the top 100 U.S. companies collaborated with the Nazis before World War II, and some links persisted after the war's outbreak, said Hamburg historian Bernd Greiner.

### Report cites Deutsche Bank role

The U.S. military held a German bank responsible for starving to death slave laborers during World War II, according to a recently declassified U.S. report.

The 1946 report says some 72 slave laborers died during the war at an industrial affiliate of Deutsche Bank, which is currently awaiting approval of its attempt to buy a U.S. financial institution, Bankers Trust.

### Ex-slave claims may be delayed

It is unlikely that Germany will be able to close the books by the end of the year on claims filed by former Nazi-era slave workers, according to the head of the American Jewish Committee.

David Harris praised Germany's efforts to speed up compensation.

But he said there were too many unresolved problems linked to the claims against German companies to conclude the process quickly.

### Swiss students meet survivors

A group of Swiss students who are raising money for Holocaust survivors met recently with some survivors in Jerusalem.

The Solidarity Fund for Victims of the Holocaust was formed by the students in 1997 amid reports of Switzerland's complicity in dealings with Nazi Germany during World War II.

The group has reportedly raised some \$45,000.

### Jews slam citizenship stance

German Jewish leaders recently criticized conservative politicians for launching a petition drive against plans to make it easier for foreign-born residents to gain German citizenship. The two major conservative parties, the Christian Democratic Union and the Christian Social Union, say the proposed law would threaten the country's security.

### Pope sees 'Life Is Beautiful'

Pope John Paul II watched an Italian tragicomedy about the Holocaust in a private screening at the Vatican. "Life Is Beautiful," a film that focuses on a relationship between a father and a son after they are deported to a concentration camp, is expected to earn at least one Oscar nomination.

## Priest in Poland under fire for selling anti-Semitic books

By Ruth E. Gruber

NEW YORK (JTA) — A Polish priest who has been suspended in the past for repeated anti-Semitic statements is in hot water once again.

Father Henryk Jankowski was criticized by several bishops for selling anti-Semitic publications at his parish church. Jankowski reportedly moved the bookstand from the church to his residence next door after two representatives of the Gdansk archbishop ordered him to stop selling what they described in the leading Polish newspaper *Gazeta Wyborcza* as books that "promote hatred."

Several other leading Polish bishops published commentaries in the newspaper highly critical of Jankowski and his actions. In 1997 the Polish church suspended Jankowski for one year for making anti-Semitic comments from the pulpit.

The books in question include one backing the Catholic fundamentalists who have erected hundreds of crosses outside Auschwitz, "Defending the Cross We Defend Poland — the Necessary Defense," by Jan Marszalek. The representatives of the archbishop described this book as "full of venom and hatred."

The thrust of the books is that Jews run Poland — and that the Polish government and members of the Polish clergy follow Jewish orders.

Jankowski has expressed this sentiment from the pulpit on several occasions over the past few years.

During a crowded mass on Sunday, according to *Gazeta Wyborcza*, Jankowski rejected the criticism and attacked the newspaper's editor, Adam Michnik, for "wanting to be an arch-censor." He declared that the books in question "are based on historical truth, and thus should not be rejected, but rather accepted, swallowed so that conclusions can be drawn."

Polish television, which featured the issue on a recent program, also aired a piece on the restitution of a synagogue in Gdansk to the Jewish community. Senior Catholic clergy attended the ceremony marking the event.

"These two episodes indicate that both anti-Semitism and Jewish life are growing in Poland," said Stanislaw Krajewski, a member of the board of Poland's national Jewish organization who is also the American Jewish Committee's consultant in Poland. □

## Greek officials visit Israel

ATHENS (JTA) — Israeli-Greek relations may be thawing.

After months of strain over Israel's increasingly close military ties with Turkey, Greece's long-standing rival in the region, a delegation of high-level Greek officials visited Jerusalem this week for what observers said was an attempt to re-establish a constructive bilateral dialogue.

During the trip, which also included a visit to the Palestinian self-rule areas, the Greek delegation met with Israeli Foreign Minister Ariel Sharon and the director general of the Foreign Ministry, Eitan Ben-Tsur, for discussions on a wide range of issues, including the Middle East peace process.

Greece's deputy foreign minister, Yiannos Kranidiotis, stressed the importance attached by Greece and the European Union to the implementation of the Wye accord — a development he said would benefit not only the Israelis and the Palestinians, but also the cause of peace throughout the eastern Mediterranean. Kranidiotis also held out a carrot to his hosts, saying that implementing Wye would enable the European Union to forge closer political and economic ties with Israel.

But perhaps of greatest importance to the visiting delegation is a series of military agreements Israel signed last year with Turkey. Sharon assured his guests that cooperation between Turkey and Israel is not directed against third countries.

In an effort to put tensions over the issue behind them, the two sides agreed to begin discussing military and economic cooperation. They agreed to continue these discussions in late February, when Sharon is slated to visit Athens. □

**A NEW GENERATION OF LEADERS****Organizations offer subsidies to get younger Jews involved**

By Julia Goldman

NEW YORK (JTA) — Being a leader in the Jewish community can be time-consuming and expensive.

Most national organizations hold board meetings at least twice a year, which may necessitate plane rides and hotel stays. Trips to Israel, not to mention visits to overseas projects, are often essential to a comprehensive understanding of an organization's mission.

Committing the time and resources necessary for such involvement can be a hardship for many people in their 30s and 40s, who are often preoccupied with fledgling careers and young families.

Young people considering getting involved in Jewish organizations "don't have a lot of time," and so they "need to feel that their participation matters," said Nancy Reichman of Denver, a professor of sociology at the University of Denver and one of the American Jewish Committee's younger generation of leaders.

Some organizations fear that if the current generation of younger Jews does not participate now, the pool of future leaders and potential donors will evaporate one day. As a remedy, some organizations are offering an incentive for involvement in the form of generously subsidized leadership programs. Last year the American Society for Technion-Israel Institute of Technology inaugurated the Sosewitz-Jackier Leadership Development Institute, which sponsors three programs for prospective national leaders, including the two-year 21st Century Leadership program.

During that time, the program's 15 participants are paired with seasoned leaders as mentors. They attend weekend seminars that coincide with national board meetings and see the scientific university firsthand on an all-expenses-paid trip to Israel.

American Jewish Committee members chosen for their demonstrated leadership abilities in local chapters qualify for Sholom D. Comay Fellowships, a program established in 1992.

AJCommittee pays three-quarters of what organizers estimate is the cost of travel and participation in three national meetings and a seminar in Israel for a handful of fellows each year.

Hadassah, the Women's Zionist Organization of America, launched a Leadership Academy for Jewish women in 10 American cities last November. Fifteen women from each city were chosen for the three-year program, which includes retreats; visits to Israel and Capitol Hill; and extensive courses in Jewish history, Jewish thought, Zionism, philanthropy and community service, management, and leadership skills.

One of the ideas behind the subsidy, which covers study materials as well as travel expenses, is to promote inclusiveness, Hadassah President Marlene Post explained.

"Rich or poor," she said, participants should feel "you're part of a Jewish communal group process."

Lori Sussman, who was accepted into Hadassah Leadership Academy's Seattle group after going on a fully subsidized young women's mission last February, sees the organization's investment as a symbol of real support, "not just lip service."

Hadassah, like other groups, is banking on the hope that such support will increase participants' commitment to the organization and prompt them to join committees and take on leadership positions locally.

And most participants see the opportunity to take on major

leadership responsibilities as an additional benefit of these programs.

"Everyone is vying for leaders," said Reichman of Denver, an alumna of AJCommittee's Comay fellowships. "If you want the best and the brightest, you have to do something, and you have to have something for them to do."

Before going on a Hadassah mission, participants must sign a contract vowing to contribute \$500 to a Hadassah project in Israel and develop a Hadassah program in their home communities, such as starting a young women's chapter or a study group.

After a year of participating in national board meetings, several alumni of the Comay program felt the need "to continue the discussion among ourselves, to create a community of future leaders," said Reichman. So they established a group to do so, called the Emerging Leadership Council.

Mentor relationships, a significant component of the Sosewitz-Jackier institute, give young leaders, "access to the highest echelons of the Technion," said Bill Litwak of Los Angeles, a co-chair of several of the institute's leadership programs.

This sends the young leaders a message that "you're not just something we have to do. We think you're important, not just an afterthought."

"We're full participants in the senior management" of the Technion society, he said.

Lawrence Jackier, the Detroit-based national president of the society and one of the funders of its \$1 million leadership institute, sees the enhanced outreach to young leaders as a wise investment.

The younger generation of Jews, made up largely of professionals — professionals, rather than the business owners of generations past — are "not at a point in their lives where they are giving a tremendous amount of money," said Jackier.

But it is a generation that will be in a position to do so in the future, he said.

Even at current giving levels, however, participants in the incentive programs often forgo the subsidies offered or more than compensate for the investment by making larger contributions right away.

Comay alumnus Mark Levenson said one Comay fellow had come to a recent board of governors meeting at his own expense.

"It's a significant investment, and it's clearly paying off," said Levenson of Portland. "The proof is in the pudding," he said. "People are spending their own nickel." □

**Record numbers visit Frank house**

AMSTERDAM (JTA) — A record number of visitors toured the Anne Frank House in Amsterdam last year.

More than 822,000 people visited the house where the teenage diarist and her family hid from the Nazis, a 16 percent increase over 1997, according to officials at the Anne Frank Foundation.

The officials attributed the increase to publicity surrounding the recent publication of newly discovered pages from her diary, as well as a general rise in tourism to Amsterdam.

In addition, the foundation's new Internet site received over 200,000 "hits" in 1998.

The house where the Frank family hid is being revamped to give an even better reconstruction of Anne Frank's environment. The renovation and a larger exhibition in the house next door are due to be completed this fall. □