



# Daily News Bulletin

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82<sup>nd</sup> Year

## TOP NEWS IN BRIEF

### Jews, blacks call for action

Citing the need to take forceful action against hate violence, black and Jewish members of Congress are calling for passage of legislation to strengthen federal law on hate crimes.

An array of black and Jewish groups joined more than a dozen lawmakers, led by Reps. Benjamin Gilman (R-N.Y.) and Charles Rangel (D-N.Y.), at a Capitol Hill news conference on Thursday.

They said the fire-bombings of three synagogues in California, the shooting spree in Illinois and Indiana, and other recent incidents underscore the need for the Hate Crimes Prevention Act, approved by the Senate last week.

The House is expected to hold hearings on the measure next month.

### Slave labor bill becomes law

California Gov. Gray Davis signed into law a bill enabling survivors of Nazi-era slave and forced labor to seek restitution in state courts.

The law allows the victims or their heirs to sue companies doing business in California that exploited their labor under the Third Reich.

It also extends the statute of limitations for filing suits to Dec. 31, 2010.

The move comes as lawyers representing former slave laborers and officials of some 16 German firms were slated to meet in Washington to negotiate a compensation fund for the laborers.

The firms are seeking assurances that they will not be subject to lawsuits after they agree to set up the fund.

### Moscow mayor visits shul

Moscow Mayor Yuri Luzhkov made a surprise visit to a synagogue that narrowly escaped a bombing earlier this week.

Luzhkov, who was the first high-ranking official to condemn Sunday's attempted bombing of the Bolshaya Bronnaya synagogue, took part in the Wednesday ceremony at the Lubavitch-run shul.

Because Luzhkov decided to attend at the last minute, there were no journalists present. Some Jews believe Luzhkov, who has earned a reputation as a friend of the Jewish community, did not want to antagonize any of his potential supporters by being shown in the media at a Jewish event. [Page 3]

## HIGH HOLIDAY FEATURE

### Where have all the rabbis gone?

### Congregations, day schools face shortage

By Julie Weiner

NEW YORK (JTA) — Temple Shalom in Wheeling, W. Va., was offering \$80,000 and various perks to its next spiritual leader, but the 110-family Reform congregation searched for almost two years before finding the rabbi of its dreams.

And some 52 Reform temples, 35 Conservative synagogues and 15 Orthodox congregations are still looking. Some say it's the high demands of the job that is keeping rabbis off the pulpit. Others point to a swelling and diversifying field in which rabbis have a range of on- and off-the-bimah career options.

Whatever the reasons, a number of synagogues are approaching the busy High Holiday season without a rabbi or without enough rabbis, say officials of the Reform, Conservative and Orthodox movements.

And leaders in the smaller Reconstructionist movement expect that as their branch of Judaism continues to grow, their congregations may face a shortage as well.

It's not a crisis — fewer than 10 percent of any movement's congregations are without rabbis. But the shortage of rabbis is a concern and is also being felt at educational and organizational institutions.

Especially hard-hit among all the denominations are small and mid-sized congregations located in shrinking and isolated Jewish communities, such as Temple Shalom.

"The biggest problem is convincing people that the quality of life is good here, that they're not entering a cultural wasteland," said Jack Mendelson, who was chairman of Temple Shalom's search committee.

But even large synagogues in big cities — once viewed as the apex of the profession — are experiencing a drop in applications, particularly in the Reform movement.

"Our largest congregations, when looking for a senior rabbi, have among the smallest number of applications," said Rabbi Charles Kroloff, the new president of the Reform movement's Central Conference of American Rabbis. Kroloff has placed the issue of his movement's rabbi shortage at the top of his agenda.

"We're asking our colleagues and lay leaders to take a look at what kind of lives we rabbis lead: Are we taking good enough care of ourselves so that we can take good care of others, and what is the reality and perception of rabbinic life?" Kroloff said.

The Reform movement — which anticipates more than 70 new positions in the coming years — has experienced a steady drop in rabbinic school enrollment in the past decade. This, officials say, is in part a response to an anticipated shortage of jobs.

The shortages in Conservative and Orthodox Judaism, however, come despite steady, even rising, seminary enrollments. Rabbi Joel Meyers, executive vice president of the Conservative movement's Rabbinical Assembly, said that while he would like to see more rabbis, he is reluctant to dramatically step up recruitment for fear that the market will experience a glut.

Despite the concerns, there are more American rabbis than ever before — even as the Jewish population is stagnant, if not declining in number. There are now 1,500 Conservative rabbis, compared to 1,200 two decades ago.

There are 1,100 members of the Orthodox Rabbinical Council of America, up from approximately 700 over the same time period. And despite recent drops in seminary enrollment, the total number of Reform rabbis — 1,700 — is still considerably more than

## MIDEAST FOCUS

### Barak, Mubarak confer

Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Barak reiterated his pledge to implement the Wye accord during a meeting with Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak.

Thursday's meeting, their second in three weeks, came as Israeli and Palestinian officials were convening to discuss implementation of the accord, which was signed last October.

### Terrorist gets life sentences

An Israeli military court sentenced a Palestinian to three consecutive life terms for two 1998 attacks in which a rabbi was killed and scores of others injured.

The daughter of the slain rabbi, who was stabbed to death in his home in the West Bank town of Hebron, said Salem Sansour should have received the death penalty. Palestinian officials have said Sansour committed the attacks because he wanted to atone for accepting money from the Israeli Shin Bet.

### Syrian demands full withdrawal

Syria's military chief of staff said Damascus would not back off its demand for a full Israeli withdrawal from the Golan Heights to the shores of the Sea of Galilee in exchange for peace.

Quoted in the ruling party's Al-Baath newspaper, Ali Aslan said that if the Israeli government is serious about peace, Syria is ready to reciprocate.

### False report postpones vote

A Knesset vote to expand the size of Israel's Cabinet was postponed Thursday after the speaker of the house received a report, which later proved to be false, that veteran legislator Amnon Rubinstein had passed away.

Legislators were on the verge of holding the final two votes on the much-contested bill when Speaker Avraham Burg was passed a message that Rubinstein, who was admitted to hospital earlier this week for abdominal pains, had died.



## Daily News Bulletin

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the 1,100 two decades ago. The number for all the movements includes pulpit and non-pulpit rabbis.

But the number of jobs is growing faster than the number of rabbis.

Synagogues, seeking to meet demands for alternative services and more programs, are increasingly hiring — or trying to hire — second, third and even fourth rabbis. They are competing with other institutions, such as day schools, hospitals, campus Hillels and Jewish community centers, which did not hire as many rabbis in the past.

"There used to be a time when the pulpit rabbinate was the symbol of the rabbinate," said Meyers. "There was an assumption that you were second-best if you didn't have a congregation."

But that has changed. In this year's crop of newly ordained rabbis, slightly under half of the 48 Conservative rabbis, one-quarter of the 45 Reform rabbis and half of the 10 Reconstructionist rabbis chose jobs outside synagogues.

The majority of Orthodox rabbis go into educational jobs, but there are not enough of them to fill these posts either, said Steven Dworken, executive vice president of the rabbinical council. Some rabbis — a growing number of whom are women — perceive non-pulpit jobs as more family-friendly than the 24-hours-a-day, seven-days-a-week reputation of the congregation.

Many male rabbis, whose wives are more likely to be professionals struggling with their own careers than traditional rebbetzins, are also shying away from congregational work. Family demands led Rabbi Andrew Bachman to leave a pulpit position in a Brooklyn Reform temple for a slightly less time-consuming job directing New York University's Bronfman Center for Jewish Student Life.

"I was barely seeing my wife and daughter," he said. "There's nothing like the intensity of being a congregational rabbi. It could work out years from now when my kids are grown, but now is not the time to be doing it."

In response to similar comments and the fear that not enough of its rabbis are choosing the pulpit, the Reconstructionist movement recently formed a commission to examine "the role of the rabbi" and to create recommendations for congregations on how to make the job more manageable.

One female Reform rabbi says the pulpit is often perceived as less manageable than it really is today.

"I've been a rabbi 20 years and was pregnant with my first child when I was ordained," said Rabbi Ellen Dreyfus of B'nai Yehuda Beth Shalom in Homewood, Ill.

"It hasn't been easy, but it's not easy to balance any career with a family," she said. "If anything, the entry of women into the rabbinate has helped humanize the rabbinate and helped lay people realize that all rabbis need time with their families."

Not everyone finds the shift away from the pulpit problematic. Rabbi Ed Feinstein of Valley Beth Shalom in Encino, Calif., is searching for a third rabbi for his Conservative congregation, but is not troubled by what he describes as "the crisis that's not a crisis."

"It's wonderful how we've deployed rabbis," he said. "In the pulpit, there's a limited number of people we're going to meet, but these other jobs are a wonderful way to find Jews in all kinds of places."

As the movements struggle to fill their pulpits, various ideas are being floated, including a sort of Peace Corps approach in which young rabbis would be recruited to serve in under-served areas, possibly in exchange for forgiving student loans.

The liberal seminaries are also considering accelerated tracks so that a rabbinic degree could be completed quicker — it currently takes five years for Reform, Conservative and Reconstructionist rabbis and four years for Orthodox ones — and training more people for auxiliary congregational roles, such as program director or executive director, so that all the burdens don't fall on the rabbi.

"The rabbinate is still a calling and not just a profession one goes into like law or investment banking," said Rabbi Ismar Schorsch, chancellor of the Conservative movement's Jewish Theological Seminary.

"There has to be a religious passion or it's not going to work," he said. "But I do think there are young people out there looking for a Jewish career, and they are the recruitment pool that we can penetrate more deeply." □

## JEWISH WORLD

### Russian survivors get payments

A first group of Russian Holocaust survivors received \$400 apiece from a \$180 million Swiss fund created in 1997 to help needy survivors.

Fund officials hope to reach a total of some 2,500 Jewish and non-Jewish survivors in Russia, some of whom will be eligible for an additional \$600 at a later date.

### Weapons ban dedicated to Jew

A new assault-weapons ban in California was dedicated in part to a slain American Jewish Congress leader.

California Gov. Gray Davis signed the ban into law effective Jan. 1. Jack Berman was murdered at the age of 35 in 1993 in San Francisco.

His widow now chairs the AJCongress' Jack Berman Advocacy Center, which works with other groups to promote safety issues and advocate for gun control.

### Russians get Jewish show

A cable television program that aims to teach Russian-speaking professionals about Judaism premiered in San Francisco this week.

"Heritage" will draw on the Torah, Kabbalah, scientific sources and psychology in the weekly half-hour show presented by the Techiah Foundation, a San Francisco-based cultural organization.

Techiah's director, Rabbi Stuart Margolin, hopes to "break through 70 years of Soviet propaganda and ignorance."

The Ukrainian-born Margolin, 27, also hosts the show.

### Polish firms face lawsuits

Several Jews of Polish descent recently filed lawsuits against Polish insurance firms demanding compensation for property confiscated by Poland's postwar Communist regime.

The lawsuits, filed in the United States, are connected to a claim filed against the Polish government last month by Holocaust survivors, according to an article in the Polish daily newspaper *Gazeta Wyborcza*.

### Hitler may have had Parkinson's

Hitler may have suffered from Parkinson's Disease, according to a paper presented at a conference Wednesday on the degenerative illness.

The effects of the disease, which researchers believe may have afflicted Hitler for at least a decade, may have caused the Nazi leader's inability to respond effectively to the Allies' D-Day invasion in 1944.

The researchers cited doctors' reports from 1944 and 1945 as evidence for their conclusions.

## The mayor of Moscow gives thanks with shul that disaster was averted

By Lev Krichevsky

MOSCOW (JTA) — In a surprise show of solidarity with the Jewish community, Moscow's mayor has participated in a thanksgiving ceremony with a congregation that narrowly escaped a bombing earlier this week.

Yuri Luzhkov, who was the first high-ranking official to condemn Sunday's attempted bombing of the Bolshaya Bronnaya synagogue, took part in Wednesday's ceremony at the Lubavitch shul.

"I just came to the shul and his car was there," said Mendell Goldshmid, a Lubavitch emissary and the executive director of the Federation of Jewish Communities of the Commonwealth of Independent States.

Because Luzhkov decided to attend at the last minute, there were no journalists present. Some Jews believe Luzhkov, who has earned a reputation as a friend of the Jewish community, did not want to antagonize any of his potential supporters by being shown in the media at a Jewish event.

The Moscow mayor is a likely contender in next year's presidential elections and is also the leader of the Otechestvo, or Fatherland, movement that is expected to compete in parliamentary elections in December.

In the absence of reporters and TV cameras, Luzhkov expressed his sympathy for the Jewish community and exchanged gifts with the synagogue's rabbi, Yitzhak Kogan. In his speech, Luzhkov said he is flattered by a rumor, widely disseminated by ultranationalists, that he is Jewish.

Earlier this year, anti-Semitic leaflets of Luzhkov wearing a yarmulka, taken at a Jewish ceremony a few years ago, were stuffed in mailboxes in and near Moscow. The leaflet claimed that Luzhkov had changed his name from Katz and mentioned that he wanted to improve conditions for Jews in Moscow to discourage Jewish emigration.

On Wednesday, Luzhkov promised to step up security for Moscow synagogues. In the wake of the July 13 stabbing of a Jewish leader inside the Choral Synagogue and the attempted bombing of the Lubavitch shul, the synagogues have turned to private firms for increased protection.

Luzhkov's expression of sympathy for the Jewish community contrasts with the prolonged silence of other top politicians in Russia on the issue of anti-Semitism.

Russian Jewish leaders are especially critical of Prime Minister Sergei Stepashin despite his visit to Washington this week, where he promised U.S. Jewish leaders that he would work to "eradicate" anti-Semitism in Russia.

The Washington meeting went almost unnoticed in the Russian media, and Stepashin has not touched on the issue since he returned to Moscow. □

## Russians polled on ethnicity and rights

MOSCOW (JTA) — Some three-quarters of Russians believe that all citizens regardless of their ethnicity should enjoy equal rights, according to a recent poll.

But one-third also believe that a person's ethnic background should be taken into account when an individual is elected or appointed to powerful positions, according to the survey conducted earlier this month by the Public Opinion Foundation, a leading polling firm in Russia.

Fifty-six percent of the respondents believe that ethnicity should not be taken into account in such an election or appointment, while 9 percent found it difficult to answer.

In other results, 78 percent of respondents agreed with the statement that all young Russians should have free access to education; 16 percent maintained that only ethnic Russians should enjoy this right.

Twenty-two percent agreed that ethnic supremacy theories should be allowed to disseminate freely in society, while 59 percent said the dissemination of such ideas should be punishable and 19 percent found it difficult to answer.

No margin of error for the poll was reported. □

**BEHIND THE HEADLINES****For now, Congress heeds Prime Minister Barak's plea***By Matthew Dorf*

WASHINGTON (JTA) — As Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Barak made the rounds on Capitol Hill last week to urge lawmakers to avoid “ill-timed” initiatives that could frustrate his Middle East peace efforts, four key U.S. senators were working behind the scenes to force a vote on such a measure.

The issue of relocating the U.S. Embassy in Israel from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem — seen as a sign of support for Israel's control over Jerusalem — was about to be thrust into the spotlight during a Senate debate over the State Department's budget.

Barak has said he is committed to retaining Israeli sovereignty over Jerusalem, but in a meeting with Jewish lawmakers last week he had pled with them “not to get out in front of me and to let me have the opportunity to bring peace to the Middle East.”

In the end, the Senate backed down and Barak got what he wanted. At least for now.

No one was out to embarrass Barak during his first visit to Washington as Israel's premier. But Jerusalem has always been a bread-and-butter issue for elected officials trying to stake out pro-Israel positions.

But in a sign of how much the definition of what is pro-Israel has changed since the Israelis and Palestinians signed the Oslo accords in 1993, neither Israel's leader nor the pro-Israel lobby were embracing this public display of support for moving the U.S. Embassy. When asked, Barak pointedly did not call for an immediate relocation of the embassy. Instead he said he was working on the “preconditions” — meaning resolution of final-status issues with the Palestinians — to make such a move possible.

A Senate vote on the issue was just the type of distraction that Barak was seeking to avoid as he tried to solidify his relationship with President Clinton and focus on restarting the peace talks.

The legislative maneuvering posed a serious dilemma for the American Israel Public Affairs Committee, which has worked for decades to move the embassy.

Four of its closest allies were about to deliver.

Sens. Jon Kyl (R-Ariz.), Joseph Lieberman (D-Conn.), Connie Mack (R-Fla.) and Charles Schumer (D-N.Y.) had the votes to cut \$100 million from the State Department's budget if the president did not declare that “the United States now formally recognizes Jerusalem as the capital of Israel and that it is United States policy that Jerusalem should remain undivided.”

The measure also would have required the United States to “carry out official ambassadorial functions in the city of Jerusalem, Israel.”

The senators had already postponed similar action until after the Israeli elections, but now had the vehicle in which to advance their cause.

AIPAC could not abandon its friends, which it had helped put out on this legislative limb. With the support of the Clinton administration, a compromise was struck under which the senators would quietly add their amendment to the State Department Appropriations bill through a procedure that did not require a vote.

All parties expected that the measure would be dropped before the bill reached the president's desk. In the end, the amendment

was not included in the bill because Sen. Robert Byrd (D-W.Va.) objected.

But there was no public debate, no floor vote and no public confrontation with the White House. Barak, on this issue, had gotten his wish. And AIPAC had sent a message to Capitol Hill that the days of confrontation with the administration, a hallmark of the last three years under former Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, were over.

The pro-Israel lobby, which had been widely criticized by some of Barak's top advisers last year for fomenting unnecessary battles with the Clinton administration, had delivered in its promise to support the Barak government.

This was “a decision that reflects the need to reconcile the need to move the embassy with Israel's pursuit for peace with its neighbors,” a senior AIPAC official said on the condition that his name not be used.

Sensitive that it would be accused of going soft on Jerusalem, the official stressed that the group is “never going to abandon the effort to move the U.S. Embassy to Jerusalem.”

But, the official said, “we are moving in a prudent and moderate manner to achieve that objective.”

For their part, eighty-four senators, instead of voting on the issue, wrote a letter to urge Clinton to move the embassy.

“Jerusalem is Israel's capital, a fact that should have been recognized long ago by putting our embassy there,” the letter released last Friday said.

Clinton has promised not to move the embassy until the Palestinians and Israelis resolve the issue of Jerusalem in final-status talks. Although AIPAC put out the fire over the latest Jerusalem initiative, Jewish activists and the Clinton administration are preparing for more congressional action in the months to come.

Going on the offensive to seek opposition to such moves, Martin Indyk, the U.S. assistant secretary of state for Near Eastern affairs, asked the Jewish community to “do its part” to support the peace process.

“All of us are obliged to do all that we can to help Arabs and Israel come to terms,” Indyk said in a speech to delegates of Hadassah, the women's Zionist organization, gathered in Washington this week for their annual conference.

“The Bible says first we have to make peace at home. We need peace in our own community, our own American Jewish community,” Indyk said Monday.

In an interview, Indyk said, “It's not right for me to tell the American Jewish community what to do.

“If the government of the United States and the government of Israel are all focused” on trying to achieve peace in the region, “then it would be very helpful if the Jewish community would also” work to support that aim.

Those working against Barak's calls are likely to run into some obstacles on Capitol Hill, where at least one senior senator is dismissing their efforts.

“It's time for them to realize where we are — Israel, the United States, the Palestinians — in terms of negotiations and direction,” said Sen. Frank Lautenberg (D-N.J.) in a telephone interview.

Even with Barak's “biggest plurality of any prime minister ever,” Lautenberg does not expect the Jews to unite behind him. “We will never have in the Jewish community— even if there are only three people — we will never have unanimity.” □