



# Daily News Bulletin

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82<sup>nd</sup> Year

## TOP NEWS IN BRIEF

### **Bush comments draw criticism**

Some U.S. Jewish leaders said Monday they were troubled by Texas Gov. George W. Bush's decision to ask presidential rival Pat Buchanan not to leave the Republican Party.

The leaders joined some of Bush's Republican rivals in saying the GOP's presidential front-runner was putting politics ahead of principle. [Page 1]

### **Ukraine relents on Israel program**

Ukraine agreed after months of delay to let some 500 youths come to Israel for a Jewish Agency for Israel program.

Israeli Interior Minister Natan Sharansky succeeded in persuading Ukrainian officials to drop their objections to the Na'aleh program, according to a Sharansky spokesman.

Ukrainian officials have delayed issuing the necessary visas, claiming that the program, which promotes immigration to Israel, was recruiting the best and brightest among the country's youth.

### **Arabs accept Disney assurances**

Arab foreign ministers meeting at the United Nations decided to accept the Walt Disney Co.'s assurances that an exhibit opening this week at its EPCOT Center will not portray Jerusalem as Israel's capital.

The Arab League's secretary-general told reporters last Friday the Arab states consider Disney's response "to delete any reference about Jerusalem being the capital city of Israel" to be "an important step." [Page 3]

### **Applicants swamp Israel project**

Just weeks after launching a marketing campaign informing North American Jewish college students of free, 10-day trips to Israel this winter, the Birthright Israel project has more would-be travelers than available spots.

Hillel: The Foundation for Jewish Campus Life reports that more than 6,000 people have applied for the 3,000 spots it is offering as one of the organizations participating in Birthright Israel's 2000 campaign.

A Birthright spokeswoman said that the other 11 providers are also getting a large response and that the number of calls to Birthright Israel itself has increased tenfold since the campaign began.

## BEHIND THE HEADLINES

### **Jewish officials critical of Bush for urging Buchanan to stay in GOP**

By Daniel Kurtzman

WASHINGTON (JTA) — With a maelstrom swirling around Pat Buchanan and the views he espouses on Hitler and World War II in his latest book, the last thing Texas Gov. George W. Bush wanted to do was become ensnared in the controversy.

But in asking the Republican firebrand not to leave the GOP, Bush has drawn criticism from key Republican and conservative leaders, as well as some Jewish officials.

The Republican presidential front-runner last week urged Buchanan to stay in the party, telling the Associated Press last week that it was "important" if he wins the nomination "to unite the Republican Party. I'm going to need every vote I can get among Republicans to win the election."

A Reform Party bid by Buchanan could siphon off at least 4 percentage points from Bush, according to most polls.

Just days earlier, Bush had met with Jewish Republicans and the heads of several major Jewish organizations to discuss a range of Jewish concerns, including the Middle East peace process, church-state separation and gun violence.

At that private meeting in Austin, Texas, Bush said he disagreed fundamentally with Buchanan's views, according to officials who attended the meeting. But he indicated that he did not want to draw more attention to Buchanan by engaging him in a debate about his assertions in his book, "A Republic, Not an Empire," that Nazi Germany posed no threat to the United States after 1940 and that Americans were deceived concerning the need to enter the war. Instead, Bush decided to appeal for party unity by urging Buchanan not to bolt the GOP at a time when Buchanan appears likely to seek the Reform Party nomination for the presidency.

Bush's stance places him at odds with GOP rival Sen. John McCain, who said Buchanan should be kicked out of the party because of his fringe views. McCain, echoing a sentiment expressed by some in the Jewish community, said Bush was putting politics ahead of principle.

Responding to criticism, Mindy Tucker, a spokeswoman for the Bush campaign, said, "Gov. Bush is a leader who believes in uniting our party much like Ronald Reagan did, instead of driving wedges between people. The Republican Party is a contest, a contest of ideas, and Republican voters will have a chance to express their opinion on this issue in the primary."

She declined to elaborate on Bush's political considerations, but said of Buchanan's views: "Gov. Bush disagrees emphatically with the strange ideas expressed by Pat Buchanan about World War II. He believes that World War II was a great and noble cause."

It remains to be seen what, if any, impact Bush's reaction to Buchanan will have on his campaign's outreach efforts to Jewish voters.

By most accounts, Bush — a pro-life governor who has said he wants church and state to "work together," has endorsed displaying the Ten Commandments in schools and once said that only followers of Jesus can go to heaven — already has a difficult road ahead in courting Jews, who have historically backed Democratic candidates.

Jewish leaders, for their part, signaled disapproval of Bush's handling of the matter, but avoided sharp criticism of Bush.

Abraham Foxman, national director of the Anti-Defamation League, said that while

## MIDEAST FOCUS

### Israel, Syria trade barbs

Israeli Foreign Minister David Levy accused Syria of preventing the resumption of bilateral peace talks by insisting that Israel first agree to return the Golan Heights.

"Maybe Syria expected that the new government [of Prime Minister Ehud Barak] would be one that would accept all the dictates issued it," Levy said in New York, where he is attending the opening session of the U.N. General Assembly. His comments came after Syrian President Hafez Assad was quoted as saying that he is "disappointed" with Barak.

Last Friday, Levy and U.S. Secretary of State Madeleine Albright participated in a meeting to air international positions on the peace process.

Three of the countries represented at the New York meeting — the United Arab Emirates, Bahrain and Saudi Arabia — have no diplomatic relations with Israel. Levy said the meeting demonstrated that association with Israel "will no longer be accompanied by collective punishment in the Arab world."

### Weizman to win Nobel Prize?

Israeli President Ezer Weizman is a front-runner for this year's Nobel Peace Prize, a Norwegian newspaper reported Monday. Among those who nominated Weizman was Palestinian Authority Chairman Yasser Arafat, who cited the Israeli president's consistent support of the Middle East peace process.

### Decision on refugees postponed

Israel's High Court of Justice recently agreed to postpone by another eight months a hearing on a petition filed by the descendants and former residents of two Arab villages who were evacuated during the 1948 War of Independence.

The delay drew an outcry in the courtroom from supporters of the petitioners, who filed an appeal three years ago for permission to return to the villages of Ikrit and Baram.

he was disappointed with Bush's response, he was far more troubled by the attitude toward Buchanan in political circles and what he called a lack of recognition of the "nature and of the poison of this man."

"I am troubled that there is a man who is an anti-Semite, who is a Hitler apologist, a Nazi war criminal defender, an Israel-basher, a racist on so many levels, and good serious people are still trying to waltz around him gingerly," said Foxman, who attended the meeting with Bush in Austin last week.

If people were to recognize "who he is and what he is," he added, "there would be no hesitancy to say that this man does not belong in the political mainstream of our country."

Richard Heideman, president of B'nai B'rith International, said, "I would like to see him reject Buchanan, and I reject Buchanan. But in the context of the meeting we had Wednesday, I understand the outreach he has expressed" toward Buchanan "at the present time."

Jewish Democrats, meanwhile, were quick to pounce on the GOP front-runner. "Bush made a terrible choice," said Ira Forman, executive director of the National Jewish Democratic Council. "He made a political calculation, and he said it doesn't matter what this guy stands for — if he's obsessed with Jews, if he's an anti-Semite, if he's a xenophobe. What matters is what can save one extra vote for George Bush. And that's terribly disappointing."

The Republican Jewish Coalition last week said Buchanan's views were abhorrent and that he had no place in the Republican Party.

But Matt Brooks, the group's executive director, defended Bush's stance, saying it made practical sense. "Buchanan is leaving the party regardless of what George W. Bush or anybody else has to say," Brooks said. "What he's done is to make sure Buchanan can't leave the party and take Republican support with him, saying he was forced out of the party." □

## Israel decides to keep close eye on the Islamic Movement in its borders

By Naomi Segal

JERUSALEM (JTA) — Israel has announced it will begin monitoring the activities of an Islamic group that has a large following among Israeli Arabs.

As part of the new campaign, officials plan to probe links between the Islamic Movement and Hamas, Public Security Minister Shlomo Ben-Ami said Monday.

The move comes after two Israeli Arabs who carried out car bombings earlier this month in Haifa and Tiberias were linked to the movement.

Prime Minister Ehud Barak ordered the campaign after consulting with his Cabinet ministers Sunday.

The measures include: monitoring the Islamic Movement's activities; reviewing the funding sources of institutions linked to the movement; and monitoring members of the Islamic Movement who travel to Jordan for gatherings of Islamic leaders.

Officials with the movement criticized the move, saying Israel was punishing the entire Israeli Arab population for the crimes of a few. Some Israeli security officials said, meanwhile, that the moves did not go far enough.

The Cabinet rejected some of the more severe measures recommended by the police and the Shin Bet domestic security service, including sealing the home of a local cleric killed in the bombing in Tiberias.

Amir Masalha is believed to have recruited the perpetrators of the two attacks in which the bombs apparently exploded prematurely, killing three of the perpetrators and seriously wounding an Israeli female passer-by.

The Cabinet also rejected recommendations to close down media linked to the Islamic Movement, including a newspaper and radio and television stations suspected of incitement against Israel.

Ben-Ami, who opposed such a crackdown on the media outlets, said the moderate stance taken by the government reflected its wish to adopt a pinpoint approach to the matter, rather than declare war on the Israeli Arab population. □



## Daily News Bulletin

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## JEWISH WORLD

### Both Israel and Arabs claim victory as Disney exhibit set to open to public

By Julia Goldman

NEW YORK (JTA) — The standoff over the depiction of Jerusalem at Disney World's EPCOT center continued last week, as Israel expressed confidence that the Walt Disney Co. "will honor its commitments."

At the same time, Arab groups believe that Disney has acceded to their point of view.

Israel is sponsoring a national exhibit in a 15-month "Millennium Village" at the Florida theme park, in which Jerusalem features prominently. The Israeli exhibit is one of 24 in the millennial pavilion, which was set to open with a gala event Wednesday and is open to the public beginning Friday.

On Saturday, Israel's Foreign Ministry issued a statement that said visitors to the exhibit "will have no doubt that Jerusalem is and will forever remain Israel's capital."

Last Friday, a meeting of Arab foreign ministers accepted the written assurance of Disney executives that "the Israeli exhibit does not reference Jerusalem as the capital of Israel."

Exactly whose claim is accurate will best be determined when the exhibit actually opens this week. Whether any change was made in the wake of the recent controversy, however, may never be known.

Arab League Secretary-General Esmat Abdel-Meguid was quoted as saying, "We have considered the response of Walt Disney to delete any reference about Jerusalem being the capital city of Israel as an important step taken by Walt Disney."

The Arab League and Arab American groups, charging that Disney was making a political statement by allowing Israel to portray the holy city as the capital of Israel, had threatened to boycott the international entertainment company.

Abdel-Meguid said the 22-member Arab League was not pursuing a boycott, but was discussing ways to represent the Palestinian Authority at the EPCOT pavilion.

The Walt Disney Co. has maintained that it is an entertainment company and does not take political positions.

Israel claims Jerusalem as its "eternal, undivided capital." The Palestinians see eastern Jerusalem as the capital of a future Palestinian state. The issue of Jerusalem is on the agenda for final-status talks between the two parties.

A Walt Disney Co. representative could not be reached for comment, but in the past, the spokesman for Walt Disney World, Bill Warren, has said that all exhibits in the Millennium Village are "under development" and "in a constant state of change."

He has refused to comment on the content of the exhibit, citing a confidential relationship with Israel.

A delegation from the Arab League, together with representatives of several Arab and Muslim American groups met with Disney World's president, Al Weiss, on Sept. 15 in Washington to discuss their concerns regarding the exhibit's depiction of Jerusalem.

Last week, Israeli Foreign Minister David Levy told representatives of American Jewish groups in New York, however, that "nothing has changed regarding Jerusalem" in the exhibition's content, which was created by Israel's Foreign Ministry.

"We are sure that the exhibition will take place as planned," he said.

The Palestinian Authority — which had joined American groups and the United Arab Emirates in calling for a boycott — is abiding by the Arab League's decision, but awaits the outcome of further discussions before formally changing its stance on Disney, according to a Palestinian source at the United Nations. But at least one U.S. group, the American Muslims for Jerusalem, is continuing its call for a boycott.

"Our position is not connected in any way to the Arab League," said the group's executive director, Khalid Turaani.

"Our position remains that we are still dissatisfied with Disney World's decision to go forward with the exhibition," he said.

The statement by Israel's Foreign Ministry, he said, indicates that Disney is partnering with Israel, thus flouting international law regarding the status of Jerusalem, and maintaining "Israel's occupation of Jerusalem." □

### Wounded boy returns home

A 5-year-old boy wounded in last month's shooting rampage at a Jewish community center in suburban Los Angeles has returned home.

Benjamin Kadish rode a firetruck home from the hospital on Sept. 23, wearing a red firefighter's helmet and a badge that said "Junior Firefighter." Kadish was one of five people wounded in the Aug. 10 attack at the center.

The other victims — two young boys, a teen-age girl and a receptionist — all left the hospital within days of the attack.

### Israel sends aid to Russia

Some \$100,000 in humanitarian aid arrived in Russia from Israel on Monday to help victims of the recent bomb attacks in Russia.

The aid, delivered by a Russian plane, consisted of medicine and medical equipment for survivors of the blasts, which occurred in Moscow and southern Russia. According to reports, Israel has also offered to share its anti-terrorist expertise with Moscow.

### Insurance panel announces delay

Holocaust-era insurance claims that were scheduled to start being processed Oct. 29 will be delayed while technical problems are resolved, the head of an international panel working to settle the claims announced.

Former U.S. Secretary of State Lawrence Eagleburger said during a meeting of the commission in London last week that it is not ready to begin the claims process because of complications in setting up call centers and toll-free lines.

### Prague plaque corrected

The Czech Republic is admitting that it erred in creating an anti-Semitic plaque in the 1600s. A plaque admitting the mistake is scheduled to be placed March 8 alongside the original plaque, which is affixed to a historic crucifix on Prague's Charles Bridge.

Since the crucifix and the original plaque are part of a registered historical landmark, the anti-Semitic message, which was created to punish a Jewish politician, could not be taken down, Czech officials said.

### Nazi film creates controversy

German Jewish leaders are criticizing a film about Nazi doctor Josef Mengele, saying it gives the infamous doctor a posthumous platform for his warped views on eugenics.

But German critics are applauding "Nothing but the Truth" for forcing the country to come to grips with its Nazi past. Mengele, nicknamed the "Angel of Death," is notorious for his experiments on children, twins and the handicapped.

## NEWS ANALYSIS

**Despite Barak's warm reception, Europe remains strongly pro-Arab**

By Douglas Davis

LONDON (JTA) — The Israeli prime minister is enjoying a blissful honeymoon with the United States, but he must still worry about placating Europe.

While Israel's relations with Washington — based on an intricate web of political, economic, strategic and cultural ties — are generally warm and cordial, its relations with Europe are generally prickly.

True, the welcome Ehud Barak received in Berlin and Paris last week was far warmer than his predecessor, Benjamin Netanyahu, could have expected.

By vigorously pushing ahead in the peace process, Barak has, for the moment at least, changed the dynamic of events and taken some of the wind out of the European sails.

"They do not have too much room for grandstanding right now," a senior Israeli source told JTA this week, "but I have no doubt that they will be back in full cry when the spotlight picks out issues like Jerusalem and refugees."

Beyond the diplomatic platitudes and the bitter memories of recent history that inevitably infused Barak's visit to Germany and France, however, there is a dense subtext on both sides of the divide.

For Barak, the importance of Europe is, first and foremost, that it is Israel's single-largest trading partner, with Europe enjoying a significant advantage in the balance of trade.

Second, Europe is the single-largest donor to the Palestinian Authority and, thus, an important element in the peace process.

Europe has long demanded a greater role in Middle East diplomacy — equivalent at least to that of the United States.

European leaders want to translate their financial influence into political clout — to play an active role in Middle East peacemaking.

The Israelis are playing a carefully calibrated game, which involves promoting their own economic interests with Europe while keeping the Europeans at arm's length when it comes to the peace process.

They want Europe to continue to financially underwrite Palestinian endeavors, but they also want to ensure that European aspirations to political arm-twisting and diplomatic power-brokering are kept on hold.

From Jerusalem's perspective, the Europeans are fickle at best, treacherous at worst; ultimately, they are perceived to be irredeemably in favor of the Arabs.

The Israelis remember that France supplied Iraq with a reactor that took Saddam Hussein to within touching distance of acquiring nuclear capability during the 1980s — forestalled only by an Israeli air raid that destroyed the Osirak facility.

They remember that the Germans' lax export controls permitted German companies to supply much of the material that enabled Iraq to develop its chemical and biological capabilities, which U.N. weapons inspectors are still not convinced have been completely dismantled. They also know that the British are turning diplomatic somersaults to overlook the ambitions of Iran's mullahs and Libya's Muammar Gadhafi in Britain's haste to re-establish

relations — and secure contracts — with Tehran and Tripoli.

The name of the game is trade and, in its scramble for markets, Europe is apparently content to ignore the strategic implications of its actions in the knowledge that when matters get out of hand the United States will rush in to clear up the mess.

Moreover, while the "partners" in the European Union appear to speak with a single voice, they are in fact fierce national competitors for brownie points with their putative Middle East trading partners.

In their anxiety to appease Arab and Islamic sensibilities, Europe often rushes to adopt the most extreme anti-Israeli postures.

The point Israel constantly makes to Europe is that winning the confidence of both sides is a precondition to a serious mediating, or even facilitating, role in Arab-Israeli affairs.

Just last weekend, France announced two initiatives:

First, it rushed in with an offer to foot the bill for a proposed Palestinian seaport in the Gaza Strip, even though the project is still in an embryonic stage and subject to negotiation.

Second, it offered troops to fill the vacuum left by a departing Israel in the south Lebanese security zone.

But when the chips are down, will it risk offending the Syrians, with whom France recently concluded a "strategic partnership?" Will it scramble its Mystere jets to strike at Hezbollah missile launchers when they threaten to bombard Israel?

"Will it? Hell," said a senior Israeli source.

On a political level, the Europeans are thought to be biding their time. After monetary union, the Europeans, looking to reinforce their supranational ideals, are now aiming to achieve a single position on foreign affairs and defense, having lured former NATO Secretary-General Javier Solana to oversee the process.

Britain, which is still pondering the merits of joining the single currency, is said to be making up for its apparent lack of enthusiasm in this area by blazing the trail in developing the single foreign and defense voice.

Officials are said to be aiming to produce a seamless, harmonized policy by the end of this year on the one policy issue they could be expected to agree on: the Arab-Israeli dispute.

It will come just in time for the political pyrotechnics that are expected to emerge from the region in the second half of next year, when final-status negotiations between Israel and the Palestinians will approach their difficult climax.

At the same time, two related events will occur: United States attention will be focused on the final stages of its election campaigns, while France — the most ambitious of the European states for an active Middle East role — will hold the rotating presidency of the European Union.

Washington will be unlikely to have the energy or the motivation to continue to micromanage the peace process, and Paris is no doubt preparing to seize the moment and fill the vacuum with the new, harmonized European voice.

The Israeli source had just such an eventuality in mind when he noted that "Europe's tendency to produce statements and declarations on how they see the outcome of negotiations is not helpful."

Barak has his work cut out in balancing Europe's diplomatic ambitions with Israel's vital economic interests.

Not too far down the road, he will clearly have to display some skillful diplomatic footwork in order to avoid the close European embrace that is being prepared for him. □