



# Daily News Bulletin

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83rd Year

## TOP NEWS IN BRIEF

### U.S.: China sale shouldn't hurt aid

Secretary of State Madeleine Albright said Monday the administration will not support any decrease in U.S. aid to Israel despite U.S. concerns about Israel's plans to sell military technology to China. "We do not believe that linking this issue to our assistance to Israel is the appropriate way to proceed, and we will oppose any effort on Capitol Hill to do so," she said.

Her comments came as the U.S. House Appropriations subcommittee on foreign operations is considering whether to cut aid to Israel because of its planned sale of an airborne early warning system to China.

### Talks to resume near D.C.

Israeli-Palestinian negotiations will resume Tuesday at two air force bases near Washington, according to U.S. Secretary of State Madeleine Albright.

President Clinton and Palestinian Authority President Yasser Arafat will meet in Washington on Thursday.

The summit was originally slated for Wednesday.

But the meeting was delayed to allow the Palestinian leader and Albright to travel to Damascus for Tuesday's funeral of the Syrian leader, who died Saturday at the age of 69.

### Bashar: Security just an excuse

The nominee for Syrian president said in a recent interview that Israel is using security concerns as a pretext for not pressing ahead with peace talks.

The comments of Bashar Assad, the son of the late Syrian President Hafez Assad, were published Monday in the Saudi daily Asharq al-Awsat.

Meanwhile, Bashar reportedly told President Clinton by telephone on Sunday that Syria would pull its troops out of Lebanon only if asked to do so by the Lebanese government. [Page 3]

### Mission to Ethiopia delayed

U.S. Jewish leaders postponed a mission to Ethiopia to assess the situation of thousands of Falash Mura who are seeking to emigrate to Israel.

The decision by the leaders of the United Jewish Communities came after the Department of State issued a warning to Americans not to travel to Ethiopia because of its renewed hostilities with Eritrea.

## Federations to gain new say in allocating overseas funds

By Julie Wiener

NEW YORK (JTA) — For the first time ever, American Jewish federations will soon have a say in how a portion of their overseas allocations will be spent.

But whether this change represents a dramatic overhaul of the old communal system of providing support for Jews around the world or just a small step depends on who you ask.

The Overseas Needs Assessment and Distribution Committee, a newly formed panel composed primarily of federation leaders, is recommending that each U.S. federation decide where 10 percent of its overseas funds go.

Each federation would select from a list of pre-approved projects of the federation system's long-standing overseas partners, the Jewish Agency for Israel and the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee.

Last year, federations around the country allocated \$237.7 million for overseas needs, most of which went to helping needy Jews around the world, bringing new immigrants to Israel and helping absorb them in the Jewish state.

Saying that the needs are far greater than what federations are currently allocating, ONAD, as the committee is known, is also urging the federations to step up their overseas giving. Federations that increase their overseas allocations from what they gave in 1998 could, under the plan, designate more than 10 percent into the choice projects, called "community" funding. ONAD's first recommendations are expected to be approved by the UJC's Board of Trustees, meeting in Chicago on Thursday.

ONAD has included in those funding choices available to individual federations:

- Feeding elderly Jews in the former Soviet Union, for which \$10 million is sought;
- A variety of programs for new immigrants in Israel, for which \$27 million is sought;
- Funding Israeli shlichim, or emissaries, who do Israel programming in U.S. communities, for which \$1.2 million is sought; and
- Partnership 2000, a project linking U.S. federations with Israeli regions for people-to-people exchanges and economic development, for which \$18 million is sought.

It is expected that most federations will make feeding the elderly Jews their top community funding priority. The remaining 90 percent of federation-raised overseas money — an estimated \$215.1 million — will continue to be funneled through a central system that will, as in the past, give approximately 75 percent to the Jewish Agency and 25 percent to the JDC.

In theory, the ONAD process is a significant departure from the past, when allocations decisions were determined entirely by the United Jewish Appeal, which last year merged with the Council of Jewish Federations to become the United Jewish Communities. Before, the two recipient agencies — the Jewish Agency and the JDC — could spend their allocations at their discretion. Now, even though those two agencies will continue to get the lion's share of overseas funding — most of the 90 percent, called "collective" funding — ONAD must review the projects that are funded.

How this new power shift will play out in the future remains to be seen, particularly whether the federations' increased role will — as many have hoped — increase federations' flagging enthusiasm for funding overseas needs.

In the past decade, federations have kept more and more of their money at home

## MIDEAST FOCUS

### Israeli Arabs to attend funeral

A delegation of Israeli Arab Knesset members has received permission to attend Syrian President Hafez Assad's funeral on Tuesday. On Monday, more than 100 Druse were refused entry into Syria to attend the funeral.

### Barak condemns Nazi labeling

Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Barak condemned remarks by a Shas Party minister accusing Education Minister Yossi Sarid of "Nazi propaganda tactics." Shlomo Benizri refused to apologize, saying the remarks were an emotional response to what he called the continuing demonization of the fervently Orthodox Shas Party in the media and political left.

### Ad: Let teens work on Shabbat

Young Israeli Jews should be allowed to flip burgers for McDonald's on the Sabbath, according to a newspaper ad taken out by the company's Israeli franchise. "Stop capitulating to Shas or Israel will turn into Iran," said the ad in Yediot Achronot, referring to the fervently Orthodox party that is part of Israel's governing coalition.

In the ad, the managing director of McDonald's Israel, which operates several nonkosher and kosher restaurants in the Jewish state, estimates that he has paid \$20,000 in fines for employing Jewish teen-agers on the Sabbath.

### Report: Israel fourth in high-tech

Israel is the fourth most influential high-tech hub in the world, according to Wired magazine. Silicon Valley in California, Boston and Stockholm-Kista were ranked as the top three.

The survey was based on the ability of area universities and research facilities to train workers and develop technology, the presence of established companies, the entrepreneurial drive of the population and the availability of venture capital.



## Daily News Bulletin

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for Jewish continuity projects and other domestic concerns.

For the coming year — meaning 2001 — as a result of a "stabilization" plan approved in April, federations are informally committed to maintain at least the 1998 allocations levels. However, the UJC has no power to enforce this plan and it is unclear what federations will decide to do once the stabilization year is over.

Depending on whom you talk to, ONAD's first recommendations are either a fundamental change or a very modest step toward giving federations greater decision-making powers. "What we're trying to do this time is to create the road map for the future," said Alan Jaffe, chair of ONAD and a former president of the UJA-Federation of Greater New York.

The choices offered this year to federations are more narrow than many had envisioned in ONAD's formative stages.

When the committee was established, it was envisioned that the panel would determine what federations wished to fund collectively and which other international agencies — such as the Reform and Conservative movement's affiliates in Israel — would be allowed to compete with the JDC and the Jewish Agency for the federations' funds. In the end, officials said that with only eight months to make its recommendations, ONAD decided to limit its work this year to the JDC and the Jewish Agency.

The committee spent most of its meetings listening to those agencies report on what their needs were and then haggling over what would fall into "collective" priorities — originally called "core" — and what would fall into "community" — originally called "elective."

Representing those who were disappointed with the outcome, the Combined Jewish Philanthropies of Greater Boston, one of 18 federations on the ONAD committee, added an appendix to the ONAD recommendations expressing frustration that the committee did not make more dramatic changes, particularly in deciding what U.S. Jews should — and should not — fund.

It is ONAD's role "to identify the highest priority needs, those of special interest to the American Jewish community which can be met with assistance and the serious 'value-added' of ideas, talent and voluntary energy above and beyond funding," says the appendix, asserting that projects now in the collective pot do not all meet this standard.

Boston also said it was disappointed that the JDC and the Jewish Agency are the only agencies eligible for federation funds under the recommendations.

Jaffe, the ONAD chairman, said that in the future, ONAD will likely offer more choices and may bring other agencies into the process. "We didn't do that this year because we hadn't done an independent needs assessment and the timing was short," he said. "To open this up would have been difficult to do."

While some believe ONAD's recommendations do not represent a big enough change for the federations, for the Jewish Agency and the JDC it presents new challenges: they must now market their projects directly to federations.

Under the new system, the agencies have to ensure continued support for both the needs and programs designated as collective as well as community-supported.

The community funding portion initially sparked some concerns from the Jewish Agency and JDC, who were represented on ONAD and were fearful that given the choice, federations might neglect what the agencies sees as worthy projects.

"JDC and the Jewish Agency have a sense of what their base funding will be, but other services are kind of at risk," said Steven Nasatir, executive vice president of the Jewish Federation of Metropolitan Chicago, and a member of ONAD.

"Both those agencies are very concerned about not knowing for sure how many dollars they'll have to run their programs."

Nasatir, whose federation has long been one of the largest contributors to overseas causes, called ONAD's recommendations a "good first-year outcome."

Overall, the two beneficiary agencies say they are satisfied with the ONAD recommendations. But the JDC is — at least publicly — more apprehensive.

"If the federations come through by meeting their share of the core and electives, then we'd be able to continue functioning at our current level," said Michael Schneider, the JDC's executive vice president. "But if they fail to produce those figures, we'll have shortfalls. We hope they rise to the occasion." □

## JEWISH WORLD

### U.S. wants notice on arms sales

The United States is asking Israel to provide it with advance notice on plans to sell arms to 27 countries it considers centers of instability or dangerous to national security.

The Israeli daily Ha'aretz said Israel has been slow in responding to the American proposal, which includes India and China, both important markets for Israeli defense exports.

### Assad's death could help search

The death of Syrian President Hafez Assad could help investigators find a Nazi war criminal believed to be hiding in Damascus, said a leading Nazi-hunter. Serge Klarsfeld made his comments Sunday regarding Alois Brunner, a top aide to Adolf Eichmann.

### 4 Chasidim attacked in Brooklyn

A stabbing attack by a group of Hispanics against four Chasidim in Brooklyn is being investigated as a hate crime by New York police. One man was in critical but stable condition, and three in stable condition, in the incident on the Coney Island boardwalk.

### Jewish tycoon vilified again

Russia's state-controlled television again attacked a Russian Jewish business tycoon, this time for using anti-Semitism as a "shield."

Sunday's attack by the ORT channel on Vladimir Goussinsky came at the end of a story on the controversy involving the chief rabbi of Russia, Adolph Shayevich, who daims he is being pressured to resign.

### Lake searched for Nazi gold

A U.S.-led team began searching for Nazi documents at the bottom of a lake in Austria. The search is being conducted by a diving robot that is taking video pictures of Lake Toplitz. It has long been believed that Nazi officials dumped documents, and perhaps also gold, into the lake in the last days of World War II.

### Symphony honors rescuers

The world premiere of a symphony to honor the people of Denmark for saving Jews during the Holocaust is scheduled for Wednesday at the Adas Israel Synagogue in Washington. "Rescue in Denmark," written by Cantor Arnold Saltzman, is dedicated to the Danish Resistance, which saved more than 7,000 Jews.

### Artist George Segal dies at 75

George Segal, an artist whose work included sculptures commemorating the Holocaust and his father's kosher butcher shop, died Saturday in New Jersey at the age of 75. Segal was known for his full-body casts of people in everyday life situations.

## Peace: What Bashar has said

NEW YORK (JTA) — Little is known about the political views of Bashar Assad, 34, who appears poised to succeed his father, Hafez Assad, as Syria's leader. Some clues, however, may be found in Bashar's few published comments.

In his first media interview last year, Bashar echoed his father's line when he bitterly criticized Arab states that have signed "unilateral peace deals" with the Jewish state.

He also confirmed what many Israeli analysts had suspected when he told a Lebanese daily that Syria used Hezbollah fighters as a bargaining chip to pressure Israel into withdrawing from southern Lebanon.

On Monday, in an interview published by the Saudi-owned newspaper Asharq al-Awsat, Bashar said most Syrians think Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Barak is either unwilling or too politically weak to make peace with Syria.

He also said Israeli concerns about who would have control over the eastern shore of the Sea of Galilee were "unrealistic."

Barak, who has agreed to return nearly all of the Golan Heights to Syria as part of a peace deal, balked earlier this year at the idea of giving Syria control over that shoreline.

Bashar accused Barak of using the issue as a pretext for not allowing the Israeli-Syrian talks to advance to a final peace deal.

He also said in the interview that Damascus would be willing to withdraw its 30,000 troops from Lebanon, but only if he were asked to do so by the Lebanese government. □

## Mandela warns that condemning Iran will work against 13 Jews facing trial

By Suzanne Belling

JOHANNESBURG (JTA) — Former President Nelson Mandela is defending his recent statements that 13 Iranian Jews received a fair hearing in their espionage trial.

Speaking last week at a party for a new book written by the nation's chief rabbi, Mandela said, "I am doing everything to save the lives of those people."

He said that he warned U.S. Jewish leaders in New York last month that "by condemning the trial, you are endangering the lives of those 13," who are accused by Iran of spying for Israel.

After Mandela called the espionage trial "free and fair" during his U.S. visit last month, the American Jewish Committee canceled a luncheon in his honor.

"What we must consider is how to save those 13 and the best thing to do is not to force the Iranians to say, 'We want to show the United States of America and Israel that we are an independent country — so we are going to pass the death sentence and execute those people,'" Mandela said May 7.

The former president drew applause from the 300 people — including legislators, ambassadors and the local Jewish leadership — who had turned out to celebrate the publication of Chief Rabbi Cyril Harris' book, "For Heaven's Sake: The Chief Rabbi's Diary."

Mandela, 82, who crusaded for decades against South Africa's apartheid system and later became the country's first black president, has enjoyed warm relations with South Africa's Jewish community.

However, Mandela is believed to be the only high-profile figure in the world to have spoken out in favor of Iran's handling of the trial, which began last month.

His stance has mystified many, including one American Jewish activist lobbying for the release of the Iranian Jewish prisoners.

"It's very disturbing," Malcolm Hoenlein, executive vice chairman of the Conference of Presidents of Major American Jewish Organizations, said recently.

For "someone of his standing, his comments carry weight in the international community."

A verdict in the trial is expected in the coming days. □

## ARTS &amp; CULTURE

**3-CD set shows Jewish humorist as an equal opportunity offender**

By Tom Tugend

LOS ANGELES (JTA) — "I'm spending Hanukkah, In Santa Monica," Tom Lehrer sings out.

"Amid the California flora, I'll be lighting my menorah.

"Here's to Judas Maccabeus, Boy, if he could only see us."

Yes, Tom Lehrer, the singing and piano playing master satirist of America's social and political foibles in the 1950s and '60s, is alive and back, his cutting observations still resonating in an age when "irreverence has been subsumed by mere grossness," as the now 72-year-old Lehrer puts it.

Apparently enough of Lehrer's original LP records have been passed on from the mid-century college generation to their children and children's children, to induce Rhino Records to release a 3-CD set, priced at \$49.98, of the maestro's entire oeuvre.

Titled "The Remains of Tom Lehrer," the set includes a bound booklet featuring the alternatively straight and jocular story of his life, along with the complete lyrics to all his songs.

Lehrer, who entered Harvard at age 15 and graduated three years later, is a mathematics instructor who always considered his performing career as a temporary sideline. Though he has not given a live performance since 1967, more than 2 million of his records have been sold. It took, however, 45 years to accomplish this feat.

Lehrer has always been reclusive about his private life and would not give an interview touching on his personal background. However, the book accompanying the CD-set includes a long introduction by Barry Hansen (aka Dr. Demento), which sheds some light on Lehrer's beginnings.

"Thomas Andrew Lehrer was born April 9, 1928 in Manhattan," the introduction notes. "His parents were ethnically, but not religiously, Jewish."

At this point, Lehrer breaks into the introduction to inject, "More to do with the delicatessen than the synagogue. My brother and I went to Sunday School, but we had Christmas trees, and 'God' was primarily an expletive, usually preceded by 'oh' or 'my' or both."

Lehrer's religiosity has apparently not deepened with advancing age. A 1997 Internet chat room Q&A included the following exchange:

**Q:** Do you personally have a religious preference?

**Lehrer:** No. There are obviously many people who prefer one brand of bullshit to another, but I am not among them. On the other hand, I often quote James Taylor's immortal line from "Sweet Baby James": "Maybe you can believe it if it helps you to sleep."

What is impressive about Lehrer's complete works is how many of his songs, dealing with long past issues of the 1960s, still skewer prejudices of the present.

Each Lehrer fan will have his or her favorite, but few will forget the lyrics of his top hits. In "National Brotherhood Week," Lehrer sings out, "Oh, the Protestants hate the Catholics/ And the Catholics hate the Protestants/ And the Hindus hate the Muslims/ And ev'rybody hates the Jews."

An equal opportunity offender, Lehrer says he has been reviled most often for his immortal "Vatican Rag," which contains such lines as:

"Get in line in that processional,  
Step into that small confessional,  
There the guy who's got religion'll  
Tell you if your sin's original.  
If it is, try playin' it safer,  
Drink the wine and chew the wafer,  
Two, four, six, eight,  
Time to transubstantiate!"

Many of the same songs are repeated on each of the three CDs in different versions — Lehrer on the piano, sometimes with comments, sometimes without — and, offensive to Lehrer purists, with orchestral backing.

Also annoying is the endless, raucous laughter following each song on disc 2.

The never-before-issued recordings of five songs conclude disc 3, including the Chanukah ditty, which was written in the early 1990s for Garrison Keillor's Saturday radio show, "The American Radio Company."

In his introduction to the song, Keillor pointed out that there just aren't any popular Chanukah songs because no Gentile songwriter ever thought about writing one, and the great Jewish songwriters were busy writing Christmas songs.

"There was thus a deplorable lacuna in the repertoire, which this song, a sort of answer to 'White Christmas,' was intended to remedy," Lehrer noted.

The full lyrics go like this, using Lehrer's own spelling:

"I'm spending Hanukkah  
In Santa Monica,  
Wearing sandals,  
Lighting candles  
By the sea.  
I spent Shevuos  
In East St. Louis,  
A charming spot,  
But clearly not  
The spot for me.  
Those Eastern winters, I can't endure 'em,  
So ev'ry year  
I pack my gear  
And come out here  
Till Purim.  
Rosh Hashonah  
I spend in Arizonah,  
And Yom Kippuh (Southern accent)  
Way down in Mississippi  
But in December there's just one place for me.  
Amid the California flora  
I'll be lighting my menorah,  
Like a baby in the cradle,  
I'll be playing with my dreidel,  
Here's to Judas Maccabeus,  
Boy, if he could only see us,  
Spending Hanukkah  
In Santa Monica  
By the sea."

At this stage of his life, Lehrer writes of himself, "He earns a precarious living peddling dope to local school children and rolling an occasional drunk. He spends his declining years with his shrunken head collection, his Nobel Prizes, and his memories." □