



# Daily News Bulletin

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83rd Year

## TOP NEWS IN BRIEF

### Barak's coalition collapsing

Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Barak's government appeared to be collapsing on the eve of an Israeli-Palestinian peace summit in the United States. [Page 2]

### U.S. Jews take sides on Barak

American Jewish leaders are staking out positions on the eve of a peace summit in the United States.

Jewish leaders who signed a full-page ad in The New York Times said they are concerned that Prime Minister Ehud Barak has "abandoned the principle of reciprocity" by agreeing to widespread concessions while the Palestinians are "strenuously avoiding their obligations."

Meanwhile, 295 U.S. Jewish leaders signed a letter telling Barak that "the overwhelming majority of American Jews" support his peace policies.

### Wiesel wants to go to Iran

Nobel laureate Elie Wiesel hopes to lead a delegation to Iran to appeal for the release of 10 Iranian Jews jailed on charges of spying for Israel, the World Jewish Congress announced.

The WJC is also sending letters to 200,000 Jewish activists around the world as an "urgent call to action" to help free the imprisoned Iranian Jews.

### Buford Furrow's trial delayed

The trial date for a white supremacist charged with wounding five people at a Jewish community center in the Los Angeles area and the subsequent killing of a mail carrier has been postponed until next February.

The trial of Buford Furrow Jr. had originally been scheduled for Nov. 14, but U.S. District Judge Nora Manella ordered the postponement, citing the case's complexity.

### Austria OKs slave labor fund

Austria's Parliament unanimously approved a \$415 million fund to compensate Holocaust-era slave and forced laborers.

As a result of last Friday's vote, there will be one-time payments of up to \$7,250 for slave laborers and \$2,400 to forced laborers. Officials said they hope there will be first payments before the end of the year.

## Russian immigrants on West Bank have little patience for peace talks

By Lev Gorodetsky

JERUSALEM (JTA) — "Yitzhak Rabin came to heaven and is knocking on the doors of Paradise.

"The angel tells him: 'You are too late, my dear. There is no place, everything has already been handed over to the Palestinians.'"

This joke, popular among Russian Israeli settlers on the West Bank, reflects the growing fears among many in Israel's largest immigrant community about the peace process. Thousands of Russian-born Israelis, fearing Prime Minister Ehud Barak is prepared to make dangerous concessions to the Palestinians, demonstrated in Jerusalem last week.

These concerns among the roughly 1 million-strong community are being fanned by leading Russian politicians, including Cabinet member Natan Sharansky. Avigdor Lieberman, a leader of the Israel, Our Home Party, which drew the bulk of the Russian settlers' vote in the 1999 election, recently warned, "War is inevitable within a year."

Sharansky's Yisrael Ba'Aliyah Party resigned from Israel's governing coalition Sunday, followed by the National Religious Party and Shas.

And the appearance in downtown Jerusalem of thousands of immigrants, who carried such signs as "This Peace Is Killing Us" and "Yes to Peace, No to Capitulation," testifies that the movement has a strong base among the Russian grass roots.

"Our people in general can't understand why Israel should surrender the land. When they hear of any territorial concession, the immediate question is, 'What for? Why should we do that?'" said Benny Briskin, who came to Israel from Moscow in the mid-1980s and is now the head of the Russian desk of the Yesha Council, a leading organization of Jewish settlers.

The hawkish views of Russian Israelis, within Israel proper as well as in the West Bank, can be traced to several factors — including a nationalistic Zionism born in reaction to the anti-Israel rhetoric that bombarded them in the former Soviet Union.

"I think there is going to be a very serious deterioration of the situation as a result of the peace process, including clashes around the settlements with numerous victims," said Alexander Averbuch, who edits a Russian-language newspaper in Russia.

Observers here agree that this drive to the right is spearheaded by Russian West Bank settlers who are spreading doomsday scenarios.

"Something should be done. Disaster is coming. Our doctor tried to stop it, he did not succeed," said a 35-year-old bearded Russian settler who asked not to be identified.

The settler was referring to Baruch Goldstein, who opened fire inside the Tomb of the Patriarchs in February 1994, killing 29 Palestinian worshippers.

Sergey Lugovskoy, who lives on the West Bank, is spreading the word to future Israelis.

"National disaster is taking place in Israel. I personally think that Jews have to be together even during the war, but you, people, when preparing to make aliyah, have to know that we are on the verge of a total war," Lugovskoy recently told a group of potential emigres studying Hebrew in a Moscow classroom sponsored by the Jewish Agency for Israel. Lugovskoy's eldest son, Marc, a 19-year-old soldier in the Israeli army, believes that he and his father will likely be killed in an upcoming war because, he said, "Arabs will only want more."

Other Russians, who constitute 20 percent of the roughly 220,000 Jewish settlers on the West Bank, also foresee dangerous developments in the near future. Even some

## MIDEAST FOCUS

### Spy's sentence pleases Israel

Israel expressed satisfaction with the one-year suspended sentence handed down by a Swiss federal judge to a Mossad agent convicted of involvement in a botched 1998 wiretap.

In its ruling last Friday, the Federal Court also barred the agent from entering Switzerland for five years.

### Palestinian killed at checkpoint

Israeli gunfire in the Gaza Strip killed a Palestinian woman and left her husband and two children wounded. The Israeli army said the Palestinian family's car was caught in crossfire.

### Envoy questioned in sex scandal

Officials in Jerusalem are questioning an Israeli diplomat wanted in Brazil for alleged involvement in child pornography.

Brazilian police say Arie Scher is involved in a ring that took pictures of teen-age girls and posted them on the Internet.

### Yitzhak Mordechai charged

Former Israeli Cabinet minister Yitzhak Mordechai was charged with sexually harassing and committing indecent acts on three women when he was the Israel Defense Force's northern command, defense minister and transportation minister.

Mordechai, who says he is innocent, agreed to the lifting of his parliamentary immunity to stand trial.

### Maccabiah head pressed to quit

A special Israeli Knesset committee on the 1997 Maccabiah bridge collapse called for the resignation of the head of the World Maccabi Union.

An Israeli court recently gave jail sentences ranging from nine to 21 months to five people found guilty of negligence in the deaths of four Australian athletes and the injury of 69 others.



## Daily News Bulletin

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of those who live in areas that are all but certain to remain within Israeli jurisdiction are concerned.

Despite gloomy forecasts, the Russian population in the West Bank is growing. Some families who settled there because of low prices are selling their apartments. But others, more ideologically motivated, are taking their places.

Mikhail Galperin recently bought an apartment in Tekoa, a settlement that is all but certain to remain in Israel. As he recently told his friends in Russia: "If Tekoa does not exist, Israel won't exist."

But Galperin's calm appeared to be the rule, not the exception, among Russian settlers on the West Bank. The son of Irina Radunskaya, a pensioner living on the West Bank, recently returned to Russia with his family.

"I am not afraid, because the kids are away, but I have a feeling that any moment everything can collapse," she said. "This state miraculously emerged as a miracle, and it could just as easily disappear." □

## As Ehud Barak goes abroad, his governing coalition collapses

By Naomi Segal

JERUSALEM (JTA) — On the eve of an Israeli-Palestinian peace summit this week in the United States, Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Barak's government was threatened with collapse by an exodus of coalition members.

Interior Minister Natan Sharansky of the Yisrael Ba'Aliyah Party was the first to submit his resignation Sunday. He cited Barak's failure to set "red lines" — the limits to what he is willing to negotiate away — before going to the summit.

Several hours later, the fervently Orthodox Shas Party, the third largest party in the 120-member Knesset, announced it was pulling out of Barak's coalition as well. The National Religious Party followed suit shortly after.

By law, the resignations require two days to take effect. If they do, Barak's governing coalition will be left with 42 seats in the Knesset.

Despite the apparent disintegration of his coalition, Barak remained set in his plans to depart Monday for the Camp David meeting with President Clinton and Palestinian Authority President Yasser Arafat. In an address to the nation broadcast on television and radio Sunday, Barak said he had gotten his mandate from the public and it was his responsibility to seek out every possible avenue of peace.

"No one will teach me what security is," the former army chief of staff said. "I must rise above all the political arguments and all the party considerations and seek out all the possibilities on the way to a peace agreement that will end the conflict of blood between us and our neighbors."

Barak said he could not reveal Israel's red lines because it could be taken by the Palestinians as Israel's opening position.

At the same time, he insisted that "no concessions have been made yet."

The coalition collapse that snowballed Sunday had been building for weeks. It accelerated when Clinton announced the summit last week. Barak was elected more than a year ago on a platform that included a plan to advance the peace process.

While he sought out a broad-based government to advance this initiative, hawkish members of the government have been unhappy over his policies and anxious about the concessions he is reportedly willing to make.

A spate of media reports on Barak's willingness to cede up to 80 percent of the West Bank raised fears among some coalition partners, who have also felt left out of the decision-making process.

Coinciding with Barak's departure for the United States on Monday, the Knesset was scheduled to debate an opposition-sponsored no-confidence motion.

However, observers speculated that the opposition would fail to muster the 61 votes needed to dissolve the Knesset and call new elections.

In another blow to Barak, Foreign Minister David Levy turned down the premier's invitation to accompany him to the United States. Levy is also said to be unhappy with Barak's handling of the peace process. □

## JEWISH WORLD

### Holocaust survivors have praise for a disgraced California official

By Tom Tugend

LOS ANGELES (JTA) — About the only words of praise for California's recently resigned insurance commissioner have come from Holocaust survivors.

Survivors are grateful to Chuck Quackenbush, who resigned June 28 in the face of almost certain impeachment, for his dogged attempts to force European insurance companies to pay claims stemming from the Holocaust era.

At the same time, Quackenbush's resignation left up in the air the future of a \$4.2 million humanitarian fund set up by Dutch insurance companies for needy Holocaust survivors.

Quackenbush likely faces a criminal investigation into charges that he allowed California insurance companies to avoid billions of dollars in fines stemming from mishandled earthquake damage claims, in return for much smaller donations to foundations he established.

In April 1999, Quackenbush formed the California Holocaust Insurance Settlement Alliance, led by Holocaust survivors, to increase pressure on recalcitrant European insurers and identify potential claimants residing in California.

Jona Goldrich, one of the state's leading home builders, was named chairman of the alliance. In an interview with JTA, Goldrich said that he knew nothing of the charges that brought down Quackenbush, but that the former commissioner did "an excellent job for the Jewish community and we will miss him.

"We are ready to work with his successor and only hope that he will be as aggressive in forcing European insurers to pay up," said Goldrich.

One of Quackenbush's accomplishments was to persuade three Dutch insurers — Aegon, ING and Fortis — to establish the \$4.2 million fund for the benefit of an estimated 3,000 needy Holocaust survivors in California.

The money is still available and none has been spent, said Richard Mahan, spokesman for the alliance. But the mechanism to transmit and distribute the fund was never established by Quackenbush's office, due to his other difficulties.

Si Frumkin, who serves on the alliance's executive committee, termed Quackenbush's resignation "tragic for the Jews.

"He was the only one to put real pressure on the European insurance companies by threatening to withdraw their permits to conduct business in California.

"I feel very badly about this matter," added Frumkin. "I would have been proud to drive a tank if Quackenbush were my commander." □

### Annan visits Wallenberg memorial

BUDAPEST (JTA) — U.N. Secretary-General Kofi Annan and his wife, Nane Lagergren, have paid tribute to Raoul Wallenberg, a Swedish diplomat who helped save tens of thousands of Hungarian Jews during World War II.

"There has never been a hero who was so powerfully present in his absence," Kofi Annan said last week at a ceremony at the memorial to Wallenberg that was unveiled here last year.

Lagergren is Wallenberg's niece.

Lagergren visited the Jewish community center, the famous Dohany Street Synagogue in Budapest and another Wallenberg statue erected 15 years ago.

Wallenberg was last seen being taken into custody by Soviet troops on Jan. 17, 1945.

It is possible that Wallenberg, who was 32 at the time of his disappearance, remains alive, although it is widely believed that he is dead.

United States Ambassador Peter Tufo said efforts to discover what happened to Wallenberg should intensify.

Other diplomats, Budapest Mayor Gabor Demszky and local Jews saved by Wallenberg attended the ceremony, which was held near where Wallenberg centered his efforts in issuing false passports and placing Jews in safe houses. □

### Pacifist charged in Russia

A Jewish conscientious objector in Russia was again charged for refusing to serve in Russia's war against Chechnya, according to the Union of Councils for Soviet Jews.

The charges against Dmitry Neverovsky came after he was released from prison in April. Russia's Constitution allows for alternative national service.

### Groups push parties on platforms

The American Jewish Committee testified before the Democratic Party's platform committee.

The AJCommittee urged the committee to include in its platform such stances as a commitment to Middle East peace, fostering reform in Arab dictatorships, opposition to school voucher programs and support for laws to protect religious freedom.

Meanwhile, the Anti-Defamation League called on both the Democratic and Republican party conventions to give a high priority to combating hate crimes.

### Paintings' histories on Internet

The Los Angeles-based J. Paul Getty Museum posted on the Internet the ownership history of some 250 paintings in its collection that may have been looted by the Nazis.

The list represents more than half of the Getty's 425 paintings. The list can be found at [www.getty.edu](http://www.getty.edu) under "Getty Museum Provenance Research (1933-45)."

### Colorado wants 'God' in schools

Colorado's Board of Education voted to urge schools to post the words "In God We Trust," the motto on U.S. currency. Critics accused the board of using the familiar phrase as a way to inject religion into the public schools.

### Russia: Wallenberg papers gone

The KGB destroyed documents about the fate of Raoul Wallenberg, according to Russian officials.

The officials discussed the case of the Swedish diplomat who saved tens of thousands of Jews in Hungary during World War II with former Israeli Ambassador Yohanan Bein, who visited Moscow last week.

A Russian-Swedish committee is currently investigating what happened to Wallenberg, who disappeared in January 1945.

### Haider protested in Italy

Carrying banners reading "Haider Out," left-wing protesters clashed with police in the northern Italian beach resort of Jesolo. The protest was held Saturday after the town's mayor granted the keys to the city to Austrian far-right leader Jorg Haider.

## ARTS &amp; CULTURE

## Miniseries on Nuremberg Trials tells the facts — and adds drama

By Tom Tugend

LOS ANGELES (JTA) — The verdicts pronounced on the Nazi war criminals at Nuremberg were the culmination of the “trials of the century,” dwarfing all other claimants to that title.

Twenty-two defendants sat for 11 months in 1946 before a four-man international tribunal of American, British, French and Russian judges. They were the elite of Germany’s political, military and economic leadership, save for Adolf Hitler, Propaganda Minister Joseph Goebbels and SS chief Heinrich Himmler, who had all committed suicide.

An upcoming four-hour miniseries on U.S. cable television views the trials through the eyes of their chief prosecutor, U.S. Supreme Court Justice Robert Jackson, as portrayed by Alec Baldwin. The docudrama is closely based on Joseph Persico’s intriguing book, “Nuremberg: Infamy on Trial,” and displays most of the virtues and defects of this work.

While the basic framework and data are accurate, Persico, who describes his book as “a narrative supported by historical fact,” does not hesitate to enter into the thought processes and musings of the Nazi bigwigs and other characters.

Most of the psychological insights in the miniseries come from Capt. Gustav Mahler Gilbert, well acted by Matt Craven. Gilbert, the son of Austrian Jewish refugees, speaks German fluently and his job is to mingle with the defendants and gauge their moods and possible suicidal tendencies.

The role of Jackson’s secretary, Elsie Douglas (Jill Hennessy), is enlarged, perhaps to provide a feminine touch among all the uniforms and suits. There are delicious, though not particularly germane, hints throughout the series that the relationship between Jackson and Douglas is more than just professional.

On the defendants’ side, the gallery of characters is both fascinating and repelling. Included are Julius Streicher, publisher of *Der Sturmer*, who is despised even by the other Nazis and who spews his hatred of Jews to his last breath.

By contrast, there is the cool and urbane Albert Speer, head of German war production, whose apparent contrition earned him a 20-year prison sentence instead of hanging.

Deputy Fuhrer Rudolf Hess, whose real or feigned insanity also saved him from the gallows, is also featured.

Of the 22 defendants, the tribunal pronounced the death penalty on 12, prison sentences for six and acquitted two. Two people committed suicide while in custody.

But, as in many morality plays, the most interesting and complex character is the chief villain — in this case, Hermann Goering. The Luftwaffe chief is brilliantly acted by Brian Cox, whose cunning and brutality is camouflaged by a corpulent exterior and generally jolly demeanor.

Goering, Hitler’s designated successor, dominated the other defendants and easily manipulated most of his captors.

He won his initial courtroom encounter with Jackson and apparently persuaded his guard, a naive Texan, to unwittingly furnish him with the cyanide capsule with which Goering cheated the hangman’s noose.

Despite some of the film’s weaknesses, including the portrayal

of the Russian delegation as hard-drinking buffoons easily outmaneuvered by the clever Americans, “Nuremberg” offers a valuable and mostly gripping history lesson. □

“Nuremberg” will air over Turner Network Television (TNT) in two parts, on July 16 and 17 at 8 p.m.. The broadcast will be repeated at 10 p.m. and midnight on the same dates, as well as on July 21, 26 and 29.

## ARTS &amp; CULTURE

## Filmmaker draws on family story as inspiration for Holocaust film

By Brian Seidman

NEW YORK (JTA) — The true story that inspired director Joan Stein’s award-winning Holocaust film may be just as suspenseful as the film itself.

Near the end of World War II, Stein’s grandmother fled her Eastern European village to hide in Budapest. The residents of her village were later killed by the Nazis or their allies.

In Budapest, unable to support all of her children, Stein’s grandmother placed Stein’s uncle in an orphanage.

In October 1944, the Arrow Cross, Hungary’s homegrown anti-Semitic movement, assumed power. Extermination squads shot Jews and threw them into the Danube River.

Stein’s uncle was among a group of Jews rounded up, but he managed to escape and make his way back to the residence where Stein’s grandmother was hiding with a number of other Jews.

The superintendent of the building refused to allow Stein’s uncle into the building out of fear that the others would be discovered. According to the story she’d been told, Stein said, “Twenty people had to hold my grandmother down” so that she would not rush to her son standing at the door. Stein’s uncle was later found and killed.

After receiving a master’s degree in business administration at Georgetown, Stein moved to Budapest in the late 1980s to work as a management consultant. In the early 1990s, after war broke out in Bosnia, Stein began entertaining refugee children.

The connections Stein made between the events in Bosnia and the Holocaust motivated her to launch her own film project.

The result is “One Day Crossing,” a 25-minute black-and-white film set in Hungary in 1944.

The film is in Hungarian with English subtitles. It follows Theresa, formerly Sarah, a Jewish woman posing as a Christian to protect her son, Peter, formerly Benjamin.

The subterfuge becomes more complicated when Theresa’s husband, a freedom fighter, brings home a boy he’s rescued from execution, also named Benjamin.

Many elements of the film, including the plight of the orphans, are hauntingly reminiscent of Stein’s family’s story. Though she was initially anxious about her family’s reaction, she needn’t have worried: They, too, believe that it is important she made the film.

Stein is working to have her film shown at Jewish film festivals around the United States. She’s been approached about having the film distributed to schools.

The film, completed as part of Stein’s master’s thesis at Columbia University, won the Gold Medal for best narrative film at the 27th Annual Student Academy Awards and the Director’s Guild of America’s Student Film Award. □