



# Daily News Bulletin

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83rd Year

## TOP NEWS IN BRIEF

### Group to disburse Shoah funds

The World Jewish Congress plans to create a foundation next month that will determine how to disburse at least hundreds of millions of dollars in Holocaust restitution money.

The foundation, which will be announced Sept. 11, may allocate funds for activities like Jewish education and restoring Europe's Jewish communities, said the WJC's executive director, Elan Steinberg.

### Hate crimes law effort heats up

U.S. Jewish groups working to pass federal hate crimes legislation are stepping up efforts to pass it before the end of the 106th session of the U.S. Congress.

Supporters held a media event in New York on Wednesday attended by New York Senate candidate Hillary Rodham Clinton.

The U.S. Senate has already passed a bill, but if the House of Representatives does not do so, the effort will have to begin from scratch in Congress' next session. [Page 3]

### Argentine Jews protest event

Argentine Jewish leaders are protesting a recent "Messianic Jewish" festival in Buenos Aires that was touted as an international festival of Jewish music and dance.

Jewish leaders sent out e-mails, took out newspaper advertisements, posted fliers and rented a truck with speakers to inform possible attendees of the Christian missionary nature of the festival.

An estimated 30,000 people attended the three-night event.

An Argentine judge refused to block the festival, but did order its organizers to turn off neon signs at the event.

### Clinton: Bring terrorists to justice

President Clinton pledged to bring to justice those who attacked and murdered Americans abroad. Clinton made his comment in a letter sent to the conference of Presidents of Major American Jewish Organizations, which called on him to seek the extradition of Mohammed Deif, wanted in connection with several attacks that killed U.S. Jews.

The Palestinian Authority reportedly recently arrested Deif.

## BEHIND THE HEADLINES

### Flap over Lieberman stance revives black-Jewish tensions

By Sharon Samber

WASHINGTON (JTA) — Joseph Lieberman's attempts last week to allay the concerns of some black leaders about his position on affirmative action showed political smarts — but it also showed that old tensions die hard.

Despite a general sense that ties between Jews and blacks have improved in recent years, the Democratic vice-presidential candidate's emergence into the public spotlight has revived issues of contention — and revived concern about black anti-Semitism.

Lieberman had to clarify his position on affirmative action to the Democratic National Committee's black caucus as soon as he arrived in Los Angeles for the convention.

"I have supported affirmative action, I do support affirmative action and I will support affirmative action," he told the group.

And in his acceptance speech to the convention on Aug. 14, Lieberman said he favored President Clinton's "mend it, don't end it" approach to affirmative action.

U.S. Rep. Maxine Waters (D-Calif.), who led the fight to force Lieberman to explain his position, seemed appeased. The outspoken congresswoman said she felt a lot better after the issue had been clarified.

Lieberman and other Democratic officials also touted the senator's long record of support for civil rights. He traveled to Mississippi in the 1960s to register black voters. In the Senate, he voted to continue affirmative action programs in 1995, and three years later helped stop the elimination of a federal program that helps women and minorities win highway construction contracts.

While he did indicate his support for California's Proposition 209, a failed ballot initiative in 1996 that would have abolished state-funded affirmative action programs, Lieberman has said he did not agree with its details and never endorsed the legislation. At the same time, Lieberman has said he is troubled by racial quotas.

The Democratic platform makes clear that Gore strongly opposes efforts to roll back affirmative action programs.

While Lieberman seemed to assuage the concerns of many party blacks, the incident brought to the surface an issue that has long been a point of contention between blacks and Jews.

Murray Friedman, an American Jewish historian and author of "What Went Wrong: The Creation and Collapse of the Black-Jewish Alliance," said there was a feeling in the black community years ago that Jewish agencies stood in the way of affirmative action.

In the landmark 1977 case of Regents of the University of California vs. Bakke, the Supreme Court found that race could be considered as one factor in the medical school admissions process but cannot be the deciding factor.

The Anti-Defamation League, the American Jewish Committee and the American Jewish Congress all filed briefs in support of the white medical school applicant who challenged the racial quota system.

Today, affirmative action remains a difficult issue within the Jewish community.

The Orthodox Union, for example, is more sympathetic to a class-based model of affirmative action rather than a race-based one, according to Nathan Diament, the director of the O.U.'s Institute for Public Affairs.

The group eschews quotas and supports assistance to people based on individual

## MIDEAST FOCUS

### Minister: No summit warranted

There's not enough common ground between Israel and the Palestinians yet to hold another summit, said Israel's chief negotiator at the recent Camp David summit.

Earlier Wednesday, Cabinet member Shlomo Ben-Ami said Egypt holds the key to resolving the stalemate on Jerusalem. Ben-Ami is scheduled to travel to Egypt on Thursday.

### Court nixes Shas leader's appeal

The Supreme Court rejected the appeal of Israeli Shas Party leader Aryeh Deri, clearing the way for Deri to begin serving his sentence for fraud and bribery on Sept. 3. Sephardi leaders criticized the decision.

Shas Party leader Eli Suissa said it "twisted the knife that has been stuck in the Sephardi back for 52 years," referring to discrimination that the Sephardi community feels it has suffered in Israel.

### Netanyahu backers applaud move

Supporters of former Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu are applauding a decision by Likud Party leader Ariel Sharon not to hold early primaries unless early elections are held.

The decision could pave the way for a return of Netanyahu, who reportedly will run for leader of the party if Attorney General Elyakim Rubinstein does not indict him on charges that he breached the public trust.

### BBC won't take Israel to court

The BBC dropped its threat to take Israel to international court over the death of a freelance driver it hired in Lebanon in May.

Instead, the broadcaster will push for compensation for the driver's family via the General Counsel of the Israeli Ministry of Defense. Abed Takkoush, 53, was killed when an Israeli rocket struck his taxi during the Israeli withdrawal from southern Lebanon.



## Daily News Bulletin

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need, rather than membership in a particular racial or ethnic group.

While there are nuanced differences among Jewish organizations, the consensus appears to support "properly structured" affirmative action policies, according to a two-year study on the issue by the Jewish Council for Public Affairs, an umbrella group of Jewish organizations.

The study found a range of opinions in the Jewish community on appropriate affirmative action policies, including those that question the value of any such policies. But the majority, according to the JCPA study, support "policies or programs that consider race as one among many relevant factors, that accept or reward only individuals judged to be qualified, and that do not include quotas."

For his part, Lieberman is receiving support from prominent black leaders and organizations.

Civil rights leader Jesse Jackson took the opportunity to turn the issue around as he told a cheering crowd at the convention that "Gore ended the quota of zero of Jewish Americans on the national ticket last week. This was a bold act of affirmative action."

Perhaps trying to halt any further damage, veteran civil rights leader Rep. John Lewis (D-Ga.) said in his prime-time convention speech, "We need a man like Joe Lieberman to walk with us." In the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People Legislative Report Card on the 106th Congress, Lieberman received 100 percent for his voting record on civil rights issues.

Julian Bond, chairman of the NAACP's board of directors, said American Jews have been more supportive of civil rights than other white Americans.

The affirmative action issue will probably die down and won't spark a renewal of tensions, most experts agree.

"I don't see this as a dominant issue at the moment," said Friedman, who heads the American Jewish Committee office in Philadelphia.

Julius Lester, a professor of Judaic and Near Eastern studies at the University of Massachusetts, said he thinks tensions between the two groups in general have diminished. "In my travels around the country, I find blacks are more curious about Judaism, that more blacks are converting to Judaism and this is in contrast to very different attitudes I encountered a decade ago," said Lester, an African American who converted to Judaism years ago.

A clear indication of the change, Lester says, was the response of the NAACP to the leader of the Dallas chapter who made anti-Semitic remarks about Lieberman being the vice presidential nominee. The NAACP immediately denounced the comments Lee Alcorn made. Alcorn was forced to resign.

"My own sense is that tensions between blacks and Jews is at its lowest in quite some time," Lester said.

But according to a 1998 Anti-Defamation League poll of Americans' attitudes about Jews, blacks are three times more likely to hold anti-Semitic beliefs than whites.

That finding of growing anti-Semitism among blacks is challenged by Rabbi Marc Schneier, president of the Foundation for Ethnic Understanding, an organization that works to foster relations between Jews and blacks.

A 1998 poll by the organization surveyed 500 Jews and 500 blacks and found growing cooperation between the groups.

According to Abraham Foxman, the ADL's national director, the polls are not comparable because of the way they were conducted.

He said he wishes the foundation's survey conclusions were right, and that his group was so troubled by the findings of the ADL survey that it doubled the samples twice — and still got the same results.

"It's a very distressing, disturbing statistic," he said.

Indeed, tensions could keep ebbing and flowing as anti-Semitic remarks come from parts of the black community, say observers.

The latest incident was an editorial in the Amsterdam News, a major black newspaper in New York City, that suggested Gore bought the Jewish vote by selecting Lieberman as his running mate.

Schneier views the remarks as exceptions to the rule. "We must distance ourselves from the rhetoric and diatribe of a few who look to exacerbate tensions between our two communities," Schneier said. □

## JEWISH WORLD

### Iran sends Jewish leader to U.N.

The lone Jewish member of Iran's Parliament will join a 20-member delegation that will visit the United Nations next week.

The role of Maurice Motamed, according to Iranian media reports, will be to refute the "smear campaign" against Iran after 10 Iranian Jews were convicted July 1 on charges of spying for Israel.

A ruling on the appeal is expected Sept. 5.

### Neo-Nazis: We beat immigrant

Three neo-Nazis charged with kicking and beating to death an immigrant from Mozambique denied that they tried to kill him.

But the three admitted that they attacked the immigrant even after he fell to the ground.

If convicted, the one adult being charged faces a life sentence, while the two teen-agers face up to 10 years in prison.

### Fights erupt over Zyklon B firm

Scuffles erupted at the annual meeting in Frankfurt of the firm responsible for the Zyklon B gas used in death camps.

Protesters at the IG Farben meeting, which is in receivership, have long demanded that the firm be liquidated and that its estimated \$9 million in assets be given to Holocaust survivors.

### Havel wants cemetery solution

Czech President Vaclav Havel indirectly criticized a recent comment by one of his government ministers that seemed to make light of a campaign by some European Jews to protest building on top of a historic Jewish cemetery in Prague.

Havel said, "The important thing for me is that the government has the will to seek a solution."

### 13 British fans arrested

German police arrested 13 British fans for chanting "Heil Hitler" and making the Nazi salute in a Munich beer garden.

The arrests came after a wave of neo-Nazi violence in Germany in which 10 immigrants were wounded, including six Jews.

### Florida rabbi hit shul president

A Florida synagogue has lost members since the rabbi punched the president several months ago, according to the Palm Beach Post.

Shortly after the incident at Temple Emanu-El in Palm Beach, Rabbi Leonid Feldman, a Russian emigre widely credited with revitalizing the Conservative synagogue, apologized to the board and took a new job at a synagogue in Miami Beach.

## Jewish groups join call for Congress to pass hate crimes law this session

By Michael J. Jordan

NEW YORK (JTA) — Jewish groups are joining in a last-ditch effort to push through federal hate crimes legislation before the 106th U.S. Congress is history.

If they fail, advocates would practically have to start over again in the next Congress.

In a news conference on the steps of New York's City Hall, Hillary Rodham Clinton, the state's Democratic candidate for U.S. Senate, joined civil rights leaders and members of New York's congressional delegation in supporting the Hate Crimes Prevention Act.

They also unveiled a Web site, unitedagainsthate.org, devoted to arm grass-roots activists with hate crimes-related information as they lobby their local representatives, who are now off on August recess.

The Senate already passed a version of the bill June 20. But it must also pass the House of Representatives between the time it reconvenes Sept. 5 to the time the session ends, around Oct. 1. If not, the entire process must be repeated.

"This is the farthest we've ever gotten; after events like this, we know it'll pass if it's brought to the House floor," said Jody Rabhan, associate director of Washington operations for the National Council of Jewish Women, which co-sponsored Wednesday's press event.

Republican leaders oppose the proposed measure because they say it would designate special classes of citizens, particularly gays and lesbians, who are already protected under existing state laws against violence.

But Rabhan said the new law would serve as better "protection and deterrence" than the current law.

It would widen the scope of crimes in which federal agencies could assist local authorities, mandate longer jail terms and expand the existing law — which focuses on violence motivated by race, color, religion or national origin — to include crimes based on gender, sexual orientation or disability.

"If people are specially attacked" for these reasons, "they must be specially protected," said New York Public Advocate Mark Green, a Jew who reportedly intends to run for mayor of New York in 2001.

At Wednesday's event, Clinton was clearly the prime attraction, as photographers and television-camera operators jostled for prime spots and local officials crowded the first lady to be included in the camera frame.

The hate crime law, she said, is a key plank on her campaign platform.

She also spoke of meeting with victims of the August 1999 shooting spree by a white supremacist at the North Valley Jewish Community Center in California, describing it as a "personally wrenching experience."

Support for this law is clear, said Clinton, "if you've ever held the hand and looked in the eye of victims."

Serving as backdrop to Clinton's appearance, her campaign is angling to pick up more Jewish voters following a few highly publicized incidents that have earned her scorn from some corners of the community. Analysts suggest, however, she may benefit from a "Lieberman bounce" among Jewish voters — a result of the nomination of Sen. Joe Lieberman as Democratic presidential candidate Al Gore's running mate.

"I don't really care what her reasons are for being here," Rabhan said.

"I think she, like most Americans, feels very deeply about this issue."

Speakers at the event signed a letter to representatives who have not yet supported the bill.

Among the Jewish signatories are the American Jewish Committee, American Jewish Congress, Anti-Defamation League, Hadassah: the Women's Zionist Organization of America, Jewish War Veterans of the USA, Jewish Women International, Jewish Council for Public Affairs, Jewish Labor Committee, Na'amat USA, National Council of Jewish Women, National Jewish Democratic Council, Union of American Hebrew Congregations, and Women of Reform Judaism. □

## Missing U.S. soldier heads home, could face an army court martial

By Gil Sedan

JERUSALEM (JTA) — A U.S. army officer who had been missing from a Texas base for two weeks is out of Israel's hands — for now.

Lt. Col. Jeremiah Mattysse, 50, voluntarily returned to the United States after he was found Monday in a youth hostel near Mitzpeh Ramon in southern Israel.

Mattysse, who converted to Judaism 10 years ago, said he did not pass on any military intelligence to the Jewish state, as a woman who claims to be his girlfriend originally said. On Monday, Rivka Nir retracted her story and said Mattysse had done nothing wrong.

"First of all, I'm on vacation here," Mattysse said. "I'm not a spy. I've given no classified information to anybody."

An Israeli source called the matter a "very human, personal situation."

Israeli authorities confirmed that Mattysse has applied to immigrate to the Jewish state. But first, he will have to explain his conduct to the United States.

Joe Hanley, a spokesman for the U.S. Army Reserve, said Mattysse — who had been missing since Aug. 7 — is charged with being absent without leave, desertion and conduct unbecoming an officer. Hanley added that authorities will decide whether to court martial Mattysse, who will be reassigned to Fort Knox.

Until February, Mattysse worked in a management position at a Texas army intelligence center.

Mattysse was reassigned to a U.S. Army Reserve group in San Antonio after an investigation was launched into a possible extramarital affair.

The San Antonio Express-News reported that Mattysse's wife, Vanda, filed for divorce on March 7. An attorney for Vanda Mattysse said a divorce is pending.

His disappearance was of heightened concern because of his intelligence background, said Hanley.

Nir, who holds both Israeli and American citizenship, said she hopes Mattysse returns to the United States and makes aliyah only after he clears his name. □

*(JTA correspondents Naomi Segal in Jerusalem and Sharon Samber in Washington contributed to this report.)*

## ARTS & CULTURE

### Jewish heritage sites promoted as integral to European history

By Ruth E. Gruber

ROME (JTA) — An ancient mikvah in Sicily. The Jewish cemetery in Sarajevo. The oldest synagogue in Great Britain.

These are just a few of the hundreds of Jewish heritage sites in 16 European countries that will be open to the public Sept. 3 in a "European Day of Jewish Culture."

The scope of this year's initiative is a demonstration of a growing interest in European Jewish heritage and Jewish heritage sites that has developed markedly in the past decade.

From Spain to Switzerland, from Belgium to the Balkans, the

aim of the event is to recognize Jewish heritage as an integral part of European cultural heritage and to promote tourism to sites of Jewish interest. According to organizers, as many as 300 or more synagogues, cemeteries, ritual baths, medieval ghettos and Jewish museums will be on show.

Guided tours, exhibitions, concerts and other events are also planned — ranging from a Jewish book fair in Bologna to food-tastings of typical Jewish cuisine in a number of towns and cities. Special brochures, leaflets and other informational material will be distributed in a number of places.

"The Jewish community wants to promote awareness and stimulate interest in all aspects of its culture," said a representative of the Union of Italian Jewish Communities. "They know that tolerance begins with curiosity in others, and that acquaintance and encounter help eliminate preconceptions, enabling dialogue among peoples."

For decades after World War II, Jews and non-Jews alike paid little attention to preserving or documenting Jewish sites that had survived both the destruction of the Holocaust and demographic shifts of Jewish populations.

Many Jews wanted nothing to do with places they believed were vestiges of a closed chapter of history.

But since the late 1980s — and particularly since the fall of communism opened up Eastern and Central Europe to tourists and scholars — Jewish heritage has become increasingly recognized as a rich legacy for Europe as a whole and embraced as an important component of multicultural society.

"Jewish heritage in France is also the heritage of all the French people, just as the cathedrals of France also belong to France's Jews," France's Culture Minister told a conference on European Jewish heritage held in Paris last year.

Sites in nearly 40 towns and cities will be open in Italy, home to about 35,000 Jews. In Florence, Italy's culture minister will attend a ceremony kicking off restoration of the city's magnificent synagogue and Jewish museum.

In Britain, sites in London and eight other cities are on the list, putting a number of selected historic synagogues on public view for the first time. Among the synagogues open to the public will be London's Bevis Marks Synagogue, the oldest in Britain, built in 1701.

Most sites on display are generally closed to public access, and many were abandoned for decades — or centuries.

Like Spanish ghettos that will be open for viewing, the Medieval Mikveh in Sicily, considered one of the finest in Europe, predates the expulsion of Jews from Spanish-ruled lands in 1492.

The Jewish cemetery in Sarajevo, founded in 1630, is undergoing restoration after being seriously damaged during the siege of Bosnia in the 1990s, when it was on the front line of fighting and used as an important artillery position by Bosnian Serbs.

France's Agency for the Development of Tourism of the Bas-Rhin, B'nai B'rith Europe, the European Council of Jewish Communities and the Red de Juderias de Espana, in Girona, Spain, are coordinating the initiative, which will take place in Austria, Belgium, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, the Czech Republic, France, Germany, Greece, Italy, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia, Spain, Switzerland, and the United Kingdom. □

*For information on the European Day of Jewish Culture, see the Web site of the European Council of Jewish Communities: [www.ecjc.com](http://www.ecjc.com).*