



Daily News Bulletin

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84th Year

TOP NEWS IN BRIEF

Israeli soldier killed in Gaza

An Israeli soldier was killed in the Gaza Strip. The soldier was killed Monday by a single bullet while he was traveling near a Palestinian refugee camp, according to a spokesman for the Israeli army. Israel closed the Gaza airport and the Gaza-Egypt border following the slaying.

Security alert issued for elections

Israeli security forces are on high alert for attempts by Palestinian terrorists to carry out attacks during Tuesday's election. The Israel Defense Force imposed a full closure on the West Bank and Gaza Strip until after the elections.

In Gaza, members of Islamic Jihad threatened to set off bombs in Tel Aviv.

The threat came during the funeral Monday of a Palestinian man killed by Israeli troops over the weekend while he allegedly tried to sneak into Israel from Gaza with 33 pounds of explosives strapped to his body.

Election campaigns end

Official campaigning in Israel ended a day before the nation goes to the voting booth to select a prime minister.

Prime Minister Ehud Barak still trailed opposition leader Ariel Sharon by nearly 20 points in opinion polls.

The two candidates published direct appeals to the voters on the front page of Monday's edition of *Yediot Achronot*.

Barak called the Middle East a powder keg and said Israeli voters should not "give the match to extremists."

Sharon wrote that his government would not conduct negotiations with the Palestinians under fire.

Banks publish 21,000 accounts

Swiss banks are publishing a list of some 21,000 dormant accounts likely to have belonged to Holocaust victims.

The list was posted Monday on the Internet at www.dormantaccounts.ch.

The total was far lower than what some U.S. banking officials and Jewish groups had wanted published. [Page 3]

UJC looking to future after departure of No. 2

By Julie Wiener

NEW YORK (JTA) — The umbrella organization for North American federations does not plan to replace its executive vice president, Louise Stoll, who officially departed last week after almost a month of negotiations.

"This is not the time to get into another search process," Stephen Solender, the president and CEO of the United Jewish Communities, said in an interview with JTA.

Solender said he would instead like to focus on "getting our program moving" and announced several upcoming goals:

- Developing several multi-year strategies in the areas of Jewish education, human services and Israel;
- Launching a media campaign, together with several national Jewish groups and Israel's Foreign Ministry, to promote Israel's perspective in its conflict with the Palestinians;
- Planning an initiative to improve the socioeconomic status of Israel's Ethiopian immigrants; and
- Recruiting financial support from private foundations, so that the UJC will not be as dependent on Jewish federations for its revenues. The UJC currently gets the bulk of its operating expenses from the federations.

The UJC's executive-level professionals will divvy up the responsibilities of Stoll, who was with the organization for 13 months, Solender said.

In addition, the group plans to hire an executive to head human resource development — including overseeing efforts to address the national shortage of Jewish educators and other Jewish professionals.

According to the UJC, Stoll's responsibilities included leading a strategic planning process, overseeing the National Jewish Population Survey, guiding the system toward greater use of technology and developing a relationship between the federations and Birthright Israel.

Officially, Stoll is maintaining a "consulting relationship" with the UJC, but it is not clear exactly what role she will have after she moves to Washington, where she plans to "pursue other professional interests," according to a UJC statement.

Solender is insisting that Stoll's departure will not affect progress of the roughly one-and-a-half-year-old organization, which resulted from the merger of the Council of Jewish Federations, the United Jewish Appeal and the United Israel Appeal.

It's "never easy to have executive change at the top," he said. However, staff members have been "able to remain focused and keep going."

After a protracted search, Stoll, who served as assistant secretary for budget and programs at the U.S. Department of Transportation from 1993 to 1997, was hired six months after the UJC was formed.

She was tapped by the UJC for her managerial expertise, outsider perspective and ability to effect change, officials said at the time.

Stoll was originally considered for the top UJC post, according to federation insiders.

But federation executives pressed for the appointment of an insider who understood the system, knew the players and could hit the ground running. When word leaked of her departure — which several insiders say was not her choice but the result of pressure from some lay leaders and some large-city federation executives — some interpreted it as a sign that the UJC is resistant to change.

"I'm disappointed" about what this says about the system's ability to rebuild itself,

MIDEAST FOCUS

Gunmen fire on Hebron children

Palestinian gunmen opened fire at a group of Israeli children in a Jewish enclave of the West Bank city of Hebron, according to the Jerusalem Post.

There were no injuries in Monday's attack.

Local Jewish leaders later demanded that the Israeli army retake the hills surrounding the city.

Intel to build plant in Israel

Israel's finance minister signed an agreement Monday outlining the government's willingness to provide some \$440 million to chipmaker Intel if it builds a \$3.5 billion plant in the Jewish state.

Avraham Shochat said Monday that if Intel goes ahead with the new plant it would be the largest investment ever made in the Israeli economy.

Judge rules against Rabin killer

An Israeli judge refused to let Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin's assassin out of jail to attend his sister's wedding. The judge said the presence of Yigal Amir, who killed Rabin in November 1995, and his brother, Hagai, at next week's wedding could create a security threat.

Last week, Prime Minister Ehud Barak ordered the Education Ministry to immediately cease the employment of Margalit Har-Shefi, who was convicted in 1998 of knowing of the plot to assassinate Rabin and failing to prevent it.

The move followed the disclosure that Har-Shefi has been working as a substitute teacher in the Jewish settlement of Pesagot for the past three weeks.

Pizza, hummus top food charts

Israeli high-tech workers still prefer to eat the basics, including pizza and hummus, despite their yuppie image. According to a survey published in the Israeli daily Yediot Achronot, pizza and pasta topped the food preferences, with hummus and tahina the most popular in the salad category.

said Caryn Rosen Adelman of Chicago, who is active in the UJC.

It's especially frustrating "because there are real needs out there, and we're still discussing governance and internal politics instead of doing whatever we can to raise money and save Jews," said Adelman, who first brought Stoll's name to the attention of the federation world.

Since its formation in 1999, the UJC has come under criticism for being slow to articulate a clear vision.

The UJC has struggled to combine organizations with different cultures.

It also has had to contend with pleasing the federations, with the smaller ones requesting extensive services while the larger ones have called for dramatic cost-cutting. In addition, some say, there has been a certain fuzziness over whether the UJC should be leading the federations — which are its "owners" — or the other way around.

It is not entirely clear why Stoll left.

Citing a "gag rule" that was part of Stoll's severance agreement, Solender declined to discuss Stoll or the circumstances of her departure.

Stoll did not return phone calls seeking comment.

Stoll's supporters say she was a first-rate professional with fresh ideas. Her critics say she could be abrasive.

They also say that after working in corporate and government sectors rather than the consensus-driven federation world, Stoll didn't fully understand the need to reach out to professional and lay leaders in her effort to promote change.

According to several federation insiders, Stoll faced challenges from the start.

Some senior UJC professionals apparently resented her authority and refused to report directly to her.

Stoll also apparently alienated some federation executives and lay leaders by not showing enough deference.

One federation official who did not want to be named recalled a meeting in Jerusalem in which she publicly berated a lay leader, a move seen as a major no-no in the federation world.

Ron Meier, the executive vice president of UJA-Federation of Bergen County and North Hudson, N.J., said Stoll was "refreshing in her candor" and "in some sense very helpful," but "had a harder time developing the kind of relationships that would support change."

"Perhaps her agenda for change ran ahead of the relationship development that would have supported that change over time," he said.

One observer who has advised several federations on management matters suggested that Stoll's departure resulted not from her personality but is "symptomatic of the fact that there is not agreement" about what the UJC is and should be.

"It starts with merger-itis, in which there are competing pulls within the organization related to the old UJA and CJF about who's going to be in charge and who has what portfolio," said this observer, who asked that his name not be used.

Some have also speculated that Stoll's departure may signal that the federation system, long regarded as a "boys' club," is an unfriendly working environment for women. Solender said Stoll's departure should not be seen as an indicator of the UJC's receptivity to women or willingness to change.

"Three out of six of our top positions are filled by women," Solender said, referring to the positions directly below him. "That speaks for itself."

As for change, Solender referred to the new initiatives in the works and said, "We are in the middle of the most massive change in the federation field since the 1940s."

"This is the largest merger that's ever been attempted by any philanthropy, Jewish or non-Jewish."

Jacob Solomon, executive vice president of the Greater Miami Jewish Federation, agreed.

"Everything about UJC is about change right now," he said, citing the "complex and challenging" task of consolidating into one organization with one culture and one mission.

UJC is "working really hard" to get to a place that is "stable, forward-thinking and visionary," he said, adding that he didn't view Stoll's departure as a "significant setback" in this goal. □

(JTA Editor Lisa Hosten contributed to this report.)



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JEWISH WORLD

Swiss banks publish names, hope to end restitution saga

By Mitchell Danow

Goussinsky barred from Israel trip

Spanish judges rejected a request by a Russian media mogul and Jewish leader to travel to Israel to vote in Tuesday's election for prime minister.

The judges said Monday they feared Russian Jewish Congress President Vladimir Goussinsky, who is being held under house arrest pending a decision on whether to extradite him to Russia to face fraud charges, would attempt to flee justice.

Survivors: Keep Papon jailed

Some 200 Holocaust survivors and members of Jewish groups gathered outside a Paris prison to demand that a Nazi collaborator remain behind bars.

Sunday's demonstration came amid debate in France over whether Maurice Papon, 90, should be freed because of his age and poor health.

Papon is serving a 10-year sentence after he was found guilty of helping deport some 1,500 Jews to Nazi death camps during World War II.

Youths to go on solidarity mission

Sixty-seven members of the U.S.-based Young Judaea youth movement are planning to visit Israel next week on a solidarity mission.

The mission is believed to be the first such youth solidarity mission since Palestinian violence erupted in late September.

Group to locate child escapees

A nonprofit organization is trying to locate approximately 1,000 people sent as children to U.S. foster families to save them from the Nazis.

One Thousand Children Inc. plans to organize a first reunion and produce scholarly papers, a documentary and a Web site.

Lithuanian alliance criticized

A Lithuanian newspaper urged the government to take action against what it said is an emerging alliance among pro-fascist and pro-Communist radicals who openly instigate ethnic hatred, according to the Union of Councils for Soviet Jews.

The alliance's declarations against Jews and Lithuania's integration into NATO should be investigated, said the editorial.

Sharon smitten by U.S. adviser

Israeli opposition leader Ariel Sharon was quoted as telling a group of Israeli television journalists that he found President Bush's national security adviser so attractive when they met last summer that he could barely focus on what she was saying.

A widower, Sharon met with Condoleezza Rice last August, when she made her first trip to Israel.

NEW YORK (JTA) — The latest chapter of the saga of Swiss banks and Holocaust survivors reflects a compromise aimed at bringing the story to a close.

Four years after publishing initial lists of dormant accounts that may have belonged to Holocaust victims, Swiss banks announced Monday that they had published the names on an additional 21,000 accounts.

The total was far lower than what some U.S. banking officials had wanted published.

Last month, New York's top banking regulator, Elizabeth McCaul, had called on the Swiss banks to open their entire database of accounts — some 4.2 million in all — that might have belonged to survivors.

Jewish groups representing these survivors made a similar request, saying the process of returning survivors' assets necessitates full access to bank records.

Swiss banking officials refused.

But, in a compromise, they said claimants who have a reasonable case could request that the full database be searched.

Survivors have long complained about delays in the restitution process.

Given the survivors' advanced age, every delay meant that some survivors would not live long enough to get their money.

Survivors' advocates estimate that some 1,000 survivors around the world die each month.

Elan Steinberg, executive director of the World Jewish Congress, estimated that some 30,000 Holocaust survivors died in recent years while restitution efforts involving Swiss banks and several European nations dragged on.

The WJC spearheaded an international campaign more than five years ago to convince the Swiss banks to confront their wartime record.

The list published Monday was posted on the World Wide Web at www.dormantaccounts.ch.

It is the third list to be published by the banks, which agreed in August 1998 to pay \$1.25 billion to settle charges that they hoarded the assets of Holocaust victims.

Dormant account holders are the primary recipients of the settlement.

Swiss officials said Monday that Albert Einstein and Sigmund Freud appeared on the latest list.

In an indication of how difficult it can be to identify account holders, however, the officials said they were unable to determine whether the names actually referred to the famous physicist and the father of psychoanalysis.

In 1997, two separate lists were published that included some 16,000 names linked to dormant accounts.

The lists were created through the efforts of an independent team of auditors.

The team conducted a three-year search of Swiss bank records that date back to the Holocaust era.

People who believe they have a valid claim against the Swiss banks may submit an application to the Claims Resolution Tribunal.

Further information about the claims process is available at the tribunal's Web site, www.crt-ii.org.

Potential claimants also can obtain information by contacting their local Jewish federation or Jewish family service agency. □

Schindler diary given to museum

NEW YORK (JTA) — Oskar Schindler's widow has donated to Germany's main history museum pages from a diary that belonged to one of the thousands of Jews her husband rescued from the Holocaust.

Emilie Schindler gave the excerpts of Henry Dressler's diary to the Haus der Geschichte museum, along with a photo album of the making of the movie "Schindler's List." □

Bush pushes faith-based plan at his national prayer breakfast

By Matthew E. Berger

WASHINGTON (JTA) — With religious faith emerging as one of the central themes of President Bush's first weeks in office, the new president sought to stress religious inclusiveness at his first National Prayer Breakfast.

Bush said his administration would welcome all religions and "honor the diversity of our country and the deep convictions of our people."

"America's Constitution forbids a religious test for office, and that's the way it should be," Bush said at the Feb. 1 breakfast, which was hosted by a bipartisan group of lawmakers. "An American president serves people of every faith, and serves some of no faith at all."

Following criticism about his plan to encourage faith-based social service initiatives, the president used the breakfast to emphasize the role the program will play in society.

"Government cannot be replaced by charities, but it can welcome them as partners instead of resenting them as rivals," Bush said. "My administration will put the federal government squarely on the side of America's armies of compassion."

Bush said his plan will not favor religious institutions over secular ones, and said he was "interested in what is constitutional."

Some groups opposed to the faith-based initiatives, under which religious institutions can receive government-supported social service contracts, say the Bush plan is short on details and leaves too many questions unanswered.

Rabbi David Saperstein, director of the Religious Action Center of Reform Judaism, said Bush's hesitancy in divulging details of his faith-based initiative showed that administration officials were listening to their critics.

"He's affirming the general concept but not getting specific," Saperstein said. Bush's people "were really shocked by the outspoken criticism, and they are reviewing the noncentral parts of this program."

Nathan Diament, director of the Orthodox Union's Institute for Public Affairs, said he hopes Bush's comments will relieve concerns among groups that oppose the programs.

"There are certainly groups both within the Jewish community and outside who are quite entrenched in opposing faith-based initiatives," Diament said. "But for those who are open-minded and want to be reasonable, this speech should give them some encouragement."

Neither Saperstein nor Diament was invited to the breakfast. Sen. Joseph Lieberman (D-Conn.), who ran as part of the Democratic ticket against Bush in the November elections, was one of the few prominent Jews who attended the event.

Abraham Foxman, national director of the Anti-Defamation League, said Bush made a sincere effort to alleviate the concerns expressed by opponents of his plan.

But Foxman warned that some groups might use the faith-based initiative to cross the constitutional separation between church and state.

Foxman, who criticized Lieberman's frequent references to God during his run for vice president last year, said Bush was "very sensitive to people's beliefs and nonbeliefs" in the speech.

During the Clinton administration, prayer breakfasts in Washington were occasionally controversial. □

Goldsmith appointment hailed, but Jews wary of charitable choice

By Matthew E. Berger

WASHINGTON (JTA) — For eight years, Stephen Goldsmith piloted the city of Indianapolis through a renaissance of social reform, spearheaded by a link between private charitable services and government resources known as the Front Porch Alliance.

Although it was a small program dollar-wise, the alliance gained Goldsmith a reputation as a politician who could "think outside the box."

Now he has been brought in to do the same thing on a national scale.

Goldsmith, the Jewish Republican who served two terms as mayor of Indianapolis, was named Monday as an adviser to President Bush on faith-based initiatives, a controversial program that would give federal funds to religious organizations engaged in charitable programs, such as homeless shelters and drug treatment centers.

He also will serve on the board of the Corporation for National Service, which oversees AmeriCorps, and is believed to have a shot to head that federal agency one day.

Goldsmith steps into this role after serving for the last year as the Bush campaign's domestic policy adviser. He is respected within the Jewish community, and even opponents of the faith-based initiative programs applauded his appointment.

Rabbi David Saperstein, director of the Religious Action Center of Reform Judaism, called it a "wise decision."

"He brings an understanding of the hopes and the fears, the aspirations and the concerns of the Jewish community," Saperstein said.

Goldsmith and John Dilulio, the University of Pennsylvania professor who will head the program, are praised for their openness, but Saperstein said he is concerned that Goldsmith's presence may be seen as Jewish endorsement of the initiatives.

"The fact that a prominent person who is Jewish is attached to this gives political cover for people to do things that are not in the best interest of the Jewish community," Saperstein said.

But Nathan Diament, director of the Orthodox Union's Institute for Public Affairs, said both sides of the Jewish community have made their positions clear on this issue, and the hiring of Goldsmith and Dilulio, a devout Catholic, show the program is not geared solely to the religious right.

"For those who think that this was going to be some White House office for evangelical Christians, they are going to have a hard time making that argument," Diament said.

As Indianapolis mayor, Goldsmith gained national attention for giving aid to secular and religious institutions for community and charitable projects. Among them, he helped churches adopt and maintain local parks and helped fund religious groups that set up drug treatment centers.

The small-scale program known as the Front Porch Alliance showcased Goldsmith's interest in finding solutions to the city's ills, said E.J. Dionne, a senior fellow at the Brookings Institution who has written about Goldsmith for *The Washington Post*.

"My experience is that Stephen Goldsmith is many liberals' favorite conservative," Dionne said. "Not because they agree with him on everything, but because they view a real sense of commitment and integrity in him." □