



Daily News Bulletin

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84th Year

Israel's new Cabinet

PORTFOLIO	MINISTER	PARTY
Prime Minister	Ariel Sharon	Likud
Foreign Affairs	Shimon Peres	Labor
Defense	Benjamin Ben-Eliezer	Labor
Finance	Silvan Shalom	Likud
Justice	Meir Sheetrit	Likud
Education	Limor Livnat	Likud
Public Security	Uzi Landau	Likud
Communication	Reuven Rivlin	Likud
Environment	Tzachi Hanegbi	Likud
Without Portfolio	Danny Naveh	Likud
Without Portfolio	Tzipi Livni	Likud
Transportation	Ephraim Sneh	Labor
Agriculture	Shalom Simhon	Labor
Industry & Trade	Dalia Itzik	Labor
Science, Culture & Sport	Matan Vilnai	Labor
Without Portfolio	Saleh Tarif	Labor
Without Portfolio	Ra'anan Cohen	Labor
Interior	Eli Yishai	Shas
Labor & Social Affairs	Shlomo Benizri	Shas
Health	Nissim Dahan	Shas
Religious Affairs	Asher Ohana	Shas
Jerusalem Affairs	Eli Suissa	Shas
National Infrastructure	Avigdor Lieberman	NU-IH*
Tourism	Rehavam Ze'evi	NU-IH*
Housing	Natan Sharansky	YB**
Without Portfolio	Shmuel Avital	ON***

*NU-IH stands for National Union-Israel Our Home.

**YB stands for Yisrael Ba'Aliyah.

***ON stands for One Nation.

Israel's Sharon takes office, pledges not to negotiate under fire

By Naomi Segal

JERUSALEM (JTA) — After a lifetime of national service marked by both heroism and excess, Israel's new prime minister, Ariel Sharon, promised the Palestinians that "our hand is extended in peace" as he presented his government to the Knesset.

Addressing a special Knesset session on Wednesday before the swearing-in of his government, Sharon said he is prepared to make painful concessions for peace, but the Palestinian side had failed to demonstrate its own willingness to do the same.

"I turn here to the Palestinians: It has been decreed upon us to live next to each other on the same small piece of land. Our hand is extended in peace," said Sharon, 73, a former general and veteran of all of Israel's wars.

"We know peace requires painful concessions by both sides," he continued. "Unfortunately, despite significant concessions for peace made in recent years by all Israeli governments, we have not yet discovered a willingness for reconciliation and a true peace by our neighbors."

His speech was not warmly received by the Palestinians.

"The new Israeli government must choose between continuing in the policy of talks or continuing its recent policy of blockades and siege and escalation," said Nabil Abu Rudeineh, a spokesman for Palestinian Authority President Yasser Arafat.

The Hamas movement threatened to greet Sharon with a wave of terror attacks.

President Bush congratulated Sharon and announced that the two would meet in Washington on March 20.

"The president looks forward to discussing bilateral and regional issues with Prime Minister Sharon, including ways to bring an end to the violence and to advance peace and stability in the region," Bush's press secretary, Ari Fleischer, said in a statement.

Sharon reiterated that Israel would not negotiate with the Palestinian Authority under threat of terror or violence. "We demand that the Palestinians abandon the path of violence, terror and incitement," Sharon said. He was interrupted several times by heckling from Arab legislators.

Sharon also said Israel must pursue peace agreements with Syria and its vassal state, Lebanon, but did not provide details.

The Knesset approved the new government later Wednesday night.

Earlier in the day, the Knesset passed several important pieces of legislation, including the repeal of direct elections for prime minister and the extension by two years of draft deferrals for yeshiva students.

The Likud's Sharon was elected in a landslide victory over Labor incumbent Ehud Barak on Feb. 6 against a background of Palestinian violence and with a vague promise to restore Israeli security. It took another month for Sharon to assemble a broad unity coalition to confront Israel's pressing security challenge. With 26 ministers, his Cabinet is the largest in Israeli history, and his Knesset coalition currently numbers at least 73 in the 120-member house.

The coalition has a wide ideological span, including the three largest parties in the Knesset — Likud, Labor and Shas — as well as the smaller Yisrael Ba'Aliyah, National Union-Israel Our Home, One Nation, United Torah Judaism and the New Way, formerly the Center Party.

Sharon said his own views about Jewish settlement are known — in past governments he was the patron of the settlement movement, and the placement of settlements throughout the West Bank and Gaza Strip reflects Sharon's strategic vision — but his government's guidelines preclude building new settlements.

In light of the ongoing violence, the government will focus first not on diplomatic

MIDEAST FOCUS

Powell: Return envoy to Israel

U.S. Secretary of State Colin Powell said he told Egypt that it is "in the best interest of stability in the region" for Egypt to return its ambassador to Israel.

Testifying before the House International Relations Committee, Powell said Egypt has been unwilling to do so, but hopes that the ambassador will return after violence ends in the region.

Commission may dissolve

An international commission investigating the violence in the Middle East may be dissolved if the new Israeli government does not cooperate, said Javier Solana, the European Union's foreign policy chief.

Solana said preliminary contacts with Israeli Prime Minister-elect Ariel Sharon have been positive, although Israel stopped working with the commission during the government transition.

Israel arrests militia members

An Israeli undercover unit arrested two members of the Tanzim, the militia arm of Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat's Fatah faction, in an operation overnight in the village of Burka, north of the West Bank town of Nablus.

Ethiopian activists to get money

Some 80 Ethiopian activists who worked with Mossad agents during the secret operations to bring Ethiopian Jews to Israel during the 1980s are expected to receive approximately \$7,500 apiece from the government, according to Ha'aretz.

Rabbi: Don't wear Arab costumes

A former chief rabbi of Israel banned Israeli children from dressing up as Arabs for Purim because of security concerns.

Mordechai Eliyahu said wearing Arab dress could "mislead security forces" looking for suicide bombers. Purim begins at sundown on Thursday.



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initiatives, but on restoring a sense of security to Israeli citizens and countering Palestinian violence.

While touting his military experience to back his assurances on security, Sharon sought during the election to present himself as a moderate. A critic of the Oslo peace process, Sharon says he prefers to pursue interim agreements with the Palestinians rather than a final peace accord.

Peace talks under outgoing Prime Minister Ehud Barak foundered when Israel and the Palestinians were unable to resolve fundamental disputes over Jerusalem and Palestinian refugees.

Barak demanded that the Palestinians declare an "end to the conflict" with Israel in exchange for deep Israeli concessions.

In his farewell remarks, Barak cited Sharon's pivotal role in Israel's military campaigns and said he hopes the knowledge Sharon gleaned from those experiences would guide him.

Sharon has said that his government will honor previously signed agreements with the Palestinians, provided the Palestinians also meet their obligations.

But Barak declared Wednesday that Sharon's government is not bound by proposals merely discussed, but not agreed on, in the latest round of peace talks.

"The outgoing government leaves you with a table clean of commitments, so you can try to pursue security and peace according to your way," Barak said. "I made clear to U.S. President Bush, Palestinian Authority Chairman Arafat and world leaders that the ideas raised at Camp David, Washington and Taba are null and void" and "do not obligate or restrain in any way your government."

At the same time, the outgoing prime minister and former Labor leader warned, Sharon must have "the courage to admit that the ongoing situation is a recipe for everlasting friction."

Barak, who is resigning from politics, also sought to avoid any blame for his inability to close a peace deal or the outbreak of violence last fall. He said that neither his government's peace policies nor Sharon's visit to the Temple Mount in September caused the Palestinian uprising.

"It would have broken out anyway, unless Israel capitulated to all of the Palestinians' unacceptable demands," he said.

Yet Barak offered a final defense for his policies, which critics charged offered too many dangerous concessions.

"I am convinced the way we led was the right one, and the future will prove this," he said.

With Labor part of Sharon's government, Yossi Sarid of the liberal Meretz Party became head of the opposition.

Sarid was scheduled to offer the opposition response to Sharon's inauguration speech later Wednesday.

As a result of the repeal of direct elections, Israel will revert to its old system in which a voter casts only one ballot for a political party beginning with the next general elections, currently scheduled for 2003.

The head of the winning party then assembles a coalition and becomes prime minister.

The direct election law had been in place since the 1996 elections, when the Likud's Benjamin Netanyahu defeated Labor's Shimon Peres.

Critics blamed the system for strengthening small, special-interest parties and creating political deadlock in the Cabinet and Knesset.

They also blamed it for leading to two of the shortest and most unstable governments in Israel's history.

Likud and Labor collaborated to repeal the direct election law.

Despite opposition from smaller parties, the Knesset overwhelmingly approved the bill.

The Knesset passed the measure extending by two years the army deferrals granted to tens of thousands of yeshiva students after the fervently Orthodox Shas Party threatened to withdraw its support for Sharon's unity coalition if the measure did not pass.

The Parliament also voted in favor of next year's budget on a preliminary vote. The budget still must pass two more readings by the end of March, or new elections will be held. □

JEWISH WORLD

In Canada, final arguments heard in Holocaust denier Internet case

By Bill Gladstone

TORONTO (JTA) — A landmark case on hate speech and the Internet is finally nearing its end after four years in the Canadian legal system.

A tribunal of the Canadian Human Rights Commission heard final arguments late last month on whether Holocaust denier Ernst Zundel's Web site violates anti-hate provisions of Canada's Human Rights Act.

The tribunal is expected to announce its decision in about three months.

Sparked by complaints by a former Toronto mayor and a private citizen, the case has occupied the three-person tribunal for more than 53 days of hearings over four years.

Both the Canadian Jewish Congress and B'nai Brith Canada have been granted a status in the case that allows them to present legal arguments.

"It is a seminal case here in Canada because it will chart the course for the manner in which human rights law can be used to deal with Internet hate," said Bernie Farber, executive director of the congress' Ontario Region.

Zundel's California-based Web site, the "Zundelsite," often appears near the top in Internet searches on Holocaust-related subjects. Articles on the site include "The Big Lie," "Hitler's Policy Was Emigration, Not Extermination" and "There Is No Proof That the Holocaust Occurred."

Section 13 of Canada's Human Rights Act prohibits the dissemination of hatred or contempt against an identifiable group via a telephone device. The section has been used to prevent white supremacist and other racist groups from using answering machines to spread racist ideology.

Among the key issues are whether a modem qualifies as a telephone device and whether Internet hate messages should enjoy free speech protections.

Soon after it began, the tribunal was effectively sidelined for nearly two years after Zundel argued that one member was biased against him. The woman had been a commissioner of the Ontario Human Rights Commission in 1988 when it issued a press release applauding Zundel's criminal conviction for disseminating "false news."

The Federal Court of Appeal ruled last May that the panel member was not biased and the tribunal could continue.

At one stage in the proceedings, Zundel claimed the Web site was controlled by Ingrid Rimland of Carlsbad, Calif., who is now Zundel's third wife. However, a former wife, Irene Zundel, testified that Zundel had been controlling the site and sending Rimland \$3,000 a month to cover costs.

The tribunal recently rejected Zundel's request to drop the case because he no longer lives in Canada. The congress believes he now lives in Tennessee.

"The tribunal basically said, 'You can't, after four years of hearings, depart and expect the whole thing to fold up,'" said Karen Mock, national director of B'nai Brith's League for Human Rights, who characterized Zundel's request as "a last-ditch stunt."

Born in Germany, Zundel entered Canada as a permanent resident in 1958. His 1993 application for Canadian citizenship was denied, partly because the Ministry of Citizenship and Immigration considers him a threat to national security.

Zundel appealed the rejection, but wrote to the immigration minister several months ago to withdraw his citizenship bid.

A former printer, Zundel was convicted in Toronto in 1985 of distributing hate literature, but the conviction was overturned on constitutional grounds. He has been barred from entering Germany due to his notoriety as a Holocaust denier.

Barbara Kulaszka, Zundel's lawyer, informed the tribunal recently that her client had moved to the United States to be with Rimland.

"I believe he saw the writing on the wall, and I believe the Canadian Jewish Congress specifically hounded him too much — they were always on his back," said the congress' Farber.

"He preferred to go to a country where he could ply his trade of Holocaust denial without facing court intervention."

Even in Zundel's absence, the case is expected to set a precedent regarding hate groups on the Internet. □

Bush meets with Jewish leaders

President Bush met with more than a dozen Jewish leaders at the White House.

Details of Wednesday's meeting were not released, but participants say the violence in the Middle East, faith-based initiatives, education and U.S. policy toward Iraq and Iran were among the topics discussed.

Shoah lawsuits not dismissed

A U.S. judge refused to dismiss lawsuits brought by Holocaust survivors against German and Austrian companies.

Wednesday's ruling could delay payments from German funds to survivors because these funds are predicated on the firms' protection from any future lawsuits.

However, the judge told the companies they could ask her to dismiss the cases once Germany's \$5.2 billion fund is fully funded.

Sharon to address AIPAC forum

Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon and U.S. Secretary of State Colin Powell will address the annual policy conference of the American Israel Public Affairs Committee on March 19.

The conference also will feature speeches by Dennis Ross, the former U.S. special Middle East coordinator, and Nobel Peace Prize winner Elie Wiesel.

Court rules against Jesus speech

A U.S. high school valedictorian who was barred from giving a graduation speech in which he planned to ask the audience to live by "Jesus' example" lost his appeal before the Supreme Court.

The court, without comment, this week turned down the California student's argument that officials of his public school district violated his rights in 1998.

Church pays forced laborers

The Roman Catholic Church made one-time payments of \$2,200 to 60 people who were forced to work for the church during the Holocaust era.

Decisions on payments for 300 other people whose identities are known are expected soon.

Some 10,000 people are estimated to have been forced to work for the church during World War II.

Polish compensation bill passes

The Polish Parliament passed a bill to compensate owners of property seized before communism fell in 1989.

But President Aleksander Kwasniewski is likely to veto the bill, which would exclude people who do not hold Polish citizenship, including Jews who left during the Nazi era and their descendants.

FOCUS ON ISSUES

Outreach professionals struggle to draw in younger Jewish adults

By Julie Wiener

NEW YORK (JTA) — Don't call them "Generation X." "Young adults" won't do either.

And unless you want to sound the death knell for your program, don't even think of calling it a "Jewish singles" event.

That's some of the advice coming from the front lines of Jewish outreach to a largely unaffiliated demographic group — Jews who range in age from just out of college to late 30-something, and have not yet had children.

For years, the American Jewish community tended to focus almost exclusively on senior citizens and families with school-age children — in short, those Jews most likely to pay to join a Jewish institution.

But amid a flurry of new efforts to engage unaffiliated Jews and — to use the lingo of "Jewish renaissance" promoters — create "multiple entry points" to Judaism, 20- and 30-somethings are getting some attention.

That age group — approximately 23 percent of the American Jewish population, according to the North American Jewish Data Bank — will be the focus of a March 12-13 gathering in Washington sponsored by the federation system's Renaissance and Renewal Pillar and the Schusterman Family Foundation.

The Washington event will bring together a handpicked list of 40 leaders, most in their 20s and 30s, to brainstorm about outreach to younger Jews.

A number of participants are from established institutions, like the religious movements and federations, but the majority come from new Jewish programs specifically aimed at 20- and 30-somethings.

They include:

- Makor, a Manhattan cultural venue housed in a stylish brownstone that looks more like a Starbucks café or a nightclub than a Jewish institution. Makor offers concerts, movies, classes, community service projects, a kosher vegetarian restaurant and networking groups for young artists, musicians, film makers and Internet entrepreneurs.

- Geshet City, a budding national organization that serves as a clearinghouse for Jewish events of interest to young people and facilitates contacts between Jews with shared interests. Founded in Boston, it now has affiliates in Washington and Baltimore, with plans under way for New York, St. Louis, Philadelphia, Detroit, Miami and Seattle.

- The Joshua Venture, which is offering \$30,000 fellowships, leadership training and other resources to eight 20- and 30-something "social entrepreneurs" launching projects in the arts, Jewish learning and social justice.

So how is this generation different from those that preceded it?

The number of Jews in their late 20s and 30s who are single has grown during the past decades because many Jews are waiting longer to marry and have children.

David Morrison, president of Twentysomething, a marketing firm that specializes in this age group, describes them as mobile, eager for adventure, busy, "grasping for a sense of belonging" and plugged into technology.

"The idea of setting down roots in a Jewish community is not

high on their priority list right now," said Morrison, who will be one of the speakers at the Washington gathering.

Morrison, himself Jewish and in his 20s, said he is unsure how to translate his somewhat contradictory findings — a yearning to belong combined with an unwillingness to set down roots — into Jewish policy.

He suggested that the Jewish community offer more opportunities for young people to connect on the Internet, perhaps even offering religious services on the Web.

He also advised synagogues to do a better job of welcoming newcomers at events and to consider shortening services, because young people are "racing to temple if they have time and from temple to somewhere else."

Leaders of new programs geared to 20- and 30-somethings said their constituents are interested in Jewish activities if they relate to personal interests such as hobbies, community service or professional development.

Amy Tobin, a Joshua Venture fellow, is creating a project for Jewish artists at San Francisco's Jewish Community Center because she thinks the arts are a good venue for exploring Jewish identity.

"I don't necessarily feel comfortable in synagogue, and I'm not looking for singles events because I'm not looking for a partner, but I haven't seen much else out there," she said.

"But I know people go to the theater and poetry readings and read books, and I know people read about and see things that have to do with their own personal identity or something that resonates for them," Tobin said.

Rabbi David Gedzelman, Makor's creative and rabbinic director, said most people are drawn to his center by arts and entertainment programs, but they increasingly are signing up for Jewish studies courses as well.

New projects like Makor and Geshet City also address the fact that many young Jewish adults not interested in going to synagogue are seeking things to do — and like-minded people to do them with.

"Everyone wants to feel connected," said Alison Corton, national director of Geshet City.

But that does not simply mean participating in cultural programs or socializing with other Jews.

Corton said that the Geshet City's most popular programs have been Jewish text study sessions and distribution of free or discounted tickets to High Holiday services.

Geshet City also has helped match people with synagogue members for holiday meals.

Less successful, say those involved in programming, are efforts to get 20- and 30-somethings to become paying members of institutions.

Makor's Gedzelman said he has been stymied so far in attempts to create memberships, but informal networks — such as a Hebrew club and a group for Internet entrepreneurs — are thriving.

Another lesson has been the importance of proper marketing.

"You can have great programming but can throw the whole thing away with the wrong labeling," Gedzelman said.

"We never use the language 'singles' ever, even if that's our goal in a particular context," he said. "You call something 'Jewish singles' and the healthy, interesting, attractive people you want to attract are going to say, 'I don't need that, to be in that context means I'm desperate.' "

□