



# Daily News Bulletin

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84th Year

## TOP NEWS IN BRIEF

### Sharon happy with Bush meeting

Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon discussed his meeting with President Bush before a crowd of some 1,500 people Wednesday in New York.

Sharon expressed pride that Bush viewed him as a "real partner" in discussing mutual Middle East concerns, and said, "We both agreed that rising terrorism, including that which is instigated by the Palestinian Authority today, is the most immediate threat to regional stability."

Sharon's appearance was organized by Israel Bonds and the Conference of Presidents of Major American Jewish Organizations.

### Fierce fighting in southern Gaza

Jewish settlers blocked the main north-south road in the Gaza Strip as heavy fighting raged between Israeli forces and Palestinian gunmen. During Thursday's clashes, Palestinians fired anti-tank missiles at one settlement in southern Gaza. Palestinians accused Israeli soldiers of firing tank shells during the clash at Khan Younis, and the army said Palestinians had used armor-piercing grenades.

In another incident, a member of Palestinian Authority President Yasser Arafat's Force 17 presidential guard was killed and several others wounded by Israeli tank fire. Israel said the army returned fire Wednesday night after shells were fired from the Force 17 position toward settlements in the Gaza Strip.

### U.S.: CIA to stop mediating

The CIA will no longer serve as a mediator in security talks between Israel and the Palestinians, according to a senior U.S. official. The Bush administration has signaled it believes more can be accomplished by direct communication between the two sides.

### Another Polish pogrom probed

Poland's National Remembrance Institute plans to investigate another World War II pogrom in Poland in which local Poles are alleged to have murdered hundreds of their Jewish neighbors.

According to Polish television, the head of the institute plans to order an investigation into the June 7, 1941, pogrom in the town of Radzilowo.

The pogrom took place three days before 1,600 Jews were murdered in nearby Jedwabne. The institute is currently investigating the Jedwabne massacre.

## FOCUS ON ISSUES

### Calling all potential candidates: A rabbinical seminary needs you

By Julie Wiener

NEW YORK (JTA) — Add one more position to the list of U.S. Jewish professions advertising vacancies: rabbinic seminary presidents.

While the recently created vacancies at the top of seminaries representing modern Orthodoxy, Reform and Reconstructionism stem from very different situations — ranging from retirement to scandal to burnout — they indicate the increased pressures that U.S. university presidents, both Jewish and non-Jewish, now face.

These increased pressures, which stem mainly from the relentless demands of fund raising, have turned what was once seen as a genteel position into a pressure cooker.

The instability at the top of the rabbinic seminaries comes at a time when there is a shortage of rabbis — and of all Jewish professionals — in all sectors except for the fervently Orthodox world.

On one day — March 14 — Rabbi Norman Lamm, president of the New York-based Yeshiva University, and Rabbi David Teutsch, president of the Philadelphia-based Reconstructionist Rabbinical College, both announced they would leave their posts in the summer of 2002.

Lamm, 73, has been Y.U.'s president since 1976.

In explaining his decision to leave, Lamm told The New York Times that he "didn't want to be carried out feet first."

In addition to its rabbinical seminary and undergraduate programs serving Orthodox Jews, Y.U. is a nonsectarian institution with prestigious graduate schools in areas such as law and medicine.

Teutsch has led the far-smaller RRC, which recently expanded its incoming rabbinic class size to 18, since 1993.

He said he is leaving the job to devote more time to scholarship, teaching, writing and family.

Both men will stay at their institutions but in less demanding roles.

In a more sudden move, Rabbi Sheldon Zimmerman — who had been president of the Reform movement's Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion since 1996 — resigned in December, shortly after the movement's rabbinic arm suspended him for sexual misconduct.

The specifics of the alleged misconduct have not been disclosed, although officials in the Reform movement said it occurred before Zimmerman assumed HUC's presidency.

While a search committee seeks a successor, the university's provost, Norman Cohen, is serving as acting president.

Based in Cincinnati, HUC has branches in New York, Los Angeles and Jerusalem.

Lamm, Teutsch and Zimmerman all have been credited with being strong fund raisers, spokesmen and teachers for their movements.

It is not clear who will replace them — or how easy the search for a successor will be. Replacing Lamm is expected to be particularly challenging, because his job requires balancing the needs of highly diverse programs and constituencies at a time when the Orthodox world has become increasingly factionalized.

The turnover in Judaism's ivory towers comes as many major Jewish institutions are struggling to find and retain top leaders.

Day schools are in national bidding wars for headmasters.

It took the United Jewish Communities, the umbrella organization for federations,

## MIDEAST FOCUS

### Peres blames Arafat's forces

Forty percent of Palestinian terror attacks are taking place with the knowledge or participation of Palestinian Authority security officials, Israeli Foreign Minister Shimon Peres told Jordan's King Abdullah in a telephone conversation, according to the Jerusalem Post.

Abdullah responded Thursday by saying that he will do everything he can to help end the violence in the region.

### Israeli troops foil infiltrators

Israeli troops foiled an attempt by Palestinian terrorists to plant a bomb near Kibbutz Nir Am, located a short distance from the Gaza Strip.

Israel Radio reported that troops opened fire Wednesday night after spotting three Palestinians about to set the device after infiltrating into Israel.

The body of one of the terrorists was discovered Thursday morning with an explosive in his hand. The other two fled after troops began firing.

### Panel sees Hebron violence

Palestinians hurled more than 10 firebombs at Israeli soldiers in Hebron as an international fact-finding team lead by former U.S. Sen. George Mitchell was visiting the West Bank city.

There were no injuries to soldiers, who fired rubber bullets and tear gas to disperse the crowds.

### B'Tselem blasts settlers

The Israeli human rights group B'Tselem says violence against Palestinians by Jewish settlers in the West Bank and Gaza Strip has risen sharply since the outbreak of violence last September.

A settler leader responded to the report by saying that since the outbreak of the violence, settlers have been effectively living under a state of siege and have been praised by army commanders for their restrained behavior.

over a year to find its top professional. It took another year to find a head for one of its programs, the Israel and Overseas Pillar. And in the past two months, three top professionals have left the UJC.

The Orthodox Union, simultaneously the umbrella for almost 1,000 synagogues and a massive kashrut certification body, is seeking a new executive vice president in the wake of a scandal over a youth group professional accused of sexual abuse.

And a new philanthropy promoting synagogue renewal has been searching for an executive director since September.

The presidential vacancies also reflect a trend in academia in general, with presidents of U.S. universities serving considerably shorter terms than in the past. Presidents at Harvard, Brown, Columbia and New York University — among others — have resigned in the past year.

Presiding over such institutions, including Jewish seminaries and universities, is much more demanding than it used to be, many observers say.

University presidents are pressured "to become fund-raising machines," said Jack Wertheimer, a professor of American Jewish history and the provost of the Conservative movement's Jewish Theological Seminary.

High-level donors are less loyal to any one institution and are demanding more "face time" with presidents than in the past, Wertheimer said.

The fact that most presidents come from scholarly — and in the case of the seminary presidents, spiritual — backgrounds often makes the emphasis on fund-raising frustrating, Wertheimer said.

Fund-raising pressures also are causing many presidents to remain silent on key social and religious issues, Wertheimer said, for fear of alienating donors.

The multiple pressures, particularly the fund-raising demands, forced Teutsch regularly to work 15-hour days.

Heading a university is "no longer the elegant and highly reflective position it was in the days when the funding situation was different," Teutsch said.

Jewish organizations also are being affected by a general shift in expectations for top professionals, said Jonathan Sarna, a professor of American Jewish history at Brandeis University.

"The old tradition where you had leaders there 10 to 20 years, that's more and more unusual," Sarna said. "Partly because they have tough lay boards that, following the corporate model, feel if you have a bad quarter or year, then it's time for a change."

In addition, observers say, Jewish leaders — like all American leaders — are being subjected to much higher levels of personal scrutiny than in the past.

"Perhaps our expectation of what leaders should be exceeds the reality, and such people don't really exist," Sarna said. "Leaders are under a constant spotlight, and no one looks glamorous when under the spotlight all the time."

The Jewish community, Sarna said, is much better educated and more sophisticated than in the past, and therefore "much less likely to deify a leader."

Past American Jewish heroes, like Reform Rabbi Stephen Wise, would "never survive today," Sarna said, noting that there were rumors — largely ignored during Wise's time — that he had extramarital affairs.

So what does all this mean for the American Jewish community?

It's not all bad, some observers say.

Change "can be a salutary thing," Teutsch said.

"One reason people recommend CEOs not stay in a position more than a decade is that institutional renewal depends on a certain amount of turnover in leadership," Teutsch said. "In a world changing so rapidly, seminaries have to change more rapidly than ever before if they're going to keep up."

Rabbi Irwin Kula, president of CLAL: The National Jewish Center for Learning and Leadership, said the culture of mobility and change is a broad transition likely to leave a significant mark on Jewish life.

"The same way people join synagogues, leave synagogues and have episodic relationships with Jewish institutions, leadership is going to have episodic relationships with institutions, too," Kula said.

"The upside is, we will have an energy infusion on a regular basis. The downside is that stability will be undermined, and there will be a wrenching quality in institutional life."

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## Daily News Bulletin

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## JEWISH WORLD

### Mideast votes end photo contest

An Internet site ended a photo contest that became a pawn of the Middle East conflict.

MSNBC.com said the ranking of a photo of a Palestinian father holding his son shortly before the boy was killed last fall shot up and down during the past several weeks, and that internal logs showed a vast preponderance of votes from Israel and Arab countries.

Officials with MSNBC.com said 5 million votes were cast in the "Year in Pictures 2000" contest during the past three weeks, as opposed to 500,000 during the previous 11 weeks.

### Jailed Russian Jew fears hitmen

A Russian Jewish leader held in a St. Petersburg jail on kidnapping charges believes he is going to be killed, according to sources in Russia.

Mikhail Mirilashvili, 40, a business magnate who is head of the St. Petersburg branch of the Russian Jewish Congress, allegedly snuck a message out of jail earlier this week saying he feared hitmen would kill him.

### Russia to catalog seized art

Russia is compiling a catalog of artwork seized by the Red Army during World War II, a move that will pave the way for owners to reclaim the stolen art.

Religious groups and victims of Nazism will be among those allowed to file claims, Russia's culture minister said Wednesday.

### Korean bar changes to 'Ditler'

The owner of a Nazi-themed bar in South Korea said he was changing the bar's name after the Simon Wiesenthal Center filed a protest.

With enough money to change only one letter of his sign, the bar will now be known as the Ditler Techno Bar and Cocktail Show, the owner said.

He also said he would remove the bar's Nazi symbols, which he had used to get attention.

### Sharon greets 'King of Pop'

Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon met a self-described fan of the Jewish state before returning home from the United States: pop star Michael Jackson. Joined by Israeli psychic Uri Geller, Jackson met the premier at a private New York reception for Sharon. Asked if he recognized the singer, Sharon said, "What? Am I not aware of modern music?"

### Miss Israel crowned

Ilanit Levy, 18, was crowned Miss Israel 2001 and will represent the country in the Miss Universe pageant in Puerto Rico. The Haifa resident works as a waitress and dances in a local troupe.

## Fears of rising anti-Semitism emerge as Vienna votes for mayor

By Ruth E. Gruber

ROME (JTA) — Days before Sunday's mayoral elections in Vienna, anti-Semitism has again become an issue for Austria.

The issue erupted after far-right politician Jorg Haider made a series of disparaging remarks about the leader of the Austrian Jewish community, Ariel Muzicant.

The question of anti-Semitism — in a nation that once welcomed native son Adolf Hitler — made its way to the Austrian Parliament, which on Tuesday approved a statement condemning anti-Semitism, xenophobia and intolerance.

Also on Tuesday, President Thomas Klestil told a visiting group of 80 Austrian-born Jews — some returning for the first time since the Holocaust — that anti-Semitism must be fought.

"Austria must never again be home to anti-Semitism. We owe that to our history and to future generations," Klestil said.

"We are all linked by an invisible bond," he told the group, who came from Israel, Britain, the United States and other countries. "A considerable part of our consciousness is formed by Austrian Judaism, and we should gratefully recognize this ancient inheritance."

Last Friday, more than 6,000 people staged a demonstration against racism and Haider's far-right Freedom Party in downtown Vienna.

Muzicant read a statement regretting that racism and anti-Semitism are once again being used in Austrian politics.

These developments follow sarcastic remarks Haider made last month about Muzicant that were widely considered anti-Semitic.

"I don't understand how someone whose name is Ariel can have so much dirt sticking to him," Haider said in a Feb. 28 speech, punning on Muzicant's first name, which is also the name of a laundry detergent.

Haider, governor of the state of Carinthia, is the one-time leader of the far-right Freedom Party and remains its dominant figure. He said his references to Muzicant's name were meant as a joke.

But the expression Haider used implies a shady or criminal past. In later interviews he accused Muzicant, who has been involved in negotiations for Holocaust compensation, of "actively speaking against our country abroad."

Muzicant has threatened to bring a libel lawsuit against Haider, who has come under fire both at home and abroad.

Haider said his comments had been twisted by "do-gooders and the politically correct."

The U.S. Embassy in Vienna, however, issued a statement saying, "We certainly do not condone personal attacks of the sort Haider has made, and would prefer to see a more elevated discourse."

"Given that, throughout Europe, we continue to see hate crimes, violent neo-Nazi demonstrations, desecration of Jewish cemeteries and an increasing number of hate sites on the Internet, we should all be especially sensitive to comments that could be interpreted as xenophobic or anti-Semitic," the embassy statement said.

The Austrian Jewish leadership issued a statement Tuesday accusing Haider of responsibility for Austria's "tainted international image."

Sunday's elections are being watched closely as an indication of Freedom Party strength nearly 14 months after it joined a coalition government with Chancellor Wolfgang Schuessel's People's Party.

Running on an anti-immigrant, law-and-order platform, the Freedom Party received 27 percent of the vote in 1999 national elections, making it Austria's second-largest political party and the strongest far-right force in Europe.

When the party entered the coalition government last year, the European Union imposed unprecedented diplomatic sanctions on Austria and Israel withdrew its ambassador.

The sanctions were lifted after seven months, however, after an E.U. report said the Freedom Party's inclusion in the Austrian government had not led to extreme right-wing policies. □

## Slovak Jews hope document will help in case against Germany

By Mark Andress

PRAGUE (JTA) — With only days to go before Slovak Jews take on Germany in a Berlin courtroom, Jewish community leaders in Slovakia have found a key document that could help them win their case.

The Central Union of Jewish Religious Communities, based in the Slovak capital of Bratislava, hopes to reclaim the millions of dollars the Slovak government paid to Nazi Germany, using stolen Jewish property, for the deportation of 57,628 Jews.

The group argues that Germany should compensate Slovakia since it broke the wartime deportation agreement by killing all but 282 of the Jews in death camps.

The all-important document outlines a wartime agreement between the Nazi-puppet Slovak state and Nazi Germany for the deportation of the Jews in 1942.

Slovak Jewish leaders say the agreement makes no mention of the Jews' extermination, only their deportation — a technicality they believe will strengthen their case when the hearing begins March 28 in the German capital.

The evidence came to light in late February, when a Slovak historian found the agreement in the Slovak National Archives.

The document contains two sections specifically relating to the deportations: Section 30 outlines the way the Slovak government would pay for deporting the Jews, and Section 31 deals with the conditions and circumstances of the deportations.

In neither section is the extermination of the Jews mentioned, said Jozef Weiss, director of the Central Union.

The Slovak government, the group says, paid a total of \$43 million at today's prices for the deportations.

Slovakia was the only sovereign nation in wartime Europe willing to pay for the removal of its Jews.

Making matters worse, said Weiss, the money the Slovak government paid came from stolen Jewish property.

Before the war there were some 100,000 Jews in Slovakia; after, the total was 1,450.

Today, Slovakia's Jewish population numbers 4,000.

As a result of the decimation, Slovak Jewish leaders say they do not have the financial means to maintain Slovakia's rich Jewish heritage.

More than 600 Jewish cemeteries lie in ruin and scores of synagogues are devastated.

The Jewish community that could have contributed to their maintenance today was murdered and had its property stolen, said Fero Alexander, executive chairman of the Central Union.

Any money the union wins at the court hearing in Berlin will go to Jewish charities, social projects and the maintenance of Jewish monuments, said Weiss.

The court move was partly prompted by Slovakia's exclusion from the lion's share of Germany's \$5.2 billion fund to compensate Nazi-era slave and forced laborers.

Slovakia's Foreign Ministry failed to win direct participation in negotiations to create the fund, while Poland, the Czech Republic, Belarus, Ukraine, Russia and the Claims Conference were recognized as official negotiating partners.

As a result of that decision, Slovakia was designated one of the "Other Countries" that will have to share a smaller amount of \$3.5 million. □

## As situation gets better in Russia, fewer Jews want to move to Israel

By Lev Gorodetsky

MOSCOW (JTA) — Vladimir and Marina still plan to immigrate to Israel next month with their 13-year-old daughter — despite the ongoing violence in the region and their poor chances of finding jobs in their careers.

"We do not feel at home here. Besides, we don't think" the economic situation in Russia is truly stable, Marina, a Moscow 30-something, told JTA.

In contrast to Vladimir and Marina, however, many Jews living in the former Soviet Union appear either to be staying put or — if they do leave — choosing destinations other than Israel.

Slightly more than 5,500 new immigrants moved to Israel from the former Soviet Union during the first 10 weeks of 2001, a drop of 45 percent from the same time last year, according to the Jewish Agency for Israel.

The 2000 numbers for the former Soviet Union — which are drawn mainly from Russia and Ukraine, which have the lion's share of the region's Jews — already were down from previous years.

At the same time, Jewish immigration from the former Soviet Union to the United States and Germany increased by 30 percent since the beginning of 2001, according to the Hebrew Immigrant Aid Society.

Karol Ungar, head of the Jewish Agency mission in Moscow, told JTA that two factors caused the decline in departures for Israel: the tense security situation as the Palestinians' "Al-Aksa intifada" nears its six-month anniversary and the improved economic situation in Russia.

Ungar, who said the Jewish Agency does not plan to cut its budget for Russia, believes the decline will slow because the Russian economy will falter again.

Others aren't so sure.

Mikhail Chlenov, a Russian Jewish leader, told JTA he is sure emigration will decrease further unless the situation in Russia worsens significantly.

"Emigration is a characteristic of the Jewish public mood: the lower the stress in society, the lower the emigration figures," said Chlenov, president of the Va'ad, one of Russian Jewish umbrella groups.

Unless there is another downturn in Russia, the decreased numbers cast serious doubts on Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon's desire to attract another 1 million immigrants to Israel in the next 10 years.

Even in Russia's neighbor Ukraine, where the economic situation is less stable than in Russia, there is likely to be a further drop in emigration, according to Arkady Monastirsky, a local Jewish leader.

Jewish emigration is coming today mainly from small towns, where the level of unemployment is very high, Monastirsky told JTA.

In Russia, too, smaller towns have a much higher emigration rate than do Moscow or St. Petersburg.

Between the late 1980s and the late 1990s, almost 1 million people from the former Soviet Union immigrated to the Jewish state.

Of these, an estimated 10 percent either returned or moved elsewhere. □