



# Daily News Bulletin

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84th Year

## TOP NEWS IN BRIEF

### Israeli missiles hit Gaza targets

Israel fired missiles at Palestinian Authority security targets in the Gaza Strip. Israeli officials said Tuesday's strikes came in retaliation for mortar bombs fired at Jewish settlements in Gaza. The Palestinians have fired more than 30 mortars at Israeli targets in Israel and Gaza since Sunday, according to the Israeli daily Ha'aretz.

In another development, the U.S. State Department said Israel and the Palestinians had agreed in principle to continue security talks after last week's high-level meeting.

However, Palestinian officials canceled their participation in talks planned for Tuesday evening after the Israeli missile strikes in Gaza.

### Bush hosts King Abdullah

President Bush and Jordan's King Abdullah discussed ways to end ongoing Israeli-Palestinian violence when they met Tuesday at the White House. Bush said he is "very interested in working with all parties" to try to get the two sides to "lay down their arms."

### Fla. rabbi arrested on sex charge

A 58-year-old Florida rabbi was arrested for sending sexually explicit computer messages to a teenage boy and arranging a meeting with him, according to the South Florida Sun-Sentinel. Rabbi Jerrold Levy, who is out on bail, resigned April 10 as associate rabbi of Temple Beth El in Boca Raton. Before he was hired in 1992, Levy told temple officials about a prior misdemeanor sexual abuse charge for touching an undercover police officer in a park men's room.

### Racist calls mar L.A. mayor race

An unknown group made automated anti-Semitic calls to harm a Jewish contender in Los Angeles' mayoral race.

The message said Republican businessman Steve Soboroff had "become entirely dependent upon Jewish money."

Because of the Passover holiday, the JTA DAILY NEWS BULLETIN will not be published Monday, April 16.

## BEHIND THE HEADLINES

### In latest battle over Rich scandal, Holocaust museum head finds support

By Peter Ephross

NEW YORK (JTA) — Rabbi Irving "Yitz" Greenberg has built a reputation as a man of letters, but not of the kind that have swirled around him lately.

In the latest volley in an escalating war of words, a majority of the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Council is defending Greenberg, the embattled council chair, against a campaign to unseat him over his role in the Marc Rich pardon scandal.

Thirty-five members of the 50-plus-member council were preparing a letter this week backing Greenberg, who is under pressure to resign for lobbying on Rich's behalf.

Even his backers admit that Greenberg made a mistake when he sent a letter on museum stationery in December asking President Clinton to pardon the financier. Yet this week's letter went on to say, "We have complete confidence that the museum will continue to flourish under Rabbi Greenberg's leadership."

The pro-Greenberg letter came in response to another letter, signed by 18 current and former members of the council, that was made public last week.

That letter recognized Greenberg's "long and distinguished career as an educator and as a leading proponent of Jewish thought."

But it called on him to resign for his role in the Rich pardon, saying he had unintentionally "entangled the museum in a political controversy inimical to its mission."

The scandal is the latest involving the museum, which has drawn close to 16 million visitors and widespread praise since it opened in 1993, but has also made headlines for political squabbles and infighting.

Depending on whom you talk to, this latest crisis may or may not be partisan in nature.

In any case, it also appears to be driven by other forces, including disagreements over the future direction of the Washington-based museum.

But Greenberg's detractors say it is his actions alone in the Rich scandal that led to their campaign.

"There is no rationale to involve the museum in the pardon of Marc Rich, the pardon of a fugitive," said Deborah Lipstadt, one of the signatories to last week's anti-Greenberg letter.

"This museum was created to commemorate the vision of the Holocaust," and the damage done by Greenberg's lobbying for Rich "can't be repaired" by an apology, said Lipstadt, a professor of modern Jewish and Holocaust studies at Emory University in Atlanta.

Lipstadt said Greenberg's actions on behalf of Rich are exacerbated by the fact that Greenberg also directs Michael Steinhardt's charitable foundation, which helped establish Birthright Israel.

Rich contributed \$5 million to Birthright, which sends North American Jews on free trips to Israel.

"No one is suggesting a quid pro quo, but appearances count," Lipstadt said.

Judging from the latest letter, most of the council disagrees with Lipstadt's faction.

Among the signers of the pro-Greenberg letter are several prominent members of the museum council, including Nobel Peace Prize laureate Elie Wiesel and two former members of the Clinton administration, Dennis Ross and Stuart Eizenstat. The council oversees the museum.

Greenberg "made a mistake on Marc Rich, but for 40 years, he has worked as a

## MIDEAST FOCUS

### Sharon says he has a strategy

Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon said he has a plan to crush Palestinian terror and restore security to Israel. Sharon made the comment while visiting an army camp Tuesday at Nahal Oz, a kibbutz hit recently by Palestinian mortar shells fired from inside the Gaza Strip. "But a nation needs to have staying power," Sharon added, warning the struggle could be a long one.

Meanwhile, Foreign Minister Shimon Peres warned that ongoing Palestinian violence eventually could weaken Palestinian Authority President Yasser Arafat's hold on power.

During a meeting Tuesday with Turkish officials in Ankara, Peres said the violence was creating a situation in which Arafat controlled only some of the armed units operating in areas under Palestinian control. Hamas, Islamic Jihad and Hezbollah are not under Arafat's control and could threaten him, Peres said.

### IDF: Palestinians fired first

Israeli soldiers acted properly when they fired last week on a convoy carrying Palestinian security officials from Israel to the Gaza Strip, according to an investigation carried out by the Israel Defense Force.

The probe found that the first shots were fired by someone traveling with the Palestinian convoy, and the Israeli soldiers then returned fire. Some IDF officials reportedly were furious after Prime Minister Ariel Sharon expressed regret for the incident in a letter Monday to U.S. Secretary of State Colin Powell.

### Shas leader comes under fire

The spiritual leader of the fervently Orthodox Shas Party is being criticized after he was quoted as calling on God to kill Arabs by dropping missiles on them. Shas officials say Rabbi Ovadia Yosef was quoted out of context and that he was referring to Arab terrorists, not all Arabs.



## Daily News Bulletin

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teacher and a Jewish leader" to commemorate the Holocaust, Wiesel said.

A longtime council member, Greenberg is an Orthodox rabbi best known in the Jewish community for his writings on the Holocaust and his leadership at two organizations that promote Jewish pluralism and learning: the Jewish Life Network and CLAL — The National Jewish Center for Learning and Leadership.

The pro-Greenberg faction criticizes the tactics of his critics.

Greenberg apologized for the Rich letter at a January council meeting, and his apology was accepted by the council and the museum's Executive Committee, his backers said.

The matter was not raised at February and March council meetings, they added.

Greenberg was presented with the letter calling on him to resign on April 4, just one day before the letter's contents appeared in the New York Jewish Week. The way in which Greenberg's critics conducted their campaign was "stealth terrorism," said Menachem Rosensaft, a council member and Greenberg supporter.

For his part, Greenberg told JTA last week that he would not quit over his role in the scandal surrounding Rich, who became a major philanthropist to Jewish and Israeli causes after fleeing to Switzerland in 1983 to escape prosecution.

"I have no intention of resigning," Greenberg said, adding that he would pursue the museum's goals "vigorously" until his term ends in January.

President Bush can then appoint another member of the council to be its chair, and many believe he will appoint someone with closer ties to the Republican Party than Greenberg, who was named to the post by Clinton last year.

In 1998, the museum came under fire for its on-again, off-again invitation to Palestinian Authority President Yasser Arafat to visit the museum. Arafat eventually declined the invitation.

Soon thereafter, John Roth, an appointee to head the museum's Center for Advanced Holocaust Studies, was criticized for making comparisons between Israel and Nazi Germany. Roth eventually resigned his post under pressure.

In addition, there have been political tensions on the council of the museum, which receives funds from the U.S. government, since the museum opened.

Observers say the council's Republican-leaning members have been miffed since 1993, when the Republican-appointed Harvey Meyerhoff was removed as chairman in what Matt Brooks of the Republican Jewish Coalition calls a "humiliating and offensive manner."

"Clinton politicized the museum in a way that was not done under Bush and Reagan," Brooks said.

Greenberg first came under fire earlier this year, after a public speech characterized as anti-Israel by an opinion writer in The Wall Street Journal.

Greenberg said the opinion piece not only was "an outrageous misrepresentation," but portrayed the opposite of what he actually said.

Both Lipstadt and Ruth Mandel, the council's vice chair and another signatory to the anti-Greenberg letter, deny that the present campaign is politically motivated.

Any partisan feuding has only been heightened by tension between Greenberg and the museum's director, Sara Bloomfield, sources said.

Bloomfield was unavailable for comment.

In their letter, the pro-Greenberg faction wrote, "We also believe that it is in the best interests of the museum and council that the Rich matter be considered concluded. The unfortunate public letter of our colleagues can only serve to distract from our important work in Holocaust remembrance — an issue around which unity is uniquely important."

If the past is any teacher, it seems unlikely that this unity will occur soon. □  
(JTA correspondent Sharon Samber in Washington contributed to this report.)

## Israeli joins .com revolution — literally

JERUSALEM (JTA)-- An Israeli Internet fanatic has changed his name, replacing it with the address of his personal Web site, according to the Israeli daily Ma'ariv.

The former Tomer Krissi, who works for a high-tech firm, now goes by the name tomer.com.

He lists ".com" as his family name on his passport. □

## JEWISH WORLD

### Poll: Most back faith-based plan

Most Americans support President Bush's plan to fund faith-based charities, but they have reservations about government involvement in religion, according to a poll released Tuesday.

The poll, cosponsored by the Pew Research Center for the People and the Press, also found that most respondents do not think religious groups outside the Judeo-Christian tradition — such as Muslims and Buddhists — should get funds.

### Auschwitz disco ordered shut

The governor of the Polish province of Krakow ordered the closure of a disco located in a former tannery where inmates of the Auschwitz concentration camp worked.

The dance club, located about one mile from the main Auschwitz camp, opened last summer after local authorities ignored protests and granted an investor a permit to operate the disco.

### Schroeder balks on slave fund

German Chancellor Gerhard Schroeder rejected calls for Germany to make preliminary payments from a fund to compensate Nazi-era slave laborers. Schroeder said last Friday that U.S. lawsuits against German firms must first be dismissed.

A U.S. judge has refused to dismiss 10 suits by Holocaust survivors against German banks, prompting lawyers for Holocaust survivors to petition a U.S. appeals court to reverse the judge's decision.

### 4 named for O.U. overhaul

The Orthodox Union appointed four people to oversee its efforts to revamp its organizational structure.

The O.U.'s overhaul was spurred by a recent report criticizing its handling of a high-ranking employee who had been accused of sexually harassing and molesting scores of teens.

### Agency expands Kiev office

The Jewish Agency for Israel expanded its offices in the Ukrainian capital of Kiev.

The Jewish Agency now occupies all of a four-story building, which includes a youth club opened with a \$75,000 donation from the Toronto Jewish community.

The building will be dedicated May 13.

### Sarajevo Haggadah to be repaired

International experts plan to repair the famed Sarajevo Haggadah, which dates back to the 14th century.

A U.N. official made the announcement last Friday, after three experts examined the manuscript.

## NEWS ANALYSIS

### West Bank building angers world, but Israel's left takes it in stride

By David Landau

JERUSALEM (JTA) — The Palestinians hope to regain the diplomatic high ground following Israel's announcement that it will build another 700 housing units in two West Bank settlements.

Housing Minister Natan Sharansky's insistence that the construction was approved under former Prime Minister Ehud Barak did little to mute the international condemnation, including the U.S. State Department's characterization of the move as provocative.

Foreign Minister Shimon Peres has his work cut out this week to explain the decision to build in Alfei Menashe and Ma'aleh Adumim.

On a midweek visit to Turkey, Peres insisted that the new construction falls within government policy guidelines, which rule out building new settlements but hold out the prospect of expanding existing settlements to account for communities' "natural growth."

Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon reportedly took much the same line in a telephone conversation with U.S. Secretary of State Colin Powell over the weekend. Sharon advised Washington to discount rhetoric from right-wing junior Cabinet ministers that may seem to contradict what he calls a policy of relative restraint in settlement building.

Sharon was at pains to stress that he, not anyone else, sets the policy — and that Peres is aware of it.

Sharansky stressed Tuesday that the building was planned for settlements "in the heart of the consensus" — in other words, within the settlement blocs to be annexed by Israel under proposals discussed at last summer's Camp David summit.

The Palestinians eventually rejected those proposals, although the land issue appeared to be less of an obstacle than other issues.

As time passes without a final Israeli-Palestinian peace agreement, more requests come in for building licenses. Ha'aretz reported Tuesday that the Housing Ministry plans to put land on the market before year's end for another 5,000 homes in West Bank settlements. Critics often claim that Barak built much more in the West Bank than prior administrations, but faced little backlash because his Labor-led coalition was perceived internationally as "pro-peace."

The issue is complicated by the fact that the approval process for construction can drag on for years, meaning that units built by one government may have been planned and approved by former administrations now insulated from criticism.

Sharansky noted that 3,500 new homes had been built in settlements over the past five years, 1,000 of them during Barak's tenure. "When there are negotiations, the opponents say, 'Don't build during negotiations,'" Sharansky said. "Now there are no negotiations, the opponents say, 'Don't build because that will deter a resumption of negotiations.' That way, nothing would ever get built."

The settlement issue stirs up instant, almost instinctive condemnations throughout the international community.

Sharon will have to tread carefully between his cardinal desire to maintain warm relations with the Bush administration and his wish to keep Likud hard-liners and right-wing coalition partners loyal.

Inside Israel, too, settlement building always generates controversy. Some observers claim to see the first signs of strain within the unity government as Labor's Cabinet ministers shuffle uneasily with the collective responsibility for the decision.

Significantly, though, rumblings in the coalition have been muffled and low key.

The international outcry has also failed to exacerbate traditional Israeli rifts between right and left. To most Israelis, focused on the life and death issue of Israeli-Palestinian gunfights, the question of a few more houses here or there seems marginal.

What has changed appears to be the left's former belief that coexistence or belligerency depends on Israeli policy. Since Palestinian Authority President Yasser Arafat buried the peace camp's best offer in a whirlpool of violence, few Israelis, it seems, still labor under the impression that decisions of war or peace are made in Jerusalem, instead of in Gaza. □

## Museum about the Holocaust to open next year in Budapest

By Ruth E. Gruber

BUDAPEST (JTA) — A new Holocaust Museum and Education Center is being planned in the heart of Budapest.

The museum, the first in Budapest to be dedicated to the Holocaust, will be located in the historic Jewish Quarter that was the site of the Budapest Ghetto during World War II. The opening is planned for April 2002.

The museum will be devoted to "promoting tolerance through the interpretation and teaching of the history of the Holocaust and Hungary's role in the Shoah," according to a statement issued by its organizers.

It will "honor those who struggled, suffered and died as well as those who resisted and hurried to the aid of the persecuted during the years of the Holocaust."

The museum is the brainchild of a group of people in their early 30s who come from Hungarian Jewish families, including Holocaust victims and survivors.

Though still in the planning stage, the museum is co-sponsoring its first public event April 22 — an evening marking Holocaust Remembrance Day that will feature two documentary films on the Shoah and a talk by author Imre Kertesz, who has written about the Holocaust and its effects.

Organizers say the museum will be a nongovernmental, nonprofit institution not directly linked to the Budapest Jewish community.

Local Hungarian authorities, however, say they back the project and are willing to provide a low rent, extended-lease site for the museum in a building near several synagogues and other Jewish institutions.

Other groups also say they look forward to helping the museum organizers.

"We are hoping to work with them," said Monika Kovacs, president of the Hannah Arendt Association, a Budapest-based organization devoted to Holocaust education.

An American Friends of the Museum Association also is being established.

More information about the Holocaust Museum and Education Center is available at [www.bphm.org](http://www.bphm.org).

Budapest has a Jewish museum, run by the local Jewish community and located in a complex that includes the famous Dohany Street Synagogue. This museum includes a section on the Shoah.

A Holocaust Documentation Center and Memorial Collection, sponsored by the government and the Jewish community, is slated to open in a currently unused synagogue in another part of the city, but it is not clear when it will open.

Organizers of the Holocaust Museum say they have "close, thriving working relations" with the organizers of the Documentation Center.

Some 220,000 Jews lived in Budapest on the eve of World War II.

The Nazis set up a ghetto in June 1944, several months after they occupied Hungary and began deporting all the Jews in provincial towns and villages.

About half of Budapest's Jews were killed in the ghetto or deported to their deaths before Soviet troops occupied the city in January 1945. □

## Accused Nazi war criminal dies; was investigated but never tried

By Jeremy Jones

SYDNEY, Australia (JTA) — An Australian citizen who allegedly helped kill thousands of Jews during World War II died recently without ever facing trial.

Jewish community leaders say the death of Karlis Ozols is a reminder of the failure of successive Australian governments to deal with alleged Nazi war criminals who immigrated to Australia after the war.

Ozols, who became Australia's chess champion in 1958, was a senior officer in the Arajs Kommandos, a pro-Nazi Latvian militia held responsible for the deaths of some 100,000 civilians, including 30,000 Jews.

According to Australian author Mark Aarons in his forthcoming book "War Criminals Welcome," Ozols was one of about 100 Arajs Kommando members who carried out mass executions of Jewish and Gypsy civilians and others in what is now Belarus.

"In Ozols' case, there is no doubt at all that he personally took part in not only ordering his men to shoot people, but shooting them himself," Aarons said.

Ozols' name figured prominently in 1986 during a public debate that eventually led to the establishment of Australia's Special Investigations Unit. Between 1987 and 1992, that unit probed allegations about the wartime actions of people who moved to Australia after the war.

In May 1992, Ozols' case was referred to the Director of Public Prosecutions, which concluded that there was a case against Ozols. No prosecution took place, however.

With that decision, the Australian government was saying that "it would cost too much to conclude the search for justice," Aarons said.

In March of last year, the Latvian Prosecutor's Office launched a criminal investigation into Ozols' activities. This week, the office confirmed that the probe would continue, as evidence relevant to other cases could emerge from it.

Meanwhile, Ozols' death has had reverberations in Australia's chess community.

Ozols, who competed for Latvia in the Munich 1936 and Stockholm 1937 Chess Olympiads, tied for the Australian National Championship in 1958 and was awarded the title of International Master in 1972.

After Ozols' death last month, the Australian Chess Federation sent its condolences to his widow, family and friends.

Chess player Michael Baron criticized the federation.

"Ozols will always be remembered as a person responsible for killing thousands of innocent people," he said.

Polish-born Holocaust survivor Harry Redner, an academic who was one of many Jewish chess players taught by Ozols in the early 1950s, was a prominent voice in past calls to bring Ozols to justice. He said Ozols' death means that "this man has escaped any accounting for his wartime behavior."

Meanwhile, Australian officials are following up on an extradition request involving a more junior officer in the Arajs Kommandos.

An Australian court last week ordered Konrad Kalejs to attend his extradition hearing next month, despite his ill health. Ozols was Kalejs' commanding officer during the war.

Latvia has asked for the extradition of Kalejs. □