



# Daily News Bulletin

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84th Year

## TOP NEWS IN BRIEF

### Another Israeli killed in ambush

An Israeli from the settlement of Homesh was killed Wednesday in a West Bank shooting attack. He was the third Israeli to be ambushed on a West Bank road since Monday. The man continued driving to Homesh after being shot, but rescue workers were unable to save him, according to Israel Radio.

The head of Palestinian militias in the West Bank vowed to continue attacks on Israeli settlers. "We will continue to besiege the settlers until all of them leave the territories," Marwan Barghouti said Wednesday.

In another incident, Israeli soldiers shot dead a Palestinian man Wednesday on the border between Israel and the West Bank. The soldiers opened fire when the man resisted arrest, Army Radio reported.

### Powell to visit Middle East

U.S. Secretary of State Colin Powell plans to return to the Middle East next week in an attempt to help Israel and the Palestinian Authority adhere to the fragile cease-fire agreement reached last week.

Bush administration officials would not say Wednesday whether Powell would still be in Washington when Prime Minister Ariel Sharon meets with President Bush next Tuesday. [Page 3]

### Israel says it will stick to truce

Israel will continue implementing a U.S.-mediated cease-fire despite what it called the Palestinian Authority's failure to fulfill its obligations under the truce.

But after a three-hour meeting of the Security Cabinet on Wednesday, Israeli officials also said they would not fully lift a blockade of Palestinian towns and villages until all attacks on Israelis stopped.

In a statement issued after the meeting, the Security Cabinet said that while there would be no retaliation for now for ongoing Palestinian terrorism, Israel "reserves the right of self-defense to prevent attacks aimed at its citizens and soldiers."

### Maccabiah shortened to a week

The duration of this year's Maccabiah Games will be reduced from 10 days to seven, according to Israel Radio. The expected announcement came less than a week after the steering committee for the Games decided that the Maccabiah would be held next month, despite ongoing Israeli-Palestinian violence.

## FOCUS ON ISSUES

### Continuing turn to tradition, Reform set to approve conversion guidelines

By Julie Wiener

NEW YORK (JTA) — In another break with its past, the Reform movement is poised to adopt new guidelines that endorse traditional rituals for people converting to Judaism.

Two years after the Central Conference of American Rabbis' "Statement of Principles" reversed the historic 1885 Pittsburgh Platform — a strident rejection of tradition and ritual — the Reform group is expected to overturn an 1893 resolution that described conversion rituals as unnecessary and meaningless.

The new document will be voted on next Wednesday at the CCAR convention in Monterey, Calif.

Among the suggestions in Guidelines for Rabbis Working with Prospective Gerim, or converts, are that prospective Jews immerse in the mikvah, or ritual bath; undergo at least a symbolic circumcision; and appear before a *beit din*, or panel of rabbis.

Such practices have become increasingly common in Reform conversions, particularly those overseen by recently ordained rabbis.

While Reform mikva'ot, or ritual baths, remain rare, three have been built in North America in recent years, and others are planned.

In addition, communities in New Jersey and the Denver/Boulder area, among other areas, have created Reform rabbinic panels to oversee conversions.

While there is little hard data about conversion, anecdotal reports describe a significant increase in the number of people undergoing Reform conversions, something Reform leaders attribute to outreach efforts targeting spiritual seekers as well as gentiles married to Jews.

With growing interest in conversion putting increased demands on rabbis' schedules, the Reform movement recently began training volunteers to work with prospective converts, said Dru Greenwood, director of the Reform movement's Union of American Hebrew Congregations' outreach and synagogue affiliation department.

The new guidelines are not obligatory. According to the introductory document, however, they aim to allow Reform rabbis to "speak as a community with a unified voice on matters so crucial to our self-definition."

While promoting ritual, the guidelines reiterate the Reform movement's longstanding rejection of the traditional notion that conversion should be discouraged. Instead, they call for an attitude of "joy and encouragement" while urging rabbis to ensure that prospective converts are aware of the challenges of being a Jew.

The guidelines also urge congregations to welcome and integrate prospective converts, calling for conversion to be seen as a long-term process involving study, participation in synagogue life and commitment to certain observances.

"It is essential that" conversion "involve more than simply graduating from an 'Introduction to Judaism' course," the document's preamble says.

Symbolic of the back-to-tradition approach, the guidelines are printed in a manner similar to a talmudic tractate, with basic principles in the center of the page surrounded by details and commentary along the sides.

In contrast to the CCAR's 1999 Statement of Principles — which spurred rabbis to months of e-mail comments and debate about the soul of Reform Judaism — the conversion guidelines are generating little controversy.

The relative quiet stems, in part, from the fact that the various drafts have been shared extensively and many rabbis have influenced the revisions, according to the

## MIDEAST FOCUS

### Bush: Keep the peace

President Bush urged Palestinian Authority President Yasser Arafat in a telephone call to make a "100 percent" effort to fight terrorism, the White House said.

Earlier Wednesday, Bush called Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon to urge him to adhere to a cease-fire brokered last week by CIA Director George Tenet.

### Terrorist to get tax refund

A Palestinian who killed eight Israelis when he drove a bus into a group of people at a bus stop near Tel Aviv is going to receive a nearly \$4,200 tax refund from the Jewish state.

The Jerusalem Post reported that Khalil Ulbah is getting the refund for work he performed for the Egged bus company. He used an Egged bus in the February attack.

### Two arrested for monk's slaying

Israeli security forces arrested on Wednesday two Palestinians in connection with the slaying of a Greek Orthodox monk on a West Bank road earlier this month. Prime Minister Ariel Sharon's office said the two were members of Palestinian Authority President Yasser Arafat's Force 17 presidential guard.

### Bombs explode, but no injuries

A bomb exploded Wednesday on a train line near the Israeli city of Hadera.

Earlier Wednesday, a pipe bomb planted in a recycling bin exploded in Hadera. No one was hurt in either incident.

### Report: Israel to buy 50 F-16s

Israel plans to exercise an option to buy more than 50 U.S. F-16 fighter jets from Lockheed Martin, according to the Israeli daily Ha'aretz. The deal with the largest U.S. defense contractor is worth \$2 billion.



## Daily News Bulletin

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CCAR's executive vice president, Rabbi Paul Menitoff.

Menitoff said the guidelines reflect what is "normative," even if not required, in the Reform world, and are "a snapshot of where we are when it comes to conversion."

"There was a period within the Reform movement where these rituals were not offered as options and were, if anything, discouraged. But that's the past," he said.

The conversion guidelines are "part of the same mind-set" as the 1999 principles, recognizing that rituals can add spiritual meaning to life cycle events and Judaism, Menitoff said.

The UAHC's Greenwood, herself a Jew by choice, praised the guidelines for providing rabbis with an opportunity to "speak with one another about what their practice is.

"I think it will be very useful for people in thinking about what they want to do and how they can deepen and improve the conversion process for people," Greenwood said.

Rabbi David Ellenson, president of the Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion, said the guidelines reflect "the general trend towards a greater receptivity to tradition.

"The irony is on the one hand, we have an ever greater turning towards traditionalism — reflected across the board in all the denominational movements — and simultaneously we have a community that is on the whole more highly acculturated than ever before in American history," Ellenson said.

"On the one hand, we have a renaissance in Jewish life and at the same time have record numbers of people who do not participate."

Some welcome the conversion guidelines as a harbinger of standards in other areas of Reform, a movement with a long tradition of rabbinic autonomy in which most statements and resolutions carry qualifiers noting that they are not binding.

"If we pass a resolution about conversion standards, it is going to suggest that we need to have standards in other areas as well," said Rabbi Robert Orkand of Temple Israel in Westport, Conn.

Rabbi Sandra Cohen, of Temple Micah in Denver, said the conversion guidelines are "reflective of what many Reform rabbis are doing in the Denver/Boulder area."

Cohen, who said working with prospective converts is "a major part of the rabbinate," said she and her colleagues have become enamored of the role of ritual in conversions and life cycle events. "It is really powerful for people that there's a discrete event that symbolizes the transformation from non-Jew to Jew." □

## Swiss Jews fearful after killing, increase in harassment on streets

By Fredy Rom

ZURICH (JTA) — The release of a suspect in the recent slaying of a rabbi here comes as a Swiss Jewish leader is calling on observant Jews to take secure routes to synagogues.

The call made by Max Besserman, chief of security for Zurich's Orthodox community, came after police released the 30-year-old suspect, saying they had little evidence that he was involved in the June 7 shooting death of Rabbi Abraham Greenbaum, a 71-year-old visiting from Israel.

The moves — and the growing fear among Switzerland's roughly 20,000 Jews — come as anti-Semitism continues to mount in the Alpine nation.

The 1998 Swiss bank settlement, in which two major Swiss banks agreed to pay \$1.25 billion to settle all claims surrounding Switzerland's handling of Holocaust victims' assets, led to an anti-Semitic backlash, as many Swiss citizens believe that international Jewry blackmailed the banks into the deal.

The nine-month-old Palestinian uprising has made the problem worse, as religious Jews often are accosted in the streets and held responsible for Israeli actions against the Palestinians. Many Swiss "do not accept that we are Jews with Swiss nationality, and not responsible for Israel," said a Jewish teen-ager named Ilan.

The most frequent manifestations of public anti-Semitism are verbal harassments of Swiss Jews on the street. Two Jewish children, Yossi, 10, and Miriam, 11, told Swiss Television last Friday that they have suffered attacks "because we look different." □

## JEWISH WORLD

### Shoah denier launches appeal

British Holocaust denier David Irving began an appeal Wednesday against a libel court ruling that branded him "anti-Semitic and racist."

In a highly publicized case in London last year, Irving lost his lawsuit against an American professor, Deborah Lipstadt, who had accused him in a book of being a Holocaust denier.

### Iran-Libya sanctions backed

A U.S. congressional committee defeated on Wednesday an amendment supported by the Bush administration that would have shortened the life of the Iran Libya Sanctions Act from five additional years to two. The act imposes sanctions against foreign companies that invest in Iran and Libya's energy sectors.

### Britain changes hate crimes law

Jewish officials welcomed changes to British law that will make it easier to prosecute people accused of hate crimes.

The Criminal Justice and Police Act allows police to arrest individuals on suspicion of harassment without a warrant. It also makes it possible to imprison, rather than merely fine, people convicted of sending hate mail.

### Shoah art controversy erupts

A scandal erupted in Ukraine, where workers from Israel's Yad Vashem Holocaust Memorial chiseled fragments from a newly discovered series of wall paintings.

Yad Vashem officials claimed the right to the paintings by Bruno Schulz, a Polish Jewish writer who perished in the Holocaust. Ukrainian officials denied they ever granted Yad Vashem permission to take the art to Israel.

### Former JTS president dies at 79

Rabbi Bernard Mandelbaum, a former president of the Jewish Theological Seminary, died Tuesday night in Florida at the age of 79.

Mandelbaum, an author and an influential voice in the Conservative movement, spent much of his life at JTS. In addition to serving as president of the seminary from 1966 to 1972, he was ordained by JTS and taught Midrash there as well.

### Israeli quake expert dies at 68

An Israeli expert on earthquakes died of a heart attack shortly after testifying before a Knesset committee regarding building safety.

Professor Ya'acov Glick, 68, succumbed shortly after speaking about what he viewed as Israel's lack of preparation for earthquakes.

## In latest move to quiet situation, Bush will send Powell to Mideast

By Matthew E. Berger

WASHINGTON (JTA) — Secretary of State Colin Powell will return to the Middle East next week in an attempt to help Israel and the Palestinians end the violence that has plagued the region for nine months.

"The president has asked the secretary to go to the Middle East to help secure efforts to preserve the cease-fire and to build upon it," White House spokesman Ari Fleischer said Wednesday.

Despite the Israeli-Palestinian agreement forged with the aid of CIA Director George Tenet last week, fighting continues in the region.

Three Israelis have been killed in attacks in the West Bank this week, while three Palestinians have been killed by Israeli soldiers.

Bush administration officials said Powell will stress that both sides need to do more to control the violence.

"We are concerned about the upsurge in the violence in recent days," State Department spokesman Richard Boucher said Wednesday. "We think people have to redouble their efforts."

This will be Powell's second trip to the Middle East since taking office, and will come during the same week that Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon meets with President Bush in Washington.

The administration refused Wednesday to give details of Powell's itinerary, but he is not expected to leave for the Middle East until after Bush and Sharon meet Tuesday.

Powell is expected to urge Palestinian Authority President Yasser Arafat to do more to control violence.

The last few weeks have provided evidence that Arafat can control the terrorist factions that have been blamed for several of the most bloody attacks.

Two of the three deadly attacks this week, however, were carried out by Arafat's own Fatah Party.

Powell's expected meeting with the Palestinian leader also will serve as an acknowledgment that Arafat has made some efforts toward quieting the situation in recent weeks.

It is a significant meeting, given that the Bush administration has refused to invite Arafat to the White House until he ends Palestinian violence.

Bush told American Jewish leaders last month that inviting Arafat was a "trump card" he intended to use to his advantage.

Powell is the most senior administration official involved in the recent drive to get Israel and the Palestinian Authority back on the path of peace talks.

Tenet spent last week orchestrating a security "working plan" between the two parties.

William Burns, assistant secretary of state for Near Eastern affairs, is expected in the region later this week.

"The president will continue to be as helpful as possible to play the role of facilitator, but it remains fundamentally important for all the parties in the Middle East to act to preserve the fragile cease-fire and to build upon it," Fleischer said.

American Jewish leaders are urging Powell to press Arafat to uphold the cease-fire plan, and continue with the process laid out by the international commission chaired by former Sen. George Mitchell.

"Right now, we see continued killings," Malcolm Hoenlein, executive vice chairman of the Conference of Presidents of Major American Jewish Organizations, said while traveling in Israel.

"We can't negotiate under these circumstances."

The Mitchell Committee called for the cease-fire to be followed by a cooling-off period and then confidence building measures by both Israel and the Palestinian Authority to bring the sides back to the negotiating table. Those plans were laid out in more detail by Tenet.

But Powell reportedly told Israeli Knesset Speaker Avraham Burg on Tuesday that the United States believes the cooling-off period has not yet begun, because Palestinian attacks are continuing. □

## Czech village marks Nazi atrocity, but nearby tragedy still a mystery

By Magnus Bennett

PRAGUE (JTA) — When the Nazis destroyed the Czech village of Lidice in June 1942, the atrocity made headlines around the world.

The Nazis shot more than 170 men, and they dispatched dozens of women and children to concentration camps in reprisal for the assassination of Hitler's chief SS official in Prague, Reinhard Heydrich.

But few people are aware of an even greater tragedy that befell the town of Kolin.

On June 13, 1942 — about a week after the death of Heydrich, who was a key architect of the "Final Solution" — 1,000 Jews from areas surrounding Kolin were sent on a journey from which they never returned. Some call it the "Lost Train of Kolin."

The transport was last known to have reached Poland, but no one survived to tell the story. Historians are still trying to learn the train's final destination.

Remarkably, some of that story lives on, thanks to a handful of Jews who were released from the train shortly before it left and somehow managed to make it through the war.

One of the lucky few was Hana Greenfield, now 75, an Israel-based Holocaust lecturer and author who ascribes her survival to the Nazis' obsession with detail.

"The Nazis told us that 1,000 Jews were to be sent on a penalty train to camps for the death of Heydrich," said Greenfield, who was born in Kolin. "There were 1,050 on the train, so I was one of 50 people who were told to get off and make our way to Terezin."

Greenfield not only survived Terezin — the transit camp also known by its German name, Theresienstadt — but also endured Auschwitz and Bergen-Belsen, as well as a period of slave labor in Hamburg, Germany, toward the end of the war.

Her older sister, Irene Ravel, was also told to leave the doomed transport.

At the age of 77, Ravel still provides guided tours of Terezin.

Perhaps the biggest tragedy today for the sisters is that, unlike Lidice, Kolin's City Hall does not remember the Lost Train.

While hundreds turned out Sunday in the rebuilt Lidice to mark the anniversary of the Nazi destruction and to remember the dead, Kolin's only moment of remembrance was a lecture in the town's synagogue by Greenfield.

"People here don't want to remember," said Greenfield. "You can see it in their faces that they are embarrassed that nothing more was done to help the Jews."

Meanwhile, the hunt goes on for the missing train.

Vojtech Blodig of the Terezin Museum said efforts were hampered by the fact that no official documents have been found to establish the final destination of the transport.

"Nobody survived this transport, and we can only guess what happened," he told JTA.

Blodig said it is not even certain that the train was a punishment transport for the assassination of Heydrich, given that three transports left Kolin for various destinations within a matter of weeks. Greenfield has a different opinion.

"I know what happened because I was there," she said. "We were held for three days in Kolin, and during this time the Nazis told us that this was a penalty train for the death of Heydrich."

"None of us knew where this transport was going and what

would happen," she said. "For me, it was a sort of adventure because we had been held for so long without being able to go anywhere or do anything."

Kolin City Hall has no plans to officially commemorate the lost train.

But as long as the sisters live, they, at least, will never forget.

"People say it is a question of God, luck or fate, whatever, that we survived," said Ravel. "Who knows why we are still around today?" □

## Religious leaders call for harmony in strife-torn Macedonia and Bosnia

By Ruth E. Gruber

ROME (JTA) — Jewish officials have joined other religious leaders in calling for peace and dialogue in two Balkan states — Macedonia and Bosnia.

Religious leaders from Macedonia issued a statement late last week expressing their "commitment to the One God for peace for our common country" and urging international support for peace initiatives.

Izhak Asiel, the chief rabbi of Macedonia and Yugoslavia, and Viktor Mizrachi, the president of the 200-member Macedonian Jewish community, signed the statement along with leaders of the Catholic, Muslim, Methodist and Macedonian Orthodox faiths.

The move came against the background of tensions between the Macedonian government and ethnic Albanian rebels that have threatened for weeks to explode into full-scale civil war.

The statement — months in the making — was released at the close of a three-day meeting of Macedonian religious leaders organized in Switzerland by the World Congress of Churches.

In the statement, the leaders acknowledged — but at the same time sought to distance themselves from — the strong role that religious identity plays in ethnic conflict.

"Our churches and religious communities are not involved in the conflict, and we strongly reject any effort to allow ourselves to be involved and to be manipulated, as well as any misuse of religious symbols and language for the purposes of violence," it said. Calling for dialogue, the statement said peace "is too important to leave only to the efforts of politicians. Peace is also a responsibility of the churches and of the religious communities."

"We call on religious communities around the world to pray with us and to support our efforts for peace."

The statement was issued just days after religious leaders from Bosnia, meeting in Rome, called upon people of faith to help consolidate the peace and reconstruct that country, which was wracked by ethnic warfare in the 1990s.

The Bosnian statement, signed by Jewish, Muslim, Catholic and Orthodox representatives, urged world leaders to "help the human and moral reconstruction" of the country by taking steps to rebuild the numerous religious sites that were damaged or destroyed during the bloody Bosnian civil war.

"There is nothing in the Balkans that does not include both political and religious components," Mizrachi told JTA before the Macedonian statement was signed.

"Our situation is very different from that in Bosnia," he said. There, he noted, the interfaith initiatives were occurring in a "postwar, post-bloodshed" situation.

In Macedonia, he said, interfaith activities are aimed at "preventing a situation such as happened in Bosnia." □