



Daily News Bulletin

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84th Year

TOP NEWS IN BRIEF

Israel, U.N. spar over video

Israel is insisting it receive an uncensored copy of a video filmed by a member of the U.N. peacekeeping force in Lebanon a day after three Israeli soldiers were kidnapped by Hezbollah in October. [Page 3]

Wagner performance blasted

Jerusalem Mayor Ehud Olmert said the city will have to reconsider its future relations with conductor Daniel Barenboim after he conducted a surprise performance of a piece by Hitler's favorite composer at the Israel Festival.

At the end of Saturday's concert, Barenboim told the audience he would conduct a piece from Richard Wagner's opera "Tristan and Isolde" and said those who objected should leave. Some members of the audience protested and walked out, but the majority cheered. Barenboim had agreed beforehand to observe the informal ban in Israel on Wagner.

Gun battle rages near funeral

Palestinian gunmen fired at Israeli troops stationed at the border between the Gaza Strip and Egypt. Sunday's gun battle took place as a funeral was held nearby for an 11-year-old Palestinian boy who was killed during a clash with Israeli troops in the area a day earlier. At the funeral, Hamas members vowed to retaliate by unleashing 10 suicide bombers in Israel.

Funders Network taps official

The Jewish Funders Network named an executive from one of North America's largest Jewish family foundations as its new executive director.

Mark Charendoff, vice president of the Andrea and Charles Bronfman Philanthropies, will head the growing, 11-year-old group for individual Jewish philanthropists and Jewish family foundations.

Powell: Violence still too high

U.S. Secretary of State Colin Powell reportedly agreed with Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon during a weekend phone conversation that the level of violence in the territories has not dropped enough to begin a cooling-off period stipulated in a U.S.-mediated cease-fire.

In another development, Israeli, Palestinian and U.S. officials held security talks last Friday night in Tel Aviv, but made no headway in stopping the violence.

BEHIND THE HEADLINES

Role as outsider was key for Pole who made film about WWII pogrom

By Deborah Sklar

NEW YORK (JTA) — Many people are familiar with Jan Gross' recent book about the 1941 massacre of 1,600 Jews in the Polish town of Jedwabne — but few are aware of the person who inspired it.

Early one Sunday morning, Polish filmmaker Agnieszka Arnold sat at her cluttered kitchen table in Southern Warsaw and sipped coffee as she talked about her film "Neighbors" — Arnold lent Gross the use of her film's title for his book.

Visibly exhausted, Arnold is a commanding woman in her late 40s, with a tough exterior and blue eyes that easily dampen.

She has made more than 20 documentaries about Polish-Jewish relations, but nothing prepared her for what she discovered in Jedwabne.

"For the past five years," Arnold, a Lutheran, says softly, "I lived in that barn where the 1,600 Jews were rounded up and killed. Every testimony I collected, every witness I spoke to, put me back into that barn. I haven't slept well since."

After the Polish responsibility for the massacre was publicized, the Polish government decided to commemorate the 60th anniversary of the event with a memorial Tuesday.

The Jewish community marked the event with its own ceremony last Friday.

On July 10, 1941, some 1,600 Polish Jews were rounded up by their Polish neighbors, forced into a barn and burned to death.

A plaque that stood in Jedwabne since the war falsely claimed that the Nazis committed the atrocity.

Even though Gross' book has received all the attention, Arnold was instrumental in placing the massacre before the public eye.

This spring, Arnold's film, broadcast in two prime-time slots, was viewed by 2 million Poles.

Viewers have reacted strongly to Arnold's film.

Some critics say that Arnold is anti-Polish; others embrace her work.

Boguslaw Majewski, minister at the Polish Embassy in Washington, is sympathetic: "Arnold's film enables us to come to terms with the crimes that some of our own committed because others stood on the side in silence. It shows us that indifference can be lethal."

Arnold's concern about Polish-Jewish relations stems from growing up as a member of the only Lutheran family in the Catholic town of Lowicz.

She believes that minorities in Poland have an advantage when it comes to examining society

"We feel and see more. Being an outsider allows us to look in," Arnold says.

After graduating from the University of Warsaw in 1972, Arnold worked for Communist-run state television but was forced to quit because her pieces were considered too political.

Eventually, her independent streak motivated her to direct her own films.

How Arnold came to discover the truth about Jedwabne has more to do with the striking absence of information rather than its existence.

After communism fell and the Polish government set up a commission to investigate Nazi war crimes, an alarm bell sounded for Arnold when she read a falsified report that claimed the Nazis had committed the massacre in Jedwabne.

In 1997, Arnold went to Jedwabne, a small town about 90 miles northeast of

MIDEAST FOCUS

Israel builds separation fences

Israel is constructing fences, walls and trenches along the edge of the West Bank to protect against Palestinian attacks, Israeli Defense Ministry officials said.

The barriers next to 10 Israeli communities will be about 35 miles long and will be completed in the coming months. Officials denied the barriers amount to a new border and refused to disclose the total cost.

P.A.: We're preventing attacks

The Palestinian Authority said it has prevented 17 terrorist attacks since it agreed to a cease-fire with Israel on June 13, Israel Radio reported. A Palestinian official said the attacks were prevented without the arrest of any Palestinian activists.

Fighting heats up in Hebron

A gun battle erupted between Israeli troops and Palestinian gunmen in Hebron. The fight began Saturday after gunmen opened fire on a Jewish enclave in the often-volatile West Bank city.

Last Friday, four Palestinian demonstrators were injured by Israeli soldiers in Hebron during confrontations before and after Muslim prayers. Several hundred protesters marched from the main mosque, burning Israeli and U.S. flags, and throwing stones at an Israeli army post, which prompted Israeli fire.

Rights groups want observers

Amnesty International and Human Rights Watch are calling for the rapid deployment of international observers to monitor Israeli and Palestinian human rights and humanitarian law violations.

In a July 6 open letter to leaders of the United States, European Union, Israel, Palestinian Authority and the United Nations, the two human rights organizations said "independent monitoring of what is happening on the ground is crucial, and only the international community can provide this."

Warsaw. "Literally, in the course of two hours, I learned the truth," Arnold says.

She and her cameraman, without equipment, entered a bar and began buying drinks for the patrons.

"We might have been tourists — although, how many tourists go to Jedwabne?" Arnold asks ironically.

The patrons in the bar accused one another, loudly, of having relatives who were murderers or living on stolen land.

The tension was palpable; they seemed to be competing for Arnold's attention.

Why they were so anxious to talk about such a taboo topic is something that Arnold easily answers.

"No one had wanted to listen to them until me," she says.

To make "Neighbors," Arnold traveled as far as Costa Rica and the United States to interview survivors, rescuers, perpetrators and witnesses.

The film uses no narration, and craftily unravels the hidden horrors through intimate interviews. Some faces are hidden and others boldly face the camera.

The current priest of Jedwabne, who claims on camera that no anti-Semitism exists, warned his congregants not to speak openly to Arnold, but many volunteered.

Arnold points out that for 60 years, no one — neither the Roman Catholic Church, schools nor the Communist Party — ever attempted to talk with them.

Arnold admits that only four years ago she thought the broadcast of her film would be postponed indefinitely. Poland was still emerging from 50 years of communism, a period during which all open dialogue had been frozen. Poles were still reluctant to openly face controversy about the past.

It was against this political backdrop that Arnold began to show her unfinished film to everyone she could. Its chilling firsthand testimonies captured the imagination of Gross, a Polish emigre and historian, and inspired him to expand his own research and publish his internationally acclaimed book.

Arnold was happy to share her transcripts and even her film's title.

"I left my ego out of it. I knew that once Janek" — as she calls Gross — "released his book, the public would know the story and my film would be broadcast," says Arnold. She was right. Her producers are now negotiating to bring the film to the United States this fall.

Pouring herself and her guests a second cup of coffee, Arnold glances at the rows of drab Communist-bloc buildings outside her kitchen window.

She's quick to point out that interspersed between the ugly gray blocks stood some prewar buildings reminiscent of a once-elegant Warsaw.

But, not surprisingly, Arnold refuses to romanticize Poland's past.

"People tell me that I'm a woman who has changed the course of history. Yet I am not satisfied. I am emotionally spent," Arnold sighs and continues.

"I am a mother with a teen-age son who I want to bring up in a country that has faced the demons of its past. My work is not done until Poles come to grips with the truth. I hope that my film restored some order and things are clearer now." □

Montreal's 'Mr. Campaign' dies at 92

MONTREAL (JTA) — Gordon Brown, an entrepreneur known as "Mr. Campaign" for his commitment to fund-raising for Montreal's Jewish community, died here July 1 at the age of 92.

Brown worked as a communal volunteer for some 50 years, during which time he also raised money to build Israeli institutions.

In 1995, he was awarded the Order of Canada, Canada's highest civilian honor.

Brown's profound impact on the community was much more than financial in scope.

"He was the quintessential community volunteer and leader," said Penny Kolb, an official at Federation CJA. "He was known by all as 'Mr. Campaign' and will always be remembered as such. I owe my involvement" in the Jewish community "to Gordie. He was my lifelong mentor."

Brown was born in the Ukraine and came to Montreal in 1908 with his parents and five siblings. He is survived by three children, 18 grandchildren and 16 great-grandchildren. □



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JEWISH WORLD

Judge: Religious rights violated

A U.S. judge ruled last Friday that town officials violated a couple's religious freedom by limiting the number of people who could attend prayer meetings at their home.

Citing zoning rules, town officials in New Milford, Conn., had said the couple could only have 24 people besides family members at their home.

Pole sentenced for WWII slayings

A Polish court sentenced a 78-year-old Polish man to eight years in prison last Friday for helping Nazis kill Jews. Henryk Mania was convicted of participating in acts of genocide at the Chelmino camp between December 1941 and April 1943.

It was the first such case brought by a government panel that began investigating archives and documents relating to Nazi-era crimes last year.

Jews blamed for murder climate

Jewish officials who pressed Switzerland to confront its World War II past were responsible for creating the atmosphere that led to the recent murder of a rabbi in Zurich, according to a public relations officer for the Credit Suisse bank.

Roger Schaerer said officials from the World Jewish Congress and Jewish politicians created an anti-Semitic backlash that was responsible for the June 7 shooting death of Rabbi Abraham Greenbaum, a 71-year-old rabbi visiting from Israel.

Dealer convicted over looted art

A French court convicted a New York art dealer on charges of receiving stolen property for buying a Dutch painting that had been stolen from a Jewish family by the Nazis during World War II. The dealer, who received an eight-month suspended sentence, testified he was unaware the painting was stolen.

The verdict could clear the way for other lawsuits against owners of Nazi-looted artworks.

Torahs honor two slain teens

The West Bank settlement of Tekoa received two Torah scrolls, with covers honoring the memory of two teen-agers killed in a nearby cave in May. Donors from Florida and New York presented the scrolls to the community, which has been grieving the death of Yosef Ish-Ran and Koby Mandell, a U.S. citizen.

Hitler retreat to become hotel

Hitler's Austrian retreat, where he plotted his assault on Europe, will become a luxury hotel, scheduled to open next year. Bavarian officials built an information center in Obersalzberg in 1999 to show how Nazis commanded their forces from the mountain getaway and planned the destruction of the Jews.

Israel demands U.N. video in flap over kidnapped soldiers

By Naomi Segal

JERUSALEM (JTA) — Hoping to glean information regarding Hezbollah's abduction of three Israeli soldiers last October, Israel is insisting it receive a full, uncensored copy of a video shot by a member of the U.N. peacekeeping force in Lebanon a day after three were kidnapped.

Since U.N. officials admitted the existence of the video last Friday — after months of maintaining there was no such footage — friction has been brewing between Israel and the international body over the conditions the officials are setting for Israel's viewing of the tape.

A U.N. official said this weekend both Israel and Lebanon could view the video, but only after it was altered to obscure the faces of presumed Hezbollah members. Explaining the move, the official said the international body cannot play a role in transferring intelligence information to either of the parties.

The official also rejected Israeli allegations of a cover-up, saying U.N. officials previously denied the existence of any video because they were unaware of its existence.

Israeli security officials charged Sunday that the United Nations is concerned that Hezbollah may attack the international body's peacekeeping force should it provide Israel with an unedited version of the tape.

The families of the kidnapped Israeli soldiers, who for months have been trying to obtain any scrap of information about the fate of their sons, expressed anger with the United Nations for its delay in acknowledging the video.

Haim Avraham, father of kidnapped soldier Benny Avraham, said that in a meeting last week with the U.N. special envoy to the region, Terje Roed-Larsen, he accused the international body of withholding information about the captives for months.

"I told him that if I do not receive the video in its entirety, I will lodge a complaint against him and the U.N. secretary-general at The Hague international court, as accomplices to the abduction," Avraham was quoted as saying.

Both Prime Minister Ariel Sharon and Defense Minister Benjamin Ben-Eliezer have demanded that Israel receive an unaltered copy of the video.

Israel wants to determine whether there is any information or footage that would shed light on the abduction. Israeli officials also want to interview U.N. peacekeepers in Lebanon. The Israeli daily Ha'aretz quoted some Israeli security sources as saying that the video does not portray anything new beyond what was already broadcast over an Arabic-language television station two days after the kidnapping.

Similarly, Jean Marie Guehenno, the U.N. undersecretary for peacekeeping, said the video — shot Oct. 8 by a member of the Indian contingent of the peacekeepers, would not shed new light on the kidnapping of Staff Sgt. Benny Avraham, Staff Sgt. Omar Souad and Sgt. Adi Avitan.

Hezbollah abducted the trio Oct. 7 when Israeli soldiers were conducting a routine check of the northern border with Lebanon. For months, contacts have been held via third party intermediaries regarding an exchange of the Israeli abductees for Arab prisoners held by Israel.

Portions of the video have already been broadcast on Israel's Channel Two Television. They show U.N. officials trying to tow two cars that were apparently used by the kidnappers and later abandoned.

A U.N. spokesman said inside the cars were bloodstains, explosive materials and equipment belonging to the U.N. Interim Force in Lebanon, as the peacekeepers are known. According to reports, the cars had forged UNIFIL license plates.

In a related development, Israeli security officials and families of the three soldiers are questioning the authenticity of images broadcast over the weekend that appear to show two of the captives in a Beirut hospital 11 days after their abduction. The faces of the two purported abductees are partly obscured, making identification difficult.

Israeli media quoted defense sources as saying it is unlikely such images could have been taken without Hezbollah's consent — which in turn raises the question of why the fundamentalist Shi'ite group would want to release the images. One theory is the pictures are part of Hezbollah's campaign of psychological warfare, aimed at putting pressure on Israel to make more concessions in any potential prisoner exchange. □

BEHIND THE HEADLINES

Fracas erupts after Israeli article criticizes leader of German Jews

By Toby Axelrod

BERLIN (JTA) — The leading Jewish official in Germany is denying reports that he favors tightening controls on people falsely seeking to emigrate to Germany as Jews.

Paul Spiegel, president of the Central Council of Jews in Germany, said the author of an article in the Jerusalem Post was "mean spirited" in stating that Spiegel wanted the German government to crack down on immigrants who falsely claim to be Jewish just to get in to the country.

The article, which appeared in a recent edition of the Post, included scathing criticism of Spiegel from Israel's Deputy Absorption Minister Yuli Edelstein and Knesset member Yosef "Tommy" Lapid. Both accused Spiegel of fomenting anti-Semitism in his remarks to *Der Spiegel*, a German newsweekly.

Spiegel, who is on a commission designing a potential immigration law for Germany, told JTA that the Jerusalem Post reporter had distorted his comments and that the Israeli politicians had never called him to clarify his views.

Among the alleged errors Spiegel pointed out in the article is a statement he supposedly made that Germany should limit the number of Jewish immigrants to 25,000 in the next four years. In fact, Spiegel said, he had "estimated the number of new immigrants for the next four years at up to 25,000 people."

In addition, Spiegel said, he never suggested that would-be immigrants should have to spend two years in their home country learning German before being allowed to immigrate.

What he said is that candidates should be offered language courses to make use of the waiting period until receiving their immigration visas, "for their own benefit and a better start" in Germany, Spiegel claimed.

In addition, Spiegel said, German citizenship is not automatically given to Jewish immigrants, as the Post article states.

"Only after 6 years of living in Germany and after a successful integration, the immigrants, who remain legally refugees under the Geneva Convention in this period, can apply for the German citizenship," Spiegel said in a recent letter to the Jerusalem Post.

Commenting on Spiegel's criticisms, the editor of the Jerusalem Post, Jeff Barak, told JTA, "The quotes attributed to Mr. Spiegel in the story we published on Monday were taken from a Reuters translation of an interview in *Der Spiegel*."

"At the time, we had no reason to doubt the veracity of the quotes," Barak said. "In a follow-up story a day later, we printed Mr. Spiegel's charges that Reuters had mistranslated his remarks and his reaction to the comments of Deputy Minister Yuli Edelstein" and Lapid.

Since the fall of the Soviet Union, more than 120,000 people claiming Jewish heritage have immigrated to Germany. Included in that number are some 30,000 non-Jews who used this opportunity as their big break, Spiegel told JTA. Those people don't join the Jewish community in Germany, as opposed to many of the immigrants who are indeed Jewish under religious law, he said.

The number of registered members of the Jewish community has grown from 35,000 to at least 90,000 in the last decade, making Germany's the fastest growing Jewish community in Europe.

Spiegel said that in the early 1990s he had been privy to talks about Jewish emigration from the former Soviet Union among

former Chancellor Helmut Kohl, former Foreign Minister Klaus Kinkel and Jewish community leaders, including the man Spiegel ultimately replaced as the leader of German Jewry, Ignatz Bubis.

Though the politicians knew that, according to Jewish law, one must either have a Jewish mother or convert to qualify as Jewish, they said they would accept anyone able to prove some Jewish ancestry, Spiegel said.

"They said, 'We are letting in Jews whether they have a Jewish mother or not,' and we said, 'OK, we will not say anything, but we will not take them into the Jewish community,'" Spiegel told JTA. "Anyone can be a citizen of Germany. But we are a religious community, not a club."

Spiegel added that it is well known that there is a black market for Jewish identity papers in the former Soviet Union: "Naturally, there are always people who try as criminals to make themselves Jewish. We have discovered many and sent them back." □

Rabbi involved in armed robbery is charged with indecent exposure

By Daniel Fleishman

NEW YORK (JTA) — A North Carolina community, already reeling from the news that a local Chasidic rabbi took part in an armed robbery a decade ago, is now dealing with the rabbi's recent arrest for indecent exposure.

Rabbi Pinchas Lew, 31, of Chapel Hill, was arrested on misdemeanor assault charges on May 16 after a woman accused him of repeatedly touching his genitals in front of her.

The woman, a housekeeper in Lew's home, reportedly said Lew had bolted all the doors and that she feared he planned to assault her. She managed to escape through a back door.

The woman filed a complaint with police two days later and Lew was arrested four weeks after the incident. He was released on a \$1,000 bond. Lew, married with five children, led religious study and frequently held services in his home for college students, most of whom attend the nearby University of North Carolina.

Lew, who could not be reached for comment, has taken a leave of absence from his job. A court hearing is slated for Monday.

Members of the community had just learned of Lew's conviction for his part in an Iowa armed robbery 10 years ago.

Lew's past conviction was written about in Stephen Bloom's "Postville: A Clash of Cultures in Heartland America," released last year.

The book examines tiny Postville, Iowa, where in 1987 a group of Lubavitchers opened a kosher slaughterhouse. Hundreds of Chasidim flocked to the town, but clashed with the locals — although one member of the community now serves on Postville's City Council. A chapter of the book is devoted to a 1991 incident in which an armed robbery and shooting shook up the town. Lew, who drove the getaway car, served 81 days in jail and was sentenced to five years' probation.

"Clearly, there is deep community concern over the charges, particularly because this is an individual who is here to work with students. The whole incident is highly unusual," said Lew Borman, executive director of the Raleigh-Durham Jewish Federation.

After the local community learned about the Postville incident, more than 100 members of the local Jewish community attended a meeting to hear Lew talk about his criminal past.

Coincidentally, that meeting occurred on the same day he allegedly assaulted the woman in his home. □