



# Daily News Bulletin

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84th Year

## TOP NEWS IN BRIEF

### **Bush, Sharon speak by phone**

President Bush called Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon on Thursday to offer condolences for last week's suicide bombing in Jerusalem, and stressed the importance of avoiding escalating Mideast violence.

According to the Prime Minister's Office, Sharon told Bush that Israel will not lead the region to war but is committed to protecting its citizens. Later, Sharon's office said the prime minister had told Bush that Israel is preparing for a "protracted battle" with the Palestinians, according to Reuters.

### **Report: It's tough for faith groups**

U.S. faith-based groups have difficulty getting federal grants for their social service programs under current guidelines, according to a new White House report.

The report comes as the Bush administration continues to try to drum up support for its faith-based effort.

### **U.N. council may meet on Israel**

The U.N. Security Council was slated to meet Thursday to decide whether to review recent Israeli actions against the Palestinians.

Arab and Muslim nations made the request after Israel's recent closure of the unofficial Palestinian headquarters in Jerusalem, and its seizure of several Palestinian military and government buildings just east of the Israeli capital, in response to a suicide bombing.

### **Egypt: U.S. policy aids extremists**

Egypt's national security adviser said the Bush administration's "inaction" on the Middle East could bolster extremists in moderate Arab countries. Osama Baz, in Washington for meetings with administration officials, told The New York Times that U.S. policy in the region also was weakening moderates in Israel and could hurt the United States' regional influence.

### **False-bomb e-mails arrest made**

An Israeli Arab man was arrested Wednesday for allegedly sending false messages over the Internet about suicide bombings. The man, who reportedly also bragged about spreading anti-Semitic messages, began spreading false information last week about attacks that were to take place throughout Israel.

## FOCUS ON ISSUES

### **Jews back cloning research, but oppose its reproductive use**

*By Sharon Samber*

WASHINGTON (JTA) — In the Brave New World of cloning, most Jewish ethicists and organizations are staking out the middle ground.

A general consensus appears to be emerging in the Jewish community that therapeutic cloning — using cloning technology for medical research — is acceptable, while reproductive cloning — using the technology to copy someone — is not.

Reproductive cloning is unproven, risky and represents a "tragic misunderstanding" of human identity, according to Laurie Zoloth, director of the Jewish Studies Program at San Francisco State University and an associate professor of social ethics and Jewish philosophy.

Advances in therapeutic cloning, which could lead to transfers of compatible tissue in transplants, would not necessarily lead to the dangerous practice of reproductive cloning, Zoloth said.

"Not all slopes are slippery," she said.

Zoloth is serving as the principal investigator of a new grant to facilitate discussion among Jewish scholars, ethicists and scientists about advances in genetics.

Reproductive cloning raises ethical, theological and moral concerns, as well as fundamental questions such as "Who is considered the clone's father and mother?" and "What happens to cloning experiments that fail?"

Some take the view that cloning can be a commandment, for example, if it is used to help infertile couples. Others say that it is immoral to make a genetic copy of someone.

Clones would be born from eggs stimulated to divide after their DNA was removed and replaced with DNA from other cells. Cells from an infertile father, for example, could be injected into an egg, which then would be implanted in the mother's uterus to create a pregnancy.

The resulting child would have the same physical characteristics as the father, and infertile parents would not have to rely on sperm donors.

Yet many people have visceral, negative reactions to cloning, fearing that the practice lacks a basic humanity.

Some believe that cloning would fly in the face of lessons from the Holocaust, when Nazi doctors experimented on humans in an effort to create a "master race."

Some rabbis are particularly troubled by the notion of a human made in one's own image, rather than the image of God.

Britain's chief rabbi recently called planned experiments to clone humans "a new low in playing roulette with human life."

Rabbi Jonathan Sacks said human cloning is dangerous and irresponsible because of the threat it poses "to the integrity of children so born."

Britain adopted guidelines years ago that allow for therapeutic cloning.

The U.S. House of Representatives voted last month to ban all human cloning, both reproductive and therapeutic.

Some Jewish groups, however, worry that a complete ban could end up being more harmful than a carefully structured one.

Important advances in medical research might be lost because of a legislative ban, said Mark Pelavin, associate director of the Religious Action Center of Reform Judaism. "We don't want to paint with too broad a brush," he said.

In a journal published last year by Yeshiva University, a number of ethicists and

## MIDEAST FOCUS

### Study: Regional war possible

Israeli-Palestinian fighting could last for several years and escalate into a regional war, according to an Israeli military report cited by the Israeli daily Ha'aretz.

But Israeli Defense Minister Benjamin Ben-Eliezer said he doesn't believe a regional war is likely.

### Israel feeds hungry Palestinians

Israel is providing food and livestock to help alleviate a Palestinian food shortage in the West Bank and Gaza Strip. Israel reportedly is transferring to the Palestinian Authority some 17,000 cattle, veal calves and sheep that arrived from Australia earlier this week. On Tuesday, 459 trucks with food and fuel reportedly entered Gaza via the Karni Crossing.

### Jewish, Arab convoy launched

Jewish and Arab youth in Israel launched a solidarity convoy for three Israeli soldiers held hostage by Hezbollah in Lebanon since October. The convoy left from Tiberias, the hometown of one of the soldiers, Adi Avitan, and was headed for the Knesset in Jerusalem.

### Roadside bombs explode

Two roadside bombs exploded Wednesday, one near an Israeli army vehicle south of Jenin in the West Bank, the other near an Israeli patrol on the Israel-Egypt border in the southern Gaza Strip. There were no injuries in either explosion.

### Israeli Druse to Lebanon: Back off

Druse leaders in Israel are asking their Lebanese counterparts to "refrain from interfering in internal community affairs" after a Lebanese leader called on Israeli Druse to stop serving in "the Israeli army of occupation," according to Ha'aretz.

In a first-of-its-kind gathering, Druse leaders from Lebanon, Syria and Israel are planning to meet in Jordan to discuss Druse service in the Israeli army.

thinkers weighed in on cloning. Reactions in the journal ran the gamut.

"Cloning does not involve the union of two individuals; it is therefore not an act of creation but rather one of duplication, and" is "at odds with any Jewish understanding of conception," wrote Dr. Eitan Fiorino, a pharmaceutical industry analyst.

But Rabbi Michael Broyde, a law professor at Emory University in Atlanta, says cloning can be proper — if done with appropriate supervision.

Broyde bolsters his argument with the scenario of a sick person who could be cloned to insure a match in a bone marrow transplant. "Jewish tradition might regard this procedure as involving two good deeds: having a child and saving a life," he wrote.

Many recommended more discussion and a cautious approach.

The Bush administration is continuing its conservative approach to genetic research, and the president reiterated his strong opposition to cloning.

"We recoil at the idea of growing human beings for spare body parts or creating life for our convenience," Bush said Saturday.

The president named Dr. Leon Kass, a biomedical ethicist from the University of Chicago, to chair a presidential council on bioethics and biomedical innovation.

An outspoken critic of human cloning, Kass believes that cloning constitutes unethical experimentation and threatens identity and individuality. Babies will be manufactured, and allowing such technology to go forward would bring about a perversion of parenthood, Kass believes.

Kass also said a ban only on reproductive cloning would be unenforceable.

Zoloth says the talmudic tract of Sanhedrin offers potential guidance, since the rabbis determine that forbidden knowledge used for teaching might be okay, Zoloth said.

Perhaps, she said, that means medical research of cloning is acceptable, but actual cloning of humans is not. "We're at the beginning of understanding," she said. □

## Jews cry foul on plans to merge voting districts in Montreal area

By Bram Eisenthal

MONTREAL (JTA) — Jews in the Montreal area are concerned that an initiative proposed by Quebec's provincial government could reduce the power of their vote.

Some 60 Montreal organizations, 56 of them Jewish, attended a meeting recently to alert the public to the potential damage posed by the initiative.

Under the initiative, the district of D'Arcy McGee — which has many Jewish and other minority voters — would merge with other districts in the Montreal area.

Many in the Jewish community are concerned that this would water down their vote in future elections, particularly when it comes to any referenda on Quebec's separation from Canada.

Members of the Jewish, Italian and black communities attended the meeting to hear addresses from various community leaders.

Among the Jewish groups represented were the Association of Jewish Day Schools, the Canadian Jewish Congress, the League for Human Rights of B'nai Brith Canada and the National Council of Jewish Women.

Casper Bloom, the honorary legal counsel for the Canadian Jewish Congress, stated there is no reason to change the boundaries of voting districts, saying D'Arcy McGee is "perfection in itself" and "a natural community established on the basis of demographic, geographical and sociological considerations."

Lawrence Bergman, a member of Quebec's National Assembly from the D'Arcy McGee district, called the merger of the voting districts "a severe and unacceptable blow."

The move, he pointed out, would reduce Montreal's representation in the National Assembly from 30 seats to 27, would further minimize the influence of the already embattled English-speaking community and would also threaten to diminish the voting clout of the Montreal Jewish community.

Bergman is one of two Jewish members of the National Assembly and is considered the body's most active member regarding Jewish issues.

Public hearings regarding the redrawn voting-district map are scheduled for Sept. 10-12, after which the National Assembly will debate the proposal. □



## Daily News Bulletin

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## JEWISH WORLD

### Shul can move into ex-convent

A Reform Jewish congregation in suburban Philadelphia can move into a building previously used as a Roman Catholic convent, a local zoning board decided.

Wednesday's decision reversed an earlier ruling against Congregation Kol Ami that had been made after complaints from residents in the area concerned about possible traffic, noise and pollution.

After that decision, Kol Ami sued the township of Abington, Pa., under a federal law designed to protect religious discrimination in zoning issues.

### Conductor: I want to go back

A Jewish conductor who created controversy in Israel when he played an encore last month by Richard Wagner, Hitler's favorite composer, said he would like to perform again in the Jewish state.

An Israeli parliamentary committee has recommended that Daniel Barenboim be banned from conducting in Israel because of his actions at the July 7 performance of the Israel Festival.

### Diseases may get new foe

American Jews one day may be able to receive a battery of screening tests for genetic diseases at low cost.

The New York-based Trust for Jewish Philanthropy, an offshoot of the North American federation system and an incubator for large-scale, innovative Jewish projects, is considering launching a genetics project that would offer tests for diseases such as Tay-Sachs and Canavan.

The project could also support research on gene mutations for which screening tests have not yet been developed.

### Czechs to mark deportations

A series of commemorative events will be held in October to mark the 60th anniversary of the start of the transportation of Czech Jews to concentration camps and ghettos during World War II.

The events are being organized by the Terezin Initiative, an international association comprised of former prisoners of the Czech ghetto, which was also known by its German name of Theresienstadt.

### Federations help Israel Red Cross

The Jewish Federation of Greater Atlanta is launching a campaign to raise at least \$60,000 to buy an ambulance for the Magen David Adom, Israel's version of the Red Cross.

Recently, the Combined Jewish Philanthropies of Greater Boston raised enough money to purchase two ambulances, according to the American Red Magen David.

## FOCUS ON ISSUES

### It's not for respect or money: Jewish educators teach for love

By Julie Wiener

FORT COLLINS, Colo. (JTA) — Ever since she was a little girl playing school, Denise Abadi has wanted to teach. For years, she taught in the public schools, but she turned to Jewish education because she likes “communicating the way I live at home” — and having Jewish holidays off.

Now a veteran Hebrew school and early Jewish childhood teacher in Charlotte, N.C., Abadi describes her work as a “labor of love.” But she's the first to admit that her jobs do not pay a “living wage.”

With a salary of about \$17,000 a year and no benefits for more than 20 hours a week in the classroom, Abadi's career offers little more than a supplementary income that she uses to send her children to summer camp.

“I'm lucky my husband makes a good living so I can afford to teach,” says Abadi, interviewed here last week at the Conference on Alternatives in Jewish Education.

Most leaders in the field describe Jewish schools' teacher shortage as a crisis.

According to officials with the Coalition for the Advancement of Jewish Education, which sponsored last week's conference, between 10 percent and 20 percent of Hebrew school classrooms will not have permanent teachers when school starts this year.

Many speculate that the field's low salaries, lack of benefits and lack of respect prevent many people from considering such jobs.

In supplemental, or congregational, schools, the problem of finding and keeping teachers is aggravated by the part-time nature of the job. Individual jobs at those schools consume from two to 12 hours a week across a smattering of time slots, many of them inconvenient for people with school-age children.

The difficulty for teachers to cobble together a full-time or even substantial part-time job based on Hebrew school teaching makes for a hard sell, particularly as two-career families have sharply reduced the old pool of stay-at-home mothers.

So, given the challenges, why does anyone teach? Like Abadi, most Hebrew school teachers interviewed at the CAJE conference said they tolerated the drawbacks of the job out of a sense of communal obligation and genuine enjoyment.

Many described the job more as a hobby or service to the Jewish community than as a career, and many teach in addition to other full- or part-time jobs.

Carol Morris, who teaches sixth grade at a Denver-area congregational school and works as an advocate for school excellence at the Colorado Agency for Jewish Education, said she sees teaching as a “way to contribute to the community.”

The director of the agency for Jewish education, where she works during the week, has “always said we're doing God's work, and that has kept me going.”

Rachel Richter, 30, of Phoenix, Ariz., works full time for the American Israel Public Affairs Committee, but has taught Hebrew school for six years. Richter, who was at the conference with her mother — also a Jewish educator — took last year off.

This year, she will return to teaching for four hours a week, “because I miss that aspect of my life — the synagogue connection and the kids.”

Agnes Sonnenfeld, who teaches at Temple Micah, a Reform congregation in Denver, and works as office manager at a local non-profit organization, grew up as a rabbi's daughter. “For me, it's a mitzvah” to teach, she said.

Richard Corn, one of the few male participants at the conference, said teaching part time at Scarsdale Synagogue and Westchester Reform Temple, both in suburban New York, is his “contribution to keeping Jewish civilization alive.”

“Although I feel very American, I think that's not enough,” he said. “Our children need the wisdom and brilliance of a 5,000-year history.”

Erin Savage, 26, is an occupational therapist by profession but teaches part time at the Woodstock Jewish Congregation in upstate New York. The job, she said, “keeps me connected to my identity as a Jew.”

“There's no better way to learn something than to try to teach to someone else,” she said.

“I learn more from my kids than most of the teachers I had in Hebrew school.” □

## AROUND THE JEWISH WORLD

## Synagogues open across Europe as a part of second Jewish day

By Ruth E. Gruber

ROME (JTA) — Passover will be the theme of the second annual European Day of Jewish Culture, when more than 300 Jewish sites across Europe will hold an open house.

"For the Jews, Pesach is a symbol of freedom," a statement from organizers said.

"It is the holiday that recalls the birth of the Jewish people and at the same time it is the affirmation of human freedom against oppression."

As part of the Sept. 2 event, synagogues, cemeteries, ritual baths, medieval ghettos and Jewish museums in 23 countries — from Spain to Switzerland, from England to Ukraine — will be on display. Guided tours, exhibitions, concerts and events such as book fairs and food-tastings are also planned.

The aim of the event is to recognize Jewish heritage as an integral part of the cultural heritage of Europe, to promote tourism to Jewish heritage sites — and to promote Jewish pride and a sense of European Jewish identity.

"It is a sign of the opening of the Jewish community toward Europe," said Cobi Benatoff, president of the European Council of Jewish Communities, one of the sponsors of the event.

"We want to present an image of openness and welcome, to show our traditions and make them known to visitors and fellow citizens," he said.

He added that organizers also want "to give an image of Jews today as people who participate fully in the development of their countries and Europe but who also still proudly and jealously preserve their own traditions."

If the results of the first Jewish Culture Day a year ago are any indication, the initiative is paying off.

Last year's more than 500 coordinated events in 16 countries drew as many as 150,000 people — more than 43,000 of them in Italy alone.

It was considered the most successful trans-border event sponsored by the ECJC in its efforts to promote a pan-European Jewish identity.

"It was the first event that really politically unified European Jewry," said Amos Luzzatto, president of the Union of Italian Jewish Communities.

"It also was a politically important event for Europe as a whole."

With more countries and more sites involved this year, even more visitors are expected.

Luzzatto said he did not expect the continuing conflict in the Middle East to affect Culture Day activities.

"We will go ahead normally," he said.

"Our security measures are permanent. We will continue to be cautious, but we don't want to close our doors."

In addition to the ECJC, organizers include France's Agency for the Development of Tourism of the Bas-Rhin, B'nai B'rith Europe, and the Red de Juderias de Espana, based in Girona, Spain.

In several countries, such as Italy, the government serves as a sponsor for events, and the Council of Europe has included Jewish Culture Day as part of its campaign promoting "Europe, a Common Heritage."

The scope of this year's initiative reflects the growing interest

in European Jewish heritage and Jewish heritage sites, which has developed markedly in the past decade.

For decades after World War II, Jews and non-Jews alike paid little attention to preserving or documenting Jewish sites that had survived both the destruction of the Holocaust and demographic shifts of Jewish populations.

As recently as 10 years ago, information on Jewish heritage sites was hard to come by in many countries, and little systematic documentation existed.

Centuries-old synagogues were used as warehouses or left to crumble, and even the location of many cemeteries had slipped out of memory.

But since the late 1980s — and particularly since the fall of communism opened up Eastern and Central Europe to tourists and scholars — Jewish heritage has become increasingly recognized as a rich legacy for Europe as a whole and has been embraced as an important component of multicultural society.

A recent project sponsored by the London-based Institute for Jewish Policy Research, for example, charted all Jewish cultural events that took place between May 2000 and April 2001 in four countries with small Jewish populations — Italy, Belgium, Sweden and Poland. Researchers counted well over 700 events in all four countries, including 27 separate Jewish cultural festivals — 13 of them in Italy alone.

"This amounted to an average of one event for every 125 Jews," said British Jewish scholar Jonathan Webber, an academic adviser to the project.

"There is clearly no correlation between the considerable size of this cultural production and the percentage of Jews in a given total population of a particular country."

For this year's European Day of Jewish Culture, sites in 36 towns and cities will be open in Italy, home to about 35,000 Jews.

These include many of Italy's 70 magnificent synagogues and even a medieval mikvah in Siracusa, Sicily.

Italy's culture minister and other senior officials will attend an official inaugural ceremony in Bologna, and other major events are planned in Rome, Milan, Florence and elsewhere.

More than two dozen sites will be open in Germany, and at least four synagogues will be opened in Slovakia, home to 3,000 Jews, where concerts and exhibits are also planned.

More than two dozen synagogues and Jewish cemeteries in the Alsace-Lorraine region of France will be open, along with other sites around the country.

In Spain, home to 20,000 Jews, about a dozen medieval ghettos in towns including Toledo, Girona, and Tudela, will be focus of a variety of events.

Most sites on display are generally closed to the public.

Many were abandoned for decades — or, like the synagogues and ghettos of Spain and southern Italy, for centuries. □

For information on the European Day of Jewish Culture and a list of events, see the Web site [www.jewishheritage.org](http://www.jewishheritage.org).

## Milosevic cronies blamed for hate

NEW YORK (JTA) — The leader of Yugoslavia's Jewish community said officials left over from the regime of jailed nationalist Slobodan Milosevic are to blame for a recent upsurge in anti-Semitism.

Aca Singer cited the example of the state prosecutor refusing to seize the anti-Semitic tract "The Protocols of the Elders of Zion" and prosecute those distributing it in Belgrade, the capital. □