



Daily News Bulletin

Vol. 79, No. 207

Tuesday, November 13, 2001

84th Year

TOP NEWS IN BRIEF

Powell vows new Mideast push

U.S. Secretary of State Colin Powell plans to revive efforts next week aimed at bringing Israel and the Palestinian Authority toward a cease-fire, high-level sources told JTA.

Powell is expected to announce the initiative in a major address at an undetermined venue.

The speech is not expected to present proposals for a final peace plan, sources said, and comes on the heels of an address from President Bush at the United Nations on Sunday that was praised by both Israeli and Palestinian officials.

Peres: No U.S.-Israel tensions

Israeli Foreign Minister Shimon Peres downplayed any tensions between the United States and Israel. Addressing the General Assembly of the United Jewish Communities in Washington on Sunday night, Peres said Israel is on America's side. "There is no other side, this is the only side," he said.

In a videotaped message from Israel, Prime Minister Ariel Sharon expressed solidarity with the United States and asked for American Jews to visit Israel.

Condolences sent after crash

Israel's prime minister and president expressed their condolences after an airplane crash in New York.

Ariel Sharon and Moshe Katsav contacted the U.S. ambassador to Israel, Daniel Kurtzer, to convey their condolences to the American people and the people of New York. American Airlines flight 587, an Airbus A-300, was taking off from JFK International Airport bound for the Dominican Republic when it crashed at about 9:15 Monday morning in the borough of Queens.

U.S. officials are currently treating the crash as an accident.

13,000 to go on Birthright trip

Some 13,000 young people are registered to go on free 10-day trips to Israel this winter. Of the number expected on the trip, sponsored by Birthright Israel, 8,000 are from the United States.

The program, which will include Jews from Hungary and Paraguay for the first time, works with young Jews from 17 countries. Birthright has sent 22,702 people to Israel since the program began.

FOCUS ON ISSUES

Jewish, Muslim college students find some unity in shared dining hall

By Julie Wiener

SOUTH HADLEY, Mass. (JTA) — Recently, Sharon Adams, a Jewish student at Mount Holyoke College, sat down with a Muslim student and got into a conversation about the challenges of remaining religious in college.

An outgoing, newly Orthodox exchange student from London, Adams might have started the discussion anyway. But it was a little easier because the two women could share a meal — one that was both kosher and halal — while they chatted.

At a time when Jewish-Muslim relations in America are strained, many Jewish students find themselves on the defensive from anti-Israel rhetoric and Muslims are fearful of being lumped together with Osama bin Laden, this elite New England women's college is a rare haven of relative harmony.

Two days after the Sept. 11 terror attacks on the World Trade Center and Pentagon, Mount Holyoke opened what is believed to be the first kosher-halal dining hall at an American college. "This was just the best thing that could have happened at that time," said Nadia Rahim, a Muslim senior from Bangladesh. "There was such a feeling of cooperation and partnership."

Dartmouth College is opening a similar facility later this month, and there are preliminary discussions about creating kosher-halal facilities at other universities, including the University of California at Los Angeles.

The centrally located dining hall — a homey room with floral wallpaper, pink curtains and comfortable wooden chairs — serves 80 to 100 students per meal, the majority of whom are neither Jewish nor Muslim but simply live in the nearby dorm.

With its relatively small Jewish and Muslim populations — Jews make up about 6 percent of the school's 2,000 students, and Muslims about 4 percent — the school might seem an unlikely spot for the country's first kosher-halal student dining hall.

Some students new to kosher and halal restrictions are grumbling about the new rules, but most students praise the cafeteria for its tasty grub — by institutional standards, at least — and the implicit message that Jews and Muslims have "more in common than separates us," as one Muslim student put it.

The project took off last year when Muslim and Jewish students approached the administration, complaining that they were outgrowing the student-run kitchen they shared. Administrators warmed to the idea, saying it "resonated with the core values" of the school, which has a large number of international students.

After an anonymous alumna contributed \$250,000, the college scrambled to convert Wilder Hall. The kitchen was redone over the summer, new equipment was brought in and staff were trained on everything from separating dairy and meat items to scrutinizing ingredients like mustard and vanilla to ensure they are alcohol-free, a halal restriction.

Even before plans for the dining hall emerged, Jews and Muslims here enjoyed good relations, leaders of both communities say. The Muslim and Jewish chaplains have adjoining offices, the two communities used to share a small kitchen in the religious life building and they came together for an ecumenical celebration each winter called "The Festival of Lights."

Some credit the smooth relations to what they say is a female tendency to be a little more peaceful and diplomatic than men.

"Because we're all girls, we tend to be more calm about these things," Adams said. "We're a little less aggressive." But another element of the harmony may be the general

MIDEAST FOCUS

Israeli killed by Arab gunman

An Israeli man was shot dead by a Palestinian gunman in a village in central Israel.

Aaron Ussishkin, 50, the security officer for Kfar Hess, was killed when he responded to warnings of a suspicious stranger in the village.

Two other Israelis were wounded by the gunman, who is still being sought by police. Israeli security forces received warnings two days ago of an impending attack on Kfar Hess, according to Army Radio.

Israel kills Hamas member

Israeli troops killed an Islamic militant in a Palestinian village. Muhammed Reihan, a senior member of Hamas, was killed during a firefight after Israeli troops entered the West Bank village of Tel early Monday morning.

Reihan picked up a rifle and went outside when troops surrounded his house, according to a relative. Israel said the troops killed Reihan after he opened fire. Reihan had been on Israel's wanted list since 1998 for killing two residents of the nearby Jewish settlement of Yitzhar.

During the incursion, which lasted about 10 hours, the army said it detained 45 residents, including 16 wanted by Israel.

Syria: Hezbollah not terrorist

Syria and the United States disagree on how to classify Hezbollah. During a meeting Sunday, Syrian Foreign Minister Farouk al-Sharaa told U.S. Secretary of State Colin Powell that Hezbollah is a resistance group, not a terrorist organization. Earlier this month, Washington included Hezbollah on a list of 28 terror groups whose assets should be blocked.

Powell told al-Sharaa that despite the disagreement, the United States wants Syria to use its influence over Hezbollah to reduce conflict with Israel, according to a senior State Department official.

environment. On the campus of elegant red brick Gothic Revival buildings, gracious trees and open grassy areas, genteel civility, friendliness and multiculturalism seem to be religions in their own right, and the two sides generally avoid discussing the Middle East, at least with each other.

Even in the aftermath of Sept. 11, when many American Jews draw comparisons between Palestinian terrorists and bin Laden's network and when many Muslims blame the attacks on U.S. support for Israel, the topic of Israel seems to come up little in campus discussions. For the most part, conversations about the war are focusing on opposition — quite common here — to the U.S. bombing of Afghanistan.

Muslim students, at least when interviewed by a Jewish reporter, were reluctant to broach the issue of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Several Jewish students said they generally avoid talking about Israel for fear of creating conflicts.

"I don't walk around wearing my Camp Tel Yehudah 'Property of the Zionism Department' T-shirt," said Naomi Gates-Monasch, a Jewish sophomore from the San Francisco area, referring to the camp run by the Young Judaea Zionist youth group. "That would be asking for trouble. In general, it's a very accepting community, but yes, obviously there are subjects we don't talk about," Gates-Monasch said.

Adams, whose mother is Israeli and who frequently travels to Israel, said she makes a point to avoid talking about politics.

"I don't find it conducive to maintaining a peaceful atmosphere with other students," she said. "It's difficult for people to keep it an intellectual conversation. It's a very emotional subject, especially if you have family there."

Farrah Hamid, a Muslim freshman from New Hampshire, said Jewish and Muslim students "definitely mix," despite "some differences of opinion."

Hamid, who is of Pakistani descent, said she does not know a lot about the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. As to the causes for the current conflict with bin Laden, Hamid grew quiet, saying "I don't want to go into it."

Efraim Eisen, the Jewish chaplain at Mount Holyoke, said he hopes to increase awareness on campus about Israel's history, and is planning a teach-in about Israel.

Most students on campus "don't know a lot about the history of Israel and why it exists," he said, adding that he is concerned that anti-war sentiment on campus could lead to anti-Israel rhetoric here, as it has on some other campuses like the University of California at Berkeley.

There is also talk of creating a formal Muslim-Jewish dialogue group at Mount Holyoke, though some students are wary of the idea.

The Jewish community is small compared to those at other prestigious East Coast schools but is growing more active and visible — though many of the most enthusiastic participants are non-Jews exploring Judaism.

The dining hall is unlikely to attract strict observers of either faith. The meat is not technically halal, though the Muslim community agreed to accept kosher meat, citing a Muslim tradition that kosher food is acceptable when halal is not available.

In addition, the kitchen is under Conservative, not Orthodox, rabbinic supervision. That wouldn't satisfy most Orthodox students, who are far more likely than Conservative or Reform students to choose a campus based on the availability of kosher food.

Eisen, who is not Orthodox, said Orthodox supervision would have made the project too cumbersome and expensive, as the Orthodox rabbis consulted would have required additional walls to separate the dairy and meat sections of the kitchen, along with a separate ventilation system. In any event, the dining hall has grown in popularity among many students who are neither Jewish nor Muslim.

That stems from the hall's central location and a by-product of the strict kosher-halal demands: Most of the food is freshly made. That distinguishes it from the other dining halls, which rely on premade, processed ingredients such as canned spaghetti sauce and powdered mashed potatoes.

All baked goods are prepared fresh in the kitchen, whereas the school's other 16 dining halls use a centralized bakery. Emily Reiman, a senior who describes her religion as "pretty much nothing," said some students initially were unsure what to expect from the new dining hall, with its more limited options.

However, said Reiman — as she waited to serve herself vegetarian lasagna, pureed butternut squash, casserole and pumpkin pie onto a green dairy plate — "The food's better than average. That won over most people." □



Daily News Bulletin

Ivan Michael Schaeffer, *President*

Mark J. Joffe, *Executive Editor and Publisher*

Lisa Hostein, *Editor*

Michael S. Arnold, *Managing Editor*

Lenore A. Silverstein, *Business Manager*

Paula Simmonds, *Marketing and Development Director*

JTA DAILY NEWS BULLETIN is published five days a week, except holidays, by the Jewish Telegraphic Agency Inc., 330 Seventh Ave., New York, N.Y. 10001-5010. For information about how to subscribe by e-mail, fax or regular mail, call (212) 643-1890, or visit our Web site at www.jta.org.

© JTA Reproduction only by previous arrangement.

JEWISH WORLD

UJC calls for policies on aged

The United States must develop national policies on long-term care for the aged, the United Jewish Communities says.

In a new guide, the umbrella organization of North American Jewish federations suggests financial reforms to Medicare, inter-agency partnerships in government and tax incentives as some ways to address an expected increase in need for elderly services.

More than 20 percent of American Jews are older than 65, compared with 13 percent of the general population.

Red Cross may admit Israel

Israel's relief organization may soon be admitted into the International Red Cross. "There is now, I think, a genuine willingness on the part of the leadership" of the International Red Cross to "find an answer" regarding Magen David Adom, American Red Cross chairman David McLaughlin told the Jerusalem Post.

He made the comment after he told the international relief organization that he plans to continue withholding annual dues because of its exclusion of Israel.

"I think there's an increasing sentiment" that Magen David Adom "should be admitted. Many of the European countries are coming to that view, though not all of them," he said.

Birthright the tie the binds

Alumni of free 10-day trips to Israel continue to feel stronger attachments to Israel and the Jewish people than they did before the trip. The finding was part of a new study conducted by Brandeis University's Cohen Center for Modern Jewish Studies.

The study reports that 65 percent of Birthright Israel alumni feel a strong connection to the Jewish people one year after the trip — compared with 38 percent beforehand — and that 48 percent feel a strong connection to Israel, compared with 22 percent beforehand.

German leader to get medal

A Jewish group plans to honor the president of Germany. German President Johannes Rau is slated to receive the Leo Baeck Medal of Honor in New York on Tuesday.

The award from New York's Leo Baeck Institute recognizes Rau's commitment to reconciliation between Jews and Christians. Since he was appointed president in May 1999, Rau often has acted as the conscience of his nation. In December of that year, after German industry and the government agreed to a compensation package for Nazi-era slave and forced laborers, Rau publicly asked for forgiveness for Nazi crimes in the name of the German people.

Rabbi on trial for murdering wife publishes memoir as jury deliberates

By Suzanne Pollak

CHERRY HILL, N.J. (JTA) — Stripped of his pulpit and unsure of his future, former Rabbi Fred Neulander apparently set pen to paper.

But rather than write about the Nov. 1, 1994, murder of his wife — a murder that could cost him his life, if a jury finds that he ordered it — Neulander chose to write about his day-to-day experiences as a rabbi.

His book — "Keep Your Mouth Shut and Your Arms Open: Observations From the Rabbinic Trenches" — was published recently, as a New Jersey jury deliberated Neulander's fate.

The book consists of vignettes about a rabbi's dealings with people during important life cycle events. The 288-page paperback sells on the Internet only, for \$17.95.

Neulander is accused of paying a hit man \$30,000 to kill his wife of 29 years in the couple's home. He maintains his innocence, saying he had absolutely nothing to do with his wife's murder.

No fingerprints or murder weapon have been found.

Neulander wrote the book under the pseudonym Rabbi Adam Plony, which is a common term for someone who wants to remain anonymous, according to Rabbi Albert Lewis, rabbi emeritus of Temple Beth Shalom.

Lewis' shul is located near Neulander's former M'Kor Shalom, which is one of the largest synagogues in southern New Jersey. He had high praise for Neulander's book and wrote a blurb for the publishing company.

"I read it a couple of months ago. There are some beautiful stories that happen to rabbis in life," Lewis said, noting that the book contains both moments of familial joy like weddings and Bar Mitzvahs — and familial pain during sickness and death.

Some of those same elements set the stage for Neulander's downfall. Two women who testified in the murder trial spoke of coming to Neulander in times of need — and ending up having affairs with him.

Neulander began the book about 10 years ago, and began working with literary agent Elizabeth Trupin-Pulli about six years ago. Trupin-Pulli had trouble finding a publisher, but said she always thought there was a market for Neulander's stories.

About three years ago, she helped form Disc-Us, a small publishing firm out of Sarasota, Fla. The firm printed 3,000 copies of Neulander's book.

Trupin-Pulli said that when she began the project she had never heard about Carol Neulander's murder. Even after she heard about the case, Trupin-Pulli decided to continue working on it — because the book doesn't deal with it.

"It is a very humanistic book," she said, noting that Neulander comes across as a "compassionate guy."

Abby Konigsberg, of Moorestown, N.J., laughed when she learned of the book.

"He married me. He named my daughter. He talked to me when I was going to get married. I had spoken with him when I split up," she said. "I don't have any respect for the man whatsoever. In my family, they think he is guilty as sin."

Konigsberg views the book as Neulander's attempt "to cover his skin."

Neulander officiated at the Bat Mitzvah of Temple University student Erin Kabo.

"I think he did it," she said, referring to the murder. "There's so many lies; everyone is lying about everything."

Covered in many newspapers and on Court TV, the murder trial "is embarrassing," Kabo said. "It's embarrassing to me. It's embarrassing for the congregation and for religion."

Neulander isn't the only author from M'Kor Shalom.

Former Assistant Rabbi Gary Mazo, who now heads a synagogue in Massachusetts, wrote "And the Flames Did Not Consume Us: A Rabbi's Journey Through Communal Crisis." That book deals with events surrounding Carol Neulander's murder and how the M'Kor Shalom congregation dealt with it.

Mazo testified during the trial that Neulander seemed to be overly evident at the synagogue the Tuesday night his wife was killed. He also testified that he had seen Neulander in his office with an envelope filled with thousands of dollars in cash. □

ARTS & CULTURE

Brother of lost Argentine Jew turns his experiences into art

By Florencia Arbiser

BUENOS AIRES (JTA) — "RELIGION: JEWISH."

That sentence, in capital letters, is on Fernando Ruben Brodsky's file.

And it is part of a secret group of documents collected by the forces behind Argentina's 1970s-era "dirty war" that recently were delivered anonymously to human rights organizations and given to a federal court on Nov. 6.

These files containing material from naval intelligence services — such as individuals' photographs, addresses, interests, meeting places and their relatives' occupations — will be added to the investigation of illegal repression at ESMA, the Navy School of Mechanics.

According to survivors' testimonies to the Federal Chamber of Justice, about 4,500 men and women were tortured at an ESMA camp and then thrown — alive but sedated — into the Rio de la Plata River between 1976 and 1983.

Fernando Brodsky was a 22-year-old psychology student when he disappeared in August 1979. But it was his political contacts, including a few meetings of "a socialist nature," that aroused the suspicion of Argentine security forces — and was enough to mark him as a target.

His younger brother's disappearance had a powerful impact on the work of Marcelo Brodsky, the internationally known photographer.

Marcelo Brodsky's art work utilizes memories and motifs of an Argentine Jewish family of the past decades.

Emptiness — from a disappeared brother, disappeared friends, people who fled Argentina and the 1994 bombing of AMIA, Buenos Aires' main Jewish community center — is an essential element of his work.

The white-haired Brodsky, 47, recently met with JTA at his bright Buenos Aires office, filled with red leather armchairs.

He is still reeling from the experience of giving his brother's file to federal court.

At the same time, though, Brodsky is preparing an art exhibit that will open on Nov. 15 at the Recoleta cultural center, the most prominent art center in Buenos Aires.

In addition to photos, Brodsky will show a one-and-a-half ton piece of granite that was part of the old AMIA building, as well as exploded, illuminated and half Stars of David that Brodsky created with rubble from the AMIA bombing. There also will be pictures of Fernando, who had thick lips and a deep, dark appearance.

"My work has always been composed with personal elements," the artist said.

After security forces tried to arrest him for several articles he had written for a left-wing newspaper, Marcelo Brodsky fled Argentina.

He settled in Spain for seven years, and his exhibition will show a picture with a full key ring that Brodsky carried there.

"As the Jews who, expelled from Spain" in 1492, "took with them the keys to their homes and kept them for 500 years, our keys came with us too, in suitcases and in pockets," Brodsky said.

"Keys to houses that had been searched, destroyed, violated" share the same ring "with new keys that opened other doors and allowed us to construct once again a home, maybe forever, maybe

just for a time." The main speaker at Brodsky's exhibition will be Daniel Goldman, the rabbi of the Beit El community center and synagogue in Buenos Aires and vice president of the Permanent Assembly for Human Rights of Argentina.

Brodsky's childhood memories are happier ones, full of images of rowing at the Jewish Hacoaj Nautical Club near Buenos Aires. Yet the family's subsequent history has been less happy.

Brodsky's father, Mauricio, is a member of the Association of Relatives of Disappeared Jews.

His mother, Sara, has built a small altar in her dining room around a bust of Fernando that she sculpted. The altar has a menorah and little dolls of Jewish immigrants with Torahs under their arms.

These objects "tell how, in the worst years of fear, my parents found refuge in community traditions and in a certain seclusion in the Jewish community," Brodsky said. "Familiar with other tragedies that we Jews suffered, they sought the key to continue living in the reaffirmation of their identity."

Over Brodsky's black office desk, a blue paperweight with a golden menorah is piled among two telephones, a mobile telephone and an assortment of disks, books, papers and photo albums. He is such a bundle of activity during the interview that every paper seems to be alive, in constant movement.

"The tradition of working to recover memory has to do with Jewish culture," Brodsky said — and it is something he does a lot of.

Brodsky has just arrived from Mexico, where he was part of the jury of the International Press Photography Prize organized by the Foundation for New Latin American Journalism, whose president is Nobel Prize laureate Gabriel Garcia Marquez.

Currently, Brodsky is a member of Buenos Aires' Commission for a Monument for the Victims of State Terrorism.

He is also one of the organizers of the Park of Memory, located near the same river where bodies were thrown during the last military government.

He also belongs to the board of directors of Buena Memoria, a nongovernmental organization dedicated to working for human rights in Argentina.

Also scheduled is an upcoming exhibit the San Francisco Jewish Museum called "Faces of Memory: Found Photographs and Memory Albums."

Brodsky will share that exhibition with the French photographer Christian Boltanski, who often uses Holocaust memory in his work.

Brodsky also has been invited to a congress on global justice be held in January in Haifa. □

Religion can be 'bad indeed'

LONDON (JTA) — Religious leaders must play a major role in resolving international conflicts, Britain's chief rabbi said.

"If religion is not part of the solution, it will certainly be part of the problem," Jonathan Sacks wrote in an issue of Parliamentary House, the magazine of the House of Commons, published Monday.

Sacks had been asked to write a piece exploring the role of faith after the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks against the United States.

"As a religious believer, I might be expected to say that religion is a good thing, and the more of it the better," wrote Sacks. "However, I do not. Religion is like the weather. It can be good; it can also be very bad indeed." □