



# Daily News Bulletin

Vol. 79, No. 213

Wednesday, November 21, 2001

84th Year

## TOP NEWS IN BRIEF

### **Powell optimistic about envoys**

Two U.S. mediators are expected to arrive in the Middle East on Sunday.

U.S. Secretary of State Colin Powell said he was confident there would be progress in ending Israeli-Palestinian violence after the arrival of the two, William Burns of the State Department and Anthony Zinni, a retired Marine Corps general.

"You'll see what pushing and prodding is when Tony Zinni gets on the ground," Powell said.

### **Bush wants faith-based bill**

President Bush pushed his faith-based initiative, urging Congress to pass a bill this year. Visiting a homeless assistance program in Washington, the president said Tuesday that lawmakers should pass adjustments to the tax code that would make more charitable donations deductible. Bush said he wanted to sign a bill by Christmas.

The Bush administration's faith-based initiative would allow government funding to go directly to religious organizations to provide social services.

Most Jewish groups support the tax deductions but oppose direct government funding of religious groups.

The White House is optimistic about getting a bill from the Senate, but noted that passing legislation this year depends on whether the Senate schedules it for a vote.

### **Case focuses on Israel nukes**

A U.S. man is facing charges of illegally exporting nuclear weapon triggers to Israel. Richard Kelly Smyth faces up to 105 years in a U.S. prison for allegedly selling about \$60,000 worth of the devices. After 16 years as a fugitive, he was arrested in July in Spain.

### **Israel blasted on jailed children**

Israel was criticized for keeping 160 Palestinian children in jails. UNICEF called on Israel to release the jailed juveniles and to stop using violence against young detainees.

Israel denied juvenile prisoners are being subjected to violence, and said they are being treated humanely.

UNICEF also called on the Palestinian Authority to discourage children from taking part in the 14-month-old intifada against Israel.

## NEWS ANALYSIS

### **Powell speech marks U.S. path to strong Mideast engagement**

By Matthew E. Berger

WASHINGTON (JTA) — The United States is back in the game.

Monday's announcement of a new Middle East envoy and a revived road map toward an Israeli-Palestinian cease-fire has brought the White House and State Department back into Mideast diplomacy, a role President Bush was extremely reluctant to take a year ago.

The Bush administration will try to walk a fine line between what it sees as two extremes — the hands-off approach Bush initially envisioned for his administration and the shuttle diplomacy of the Clinton years.

The shift in policy emphasis — a result of the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks — is just the latest seesaw in the administration's activities in the region.

While the Bush administration originally vowed to stay out of the Middle East conflict — placing more emphasis on the responsibilities of Israel and the Palestinian Authority themselves — daily violence also forced a slightly more active role on Washington.

In May, Bush endorsed a plan by former Sen. George Mitchell to bring the two sides back to peace talks, and dispatched CIA Director George Tenet to the region a month later to negotiate a cease-fire.

But Bush did not put any real effort into implementing either plan, and both failed to bring the parties together toward a lasting truce, said Martin Indyk, U.S. ambassador to Israel during the opening months of the Bush administration.

The administration "got its toes wet in the first six months, found the water too hot and pulled back," said Indyk, who served in Israel and also as assistant secretary of state for Near Eastern affairs under Clinton.

Now, Secretary of State Colin Powell says the United States will "push," "prod" and "present ideas" toward ending violence. Powell has sent retired Marine Gen. Anthony Zinni, former commander of the U.S. Central Command, to the region and has said Zinni will remain there until conditions for a lasting cease-fire can be found.

"Now the U.S. is more engaged, but still there's the question of how engaged," Indyk said.

An unpaid, part-time adviser, Zinni will be the main conduit for talks, which places the U.S. engagement still below Clinton's level of involvement — which reached a height when Clinton brought Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Barak and Palestinian Authority President Yasser Arafat to Camp David in July 2000 to seek a final-status agreement.

Powell made clear Monday in his speech at the University of Louisville that the administration's focus would be on ending violence, not seeking a final peace agreement.

After 14 months of violence, U.S. sights have been lowered — and diplomats simply hope to reduce current tensions instead of working toward lasting peace.

David Makovsky, senior fellow at the Washington Institute for Near East Policy, said the United States needs to engage now in crisis stabilization, not conflict resolution.

"The administration has realized it is a false choice to say 'a grand deal or nothing,'" said Makovsky, the former editor of the Jerusalem Post. "The situation has deteriorated further, and they cannot just blame the Clinton administration."

Many analysts agree that Bush was scared away from the Middle East by the experience of his predecessor. Clinton spent a great deal of time negotiating with Israeli

## MIDEAST FOCUS

### Israel looks for Holocaust heirs

Israel is creating an office to locate the heirs of bank accounts and property belonging to Holocaust victims. Until now, the office that managed abandoned property waited for survivors or their heirs to turn up and claim their property.

### Israel enters Gaza refugee camp

Israeli tanks and a bulldozer entered the Rafah refugee camp in the southern Gaza Strip.

Palestinian security officials said five houses were demolished and 12 partially damaged by the Israeli forces early Tuesday. Israel said troops demolished two abandoned buildings in response to frequent shooting attacks on Israeli troops in the area.

### Sharon satire to remain on the air

Abu Dhabi TV said a satire depicting a blood-thirsty Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon would continue to air.

Officials with the satellite television station said Tuesday they had no intention of bowing to international criticism of the show, in which Sharon is depicted as someone who drinks Arab blood.

### Barak testifies on Arab riots

Former Prime Minister Ehud Barak testified about last year's Israeli Arab riots.

Testifying on Tuesday before the Or Commission, which is looking into last October's riots, Barak said the government had received no warnings from intelligence officials of possible violence among Israeli Arabs in tandem with the Palestinian intifada.

### Strike grounds Israel flights

Workers went on strike at Israel's Ben-Gurion Airport. The strike continued beyond the scheduled four hours after management and employees disagreed on the 8.6 percent wage hike workers sought.

and Palestinian leaders, but left office without a peace deal. During his final hours as president, he reportedly told Arafat that Arafat's rejection of a Mideast peace plan had ruined Clinton's legacy.

Bush was wary of following down the same path.

"There was the question of, 'What was the point of getting engaged?'" Indyk said. "Now they are more engaged, but more out of response to Arab pressure and post-Sept. 11."

The terror attacks in New York City and Washington have placed a larger emphasis on international affairs, and some say gave Bush a window to re-engage in the Middle East.

Arab nations have pressured the United States to take a more active role in exchange for their support for the U.S.-led "coalition against terrorism." Israel sought proof that its needs would not be ignored in exchange for this Arab support.

"The policy of 'hands off and let them bleed' was unsustainable before Sept. 11, and impossible afterwards," said Tom Smerling, Washington director of the Israel Policy Forum. "There's too much at stake."

In the two months since the terror attacks, the Bush administration's leadership and early victories in Afghanistan have raised its foreign policy clout. A leader who came to office after bumbling the names of foreign leaders can now feel more secure leading an international peace effort, analysts say.

Even so, the fact that the map was laid out by Powell, not Bush, shows a lingering hesitancy to put all of the administration's eggs in the Middle East basket.

"You don't want the president associated with something unless you know it is going to succeed," Makovsky said. □

## AROUND THE JEWISH WORLD

### On eve of Chanukah, new museum marks 'miracle' of new South Africa

By Michael Belling

CAPE TOWN, South Africa (JTA) — Shortly before the start of Chanukah celebrations marking the miracle of release from oppression, two Jewish South African businessmen plan to open a museum in Johannesburg to mark the miracle of the peaceful transition from apartheid to a democratic South Africa.

Twins Solly and Abe Krok, 72, leading industrialists, are prominent philanthropists for Jewish and general causes in South Africa.

Solly Krok conceived the idea following a visit several years ago to the Holocaust Museum in Washington.

"The motivation came from being a mensch, for humanitarian reasons," Solly Krok explained. "Everybody is entitled to a place under the sun. We had to tell the story so that the immorality of the previous regime doesn't happen again."

Slated to open Nov. 30, the apartheid museum illustrates the modern history of South Africa, focusing on the triumph of the human spirit over adversity.

The opening comes little more than a week before the start of Chanukah, which commemorates a different victory — that of the Jews over their Syrian oppressors.

Multimedia exhibits in the museum will show the causes and effects of a state-sanctioned system of racial discrimination and the struggle against it, which culminated in South Africa's first democratic elections in 1994.

The museum was called "the greatest building to come out of this country for the last 20 years" by "Bunny" Britz, emeritus professor of architecture at the University of the Orange Free State.

The museum came about as a result of a casino license issued to a consortium in which the Kroks have a prominent role.

The consortium built a major casino on the site next to the museum. The casino also houses a recreation of early Johannesburg as a gold-mining town and a disused gold mine that visitors can explore.

South African gambling legislation requires cultural elements, as well as tourist attractions, as an integral part of any casino venture — and the museum was part of an effort to give something back to the community. □



## Daily News Bulletin

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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](http://www.jta.org).  
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## JEWISH WORLD

### German anti-Semitism on the rise

Anti-Semitic attacks are becoming "virulent" again in Germany.

"Right-wing extremism now seems to have taken on a new quality. Things that used to happen only in secret are now happening in open daylight. Publicly, shamelessly, provocatively," said Paul Spiegel, president of the Central Council of Jews in Germany.

Spiegel made the remarks Tuesday during an address to the annual conference of Chancellor Gerhard Schroeder's Social Democratic Party. "Memorials and Jewish cemeteries are being defaced, incendiary devices hurled at synagogues and foreigners' homes, and foreigners are being hunted. These are sadly not isolated cases any more."

### Jewish leader backs pope's call

The leader of Italy's Jewish community supported the pope's call for a day of prayer for peace.

The pope on Sunday called a meeting of leaders of all the world's religions for Jan. 24 in the central Italian town of Assisi, birthplace of St. Francis. The object will be to pray for peace, work to overcome armed conflict and improve relations between Christians and Muslims in the wake of the Sept. 11 attacks.

Amos Luzzatto, president of the Union of Italian Jewish Communities, said Tuesday, "It is an invitation to which it is not possible to think of responding negatively." He added, however, that the meeting had to be more than a symbolic gesture and be accompanied by concrete work. The pope organized a similar interreligious meeting in Assisi in 1986.

### Poll: French back Israel

Most French citizens sympathize more with Israel than with the Palestinians. According to a recent poll conducted for the Israeli Embassy in Paris, 26 percent of those surveyed claimed to sympathize with Israel and 19 percent with the Palestinians. However, 35 percent answered "neither one nor the other."

The respondents also seemed disappointed with the leadership of both sides of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Eighteen percent stated that they sympathized with Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon, and 25 percent with Palestinian Authority President Yasser Arafat.

### Princeton gets Judaica collection

Princeton University received a collection of American Judaica. The 35 books donated to the New Jersey school's library are from the 18th and 19th centuries.

They include two written by Isaac Mayer Wise, one of the founders of American Reform Judaism, and one written by Emma Lazarus, author of the poem enshrined on a plaque at the Statue of Liberty.

## Landmark Holocaust denial lawsuit explored in BBC radio documentary

By Richard Allen Greene

LONDON (JTA) — Holocaust denier David Irving emerges unrepentant in a BBC radio documentary that explores the legal strategy scholar Deborah Lipstadt employed when he sued her for libel last year.

The 45-minute program, broadcast on Nov. 8, contains interviews with all the major players in the landmark trial, which Irving lost.

Lipstadt's lawyers describe how their case rested on proving that Lipstadt had been correct to label Irving a Holocaust denier in her 1994 book, "Denying the Holocaust: The Growing Assault on Truth and Memory."

They subpoenaed his diaries and appointment books in order to demonstrate that he was an anti-Semite who spoke at neo-Nazi events, and they had an expert witness demolish his books as "falsifications" that "can only really be deliberate."

"Putting Irving's books on trial was the strategy," lawyer Anthony Julius explained. Irving — who represented himself — tells the BBC that he never grasped that.

He describes the judge, Sir Charles Gray, as too "thick-skulled" to understand his case.

"There were occasions when I could see he was not getting the point I was extracting from the witness," he told the BBC.

There are times in the program when Irving seems to be out to prove the truth of the judge's verdict last year, when Gray labeled him a racist anti-Semite who had deliberately distorted history.

"Lipstadt is part of an international conspiracy to silence me," Irving claimed.

He also said he was "not surprised that the Jews go on about the Holocaust, because it's the only interesting thing that's happened to them in 3,000 years."

Criticizing Gray's sweeping verdict as "so over the top that it missed its effect," Irving said, "It's lucky the twin towers hadn't been shot down by then, or I would have been blamed for that too."

Lawyer Richard Rampton, who represented Lipstadt, told JTA that at first he was concerned that the program gives Irving too much air time.

But after talking to people who heard the program, he said Irving said "just enough to bury himself. Each sentence made his hole deeper."

Julius said there is no danger in letting Irving speak in a forum like the documentary. "The people who are impressed with Irving will continue to be, and those who are not will not be," he said.

Irving, on a speaking tour in the United States, was not available for comment.

Rampton said Irving was not harmed by representing himself.

"Getting him a lawyer wouldn't have made any difference," he told JTA.

"A good lawyer would have told him he was dead in the water" and advised him to drop the case, Rampton said. "You can't win a case if you're firing blanks. You need ammunition, and he didn't have any," he added.

Rampton described the documentary as "illuminating" and praised Lipstadt's participation in the program. "I worry when she goes public because she's so passionate," he said. "But I thought she was extraordinarily good, intensely moving."

The American scholar broke down when she told the BBC of meeting a Holocaust survivor who remembered a man from Hamburg nicknamed "Handlebar" Lipstadt because of his mustache.

The survivor, who met Lipstadt during the trial, asked her if she was related to the man he remembered from his childhood. On the verge of tears, she told the BBC that "Handlebar" was her grandfather, Gustav, whom she never knew.

Lipstadt, who never took the stand herself during the trial, said she had wanted to do so: "I was sorry I couldn't go into the witness box because I could have bested" Irving.

Rampton said there had been no need for Lipstadt to give evidence.

"The question is whether what she wrote when she wrote it is true or not, and she's not necessary for that," he said.

When the verdict came down last year, Irving was ordered to pay Lipstadt's legal costs, estimated at more than \$3 million. He has been denied permission to appeal. □

BEHIND THE HEADLINES**On sidelines of United Nations,  
Jewish groups work the scene***By Michael J. Jordan*

NEW YORK (JTA) — When scores of world leaders descended on New York in mid-November for the opening of the U.N. General Assembly session, it created more than just traffic problems.

It also created an opportunity for Jewish groups to pursue their “foreign policy,” pressing the interests of Israel and Diaspora Jewish communities in meetings with representatives from around the world.

On one recent morning, a trio of officials from the American Jewish Committee was meeting with El Salvador’s foreign minister and its U.N. ambassador.

Israel and pro-Israel advocates are grateful to the Salvadorans, as they are one of only two countries in the world — the other is Costa Rica — to open an embassy in Jerusalem, Israel’s capital, despite protests from the Arab world.

“It’s important that we find every opportunity to acknowledge El Salvador’s principled determination,” says David Harris, the AJCommittee’s executive director.

For example, the AJCommittee endorsed a U.S.-Central America free trade agreement, Harris says, and will work to ensure that the region’s needs are not forgotten while the U.S. focuses on its campaign against terrorism.

This is Jewish diplomacy in action.

While Washington renews its push for Mideast peace and Jews and Israel weigh how to respond, American Jewish groups like the AJCommittee forge ahead with foreign policy of their own.

From the Jewish side, the aim is to drum up global support for Israel and protect vulnerable Jewish communities throughout the Diaspora. The nations sitting across the table are seeking something equally intangible — Jewish clout.

American Jewry is viewed as one of the most influential lobbying forces in Washington — the perception often outstrips the reality, Jewish leaders say — and as an important middleman for improving relations with the world’s lone superpower.

And the Jewish community makes sure to remember its friends, Harris says. “These relationships are two-way streets,” he says. “We try to transmit the issues that are of importance to us. From our interlocutors, we listen. And where and when possible, we try to be responsive.”

A handful of American Jewish groups routinely send delegations across the globe, where they receive red-carpet treatment. Likewise, statesmen visiting Washington may squeeze a meeting with Jewish leaders into their itineraries.

But the diplomatic high season is the annual opening of the U.N. General Assembly in New York.

This year, due to the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks, the General Assembly was postponed two months and compressed from three weeks into one. The AJCommittee usually meets with some 50 world leaders during the assembly weeks. This year, because of the shortened time frame, it crammed all the meetings into eight days beginning Nov. 9.

The AJCommittee is not alone in its diplomatic efforts; most of the leading American Jewish organizations do the same. But Harris allowed a reporter to tag along for a day to gain a glimpse

into the world of American Jewish diplomacy — as long as the countries were not identified. From El Salvador, Harris and various AJCommittee staff and lay leaders met with foreign ministers of a European Union member, an Arabic Gulf state, a former Soviet republic, and an important Middle Eastern state.

The AJCommittee has met with several of these countries for seven or eight years in a row, Harris said.

Whether at AJCommittee headquarters, a consulate or a U.N. mission — all of which are close to the United Nations — the meetings generally unfolded in a similar format.

Composed primarily of men dressed in dark suits, the delegations sat face to face across a table or around a room.

First came condolences for the Sept. 11 terror attacks.

Then the exchange of niceties and praise — sometimes more sincere, sometimes less — followed by candor and gravitas.

After years of such meetings, the senior figures addressed each other by first name. The host began by asking the most senior guest what’s new or what’s on his mind.

Naturally, discussion was dominated by Sept. 11, the war in Afghanistan and the U.S. campaign against terrorism. But local and regional issues and ethnic or religious conflicts also were addressed. Questions were asked, notes taken.

Then the roles were reversed.

Requests and favors were not broached in every encounter. Often, the meetings are a free-flowing exchange of ideas and opinions, a search for common ground, trust and partnership.

With the Bush administration refocusing on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, the AJCommittee’s main message was that the Palestinians — and the rest of the world — need to help rebuild the confidence of Israelis whose belief in the peace process was shattered by Palestinian violence.

Access and hearing seemed to be the only thing Harris and his colleagues derived from a meeting with the Arab foreign minister at his country’s New York consulate. The foreign minister — who told the Jewish delegation, “I couldn’t come to New York without meeting with you” — was charming and friendly.

The AJCommittee reiterated the need to rebuild Israeli confidence, and expressed concern about the role Iran and Saudi Arabia play in sponsoring global terrorism and exacerbating Israeli-Palestinian relations.

“I agree with you,” the host said repeatedly, smiling. “You are absolutely right. But . . .”

Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon also should take steps, the minister said — in a way that placed the onus entirely on the Israeli side. The foreign minister did divulge some insider information about goings-on in the Arab world. But, still smiling, he defended Saudi Arabia from every allegation.

What exactly had the AJCommittee delegation accomplished, since the foreign minister hadn’t budged in his views or made any commitments? Was it a waste of time?

“It’s not a question of keeping contact at all costs,” Harris said afterward. “But such contact has inherent merit. I’d rather talk to Country X than about Country X.

“You have to ask yourself: Why is he meeting with us? Because he thinks we’re important actors here,” Harris continued. “And he’ll take away two things from this meeting: our unhappiness with Saudi Arabia, and the need to rebuild confidence in Israel. And who knows? Maybe when he goes back to one of his regional meetings, he’ll say ‘I’ve talked to Jews I trust, and they say this and that.’” □