



# Daily News Bulletin

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85th Year

## TOP NEWS IN BRIEF

### Bush budget includes Israel aid

President Bush's budget request includes increased military aid for Israel.

Released Monday, the budget calls for \$2.1 billion in military aid and \$600 million in economic aid for Israel.

This is in keeping with a plan to increase Israel's military aid by \$60 million each year while decreasing its economic aid by \$120 million each year until 2009 when, according to the plan, U.S. economic aid to Israel will end.

In the planned budget, Egypt will receive \$1.3 billion in military aid and \$615 in economic aid.

This is the first time that economic aid planned for Egypt will be higher than that earmarked for Israel.

According to the budget, Jordan will receive \$250 million in military aid and \$198 million in economic aid, while the West Bank and Gaza Strip will receive \$75 million, the usual allocation for projects run by the United States Agency for International Development.

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### UJC names two senior officials

The United Jewish Communities named two new senior vice presidents.

Nachman Shai is the federation umbrella's senior vice president and director general of the Israel Office, and Ron Meier is the group's senior vice president for human resource development.

Shai most recently served as chairman of the Israel Broadcasting Authority.

Meier has been executive vice president of the Jewish federation in Bergen County and North Hudson, N.J., since 1994.

### Dreyfus statue defaced

Anti-Semitic vandals defaced a statue in Paris honoring Alfred Dreyfus.

The vandals scrawled a Star of David and wrote the words "Dirty Jew" on the statue.

In a case that sparked a wave of anti-Semitism in France, Dreyfus, a Jewish captain in the French army, was falsely convicted in 1894 of treason, publicly degraded and sent to Devil's Island, a penal colony in South America.

He served five years of a life sentence before receiving a presidential pardon.

## UJC considers returning to known brand name — UJA

By Julie Wiener

NEW YORK (JTA) — When the North American Jewish federation system chose the name "United Jewish Communities" three years ago, some insiders joked that since the first two words already appeared in the name of one of the groups that preceded it, "communities" was the most expensive word in the Jewish lexicon.

The new name — decided on after focus group research and input from consultants — represented the merger of the United Jewish Appeal, Council of Jewish Federations and United Israel Appeal.

But now, at the request of several member federations, including Detroit and Chicago, the UJC is considering changing its name again — back to the United Jewish Appeal.

While supporters of the idea say the change could improve the group's name recognition and reaffirm its commitment to overseas needs, others say the UJA name carries negative baggage, and that it is ultimately more important what the group does than what it calls itself.

The UJC is the umbrella for 189 North American federations, Jewish philanthropies that raise and allocate money for community needs domestically and overseas, and 400 independent communities.

The group, which underwent a full leadership change at the top this fall, is currently in the process of trying to move from the merger stage — in which it was preoccupied with hammering out governance issues — to becoming a more active player.

The UJC is in the middle of a priority-setting process, in which it is under pressure to offer strong leadership and vision and be a coordinating body, while also trimming its approximately \$42 million annual budget.

It also is struggling to unite its diverse and sometimes disenchanted member federations.

Some federations believe the UJC has not offered enough services to justify its big budget.

Others are disappointed because their hopes that the merger would result in larger federation allocations for overseas needs have gone unfulfilled.

Federation campaigns raised a total of \$850 million in 2001, \$25 million more than in 2000. That is on top of separate funds raised as part of an Israel solidarity initiative and for endowments.

"The issue is simply that we had what marketers would call a significant amount of brand equity in the UJA name," said James Tisch, chairman of the UJC board.

"You say UJA to people, and they know what you're talking about," he said. "You say UJC, and more often than not they don't know, unless you're talking to people that are into inside-the-park baseball."

The discussion is still in its early stages, Tisch said, adding that he does not yet have an opinion on the matter.

Richard Pearlstone, the UJC's lay leader in charge of marketing, is gathering information, but member federations have not yet received a proposal or any details in writing.

"A number of federations brought up the issue and we're taking it under advisement," Tisch said.

Founded in 1938, the United Jewish Appeal ran widespread and largely successful grass-roots fund-raising campaigns that made it a household name.

For some, the UJA era represents a heyday in American Jewish communal

## MIDEAST FOCUS

### Israel, Iran in war of words

Foreign Minister Shimon Peres claimed that Iran is sending its elite Revolutionary Guards to Lebanon to prepare for an attack on Israel.

Peres' statement came as Iran's defense minister, Admiral Ali Shamkhani, responded to a reporter's question by saying, "If Israel carries out any military action against Iran, it will face a response that will be unimaginable to any Israeli politician."

### Powell pledges U.S. involvement

Colin Powell pledged the United States would stay involved in efforts to secure an Israeli-Palestinian cease-fire. "Even though things have not gone well in recent weeks, we cannot walk away from it," the U.S. secretary of state told the Senate Foreign Relations Committee on Tuesday.

### Israeli minister: Sidetrack Arafat

Israel's defense minister wants the United States to reject Yasser Arafat as a potential peace partner for Israel. During a stopover in New York before traveling on to Washington, Benjamin Ben-Eliezer told JTA on Tuesday that he plans "to press U.S. officials to open a channel of negotiations with others" in the Palestinian leadership besides Arafat.

In an address to the Conference of Presidents of Major American Jewish Organizations, Ben-Eliezer made a similar point to U.S. Jewish leaders. Referring to Arafat, he asked rhetorically, "Can this gentleman sit in front of us and talk peace? I answer no."

### Israeli disabled appeal to Bush

Disabled Israelis demanding improved benefits asked President Bush to help their cause. In a letter presented to the U.S. ambassador to Israel, Dan Kurtzer, strike organizers asked that Bush raise their case during his meeting later this week with Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon, according to Ha'aretz.

philanthropy — in which Jews came together as never before to support Israel and rescue Jews around the world.

In contrast, the UJC has not yet carved out a name for itself.

In addition, its member federations are allocating less money for overseas needs than they did in the past. The name-changing discussion comes as the UJC is "still in the growing pains of trying to get this organization up and running to be really functioning well," Pearlstone said.

Pearlstone, who is a past president of the UJA, declined to say which name he prefers.

Robert Aronson, executive vice president of the Jewish Federation of Metropolitan Detroit, said he is among those pushing for a name change because "United Jewish Appeal was the most important brand, if you will, for our national system."

"It's a distinguished name," he said. "It's a name that represents our commitment to overseas needs."

"Bringing back the UJA name maybe will bring back a stronger commitment to our overseas partners," Aronson said, referring to the Jewish Agency for Israel and the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee.

Many people — unaware of the merger — still make bequests to the UJA, Aronson said. While the UJA name has positive associations for many people — particularly loyal older donors — it also has some negative connotations, according to people who researched the matter three years ago.

Focus groups showed that "while UJA definitely has brand recognition, it's recognition that cuts both ways," said Jon Friedenberg, executive director of the Jewish Federation of Greater San Jose, Calif., and a member of the naming committee three years ago.

According to one person involved with the market research at the time, some younger Jewish research participants said the UJA name made them think of something that was "elitist, closed, not welcoming."

Richard Wexler, a board member of Chicago's federation and a former president of the UJA, said he is pleased to see the matter back on the table because, he said, not all of the federations had the opportunity to vote three years ago when the group's governance procedures were still not finalized.

"Had over the past two years UJC asserted its proper role as a central address of the North American Jewish community, it might be persuasive that there's no reason to even examine this issue," Wexler said. "But we've been silent on the great issues affecting our people," he said, adding that it might be easier to "establish our bona fides" with a "name that's recognized around the world."

However, several federation leaders were lukewarm — if not opposed — to the idea, with some saying they worry that a name change would be off-putting to prospective younger donors.

Friedenberg said changing the name now — after investing time into researching the matter three years ago — doesn't make sense. Instead, he suggested that the UJC improve the brand equity of the current name by stepping up marketing efforts.

The UJC has not spent as much money on marketing as the UJA did, he said, and "it's not fair to say that because the name doesn't have the kind of recognition that UJA had, therefore the new name is wrong or failed."

Barry Shrage, president of Boston's Combined Jewish Philanthropies, said he does not object to exploring the UJC's name, but "there are other issues that are more important for us right now."

"I'd argue that we should be focused on who we are, what we are and what we do," he said.

Jack Ukeles, a former consultant to the UJC, said he is "puzzled" to see the discussion raised anew and that changing the name now has the potential downside of "appearing to go backwards in time."

He also warned that going back to the name of one of the partners in the merger could "be construed as a signal that UJA," with its focus on Israel and overseas needs, "won't over the other merger partners," which were more focused on domestic needs.

"One might say that fiddling with the name is grasping at cosmetics," he said. The UJC "should focus on the substance of what is the UJC and what is it going to be and how it is going to operate to create a sense of national community," he said. □



## Daily News Bulletin

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## JEWISH WORLD

### Congressman returns money

A U.S. congressman returned a contribution from a Muslim known to be a supporter of Hamas and Hezbollah.

The American Jewish Committee's Washington chapter had written to Rep. James Moran (D-Va.) asking him to return \$2,000 in political contributions from Abdurahman Alamoudi, who declared his support for Hamas and Hezbollah at an October 2000 rally outside the White House. "We're glad that he's taken a decisive stand against a supporter of terrorism," said David Bernstein, director of the AJCommittee's Washington chapter.

### Refugee numbers down

The number of refugees the Hebrew Immigrant Aid Society helped bring to the United States decreased by 2,000 people in 2001.

As a result of tightened U.S. immigration policy following the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks, HIAS helped 4,994 refugees in 2001, as opposed to 6,903 in 2000. The post-Sept. 11 moratorium was lifted recently and processing of refugees has begun again, but at a slow pace, according to HIAS officials.

### Nazi collaborator to stay in jail

A Polish court rejected a convicted Nazi collaborator's appeal. The court upheld last year's eight-year prison sentence for Henryk Mania, who served as a guard at the Chelmno camp between December 1941 and April 1943.

In making its decision, the court ruled that Mania could have escaped from his service as a guard at the Chelmno camp. It also cited evidence that he participated eagerly in beating Jews and confiscating their belongings.

### Russian-Israeli trade boosted

A Russian-Israeli trade center opened in Moscow. A group of Israeli businessmen led by Natan Sharansky, Israel's housing minister and a former Soviet refusenik, is visiting Moscow for the opening.

Israeli exports to Russia totaled \$170 million in 2001, an increase of 16 percent over the previous year.

### Ukraine Jewish elderly move in

A house for Jewish elderly opened in Ukraine. Some 15 people are currently living in the house, which has a capacity of 100, in the city of Dnepropetrovsk.

The local Jewish community and the Global Jewish Assistance Project funded the house, which contains rooms for medical care, a synagogue, a library and a canteen. "I'm crying happy tears because now I know my old age will be happy," said one of the residents, Anna Sheveleva.

## Bush's school tax credit plan elicits mixed Jewish reaction

By Sharon Samber

WASHINGTON (JTA) — President Bush is using this year's budget proposal to take another step into the thorny area of school choice.

Included in the budget, released Monday, is a proposal for tax credits of up to \$2,500 per year for parents whose children are in failing public schools.

The money could be used for private school tuition or other educational needs, such as books, computers or transportation to a better school.

The proposal elicited predictably mixed reaction in the Jewish community, with supporters heralding the move and opponents accusing the administration of pushing through a back-door voucher plan.

A final budget won't be approved for months—the House and Senate will have to pass their own plans, which will then need to be reconciled with Bush's proposal—which leaves the final budget numbers far from certain.

Also included in Bush's \$2.13 trillion proposal:

- Full funding for Israel — \$600 million in economic assistance and \$2.1 billion in military aid. This is in keeping with a plan to increase Israel's military aid by \$60 million each year while decreasing its economic aid by \$120 million each year until 2009 when, according to the plan, U.S. economic aid to Israel will end.

- \$1.3 billion in military aid and \$615 million in economic aid for Egypt. This is the first time that economic aid proposed for Egypt is higher than that earmarked for Israel.

- \$250 million in military aid and \$198 million in economic aid for Jordan;

- \$75 million for the Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza Strip for projects run by the United States Agency for International Development.

- \$60 million to the United Israel Appeal for refugee resettlement, primarily for resettling Ethiopian refugees in Israel.

On the domestic front, many of the feared cuts did not materialize, but proposed cuts in programs for elderly housing are prompting concern.

Those in favor of the tax credit see it as a serious move that could be followed by even stronger government support for parents to help send their children to private schools.

"It's an important step in the right direction of leveraging federal tax policy to open greater educational opportunities," said Nathan Diament, director of the Orthodox Union's Institute for Public Affairs.

The Orthodox community would like to see the proposal open to a larger group of low-income families and not just restricted to children already in public schools.

The O.U. is hopeful the proposal is "the beginning of a new discussion over these kinds of policies," Diament said.

But many in the Jewish community who support the public school system and are suspicious of any attempts to move federal money to private and religious schools are unhappy with the proposal.

"This is a voucher," said Michael Lieberman, Washington counsel for the Anti-Defamation League.

The constitutionality of tax credits and vouchers may be different, but the public policy analysis is the same, according to Mark Pelavin, associate director of the Religious Action Center of Reform Judaism.

"What is this going to do to public schools?" he asked. "Tax credits are a danger."

The Supreme Court has said there are certain kinds of tax credit proposals that could be crafted in a constitutional manner. But guidance from the court on issues of direct and indirect public funding to private and parochial schools could become clearer in the spring when the high court is expected to rule on a high profile voucher case.

While Bush's proposal is important in a policy sense for the Orthodox community, from a practical standpoint the credit is unlikely to apply to many Orthodox families, who for the most part already send their children to religious schools.

But there are families, mostly immigrant families, who send their children to public school because they can't afford a Jewish school, according to David Zwiebel, the executive vice president for government and public affairs for Agudath Israel of America, a fervently Orthodox group. □

## NEWS ANALYSIS

**With ties on a high, Sharon visits the White House again**

By David Landau

JERUSALEM (JTA) — Prime Minister Ariel Sharon's visit to Washington this week comes during a high point in American-Israeli relations that contrasts starkly with the depressed mood in Israel brought on by security concerns and economic woes.

Sharon finds himself in a remarkable alignment with the Bush administration, both over Israel's conflict with the Palestinians and, on a broader plane, over America's challenge to the "axis of evil" around the world.

Still, the Palestinian intifada continues to rage, claiming more casualties this week. On Tuesday, an Israeli was seriously wounded in a shooting attack in the West Bank. That came a day after an Israeli Arab — apparently mistaken for a Jew — was injured by Palestinian gunmen as he returned from the West Bank city of Nablus, where he had been gathering evidence on alleged human rights abuses by Israel.

Most ominously, five Palestinian militants from the Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine and from Palestinian Authority President Yasser Arafat's Fatah movement were killed Monday when the car they were traveling in exploded.

Israeli officials denied involvement, but Palestinians blamed Israel for the killing and pledged to avenge the deaths with a new wave of attacks.

Sharon's visit also comes after a Bush administration reassessment of its relations with Arafat and the Palestinian Authority.

President Bush has refused to invite Arafat to the White House, but he also has declined to cut ties with Arafat entirely — something Sharon is expected to lobby for when he visits the White House.

In an Op-Ed that appeared this week in *The New York Times*, Arafat denounced terror and said Palestinians want to live peacefully alongside Israel. The Bush administration praised the words, but kept the pressure on Arafat to translate them into action.

Sharon and his defense minister, Benjamin Ben-Eliezer, dismissed the Op-Ed, saying it represented nothing new from the Palestinian leader. Ben-Eliezer agrees with Sharon that Arafat is not a peace partner.

In New York on Tuesday, Ben-Eliezer told JTA that he plans "to press U.S. officials to open a channel of negotiations with others" in the Palestinian leadership besides Arafat.

Ben-Eliezer made a similar point to the Conference of Presidents of Major American Jewish Organizations, hours before he left for Washington for his own meeting with the Bush administration.

"Can this gentleman sit in front of us and talk peace?" he asked rhetorically, referring to Arafat. "I answer no. He is committed to the past," while "Israel is committed to the future."

Occurring exactly a year after he was elected, this will be Sharon's fourth visit as prime minister to Washington, and it is expected to be his most harmonious.

Word of Sharon's meeting last week with three top figures in the Palestinian Authority served to project his image as a moderate and peace-seeker, a far cry from the ghoulish depictions of Sharon still prevalent in much of the European and Arab press.

It remains unclear whether the meeting was a tactical maneuver before his White House visit or represented a significant change

of course on Sharon's part. But by holding the meeting — with Palestinian parliamentary speaker Ahmed Karia, top PLO official Mahmoud Abbas and Mohammed Rashid — Sharon sent out several powerful, if contradictory, signals:

- He indicated that Arafat is not just "irrelevant," as the Israeli Cabinet resolved in December, but dispensable. Sharon's tactic has been to distinguish between Arafat the man and the Palestinian Authority that he heads, which — in contrast to some on the Israeli right — Sharon never proposed to destroy or dismantle. The meeting with Arafat's lieutenants is graphic evidence, Sharon aides say, that this goal of distinguishing between the two is achievable;

- He showed that despite the rhetoric about Arafat's "irrelevance," Sharon continues to do business with him in some manner. After all, the meeting took place with Arafat's blessing, and the three Palestinians reported back to Arafat after the meeting in Sharon's home in Jerusalem;

- He showed, some argue, that his refusal to negotiate "under fire" — his mantra since taking office — is not absolute. As became apparent, the meeting ranged far beyond security issues. Sharon and his guests delved into the prime minister's plan for a long-range "interim settlement" that eventually would lead to new permanent status negotiations. Defending himself from criticism, Sharon said the meeting was the first time the Palestinians finally understood the steps Israel demands before the peace process can resume. Sharon and his guests reportedly resolved to institutionalize their forum by convening once every two or three weeks;

- He deflected growing criticism from Israel's peace camp, who argue that the unity government's tough line against the Palestinian intifada, now in its 16th month, is precluding any diplomatic horizon. Sharon's meeting earned unaccustomed praise from the dovish leader of the opposition, Meretz Party leader Yossi Sarid, who congratulated Sharon on "a good start."

- Sharon outflanked the leaders of the Labor Party, Ben-Eliezer and Shimon Peres, who seek to portray themselves as indispensable peacemakers alongside the hard-line Sharon. Ben-Eliezer held talks at Sharm el-Sheikh last week with Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak, who still refuses to meet with Sharon. Peres is engaged in ongoing negotiations with Karia; the latest session took place in New York last week, where both men were attending the World Economic Forum. Sharon's message — to his Palestinian interlocutors and the world — was that he alone is the Israeli address for any deal;

- Sharon signaled to his American hosts that there is a distinct gap between his positions and those of his far-right hinterland: Witness the strident criticism the meeting triggered from the National Union Party and the settlers' Yesha Council. Benjamin Netanyahu needs the support of this extremist constituency if he is to challenge Sharon for leadership of the Likud Party, while Sharon seems intent on shoring up his own high standing with Israeli centrists.

On the global agenda, Sharon's aides are effusive in their praise of Bush's recent State of the Union address that cited Iraq, Iran and North Korea as a worldwide "axis of evil," and singled out Hamas, Islamic Jihad and Hezbollah for criticism.

Israeli officials believe they have succeeded in impressing on Washington the gravity of the *Karine A* ship, which was captured Jan. 3 in the Red Sea while smuggling weapons from Iran to the Palestinian Authority, apparently with the aid of Hezbollah operatives. □

(JTA Foreign Editor Mitchell Danow in New York contributed to this report.)