



# Daily News Bulletin

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85th Year

## TOP NEWS IN BRIEF

### D.C. pro-Israel rally planned

An Israeli solidarity rally is planned for April 15 in Washington.

The event will be part of an initiative sponsored by the Conference of Presidents of Major American Jewish Organizations. [Page 1]

### 13 troops killed in Jenin

Thirteen Israeli soldiers were killed during fierce clashes Tuesday with armed Palestinians in the Jenin refugee camp.

Eight soldiers were killed in an ambush in one of the camp alleys.

Five other soldiers were killed when back-up troops who came to help the first unit also came under fire.

The ambush was the single deadliest incident involving Israeli forces in the past 18 months of Israeli-Palestinian fighting. Nine soldiers were wounded.

### Powell to meet with Arafat

Colin Powell said he would meet with Palestinian Authority President Yasser Arafat later this week.

Powell made the announcement Tuesday in Cairo, the second stop in his Middle East peacemaking mission.

Powell also told reporters that the United States welcomed Israel's withdrawal earlier Tuesday from Tulkarm and Kalkilya.

He also voiced the hope that these steps are "the beginning of the end" of the Israeli military operation in the West Bank.

At the same time, Powell said U.S. officials "know it is difficult to disengage that quickly when people are locked" in combat.

### Report: Israeli tanks in Gaza

Israeli tanks moved into the Gaza Strip late Tuesday.

According to The Associated Press, which cited Palestinian witnesses, three Israeli tanks and a bulldozer moved into Gaza and began demolishing a Palestinian security post located near the town of Deir el-Balah.

There had been several mortar attacks from the area on Israeli troops in recent days. Israeli officials had no immediate comment on the report.

## American Jews mobilize forces for massive solidarity rally in D.C.

By Matthew E. Berger

WASHINGTON (JTA) — The American Jewish community is mobilizing for a major pro-Israel rally next week that could bring tens of thousands of people to the nation's capital.

The rally, planned for Monday, comes at a time when many American Jews are anguished over the situation in Israel and have been looking for ways to express their support.

It also comes as the organized community has been trying to devise a strategy that would make the case for Israel to the American government, the public and the media.

The rally, coordinated by the Conference of Presidents of Major American Jewish Organizations, which just decided early this week to hold the event, is still in the planning stages. It is already encountering some logistical difficulties, even as some in the organization world are questioning whether a rally is the best use of resources — and whether it can draw the type of attendance necessary to have the desired effect.

It is also raising questions about what the message should be — and whether the rally might be seen as a move against the Bush administration, which has been pressuring Israel to withdraw its forces from the West Bank towns it has occupied in an effort to root out terrorism.

Malcolm Hoenlein, the executive vice chairman of the Conference of Presidents, said the rally would show support for Israel's right to defend itself in the face of a horrific wave of suicide bombings.

"There is a feeling that this is the critical time in Jewish history and Israel's history. The people of Israel have to realize they are not alone. We will bring together the totality of community to show solidarity."

"Everybody says it can't be done," he said, referring to the difficulties of mobilizing on such short notice. "That's exactly why we're going to get it done."

Benjamin Netanyahu, Israel's former prime minister, who has agreed to present Israel's case to the American public even though he is Prime Minister Ariel Sharon's political rival, has tentatively agreed to speak at the event.

Hoenlein said he is also hoping to attract leaders of Congress and other ethnic groups to speak at the event, which is scheduled for 1 p.m.

Both Hoenlein and Netanyahu, who addressed the Conference of Presidents on Tuesday, said one of the main messages would be that Israel and America share the same war against terror.

Jewish organizations and federations are already mobilizing forces for the event, which will come two days before Israel's Independence Day.

Stephen Wolnek, the honorary president of the United Synagogue of Conservative Judaism, said his movement would bring at least 10,000 people from the Washington area and is already mobilizing other East Coast communities.

"Everyone's been calling" wanting to know "what they can do," he said. "Now they have an opportunity to respond. They've been waiting for this call and it's out."

Hadassah, the Women's Zionist Organization of America, is calling out its grassroots constituency and organizing buses from at least 12 states along the East Coast, said Roberta Elliott, national public affairs director for the group.

The North American federation system is also getting out the word to communities across the country.

"Whether or not there is unanimous agreement" as to whether there should be a rally or not, this is a response to a great deal of "pent-up desire to have a voice," said

## MIDEAST FOCUS

### U.N. aging forum 'hijacked'

Israel accused Arab countries of trying to "hijack" a U.N. conference on aging.

The U.S. and Israeli delegations are resisting language in the conference's final declaration, which includes a call for special attention to victims of "foreign occupation" that could be construed as a reference to elderly Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza Strip.

A member of the Israeli delegation at the conference in Madrid said Tuesday that if compromise language could not be worked out, Israel would request that language referring to elderly victims of terrorist attacks be included.

The controversy is the latest involving Israel at an international conference. Last year, the U.S. and Israeli delegations walked out of a U.N. forum against racism in Durban, South Africa, because of anti-Israel and anti-Semitic sentiment there.

### Launchers found in mosque

Israeli troops discovered rocket launchers in a mosque in a town near Ramallah. Other weapons were also found inside the mosque in the town of El Bireh, Israel Radio reported. The army denied Palestinian charges that the mosque was damaged during the soldiers' search.

### Europe delays exports to Israel

Several European nations are holding up defense exports to Israel. Germany, France and England are among the countries that have been delaying the shipments. An Israeli security source was quoted as saying the unofficial sanctions appeared to stem from European displeasure with Israeli actions in the West Bank and Gaza Strip.

Reports said that for more than three months, Germany has not exported components of the Merkava tank, which is being used by Israel in the West Bank.



## Daily News Bulletin

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Gail Hyman, vice president of marketing and public affairs at the United Jewish Communities. "There is a sense that this could mobilize a lot of people."

Some said a massive rally would also counter the anti-Israel and pro-Palestinian demonstrations taking place in the United States and throughout the world.

But questions remain what the message of the rally should be.

Some want the event to express support for Sharon's policies, while others want to keep the support strictly to the Israeli state and its people.

This conflict mirrors one the Conference of Presidents dealt with before issuing a statement of solidarity last month.

In the end, in order to achieve full consensus, the final version of the statement expressed support for the state but not the government.

"We will not support a rally that is in support of policies of the Sharon government or challenges the Bush administration," said Lewis Roth, assistant executive director of Americans for Peace Now.

"We haven't seen what exactly the rally is about yet, and once we have clarification of the message we will decide whether we will be on board."

Abraham Foxman, national director of the Anti-Defamation League, said it is essential for the American Jewish community to support the Israeli government and that he would not lend his organization's name to a rally that does not.

The conference's leadership has said they expect the event to be non-confrontational, but others fear the rally could drive a wedge between the American Jewish community and the Bush administration.

If lawmakers attend, organizers would not be able to control their comments, and the possibility arises that one or more could take potshots at the president's strategy.

And some have speculated that the Conference of Presidents chose a rally in Washington to control the message, preventing smaller organizations planning similar events from choosing the rhetoric. Indeed, Rabbi Avi Weiss of the Coalition for Jewish Concerns-AMCHA, is planning a Washington rally to mirror his New York event last weekend that had a strong right-wing message.

Some speculated that it was Weiss' success at bringing an estimated 5,000 to 12,000 Israel supporters to the United Nations on Sunday with very little notice and publicity that helped convince the mainstream organizations that a rally was the way to go.

Weiss, who said he is "flying" at the idea of the Conference of Presidents working on a Washington rally, suggested that a stronger message be sent to the Bush administration at the event.

"I do believe that the message needs to get across that America should not be asking Israel to do anything that America would not do" in its war against terrorism, Weiss said. "Telling Israel it has the right to fight terrorism but it must withdraw before destroying the terrorist infrastructure makes no sense."

Among the other concerns is the expected cost of the rally, whether it will have the desired impact of reaching a national audience and, of course, security.

"We are taking all the appropriate precautions and working with police," Hoenlein said of the security consideration

Though no one would predict numbers, Hoenlein said he expected it to be the largest Jewish gathering since 1987, when several hundred thousand Jews demonstrated in Washington on behalf of Soviet Jews seeking to emigrate. □

(JTA Staff Writer Julie Wiener in New York contributed to this report.)

### N.Y. rallies protest French hate

NEW YORK (JTA) — Demonstrators at two New York rallies called on France to crack down on anti-Semitism.

Rabbi Avi Weiss led an estimated 250 protesters in front of the French Consulate on Tuesday, while Rabbi Zvi Friedman and his students from the Rambam Mesivta in Long Island led some 300 demonstrators at the Air France terminal at New York's JFK Airport.

The organizers of both demonstrations highlighted the significance of holding protests against anti-Semitism on Holocaust Remembrance Day. Violent anti-Semitic attacks have swept across France in the past two weeks, apparently linked to Mideast violence. □

## JEWISH WORLD

### Holocaust remembered in Capitol

Condoleezza Rice referred to violence in the Middle East and anti-Semitism in Europe as she marked Holocaust Remembrance Day.

"Fanatical hatred has intruded upon our lives in ways no one could have imagined months ago," the U.S. national security adviser said Tuesday in a ceremony at the Capitol Rotunda in Washington. "From the Holy Land, we see daily images of carnage, and from Europe come images of synagogues and Torah scrolls burned."

Rice joined members of Congress and Holocaust survivors in lighting memorial candles for the 6 million Holocaust victims.

### Report cites rising anti-Semitism

The current wave of anti-Semitism in Europe is the worst since World War II, a Jewish official said. Avi Beker, secretary-general of the World Jewish Congress, made the comment Tuesday while presenting the findings of an annual report on anti-Semitism by Tel Aviv University's Stephen Roth Institute for the Study of Contemporary Anti-Semitism and Racism.

The report found a sharp increase in the number of anti-Semitic incidents spurred by the outbreak of the intifada in September 2000. Reporting on anti-Semitism worldwide, it singled out France for special attention, saying there were more than 50 major anti-Semitic attacks there in 2001 that involved the use of weapons.

### UJC launches Israel campaign

The North American Jewish federation system officially launched an emergency campaign for Israel on Monday. The United Jewish Communities board of trustees raised more than \$13 million at a New York meeting and plans to raise hundreds of millions of dollars in the coming months.

The campaign, called "We Stand with Israel Now and Forever," is larger and more centralized than previous UJC efforts for Israel since the intifada began in September 2000.

### Reform Jews collect for Israel

The Reform movement is collecting funds to assist Israelis in the current crisis. The Union of American Hebrew Congregations, which represents more than 900 synagogues in North America, is creating an Israel Relief Fund to be used for several purposes, including relief to victims of terror and their families; emergency medical equipment and supplies; and psychological counseling and other services for children and the elderly.

This fall, the UAHC collected more than \$1.6 million for people directly affected by the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks in New York and Washington.

## UJC launches emergency campaign for Israel with \$13 million in pledges

By Julie Wiener

NEW YORK (JTA) — The North American Jewish federation system launched an emergency campaign for Israel and Argentina this week, raising an initial \$13 million from its board of trustees.

Meeting in New York on Monday, the United Jewish Communities moved forward with a plan to raise hundreds of millions of dollars for emergency needs for the Jewish state, such as assistance to victims of terrorism, crisis management and rebuilding infrastructure damaged in terrorist attacks. At the same time, UJC's president and CEO, Stephen Hoffman, announced preliminary plans to cut the federation umbrella group's \$44.7 million operating budget by 5 percent as of July.

Details still need to be hammered out by the budget committee and board.

In addition to generating an influx of new funds for Israel, the new campaign, called "We Stand With Israel Now and Forever," also will incorporate most of an existing \$42.5 million campaign for Argentine Jews, who are suffering from a national economic crisis.

Most of the funds for the Argentine campaign was to resettle Jews who immigrate to Israel. A small portion, which is not being folded into the Israel campaign, goes for relief efforts and community needs for Jews staying in Argentina.

The new Israel campaign differs in its magnitude and centralization from previous federation campaigns. One such effort, called "Israel Now," was launched last year and has raised approximately \$90 million.

"When we started Israel Now, the communities said to national, 'Let us decide how to raise the money and what it goes for,'" said Victoria Agron, the UJC's vice president of campaign and financial resource development.

"This time, they were looking for guidance."

Many federation activists noted that they expect raising money for the campaign to be fairly easy, as large numbers of American Jews are concerned about Israel right now and eager to do something to help.

The UJC is also hoping to coordinate pro-Israel rallies in communities around the country in the coming month. In a caucus session of the board of trustees meeting that was closed to the media on Monday, individual lay leaders took turns making pledges for the new campaign, with cash gifts of more than \$13 million promised.

The meeting adjourned an hour early, so that 34 people could leave for Israel. Another 160 departed for Argentina on Monday night.

The Israel mission was slated to include a visits to the Park Hotel in Netanya, where a suicide bomber killed 27 people at a Passover seder.

Monday's board meeting — which began with a 10-minute service marking Holocaust Remembrance Day — was marked by an atmosphere of urgency and had little of the rancor or quibbling over details that have characterized many UJC meetings in recent years.

That was particularly evident in the brief discussion over the budget, an issue that has been highly contentious in past years.

The 5 percent cuts proposed were considerably less than most large-city federations have been clamoring for. The cuts will also likely reduce services smaller federations enjoy, but no one raised objections to the budget at the meeting.

"Issues such as budget become peripheral when the threat to Israel's survival becomes central," said Dr. Conrad Giles, a lay leader with the Jewish Federation of Metropolitan Detroit and a former president of the Council of Jewish Federations.

CJF was one of three organizations that merged three years ago to become the UJC.

At a time of crisis, such as now, Giles added, "our national Jewish organization becomes so clearly central to our ability to act as a Jewish people that the question of how much it is costing is less relevant."

The UJC budget cuts will be primarily in missions and missions subsidies; consulting services, or regional operations; and subsidies to help UJC lay leaders with travel expenses to the UJC and Jewish Agency for Israel meetings.

The budget will be voted on in June. □

**BEHIND THE HEADLINES****In Jewish-Muslim campus battle, education's the thing, activists say***By Sharon Samber*

WASHINGTON (JTA) — Shira Landau wants her fellow Jews at the University of California at San Diego to be proactive about their pro-Israel message.

Easier said than done.

Jewish activists at the California school — and on college campuses across the country — are struggling with ways to get out their message as they encounter increased efforts by Arab student groups.

Like many Jewish student leaders, Landau is working to organize speakers forums, hold workshops and educate people about the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

She does not want to simply counter the other side's message.

"If it's always reactive, it's not very empowering," she said. "It's tiring."

Before Sept. 11, Arab student groups had planned a campaign to call for universities to divest from Israel, similar to a students campaign waged against South Africa in the 1980s.

The groups toned down their actions after the terrorist attacks on the World Trade Center and Pentagon, in part out of fear that their message would not find much sympathy as anti-Islamic sentiment spread across the United States.

But several months later, the divestment campaign is again picking up steam. And a pro-Palestinian "Day of Rage" was marked Tuesday on some college campuses to commemorate the "massacre" of Palestinians in Deir Yassin during Israel's War of Independence in 1948.

It's unclear how pervasive the new push is, as several Hillel directors said their campuses have been relatively quiet. But as the violence in the Middle East intensifies, the campaigns might become more active.

There continue to be hot spots such as the University of California at Berkeley where the Hillel was recently vandalized and Jewish students say they feel under attack, and the University of Michigan, where there are large numbers of both Arab and Jewish students.

Hillel The Foundation for Jewish Campus Life, Hamagshimm, the American Israel Political Affairs Committee and other organizations have been working on campuses to get students to understand the political situation in Israel.

"The sky's not caving in," said Michael Jankelowitz, Hillel's director of Campus Israel Affairs, a new project with the Jewish Agency. "Jewish students are proud."

Hillel is coordinating a nationwide Day of Solidarity with Israel on April 17, Israel's Independence Day, when students will affirm Israel's "right to exist within secure boundaries."

The focus on campuses continues to be on education about the issue, but Jewish students shouldn't be bullied and there are issues where they can go on the offensive as well, Jankelowitz said.

Jewish students are conflicted and they have to explain and understand the history of the conflict themselves first, according to Michael Brooks, the executive director of the University of Michigan Hillel.

What's especially difficult for Jewish students is the formation of a clear and focused message.

There is definitely a pro-Israel sentiment, but the spectrum of

different positions makes it "really hard" to draft a cohesive message, said Liz Rutzick, a University of Pennsylvania senior and Israel chair of Penn Hillel.

But senior Eric Bukstein, chairman of the governing board of Michigan's Hillel, says that may be both a weakness and a strength.

Different pro-Israel opinions don't preclude a unified message — in fact, different opinions mean people are informed, Bukstein said.

The need to appeal to a diverse audience is reflected in the working theme of Wednesday's planned rally at Michigan — "Wherever I stand, I stand with Israel."

Arab students, meanwhile, are defining Israel as an apartheid state and the Israeli-Palestinian conflict as a human rights issue, said Jeffrey Ross, the Anti-Defamation League's director of campus/higher education affairs.

They are setting a tone on campuses that Israel is the aggressor, and activism is not only pervasive but reaching a crescendo, Ross warned, though it has not reached critical mass yet.

At times, anti-Israel propaganda blends into an anti-Semitic message as well.

At San Francisco State, a poster being displayed on campus accuses Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon of slaughtering Palestinian children according to Jewish rites.

Despite the anti-Semitism, Reed Albergotti, a senior at San Diego State University, believes it's important to maintain a dialogue with Arab student groups and is co-sponsoring an event about the Israeli-Palestinian peace process with a Muslim student group.

"A Jewish event doesn't change the sentiment on campus," said Albergotti, who founded a pro-Israel group on campus.

Hillel directors and Jewish students say rallies and counter-rallies should not be the focus of pro-Israel student activism. They say educating students is of paramount importance.

"Education is most helpful so you can get more dialogue instead of emotional bloodletting and finger pointing," said Rabbi Andrew Bachman, director of the Bronfman Center at New York University's Hillel.

Many Muslim students are first- or second-generation immigrants to America and have familial ties and a good grasp of the situation, whereas Jewish students might not have that emotional connection or be as knowledgeable.

But Jewish students are becoming better prepared — and more willing to defend Israel, said Simon Amiel, executive director of George Washington University's Hillel. "We're seeing Jewish students come out of the woodwork because they're being asked to defend Israel," he said. "Students make their own choice but they need to make an educated choice." □

**Anti-Semitism in Russian city**

MOSCOW (JTA) — A wave of anti-Semitism has swept across a Russian city. During Passover, vandals drew a swastika and the words "Death to the kikes" on the entrance arc of the old Jewish cemetery in the center of the usually quiet city of Petrozavodsk, according to the Union of Councils for Jews in the Former Soviet Union.

Earlier last month, leaflets of the neo-Nazi Russian National Unity were distributed in the city calling for "racial hygiene" and the words "Kill a kike" were painted near the city's railway tracks.

The local Jewish community protested the incidents to the authorities. The city is home to 2,000 Jews. □