



# Daily News Bulletin

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85th Year

## TOP NEWS IN BRIEF

### Israel withdraws from Arafat HQ

Israeli forces withdrew from Palestinian Authority President Yasser Arafat's Ramallah headquarters.

As the Israeli tanks pulled away, ending a more than two-day siege, Palestinian police and security officers ran into the compound and shouted slogans in support of Arafat, witnesses said.

### 4 terrorists killed in Gaza

Israel said it thwarted a large terrorist attack in the Gaza Strip.

Israeli soldiers spotted seven armed Palestinians approaching the Jewish settlement of Netzarim and opened fire, killing four of them. Israeli military sources said they believed the gunmen planned to attack a Jewish settlement or convoy, Israel Radio reported.

In another development, the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine called for increased attacks against Israel after Israeli troops arrested the group's deputy leader on Tuesday.

### U.S. support for Israel too high?

Growing numbers of Americans believe the United States is too supportive of Israel, a poll says.

According to a new Gallup poll, for the first time since last October a plurality of Americans — 43 percent — say the United States is too supportive of Israel, while 40 percent say America gives about the right amount of support. According to 10 percent, the United States does not give enough support.

Forty-seven percent of Republicans say U.S. support for Israel is in the right measure, while 36 percent believe America is too supportive.

Among Democrats, 51 percent say the United States is too supportive of Israel, while 32 percent say support is proportional.

### Interfaith group gets new leaders

A leading Jewish group handling interfaith relations named two people to head its operations.

Israel Singer, the chairman of the World Jewish Congress, and Rabbi Joel Meyers, the executive vice president of the Conservative movement's Rabbinical Assembly, are succeeding Seymour Reich, who served since 1999 as chairman of the International Jewish Committee for Interreligious Consultations, which is best known for its dealings with the Vatican.

## UJC passes pared-down budget, approves funding over Green Line

By Rachel Pomerance

NEW YORK (JTA) — The umbrella group of North American federations has won overwhelming approval for its 2002 budget, despite cuts in regional staffing and in subsidies for its missions program.

In a departure from previous policy, the United Jewish Communities also voted this week to allow funds to be used to aid Jewish residents in the West Bank and Gaza Strip, who have borne the brunt of Palestinian violence during the 21-month-old intifada.

The cuts to UJC's budget come as crises in Israel and Argentina, along with a rise in global anti-Semitism, have spurred the Israel Emergency Campaign, the federations' largest special fund-raising effort since the 1973 Yom Kippur War.

The campaign has raised more than \$265 million since it began in October 2001.

UJC President and CEO Steven Hoffman believes the trimmer budget addresses current needs and responds to the demands of its member federations, many of which have complained of a bloated budget.

UJC is "making adjustments in services we thought needed to be radically altered," he said, citing as an example the reform in UJC's regional staffing to better serve the needs of member federations.

In addition, he said, "we're putting resources into areas that have been underdeveloped, like professional resource development."

Meeting in Chicago, the UJC's Delegate Assembly — consisting primarily of representatives of the North American federations — passed the budget Monday with only a handful of abstentions and nays.

The \$42.5 million budget is pared down from last year's \$44.7 million total. The current figure is considered a maximum allowance, with UJC leadership committed to seeking further cuts. Because this is his first stab at the budget, Hoffman said he is still planning a "line-by-line" review to further reduce expenses in areas such as the organization's choice of vendors.

In another development at Monday's meeting, the UJC unanimously approved a resolution to allow relief and rehabilitation funds from the Israel Emergency Campaign, or any other UJC funds, to be used to help "any Jew in need without regard to geography or any other consideration."

That would include settlers in the West Bank and Gaza Strip, areas that Israel captured in the 1967 Six-Day War.

In the past, UJC money was spent only within the Green Line, as the pre-1967 border is known. According to a charter it inherited from the United Jewish Appeal, the UJC had subscribed to an internationally agreed upon definition of Israel, which excludes the territories it gained in the Six-Day War.

However, UJC officials would not confirm whether the UJC had ever previously administered services to Jews living beyond the Green Line.

Gail Hyman, UJC's senior vice president of marketing and public affairs, would only say that "changing our practice allows the organization to help Israelis regardless of where they live."

"The events in Israel over the last 20 months have to a great degree been behind the desire to revisit the UJC charter that was inherited at the time of the merger and to make sure that the new UJC board's understanding of that charter was clear and understood by all," Hyman said.

She said UJC's leadership has been working to bring a review before the board for several months. "The review of the charter was related to all of our fund raising" and

## MIDEAST FOCUS

### U.S. may back 'temporary' state

The United States may propose the creation of a "temporary" Palestinian state, according to Colin Powell. The U.S. secretary of state told the London-based Arab-language Al-Hayat newspaper that it "might be necessary to set up a temporary state as a transitional step."

Powell also chided Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon, who has said he would not deal with Palestinian Authority President Yasser Arafat. "Arafat is the elected leader of the Palestinian people, and Sharon knows the Bush administration does not share his view about working with Arafat," Powell said.

### Will new court try Israelis?

A new international court might indict Jewish settlers or soldiers for war crimes, Israel's attorney general warned. Commenting on the upcoming inauguration of the new International Criminal Court in The Hague on July 1, Elyakim Rubinstein told a Knesset committee this week that it is not clear whether the tribunal may try to take action against settlers or soldiers for their activities in the West Bank and Gaza Strip.

According to the treaty that created the court, Jewish settlement activity is regarded as a war crime, Rubinstein said. "The international court is a great unknown for us," he said. Israel did not ratify the court's treaty out of concern it would be directed by political considerations, Rubinstein said.

### Sharon open to talks in Japan?

Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon reportedly is prepared to send a representative for talks with Palestinian officials in Japan.

The Israeli daily Ha'aretz reported that the Japanese foreign minister raised the idea during a meeting with Sharon prior to his departure for the United States.



## Daily News Bulletin

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allocations overseas, which would include the needs of newly poverty-stricken Jews in Argentina, she said. "It's bigger than one specific campaign," she said.

Israel Emergency Campaign funds will go toward providing safe summer camps in Israel, assisting special immigration efforts from Argentina, enhancing Israel's emergency rooms and trauma centers, and paying for a fund for victims of terrorism.

This is not "a political decision," Hoffman said.

Rather, it's a "statement that says the UJC and its federations are here to provide relief and rehabilitation services to Jews in need wherever they live," whether in Tajikistan, Sao Paulo or Buenos Aires, he said.

Richard Wexler, a member of UJC's budget committee, called the resolution "totally consistent" with "both UJC's charter and its mission" and the interest of "our donors."

The major cuts in UJC's total budget came to its regional staff or consulting department, which served as liaisons to local federations.

The department was cut by approximately 38 percent, with 16 staff members laid off, office closures in Chicago and South Florida offices, and a move of the New Jersey office to UJC's Manhattan headquarters.

The two other biggest cuts apply to reduced subsidies for missions and travel by volunteers. But the new budget also contains significant new investments.

Reflecting the situation in Israel, UJC's Israel and Overseas department received an additional \$150,000 each for its Israel and New York offices, and \$300,000 for the department's allocations committee.

Another \$250,000 was earmarked to hire a senior vice president of human resource development and to invest in recruitment, continuing education and training programs.

Planned giving activities also received an extra \$250,000, Hoffman said.

Personnel costs such as compensation and insurance also increased, Hoffman said.

Much of the wrestling over the cuts occurred before Monday's final approval.

Many have faith that Hoffman, who served as president of the Cleveland federation before taking over as UJC head, can revitalize the 3-year-old UJC, a merger of the Council of Jewish Federations, the United Jewish Appeal and the United Israel Appeal.

Critics have said the UJC has been stunted by weak leadership and unclear goals, along with natural growing pains.

Yet some continue to complain that the budget is too large, and criticized the choice of cuts. Steven Nasatir, president of the Jewish Federation of Metropolitan Chicago, supported the budget.

But he disagreed with cuts in the UJC's missions program, which come at a time when visits to Israel are touted as crucial acts of solidarity with the embattled state.

There is "no way" to have a budget that makes "100 percent of the people happy 100 percent of the time," he said.

But he said that cuts in the missions program are "silly" and "shortsighted."

It's "good business" to encourage people to "see the miracle of Israel," he said.

Federations more than make up their investment in mission subsidies with the generosity of won-over travelers, he said.

But he called it a "philosophical" issue that divides federations: Those with less successful mission programs aren't keen to subsidize travelers from other cities.

Wexler said the UJC "might at the same time be spending far more dollars with direct engagement with the federations, as opposed to increasing visibility in Israel" and Israel-Diaspora relations.

Wexler, a former UJA president, said the previous structure excelled in coordinating among local federations and the national leadership. Hoffman dismissed some of the criticism, saying some people "just like to complain."

Barry Shrage, president of Boston's Combined Jewish Philanthropies, supports Hoffman's vision for the UJC, which he calls "leaner and better at the end of the day."

He said it will take time for Hoffman's changes to be felt.

"You've got to give the guy some time," Shrage said. "It's destructive to ask him to make serious cuts, and then second-guess every cut he makes."

Initially, the UJC required a management style that "didn't rock the boat that much," Shrage said.

At this point, however, it needs "incisive management," and someone to take it "in the direction it needs to go. Steve can do that." □

## JEWISH WORLD

### Texas GOP: U.S. is Christian

The Republican Party in Texas declared the United States a "Christian nation."

Delegates to the statewide convention approved a platform over the weekend that said America is a Christian nation founded on "fundamental Judeo-Christian principles based on the Holy Bible."

The party affirmed the rights of individuals to choose their religion. The platform also favored posting the Ten Commandments on public property and said the nation needs to "dispel the myth of the separation of church and state."

The National Jewish Democratic Coalition said the Republicans are alienating American Jews. Some Republicans maintain that those who attended the convention came from the far-right side of the party.

### STAR picks new director

A program that seeks to revitalize North American synagogue life chose a new executive director. Rabbi Hayim Herring is "an outstanding leader," said Lynn Schusterman, president of Synagogues: Transformation and Renewal, known as STAR. "He understands the multiple issues facing the American Jewish community and is passionate about finding ways to strengthen that community by using the most substantial resource we have — the synagogue."

After serving as a pulpit rabbi for seven years in Minneapolis, Herring helped create a Jewish identity program for the Minneapolis Jewish Federation.

### JNF replaces Bulgaria monument

The Jewish National Fund removed mention of Bulgaria's wartime king from a monument marking the destruction of Balkan Jewry during the Holocaust.

According to the Israeli daily Ha'aretz, the decision to change the monument, which is located in Bulgaria, stems from the fact that while King Boris protected the Jews of his own country, he helped the Nazis murder Jews in areas of Greece and Yugoslavia annexed to Bulgaria.

### Protesters disrupt London show

Anti-Israel protesters disrupted a concert by Israeli singer Noa in London.

Two men walked onto the stage this week, one of them snatching her microphone while the other tried to display a banner calling for a ban on performances by Israeli artists, the Jerusalem Post reported.

### Latvian construction protested

Latvian Jewish leaders are protesting the construction of a gas station on the site of a synagogue in Riga destroyed by the Nazis. Jewish leaders are expected to appeal to Latvia's president to reverse the Riga City Council's decision to allow the construction.

## New Holocaust studies center harnesses diverse academic fields

By Tom Tugend

LOS ANGELES (JTA) — The son of a Presbyterian minister and a man raised in a Greek Orthodox family are spearheading the establishment of a Center for the Study of the Holocaust, Genocide and Human Rights at a Los Angeles-area college.

Philosophy professor John Roth and historian Jonathan Petropoulos are both steeped in the history of the Holocaust.

Roth, 61, has been teaching and writing on the subject for 25 years at Claremont McKenna College, a liberal arts college.

In 1999, Roth resigned his appointment to head the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum's Center for Advanced Holocaust Studies after he was assailed for writings he made in which he compared Israel's treatment of the Palestinians to Nazi Germany's treatment of the Jews.

Roth has apologized for the comparison.

Petropoulos, the 41-year-old director of the college's Gould Center for Humanistic Studies, is an authority on Nazi-looted art, both as the author of two books on the subject and in assisting Holocaust survivors.

Drawing on the resources of Claremont McKenna College, its four sister undergraduate colleges and two graduate schools, which collectively make up the Claremont Colleges, Roth and Petropoulos are enlisting professors and students in such fields as history, philosophy, religion, sociology, political science, psychology, economics, arts, science and literature for the center's mission.

They make the point that while there are numerous Holocaust museums, memorials, university courses and teacher training programs in America on the Nazi extermination of European Jewry, there are only two or three academic centers which bring to bear the perspective and research of a whole range of scholarly disciplines on the subject.

In dealing with the three areas in the center's title, Roth emphasized in a recent interview with both men that "the Holocaust will be the linchpin and cornerstone of our studies. There is no moral equivalency to the Holocaust. But, unfortunately, the Holocaust has not put an end to genocide, and to understand both, some comparative analysis is appropriate."

Roth also notes that "much of the international legislation on war crimes, crimes against humanity and the United Nations' declaration of human rights have grown out of the Holocaust experience."

Petropoulos added, "We are sensitive to the uniqueness of the Holocaust. We will not try to relativize it."

Petropoulos said he first became aware of the Holocaust as a 10-year-old when his Athens-born father spoke with great bitterness about the German occupation of the city.

With his subsequent studies of the Holocaust, he is convinced that its impact and relevance "transcend ethnicity."

Roth said he learned about the Holocaust as a college student when he encountered Richard Rubenstein's writings and later the works of Elie Wiesel.

He recalled discussing with his minister father his discovery that his own Christian tradition, "its antipathy toward Jews, was embedded in the Holocaust."

Still in its beginning stages, the Claremont center is seeking an endowment of \$5 million to \$6 million. □

## Iran radio show aimed at Israelis

JERUSALEM (JTA) — Iran launched a Hebrew-language radio program aimed at Israelis.

Tuesday's debut of the half-hour "The Voice of David" broadcast lacked the anti-Israel diatribes routinely issued by Iranian leaders.

Along with news headlines, the show included an interview with a member of Iran's Jewish community.

"We separate with the hope that you will return," the announcer told listeners at the end of the broadcast. □

## World Zionist Congress to tackle the difficult issue of defining Israel

By Rachel Pomerance

NEW YORK (JTA) — When Jews from around the world gather in Jerusalem next week for the 34th World Zionist Congress, their presence will be seen as an expression of unity and solidarity with the embattled Jewish state.

Yet one of the major challenges will be to bridge the gaps of the various parties and forge consensus over how to define Israel as a Jewish and democratic state.

Groups as diverse as Likud, the Conservative movement and the Orthodox have submitted resolutions on the subject, clearly with different goals in mind.

“Although clearly Israel is under attack and we need to pull together,” the congress can’t afford to “completely ignore the agenda of the Zionist movement,” including environmentalism, the gap between the rich and the poor and the religious-secular divide, said Robert Golub, executive director of Mercaz USA, the Zionist arm of the Conservative movement.

Known to many as the parliament of the Jewish people, which determines policies and programs of world Jewry, the 750-seat World Zionist Congress convenes every four to five years in Jerusalem.

This year’s gathering is being held June 17-20 at a time of much angst over the future of Israel and the Jewish people.

But while the external threats to Israel and the anti-Semitism facing Jews around the world will shape much of the agenda, the political intrigue that traditionally characterizes the congress is expected to happen again this year.

At the congress, ideological groups team up to determine policies of the World Zionist Organization, which holds half the decision-making power of the Jewish Agency for Israel.

That means influence over the agency’s \$350 million budget, which focuses on immigration and absorption and worldwide religious, political and educational programs.

Ammiel Hirsch, executive director of ARZA/World Union, the Zionist branch of the Reform movement, agreed with Golub.

There’s an “urgent need for world Jewry to come together in solidarity,” and the delegates’ presence in Israel will go a long way toward that end, he said.

But Hirsch said he fears wartime talk would trump the discussion of social issues like pluralism, the acceptance by Israel of non-Orthodox religious streams and civil rights.

Hirsch said he strongly supports the notion that “Israel was born a Jewish state and should remain a Jewish state in its very founding definition.”

That’s “contrary to the assertion of those post-Zionist Jews and some in the Arab community who claim that to define Israel as a Jewish state diminishes its full democratic character and contrary to those religious Jews, some of whom claim Israel should be a halachic state governed by Jewish law and not democratic law,” he said.

But Harvey Blitz, president of the Orthodox Union and a delegate on the slate of the Religious Zionists of America, anticipates his faction will take issue with any resolution that endorses equal rights for all denominations and religions.

Blitz said he thinks it is wrong to hold such a divisive debate during such turbulent times in Israel.

On the substance of the issue itself, he said, “To us, saying Israel is supposed to be a Jewish state has not just ethnic meaning, but religious meaning.

“Israel needs to be a Jewish state and there needs to be a consideration of religious needs and requirements,” he said.

If this year’s American Zionist elections for delegates to the congress is any indication, the debate at next week’s congress will be heated.

In those elections, Reform and Orthodox groups pressed the pluralism debate to mobilize voters.

The hot-button issue accounts for the increased influence of the religious streams, which have now supplanted the political parties within the American Zionist Movement, the umbrella organization for most American Zionist groups that administers American elections to the congress.

In the end, the Reform movement swept the electorate for the second time with 42 percent of the vote; the Conservative movement ranked second with 22 percent; and while the Orthodox placed third at 20 percent, they nearly doubled their numbers from the last election.

Voicing the concern of many Reform and Conservative Jews, Golub said democracy means “every Jew has the right to define his or her Jewish lifestyle.”

Yet “the current Israeli government is made up of parties, some of whom want to circumvent and supercede decisions of the Israeli Supreme Court” that allow for non-Orthodox conversions.

That “runs in the face of Israel as a Zionist” and therefore democratic state, Golub said.

The 145-member American delegation is second in size only to Israel’s, whose delegation mirrors the Zionist parties in the Knesset.

The remaining 33 percent of delegates are from Jewish communities around the rest of the world.

While some view the splintered congress as a sign of weakness, many are committed to the social debates that they say signify the relevancy of this democratic organization.

Zionism has always been about a “great deal more than creating a safe refuge for Jews to live in,” said David Breakstone, the Jerusalem-based liaison between the WZO and Zionist federations, or national affiliates.

The WZO is concerned with engaging “those living abroad to be involved personally and meaningfully in shaping the society that we have here,” and in shaping a chevrah l’mofet, or exemplary society, in Israel.

To that end, the debates are in step with the WZO’s aim.

But the group has added another force to rejuvenate this year’s congress — and the movement as a whole.

This year, 25 percent of the 750 delegates will be younger than 30.

During the elections, which were available on the Internet to boost voter turnout, the election slates reserved at least a quarter of their delegate slots for those younger than 30, according to a new mandate.

“We believe that if there won’t be empowerment of youth that will bring new spirit to the goals of the Zionist movement, the movement won’t hold up for much longer,” said Haim Hayet, a Meretz Party delegate of the Congress who serves as chairman of the youth department for the WZO.

(JTA correspondent Jessica Steinberg in Jerusalem contributed to this report.) □