



Daily News Bulletin

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85th Year

TOP NEWS IN BRIEF

Israel submits formal aid request

Israeli officials requested \$10 billion in loan guarantees from the United States.

The Israeli Prime Minister's Office said the request was made during a meeting Monday in Washington with the U.S. national security adviser, Condoleezza Rice.

Israel also is seeking \$4 billion in special military aid from the United States to defray the cost of fighting terrorism and preparing for a possible U.S. war against Iraq. [Page 3]

Germany likely to provide Patriots

German officials said they were likely to approve a request by Israel for Patriot missiles.

Germany's Defense Ministry said Tuesday that Israel had long expressed an interest in acquiring Patriot missiles from Germany and had renewed its request a week ago because of the Iraq crisis.

The officials said the approval came as part of Germany's post-Holocaust commitment to Israel's security.

Israeli officials said they had made the request "some time ago" after the German military announced it had Patriot missile batteries it no longer needed.

FBI: Decrease in attacks on Jews

Hate crimes against U.S. Jews declined slightly in 2001 from the year before, according to the annual FBI tally of such crimes.

There were slightly more than 1,000 attacks against Jews last year, compared with nearly 2,900 against blacks, who suffered the largest number of bias attacks.

Hate crimes against Muslims increased from 28 in 2000 to 481 in 2001, "presumably as a result of the heinous incidents that occurred on Sept. 11," the report said.

Bush signs terror insurance bill

President Bush on Tuesday signed a bill that shifts most of the cost of terrorist attacks onto the federal government.

The new law, which provides insurance companies with up to \$100 billion in government protection against losses from terror attacks, is expected to help Jewish federations and other groups that have been burdened with high insurance premiums.

New draft of 'road map' raises concerns among Israeli leaders

By Matthew E. Berger

WASHINGTON (JTA) — Israel backers are raising numerous concerns about the latest version of the U.S. "road map" for Middle East peace.

Analysts and Jewish leaders say the latest version, currently being hammered out in Washington, diverges from President Bush's June 24 speech, in which he called for new Palestinian leaders and said a Palestinian state could be created only after significant institutional reforms.

They also say Israel has not been consulted enough in the preparation of the document.

Also of concern is the fact that the State Department — which is considered to be softer on the Palestinians — is working on the plan, rather than the White House, whose views on the conflict are considered closer to Israel's.

"The concern is that some of the key players credited with crafting Bush's speech are now focused on Iraq," said one official with a Jewish organization. "Some of the other folks, in the State Department, have moved to fill the vacuum."

Israel has complained that it learned about the revised road map only from news reports.

Housing and Construction Minister Natan Sharansky raised some of Israel's concerns during a visit to Washington last week.

Conceived in conjunction with America's "Quartet" partners — the United Nations, European Union and Russia — the road map has been under revision for more than a month, addressing concerns raised by all sides.

It is expected to be released when Quartet leaders meet in Washington on Dec. 20. Israeli officials want the release postponed until after Israeli elections on Jan. 28.

The road map calls for a three-staged approach leading to an interim Palestinian state in the West Bank and Gaza Strip next year, and the creation of a permanent state by the end of 2005.

In the first stage, the plan demands the appointment of a new Palestinian Authority Cabinet and the creation of a prime minister's post. It also demands that Israel improve humanitarian conditions for Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza Strip and dismantle any settlement outposts created under the Sharon government.

Later, it would require the Palestinians to write a constitution, and also calls for a monitoring system led by the Quartet to ensure that the two sides meet their commitments.

It also calls on Israel to withdraw troops from all areas occupied since the Palestinian uprising began in Sept. 2000 and to freeze all settlement activity.

The second phase, which would run through the end of 2003, begins with Palestinian elections in January and an international conference to form a provisional Palestinian state.

The third phase, due in 2004 and 2005, calls for a second conference and negotiations toward a final peace agreement.

The new version does not address some of the fundamental concerns that Israel raised last month.

Specifically, Israel is concerned that the road map does not repeat Bush's demand for a change in Palestinian leadership and does not set standards that the Palestinians must meet before the sides progress from stage to stage.

Israel wants the steps to be performance-based, not dictated by a timeline that runs regardless of how well the Palestinians honor their commitments, as was the case under

MIDEAST FOCUS

West Bank, Gaza clashes erupt

Israeli forces carried out anti-terror operations Tuesday in the West Bank and Gaza Strip. In Gaza, one Palestinian gunman was killed in clashes that erupted when Israeli tanks entered the refugee camp of Deir el-Balah. Soldiers demolished the home of a Hamas member who Israeli officials said had orchestrated several terror attacks.

In the West Bank, soldiers arrested more than 30 suspected terrorists.

U.S.: Terror thwarts state goal

It is impossible to make headway toward a Palestinian state amid terror attacks on Israel, according to the U.S. State Department.

Department spokesman Richard Boucher made the comment Monday while discussing U.S. plans to host a conference on Middle East peace Dec. 20 in Washington.

Palestinian threatens terror

A Palestinian legislator issued a veiled threat against the United States, according to Palestinian Media Watch.

President Bush's policies toward the Arab world will leave Arabs so isolated in world opinion that they will have no alternative but to carry out suicide bombings, Nahed Munir Alrayis wrote Monday in the Palestinian Authority's official daily *Al-Hayat Al-Jadida*, the media watch group reported.

Hezbollah: Children fighting IDF

Palestinian children recently joined armed gunmen in fighting Israeli forces in Jenin, according to a journal published by Hezbollah.

After being taught at a very early age to throw stones at members of the Israel Defense Force, Palestinian children are now using hand grenades and homemade bombs, the publication said.

the Oslo peace accords. "We've had very negative experiences with timelines in the past," an Israeli official said.

Israel is also not happy that Quartet members — three of whom it considers biased toward the Palestinians — will serve as monitors, playing a role that until now has been filled by the United States.

The new version speaks of moving through the process with the "consensus" opinion of the Quartet — essentially giving the United States veto power — but Israeli officials argue that isn't enough: They want any monitoring to be left solely to the United States. Several analysts say that, unlike Bush's June 24 speech, the road map essentially allows Palestinian Authority President Yasser Arafat to remain in power.

Bush also said that no Palestinian state could be created until the Palestinian leaders "engage in a sustained fight against the terrorists and dismantle their infrastructure."

Israel has complained that the security steps the plan demands of the Palestinians are too vague.

"The road map is not faithful to President Bush's June 24 speech, which makes crystal clear that removal of Yasser Arafat is a prerequisite of any American diplomatic initiative," said David Makovsky, a senior fellow at the Washington Institute for Near East Policy.

Also of concern is the lack of consequences for Palestinian non-compliance.

If the road map is released next month, it will come during national elections in Israel, where Haifa's dovish mayor, Amram Mitzna, will lead the Labor Party. The Likud leadership will be decided in a primary Thursday, with Prime Minister Ariel Sharon a heavy favorite to defeat his challenger, Foreign Minister Benjamin Netanyahu.

Israeli officials have been asking for the release to be postponed until after the Jan. 28 national elections. Sharansky made the request in Washington last week, but so far the United States has resisted.

"We haven't made any decisions in terms of announcements or anything," State Department spokesman Philip Reeker said last week.

Releasing the road map during the election campaign would be seen as a gift for Mitzna, who has said he will meet with any Palestinian leader, including Arafat. Sharon has refused to meet with Arafat because of Arafat's ties to terror groups.

However, Martin Indyk, a former U.S. ambassador to Israel, said Monday that postponing the release would be as much an act of interference in Israeli politics as releasing it. He also suggested that Sharon would not be hampered by the road map.

"He needs to show the Israeli electorate not only that he can fight terrorism but that he has a way out of the process," Indyk said at a forum at the Brookings Institution, where he is a senior fellow. "He needs to support it."

Indyk also said that, based on the fate of other peace plans presented over the past two years, Sharon knows there is little chance the road map will be implemented. Therefore, Indyk said, he has little to lose by supporting the plan.

Makovsky speculated that the United States may be insisting on releasing the document quickly to strengthen U.S. attempts to woo Arab support for a potential attack on Iraq.

"Introducing the document at such a sensitive juncture, very little can be accomplished," he said. "It makes me wonder if Arab states are seeking to insist upon the Quartet's passage of the road map as a prerequisite for their acquiescence to the American actions in Iraq." □

U.S. Jews to mark 350 years

NEW YORK (JTA) — Plans are under way to celebrate the 350th anniversary of American Jewish history.

As part of the celebration, four legislators from Ohio recently introduced a resolution to recognize the anniversary.

The resolution, introduced Nov. 13 by Sens. George Voinovich and Mike DeWine, as well as by Reps. Steve Chabot and Rob Portman, calls for the anniversary year to run from September 2004 through August 2005. During that year, commemorative events are planned throughout the country, including an exhibit on U.S. Jewish history at the Library of Congress in Washington. □



Daily News Bulletin

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JEWISH WORLD

Austria's Haider won't resign

Austrian far-right leader Jorg Haider reversed course and withdrew his resignation as governor of the state of Carinthia. Haider said Tuesday that resigning would have been the "logical consequence" following his Freedom Party's poor showing in Sunday's national elections.

But he withdrew his resignation after "party friends" said "my 'Carinthian way' is good and I should continue."

Georgetown rallies against hate

More than 100 Georgetown University students rallied Monday against "intimidation and intolerance" on their campus. The rally was a response to the invitation of Norman Finkelstein, whom the Anti-Defamation League has branded a Holocaust revisionist author, to speak on campus last week. The rally also came after Georgetown professor Hisham Sharabi made anti-Semitic comments last week at a university in Lebanon.

"These, my friends, are the ugly faces of hate and ignorance and they have succeeded in painting themselves blue and gray," the school's colors, said Dan Spector, president of the university's Jewish Student Alliance.

Daniel Pearl honored by UJC

The father of slain Wall Street Journal reporter Daniel Pearl accepted an award for his son from the umbrella group of North American Jewish federations.

At the United Jewish Communities' General Assembly last week, Daniel Pearl was given the group's Tzedek award for outstanding leadership in the pursuit of justice. Judea Pearl told the gathering that "hatred killed my son, and hatred I will fight for the rest of my life with vengeance." With his last words, which proclaimed his Jewishness, Daniel Pearl meant to tell his Islamic extremist killers that he respected Islam and wanted their respect in return, Judea Pearl said.

Medical mission to Israel

Seventy American professors of medicine traveled to Israel to protest anti-Israel activities on U.S. campuses. American doctors and their Israeli colleagues focused on trauma and emergency care at the Nov. 24-25 conference, which was sponsored by the Combined Jewish Philanthropies of Boston and Hadassah: The Women's Zionist Organization of America.

"We're saying no to the European boycotts and to the university divestment campaigns, and we're showing support for Israel," said Ben Sachs, American conference chair and chief of the department of obstetrics and gynecology at Harvard University Medical School, which also sent 11 other professors.

Israel asks for loan guarantees, but some worry about conditions

By Matthew E. Berger

WASHINGTON (JTA) — Israel is seeking loan guarantees from the United States to compensate for the Jewish state's economic crisis and the looming threat of U.S. military action against Iraq.

Israeli officials met Monday in Washington with the U.S. national security adviser, Condoleezza Rice, seeking up to \$10 billion in loan guarantees and additional aid to compensate Israel for any damages if Baghdad lashes out at Israel in response to a U.S. attack on Iraq.

Dov Weisglass, Prime Minister Ariel Sharon's bureau chief, and Ohad Marani, director general of Israel's Finance Ministry, "presented a picture of the economic situation in Israel and, in its wake, a request for aid," Sharon's media adviser said. Talks are in their opening stages.

"No commitments were made to a specific level of assistance," White House spokesman Ari Fleischer said of the meeting. "But we are cognizant of the economic conditions in Israel, and we want to work with Israeli authorities on this issue. And of course, any decision that would be made on this would be subject to congressional approval."

The guarantees allow Israel to borrow money at a lower interest rate, and there is no cost to the United States if Israel repays its loan. Israel maintains that it has never defaulted on a loan. But the issue is complex: Some Israel supporters are concerned that the United States will use the loan guarantees and aid package to pressure Israel for diplomatic concessions.

"It means that the administration, with a positive reaction for the request of the government of Israel, might ask a price for it," Yaron Deckel, Washington bureau chief of Israel's Channel One television, told a Brookings Institution forum on Monday. "The price could be in terms of political negotiations with the Palestinians or not reacting after an attack from Iraq. There is no gesture just for a gesture, including in international policy."

On Dec. 20, the United States is expected to unveil a "road map" for Israeli-Palestinian peace that was crafted with America's partners in the "Quartet" — the United Nations, European Union and Russia.

Among the concessions demanded of Israel are the dismantling of settlements and a pullback of troops from the West Bank and Gaza Strip to the positions they held before the Palestinian uprising began in September 2000.

The United States also is moving toward military action against Iraq, and is concerned about Israeli retaliation if Iraq launches missiles against Israel.

U.S. officials would like Israel to remain out of the conflict, fearing it may antagonize the Arab world.

"There's always concerns about how issues can be used, and aid is always a leverage issue," said Malcolm Hoenlein, executive vice chairman of the Conference of Presidents of Major American Jewish Organizations. "But there is no indication that they're tying the aid to something else."

However, Hoenlein said he would not be surprised if the United States did make the aid conditional on Israeli acquiescence to U.S. wishes.

The United States is likely to place some overt conditions on any aid it gives Israel — for example, that none of the funds be used to create or maintain settlements in the West Bank and Gaza Strip. Under the first President Bush, for example, the United States refused to approve loan guarantees that the Likud government of Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir wanted to help settle immigrants from the former Soviet Union.

Bush ultimately approved the loan guarantees when Labor Party leader Yitzhak Rabin, who had a more conciliatory policy on settlements, became prime minister in 1992.

In the present reality, conditions on the aid may be less controversial.

"The Israeli side knows that when we're using American money, none of the money is used over the Green Line," the Israeli official said, referring to Israel's pre-1967 border with the West Bank and Gaza Strip. □

ACROSS THE FORMER SOVIET UNION**The Jewish world's a stage at theater festival in Ukraine***By Lev Krichevsky*

LVOV, Ukraine (JTA) — Before World War II, this city — then part of Poland and home to that country's third largest Jewish population — boasted as many as 16 Jewish theater companies.

Earlier this month, Lvov — now in Ukraine — was reminded of this page of its rich Jewish cultural history when troupes from all across the former Soviet Union took part in a Jewish theater festival here.

But if the festival conjured up echoes of the past, it also exemplified how much Jewish life has changed in the past 60 years.

Many of the new theater companies were started as offshoots of the Hesed welfare centers run by the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee.

A Belarussian company presented the festival's only Yiddish-language production.

But most of the audience did not understand the dialogue and even a key actor didn't seem to know the language well enough and kept forgetting his lines.

The other 15 full-length productions staged at the festival were in Russian.

Most of the festival productions portrayed recognizable Jewish images — from King Solomon to the ubiquitous "Fiddler on the Roof" and other shtetl characters based on the writings of Sholem Aleichem or Isaac Babel.

"If there is anything that allows a contemporary theater to be called Jewish theater, these are the specific themes," said Iosif Shats, a theater producer from Kishinev, Moldova.

Some of the plays were performed at the First Ukrainian Theater for Children and Youth, which once housed the Lvov Jewish Theater, home to one of the city's professional Jewish troupes.

Before the war, Lvov was a hotbed of Yiddish theater. In addition to its homegrown companies, many famous troupes from Warsaw, Vilna and other East European Jewish centers toured here.

Prewar Yiddish theater "did not survive. Its actors and audience died in the Holocaust," said Ada Dianova, director of the Lvov welfare organization Hesed Arie and head of the festival's organizing committee.

However, the last 10 years of Jewish community building in the former Soviet Union have witnessed a rebirth of Jewish culture, including theater.

For many of the participants in this year's festival, the present and future are more important than the past.

"We are not trying to revive the Jewish theater that was," said Alexander Chevan, artistic director of the Spiegel Open Jewish Theater in the Ukrainian town of Chernigov.

His troupe presented "Solomon's Ring," an avant-garde tale about King Solomon built on a variety of sources — from the Bible to 20th century Russian literature.

"We are trying to build Jewish culture here and now using modern artistic means," Chevan said.

In Russia and Ukraine there are now a few professional companies with permanent space of their own. But most troupes

that exist — and all the participants of the Lvov festival — are amateur troupes that usually operate as part of Jewish communal institutions.

During the last few years, the focus of many of JDC's Hesed centers shifted from purely charitable work to encompass cultural activities as well.

The change is attributed to some economic improvements in post-Soviet countries, as well as to the maturation process of Jewish institutions.

"The problem of malnutrition and hunger that was so acute a while ago is no longer our only focus," Dianova said. "Today, a community that only feeds without giving people some food for the soul is like a poorhouse."

She added: "When we turned a soup kitchen into a club where people can watch a theatrical performance, celebrate holidays and birthdays — many of those who have been embarrassed to come for a free cup of soup are now more comfortable with the idea that they come to a Jewish club."

But Jews aren't the only target group for the theater — either as audience members or as performers.

"If we were to create a theater only for Jews and only of Jews, we would have missed the target," said Dianova, who is also artistic director of the Lvov Jewish theater studio called Debut.

Indeed, about 40 percent of the actors in her troupe have no Jewish background in their families.

And while the actors are amateurs, they are devoted to their hobby.

"I give all my time to the theater. For the festival, we have been rehearsing for three-and-a-half hours every night for six months," said Vanya Bilonenko, a 16-year-old high school student who acted in "What Is Your Uncle's Name" at the festival.

The play, which is based on books by Russian Jewish author Ephraim Sevela, is centered on the figure of a young Jewish man whom the 1917 Russian Revolution turned into a Communist fanatic.

The tragicomic story is set against the background of a Jewish neighborhood plunged into deep economic and moral crisis by the revolution.

Pasha Alexeev, a 27-year-old Jewish professional who played an elderly Chasidic Jew in the same production, said the months he spent preparing for his role helped him better understand his own family's past.

"I just realized how little I know about my own family. Working on this role gave me a whole new horizon in understanding how my grandparents lived — what made them cry and what made them happy." □

Biblical patriarch found innocent

NEW YORK (JTA) — The biblical patriarch Abraham was found not guilty of agreeing to sacrifice his son Isaac.

Jurors at a mock trial held Sunday at the University of Judaism in Los Angeles voted 225-216 to clear Abraham of agreeing to sacrifice Isaac after God asked him to do so.

"That's the way I would have voted," TV Judge Joseph Wapner, who presided over the trial, told the New York Post newspaper.

"Under California law, I don't think intent was proven beyond a reasonable doubt." □