



# Daily News Bulletin

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86th Year

## TOP NEWS IN BRIEF

### Shoah commemorations held

Holocaust Remembrance Day commemorations were held Monday in countries including Italy, Britain, Sweden, Germany, Estonia and Denmark. [Page 4]

### Israelis head to the polls

Nearly 8,000 polling stations will be open across Israel to enable some 4.7 million voters to participate in Tuesday's elections for the 16th Knesset.

Israelis will vote by selecting a slip marked with a letter representing one of the 26 parties competing in the election. Voting slips are printed in Hebrew, Russian and Arabic.

### Population results expected

The controversial National Jewish Population Survey 2000-01, which was delayed last year when some data got lost, should be released within several months.

A report to the United Jewish Communities federation umbrella said Monday that the NJPS — billed as the most comprehensive demographic portrait to date of U.S. Jewry — should be made public in "not more than several months" after an internal probe found it was not necessary to "redo the research," UJC spokeswoman Gail Hyman said.

The UJC blames Roper Audits & Surveys Worldwide, the firm that conducted the study, for "programming errors" that led to the missing data.

A Roper spokeswoman said the firm is "working closely" with the UJC on its review of the delay. Barring the discovery of new problems, the review should be wrapped up in six to eight weeks, Hyman said.

### UJC funds Argentine Jewry

The North American federation system approved \$39 million for Argentine aliyah and welfare in 2003. The sum, approved at a meeting Monday of the United Jewish Communities' Board of Trustees in Miami, contains \$25 million for aliyah and \$14 million for welfare.

Of the \$14 million, \$4 million goes to the Jewish Agency for Israel for education, and \$10 million to the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee for relief efforts. An estimated 6,000 Argentines are expected to move to Israel this year, and all of the new funds for Argentine aliyah will come from the UJC's Israel Emergency Campaign.

## NEWS ANALYSIS

### Even after Israeli election, 'road map' likely to be off course

By Matthew E. Berger

WASHINGTON (JTA) — The much-touted "road map" for progress in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict appears to be leading nowhere.

For months, Bush administration officials have said the impending Israeli election was the reason they were not yet endorsing and implementing the road map.

But analysts say the chances that the United States will bring new energy to the product of the Quartet — the United States, United Nations, European Union and Russia — after the Israelis pick their new prime minister this week are slim.

In Washington, the road map is viewed as a nonstarter, essentially dead until other foreign policy priorities, especially U.S. military action against Iraq, are completed.

"The road map is not American policy," said Scott Lasensky, a fellow at the Council on Foreign Relations. "It's a big question mark."

On the surface, the road map remains the document of reference when discussing the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

"We have worked very hard to develop a road map that we believe will give us a way forward and will lead us onto a path that will result ultimately in the creation of a Palestinian state," Secretary of State Colin Powell said recently in New York.

"That is President Bush's objective, and we look forward to moving ahead with our efforts when the Israeli election is over."

While many drafts have been circulated to the parties and leaked to the media, the United States has neither officially unveiled nor endorsed the map.

The Bush administration has preferred to keep its focus on Iraq, and save the Israel-Palestinian conflict for later. Bush administration officials privately cite the opportunity that arose after the Persian Gulf War in 1991 that led to the Madrid Conference and, ultimately, the Oslo peace process.

Analysts believe the Bush administration is keeping talk of the road map alive largely to appease European and Arab nations, which believe that the United States should be focusing more on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and less on Iraq.

The United States also needs Europe and the Arab countries on board if it pursues military action against Iraq.

Many here are already comparing the road map to the Mitchell Report, which was released in 2001, touted by the Bush administration as the guiding principles of Middle East intervention, but then went nowhere. In a telling sign, William Burns, who was the State Department's main envoy for the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, was in the Middle East last week to talk primarily about Iraq, not the Israel-Arab conflict.

And the deputy secretary of defense, Paul Wolfowitz, told The Washington Post recently that U.S. efforts "pushing for a Palestinian state will grow" after military action against Iraq. It seems that the international community has gotten the message that the Israeli-Palestinian conflict is on the United States' back burner.

England sponsored its own talks in London last week among Quartet members and Arab states — but not Israel — about reform in the region.

Analysts say that after the votes have been counted in Tuesday's Israeli elections, Israel will remain unwilling to support the road map, and will encourage the United States to do likewise.

If Prime Minister Ariel Sharon wins, which is likely, he may be forced to create a right-wing coalition government with parties that would deeply oppose many of the

## MIDEAST FOCUS

### Fla. rep to head panel

Rep. Ileana Ros-Lehtinen (R-Fla.) has been named the new head of the U.S. House of Representatives' Middle East subcommittee.

Ros-Lehtinen replaces Rep. Benjamin Gilman (R-N.Y.), who retired from Congress last year.

Ros-Lehtinen, who represents the city of Miami, is considered to be a strong supporter of the Jewish state.

### Saudi backs Lieberman

A Saudi columnist reportedly welcomed the candidacy of Sen. Joseph Lieberman (D-Conn.), saying that as president Lieberman would go out of his way to prove that he is not biased in favor of the Jewish community.

As a result, Lieberman would offer the Palestinians concessions never offered by any of his predecessors, columnist Walid Abu Murshid wrote earlier this month in the London-based daily newspaper *Al-Sharq Al-Awsat*, according to a translation that was provided by the Washington-based Middle East Media Research Institute.

The fear that "the Jews will be blamed for everything done" by a President Lieberman, and the "requirement that the first Jewish president of the United States must prove that he places his Americanism ahead of his Jewishness," would wind up serving Palestinian interests, Murshid wrote.

### Peres: Quiet boycott of Israel

Private companies have been waging a "quiet boycott" of Israel in recent months, according to former Israeli Prime Minister Shimon Peres.

Speaking to the Russian-language media in Israel, the prime minister said the boycott appeared to be based primarily in Europe, where businesses no longer believe that Israel wants peace, Israel Radio reported.



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elements in the road map's timetable. Sharon himself and other Likud leaders also have expressed deep concerns.

The latest draft of the road map calls for three phases that would include an interim Palestinian state in parts of the West Bank and Gaza next year, and a permanent state by the end of 2005. In the first stage, the plan calls for the appointment of a new Palestinian Authority Cabinet and the creation of a prime minister's post to dilute the power of Palestinian Authority President Yasser Arafat.

It also demands that Israel withdraw troops from all areas occupied since the Palestinian intifada began in September 2000, and to freeze all settlement activity. It would also require the dismantling of any settlement outposts created since the Sharon government took office in March 2001.

Critics say the road map differs from President Bush's June 24 speech, in which he called for alternative Palestinian leadership and enunciated several conditions before the creation of a Palestinian state, including fighting terrorism and ending incitement.

There is concern in some Jewish and political quarters that the White House is moving away from its conditions and leaning toward the road map's timetable, something Bush administration officials have denied.

"It's perfectly clear that the majority of the Quartet is not that concerned about Israel, to put it mildly," said Jeane Kirkpatrick, a senior fellow at the American Enterprise Institute. "I think they should not be permitted to take over negotiations," said the former U.S. ambassador to the United Nations.

For their part, peace activists seem resigned to the fact that the road map is headed nowhere for now.

"I think the people who are very familiar with this stuff seem to be saying, after the elections, the prospect for the road map being unfolded and implemented are not quite good," said Lewis Roth, assistant executive director of Americans for Peace Now.

And on the right, the Zionist Organization of America has taken out ads in Jewish newspapers, as well as the *Weekly Standard* magazine and *The New York Times*, rejecting the idea of a Palestinian state altogether.

The ads have been signed by numerous conservative leaders, including Kirkpatrick and two former presidential contenders, Pat Robertson, chairman of the Christian Broadcasting Network, and Gary Bauer, president of American Values.

"I'm highly dubious of a Palestinian state at the current time contributing in any way to peace in the region or Israel's national security," said Bauer, who ran for the Republican presidential nomination in 2000.

"The plan that the president outlined in his speech, if followed to the tea, would lessen some of the risk, but it's not being followed." □

## Slovak compensation plan in effect

PRAGUE (JTA) — Jews around the world have been invited to apply for property losses sustained in Slovakia during the Nazi era.

Slovakia's Central Union of Jewish Religious Communities recently said Holocaust survivors or their relatives can submit preliminary applications for compensation.

The move follows an agreement reached by the Slovak government and Jewish representatives late last year in which the state agreed to provide more than \$20 million to Slovak Jewry to mitigate wartime property losses.

One-third of that figure has been earmarked for uncompensated Holocaust victims, with the rest going toward restoration of dilapidated cemeteries and synagogues, as well as for cultural and social programs.

The compensation plan, which the executive chairman of the Central Union, Fero Alexander, stressed is "only symbolic," is being handled by a newly established Council for the Compensation of Holocaust Victims, made up of four members of the Slovak Jewish community and three government representatives.

Those entitled to apply include people who "as a result of racial persecution" lost title to real estate in those regions that now make up Slovakia between Nov. 2, 1938, and May 8, 1945, and who have not received compensation for the loss from another source.

The term "racial persecution" applies to those individuals, for example, who were imprisoned in a concentration camp or ghetto or were forced to remain in hiding to escape imprisonment. □

## JEWISH WORLD

### UJC names new chairs

The umbrella group of North American federations announced a new chair of its Israel and Overseas Pillar. The United Jewish Communities announced Monday that Arlene Kaufman, a national activist from Palm Beach, Fla., will chair the division, which determines overseas needs. Kaufman is expected to select the chair of a new UJC advocacy committee for overseas funding, but she told JTA she has yet to determine the candidate or the timing of the appointment.

The UJC also appointed Marion Blumenthal chair of its Renaissance and Renewal Pillar. Blumenthal is an activist with UJC and the UJA-Federation of New York. In addition, Jerry Yanowitz was appointed chair of UJC Consulting. Yanowitz is a past president of the Jewish Federation of the East Bay in San Francisco.

### Racism discussed with Chirac

The executive director of the American Jewish Committee discussed combating European anti-Semitism during a meeting with French President Jacques Chirac.

Chirac told David Harris and other members of the AJCommittee delegation that the French government had taken serious steps to protect Jews and Jewish institutions from a recent wave of violence.

### Germany signs historic accord

Germany signed an accord giving the Central Council of Jews in Germany \$3 million in governmental support each year. The signing of the agreement by Chancellor Gerhard Schroeder and Paul Spiegel, the head of the Central Council, came on the 58th anniversary of the liberation of the Auschwitz death camp.

The contract establishes the first legal partnership between the Jewish community and the government since World War II. The accord mirrors similar agreements between the government and Germany's Catholic and Lutheran churches.

### Jewish-Muslim message to D.C.

The Euro-Asian Jewish Congress is bringing its message of Jewish-Muslim cooperation to political leaders in Washington.

A delegation of Jewish leaders from Central Asia plans to meet Wednesday with members of Congress and the State Department to educate U.S. officials about the peaceful coexistence and common goals that exist between Jews and Muslim in that part of the world, according to Mikhail Chlenov, the group's secretary-general.

The group, a branch of the World Jewish Congress, is organizing a conference in Kazakhstan in mid-February that will bring together Jewish and political leaders in the region, including the presidents of Kazakhstan and Afghanistan.

### BEHIND THE HEADLINES

## Israeli astronaut too busy in space to think about his place in history

By Irene Brown

CAPE CANAVERAL, Fla. (JTA) — Israel's first astronaut has been too busy to observe Shabbat, though he did make a Tu B'Shevat pitch for planting trees in the Jewish state.

Mostly though, Ilan Ramon, who was slated to return to terra firma on Friday after 16 days in orbit, has been a key member of the crew on the space shuttle Columbia, overseeing 80 experiments and working in split 12-hour shifts.

"I didn't even have a chance to think about the Sabbath," said Ramon, a nonobservant Jew who nonetheless ate kosher meals and carried a kiddush cup in an acknowledgment that he was flying in space on behalf of Jews around the world.

"I'm secular and I didn't get any special permission" to work on the Sabbath, he said during an in-flight interview. "I'm here with special teammates, crew mates, and I'm working every day."

A married father of four, Ramon, 48, is a former fighter pilot and weapons specialist who fought in the 1973 Yom Kippur War and in the 1982 Lebanon War.

In 1981, he took part in the Israeli air raid that destroyed Iraq's nuclear reactor at Osirak.

Between operating an Israeli atmospheric experiment, serving as a subject for a variety of medical tests and keeping research projects going in the shuttle's laboratory, Ramon said he hasn't even had a chance to think about what it means to be the first Israeli in orbit, though he was hoping to do so before the end of the flight.

"I sure thought about it before getting to space," he said early in the flight.

But the team has been "real busy — and I didn't have a chance to think about it up here."

Ramon did make time for a short radio call with Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon, who invited the entire shuttle crew to come visit Israel after the mission is completed.

"If all Israelis are as nice as Ilan and his family, then I know we can expect a very warm welcome," said Ramon's commander, Rick Husband.

During the half-hour televised talk, Ramon held a small Torah scroll that had been smuggled into the Bergen-Belsen concentration camp during World War II.

The scroll is owned by Yehoyachin Yosef, a Holocaust survivor and Israeli scientist who spearheaded the primary Israeli science experiment conducted aboard the space shuttle.

Yosef was given the scroll by the chief rabbi of Holland at the time, who also was at Bergen-Belsen.

Yosef used the scroll to prepare for his Bar Mitzvah at the concentration camp, best known as the place where Anne Frank died.

"This represents, more than anything, the ability of the Jewish people to survive, despite everything from horrible periods, black days, to reach periods of hope and belief in the future," said Ramon, the son of a Holocaust survivor.

In addition to the Torah scroll, Ramon carried a picture drawn by a child who died during the Holocaust and a dollar bill from the Lubavitcher Rebbe, Rabbi Menachem Mendel Schneerson, given to Ramon by a Florida rabbi from Chabad-Lubavitch.

In Jewish tradition, this is known as being a shaliach mitzvah.

If one receives money to deposit to charity upon arrival, one becomes an emissary, or shaliach, for a good deed, or mitzvah, and is assured protection and success on the mission.

"Even when far from home, one should always think how I can help another person," said Rabbi Zvi Konikov of Satellite Beach, Fla., located near the NASA launch site at Cape Canaveral.

Ramon has been able to spot fleeting glimpses of Israel from orbit.

He said he was struck, however, by how thin and fragile the planet's atmosphere looks from orbit.

"It's in need of protection," he said. □

## Jews warn of anti-Semitism as Europe remembers Holocaust

By Ruth E. Gruber

ROME (JTA) — Europeans commemorated the Holocaust on Monday, the 58th anniversary of the liberation of Auschwitz, amid widespread Jewish concern about rising anti-Israel bias and resurgent anti-Semitism across the continent.

Official Holocaust memorial days in Germany, Italy, Britain, Sweden, Denmark and Estonia featured hundreds of vigils, performances, exhibitions and other public events honoring the 6 million Jews — and others — who were murdered during the Holocaust.

Holocaust survivors recounted their experiences on the airwaves, in print and in public meetings, and special educational programs were held for schoolchildren.

The aim of the programs was to make knowledge and memory of the Holocaust the key to confronting broader issues of hatred, discrimination and genocide today.

In Britain, for example, where the theme of events was "Children and the Holocaust," Home Secretary David Blunkett called Holocaust Memorial Day "a very important day for the whole nation," one that "enables us — both as individuals and as a society — to reflect on the Holocaust and its contemporary relevance for us."

The theme of children stresses the importance of educating young people about the Holocaust and other atrocities, to "remind us of what can happen if we do not continue to be vigilant in preventing the spread of racism and intolerance," Blunkett said.

Jews have slammed European governments during the past two years for a lack of vigilance concerning anti-Semitic bias.

They have sharply criticized authorities for not cracking down enough on anti-Semitic attacks carried out both by right-wing extremists and by Arabs protesting Israeli military retaliation for Palestinian terrorism. European Jews have decried a pro-Palestinian bias in the media, and efforts in some countries to boycott Israeli products and cut cultural and intellectual ties with the Jewish state.

In Paris on Saturday, Roger Cukierman, head of the CRIF umbrella group of secular Jewish organizations in France, caused a furor by charging that leftist criticism of Israeli policy had crossed the line into a "politically correct" form of anti-Semitism.

In this, he implied, leftists were linked in a pernicious alliance of Jew-hatred with neo-Nazis and militant environmentalists.

"France is neither racist nor anti-Semitic. But some of our fellow countrymen on the far right and far left are," Cukierman said at the annual CRIF dinner.

In Italy, Jewish commentator Giorgio Israel warned that commemorations that did not go beyond memorializing the past could lose their meaning. Holocaust memorial days, he wrote, "are crowded with hundreds of events and initiatives that all too often drip with empty and senseless rhetoric; on the other hand, total silence surrounds the spread of manifestations, even physical manifestations, of anti-Semitism."

Holocaust Memorial Day had a particularly high profile in Italy. Emphasis was placed on educational programs. Events took place throughout the country.

More than 20,000 people took part in a commemorative march in Milan, and Italy's president awarded the national Order of Merit to seven people who either survived the Holocaust or helped save

Jews. Radio and television broadcast hours of special programs, and newspapers and magazines published special sections.

Bice Milliau, director of the Rome Jewish Cultural Center, told JTA that there were more than 40 events in Rome alone, ranging from a special conference for several thousand high school students to a concert by Israeli musicians at a train station from which Roman Jews were deported to Auschwitz.

"From the educational point of view, it is extremely important," she said. "More than 100 schools are taking part in events, and some schools had to be turned away, as there wasn't enough room to include their students."

In Germany, which has marked an official Day of Remembrance for Victims of Nazism on Jan. 27 since 1996, the centerpiece of this year's events was a political move opening a new chapter between German Jews and the state.

Chancellor Gerhard Schroeder and Paul Spiegel, head of the Central Council of Jews in Germany, signed a landmark agreement giving Germany's main Jewish organization the same legal status as the country's main Catholic and Lutheran churches.

"Remembering the Holocaust is thus bound up with a declaration in favor of a good and secure future for Jews in Germany," Schroeder said at the signing ceremony.

Thanks to the influx of tens of thousands of immigrants from the former Soviet Union, Germany today has about 100,000 Jews — and the only visibly growing Jewish community in Europe.

The accord triples the Central Council's annual funding from the government to \$3.2 million, and establishes the first legal partnership between the Jewish community and the German government since World War II.

Officially mandated, national Holocaust memorial day commemorations are a relatively recent phenomenon in Europe. They are separate from the Yom Hashoah Holocaust memorial day celebrated by Israel and the Jewish people.

Great Britain, Italy and Sweden marked their first official Holocaust memorial days on Jan. 27 in 2001, and Estonia decided to adopt the date last year. Denmark, too, marked its first official Auschwitz Day this year.

Several other countries have chosen different dates as national remembrance days, reflecting local Holocaust events.

The new commemorations are part of a process through which the Holocaust has become recognized as part of the human experience, and not solely as a Jewish trauma. In 2000, leaders from nearly four dozen European countries held an international forum on the Holocaust in Stockholm, where they acknowledged the Holocaust as part of their countries' national histories.

Convened by the Swedish government, the conference also set out to support Holocaust education and research to better equip governments to combat racism, anti-Semitism and intolerance. □

## Report: Nazi living in London

LONDON (JTA) — A former Nazi SS soldier who allegedly participated in the liquidation of the Warsaw Ghetto in 1943 reportedly is living in London.

Ukrainian-born Swiatomyr Mychailo Fostun, 78, admits to having served in the 14th SS Division Galicia but denies participating in atrocities, according to Britain's Daily Telegraph newspaper.

Lord Greville Janner, who chairs Britain's Holocaust Educational Trust, says he will ask the British government this week to investigate Fostun's past. □