



# Daily News Bulletin

Vol. 81, No. 34

Thursday, February 20, 2002

86th Year

## TOP NEWS IN BRIEF

### 'Iran 5' released from jail

The last five Jews still held in an Iranian prison have been released, according to a U.S. Jewish leader. "We welcome" the news "and hope that it will now be permanent," Malcolm Hoenlein, executive vice chairman of the Conference of Presidents of Major American Jewish Organizations, told JTA on Wednesday.

Earlier this year, the five were released on what Iranian officials referred to as a "vacation," but they were put back in jail this past weekend before getting their freedom. [Page 3]

### Israeli master spy dies

Issar Harel, one of the founders of Israel's intelligence community, died Tuesday at the age of 91.

Harel is considered responsible for establishing the worldwide reputations of the Mossad and the Shin Bet domestic security service. [Page 3]

### Arabs equate Iraq, Israel

Several Arab leaders diverted a U.N. debate on Iraq to criticize Israel.

In a U.N. Security Council debate Tuesday, several Arab countries complained of a double standard in cracking down on Iraq when Israel has also rejected U.N. resolutions and refused to join the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty.

"The council is turning the other eye regarding the resolutions against Israel," said Ahmed Own, Libya's U.N. ambassador.

The Arab claims are "ludicrous," said an Israeli official. "It is clear to the international community that there is no room for comparison between the two cases."

### Shuttle experiments salvaged

More than 80 percent of the results of Israeli experiments conducted aboard the Columbia space shuttle were relayed to Earth prior to the shuttle disaster.

A report published this week by the Israel Space Agency and scientists from Tel Aviv University and the Open University said a large portion of the data was relayed to Earth in real time, the Israeli daily Ha'aretz reported. According to the report, the data yielded a number of important scientific findings, including photographs of lightning formed at high altitudes and dust movement in the Middle East, the report said.

## Reform rabbis launch campaign to restore cut outreach positions

By Joe Berkofsky

NEW YORK (JTA) — Reform rabbis and activists are waging a last-ditch campaign to save the jobs of specialists who conduct outreach to interfaith families.

These rabbis and activists say they are raising money from rabbis, congregations and Jewish charitable foundations to ensure that the Union of American Hebrew Congregations, the congregational arm of the Reform movement, does not eliminate the outreach professionals.

"This is not a political statement, but an effort to see that these positions are not lost," said Rabbi Howard Jaffe of Temple Isaiah in Lexington, Mass.

Dropping these professionals would damage outreach to the intermarried, which is one of the movement's signature programs, activists in the campaign say.

However, it remains unclear how the UAHC would respond if the campaign finds the money to restore the positions of the outreach staffers, who counsel interfaith couples and create programs for temples.

"We won't respond until they have a specific proposal and the cash in hand," said UAHC spokeswoman Emily Grotta.

The grass-roots fund-raising effort began after the movement's congregational union announced in December that it was cutting 13 regional outreach coordinators to help close a \$2 million shortfall in its \$20.2 million fiscal 2003 budget.

By eliminating each regional director of outreach and synagogue community, the movement would save slightly more than \$300,000 annually, Grotta said.

The outreach cutbacks, due to take effect March 31, sparked immediate protest.

The West Coast's Pacific Association of Reform Rabbis voiced "deep concern" about the cutbacks.

Others questioned whether the Reform movement was weakening its commitment to support interfaith couples and its attempts to encourage them to raise their children as Jews.

Several rabbis, synagogue members and activists then launched an effort on their own to find the money to keep the outreach professionals on board.

In the Northeast, for example, Jaffe said a dozen rabbis told him they would ask their synagogue boards to pledge money for the outreach work.

Others said they would dig into their discretionary funds, or get congregational members to make pledges, he said.

Jaffe aims to raise up to \$90,000 to pay three years' worth of salary for an outreach coordinator in his region.

He said he has received half of that in pledges already.

"We want to demonstrate the value of outreach as perceived by congregations and the leaders of a large number of congregations," he said.

Jaffe and others said that the coordinators are doing work that is having a real impact.

Two weeks ago, he said, 200 people attended a role-playing seminar at his temple on interfaith dating that had been organized by a regional coordinator "with the insight" into such issues.

In Orange County, Calif., Rabbi Stephen Einstein of Congregation B'nai Tzedek in Fountain Valley, who is leading the effort to save the coordinators' positions in the movement's Pacific Southwest region, is also reporting fund-raising success.

Einstein, who co-chairs the movement's National Committee on Outreach and Synagogue Community, is taking a slightly different tack, going directly to his pulpit

## MIDEAST FOCUS

### 11 killed in Gaza incursion

At least 11 Palestinian gunmen were killed during an Israeli military incursion in Gaza City on Tuesday night.

Some 40 tanks backed up by military helicopters entered a neighborhood considered a hotbed of Hamas activity and destroyed four weapons factories and 32 machines used for making weapons.

During the six-hour operation, the troops came under heavy fire, but there were no Israeli casualties.

### White House may focus on map

The White House suggested it may intensify diplomacy on the "road map" for Israeli-Palestinian peace.

White House spokesman Ari Fleischer also said Wednesday that President Bush continues to discuss the road map with international leaders during conversations largely focused on Iraq.

### Rivlin becomes Knesset speaker

Israel's Knesset on Wednesday approved the appointment of Likud legislator Reuven Rivlin as Knesset speaker. No other party fielded a candidate for the position.

Support for Rivlin was near unanimous, with only seven Arab legislators abstaining.

In anticipation of the appointment, Rivlin submitted his resignation as communications minister earlier this week.

### JNF effort honors astronaut

The Jewish National Fund presented several thousand tree certificates to Ilan Ramon's wife, Rona.

The JNF executive committee met Tuesday with the late astronaut's wife and presented her with the certificates. Ilan Ramon, Israel's first astronaut, was killed in the explosion of the U.S. space shuttle Columbia earlier this month.



## Daily News Bulletin

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JTA DAILY NEWS BULLETIN is published five days a week, except holidays, by the Jewish Telegraphic Agency Inc., 330 Seventh Ave., New York, N.Y. 10001-5010. For information about how to subscribe by e-mail, fax or regular mail, call (212) 643-1890, or visit our Web site at [www.jta.org](http://www.jta.org).  
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colleagues for financial support. He aims to raise \$50,000 to pay two years' worth of outreach, and has taken in pledges for half that so far, he said.

Both Einstein and Jaffe said they believed they had the go-ahead from the New York headquarters to embark on such fund raising.

"It is our expectation that if the money is raised, the positions will be restored," Jaffe said, adding he had gotten indications from the movement's leadership to that effect.

But Grotta said the movement's New York headquarters preferred that its members not reach into their pockets to save the outreach staffers.

"We have a contract with the congregations, a dues-paying system, and we can't go to them every time we need more money," she said.

Instead, the movement's leadership is encouraging its members to apply for grants from independent charitable organizations, she said. UAHC officials would be "happy" to see such support.

That is what seems to be happening in the San Francisco Bay Area, which is part of the Reform movement's Pacific Central West region.

Paul Cohen, past president of San Francisco's Congregation Sha'ar Zahav, said he and other outreach activists decided at a UAHC regional biennial in Santa Clara, Calif., two weeks ago to seek grants for outreach from as-yet specified local philanthropies.

Such a grant would hopefully fund more than a short-term, part-time staffer, Cohen said.

It would win "significantly more" money for a "larger, more distinctive program."

But not everyone believes grants are the way to go.

Ed Case, the publisher of [Interfaithfamily.com](http://Interfaithfamily.com), which has led protests against the cutbacks, said he believes it is "not realistic" that activists could apply for and win grants for the positions in such a short time.

"If the UAHC leadership could postpone this decision for several months, then maybe there would be time to get these grants," he said.

Like other outreach proponents, Case said the loss of the coordinators would mark a major setback in the movement's efforts to reach out to non-Jewish partners of Jews and convince them to raise Jewish families.

"I have heard from many people that these coordinators have brought thousands of people into Jewish life," Case said.

Case, who is a past president of Temple Shalom of Newton, Mass., said synagogue members have already pledged \$6,000 to save the outreach staffer in his region.

He believes the movement should raise the money from rabbis and congregations to stave off the layoffs, and examine longer-term strategies afterwards.

Meanwhile, Dawn Kepler, who leads outreach to interfaith families at the Jewish Federation of the East Bay of San Francisco, said she, like other outreach activists, was worried the layoffs reflected a retreat from the movement's longtime commitments.

Many wondered, she said, "was this the result of budgetary concerns, or policy change?" she said.

But Grotta, the UAHC's spokeswoman, said the cuts did not just pertain to outreach efforts, but affected the entire budget.

Other measures to close the \$2 million deficit included subletting a quarter of the UAHC's Third Avenue headquarters, a gain of \$500,000; disbanding its Department of Adult Jewish Growth, to be absorbed into other sections, saving \$270,000; restructuring the Department of Synagogue Management, saving \$120,000; increasing employee health-care contributions, saving \$100,000; and the elimination or reduction of 34 staff positions that included the outreach coordinators.

She added that some funds would be left for each of the movement's 14 regional offices to help synagogues conduct outreach work, but she could not say exactly how much.

The savings will help the movement recoup a drop in revenue, due to such factors as lower-than-expected congregation dues payments, which account for 80 percent of the UAHC's income; fewer donations; a dip in summer camp enrollment; and a decline in the group's endowment income.

The cutbacks "hit everyone," she said.

"When you're cutting that much from a budget, you're cutting into some areas you wish you didn't have to cut." □

## JEWISH WORLD

### Letter warned about Holocaust

Pope Pius XI was warned just weeks after Hitler took power in Germany of a "war of extermination" against the Jews.

The warning was contained in an impassioned letter written in April 1933 by a Jewish convert to Catholicism who years later was declared a saint.

Edith Stein, who became a nun and was murdered in Auschwitz in 1942, implored the pope to speak out against the Nazi regime's anti-Semitic persecution.

The letter, which was published Wednesday in the Milan daily *Corriere della Sera*, was one of the first major discoveries among prewar documents that the Vatican made available to scholars on Saturday.

From other writings by Stein, scholars had long known that such a letter existed. But no one had ever seen the text.

### Poll: Israel approval grows in U.S.

Americans' perceptions of Israel have grown more favorable during the past year, a new poll finds. According to the Gallup poll, 64 percent of Americans view Israel favorably, and 58 percent say their sympathies lie more with Israel than the Palestinians.

The level of sympathy is the highest since 1991, during the Persian Gulf War.

The Gallup poll also found that 80 percent of Republicans give Israel a favorable rating, with 59 percent of Democrats responding favorably.

The poll of 1,001 adults has a 3 percent margin of error.

### Czech shul sold off

A century-old Czech synagogue is to be converted into a second-hand furniture store after being sold by the local Jewish community.

The Czech Federation of Jewish Communities made the decision to sell the shul in Roudnice nad Labem for \$33,000 after failing to find anyone to rent it. The synagogue, which had fallen into disrepair during the Communist era, was badly damaged during the severe flooding that swept the Czech Republic last year.

The federation's real estate arm, Matana, said selling the shul was "the best option," given the enormous reconstruction costs required.

The synagogue, which was built at the turn of the 20th century, served a 130-strong Jewish congregation until World War II.

Only four Jews returned after the war. In 1953, the Communist regime wrested the property from its Jewish owners and turned it into a school for trade apprentices.

It was later returned to the Jewish Federation under restitution laws.

## Five Iranian Jews are freed in move hoped to be permanent

By JTA Staff

JERUSALEM (JTA) — The last five Jews still held in an Iranian prison have been released, according to a U.S. Jewish leader.

"We welcome" the news "and hope that it will now be permanent," Malcolm Hoenlein, executive vice chairman of the Conference of Presidents of Major American Jewish Organizations, told JTA on Wednesday.

Hoenlein received word of the release while he was in Jerusalem attending the Conference of Presidents' annual mission to Israel.

Earlier this year, the five were released on what Iranian officials referred to as a "vacation," but they were put back in jail this past weekend before getting their freedom.

The shifting fortunes of the five reflects the precarious situation faced by the entire Jewish community in Iran. They now number between 22,000 and 25,000, down from 100,000 or so before the 1979 Islamic Revolution.

The five were among 13 Jews who were arrested in January and March 1999 on charges of spying for Israel. Three were subsequently found innocent of the espionage charges and released. The other 10 were sentenced in July 2000 to jail terms of four to 13 years.

The men appealed, and Tehran reduced the sentences from two to nine years in September 2000.

But their advocates — as well as media, diplomats and human rights experts from around the world — pronounced the closed trial a fraud.

Israel denies that the men were its spies.

Five of the 10 who were sentenced were previously released after serving some or all of their time.

Advocates for the men say that what really bothered Iranian authorities was the men's increasingly fervent brand of Orthodox Judaism. □

## Issar Harel, Israeli spymaster behind Eichmann capture, dies at 91

By Naomi Segal

JERUSALEM (JTA) — Issar Harel, the Israeli master spy responsible for the capture of Nazi war criminal Adolf Eichmann, died this week at 91.

Harel, one of the founders of Israel's intelligence community, led the Shin Bet domestic security service for 15 years and the Mossad foreign intelligence agency for 11 years.

Between 1952 and 1963, he simultaneously headed both agencies, and was considered responsible for establishing their worldwide reputations.

Among the most significant achievements during this period was the 1961 kidnapping of Eichmann in Buenos Aires, an operation Harel later recounted in his book, "The House on Garibaldi Street."

Harel once recalled in a television interview how he informed then-Prime Minister David Ben-Gurion of the successful outcome of the operation: "I brought you a present — Eichmann is here."

Fiercely devoted to his work, Harel was recalled as someone who wielded unprecedented influence and power during the period he headed Israel's security agencies.

During the 1950s, he also combated efforts by Soviet bloc countries to recruit agents in Israel. As a result of his efforts, several such agents were identified.

He established an office to bring Jews to Israel from countries where such immigration was illegal. The office oversaw the mass immigration of Moroccan Jews during the 1950s, the Israeli daily *Ha'aretz* reported.

Harel was born in 1912 in Russia and immigrated to Palestine in 1931. □

## New mayor heightens fears among Jerusalem's secular Jews

By Matthew Gutman

TEL AVIV (JTA) — The appointment of an acting mayor in Jerusalem has provided a new source of religious-secular tensions in the sharply divided city.

On Sunday, after Jerusalem Mayor Ehud Olmert announced his resignation so he could take a seat in the Knesset, he was succeeded by Deputy Mayor Uri Lupoliansky of the fervently Orthodox Agudat Yisrael Party.

Lupoliansky, the first fervently Orthodox Jew to lead Israel's capital, is likely to remain mayor until municipal elections are held in October.

Lupoliansky's appointment reflects the ascendancy of the Orthodox parties in Jerusalem's City Council — of eight deputy mayors, six are fervently Orthodox. The increasing power of the Orthodox has caused anxiety among secular Jews and officials of the liberal Jewish streams.

Nevertheless, in his inaugural speech as acting mayor, the 50-year-old Lupoliansky said people should not be "judged on the basis of their lifestyle and dress, but on the basis of their acts."

"I extend my hand to all," he told the City Council, which includes a Conservative rabbi, an Israeli Arab and a leader of the gay community.

"I will be everyone's mayor and act to reduce the feelings of discrimination and neglect" among the Arab residents of eastern Jerusalem, he said.

Anat Hoffman, the director of the Israel Religious Action Center and formerly a Meretz legislator in the City Council, said she believes his "major test will be his attitude toward Progressive Judaism."

Lupoliansky has been asked to meet soon with Rabbi David Ellenson, the president of the Reform movement's Hebrew Union College — Jewish Institute of Religion.

"He'll have to bite the bullet," Hoffman said, "If he accepts the meeting, then we know this is a man we can deal with, if not, there will be international repercussions."

Dudi Zilberschlag, an adviser to Prime Minister Ariel Sharon on Orthodox affairs, expressed the stance of the fervently Orthodox Council of Torah Sages when it comes to meeting with officials from the liberal Jewish streams.

"If the council of rabbis allows it, the meeting will happen. But we are not about to compromise on any element of Judaism.

"In fact, the sages prefer to deal with Hamas or the evangelists than Reform. We pay and are willing to pay a very high price to keep Orthodoxy."

Meanwhile, Roni Alon, a city councilwoman for the secular Jerusalem Now Party, has already reached her verdict about the new mayor.

"Lupoliansky is the worst thing that could happen to Jerusalem," she said.

A fervently Orthodox mayor would ban soccer games on the Sabbath, halt funding to museums that operate on the Sabbath and not issue licenses to the few restaurants and cafes open in Jerusalem on Friday nights and Saturdays, she said in an interview with Ha'aretz.

In order to allay the fears of secular parties like Jerusalem Now — and indeed of the majority of Jerusalemites who are not

fervently Orthodox — Lupoliansky pledged as one of his first steps as acting mayor to maintain the status quo on matters of religion and state in the city.

A devotee of Rabbi Yosef Shalom Eliashev, head of the Council of Torah Sages, Lupoliansky said he intends to tackle poverty in what is Israel's poorest city, a condition that has become increasingly severe in recent years.

He also plans to provide equal educational opportunities for all segments of the city's diverse population, he said in his inaugural news conference Sunday.

However, he said, he has yet to formulate detailed plans for running the city.

"There is nothing easier than outlining a series of populist plans that will win applause," he said. "All my acquaintances know that is not my work style."

Rabbi Avraham Ravitz, a lawmaker from the fervently Orthodox United Torah Judaism bloc and Lupoliansky's former teacher, called Jerusalem's new mayor "such a sweet man" and said he doubts Lupoliansky would change the city's status quo.

"We're not going to see the closing of coffee houses on Shabbat," Ravitz said.

The fervently Orthodox "are not supposed to force our minds on other people."

Yet he did hint that Jerusalem residents might see a certain "Judaification" of the city.

"Jerusalem must be a Jewish city. It is not Naples or even Tel Aviv," he said.

Lupoliansky's political career was born when the council of rabbis devoted to Eliashev appointed him head of the Degel HaTorah faction in Jerusalem in 1989.

He was appointed a deputy mayor in Teddy Kollek's city government and quickly assumed responsibility for community and family services.

When Olmert won Jerusalem's 1993 municipal elections, Lupoliansky was again elected deputy mayor.

By 1998, he was designated Olmert's substitute when the mayor was ill or traveling.

As the ranking deputy mayor, he was responsible for municipal planning and construction.

While a controversial figure within the City Council, Lupoliansky is renowned in Israel for founding, along with his father, the Yad Sarah charity, which distributes free medical equipment to the sick and disabled.

Started in 1976, the organization now has 6,000 volunteers and almost 100 branches nationwide. □

## Ex-Israeli officials in Cape Town

CAPE TOWN (JTA) — The South African government held discussions with nine former high-ranking Israeli defense, security and intelligence officials near here.

The four days of unofficial talks, which ended Tuesday, were a follow-up to similar talks held last January at which senior officials representing the Palestinian Authority were also in attendance.

There were no Palestinians present this time, but a Palestinian delegation is expected to be present at the next round of talks.

South Africa's deputy foreign affairs minister, Aziz Pahad, said the meeting was aimed at helping the two sides reach a diplomatic breakthrough. □