



# Daily News Bulletin

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86th Year

## TOP NEWS IN BRIEF

### Study: Intermarriage still rising

Homes of intermarried American Jews soon will outnumber purely Jewish households if high intermarriage rates keep pace, a new report suggests.

A study out this week by the New York-based Jewish Outreach Institute says that intermarriages have climbed above 33 percent since the mid-1960s, meaning that the ratio of intermarried households to Jewish households is rising.

With intermarriage estimates since 1990 ranging between 40 percent and 52 percent, the report says, the ratio of intermarried homes to in-married homes runs between 4:3 and 2:1. The institute, which promotes outreach to unaffiliated and intermarried Jews, says there is hope for Jewish survival because an estimated 30 percent of interfaith families raise their children as Jews, an amount that the institute believes could be increased to 50 percent.

### Report: Blair presses Arafat

British Prime Minister Tony Blair is pressing Yasser Arafat to install Mahmoud Abbas as the Palestinian Authority prime minister. Blair reportedly made his comments in a phone call Tuesday to Arafat, the P.A. president.

Arafat reportedly is upset about Abbas' intention to disarm terrorist groups, the Israeli daily Ha'aretz reported.

### France to fight anti-Semitism

French Education Minister Luc Ferry said he would tighten the law against religious practice in schools in order to combat the growth of anti-Semitism in the classroom.

"We are faced with the rise of a new type of anti-Semitism which does not come from the extreme right but from Islamization and the radicalization of the Muslim community," Ferry told Europe One Radio on Tuesday. "I believe that faced by this rise in racism and anti-Semitism, we must very strongly reaffirm Republican and secular principles. That is what the new law will do."

REMINDER: The JTA DAILY NEWS BULLETIN will not be published Thursday, April 24 and Friday, April 25.

## NEWS ANALYSIS

### After Saddam's fall, Israel ponders how to deal with threat from Iran

By Leslie Susser

JERUSALEM (JTA) — On the face of it, the American military victory in Iraq has significantly enhanced Israel's national security, removing a threat from weapons of mass destruction and potentially opening new chances for peace between Israel and the Palestinians.

But there is a downside: Israeli leaders are concerned that Iran could emerge strengthened from Iraq's defeat and continue to promote terror while developing nuclear weapons that could pose a threat to Israel's very existence.

One worry is that the defeat of Iraq could lead to a fundamentalist backlash in the region spearheaded by Iran, using its close ties with Syria and the Lebanon-based Hezbollah to wage a campaign of terror.

Another is that Shi'ite Iran could build close ties with a new Shi'ite-dominated Iraq, projecting fundamentalist influence across the region.

But most alarming is that, according to some Western experts, Iran is barely two years away from producing a nuclear bomb.

Israeli officials maintain that the two prongs of the Iranian threat — nuclear weapons and terrorism — are related.

Ra'anana Gissin, a senior aide to Prime Minister Ariel Sharon, declares that Iran uses terror to "create deterrence as it builds a nuclear weapons capability that has not yet become operational."

In other words, the threat of Iranian-inspired terror is intended to make the United States or other would-be aggressors think twice before taking military action to stop Iran's nuclear program.

Over the past few months, Sharon has been urging visiting U.S. legislators and administration officials to take action to stop Iran from going nuclear.

The message seemed to be getting through: After mid-March meetings in Jerusalem, U.S. Undersecretary of State John Bolton announced at an Israeli-American strategic forum in Washington that "the U.S. will focus on stopping Iran getting nuclear weapons."

But it could be too late.

Over the past few years, undetected by the world's most vaunted intelligence agencies or the U.N.'s International Atomic Energy Agency, Iran developed two sites capable of producing the fissile materials from which nuclear bombs are made.

One, near the desert town of Natanz, 200 miles south of Tehran, will be able to produce weapons-grade uranium. The other, farther west at Arak, will be able to make plutonium from heavy water.

Tips about the two sites came last August from an Iranian dissident group, the National Council of Resistance. Until then, the Iranians had claimed that the Natanz site was for "desert irrigation."

Satellite pictures, released in December by the American Institute for Science and International Security, proved otherwise.

When Mohammed Baradei, an Egyptian who heads the International Atomic Energy Agency, visited the Natanz site in late February, he counted 160 brand-new centrifuges capable of producing weapons-grade uranium, as well as parts for assembling 1,000 more.

Baradei's Iranian hosts acknowledged that by 2005, they planned to have 5,000

## MIDEAST FOCUS

### Settlers urged to oppose plan

Israeli settlers in the West Bank should oppose the "road map" toward peace, a Knesset member said.

Speaking at a meeting of hawkish Israeli legislators and settlers Tuesday, Yuri Stern said settlers should begin pressuring Cabinet ministers and Knesset members to oppose the U.S.-backed plan.

Israelis who oppose the plan apparently have been alarmed by Prime Minister Ariel Sharon's mention of specific settlements that may have to be abandoned in a peace deal with the Palestinians.

### Palestinians take aim at Israelis

Palestinians fired anti-tank missiles and threw grenades at Israeli soldiers in the Gaza Strip. No injuries were reported in Tuesday's shooting near Rafah. In the West Bank, Israeli forces destroyed the homes of two suspected terrorists.

### Israeli Arabs skeptical of peace

Israeli Arabs do not expect the war in Iraq to improve the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, according to a new survey.

According to the study, conducted by the Arab Center for Applied Social Research, 65 percent of Israeli Arabs do not believe the United States will now increase pressure on Israel to reach a settlement with the Palestinians, the daily Ha'aretz reported. Sixty-eight percent of the 294 respondents did not think the war would help the Palestinians.

### Soldiers get bulletproof vests

A U.S. Jewish group recently donated 250 bulletproof vests to Israeli soldiers.

The donation is part of an ongoing campaign by a group known as Save Our Soldiers to equip every Israeli soldier with a bulletproof vest.

The group says there are 30,000 soldiers without vests.

centrifuges fully operational at the desert site. Experts say that would enable Iran to produce enough enriched uranium for at least two nuclear bombs a year, beginning in 2005.

Experts believe Iran had some help from Pakistan in developing the Natanz technology, but the centrifuges are unique in shape and clearly were engineered by the Iranians themselves.

Moreover, Iran has begun mining its own uranium ore in the Yazd area, 400 miles southeast of Tehran.

Taken together, these two facts mean that Iran has passed the point of no return: Its nuclear program can no longer be stopped by getting third parties to withhold materials or technologies.

The same is true of Iran's missile technology.

"The Iranians cannot be stopped anymore. They have their indigenous capability now, and they will continue their programs regardless of what the international community thinks," said Uzi Rubin, former head of Israel's Arrow anti-missile defense program.

One of the Iranian-developed missiles, the Shahab-3, has an estimated range of nearly 800 miles, able to reach targets in Israel from western Iran.

What makes the Iranian threat most chilling is that Iran's fundamentalist leaders remain formally committed to Israel's destruction.

For example, Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani, a former Iranian president who retains an influential post, in December 2001 called publicly for the Muslim world to develop nuclear weapons in order to annihilate Israel.

Iran also has shown a marked capacity to act against Israeli interests.

According to Israeli intelligence, Iran was behind the 1992 and 1994 terrorist attacks on the Israeli Embassy and a Jewish cultural center in Buenos Aires; Iran regularly supplies Hezbollah with weapons, including long-range rockets, through Damascus, Syria; and in 2002, Iran tried to sell arms to the Palestinian Authority for use against Israel.

Indeed, Israeli experts say, it was the January 2002 interception by Israel of the Karine A, a vessel loaded with Iranian arms for the Palestinians, that led President Bush to include Iran in the "axis of evil" when he gave his State of the Union address later that month.

So what can be done to contain or assuage the Iranian threat? First, Israeli experts say, Israel must enhance its defensive and deterrent posture.

The Arrow, which could intercept incoming Shahab missiles, does both. Moreover, according to foreign sources, Israel has mounted special launchers on its submarines that are capable of firing nuclear warheads.

This would give it a "second strike" capability, hopefully deterring potential enemies from contemplating a first strike.

To weaken Iran's terrorist capacity and ability to spread its fundamentalist message, Israeli experts propose putting pressure on Syria rather than Iran. Syria, they maintain, is more susceptible to Western pressure and also has the power to disarm Hezbollah relatively quickly.

Once Hezbollah is disarmed and Damascus distances itself from Tehran, Iran's scope for terror and political influence will decline, the argument goes.

No one in the Israeli establishment believes that after the war in Iraq, the United States will be in any mood for a far more difficult military campaign against Iran, which is stronger than Iraq both militarily and economically.

Moreover, many are convinced that it is too late to stop Iran from going nuclear; therefore, they argue, the best way to neutralize a nuclear Iran is to promote regime change from within.

David Menashri of Tel Aviv University's Dayan Center proposes a dialogue with young reformist forces in Iran, while hanging tough with the conservative clerics who run the country today.

That way, in case of regime change, at least the weapons would be in more enlightened hands.

Moreover, Menashri adds, if the reformists come to power, the once-flourishing ties between Israel and Iran might even be renewed. □

(Leslie Susser is the diplomatic correspondent for the Jerusalem Report.)



## Daily News Bulletin

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## JEWISH WORLD

### Holocaust lawsuit dismissed

A U.S. judge dismissed a lawsuit brought against Austria by Holocaust survivors.

But the attorney for the survivors said he would appeal last week's ruling in the case, which seeks to recover \$10 billion in assets stolen and auctioned off during World War II.

Judge Florence Marie Cooper ruled that the lawsuit could not proceed because it breached an agreement on Austrian reparations reached by the U.S. and Austrian governments a few years ago.

### Students to mark Holocaust day

Jewish students at Brooklyn College are joining with a black group and a gay and lesbian group to mark Holocaust Memorial Day.

The efforts, which include turning the school's Hillel into a Holocaust museum, are part of steps at 40 Hillels across North America to work with non-Jewish student groups to mark Yom Hashoah. The holiday will be marked this year on April 29.

### Russian skinheads remain active

Up to 50 skinhead and other extremist youth groups exist in Russia, according to Russia's Interior Ministry.

The Interfax news agency said last Friday that Russian police have stepped up undercover work among skinhead groups to "track and localize leaders and activists of criminal youth movements, including skinheads," the Interior Ministry's press service said.

The ministry noted that there are up to 15,000 skinheads in Russia, with more than one-third of the groups operating in Moscow.

### Czech man arrested for swastikas

Czech police arrested a man who painted swastikas with his own blood in a hospital waiting room in the town of Pilsen.

Police said the man, 23, had arrived over the weekend in a drunken state and had painted Nazi symbols using blood from his injured hand. He has been charged with promoting a movement aimed at suppressing human rights and freedom. Police have yet to establish a motive for the crime.

### Japan's Shoah museum reopens

A Holocaust museum reopened in Japan. The Auschwitz museum, which has been closed since March 2002 after the land on which it was built was sold, is now in the town of Shirakawa.

It contains about 100 exhibits of photographs and personal effects from Auschwitz. The museum is the brainchild of Shinshin Aoki, a Japanese man who decided to build the museum after visiting Auschwitz in Poland.

## Arab groups step up pressure on Pipes' nomination to peace panel

By Matthew E. Berger

WASHINGTON (JTA)—Mideast scholar Daniel Pipes will be making the rounds of the U.S. Senate in the next several weeks, drumming up support for his controversial nomination to the board of a government-funded think tank.

Pipes, an author and lecturer who has spoken out about the threat of Muslim fundamentalism, was nominated by the White House earlier this month to sit on the board of the U.S. Institute of Peace, a nonpartisan think tank that promotes peaceful resolutions to international conflicts.

Pipes' nomination has been criticized by Arab groups and others, including the editorial board of *The Washington Post*, which said Pipes' nomination was like "salt in the wound" caused by government treatment of Arabs since the Sept. 11 terror attacks.

Pipes has found friends in interesting places, however, such as from some moderate Muslims.

While Pipes is not speaking publicly about the controversy, sources familiar with the situation say he has contacted members of the Senate Health, Education, Labor and Pensions Committee about meeting with them on Capitol Hill next week, when they return from Easter recess.

Only one lawmaker, Sen. Charles Schumer (D-N.Y.), has come out in support of Pipes, but he is not on the HELP Committee.

The committee's ranking minority member, Sen. Edward Kennedy (D-Mass.), will speak next week at a banquet of the Arab American Institute, one of the strongest opponents of Pipes' nomination.

A spokesman for Kennedy said the committee just received the paperwork for Pipes' nomination over the weekend and is reviewing it.

Little is known about when Pipes' nomination will be voted on, though it would need to be approved by the HELP Committee and then the full Senate.

There has never been an actual hearing on the appointment of a USIP board member, and votes on nomination can happen at any time in the Senate's schedule.

There are rumors that lawmakers could place a hold on Pipes' nomination. If even one senator places an anonymous hold on the nomination, Pipes' appointment may never come up for a vote.

Jewish groups are rallying behind Pipes. The American Jewish Committee sent a letter to President Bush earlier this month, praising the appointment.

"You have selected an eminently qualified candidate with broad knowledge of the threats posed by extremist, anti-American interpretations of Islam — and with the wisdom not to confuse the militants who make up that movement with the vast body of decent, moderate adherents of a proud and vibrant faith," said the letter, signed by the organization's president, Harold Tanner, and its executive director, David Harris.

The American Israel Public Affairs Committee supports the nomination and is "making sure the appropriate people know about it," spokeswoman Rebecca Dinar said.

Arab groups claim Pipes has "bigoted" views against Islam and that his appointment would not be in keeping with the USIP's mission to promote peace.

"Throughout his career, Mr. Pipes has been a virulent critic of the Islamic faith and Muslims in general," wrote Jean AbiNader, AAI's managing director. "Indeed, his bigoted point of view does little but stir the already enflamed [sic] passions of people who are searching for a hero or a villain to either emulate or degrade. Mr. Pipes happily fills both roles."

Pipes has been a frequent target of the Arab community. A Web site, [www.danielpipes.com](http://www.danielpipes.com), was launched in 2000, forwarding visitors to a site run by the Council on American-Islamic Relations.

Pipes threatened to sue, and he won the rights to the domain name.

Last year, Pipes launched a site called Campus Watch, which tracked professors on college campuses who denigrated Israel and the United States and justified terrorism and radical Islam.

Critics, however, said the site smacked of academic McCarthyism. □

## AROUND THE JEWISH WORLD

**As war-ravaged Kosovo rebuilds, JDC finds itself playing major role***By Ted Siefer*

PRISHTINA, Kosovo (JTA) — The topic of today's lesson in "Literature and Psychology" is Nikolai Gogol's "Diary of a Madman."

"How can the madman in the story actually think he is reading letters written by dogs?" a student asks.

In a New York-inflected rasp, Professor Les Rabkin explains that it's part of the character's psychosis.

It's only as the chill air sneaks into class and the generators rumble to life, signaling another power cut, that the fantasy of being in an American college class dissipates.

We are at the University of Prishtina in Kosovo, and the professor is here as part of a project sponsored by the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee. The school is among many projects that the JDC has undertaken to restore the physical and human resources of Kosovo's educational system.

The JDC, an international Jewish relief organization, began work in Kosovo in June 1999, shortly after NATO bombs had cowed Yugoslav President Slobodan Milosevic into ending his "ethnic cleansing" campaign against the majority population of Albanians and withdrawing his army from Kosovo.

The JDC's first mission in Kosovo was to rescue the handful of Jews in Prishtina, but of course a colossal humanitarian imperative presented itself as well.

News of Milosevic's misdeeds in Kosovo — as many as 18,000 people were killed and 750,000 displaced, according to estimates — touched a raw nerve across the American Jewish community. "Never again" seemed to be the collective response as the JDC collected some \$5 million in a special mailbox campaign to aid the region.

Those specially earmarked funds allowed the group to undertake an array of humanitarian projects.

But now, with those funds running out and life in Kosovo steadily normalizing, JDC is scaling back its activities.

In the four years JDC has been here, the small staff — two sabras and a British-born Israeli — has played a critical role in reconstructing and equipping the territory's schools, providing computer and vocational education and supporting projects aimed at fostering coexistence among Kosovo's religious and ethnic communities.

Eli Eliezri, the JDC's main representative in Kosovo, came here by way of Bosnia in June 1999.

"We did an assessment and decided that the greatest priority for that time was getting the children back to school," Eliezri says.

Working directly with local builders, Eliezri rebuilt walls, repaired broken windows and replaced doors.

In a postwar environment rife with nongovernmental organizations flush with noble intentions but short on practical achievements, the JDC's efforts were so successful that UNICEF asked the group to take on the reconstruction of all of Prishtina's schools.

Eventually the JDC would repair and renovate 40 public schools across Kosovo.

The organization's symbol, a menorah, is a familiar image on dedication plaques in front of schools, as well as on the backpacks — donated along with other school supplies — toted by children in

Kosovo's towns and cities.

To close the educational gaps between Kosovo and the developed world, the JDC has supplied computer labs and set up free English and computer classes taught by local teachers.

The classes were organized in cooperation with ORT, the global vocational training program that shares an office with the JDC here.

These days, ORT is really just one man — Aryeh Kurakin, a large, affable fellow with silvery white hair and mustache. He worked as an engineer for the Israeli shipping firm Zim, and taught welding and related skills for more than 30 years.

In addition to computer and English classes, Kurakin established and taught welding classes eight hours a day.

With some of the territory's most desperate needs tended to, the JDC turned its efforts toward bridging some of Kosovo's ethnic and religious rifts. The group lent its support, along with the Catholic Church and Kosovo's Islamic community, to the restoration of a mosque that had been bombed during the war.

The Shiponje mosque was one of more than 200 deliberately targeted by Serb forces, a testament to the scale of Milosevic's ambitions in changing the cultural identity of Kosovo.

Religious figures from the three communities stood together with hands joined at the mosque dedication, an event attended by many luminaries, including Ambassador John Menzies, the former head of the U.S. diplomatic mission in Kosovo.

The ceremony took place on Sept. 7, 2001. Before news had reached the outside world of this novel effort to heal sectarian wounds, it was overshadowed by another event a few days later aimed at blowing them wide open.

For what will probably be the JDC's final large effort in Kosovo, the group has directed its attention to the country's most severe ethnic-religious divide, the one between the Serbs who have remained or returned to Kosovo — some 200,000 became refugees after the NATO campaign — and Albanians.

The JDC is supporting the Multiethnic Children and Youth Peace Center in Mitrovica, a town in northern Kosovo, divided by a river into Serbian and Albanian sections.

Operating under the philosophy that coexistence must be fostered while people are young, the center runs a day-care center for children of all ethnicities. The center publishes a youth magazine and produces a radio program, written by Serbians and Albanians under the tutelage of trained journalists.

The center's operations will expand dramatically when it moves into a massive community center close to one of the main bridges dividing the town. In helping this move, the JDC has played its most vital role, say observers.

Once the peace center's director, Miranda Buchman, enlisted Eliezri's support, the JDC representative rolled up his sleeves and managed to get a deal signed with municipal authorities for use of the space.

His group also is funding the renovation and equipping the center with computers.

One JDC project, the psychology department project at the University of Prishtina where Rabkin teaches, was the brainchild of American-born Israeli Moshe Lantsman, a psychology professor at Ben-Gurion University.

Lantsman had been volunteering in Kosovo after the war and came to the realization that there was an acute lack of trained counselors and psychologists, since the University of Prishtina, Kosovo's only university, had no psychology department. □