



Daily News Bulletin

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86th Year

TOP NEWS IN BRIEF

Hamas: Ball in Israel's court

Hamas would consider limiting attacks on Israelis just to the West Bank and Gaza Strip if Israel ceases its military campaign against the terrorist group.

Hamas leaders reportedly made the offer Thursday in a meeting in Gaza with Palestinian Authority Prime Minister Mahmoud Abbas.

Israel previously has rejected such suggestions, arguing that it does not distinguish between attacks on Israeli civilians in the territories or within Israel proper.

Abbas hopes to convince the group to temporarily suspend its attacks, but Israel fears a temporary cease-fire will only give Hamas time to regroup, and is demanding that Abbas dismantle the organization.

Bolten nominated to Cabinet

President Bush nominated a senior Jewish policy adviser to his Cabinet. Josh Bolten was nominated to serve as director of the Office of Management and Budget.

Bolten is a former Goldman Sachs executive.

UJC closes university department

Citing budget constraints, the umbrella group of North American Jewish federations will close its university programs division.

"We are reducing our budget in recognition of the financial demands on our member federations," United Jewish Communities CEO Stephen Hoffman said. "In examining our budget, we looked at our menu of services and made the decision to withdraw services where there were other options available to federations from within the Jewish community."

Through its annual National Student Leadership Conference and its Contemporary Jewish Affairs Institute to Ukraine and Israel, university programs instructed student leaders about getting involved in the federation system.

Among its activities, the department coordinated student programming at the UJC's annual General Assembly and directed fund-raising campaigns on campus.

REMINDER: The JTA DAILY NEWS BULLETIN will not be published Monday, May 26.

ISRAEL'S ARAB MINORITY

Israeli Jew and Arab hope cafe can transform a village — and relations

By Gil Sedan

FUREIDIS, Israel (JTA) — Three years ago, Guy Poran, 47, still believed that the gate to the "New Middle East" was right next door.

Poran, a resident of the town of Maccabim, halfway between Tel Aviv and Jerusalem, finally was ready to open a restaurant right on the "Green Line" between the West Bank and Israel proper, a joint venture with an Arab friend from the village of Beit Sira, just across the line in the West Bank.

Every Israeli dreams of wiping clean a plate of hummus with a hot pita bread in a picturesque restaurant in the middle of an olive orchard. To Poran, a successful high-tech entrepreneur who invested \$50,000 in the project, it seemed to be a business venture that couldn't go wrong — as well as a solid contribution to Israeli-Palestinian coexistence.

The opening ceremony was scheduled for Sept. 30, 2000, the weekend of Rosh Hashanah. No one could have predicted that would be the weekend the Palestinian intifada would break out.

Several thousand Israelis and Palestinians have been killed in the months since — as have most dreams of coexistence.

For two and a half years, Poran shared the frustration felt by so many Israelis and Palestinians. He was particularly disturbed by the deteriorating relations between Israeli Arabs and Jews.

Recently, however, he could finally smile — and raise a toast to a joint partnership with a young Arab — a project that could help heal many wounds.

In the village of Fureidis, just down the road from Zichron Ya'acov, Poran and Rami Mahamid opened the village's first Internet cafe. Dozens of kids and adults who can't afford to buy a computer finally had been introduced to the world of the Web.

"Recently, a lot of my energy went to encouraging Amram Mitzna to continue heading the Labor Party," Poran said. "Now that he has quit, I feel like an empty bottle. I realize that this is but a drop in the ocean, but you can't say, 'I will not add this drop just because it's a drop.'"

On the face of it, the business partners seem worlds apart. Poran is a typical Israeli high-tech wizard, the son of the late Brig. Gen. Ephraim Poran, who was military adjutant to Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin.

Guy Poran is the owner of Pixel Software Technologies, a developer of multiplayer games for interactive television and cellular networks, and he knew how to play his digital cards against the odds of a high-tech crisis.

Mahamid, 24, studied computer planning and computerized graphics, but had to settle for occasional jobs. The partners' ways would not have crossed had they not sought common ground.

They happened to meet last January at a seminar of the Peacemaker Circle, an American organization that aims to interlock circles of peace activists throughout the world.

The Israeli branch of the group is run by Iris Elhanani, 47, owner of a Tel Aviv marketing firm who, due to Israel's economic crisis, turned to marketing peace. She introduced Mahamid to Poran.

"Rami started talking about his interest in doing something practical that would contribute to the community," Poran recalled as he sat in the Fureidis Internet cafe, just

MIDEAST FOCUS

Israel captures weapons ship

Israel intercepted a weapons ship believed to be headed for the Palestinian Authority. Crew aboard the ship, including suspected Hezbollah agents, were arrested when the ship was intercepted Wednesday off the northern Israeli coast.

U.S. OKs radar sales

The United States will allow Israel to sell its Phalcon airborne radar system to India. U.S. pressure blocked the sale more than a year ago, when tensions between India and Pakistan peaked, but Deputy Secretary of State Richard Armitage announced on a recent trip to Israel that it would be permitted, sources told JTA. The deal is worth close to \$1 billion.

In the past, the United States forced Israel to cancel a similar sale to China, arguing that it could pose a threat to U.S. allies such as Taiwan. Israel fears the United States is trying to keep Israeli firms from competing for lucrative contracts.

Palestinian killed in Jenin

Palestinians said a 12-year-old boy was killed by Israeli fire during clashes Thursday near Jenin. Israeli troops operating in the West Bank overnight detained seven Palestinians for questioning.

A firebomb was thrown at an Israeli car in the West Bank on Wednesday night, hitting the car but causing no injuries, Israel Radio reported.

Palestinians detained in sweep

Israeli police arrested 1,300 Palestinians who were living in Israel illegally. Most of those arrested during the 24-hour sweep were returned to the West Bank and Gaza Strip, while 19 were transferred for a speedy trial by military court, Israel Radio reported.

Seven Israelis who transported the Palestinians to Israel, and two other Israelis who employed them, also were apprehended.



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hours before the festive opening. Mahamid came up with the idea of the cafe, a place in the middle of the village that would offer customers computer time, coffee and cake.

"This was exactly what I wanted," Poran said. "I had no interest in a business venture; I am busy enough with my business as it is."

Poran has been active for years with Peace Now and other dovish groups. He has joined demonstrations, attended rallies and contributed to all sorts of peaceful causes, but he was disappointed time after time by the lack of progress.

"I was interested in a practical venture that would create real change — not just another demonstration, but a real business project," Poran says.

Poran invested \$20,000, bought 10 computers and rented an empty store in the middle of the village. The project was ready to go.

"I have worked on the idea for a long time," Mahamid said. "I spoke to our municipality, to local businessmen, to the Histadrut Workers Union. No one would go along with me, no one was ready to reach out and help the community, until I met Guy."

The new cafe — called Klik — already is humming with the happy clicking of children. The cafe charges \$2 an hour, which is no small sum for the residents of Fureidis, but Mahamid and Poran are determined to make a little profit.

"I don't want this project to depend on donations," Poran said. "I want it to be profitable. All profits will go to the development of similar projects in Arab villages."

This is not the first Internet cafe in an Arab village; most Arab towns and bigger villages have at least one. Neither is it the first joint business venture between Jews and Arabs. However, it is one of the few projects designed to set wheels rolling for the development of the Arab communities in Israel.

"My village really has very little to offer its residents," Mahamid said. "Although we have quite a number of businessmen, all they have come up with were a number of coffee houses. They will invest millions in building a hotel in Haifa, but will not invest in their own community. It's not the money that counts in Guy's investment, it's the intention to change things."

Fureidis played an ugly role early in the intifada. When Israeli Arabs rioted that first weekend of the intifada, local hooligans burned an Egged bus.

Luckily there were no casualties — except for the delicate membrane of Jewish-Arab relations.

"For a long time, since the outbreak of the intifada, Jews stayed out of Arab villages," Poran said. "It was important for me to make the political statement that since both peoples live in this country side by side, they will not be able to do so without deepening their mutual business involvement. As far as I'm concerned, there is no difference between a business venture in Tel Aviv and Fureidis."

Some 4,500 of Fureidis' 10,000 residents are less than 25. Until the outbreak of the intifada, families made a living mostly by fishing and working in nearby Jewish towns and cities — Zichron Ya'acov, Haifa and Hadera.

Jews used to come on Saturdays for a bite or to shop in the local market. However, with Jews afraid to visit Arab areas — and Israel reeling from an economic slump — Fureidis suffered a heavy economic blow.

"I'm glad we started with the Internet," Poran said. "The Internet opens eyes. Local kids are now exposed to the same Web sites as my kids in Maccabim, or for that matter in any Jewish community. The Internet cafe of Fureidis is a real bridge. We need many such bridges." □

Egypt: Bush must be committed

JERUSALEM (JTA) — Egypt's ambassador to the United States says that President Bush's personal commitment to the "road map" toward Israeli-Palestinian peace is necessary for the plan to succeed.

Noting that the conflict has moved from the governmental level to the popular level, Nabil Fahmy said Thursday that Egypt would support the road map because it benefits the Egyptian people, and that a commitment from Israel also is necessary for progress.

Fahmy told the Israel Policy Forum that he believed the Middle East would modernize — not because of the recent U.S.-led war against Iraq, but because of growing pressure from Arab youth. □

JEWISH WORLD

Papon wants pension

War criminal Maurice Papon reportedly is demanding that the French government reinstate his pension rights. A former official for Vichy France, Papon was convicted of crimes against humanity for his role in deporting more than 1,500 Jews to Nazi death camps in 1942, but was released from prison in September for health reasons.

Papon's pension was canceled in 1999, but his lawyer says he is entitled to restoration of his pension rights as a former civil servant and legislator, the weekly *Le Canard Enchaîné* reported Wednesday.

The president of the French Council of State said that "the execution of" Papon's "sentence may have been suspended, but the sentence itself was not."

Canada OKs Jewish group

The Canadian fund-raising arm for Israel's Magen David Adom relief agency retained its charitable status. As part of a verbal agreement struck last year with Canadian officials, Canadian Magen David Adom for Israel was de-registered and then re-registered earlier this month to meet conditions that allow it to retain its charitable status in Canada.

The group has agreed to employ two agents in Israel who will monitor how its gifts are used there.

With the agreement, the Montreal-based organization abandoned its Supreme Court appeal of a decision that had revoked its charitable status because ambulances might travel beyond Israel's pre-1967 borders — including in sections of Jerusalem — in response to an emergency call.

Italian leftists for Israel

Leftist intellectuals in Italy formed a pro-Israel group.

The Left-Wing for Israel Association aims to fight anti-Israeli and anti-Semitic attitudes that have surfaced among some Italian leftist intellectuals.

The group also aims to publicize Israeli leftists' work to foster "a reciprocal and peaceful recognition of the rights of the two peoples, Israeli and Palestinian."

About 150 people, including journalists, writers and politicians, attended a meeting launching the group Monday night.

Arrest in Russian cemetery case

Russian police arrested a man in connection with the desecration of eight tombstones, most of them Jewish, in a Moscow cemetery this month.

A 41-year-old unemployed man was arrested in the incident at Moscow's Vostryakovskoe cemetery, the Union of Councils for Jews in the former Soviet Union said Wednesday, citing a Russian news agency.

Police say the suspect is a scrap metal thief who they believe acted without anti-Semitic motives.

OBITUARY

David Clayman dies at 69, was leading U.S. voice in Israel

By Peter Ephross

NEW YORK (JTA) — Rabbi David Clayman, one of the leading American Jewish advocates in Israel, died overnight Thursday from cancer at the age of 69.

As the longtime director of the American Jewish Congress' Israel office, Clayman walked a tightrope, prodding Israeli leaders on civil liberties and gender issues more popular in the United States than in Israel.

It was a tightrope he walked well, according to those who worked with him.

"He had the ability to engage Israelis on controversial issues without turning them off," said Henry Siegman, who worked with Clayman for 16 years as president of the American Jewish Congress.

Clayman was buried Thursday in Beit Shemesh.

Clayman "worked tirelessly for Middle East peace, for interfaith understanding and toward improving the communication between the secular and religious communities," the U.S. ambassador to Israel, Daniel Kurtzer, said at the funeral.

One of Clayman's lasting achievements was helping to establish the Jerusalem Conference of Mayors, an annual meeting that has attracted mayors from around the world to meet with their counterparts in Israel.

In the last few years, Clayman was disappointed by the regression on an issue that animated his life: compromise on peace with Palestinians. But he never gave up.

"I don't make light of Jerusalem and the Temple Mount," he told Ha'aretz's Anglo File section in 2001. "But it's nice to live in New York, Philadelphia and L.A., and know that the Temple Mount is in our hands. But what is really to see up there? Mosques. And for what price?"

Clayman was well suited to link the American Jewish and Israeli communities because he himself straddled both words.

Born in Boston, he graduated from Harvard and earned his rabbinical ordination from the Jewish Theological Seminary.

He later served as a U.S. Navy chaplain and a congregational rabbi in Philadelphia until 1970, when he made aliyah.

After moving to Israel, Clayman "was clearly one happy guy. It changed his whole life. Aliyah for him was essential and it worked," said Theodore Mann, who was president of the AJCongress in the mid-1980s.

Clayman also was a fellow of the Jerusalem Center for Public Affairs and a frequent lecturer on Israeli and Jewish affairs.

In addition to his intellectual and communal work, Clayman is remembered for his kindness and sense of humor — even in difficult times.

"David Clayman was an extraordinary" representative for the Jewish people, said Neil Goldstein, executive director of the AJCongress. "We were shocked by his demise and are extraordinarily saddened. All of us will miss him dearly."

Clayman is survived by his wife of 47 years, Roz, and children Tamar, Daniel and Jonathan. □

Hadassah praises genetic bill

NEW YORK (JTA) — Hadassah is praising a Senate panel's approval of a genetic non-discrimination bill.

The bill would mandate comprehensive genetic non-discrimination protection in all insurance markets, preventing insurance companies from raising premiums based on genetic information.

The legislation was prompted by a desire to make people — such as Ashkenazi Jewish women, some of whom carry a genetic mutation that makes them more likely to develop certain types of cancer — less wary of taking genetic tests.

The bill's unanimous passage in the Senate Health, Education, Labor and Pensions Committee was "a good start," the women's Zionist organization said. □

Does pope back opening archives? Jewish leaders get mixed signals

By Ruth E. Gruber

VATICAN CITY (JTA) — Jewish leaders hope their meeting with Pope John Paul II may lead to greater access to sensitive Vatican archives from World War II.

In a private meeting Thursday with the president of the World Jewish Congress, Edgar Bronfman, and the group's secretary-general, Rabbi Israel Singer, the pope "gave his blessing" to a request to make more of the archives available to scholars, a WJC spokesman said.

The pope also endorsed a WJC plan to ask national bishops conferences to adopt public statements against anti-Semitism, as well as a WJC project to work with the Catholic charity Caritas to help needy children in Argentina, the WJC spokesman said.

After the private meeting, the pope held a half-hour meeting with a delegation of a dozen international Jewish leaders. Those who took part in the larger audience could not confirm that the pope had endorsed the requests.

At the larger meeting, in fact, the pope did not respond directly when urged to open wartime archives from the pontificate of Pope Pius XII, those present said. Jewish leaders say Pius XII did not speak out strongly enough against the Holocaust.

That caused "some disappointment" among the Jewish leaders, according to those present.

One member of the delegation said Singer said Bronfman also asked the pope to speak out against suicide bombings and terrorism in Israel. Bronfman and Singer left Rome immediately after the group audience, but Singer told Reuters that they and the pope had "agreed on everything."

Bronfman raised the issue of the archives "in a friendly way," Singer told the news agency. "We were encouraging them to open the archives, but it's not like we came in with an aggressive approach. We came in with a negotiated approach."

The Vatican and the Jewish world have clashed over granting scholars access to Vatican archives — such access would clear the air about the Vatican role in the Holocaust, some say. Some prewar archives from the time of Pope Pius XI were unsealed in February, but archives from World War II remain sealed.

In his meeting with the full delegation, the only issue the pope touched on specifically was the Argentine charity project, for which he expressed "encouragement," the Jewish leaders said.

The pope also praised Jewish-Christian relations and called for "courage and vision" to foster further "practical" cooperation, they said.

Those present said the pope's failure to respond to specific points raised during the group audience disappointed some delegation members.

But Seymour Reich, who attended as past chairman of the International Jewish Committee for Interreligious Consultations, said the meeting was important nonetheless.

"Meetings of this nature are very important for the Jewish community," he told JTA. "They give us the opportunity to share directly with the pope our concerns — about anti-Semitism, about Israel, about the Vatican archives.

"Even if there is not an immediate direct response, the hope remains that the pope and his aides will act on it in a positive way, and if that occurs that is one more positive step in our relations with

the Vatican," he said. On Tuesday, the Vatican newspaper *L'Osservatore Romano* called the five Palestinian suicide attacks that hit Israel in the past week a "vicious strategy against dialogue."

In a front-page editorial, the paper said the terrorists' intent was to wreck the "road map" toward Israeli-Palestinian peace before it had a chance to be implemented.

The Vatican audience followed a meeting Wednesday with Italy's prime minister, Silvio Berlusconi, who told a WJC delegation that he would fight anti-Semitism, promote sympathy for Israel in Europe and work to broker Mideast peace.

Speaking less than two months before Italy takes over the six-month rotating E.U. presidency, Berlusconi said he planned to fly to Israel in early June to meet with Prime Minister Ariel Sharon — but not, apparently, with Palestinian Authority President Yasser Arafat, whom Israel and the United States accuse of having ties to terrorism.

"Mr. Berlusconi said he considered Israel as part of Europe and agreed that Israel was not getting a fair shake" from Europeans, one source who attended the meeting told JTA. "He said he would work vigorously to change that."

The trip to Rome followed the WJC's executive meeting in Jerusalem.

Still shaken by the suicide bombings, the group wanted to convey to Berlusconi Israel's dismay at what it views as a lack of sympathy on the part of the European Union, European governments and the European public for Israel's losses and suffering from Palestinian terrorism.

Berlusconi made "incredible statements" of support for the Jewish state, the source who attended the meeting said.

"He told us that he would stand shoulder to shoulder with President Bush to help broker peace," he said. "As far as I know, no other European leader has come out so unambiguously."

The delegation presented Berlusconi with a copy of the most recent WJC annual report on international anti-Semitism, which details a sharp rise in anti-Jewish violence and sentiment.

"Berlusconi said this was terrible and had to be fought," the source said. "He said we had to take it seriously."

He said Berlusconi also expressed interest in a series of Jewish cultural, educational and communal projects under way in Europe, and asked Cobi Benatoff, the Italian president of the European Council of Jewish Communities, to keep his office informed. □

Anti-Israel resolution passed

NEW YORK (JTA) — A U.N. body passed a resolution blaming Israel for health problems in Palestinian areas. The largely Arab-sponsored resolution, which annually passes the Geneva-based World Health Assembly, condemns "Israeli acts of aggression," which have caused "death and injury of thousands of Palestinian civilians."

The assembly is the annual meeting of the World Health Organization. The resolution also notes "grave violations by the Israeli occupation authorities." While it continues to be the only resolution at the assembly that singles out a specific country, this year's vote marked an improvement for Israel, according to the American Jewish Committee's U.N. Watch.

The language in this year's resolution was less harsh than in previous years, and it passed Wednesday by 42-10, with two new countries — Costa Rica and Papua New Guinea — opposing the vote, and six abstaining. □