



# Daily News Bulletin

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86th Year

## TOP NEWS IN BRIEF

### **Bush meets Arab leaders**

Meeting Tuesday with Arab leaders in Egypt, President Bush said Israel "must deal with the settlements." Israel must "make sure there is continuous territory that the Palestinians can call home," he said Tuesday at the meeting at the Egyptian resort of Sharm el-Sheik, with leaders from Egypt, Jordan, Saudi Arabia, Bahrain and the Palestinian Authority.

Arab leaders at the summit endorsed the "road map" for peace.

According to Israel Radio, the meeting was delayed after Arab leaders refused an American appeal to agree to normalize ties with Israel. Arab leaders did, however, agree to crack down on terrorism and funding for terror in their countries.

Bush also said a "few terrorists" cannot be allowed to prevent a political settlement between Israel and the Palestinians.

### **'Road map' envoy to be named**

John Wolf is expected to be named a special U.S. Middle East envoy to help implement the "road map" for Israeli-Palestinian peace.

A team headed by Wolf, the U.S. assistant secretary of state for nonproliferation, is slated to arrive in the Middle East following Wednesday's summit with President Bush, Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon and Palestinian Authority Prime Minister Mahmoud Abbas. Wolf is relatively unknown, and has little experience in the Middle East conflict, according to reports. [Page 3]

### **UJC cuts budget**

The United Jewish Communities adopted the second-largest budget cut in its four-year history.

The budget slash of nearly 10 percent — from \$42.5 million to \$38.5 million — is up for approval by the group's Delegates Assembly, which is set to meet in Washington on June 9.

The reduction largely comes from axing the federation umbrella's university programs division and its Trust for Jewish Philanthropy, along with deep cuts in UJC's Campaign/Financial Resource Development and Israel Overseas departments.

The vote on the new budget, which is to take effect July 1, comes as nominations for new officers will be reported to the Board of Trustees, also meeting in Washington early next week. [Page 4]

## BEHIND THE HEADLINES

### **Will U.S. Jewry keep pace as Israel cautiously pursues new peace effort?**

By Matthew E. Berger

WASHINGTON (JTA) — It may seem that in the course of just a few weeks, many in the Bush administration and in Israel stopped on a dime, turned and began moving swiftly toward the notion of reviving Israeli-Palestinian peace negotiations.

But lagging behind are many leaders of the organized American Jewish community, still skeptical of the new Palestinian leadership and harboring vivid memories of a similar track a decade earlier that not only failed but turned into two and a half years of terror and violence.

Publicly, most Jewish organizations support the "road map" for Israeli-Palestinian peace that President Bush is promoting in his Middle East travels this week and at his summit with Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon and his new Palestinian counterpart, Mahmoud Abbas.

But privately, there is much skepticism about what will transpire in the coming weeks and months, with fears that Israel will be forced to make too many concessions or that Palestinians will get a state without first cracking down on terrorism.

The goal, many say, is to make these concerns heard quietly, while not standing in the way of progress.

Mainstream Jewish leaders who have reservations say they are not worried that they will be viewed as impediments to peace. Instead, they say they are on the same wavelength as Israel's government, supporting the process — hesitantly.

"The center, I am convinced, has already shifted in support for Sharon and Bush," said Abraham Foxman, national director of the Anti-Defamation League.

"If it's good enough for Sharon and good enough for Israelis, then the American Jewish community will embrace it."

But to some, supporting the Israeli government means more than backing what is said publicly.

Some Jewish leaders feel it is up to them to say what many in Israel, including Sharon, are thinking but are not saying. They say political pressure may have forced Sharon to back something he truly does not believe in, and it is the Jewish community's job to balance the support Israel is expressing with voices of caution.

This is not the first time the organized American Jewish community faces the prospect of suddenly embracing a peace process after years of echoing hard-line Israeli positions with respect to the Palestinians.

When the Oslo process evolved in the mid-1990s, some prominent Jewish organizations, including the umbrella Conference of Presidents of Major American Jewish Organizations, were accused of not fully backing the process the Israeli government had adopted.

Indeed, in 1995, then-Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin chastised Jewish leaders for not getting on board and supporting the Oslo peace process as much as it aided Israel through tougher times.

Supporters of Oslo called it the "Diaspora lag" — the fact the American Jews were not supporting something that was being viewed positively in Israel.

The Oslo process "was very difficult for the Jewish community to digest," said Martin Raffel, associate executive director of the Jewish Council for Public Affairs.

"Our mistrust in Yasser Arafat proved to be well-placed."

Raffel said that American Jews can become more pessimistic than some in Israel

## MIDEAST FOCUS

### Ambassadors to return?

At Tuesday's summit in Egypt, President Bush and Arab leaders discussed the possibility of Egypt and Jordan returning their ambassadors to Israel.

"I hope that as we move forward in this process down the 'road map,' both Egypt and Jordan will see the merit at an appropriate moment to return their ambassadors," U.S. Secretary of State Colin Powell said Tuesday in the resort of Sharm el-Sheik, where the summit was held.

### Politician: 17 settlements will go

Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon plans to evacuate 17 West Bank settlements as part of a final political agreement with the Palestinians, a senior Likud Party official said.

Knesset speaker Reuven Rivlin said in an interview with the daily Ha'aretz published Tuesday that Sharon would order the evacuation of settlements breaking the territorial contiguity of a future Palestinian state.

### Israel frees prisoners

The Israeli army freed some 100 Palestinian prisoners Tuesday as part of conciliatory gestures toward the Palestinians. The prisoners released Tuesday included the longest held detainee, Ahmed Jubarah, who spent 28 years in jail for his role in a 1975 bombing in downtown Jerusalem that killed 13.

### 'Lost tribe' members go to Israel

Some 50 members of the Bnei Menashe community in northeastern India arrived in Israel on Tuesday. After the community members, who say they are members of a lost tribe of Israel, complete the conversion process, they will be granted new immigrant status, Israel Radio reported.

Some 700 members of the community have immigrated to Israel, the report said.

because they do not see the violence up close each day, and therefore are not as pragmatic about the need to embrace any movement in the peace process.

"Maybe the fact that we don't live it as acutely as Israelis do, sometimes we have a tendency to be less pragmatic or more idealistic," he said.

This time around, some Jewish leaders say they are once again skeptical.

But the difference is, some say, that skepticism is shared by Israel.

"Everybody is hesitant," said Malcolm Hoenlein, executive vice chairman of the Conference of Presidents. "A lot of people have reservations because they see this as a very risky approach."

Hoenlein and others say the 14 reservations about the road map that Israel submitted to the United States last month mirror the concerns they have been expressing for months, and there is still strong concern that Arafat, the Palestinian Authority president, retains much of the control of the security system in the West Bank and Gaza.

Indeed, an Israeli Cabinet minister, Limor Livnat of Likud, meanwhile, told American Jewish leaders Tuesday that "your role now is to stand very firm" and to make sure that the Israeli government does not make concessions until the Palestinians have uprooted terrorism.

"You need to make sure" that Bush sticks to his ideology to uproot all terrorism in the world, "including of course the Palestinian infrastructure," Livnat, who abstained from the Cabinet vote endorsing the road map, told a meeting of the Conference of Presidents.

There's a decade's worth of experience that makes American Jews fear the worst.

"If it's hard for the community to be on board, it's for good reason," said Morris Amitay, a former executive director of the American Israel Public Affairs Committee. "I don't think the Jewish community will be that much ahead or behind Congress and public opinion."

That worries some more dovish Jewish groups, who fear Jewish leaders may be reluctant to embrace a new process, when the last one burned Israel.

"The concern I have is if groups get wrapped up in the opposition to any talks of a return to diplomacy, and too tightly wound around denigrating the other side," said Lewis Roth, assistant executive director of Americans for Peace Now.

He fears that Jewish groups, while technically on board, will not expend any political capital on supporting — and pushing — the peace process.

The question, others say, is whether Abbas and the Palestinians will follow through where they have not in the past.

If progress is made by the Palestinians, with terrorism especially coming to an end, there would be almost universal support among American Jews for a revived peace process, they say.

Even hawkish groups like the Zionist Organization of America will "openly and publicly support negotiations" if the environment is right, said the group's national president, Morton Klein. The ZOA would need to see Palestinian arrests of terrorists and other requirements met before they would support the process, he said.

Indeed, several Jewish leaders said they will be working in the weeks and months ahead to ensure that Palestinians and other partners are keeping the commitments stressed in the road map, because they fear the main problem with Oslo was that Palestinian compliance was not enforced.

"The role for the American Jewish community is to be skeptical and watch and move in when the Arabs are not fulfilling their commitments," Amitay said.

Also on the agenda is setting the scene to entice the Palestinians to fulfill those commitments.

AIPAC, the pro-Israel lobby, last month pushed for a provision in the State Department Authorization Act that would give substantial U.S. assistance to a Palestinian state, once it achieved a thorough peace.

Jewish leaders said the provision, sponsored by U.S. Reps. Henry Hyde (R-Ill.) and Tom Lantos (D-Calif.), the leaders of the House International Relations Committee, sent a signal that the new state would have American Jewish support.

"I think our role is to encourage our government to play a constructive role to facilitate an opportunity for peace," Raffel said. That means finding international donors and other financial avenues to support the state.

"I only wish that we get to the point where money is needed," he said. □



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## JEWISH WORLD

### Austrian Jews reject offer

The leader of the Austrian Jewish community rejected as inadequate stopgap funding proposed by the Austrian government.

Ariel Muzicant said a suggested interest-free loan of about \$800,000 a year for 2003, 2004 and 2005 was just a means of postponing a decision on whether the state will provide the community with more substantial permanent funding.

The state currently provides \$900,000 in annual subsidies to the community, and Muzicant has asked the state for an extra \$3 million a year. Without this extra subsidy, he says, the community will be forced to lay off staff and drastically cut activities.

### IBM lawsuit dismissed

A Swiss court dismissed a lawsuit filed by Gypsy leaders claiming that IBM expertise helped the Nazis commit mass murder.

A judge in Geneva said Tuesday that the court lacked jurisdiction to handle the claim. The lawsuit, which was filed after a book by journalist Edwin Black alleged that IBM technology helped make the Nazi killing machine more efficient, sued for "moral reparations and \$20,000 each on behalf of four Gypsies, or Roma, who were killed during World War II."

A lawyer for the plaintiffs said he planned to appeal.

### Yale prof in anti-Israel flap

A Yale professor is under fire for calling Jewish students in a pro-Israel group members of a "pro-war cabal."

In an e-mail to members of a Yale group that opposed the U.S.-led war in Iraq, Mazin Qumsiyeh, an assistant professor of genetics and co-founder of a group called the Palestine Right to Return Coalition, singled out 64 students, many of them Jews, as pro-war and as members of a Yale pro-Israel group, the New York Sun reported.

Qumsiyeh, who later apologized for misidentifying some students, also is active in efforts to compel the school to divest from companies that do business in Israel. In an earlier e-mail he wrote about "prominent Jews in the media," and once said that "Zionists regularly collaborate with Nazis."

### Group to help Moldovan Jews

A new Jewish organization will assist elderly and needy Jews in Moldova, one of Europe's poorest nations. On Sunday, Jewish business leaders in Kishinev launched the Jewish Congress of Moldova.

The group is believed to be the first indigenous charity group serving the needs of 30,000 Jews in this former Soviet republic, located between Romania and Ukraine.

## BEHIND THE HEADLINES

### New U.S. point man on 'road map' charged with monitoring compliance

By Matthew E. Berger

WASHINGTON (JTA) — As Washington prepares to send an envoy to the Middle East, expectations about what he may achieve are low.

John Wolf, assistant secretary of state for nonproliferation, was expected to be named this week by the White House as the new envoy for the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

Sources say Wolf, who is Jewish, will not have the same negotiating responsibilities that other envoys, including Dennis Ross and Anthony Zinni, have had.

Instead, Wolf will serve predominantly as the head of a monitoring group that will oversee implementation of the "road map," the three-staged approach toward Israeli-Palestinian peace drawn up by the United States and its "Quartet" partners — the United Nations, European Union and Russia.

Already, close to 10 CIA officials are on the ground in the Middle East, and Wolf is expected to oversee their efforts to make sure both parties comply with the steps outlined in the road map.

Among the initial steps are specific measures taken by the Palestinians to crack down on terrorism and by the Israelis to freeze settlement building and dismantle illegal settlement outposts erected since 2001.

"They will be investigating charges on both sides, investigating hot spots and reporting on violent activities," one State Department official said.

While other recent U.S. envoys have shuttled back and forth to the region, Wolf and his team are expected to stay in the Middle East, most likely based in Jerusalem.

Also unlike previous envoys, Wolf is not expected to settle disputes between the parties or interpret the road map.

Wolf, originally from Philadelphia, is an unknown quantity in Middle East diplomacy, but someone who is well-respected within Foreign Service circles.

He is a former ambassador to Malaysia, and served as a special adviser to President Clinton for Caspian Basin energy diplomacy.

The selection of Wolf comes after several more prominent officials turned down the position, sources said.

But in the end, they said, the choice of a career official works with the Bush administration's revised vision of the position.

"This is not negotiation; this is implementation," the State Department official said.

Sen. Joseph Lieberman (D-Conn.), a Democratic presidential candidate, has long advocated a senior envoy for the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and said he was disappointed by the selection.

He said a more senior envoy "would have been more effective and would have shown the seriousness of this administration."

Few in the Jewish community in Washington are familiar with Wolf, whose work has focused on Asia. But while there is concern about an envoy emerging from the State Department, which is seen within the Bush administration as more sympathetic to the Palestinians, there is optimism about Wolf.

"The president's confidence in him, at this sensitive time, alleviates our concerns," said one Jewish leader, who asked not to be identified. □

### Paper's cartoon causes uproar

NEW YORK (JTA) — Readers of the Chicago Tribune are complaining about an editorial cartoon they see as anti-Semitic.

The cartoon, which appeared last Friday, depicts President Bush laying down dollar bills in front of a heavyset man with a large nose, and a Star of David on his jacket.

The man, who is meant to be Ariel Sharon, says, "On second thought, the pathway to peace is looking a bit brighter." The Tribune's ombudsman, Don Wycliff, said he agrees that the cartoon reinforces anti-Semitic stereotypes. □

## Survivors to get insurance payouts after years of debate and struggle

By Joe Berkofsky

NEW YORK (JTA) — Needy Holocaust survivors around the world will soon get some more help.

The Claims Conference announced this week that it will distribute \$15 million in 2003 to needy survivors as part of a deal with German insurance companies to pay families of Nazi victims whose Holocaust-era policies were never honored.

The September 2002 agreement, negotiated by the International Commission on Holocaust Era Insurance Claims, calls for distributing \$132 million in humanitarian aid during the next decade to those survivors via 870 social service agencies in 31 nations.

Such compensation marks the first step in ending a long, often-bitter struggle over settling unpaid Holocaust-era insurance claims due the now-aging victims of Nazi Germany, many of whom rely on social services to survive.

"We're finally seeing some of the benefits flow to survivors," said Gideon Taylor, executive vice president of the Claims Conference. "You're turning the proceeds of theft into home care, food package and medicine."

In the first annual payments this year, slightly more than \$6 million will go to Israelis; \$2.4 million will go to U.S. survivors, with \$1.1 million going to an estimated 65,000 New York-area survivors; and the remainder will go to survivors around the globe, including those in the former Soviet Union and in Western Europe.

These payments follow years of sometimes bitter deliberations involving ICHEIC — a consortium that includes the Claims Conference, the World Jewish Restitution Organization, officials from Israel, major European insurers and U.S. and European insurance regulators — and the German Remembrance, Responsibility and Future Foundation.

German insurance firms and the German government funded that foundation.

The payout appeared to partially temper criticism of ICHEIC, which has been blasted for its slow pace and high overhead costs.

In 2001 a House panel criticized ICHEIC for failing to reach a deal on the insurance payments. Last year the panel's chairman, Lawrence Eagleburger, a former secretary of state, even threatened to walk out, but remained after securing greater authority to deal directly with the Germans.

Talks are continuing between ICHEIC and insurance firms in other countries, including Switzerland.

"It's a sign certainly of progress with negotiations with the insurance companies, which have been difficult and long and drawn out," said Taylor.

Stuart Kaplan, chief executive officer of Self-Help Community Services in New York, welcomed Monday's announcement as a critical infusion of cash at a time when the survivor population is aging and its needs growing.

"While no one is satisfied with the speed of the settlement — it should have happened years ago — nor the amount — it should have been greater — it is certainly too late for some, but it is not too late for many."

Kaplan oversees the primary social service agency dealing with the largest survivor community in the United States and said Self-Help will receive \$615,000 from the insurance deal's humanitarian

aid. That's significant cash for Self-Help, which carried a \$3.8 million budget for survivor care in fiscal 2002 — \$1.2 million of which came from the Claims Conference and the remainder from donations.

"We will be able to expand and enrich services to the Nazi victim community," Kaplan said.

Self-Help serves 2,700 survivors in the New York area, a population that has swelled by half over the past five years and is expected to climb until 2015, the end of most survivors' life spans.

Most of Self-Help's survivor clients are between 65 and 74 years old, he added.

By boosting social services to these older survivors, the insurance policy payments will help needy survivors — but only somewhat, Taylor said.

"We don't speak of meeting the needs of Holocaust survivors; we speak about making a difference," he said.

The Claims Conference — the central group battling for survivor restitution on various fronts — came under criticism recently from some Holocaust survivors for earmarking 20 percent of \$430 million in proceeds of sales of unclaimed eastern German Jewish property for Holocaust education, documentation and research.

That criticism reflected a wide debate over how to spend reparation money for forced German labor, looted Swiss bank accounts, insurance claims and unclaimed German real estate.

Leading that campaign against the Claims Conference was the Florida-based Holocaust Survivors Foundation, which urged that all the German property reparation money go to needy survivors rather than education.

Claims Conference officials defended the allocations, saying much of the money they distribute aids needy survivors through social welfare agencies.

Next month, the Claims Conference board of directors is due to meet, and officials with the group say they may take up the issue of how to spend the eastern German property sales proceeds.

Taylor said the first chunk of the insurance money will benefit groups that aid survivors, like Self-Help.

The insurance money will allow Self-Help, for example, to increase the counseling and support it provides, as well as sponsoring events such as coffee houses for survivors, Kaplan said.

ICHEIC, meanwhile, has posted a list of 363,232 people due unpaid claims, and they have until Sept. 30 to file. The list is posted at [www.icheic.org](http://www.icheic.org).

In another Holocaust reparation development, a New York group said eligible survivors who "voluntarily worked" in German-controlled Jewish ghettos can still apply for pensions retroactive to 1997.

The Holocaust Compensation Assistance Project of the New York Legal Assistance Group said those who miss the deadline and are due compensation may still receive future payments. The group can be reached at (212) 688-0710. □

## Progress in fighting disease

NEW YORK (JTA) — Israeli scientists made a major advance in fighting a genetic disease that is common among Jews.

A team of researchers at the Weizmann Institute of Science recently solved the structure of a 3-D enzyme whose mutation causes Gaucher disease. The discovery may lead to new treatments for the disease, which causes swelling of the spleen and liver and may also affect the brain. □