



# Daily News Bulletin

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86th Year

## TOP NEWS IN BRIEF

### 130 arrested in West Bank sweep

Israeli security forces arrested some 130 Palestinians in a West Bank sweep.

Most of the detainees arrested Monday night belong to Hamas and are suspected of involvement in recent terrorist attacks, Israeli security sources said. Most of the arrests were made in the Hebron and Nablus areas.

### Author Leon Uris dies at 78

Leon Uris, the best-selling author of "Exodus" and other books that dealt with Jewish history, died Saturday in New York at 78.

"Exodus," a 600-page novel, details the Jewish struggle to establish the State of Israel after World War II. [Page 3]

### Survivor sues AJCommittee

A Holocaust survivor is suing the American Jewish Committee over a memorial the group is erecting at a Nazi death camp.

On Monday, Norman Salsitz of Springfield, N.J., filed a suit in U.S. District Court in Washington seeking an injunction blocking the AJCommittee from digging a trench through the Belzec death camp in Poland because it allegedly will disturb human remains buried there.

Salsitz, who lost 23 family members in Belzec, where an estimated 600,000 Jews died, said the trench would desecrate the remains of buried bodies. "What is a monument? A remembrance of a terrible thing. You don't remember by stepping in the blood and the bones and the ashes," he said.

The AJCommittee denies that any desecration is taking place, and says the memorial has won the approval of Israel's former chief Ashkenazi rabbi, Yisrael Meir Lau; leading European rabbis on a Jewish cemetery preservation panel; and other survivors of the camp.

### P.A. pressing E.U. on Hamas?

The Palestinian Authority denied reports that P.A. officials asked the European Union to blacklist Hamas as a terrorist organization. The reports, from Israel Radio and the European Union, say representatives of P.A. Prime Minister Mahmoud Abbas asked the European Union to put more pressure on Hamas to accept a cease-fire with Israel.

## NEWS ANALYSIS

### With cease-fire talks continuing, Sharon faces internal opposition

By Leslie Susser

JERUSALEM (JTA) — With Israel and the Palestinians seemingly approaching a cease-fire, Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon faces growing skepticism within his government over the "road map" peace plan.

Active American involvement, heavy pressure on Palestinian terror groups and widespread popular support for Sharon and his pro-road map policy are generating promising momentum for the peace plan.

But — setting aside doubts about the Palestinians' willingness to honor their commitments — Israeli pundits wonder how far Sharon will be able to advance along the road map.

Members of his own Likud Party have become his most vociferous opponents.

The movement toward a cease-fire follows the military pressure Israel exerted on Hamas in recent weeks and U.S. Secretary of State Colin Powell's visit to the region last weekend.

Using hints both of carrot and stick, Powell was able to generate progress on the two key issues: the "hudna," or temporary cease-fire, to be declared by Hamas and other Palestinian terrorist organizations, and the willingness of the Palestinian Authority to take over security responsibility from Israel in Palestinian areas, starting in the northern Gaza Strip and Bethlehem.

Of course, reports of an imminent cease-fire all too often have proven illusory. But at the World Economic Conference in Amman, Powell sought to corner Hamas, urging his European counterparts to cut off funding to the group.

The Palestinian Authority reportedly backed Powell's efforts, secretly suggesting to the Europeans that they declare Hamas a terrorist organization and thereby make its funding illegal.

Palestinian sources denied the reports, but they were confirmed by European officials.

In addition, many analysts believe that continuing Israeli pressure on the group — a senior Hamas official was killed in Hebron this week and dozens of Hamas activists were arrested in the West Bank — have made Hamas more eager than ever for the protection of a cease-fire.

Powell also reaffirmed to Palestinian officials that if they got a viable cease-fire and neutralized Hamas, the United States would push for the establishment of a Palestinian state as envisaged in the road map.

P.A. Prime Minister Mahmoud Abbas is convinced that Powell means what he says.

In a recent meeting with Hamas officials on the cease-fire, Abbas described the road map as a wonderful chance to extricate the Palestinians from their current dead-end predicament.

The Palestinian national movement, he said, is like a tiger with its head caught in a bottleneck; only the road map can save it.

If there is no cease-fire, he said, Hamas will bear responsibility for the consequences.

On the Israeli side, there is much skepticism regarding Abbas's capacity, not to mention his resolve, to effect real change.

One of the chief doubters is Defense Minister Shaul Mofaz, who says both Abbas

## MIDEAST FOCUS

### Israel indicts Islamists

Leaders of Israel's Islamic Movement were charged with belonging to a terrorist organization.

The charges filed Tuesday against the five leaders included membership in a terrorist organization, money laundering and contact with foreign agents.

Those accused included the head of the Islamic Movement's northern branch and the mayor of the Israeli-Arab town of Umm el-Fahm.

They are suspected of channeling funds from Hamas-linked charities abroad to Hamas-linked groups in the West Bank and Gaza Strip.

### 810 Israelis dead in uprising

Since the Palestinian intifada began in September 2000, 810 Israelis and foreign visitors have been killed and about 5,600 have been injured.

An official with the Israel Defense Force told the Knesset Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee on Tuesday that 567 of those killed were civilians and 243 were soldiers.

The IDF official also said an estimated 2,330 Palestinians have been killed and 14,000 injured. The majority of Palestinians killed have been militants, Israeli officials say.

### Infiltrator apprehended

A Palestinian armed with two knives was apprehended in an Israeli settlement in the Gaza Strip. Israeli troops shot and wounded the Palestinian, who was discovered Tuesday in the greenhouse area of the settlement, Israel Radio reported.

### Israel gets all-music TV station

A new 24-hour music TV station with Israeli music only will debut in Israel on July 20.

Music 24 already has archives of more than 1,500 video clips created over the years by recording companies but never broadcast on TV.



## Daily News Bulletin

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and his security chief, Mohammed Dahlan, have shown a disturbing lack of leadership and determination.

Mofaz says he hoped the early June summit held by Sharon, Abbas and President Bush at Aqaba, Jordan, would usher in a new era, but so far nothing has changed on the Palestinian side.

In the Israeli Cabinet, there are three schools of thought on the road map. "Skeptics" like Mofaz see no danger in giving the road map a chance, but hold out little hope that it will succeed.

"Doves" like the Shinui Party leader, Justice Minister Yosef (Tommy) Lapid, say Israel should be ready to take risks to give the road map a chance.

"Hawks" like Uzi Landau, a minister without portfolio from the Likud, see the road map as a major threat to Israel's security. If things go too far, Landau says, he thinks Sharon can be blocked in the Cabinet.

Landau points out that in the late May Cabinet vote authorizing the road map, only 12 of 23 Cabinet ministers were in favor; the rest either voted against or abstained.

"All we need is one more to come over to our side to stop our going down this slippery slope. That's precisely the challenge in this government," Landau says.

Likud opposition to Sharon's pro-road map policy also is building in the Knesset and in the party's Central Committee.

The Knesset's Judea, Samaria and Gaza lobby group — led by the Likud's Yehiel Hazan — is lobbying legislators of all parties to oppose the road map. The group numbers 30 members — a quarter of the Knesset — including 20 from Likud.

Under the latest amendment to the electoral system, if 61 legislators vote no-confidence in the prime minister and suggest an alternative candidate — say, Finance Minister Benjamin Netanyahu — President Moshe Katsav would be obliged to ask Netanyahu to form a new government.

There would be no need for an election.

Hazan angrily rejects suggestions that his group could form the basis for such a vote.

More significantly, Netanyahu is not doing anything to challenge Sharon's leadership — certainly not drumming up support for a take-over bid in the Knesset.

Moreover, Likud insiders argue that as long as Sharon and his policies remain popular nationwide — some 60 percent of Israelis back the road map — a challenge to his leadership is unlikely. Should he lose popular support, however, anything could happen.

For now, Likud legislators who oppose the road map are not looking to topple Sharon, but rather to tie his hands.

Legislator Gilad Erdan, chairman of Likud's youth wing and an active member of the party's right-wing "Forum for the Preservation of Likud Values," wants to pass legislation that would force Sharon to put any agreement reached on the basis of the road map first to the Knesset and then to a nationwide referendum.

Erdan also seeks to restrict Sharon's room for maneuvering by barring Likud legislators who vote against party resolutions from running again for Knesset on the Likud list.

Given the May 2001 Likud Central Committee resolution opposing a Palestinian state, if Erdan gets his way any Likud legislator voting for a Palestinian state, as called for in the road map, would be risking his career.

As if the ferment in his own party were not enough, Sharon also faces serious opposition from forces to the right of Likud.

Any attempt to dismantle populated settlements in the West Bank and Gaza Strip is likely to encounter fierce resistance from settlers, especially after the recent ruling by right-wing rabbis that "no government has the right to give up parts of the Land of Israel" in order to create a Palestinian state.

Given the sentiment on the right, the road map inevitably will be a very bumpy ride for Sharon.

If, in the wake of a cease-fire, there is movement toward the establishment of a Palestinian state, it will take all of Sharon's political skill to sell it to his party — and his country. □

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

## JEWISH WORLD

### Data: Jews mixed on Bush

Nearly 50 percent of U.S. Jews approve of President Bush's job performance, but only 25 percent would definitely vote for him, according to a new poll.

More than 60 percent of Jews support Bush's foreign policy and 33 percent support his domestic policy, according to data collected between January 2002 and March 2003 by the Ipsos/Cook Political Report. American Jewish support for Bush was still lower than his approval rating among the general public, the poll found.

The National Jewish Democratic Council hailed the results, while the Republican Jewish Coalition said the data was so outdated as to be useless. Only 19 percent of Jews voted for Bush in the 2000 election, but Republicans hope that his support for Israel and leadership in the war on terror will attract more Jewish voters in 2004.

### Jewish Agency elects No. 2

The Jewish Agency for Israel elected its second-ranking volunteer leader.

Jay Sarver, immediate past president of the Jewish federation of St. Louis, became the budget and finance chair of the Jewish Agency, which handles immigration and absorption in Israel.

Sarver, who succeeds Richard Pearlstone, was confirmed Sunday morning by the World Zionist Organization at meetings of the Jewish Agency's board of governors. He was asked several weeks ago to fill the position by the United Jewish Communities' vice chairwoman, Carole Solomon, who officially became chairwoman of the Jewish Agency's board of governors on Tuesday.

### Looted painting fetches millions

A Nazi-looted painting that was returned to its rightful owners was auctioned for nearly \$21 million. "Krumauer Landschaft," by the Austrian painter Egon Schiele, recently was auctioned off to an anonymous telephone bidder by Sotheby's.

The Nazis seized the painting from the Viennese textile manufacturer Willy Hermann in 1938.

### Holland's kosher scandal

Observant Jews may have eaten pork without knowing about it, according to the Dutch government.

Holland's Ministry of Agriculture said several companies had added proteins originating from cows and pigs to the chicken meat they process, allowing the meat to absorb more water.

Holland exports kosher meat to Israel, European countries and the United States. Three agricultural companies who used these methods officially have been warned, and the Dutch national supervisor of processed foods has launched an investigation.

## OBITUARY

### Leon Uris, author of 'Exodus,' dies; popularized Jewish history in novels

By Peter Ephross

NEW YORK (JTA) — Leon Uris wasn't a critic's darling. But for millions of readers, he was an entree into modern Jewish history.

Uris' books "appeal to people who want a good read," said Bonnie Lyons, a professor of English at the University of Texas-San Antonio.

Through Uris' works — which included "Exodus," a 600-page novel on the Jewish struggle to establish the State of Israel after World War II, and "Mila 18," a chronicle of the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising — people could develop a sympathy for Israel and Jewish history, said Lyons, who has written widely on American Jewish literature.

Uris died Saturday in New York at 78 of renal failure. He was known for writing books that were long and obsessively researched — and, once they landed on the bookshelves, were obsessively read. None of the criticism matters "as you are swept along in the narrative," author Pete Hamill once wrote in *The New York Times*.

Uris' parents were immigrants from the Russian Empire. His father had spent a year in Palestine before moving to the United States, and derived his surname, Uris, from Yerushalmi, meaning Jerusalemite, according to *The New York Times*.

The story of European immigrants making their way to Palestine and establishing the State of Israel was the basis of "Exodus."

The story makes heroes of the Jewish underground fighters trying to smuggle Jews into Palestine in the years leading up to the creation of the State of Israel — and uses this tale to retell Jewish history and Zionism of the late 19th and early 20th centuries.

"The mythic Israel he presented is still the mythic Israel in the heads of many American Jews," said Sanford Pinsker, the Shadek professor of humanities at Franklin and Marshall College in Lancaster, Pa.

Uris is not well-regarded by critics, many of whom consider his writing crude and simple. People who think Saul Bellow, Bernard Malamud and Cynthia Ozick are major Jewish writers "would say he's just a popular writer," Lyons said. "He tells a good story, but he's not of lasting literary value."

In the world of American Jewish fiction, Uris is likely to be remembered as a step below Chaim Potok, perhaps on par with Herman Wouk.

But readers around the world didn't seem to care.

"Exodus" was translated into dozens of languages and even smuggled into Communist Eastern Europe.

"'Exodus' has been the Bible of the Jewish dissident movement in Russia. It's referred to as 'The Book,'" Uris once told *The Associated Press*.

It later was made into a movie by Otto Preminger.

Uris then traveled across Eastern Europe to collect material for "Mila 18," which focused on the ghetto uprising. This novel proved so successful that Joseph Heller reportedly decided to change the name of his novel from "Catch-18" to "Catch-22."

"Mitla Pass," published in 1988, starts out in Israel in 1956, during the Suez Canal crisis that led to the Sinai Campaign. Focusing on a journalist named Gideon Zadok, the book traces Zadok's ancestry back to the 1880s.

Among Uris' other novels was "Trinity," about Ireland's struggle for independence, and "QB VII," a fictionalized account of a lawsuit filed against Uris by a Polish doctor who had been called a war criminal in "Exodus."

Uris was born in Baltimore and grew up in Norfolk, Va.

"I used to think of myself as a very sad little Jewish boy, undersized, asthmatic," he once said.

His father was a storekeeper whom Uris remembered as a failure — which he said motivated him to succeed. "I think I can say that from earliest memory I was determined not to be a failure," he said.

His last book, "O'Hara's Choice," a love story involving the history of the Marines, is slated to be published in October.

Uris was married three times and had five children. □

## Jewish groups, survivors upset by California insurance law ruling

By Tom Tugend

LOS ANGELES (JTA) — The fight over unpaid Holocaust-era insurance policies will now move to Congress, advocates say, after the Supreme Court struck down a California law that required European insurance companies to disclose information about their wartime policies.

Holocaust survivors and Jewish organizations reacted with anger and disappointment to Monday's ruling.

Attorney Frank Kaplan of Los Angeles, who represented the California Department of Insurance in the Supreme Court case, said the main recourse left would be congressional action.

Just such an initiative has been taken by Rep. Henry Waxman (D-Calif.), who introduced the Holocaust Victims Insurance Relief Act in March.

The bill has garnered more than 50 co-sponsors.

"It's clear that Congress must act. The Supreme Court decision will spur momentum and move the legislation forward," Waxman said.

Much of the dismay was directed at the Bush administration, which sided with the insurance companies in the case.

"This is very disheartening," said Suzanne Weiner-Zada, 73, a Hungarian-born survivor of Bergen-Belsen and Auschwitz, who is suing an Italian insurance company.

"Why would an American court side with foreign companies against American citizens?"

"The insurance companies have been stonewalling us and cheating us for almost 60 years," the Los Angeles resident added. "You would think that the United States government would be morally on our side."

In a 5-4 vote, the Supreme Court ruled that California's Holocaust Victim Insurance Relief Act of 1999, which revoked the state license of any company ignoring the disclosure law, was an unconstitutional interference with the president's foreign policy prerogatives.

The decision specifically invalidated the part of the California law that forced insurance companies to make public the owners and substance of all policies written between 1920 and 1945.

Other provisions were not affected, such as those allowing plaintiffs to file claims against the companies in California courts and extending the deadline for filing such claims until 2010.

However, legal experts said the high-court ruling could chill the judicial climate in considering related cases.

Among those most disappointed was former California state assemblyman Wally Knox, who authored the California law and helped it weather a gubernatorial veto and a number of lower-court challenges.

"This law was struck down for one reason, and that is because the president of the United States was opposed to it," Knox said. "As Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg" — who dissented from the majority — "noted, the president sided with the companies that sided with the Nazi looting of Jewish families."

Knox, who now serves as executive director of California's Holocaust-Era Insurance Claims Oversight Committee, said he was baffled by Bush's position.

The American Insurance Association, which spearheaded the

legal fight against the California law, expressed its satisfaction with the outcome.

"We believe that the International Commission for Holocaust Era Insurance Claims," or ICHEIC, "which was established specifically to handle Holocaust insurance claims, is the best way to provide a measure of financial relief today," AIA's senior vice president, Craig Berrington, said in a statement.

"As both the Clinton and Bush administrations made clear in this long litigation process, the issues remaining from the Holocaust are matters for the United States government, not individual states," he said.

Italy's Generali is one of the chief financial underwriters of ICHEIC, a voluntary commission made up of representatives from European insurance companies, American state insurance regulators, Jewish organizations and the State of Israel.

However, since its establishment in 1998, the commission has been dogged by charges of unnecessary delays, meager accomplishments and administrative overspending.

It has set a deadline of Sept. 30 for filing Holocaust-related insurance claims.

New York attorney Kenneth Bialkin, Generali's lead counsel in the United States — and a former chairman of the Conference of Presidents of Major American Jewish Organizations — said his company "was not unhappy" with the decision, which he described as "well crafted."

Others said the issue would not end with Monday's ruling.

The Supreme Court decision "points to the urgent need for federal legislation that will compel insurers wishing to do business in the United States to reveal information about policies held during the Holocaust era," Michael Bohnen, chairman of the Jewish Council for Public Affairs, said in a statement. "We are encouraged that conversations have already begun in the U.S. Congress and we look forward to working in a bipartisan manner to try to right some of the wrongs that have been allowed to linger far too long."

"The effort to ensure that unpaid Holocaust-era insurance policies are paid will continue regardless of this decision," agreed Gideon Taylor, executive vice president of the Claims Conference. "This has always been a matter of morality, and not just legality."

California Gov. Gray Davis also pledged to continue the fight "to deliver full justice to victims of Nazi persecution, calling it "more than a policy decision. This is a moral imperative."

In Los Angeles, both Bet Tzedek Legal Services and the Simon Wiesenthal Center had filed friend-of-the-court briefs, in which they argued that "callous insurance companies that profited from the Holocaust need secrecy, not only to keep the properties they stole from corpses, but to continue to do business today with Californians who would be rightly concerned" if "they learned the truth."

Rabbi Abraham Cooper, associate dean of the Wiesenthal Center, said the court ruling also was a blow to the legal efforts of American ex-prisoners of war to obtain compensation for forced labor under their Japanese captors.

"It is the shame of the U.S. State Department that it claims foreign policy prerogatives to give cover" to the wartime deeds of former enemies, Cooper said.

The Supreme Court's two Jewish justices came down on opposing sides of the decision, with Stephen Breyer voting with the majority and Ginsburg writing the minority's dissent. □