



# Daily News Bulletin

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86th Year

## TOP NEWS IN BRIEF

### Israelis shot near Bethlehem

Palestinian terrorists wounded an Israeli mother and her three children in a shooting attack in the West Bank.

Sunday night's attack is believed to be the first in the area since Bethlehem was handed over to Palestinian Authority security control last month, as part of the "road map" for peace plan.

The woman and her 9-year-old daughter were taken to a Jerusalem hospital after the attack, which occurred near Har Gilo, south of Jerusalem.

Her two other children were treated at the scene of the shooting. Al-Aksa Brigade claimed responsibility for the attack.

In other violence, Israel shot a Palestinian driver who failed to stop at a roadblock.

Sunday's incident occurred at a checkpoint near the West Bank city of Ramallah.

The shooting occurred when police fired after the man refused to stop his car at a checkpoint and ramméd his car into a police jeep.

Israel launched an inquiry into the shooting, the third such incident in the past few weeks.

### Suspects to stay in Ramallah

The transfer of 17 Palestinian terrorist suspects from Ramallah to Jericho was delayed.

The men refused over the weekend to move to Jericho, as requested by Palestinian Authority President Yasser Arafat.

On Sunday night, Arafat's Palestinian Authority reportedly said it would allow the men to remain in Ramallah pending further negotiation with Israel.

### Russian Jewish leader sentenced

A Russian Jewish leader was sentenced to 12 years in jail.

Mikhail Mirilashvili, the president of the St. Petersburg branch of the Russian Jewish Congress, received the sentence last Friday for his role in the kidnapping of individuals who he believed had previously kidnapped his father.

Jewish leaders in St. Petersburg said they are shocked by the sentence.

Many prominent Jewish leaders in Russia's second largest community have previously said they believe Mirilashvili is innocent. Mirilashvili's lawyers said they would appeal.

## FOCUS ON ISSUES

### Facing reality of Jews in Germany, Zionist arm takes indirect approach

By Toby Axelrod

BERLIN (JTA) — It's a bitter pill for some to swallow: In 2002, more Jews from the former Soviet republics immigrated to Germany than to Israel.

But the Jewish Agency for Israel, which handles immigration and absorption in the Jewish state, appears to be partially swallowing that pill.

The immigration numbers — about 19,000 to Germany versus 18,000 to Israel — have sent a message to the Jewish Agency, which recently sent a high-level delegation to visit Jewish communities across Germany.

The message is that the first priority, even ahead of aliyah, should be supporting Jewish life in Germany, delegation members told JTA.

While the ultimate goal remains convincing German Jews to move to Israel, the Jewish Agency Task Force on Germany reflects a new approach, Jewish Agency officials say.

The argument is that strengthening Jewish identity in Germany will lead to increased Zionism, Shai Hermesh, treasurer of the Jewish Agency and head of the task force, told JTA in a telephone interview.

"We have two major tasks: to keep Jewish life, and, secondly, to create Jewish Zionist activity," Hermesh added. "At the end of the day, Israel is the answer for Zionists."

Some Jewish Agency officials are upset that Germany's attractive absorption package — far beyond what Israel can afford — is luring Jews, particularly from the former Soviet Union.

But the Jewish Agency is not about to try to convince Germany to stop accepting Jewish immigrants.

Instead, from July 14-18, the task force traveled throughout Germany, visiting seven Jewish communities of varying sizes.

The new task force aims to work with existing communal structures to "encourage Jewish roots and Jewish Zionist education" among Jews in Germany, so that "the younger generation will believe that their place is in Israel, not in Germany."

With that in mind, the agency is planning to create new positions here to augment its current staff of one and to increase the emphasis on Jewish education and religious life.

"We must find the best positive way to have contact with Jews in Germany," Hermesh said.

Though he didn't want to comment on the task force, he said that "it is always good to strengthen Jewish life and identity; it is very positive."

"As a true Zionist, I think the place for Jews is Israel, but I think we also have to live with the reality that there are Jews in Germany and Jews in America and England, not just Israel," said Israel's former ambassador to Germany, Avi Primor, who now is vice president of Tel Aviv University.

He said the recent drop in immigration to Israel has more to do with the intifada than anything else.

Meanwhile, the Jewish community in Germany has grown threefold since the 1990 fall of communism.

The Jewish Agency is by no means the first Jewish organization to recognize the challenge and potential in Germany's growing Jewish community. In recent years,

## MIDEAST FOCUS

### Concern over kidnapping efforts

Israeli security forces are concerned that Arab terrorists will increase efforts to kidnap Israelis. Concern was intensified following the disappearance of Dana Bennet, 18, in Tiberias.

Bennet disappeared July 31 after she finished a shift as a waitress at a local restaurant. Police forces conducted a wide search for the girl in an area north-east of Tiberias.

Kidnappers killed an Israeli soldier two weeks ago.

### Hezbollah vows revenge

Hezbollah is vowing to avenge the death of a man whose death they blame on Israel. Ali Hussein Saleh was killed over the weekend in a car bombing in Lebanon. Israel has refused to comment on Saleh's death.

### A-G criticizes Sharon's son

Israel's attorney general criticized Prime Minister Ariel Sharon's son for stonewalling police.

Gilad Sharon has refused to answer police questions about \$150,000 he received from politically connected developer David Appel for public relations work on a planned Greek island resort in 1999, when Ariel Sharon was foreign minister.

### Music the universal language?

Daniel Barenboim played a peace concert Saturday in the West Bank.

In the West Bank city of Ramallah, Barenboim, a world-renowned pianist and conductor who grew up in Israel, played a program with a Palestinian pianist and his son.

"I am sure that there are many people in the Israeli government who are not happy about my being here," he said. "But then, I am not happy about many things that they do."



## Daily News Bulletin

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several rabbinical training programs have sprung up here, started by the Central Council for Jews in Germany, the World Union for Progressive Judaism and two American imports: the Ronald S. Lauder yeshiva and Chabad-Lubavitch.

All are driven in part by the fact that there are fewer than 30 rabbis available to serve 83 Jewish communities in the country.

Germany also has become a favorite stop for American Jewish organizations and rabbinic groups who want to see Jewish life here for themselves. This growing popularity is encouraged — and partly supported — by the German government.

But this apparently is the first time that an Israeli organization is stepping into the mix. It marks a major change in official Israeli attitudes toward immigration to Germany, formerly seen as a taboo topic. But the trends and figures cannot be ignored anymore.

The task force consists of Jewish Agency professionals and board members: Benny Navon, Israel's former ambassador to Germany; Benni Bloch of the Central Welfare Council of Jews in Germany, and Rabbi Josh Spinner, director of the Ronald S. Lauder Foundation in Berlin.

The team will present its recommendations to the agency chairman, Sallai Meridor.

"The Jewish Agency has expressed interest in Germany before, but never before has the board of governors created such a task force to present findings," Spinner said.

The agency is planning to send a new liaison for Jewish students, a representative of the Maccabi sports organization and other "emissaries of all kinds," Hermesh said.

The Jewish Agency's representative in Germany, Anat Kagan, said that on its recent visit the task force met with Jewish community leaders, new immigrants and Jewish students.

They did not meet with representatives of the Central Council of Jews in Germany, the main Jewish umbrella group, whose board was in Israel at the time. But they did talk to leaders of both the Reform and Orthodox Jewish communities here, including representatives of Chabad and the Lauder program.

The delegation noted the isolation of many small Jewish communities across Germany and the lack of Jewish education and religious leaders in those areas, Kagan said.

Since the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989, immigration from the former Soviet Union has tripled Germany's Jewish community to more than 100,000.

To prevent the absorption burden from falling solely on larger established communities in Berlin, Munich and Frankfurt, the German government, in agreement with the Central Council, has distributed the newcomers to dozens of communities across the country.

Representatives of the Central Council could not be reached for comment.

While many celebrate the re-establishment of Jewish life here — even in cities that had no Jewish community before the Nazi era — Jewish leaders say it is a major challenge to meet the immigrants' needs.

The newcomers need language and job skills in order to build new lives, and many have little or no knowledge about Judaism, due to decades of religious suppression in the former Soviet Union. Their connections with the community are tenuous at best.

"In some places, a rabbi arrives once in three weeks," Hermesh said. "No one knows how to read Torah. I am afraid it will go on in this direction, because they are isolated. You can't create a Jewish life with 160 families."

The task force "came to study the situation and I tried to show them reality," said Bloch, head of the Frankfurt-based Central Welfare Council. "And I hope that it will lead to productive cooperation."

"The fact that they came here shows that there is a changing attitude in Israel," he added. Bloch accompanied the group on much of their trip. "They recognize that the Jewish community here is the third largest in Europe," he said.

"They said from the beginning that it was not about moving to Israel, but about improving life in Germany," said Jana Vimensky, 27, head of the Berlin Jewish Student Union. She was one of several students who met with the group on July 15.

Students had met previously with Jewish Agency representatives and their interest "did not surprise me," she said, but she added that she hoped they would "finally do something." □

## JEWISH WORLD

### Hate crime bill to be reintroduced

Supporters of hate crime legislation in the United States are seeking congressional co-sponsors to reintroduce the bill. The bill is expected to be introduced later this year. It would expand federal hate crime law to protect sexual orientation, gender and disability.

### Crown Heights sentencing soon

The family of the Chasidic man killed in the Crown Heights riots of 1991 is seeking a life sentence for the man convicted of violating his civil rights.

But lawyers for both sides involved in the case have said that the law only allows a 10-year sentence for Lemrick Nelson, who admitted to the killing.

Earlier this year, a jury found that Nelson violated Yankel Rosenbaum's civil rights, but it did not convict him of causing Rosenbaum's death.

Sentencing is scheduled for Aug. 15.

### 'War-crimes lite' law OK'd

The Belgian senate approved a watered-down version of a war-crimes bill.

The law drops the "universal jurisdiction" portion of a previous law that saw war crimes lawsuits — with no connection to Belgium — pressed against world leaders such as Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon, President Bush and British Prime Minister Tony Blair, The Associated Press reported.

The new bill says that only Belgian residents or citizens can be tried, and guarantees diplomatic immunity to visiting world leaders.

### Alleged Nazi loses citizenship

A federal judge revoked the citizenship of an alleged Nazi concentration camp guard.

U.S. District Court Judge Allyne Ross in New York ruled July 31 that Jakiw Palij, 79, lied on his 1949 visa application about having been an armed guard at the SS labor camp Trawniki. Palij claimed he had worked on his father's farm in Poland during the war.

Palij's attorney declined comment, The Associated Press reported.

### Moscow bomb dismantled

Police dismantled a booby-trapped, anti-Semitic sign next to a Moscow highway.

After a telephone tip, Moscow police defused a bomb wired to a placard that read, "Death to Jews."

In May 2002, another booby-trapped anti-Semitic sign detonated in the face of a woman who tried to remove it from a road outside Moscow. Since then, several such signs have been placed in Russia, wounding those who attempted to remove them.

Last year, a bomb planted in a pipe bearing an anti-Semitic slur exploded in a Moscow residential area, shattering windows but causing no injuries.

## Jews for Jesus sign controversial, and British Jews want it taken down

By Richard Allen Greene

LONDON (JTA) — British Jews are furious about a new Jews for Jesus advertising campaign.

The advertisements, which hit Britain in July, show a group of fervently Orthodox Jews at the Western Wall in Jerusalem. One of them is wearing a bright red Jews for Jesus T-shirt, while a slogan urges "Think for Yourself."

The ads have appeared in two national newspapers and on four billboards in Jewish areas of London.

The Board of Deputies, the umbrella organization that represents most British Jews, has complained to the Advertising Standards Authority about the campaign.

"This advertisement is clearly based upon the principle that the majority of Jews are unable to 'think for themselves' — i.e., believe in Jesus," the board's director general, Neville Nagler, wrote in the complaint.

"This is a highly objectionable notion, and one that gives great offense to the vast majority of Jewish people in this country. We call for the immediate withdrawal of the advertisement," he wrote.

The Advertising Standards Authority has opened an investigation into the campaign after receiving nearly 20 complaints, a spokeswoman told JTA.

The authority has compiled a report summarizing the complaints and requested a response from Jews for Jesus.

The regulators expect to rule on the case by the end of August, and could order the missionary organization to take the billboards down.

Joseph Steinberg, the U.K. director of Jews for Jesus, said the idea for the billboard — which features him in the Jews for Jesus T-shirt — came from a similar campaign used in the United States a few years ago.

He said the current advertising campaign was part of an international missionary push going on this summer.

"We are now in a very large outreach worldwide. London is a place where we have been very proactive," he said.

The group has been active in Britain for 13 years, he said, and currently has a paid staff of nine plus volunteers.

Steinberg said the ads were supposed to be funny. "It was done tongue in cheek," he said. "The only thing I can think is that Jews are offended by the message, which is that you can be Jewish and believe in Jesus."

But Rabbi Shmuel Arkush, the head of the U.K. anti-missionary group Operation Judaism, said there are several reasons Jews are upset about the ad.

For starters, he said, the implication that fervently Orthodox Jews do not "think for themselves" is outrageous.

"These are people who would be spending hours a day studying the Torah. The inference that" Jews for Jesus "think and we don't is such an affront," he said.

"It's absolute chutzpah and that's what riles people — and they're entitled to be riled," he said.

In addition to the offense caused by the particular slogan in the advertisements, Arkush said, the missionary movement itself is problematic.

"Let's call a spade a spade: You have a group of publicity-seeking individuals who are trying to peddle the impossible," he said.

For a Jew to believe in Jesus is "theologically without foundation. You have Jews, and you have Christians. You can't dance at both weddings."

There are a whole raft of registered charities who specialize in targeting Jews for conversion, he said.

"That puts a wedge between faith groups. We need religious authorities to promote respect between religions," he argued.

And he rejected Steinberg's accusation that Jews who were upset had missed the joke. "If he considers this to be amusing," Arkush said, "then I hope he has another job." □

## Waiting for economic upturn, Brazil's Jews struggle to get by

By Larry Luxner

SAO PAULO, Brazil (JTA) — In the working-class Bom Retiro neighborhood of South America's largest city, an inconspicuous sign in Hebrew and Portuguese stands out from the abundance of Korean-owned shops along Rua Ribeiro de Lima.

### The Jews of Latin America Part of a Series

The sign welcomes visitors to the "Instituicao Beneficente Israelita Ten Yad," a charity that since 1992 has offered hot meals and spiritual hope to thousands of impoverished Brazilian Jews.

Isaac Guinsberg, 69, is a regular at Ten Yad, having lunched there nearly every day for the last 10 years. "I used to work for the chevra kadisha," or burial society, he said. "I received quite a good salary and didn't want to come here, but it wasn't enough to live on."

Guinsberg, a Sao Paulo native, is divorced and has no contact with his children. About half of his monthly government pension of \$70 goes toward rent. "I feel good here," Guinsberg said. "If it weren't for Ten Yad I'd be in a very bad situation, because I have no money to buy food."

Ten Yad is one of several Jewish charities fighting hunger in Brazil, a vast nation of 175 million people. The devaluation of Brazil's currency, the real, in January 1999, wiped out the savings of many middle-class Jewish families. For the first time in their lives, many were forced to turn to charity to survive.

"We always knew that most of Brazil's Jews were middle class, but this last crisis was the most difficult for the community because the standard of living dropped dramatically," said Jayme Blay, president of the Federacao Israelita do Estado de Sao Paulo, an umbrella group of 55 institutions serving the 60,000 Jews of Sao Paulo state.

"This included a lot of Jewish entrepreneurs with little shops and businesses, and even professionals like lawyers, doctors and engineers," Blay said. "Our welfare institutions saw an enormous increase in their workload."

Blay estimated that 10 percent to 15 percent of Sao Paulo's Jews are receiving some kind of assistance.

"When the crisis arrived, many Brazilian Jews didn't have enough money to live through the crisis and wait until better times," he said. "The ones who lost their income cannot benefit at all from the improving situation, because right now they have to pay their debts, solve their problems, rebuild their lives and look for other jobs."

Brazil's new president, Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva, known here as "Lula," has made the struggle against hunger and poverty one of his major priorities. Elected last year as the first leftist president in a generation, Lula calls his poverty initiative "Fome Zero," Portuguese for "zero hunger."

Though Brazil's economic situation is gradually improving, it cannot come fast enough for the country's Jews.

The nation's economic turmoil has created quite a burden for Dora Lucia Brenner, 55, who runs what may be Brazil's largest Jewish charity, the Uniao Brasileiro-Israelita do Bem-Estar Social.

Known as Unibes, the Sao Paulo-based organization was

founded in 1915 to help Jewish immigrants from Eastern Europe. Brenner's own grandparents came to Brazil from Poland in 1920.

Today, Unibes provides housing, day care and financial assistance to 1,500 families. It has an annual budget of \$2.5 million.

"When I first came to Unibes 15 years ago, we had 500 Jewish families, mostly older and very sick people who had no other means of support," Brenner said. "In the last eight or nine years, because of the economic situation, we have lots of new poor, mainly young people in their 30s, 40s and 50s, people who don't have jobs.

"We are trying very hard to help these people, but it's hard because Brazil is not in a very good economic situation," she added.

Unibes occupies three large buildings along Sao Paulo's Rua Rodolfo Miranda. Its staff consists of 180 workers and 200 volunteers. In addition to caring for poor Jews, the organization also provides day-care facilities for more than 1,000 non-Jewish children. The organization gets money from the local Sao Paulo government and many foundations. It also has partnerships with Cinemark, a company that develops movie theaters and malls throughout Latin America, Fundacion Vitae, a non-profit organization that funds social and environmental programs, and Accor Hotels, Brenner said.

She estimated that Unibes receives between \$52 and \$62 per month per child to administer the day-care program.

Over at Ten Yad, a Chabad-Lubavitch organization, half a dozen female volunteers stood recently serving hot kosher lunches to about 130 pensioners in their 60s, 70s and 80s.

Across the hall from the cafeteria, a handful of Yiddish-speaking men were engaged in a lively political discussion. In another room, a group of women sat listening to a lecture on Judaism.

Therezinha Davidovich, coordinator of Ten Yad, said her organization served more than 148,000 hot lunches last year. The group has more than 300 volunteers, who do work ranging from helping poor newlyweds get financing for apartments to delivering "meals on wheels" to handicapped or immobile Jews.

The group also provides special subsidies for Torah study and holiday meals.

"Unfortunately, the demand for our services is rising fast," said Rabbi David Weitman, spiritual director of Ten Yad. "More Jews have lost their homes, and more people are alienated from the community because they can't afford to pay their synagogue membership dues."

Rising poverty has put a dent in synagogue membership. Sao Paulo has about 20 to 25 synagogues operating year-round. Most of them are Conservative or Reform. About 15 percent of Brazil's Jews attend Orthodox services.

Last year, the Sao Paulo state government chose Ten Yad to administer a hot-lunch program for indigent Brazilians.

Every morning at around 10 a.m., a line forms outside a rented storefront in Baixada, an impoverished neighborhood of Sao Paulo, where Ten Yad serves about 1,700 meals a day. The line often stretches for blocks as homeless people, drug addicts, alcoholics and Brazilians who simply are down on their luck wait for the meal, which costs about 35 cents.

"Since we are Jews, we have to do something for the local population too," Weitman said. □