



# Daily News Bulletin

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86th Year

## TOP NEWS IN BRIEF

### Israeli withdrawals delayed

Plans were delayed for Israel to hand over control of two West Bank cities to the Palestinians.

Israel reportedly wants to be guaranteed that Palestinians in those cities will not revert to terrorism once the hand over of Jericho and Kalkilya is complete.

For their part, the Palestinians want Israel to remove roadblocks at the exits of the cities.

### Dean: U.S. helps fund Hamas

American money that buys oil from Saudi Arabia helps fund Hamas, presidential candidate Howard Dean said.

The money funds the "teaching of small children to hate Americans, Christians and Jews," the former Vermont governor said Saturday in Buffalo.

### Rubinstein to check Sharon

Israel's attorney general has appointed a team to investigate a land-expropriation scandal surrounding the prime minister.

On Monday, Elyakim Rubinstein told the Transportation Ministry not to pay the Malmoud family of Kfar Malal some \$720,000 in compensation for land confiscated for a new road.

Rubinstein acted following reports that the ministry had upped the compensation by \$110,000 at the intervention of Ariel Sharon. Sharon was born in Kfar Malal and still owns land in the moshav.

### Ancient farm found

Israeli archaeologists unearthed the remains of a Jewish farmhouse from the first century.

The find, which also included remains of an 8,000-year-old Bronze Age settlement, occurred underneath an area slated to be part of the new Trans-Israel Highway.

The farmhouse apparently was abandoned during the Jewish revolt against the Romans in 70 C.E.

### Michigan Hillel vandalized

The University of Michigan's Hillel building was defaced with a swastika and obscenities during last week's blackout.

Police believe vandals took advantage of the Aug. 14 blackout to paint the graffiti, Hillel director Michael Brooks said. Police officials are viewing the episode as an isolated incident.

## IN THE DARK

### Loss of power brings communities closer — but shows unpreparedness

By Rachel Pomerance

NEW YORK (JTA) — It was Thursday afternoon, three days before 1,800 Jewish kids were to arrive for the final week of the JCC Maccabi games, and 40 delegation leaders were ironing out the logistics at a New Jersey hotel.

That's when the lights and the air conditioning went dead, and the room became hot and sticky.

But the organizers kept planning, hardly skipping a beat.

"I gotta tell you," said Lenny Silberman, North American continental director of the JCC Maccabi Games, "doing this for the games for 20 years and working with those communities, the potential for a big balagan" — brouhaha — "was definitely there."

But "it was amazing," he said Monday from his cell phone at the site of the games, the Jewish Community Center on the Palisades.

Thanks to the organizers' calm, the blackout didn't create even "an ounce" of anxiety — and all the athletes, hosted by local families, arrived in time for Sunday's opening ceremonies.

"We knew there's no power, but we also knew that we had 1,800 kids that are depending on us on Sunday, so we had to do what we had to do," Silberman said.

A mix of determination and calm was found in Jewish communities across the Northeast that were affected Aug. 14 by the massive blackout, the largest in the nation's history.

Jewish communities also mirrored the mood of the population at large, which was relieved to learn that the outage was the result of a system overload, not terrorism.

Yet the incident highlighted Jewish organizations' lack of preparedness for an emergency situation.

David Gad-Harf, executive director of the Jewish Community Council of Metropolitan Detroit, praised the spirit of communal cooperation — people took to the streets for block parties, cooking steaks that were defrosting — but called the power failure a "wake-up call not only for the Jewish community, but for America as a whole."

Without an "old-fashioned" non-electric phone on hand, Gad-Harf said, the agency was unable to contact local federation leaders or other Jewish agencies.

"We realized that we were really not prepared for a crisis of this kind," he said.

Hannah Rosenthal, executive director of the Jewish Council for Public Affairs, the umbrella organization for local federation community relations councils, agreed.

"We learned how completely dependent on electricity we are," she said, noting that even the organization's national contingency plan is dispatched through computers.

The alternative plan is to use telephones — which, if they were typical office phones, depend on electricity and didn't work in the blackout — followed by cell phones, whose networks quickly were overloaded.

"None of those three plans worked for us," she said.

A new backup system has been in the works, Rosenthal said, explaining that a computer located in the Midwest could release information remotely.

But even that wouldn't have helped last week, as parts of the Midwest went as black as Manhattan.

As a result, every Jewish agency had to fend for itself in the blackout — without the national mobilizations or alerts that are customary in emergencies.

There was "not the time or the communications capacity to mobilize," said John

## MIDEAST FOCUS

### Jerusalem Arabs arrested

Israel arrested five residents of eastern Jerusalem for alleged "terrorist training."

The men, who were believed to be training to re-establish a Palestinian security force in Jerusalem, reportedly are members of Yasser Arafat's presidential guard. Israel prevents eastern Jerusalem residents from participating in Palestinian security activities.

### Study: Israel vulnerable to terror

Israel is the second most vulnerable country to a terrorist attack in the next year, a new study says.

Only Colombia is more likely to suffer an attack than the Jewish state during the next 12 months, according to the World Markets Research Center, a risk-assessment company. The list ranks Pakistan third and the United States fourth.

### Israel to buy gas from Egypt

Israel will purchase natural gas from Egypt. On Monday, Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon decided to buy gas from Egypt rather than from British Gas, which works jointly with the Palestinian Authority off the shores of the Gaza Strip.

Sharon reportedly was concerned that the Palestinians would use the income to finance terrorism.

Shalom Simhon, chairman of the Knesset's Economic Committee, said Sharon had missed a chance to strengthen ties with the Palestinians.

### Jewish extremists to be held

Two alleged Jewish extremists will remain in custody until the end of their trial.

An Israeli court ruled Monday that Yitzhak Pass and Matityahu Shabo, accused in mid-July of carrying and transporting explosives to be used in a terrorist attack, will not be freed for now.

Pass' infant daughter, Shalhevet, was killed in a Palestinian attack in Hebron in March 2001.



## Daily News Bulletin

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Ruskay, executive vice president and CEO of the UJA-Federation of New York. "Our first responsibility was to deal with the safety and security of our people.

"Every agency with whom I've spoken was better prepared and had a better system in place than we did on 9/11, and yet there are times when you still need to call audibles," he said, using a term for football plays that are improvised in response to unexpected circumstances.

While commending the efforts of his federation's social service agencies, Ruskay noted that Jewish agencies realized they must establish more effective backup modes of communication.

Many rose to the occasion with resourcefulness.

Some 150 young people were staying in the hostel at Manhattan's 92nd St. Y when the lights went out.

Borrowing yoga mats from the gym, the staff turned the senior lounge into a makeshift boarding room. They served meals paid for with IOU's from local grocery stores and brought games and cards from their children's and seniors' centers and a transistor radio for news and music.

Despite the enormity of the power failure, Jewish communities across the country took it in stride and were only minimally hindered.

The Jewish contingent of an interfaith mission from Akron, Ohio, to Washington was about to fly home when they heard about the blackout.

Michael Wise, chief executive officer of the Jewish Community Board of Akron, which sponsored the trip, saw the flight would be canceled. So, using cell phones, Wise managed to book the group a flight to Pittsburgh and arrange for a bus from Akron's Shaw Jewish Community Center to pick up the tired travelers at the Pittsburgh airport.

The group — which included state representatives, judges, media professionals, clergy and school and business leaders — arrived in Akron at 1 a.m., only five hours later than planned.

"Everyone from our group was incredibly cooperative and understanding," Wise said. "They all said this was a trip they will definitely never forget."

Most Jewish organizations escaped Thursday's mishap without much difficulty. Others found a type of reprieve in the electric jolt.

"In a way it was magic," said Naomi Rose, executive director of the Miles Nadal JCC in Toronto, which closed early on Thursday.

"We got to see the stars," which usually are obliterated by the city lights, she said.

"People sort of felt reasonably positive about it," viewing it as a "pause in their hurried lives," she said.

At the Baycrest Terrace, a Jewish senior citizens home, volunteers climbed a dozen flights of stairs to deliver prearranged meals and check on elderly residents.

In Detroit, volunteers also climbed stairs to deliver water to residents of senior citizen apartments maintained by the community, while a local kosher food bank donated canned tuna fish and salmon, applesauce, peanut butter and bread.

Some employees drove as much as 75 miles, to Lansing, to pick up gallon jugs of water.

The wedding of Eli and Debbie Savage, a young Orthodox couple in Toronto, was due to begin Thursday evening soon after the lights went out.

It went ahead as scheduled. Some 350 wedding guests ate a festive meal warmed on gas stoves and danced to music played on a grand piano that had been wheeled into the banquet hall.

A hotel generator supplied a bit of backup lighting and air conditioning, as well as temporary power for a video camera.

After a night of dancing, the newlyweds were obliged to climb ten flights of stairs to their honeymoon suite with candles in hand.

A candlelit photo of the Savages appeared on the front page of The Globe and Mail's Saturday edition under the headlines "With Glowing Hearts" and "How the wedding sparks flew against a backdrop of darkness."

Guests commented that it had been one of the best weddings they had ever attended. □

(JTA Correspondent Bill Gladstone in Toronto contributed to this story. Material also came from the Akron Jewish News and the Detroit Jewish News.)

## JEWISH WORLD

### Greek anti-Semitism slammed

The Simon Wiesenthal Center criticized Greek media for fostering anti-Semitic attacks.

In a written statement, the Paris-based branch of the Wiesenthal Center said the Sabbath desecration this month of a synagogue of Auschwitz survivors in Ioannina that left swastikas, Greek crosses and anti-Semitic graffiti followed similar attacks on Holocaust memorials at Thessaloniki and Molos.

"These expressions of Jew-hatred are not isolated phenomena, but are endangered by a paroxysm of anti-Semitic stereotyping and Holocaust denial in the articles and cartoons of the national Greek media" related to its Middle East coverage, the center's Shimon Samuels said.

### Center helps Bnei Menashe

A vocational center for Jews recently opened in northeastern India.

The ORT Manipur Computer Center mainly serves the Bnei Menashe, a group of Indians who say they are descended from one of the Ten Lost Tribes of Israel and who have begun practicing Orthodox Judaism.

The center offers computer-related training.

### Senate lauds U.S. Jewish history

The U.S. Senate passed a resolution marking the 350th anniversary of American Jewish life.

The resolution, passed earlier this month, supports the designation of September 2004 as American Jewish History Month. That month will launch a yearlong celebration that will include a national exhibit at the Library of Congress in Washington.

In 1654, 23 Jewish refugees fled Brazil and landed, by mistake, in New Amsterdam, later renamed New York.

### Writers marked at Terezin

Works by young Jewish authors persecuted by the Nazis were read in the former Jewish ghetto Terezin.

The ceremony at Terezin, also known by its German name of Theresienstadt, was part of the German-Czech Festival in the Middle of Europe.

The event was attended by several Terezin survivors, including Helga Pollakova-Kinska, whose wartime diary was read for the first time in Czech under the title "Girls from Room No. 28."

### Students maintain cemetery

A group of students from across Europe returned home after 10 days spent maintaining a Jewish cemetery in the Czech Republic.

The students from Germany, Italy, Britain, France and the Czech Republic removed debris, cut grass around 3,000 gravestones and documented Hebrew inscriptions there.

## BEHIND THE ISSUES

### Facing opposition in Senate, Bush expected to push Pipes nomination

By Matthew E. Berger

WASHINGTON (JTA) — President Bush is likely to use his executive power to push through the nomination of Middle East expert Daniel Pipes to a federal think tank, despite opposition from Arab Americans and some congressional Democrats.

Bush is expected to name Pipes, the director of the Philadelphia-based Middle East Forum, to the board of the U.S. Institute of Peace through a recess appointment. That appointment would allow Pipes to serve without Senate approval through the end of the congressional term, according to sources familiar with the situation.

Pipes' writings have been controversial for years, and his nomination to the USIP has provoked strong reactions from the Arab-American community, as well as from some mainstream newspapers, since it was announced in April.

Muslim and Arab groups have launched a major lobbying campaign with their lawmakers against the nomination, painting Pipes as an "Islamophobe" who has made racist comments against Arabs and is unqualified to serve on the USIP board.

"Daniel Pipes is a bigot," said Hussein Ibish, communications director of the American-Arab Anti-Discrimination Committee. "That is a clear and simple fact, demonstrative by his own words."

Arab groups claim Pipes supports profiling Muslims and Arabs, has suggested that they do not follow proper hygiene and has criticized the enfranchisement of American Muslims, among a list of charges.

Pipes has dismissed such accusations as character assassination by extremists who he believes have taken over American Islamic organizations. He maintains that he is not opposed to Islam per se, but only to the religion's more violent manifestations.

The USIP, to which Pipes stands to be appointed, was founded by Congress in 1984 to create programs that foster peace. The organization frequently sponsors lectures in Washington on international conflicts. Its 15-member board is appointed by the president and confirmed by the Senate.

Pipes consistently has refused to comment on the nomination. But several American Jewish organizations — including the American Jewish Committee and the American Israel Public Affairs Committee — have been working on his behalf.

"We've known and worked with Daniel Pipes for many years," said Jason Isaacson, director of government and international affairs at the AJCommittee. "We've come to rely on his insight and scholarship."

Long before Sept. 11, Pipes warned that militant Islam posed a serious danger to the United States, a danger often overlooked or minimized by scholars fearful of appearing culturally intolerant.

Observers say they have been surprised that Bush is willing to expend political capital in support of Pipes.

But others say that the recess appointment allows the administration to support Pipes without the embarrassment of long confirmation hearings or Pipes' possible defeat.

At a hearing on his nomination last month before the Senate Health, Education, Labor and Pensions Committee, several lawmakers spoke out against Pipes.

The vote was postponed, but many left believing the nomination would not pass.

After media reports last week suggested that Bush would use his recess appointment power, Arab-American and interfaith groups sought to demonize Pipes and urged their members to call the White House.

Nihad Awad, executive director of the Council on American-Islamic Relations, said that a recess nomination of Pipes "would be a slap in the face to all those who seek to build bridges of understanding between people of faith."

One group suggested that White House officials' support for right-wing Israeli leaders was driving the appointment.

A White House spokeswoman refused to comment, saying only that the White House supports all of its nominees. □

## BEHIND THE HEADLINES

## For Cubans on birthright, a tie is formed to their ancestors' land

By Loolwa Khazzoom

TEL AVIV (JTA) — For many travelers, the threat of terrorism is a compelling reason to stay away from Israel.

For Maria Louisa Zayon, it was a compelling reason to visit.

"In Israel now it's a very hard time," says the 21-year journalism student from Havana, Cuba. "I think it's very important that people like us come to be together with Israel."

By "people like us," Zayon means the eight Cuban Jewish youths on the birthright Israel program, the first organized group from Cuba to visit Israel since the 1973 Yom Kippur War.

On Sunday, the participants finished a 10-day tour on birthright, which provides free trips for Jewish youths aged 18 to 26 who have never visited Israel on a peer tour.

They were accompanied by William Miller, director of ORT-Cuba and a counselor for the trip, and David Tasher, a board member of the organized Cuban Jewish community.

"We came here to build bridges between Cuba and Israel," Miller said, "to bring Jewish youth closer to Israel, to see a little more about the reality here."

Cuban Jews, he says, know of Israel only through the Torah or through contemporary books and magazines.

"To see the history behind us, in front of us, to see Judaism before us, to see the Torah in front of us, living, was something incredible," he said.

Delegations from Switzerland, Bulgaria and Venezuela also took part in birthright for the first time this summer.

In all, some 8,500 youths are expected to visit Israel on birthright this summer — a 70 percent increase over last summer — and 15,000 for the year.

Some 48,000 young Jews from 34 countries have taken part in birthright since the program began in 1999.

Cuba has not had diplomatic ties with Israel since Cuban President Fidel Castro cut them before the 1973 Yom Kippur War.

Castro offered training and support to PLO guerillas over the years and was an ally of such anti-Israel figures as Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat and Libyan leader Muammar Gadhafi.

Still, Cuba began allowing its Jews to emigrate in 1994 for a fee, paid by the Jewish state.

By 2000, some 500 Cuban Jews had reached Israel under the behind-the-scenes arrangement, known as Operation Cigar.

For most of those who remained in Cuba, however, a trip to Israel was out of the question — until birthright came along.

One of the most memorable birthright experiences for the Cuban group was standing at the Western Wall on Tisha B'Av, "seeing all the different Jewish people all together, seeing everyone and being part of this also," Miller said.

Annette Eli, 22, said another powerful moment was right before landing at the airport. "For the first time we saw the Land of Israel, we had an aerial view of Tel Aviv," she said. "We were very emotional."

"The kids were all crying," Miller said.

Rosa Delgado, 23, was especially excited about the Diaspora Museum in Tel Aviv, where she was able to learn about the Jewish community of Turkey — where her family has roots — and about

Jewish communities in South America.

The Cuban participants "were very excited and emotional" during the trip, said Tal Somech, the security guard who accompanied them. "They said that it was the most beautiful 10 days of their lives."

The youngsters intend to bring their positive memories back to Cuba, telling people what Israel was like.

"The program has made every single one of its participants the best ambassador Israel could possibly have in his or her respective country of origin," Natan Sharansky, Cabinet minister for Jerusalem and Diaspora affairs and chair of birthright Israel's steering committee, said in a news release.

Not only has the program increased the number of Jewish youths with personal experience in Israel, but it has boosted Israel's tourism industry during an economic crisis.

"Birthright Israel has made an important contribution to both local tourism and the long-term strengthening of Zionist roots amongst Diaspora youth," Avi Ellah, president of the Israel Hotel Association, said in a recent statement.

The various birthright groups met up in Jerusalem on Aug. 12 for a gala celebration that included appearances by Prime Minister Ariel Sharon and birthright Israel funders such as Charles Bronfman and Michael Steinhardt.

As each country represented was announced, that delegation raised its country's flag. When the Cuban flag was displayed, the Cuban representatives became teary-eyed.

"We are the pioneers in this kind of experience," Zayon said proudly, "because after us, other groups of young Jewish people can come from Cuba. And we want that to happen."

Organizing this first trip took a lot of effort, Miller said.

After finding out about the program on the Internet, Miller contacted birthright Israel offices in Jerusalem. He then arranged sponsorships from Canadian Jewish federations.

With a letter of invitation in hand showing that the trip would be fully funded by outside sources, Miller approached Cuban government officials.

"We explained to the government our reasons why it's important for Jewish people to come to Israel," said Miller, who had to explain the Jews' historical and religious connection to the land. "They understood."

"Now the land of Israel, the Holy Land, is nearer to us," Zayon said. "We always heard about Israel, the land of our forefathers and foremothers, but now it's reality for us. We are actually in Israel. It's amazing." □

## Greek isle fetes Israeli heroes

ATHENS (JTA) — Some early members of Israel's navy marked the 50th anniversary of a daring rescue on an earthquake-prone Greek island.

To mark a major 1953 temblor that destroyed the capital of Argostoli, the island of Cephalonia on Sunday invited an Israeli navy squadron that helped rescue victims, Reuters said.

Admiral Shlomo Erel, who led the squadron in Israel's then-fledgling navy, recalled being on a training mission near the island when a quake measuring 7.3 on the Richter scale struck and the Israelis heard a distress signal.

The sailors found an island that was calm, "apart from the fact that we could observe cliffs sliding down to the sea," he said. □