



IN THE NEWS

Vatican: We helped Jews during the war

The Vatican released documents supporting its position that it helped Jews during World War II.

One of the letters in two volumes and eight DVDs released this week is from a bishop who complained in 1943 that the Vatican was doing too much to help Jews.

The Anti-Defamation League welcomed the release of the documents but said important archives remain closed.

Allstate reverses Israel travel policy

Allstate reversed its decision to deny life insurance to travelers visiting Israel and Palestinian areas.

Allstate was one of several U.S. insurance companies that denied insurance to those who had traveled or planned on traveling to Israel.

On Tuesday, Rep. Rahm Emanuel (D-Ill.) lauded the insurer's decision but said other companies' policies made it necessary to pass legislation on the issue.

"Allstate's decision is a good first step, but we need to make sure that all insurance companies stop discriminating based on either past or future travel," Emanuel said.

Bush stresses freedom as NATO summit ends

The fight against Palestinian terrorism and against tyranny in Iran is part of the struggle for freedom in the Middle East, President Bush said.

Bush on Tuesday ended a NATO summit in Istanbul by calling for greater democracy in the Middle East and comparing struggles against violence and terrorism in the region.

The JTA World Report will not be published on Monday, July 5 because of Independence Day in the U.S.

WORLD REPORT

PUBLISHED WEEKDAYS BY JTA—THE GLOBAL NEWS SERVICE OF THE JEWISH PEOPLE · WWW.JTA.ORG

In landmark ruling, high court says Israel must reroute security fence

By DAN BARON

JERUSALEM (JTA) — Security cannot come at any price, Israel has decided.

The High Court of Justice on Wednesday ordered that a 20-mile section of the West Bank security barrier be rerouted to reduce the hardship caused to Palestinians on whose lands it will be built.

Israeli defense officials, insisting that the original route offered the best bulwark against terrorist infiltration, cried foul. But officials also hoped that the landmark ruling would offset Arab rancor at the vast project, which led to hearings at the International Court of Justice in The Hague.

"The current routing would impede upon the entire way of life in traditional villages," the three-justice panel said, finding in favor of petitions lodged by Palestinians from northwest Jerusalem and their Israeli neighbors.

"Military commanders must consider alternatives," the judges ruled. "Even if they result in a lower level of security, they should bring a substantial — even if not complete — reduction in the harm done to the lives of the local inhabitants."

The Defense Ministry bowed to the order, though officials noted it would delay by as much as six months the completion of the fence.

The fence is planned to stretch for 370 miles along the contours of Israel's boundary with the West Bank and around Jewish settlement blocs.

"The rerouting of these sections will be based on the principles set by the High Court of Justice, namely the proper balance

between security and humanitarian considerations," the ministry said in a statement.

Prime Minister Ariel Sharon was to convene a meeting of senior figures Thursday to discuss the ruling. Defense Minister Shaul Mofaz, senior defense establishment figures, Justice Minister Yosef "Tommy" Lapid and Attorney General Menachem Mazuz were expected to participate, Ha'aretz reported.

The court froze construction in the disputed area in March, pending a final decision.

The petitioners argued that Palestinian humanitarian considerations were key, not contrary, to Israel's interests, arguing that the plan to expropriate some 12,000 acres of West Bank land northwest of Jerusalem had risked driving more Palestinians toward violence.

"Looking out for the Palestinians is in itself essential for Israeli security," said Haggai Givon, a resident

of the Jerusalem suburb of Mevasseret Zion who went to court to stop the fence going up on farmland belonging to Palestinians in the neighboring village of Beit Furiq.

The two communities enjoy a relationship of coexistence largely unscathed by three-and-a-half years of the Palestinian intifada, but in recent months Beit Furiq had seen increasingly violent protests against the planned fence. Two Palestinian villagers have been shot dead by riot police.

"I say bravo to those people who went to the High Court for us," Beit Furiq resident Mohammed Kandil said. "Those people are decent human beings."

Jerusalem officials voiced fear that Wednesday's ruling could prompt more petitions against other sections of the fence

Continued on page 2

**SECURITY
VS.
HARDSHIP**

■ High court says Israel must reroute its security fence to reduce hardship

Continued from page 1

not yet constructed, further delaying a project Sharon has vowed to complete by September.

"We should pass an emergency law requiring that the fence be completed, according to its original plan, as a matter of life and death," Health Minister Danny Naveh told reporters.

But another deadline looms: The International Court of Justice is due to rule July 9 on claims by several Arab nations that the security fence is illegal and masks an Israeli scheme to annex West Bank land. Israel refused to appear before the court, arguing that the issue is not within

the court's purview. Few in Jerusalem expect sympathy for Israel's security needs at The Hague, whose decisions are not binding but can prompt more serious U.N. resolutions.

Yet Israel's High Court of Justice, which enjoys world renown for regularly upholding Palestinian rights, may have gone a long way toward offsetting international pressure against the controversial fence.

"Today's ruling not only showed that Israel does not freely trample on the underdog, but also reaffirmed the fact that the fence is a bona fide lifesaver, rather than some ploy to seize West Bank land," a

senior source in Sharon's office told JTA.

While some right-wing politicians in Israel blasted the decision, the Conference of Presidents of Major American Jewish Organizations released a positive statement.

The judges rejected the contention that the fence was a political measure and accepted that it was a security measure, James Tisch, the conference's chairman, and Malcolm Hoenlein, its executive vice president, noted in the statement.

"The ruling renders the case before the International Court of Justice all the more irrelevant and inappropriate," they said. ■

Canadian Jews hopeful but wary after election

By BILL GLADSTONE

TORONTO (JTA) — Canadian voters have reduced the Liberal government to a minority in the House of Commons, but Jewish officials remain guardedly optimistic that Prime Minister Paul Martin won't be swayed by the anti-American and anti-Israel positions of his likely coalition partners.

Some observers say Canada's new Parliament looks a little bit like Israel's Knesset because it's headed by a minority government that depends upon political coalitions to govern.

"A minority Liberal government that looks to the" left-wing New Democratic Party "for support on issues regarding

Israel would be a concern to the Jewish community," said Frank Dimant, executive vice president of B'nai Brith Canada. "On the other hand, if it looks to the Conservatives for support on these issues, that could be very good for the Jewish community."

Joseph Ben-Ami, the Ottawa-based communications director for B'nai Brith Canada, noted that foreign policy and various identifiably Jewish issues rarely were discussed during a campaign that touched on health care, taxation, same-sex marriage, child pornography and a Liberal spending scandal. ■

Rather than endorsing a party or slate of candidates, Jewish officials urged Jews to get involved in the political process and vote in Monday's hard-fought election.

Results showed the Liberals with 135 seats, the Conservatives with 99, the Bloc Quebecois with 54 and the New Democratic Party with 19. The remaining seat was held by an independent.

Though they didn't win the election as some polls had predicted, the Conservatives made strong gains in most of the country.

The Conservatives share many of the Jewish community's stands on a host of foreign policy issues and related issues. They also are regarded as the party most supportive of Israel's right to defend itself against terrorism.

Before the election, Jewish officials were evenhanded in their praise for Martin and Stephen Harper, the Conservative leader, regarding their sympathy for Jewish concerns and support for Israel.

Privately, however, many expressed dissatisfaction with the Liberals' spotty voting record on Israel-related resolutions at the United Nations, their slowness to enact counterterrorism legislation and other concerns.

"We're hoping that the government continues its strong bilateral relationship with Israel and, frankly, that it starts to improve its voting record at the U.N. and its support for Israel in international institutions," said Ed Morgan, national president of the Canadian Jewish Congress.

Martin also welcomed the return to Ottawa of a handful of incumbent politicians — including Irwin Cotler, the former justice minister — known for their strong support of Jewish issues and Israel.

But he noted that several outspoken foes of Israel also were returning to Ottawa.

"We're going to keep our eye on Liberal members of Parliament who take positions that are contrary to the positions of the government," he said. "If the government has a specific position on the Middle East and one of its" legislators "is outspoken to the contrary, then he or she should be admonished."

Jewish leaders were incensed after strongly anti-Israel comments from Liberal legislators went unpunished under former Prime Minister Jean Chretien, who stepped down in December.

On the domestic front, Jewish leaders give the major parties top marks for their across-the-board condemnation of a recent spate of anti-Semitic attacks. In the latest incident, swastikas were spray-painted in the Toronto area on election day. ■



WORLD REPORT

Howard E. Friedman
President

Mark J. Joffe
Executive Editor and Publisher

Lisa Hostein
Editor

Michael S. Arnold
Managing Editor

Lenore A. Silverstein
Finance and Administration Director

Paula Simmonds
Marketing and Development Director

JTA WORLD REPORT is published five days a week, except holidays, by the Jewish Telegraphic Agency Inc., 330 Seventh Ave., New York, N.Y. 10001-5010. For more information about how to subscribe by e-mail, fax or regular mail, call (212) 643-1890, or visit our Web site at www.jta.org.
© JTA. Reproduction only with permission.

Study: Conservative Jews less observant

By JOE BERKOFSKY

NEW YORK (JTA) — College-age Jews affiliated with the Conservative movement identify more with Israel since the start of the Palestinian uprising and voice pride in their heritage, yet observe fewer religious rituals as they go out on their own and often date non-Jews.

Those disparate findings surfaced in the third phase of a rare, decade-long longitudinal study that tracked the Jewish engagement of 1,006 young Jews who have grown up in the Conservative movement.

Called "Eight Up: The College Years," the study began tracking the students in the Bar and Bat Mitzvah class of 1994-1995, continued through high school in 1999, and then surveyed them in their junior or senior year of college.

The project, by the Ratner Center for the Study of Conservative Judaism at the Jewish Theological Seminary, is modeled after the British documentary film series "42 Up" that followed a group of children from age 7 into adulthood.

It surfaces as the centrist movement that once dominated the American Jewish scene is navigating its way through a period marked by declining membership and debate over such issues as the status of homosexuals, driving on Shabbat and criticism that leaders have failed to shape a clear vision for the rank and file.

"They're reflecting the community they're coming from, and it presents a challenge for us," said Rabbi Jerome Epstein, executive vice president of the United Synagogue of Conservative Judaism, the movement's congregational arm.

Led by researchers Ariela Keysar and Barry Kosmin and funded by the Avi Chai Foundation, the study offers both good and bad news for the movement, said Jack Wertheimer, director of the Ratner Center.

"On measures of feelings about being Jewish, attitudes toward the Jewish community and attitudes toward Israel, these students are quite positive and if anything became more positive" over time, Wertheimer said.

"But when it comes to religious observance, attending synagogue services and ritual observance, they have been in decline" starting in the high school years, he added. "We didn't sugarcoat this."

The young Jews surveyed are increasingly open to dating or marrying outside

the faith, though the majority still say they want to marry another Jew. Asked how important it was to marry a Jew, the study found:

- 51 percent said it was very important, down from 58 percent in 1999;

- 36 percent said it was somewhat important, up from 31 percent in 1999;

- 13 percent said it was not important, up from 11 percent in 1999.

Meanwhile, 41 percent said they prefer to date Jews but also date non-Jews, while 35 percent said they did not care whether they date Jews. Only 18 percent dated only Jews.

Their plans in high school and their actual behavior in college are not consistent, said Keysar, one of the researchers. "They're still not ready to make commitments."

Among the most significant positive trends in the study was the students' growing attachment to Israel. Conducted in 2003, three years after the outbreak of the Palestinian intifada, the study found 66 percent of students said Israel was "very important" to them, up from 54 percent in 1999 and 56 percent in 1995.

A majority of these students, 60 percent, reported having visited Israel since the study began, with 14 percent of them having gone since entering college. In contrast, only 54 percent of their parents went during the same period.

Meanwhile, 68 percent reported joining a Hillel chapter or another Jewish student group, in college, 8 percent a Chabad organization, 7 percent the American Israel Public Affairs Committee and 6 percent the United Jewish Appeal, which raises money for Jewish causes.

Asked what being a Jew involves, 79 percent said "remembering the Holocaust," 74 percent said "leading an ethical and moral life," 72 percent said "caring about Israel" and 68 percent said "countering anti-Semitism."

During college, 48 percent of the students said they had experienced anti-Semitism, up from 42 percent during high school and 29 percent before then.

Reacting to the statement "I am proud to be a Jew," 66 percent agreed "strongly," while 32 percent agreed. That reflected

little change from 1999, when 67 percent agreed strongly and 31 percent agreed.

"Some of the dire views as to what college campuses mean for the Jewish future

really are exaggerated," Wertheimer said. "This group, on some very important measures, continues to identify very strongly as Jews."

Though 92 percent also felt some connection to "the Jewish people," a minority felt such ties included religious observance. The survey found

that among the college students in 2003:

- 34 percent attended synagogue only on the High Holidays, up from 22 percent in high school and 14 percent in 1995;

- 28 percent avoided mixing meat and dairy while eating in restaurants, compared to 31 percent in 1999 and 39 percent in 1995;

- 78 percent said they intended to fast on Yom Kippur, down from 86 percent in 1999 and 90 percent in 1995.

- 25 percent said they never marked Shabbat, while 49 percent sometimes did. In 1999, 26 percent of high school students said their family did something "special" on Friday night or Shabbat, and 34 percent said their families "sometimes" did so.

A minority also engaged in formal Jewish education. Of the college students, 37 percent said they'd taken a Jewish studies course. Of that sub-group, 40 percent said they took a Hebrew language course and 23 percent a course in Holocaust studies.

The study also found young Jews more plugged in than ever before. Among the college students, 58 percent said they had surfed a Jewish Web site and 41 percent read a Jewish newspaper or periodical online. Only 12 percent said they had read a Jewish-themed book.

Keysar, one of the researchers, found that troubling. "We are the people of the book; for this generation, reading Jewish books is at the lowest point."

At the same time, Keysar found it "amazing" how comfortable these students were in discussing their Jewish identity. "Their connectedness with the community is something we have to bear in mind," she said.

Wertheimer said it was not clear whether or not there would be sufficient funding to continue the longitudinal study. ■

'Eight Up' is a longitudinal study that tracks the same people over several years.

NEWS IN BRIEF

MIDDLE EAST

Shalom to talk Gaza in D.C.

Israel's foreign minister will meet with senior Bush administration officials to discuss Israel's Gaza withdrawal plans.

Silvan Shalom will meet Friday with Condoleezza Rice, President Bush's national security adviser, and then next week with Secretary of State Colin Powell.

It's the first Cabinet-level visit to Washington since Prime Minister Ariel Sharon's Cabinet approved the Gaza withdrawal plan June 6.

Topping Shalom's agenda will be Egypt's proposals to help train Palestinian Authority forces to assume control of the Gaza Strip once Israel withdraws in 2005.

Israel to fund settlers

Israel budgeted \$33 million for defending settlements outside the West Bank security barrier.

The funding authorized Wednesday by the Knesset Finance Committee is to go toward fortifying 40 settlements that lie east of the fence's final route.

Palestinians accuse Israel of planning eventually to connect these settlements' individual peripheral fences to the main barrier.

Israel denies the charge.

Dirt and blood

An Israeli rabbi likened territorial concessions to murder.

"According to Jewish law, anyone who transfers even a tiny portion of Israel to the gentiles is considered a 'murderous pursuer,' with all the consequences that entails," Rabbi Avigdor Neventzal, chief rabbi of Jerusalem's Old City, said in a speech to high-school students Tuesday.

By invoking the legal principle of *din rodef*, which permits the killing of those threatening the lives of others, Neventzal echoed radical rabbis who made the same argument in 1995, when then-Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin was making territorial concessions.

Some say the rabbis' pronouncements paved the way for Rabin's assassination. On Wednesday, Israeli lawmakers demanded that police investigate Neventzal on suspicion of inciting political violence.

"The next murder is on the way," said Yuli Tamir of the Labor Party.

Palestinians continue rocket fire

Palestinians fired mortar shells Wednesday morning at a Gaza Strip settlement, causing light damage.

The attack on Neveh Dekalim followed shelling in the area overnight, including rocket attacks, the Jerusalem Post reported.

In the West Bank, Palestinians threw a firebomb at a car traveling on a highway near Modi'in. A soldier was wounded in the incident.

NORTH AMERICA

Canadian court rules for sukkahs

Canada's Supreme Court ruled in favor of Jewish condo owners' right to put up sukkahs. In a 5-4 vote Wednesday, the court ruled that the condo owners in Montreal had the right to put up the sukkahs on their balconies. Condo rules had prevented any construction on balconies or porches, but the court said religious rights took precedence as long as safety was not an issue.

Nader: White House Israel's 'puppet'

The U.S. Congress and White House are "puppets" of Israel, Ralph Nader said.

"The subservience of our congressional and White House puppets

to Israeli military policy has been consistent," the independent candidate for president told Pat Buchanan in an interview in this month's American Conservative magazine.

"Both parties concede their independent judgment to the pro-Israeli lobbies in this country because they perceive them as determining the margin in some state elections and as sources of funding," he said. Nader, who said Israelis enjoy greater freedoms than Americans in discussing Israeli policies, said he would heed Israel's peace movement in formulating his own policies.

New Reconstructionist chief

A Brandeis University professor was tapped to lead the Jewish Reconstructionist Federation.

Carl Sheingold this week was named executive vice president of the Reconstructionist movement's congregational arm, which includes more than 100 synagogues and *chavurot*, or informal congregations. Sheingold, who taught management in the Hornstein Program in Jewish Communal Service and was director of the Fisher Bernstein Institute for Leadership Development in Jewish Philanthropy, both at Brandeis, will start Sept. 1.

Agudah blasts Supreme Court ruling

Agudath Israel of America blasted the U.S. Supreme Court for its ruling on Internet pornography. "This is the third time over the past several years that the Supreme Court has favored the rights of online pornographers and the pitiful adults who seek out their filth over the interests of innocent and impressionable children," said Rabbi David Zwiebel, Agudah's executive vice president for government and public affairs.

In a 5-4 decision, the court ruled Tuesday that the Child Online Protection Act, which fines people who place on the Internet images deemed harmful to minors, does not meet constitutional free speech standards.

ADL lobbyist David Brody dies

David Brody, a top Anti-Defamation League official in Washington for 40 years, died at age 88. Brody, who died Saturday in Washington, was close to leading political figures in both parties and was known for his lively, off-the-record dinner parties.

Brody played a key role in lobbying for punitive measures against companies that complied with the Arab boycott against Israel and for linking trade with the Soviet Union to human rights issues.

WORLD

U.N. parley condemns suicide attacks

The chairman of a U.N. meeting in Africa on Palestinian rights condemned suicide bombings.

"We reject suicide attacks against civilians. Nothing could justify such murderous acts, no matter what the activity," said Paul Badji, chairman of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People, which met in Cape Town.

South African President Thabo Mbeki called for a program of action from the conference and said it is not true that "to support Palestine is to make a statement that is hostile to Israel."

He also said no solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict would be found without the participation of Palestinian Authority President Yasser Arafat.

Israel was not at the conference.

But it was subjected to a barrage of criticism for alleged human rights abuses.

The conference also endorsed a two-state solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.