



IN THE NEWS

Israeli Jew kills 4 in terror attack on bus

An AWOL Israeli soldier killed four Arabs in a terror attack on a bus in an Israeli Arab town.

After his shooting attack on a bus in Shfaram on Thursday night, Eden Tzuberi, 19, was killed by an Arab mob.

Tzuberi was from Rishon le-Zion but had moved to the West Bank settlement Tapuah and was known for his extremist views on the Israeli-Arab conflict.

"This was a reprehensible act by a bloodthirsty Jewish terrorist who sought to attack innocent Israeli citizens," Prime Minister Ariel Sharon said in a statement.

Indictment charges 2 as AIPAC case unfolds

Federal charges against two former employees of the American Israel Public Affairs Committee detail their activities dating to 1999.

An indictment unsealed Thursday in Virginia against Steve Rosen, AIPAC's former policy director, and Keith Weissman, its former Iran analyst, charge the two with "conspiracy to communicate national defense information to persons not entitled to receive it."

The indictment alleges that the conspiracy started in 1999 and charges the two with revealing information related to terrorist activities in Central Asia, a 1996 attack on a U.S. military base in Saudi Arabia and information related to Iran.

Previously, Rosen and Weissman were linked only with a case against Larry Franklin, a former Pentagon Iran analyst, that started in 2003.

The charges are "entirely unjustified," Abbe Lowell, Rosen's attorney, told JTA.

"We expect that the trial will show this prosecution represents a misguided attempt to criminalize the public's right to participate in the political process," Lowell said.

Rosen "looks forward to being vindicated at trial."

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Avi Ohayon/GPO/BP Images

Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon signs evacuation orders for the settlements in the Gaza Strip, earlier this year in Jerusalem.

Post-withdrawal, Sharon faces challenges on more than one front

By LESLIE SUSSER

JERUSALEM (JTA) — With its planned withdrawal from Gaza and the northern West Bank virtually a fait accompli, Israel is bracing for the morning after. Israeli decision makers expect challenges on several fronts: international, Palestinian and domestic.

The first challenge could be a call for a new international conference to kick-start the Israeli-Palestinian peace process. France first suggested the idea six months ago, and it was later picked up by Russia and the United States.

Israel remains adamantly opposed.

Israeli officials argue that before weighty peace issues can be discussed, the Palestin-

ians must show they can run their affairs in the Gaza Strip and prevent terrorism. The Israelis assert that a premature peace parley could do more harm than good by signaling to the Palestinians that the process can move forward even if they don't carry out their promised security, economic and political reforms or stop attacks against Israel.

Western diplomats, however, fear the process could bog down unless strong international pressure is exerted on both sides. An international conference, they say, would be part of that effort.

In the Israeli view, the key to future progress lies in the emergence of a credible Palestinian peace partner. Israel's post-withdrawal

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■ *Once the withdrawal is complete, Sharon will face a host of challenges*

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strategy, therefore, will be to urge the international community to focus on creating a Palestinian leadership strong enough to run Gaza, prevent terror and conduct meaningful peace negotiations with Israel.

The best way to do this, the Israelis say, is to boost the Palestinian economy.

Instead of rushing into an ill-timed peace conference, the international community should turn its energy to raising funds for investment in Gaza, Israeli officials argue. Israeli Foreign Ministry spokesman Mark Regev told JTA that Israel is fully supportive of the efforts by former World Bank President James Wolfensohn to put together an international investment package and of the pledge by the world's richest nations at the recent G-8 conference in Scotland to raise \$3 billion a year for Gaza for each of the next three years.

"It is in our interest that Gaza be a success story," Regev says. "Because if there is a 'disengagement dividend' and ordinary Gazans feel tangible economic benefits after our withdrawal, that could help create the climate for the emergence of a genuine peace partner for Israel."

For Israel, Regev says, "partner" is the key word: "If we see that we have a partner," he declares, "we will need no conferences or prodding to move ahead."

But there is a dilemma for Israel: How to enable Palestinian Authority forces to become strong enough to exercise control over Gaza, without constituting a security threat to Israel itself?

In her recent visit to the area, U.S. Sec-

retary of State Condoleezza Rice was adamant about supplying the Palestinian Authority with armored personnel carriers and light weapons to keep the peace or win a possible showdown with terrorist groups such as Hamas.

Israel, however, wants strict controls on the Palestinian buildup, fearing that the guns could be turned on Jerusalem or Tel Aviv — or used to carry out terrorist attacks, given the P.A. security forces' deep involvement in terrorism during the intifada. Since he took office in January, one of P.A. President Mahmoud Abbas' main strategies for dealing with terrorist groups has been to offer their members uniforms in the official P.A. forces.

On the Palestinian front, the Israelis see two scenarios: Gaza succeeding and becoming the basis for negotiations over Palestinian statehood; Gaza failing and becoming part of a new intifada against Israel, focused mainly on the West Bank.

In the first case, Regev says, Israel will be ready for further withdrawals; in the latter, the international community will understand why Israel cannot be expected to hand over more land.

Regev says Israel will seek international endorsement for the fact that it has withdrawn fully from Gaza, just as it did after its May 2000 withdrawal from southern Lebanon. That would deny the Palestinians any pretext for continuing to wage war from Gaza.

On the domestic front, the big question is Prime Minister Ariel Sharon's future in his Likud Party, where he can't count on a majority in key institutions such as the party's Central Committee or Knesset faction.

Even if Sharon were to beat off a leadership challenge from Finance Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, he would be unlikely to enter the next Knesset with a more supportive faction.

The answer for Sharon could be to engineer what is often referred to as the "big bang" of Israeli politics, in which the Likud's more moderate wing joins with the Shinui Party and moderate parts of the Labor Party to form a strong centrist alliance, with Sharon at its head.

Sharon denies that he has anything

like this in mind. But shrewd observers of the Israeli political scene point out that he did nothing to bring back ex-Li-

kudniks during a recent party-membership drive. Since the party leader is elected in a primary that is open to all Likud members, these observers conclude that Sharon has already decided not to run against Netanyahu within the Likud and instead to

find a leadership spot for himself outside the party.

Either way, politicians and pundits predict early elections in the first half of 2006, and the key issue will be Israel's next move after the Gaza withdrawal.

Hawks such as Netanyahu will advocate digging in behind the new lines; Sharon's people will say it depends on what happens in Gaza; Labor leaders will push for further withdrawals from the West Bank; and further to the left, the Yahad leader Yossi Beilin will revive the so-called Geneva initiative as a model for a final peace deal with the Palestinians.

The domestic debate in Israel could influence moves by the international community: whether the call is to proceed step-by-step according to the internationally approved "road map" peace plan; to attempt a major leap based on something like the Geneva initiative, which points to possible solutions on core issues like borders, Jerusalem and refugees; or to leave the way open for more unilateral moves by Israel.

But the most pressing issue on Israel's domestic agenda after the withdrawal is likely to be the rift between national religious Jews and the state. Rabbi Avraham Isaac Kook, the spiritual father of religious Zionism, saw the state as "the beginning of redemption," a necessary step leading toward the coming of the Messiah.

Consequently, the movement always was strongly Zionist and supportive of state institutions, especially the army. Now there's a debate among religious Zionists as to how much a state that gives land to its enemies and evacuates Jewish settlements is fulfilling that purpose.

The way all these complex issues play out over the new few months will determine the success or failure of Sharon's bold withdrawal plan.

Politicians on both the left and right are expected to speak up after the withdrawal.

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In D.C., hard work begins after Israel's pullout

By RON KAMPEAS

WASHINGTON (JTA) — Despite intense U.S. involvement in negotiations leading up to Israel's departure from the Gaza Strip, the hard work will begin only after Israel leaves.

In order to achieve a badly needed success in the region, the Bush administration will have to bridge competing Israeli and Palestinian interests. Already, senior U.S. officials have begun to make clear the expectations — on issues of weapons, fighting terrorism, open borders and aid.

U.S. Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice visited the region twice in the last two months. On her most recent visit — acting on advice from Gen. William Ward, the top U.S. security adviser for the withdrawal — she advised Israeli Defense Minister Shaul Mofaz that the Palestinians need more guns if they are to confront terrorist groups after the withdrawal.

Mofaz accelerated the delivery of non-lethal equipment this week — jeeps and walkie-talkies — but is balking at delivering guns to a force Israel still sees as potentially aligned with terrorists.

Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon's top adviser, Dov Weisglass, was in Washington this week trying to persuade the American government that arming the Palestinians now is counterproductive.

"This is lethal stuff," an Israeli official said. "The Palestinians are not dealing with the terrorist infrastructure."

Rice is also making it clear that once the Palestinian Authority has the guns, it must confront the terrorists in its midst.

"We're working with the Palestinian Authority and with their security forces to make sure that they have the tools that they need and that they are organized properly to be able to carry out their mission — to be able to provide security to the Palestinian people in Gaza," Rice's spokesman, Tom Casey, said Monday.

Rice also wants Gaza to have access to the outside world. An open Palestinian economy would help prop up P.A. President Mahmoud Abbas, favored by the Bush administration as a relative moderate, ahead of Palestinian legislative elections slated to take place before the end of the year.

"When the Israelis withdraw from Gaza, it cannot be a sealed or isolated area, with

the Palestinian people closed in after that withdrawal," Rice said last month during her Israel visit, standing alongside Silvan Shalom, the Israeli foreign minister.

The Palestinians applaud this perspective. Diane Buttu, a top aide to Abbas, said of the Bush administration, "There has been a change. They understand the need for open borders, for the freedom for the economy to develop and grow."

Sharon has said he is willing to let the Palestinians rebuild their seaport and discuss a timetable for rebuilding their airport. Israel is also accelerating the building of high-tech transit stations on the border with Gaza and on the West Bank, to expedite the passage of Palestinians and speed the export of produce.

On the issue of aid, Bush has authorized \$50 million in direct U.S. assistance to the Palestinian Authority, using a national security waiver to bypass congressional directives not to directly fund the P.A. Bush has also persuaded Western allies to pledge \$3 billion in assistance.sj

Israel supports efforts to aid the Palestinians.

And for the Palestinians, "it is vitally important" that the aid go through the Palestinian government, Buttu said.

" Hamas is saying Israelis are evacuating because of its resistance, and if at the end of the day, once evacuation takes place, Hamas is rebuilding, it will be a disaster for everybody," she said.

The United States will also have to decide what aid to grant Israel.

Partnered with his longtime rival, Shimon Peres — the Labor Party leader and vice prime minister who is coordinating the civil and economic aspects of the withdrawal — Sharon wants the U.S. government to help fund the development of the Negev and Galilee, where the bulk of the roughly 9,000 Gaza evacuees are likely to be resettled.

Peres' representatives have reportedly asked the Americans for \$2.2 billion for withdrawal-related expenses, in addition to the \$2.5 billion Israel already receives annually.

Peres' office has said that \$600 million

has been requested for transferring military bases from Gaza but would not confirm a total amount requested.

The U.S. administration has said it is interested in helping Israel with the costs of withdrawal but has not indicated whether all or a portion of that aid would be forthcoming.

For Peres, U.S. assistance is crucial. "The Israeli people will see it's not about

uprooting settlers, but about building," his office said in a statement to JTA. "We're building Israel's future."

For its part, the U.S. Congress appears to be moving closer to the administration on aid to the Palestinians.

Throughout the Clinton administration and this one, Congress has traditionally been more skeptical than the presidents about the Palestinians' willingness to confront terrorism and resist corruption. It has imposed oversight restrictions on aid to the Palestinians that do not apply to other foreign assistance.

Yet in recent months, Congress has shown some willingness to roll back some of those restrictions.

Among those opposing the measure proposed last week by Rep. Shelley Berkeley (D-Nev.) were eight Jewish members, including Rep. Nita Lowey (D-N.Y.), the most powerful Democrat on the House Foreign Operations subcommittee.

"I fought for many years against direct transfer of funds to the Palestinian Authority, and it still makes me extremely uncomfortable — and I think for good reason — based on facts," she said at a hearing on the withdrawal.

"I've not stood in the way, however, of the three most recent direct transfers of funding," she said, adding that she wanted to see whether Abbas "is committed to achieving a better future for the Palestinian people or whether he is interested more in haranguing Israel for defending its people."

To better assess Abbas' intentions, both parties are sending delegations to the region during this month's congressional break. Party leaders say they want to determine whether to lift restrictions on the remaining \$250 million in aid designated for the Palestinians, which is not allowed to go directly to the P.A.

If Hamas rebuilds after the withdrawal, 'it will be a disaster for everybody.'

Diane Buttu

Aide to P.A. President Mahmoud Abbas

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Israeli forces fear violent worst-case scenarios

By BARBARA OPALL-ROME

TEL AVIV (JTA) — The column of armored sport-utility vehicles waited, engines humming, as a phalanx of bodyguards ushered Prime Minister Ariel Sharon into the third truck from the end. As the convoy cleared the main gate of the Israeli government head's residence, a set of decoy vehicles turned north, toward Jerusalem, while the remaining units proceeded south toward the Negev, where Sharon planned to tour absorption sites being built for hundreds of Israeli families soon to be evacuated from their Gaza Strip homes.

Hours earlier, crack teams descended on each of the six kibbutzim and farming villages on the morning's itinerary, creating "sterile" zones for Sharon to meet with pre-screened residents and local leaders. At each stop, a bridgehead of agents cleared the way for the advancing prime minister while, 15,000 feet overhead, an unmanned reconnaissance drone scanned the scene with high-powered optics.

"We don't spare any effort, money and tools in order to protect the prime minister from the growing threat," Avi Dichter, the recently retired director of Israel's Shin Bet security service, told JTA.

Dichter was talking less about Palestinian terrorists seeking to harm Sharon than about "Jewish ultra-extremists who are sure that one way to block the disengagement is by harming, if not killing, the prime minister," he said, referring to the controversial plan to withdraw Israeli soldiers and settlers from the Gaza Strip and northern West Bank that Sharon pushed through his government.

As the planned mid-August pullout approaches, many fear that protests against the Sharon government could give way to acts of violence. As ringleaders from the far right vow to thwart the withdrawal, security officials are increasingly warning of the prospect of Jewish terrorism.

Those warnings appeared prescient Thursday, when an AWOL Israeli soldier reportedly known for his extremist ideology went on a shooting rampage on a bus in the Israeli Arab town of Shfaram, killing four people and wounding 12. An enraged mob lynched the shooter, Eden Tzuberi, 19, when he stopped shooting.

Israeli government officials and leaders of the Yesha settlers council condemned

the attack as an act of terrorism.

According to Dichter, the Shin Bet has assessed a number of scenarios, including the prospect of a Jewish suicide bomber.

The Knesset Finance Committee last month authorized a budgetary increase of nearly \$90 million to cover extra costs associated with Sharon's personal protection, which a committee aide estimated at some \$230 million a year.

While many protective measures were mandated by a commission of inquiry following the 1995 assassination of then Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin — and extended to a wider net of officials after Palestinian terrorists murdered Tourism Minister Rechavam Ze'evi in October 2001 — one recently retired Shin Bet official said the security around Sharon was unprecedented and was directly related to the Jewish terror threat.

"The fact that we now are dealing with internal threats definitely compounds our security requirements," the former official said.

Aides say Sharon is disturbed but not deterred by threats from nationalistic elements he once considered his most ardent supporters.

Little more than a decade ago, Rabin used to walk the Tel Aviv streets to his Shabbat-morning tennis session. With his security detail trained to keep watch from a deferential distance, dog walkers and other early risers had no difficulty approaching Rabin in his tennis whites.

In the heady but tumultuous period after the 1993 Oslo accord, Rabin brushed off repeated requests by Carmi Gillon, then the head of Shin Bet, to curtail his public appearances or limit those with whom he came in direct contact. He also refused to wear the bulletproof vest the Shin Bet prescribed.

Even as the atmosphere grew increasingly menacing, Rabin's 1995 slaying by a religious university student stunned Israel and the world.

On that fateful night in November 1995, Israelis lost not only a leader but also their

relatively free access to those in positions of power in the government.

"Today it's much uglier. We haven't learned our lesson," said Hezi Kalo, a former Shin Bet official. "We've already seen how verbal violence can lead to murder."

Since Sharon began talking of withdrawal in December 2003, opponents of the plan have blocked roadways, planted dummy bombs in public places, and blanketed the country with placards and banners pillorying the prime minister

as a "traitor" and a "fascist."

Rabbinic authorities — including two former Israeli chief rabbis — have issued religious rulings against the withdrawal, insisting that Israel Defense Forces soldiers must refuse orders regarding the withdrawal. Other rabbis have fiercely rejected such rulings.

Even the most vociferous defenders of the right to protest have been working with the Justice Ministry, the nation's attorney general and academics to define the lines separating legitimate protest from seditious and violent acts.

Some right-wing activists charge that Israeli security officials trot out such warnings every few months.

But Ephraim Sneh, a Labor Party legislator who chairs the Knesset Subcommittee on Defense Planning and Policy, is privy to what he said were ominous briefings by security officials concerning the Jewish terror threat.

"The potential for political assassination and civil war here are no longer just rhetorical," he said. "The poisonous atmosphere is getting worse."

Beyond political assassinations, catastrophic scenarios range from the indiscriminate killing of Jewish civilians to guerrilla-style warfare against military and police units charged with implementing the withdrawal.

Soldiers will not be precluded from defending themselves if settlers open fire during the withdrawal, said the IDF's new chief of staff, Lt. Gen. Dan Halutz.

Dozens of rabbis have banded together

The Shin Bet has assessed a number of scenarios, including the prospect of a Jewish suicide bomber, a retired Shin Bet director says.

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to criticize colleagues whose interpretations of Jewish religious law appear to sanction violence and insubordination in the army.

"We have a special responsibility to preserve pikuach nefesh," or the sanctity of life, Rabbi Yehuda Gilad, the head of the Religious Kibbutz Movement, told JTA in July.

Leaders of the Yesha settlers council have backed resistance to the withdrawal but stress that such resistance should be nonviolent.

Gilad and 80 other rabbis — many of them passionately opposed to the withdrawal plan — insist that civilians must not take the law into their own hands, nor should soldiers refuse orders from their commanders.

Meanwhile, Sharon and top brass from the IDF and police force are trying to boost the morale of soldiers who will have to confront any anti-withdrawal extremists. As the clock ticks down to the mid-August evacuation, senior officers sense that the esprit de corps is eroding, particularly among troops from nationalist communities where the anti-withdrawal slogan "A Jew does not expel a Jew" has deeper resonance.

In the past several weeks, nearly three dozen soldiers have been disciplined, reassigned or arrested for refusing orders, a top Israeli general told JTA in late July.

In addition to the possibility of Jews attacking other Jews, security officials also are afraid of a Jewish extremist attack on the Temple Mount mosques in Jerusalem or other Islamic sites. Their vigilance led to the arrest in April of four suspects in two separate attack plots.

According to a May 16 summary by the Jerusalem District police, three of the men acknowledged under interrogation that they had planned to launch an anti-tank missile at the Temple Mount in hopes of thwarting the Gaza withdrawal.

In the second incident, a Ra'anana businessman, Ilan Hirschfeld, 61, allegedly considered flying a remote-controlled plane over the Temple Mount, hoping that the international tension likely to result from the episode would scuttle the withdrawal.

Hirschfeld too was released once the state determined there was insufficient evidence to indict him. Nevertheless, Israeli police vowed to act forcefully and swiftly to nip any future plots in the bud.

Those who hope for a peaceful outcome this summer often look back to the 1982 evacuation of Israeli settlements in the Sinai — part of Israel's peace agreement with Egypt — when worst-case scenarios didn't materialize.

As challenging and heart-rending as the Sinai evacuation was, security sources say it may seem like child's play compared with the pullout from Gaza and the northern West Bank. This time around, they face a more emotional and committed group of resisters who have a much more spiritual, financial and cultural attachment to the place they've called home — some for more than 20 years.

Simha Weiss, 47, who has lived for 16 years in Shalev, a tiny settlement in southern Gaza, insists most longtime residents of the cluster of Jewish communities known as Gush Katif would never think of provoking violence against Israeli forces who come to evacuate them.

Nevertheless, the mother of six said she fears events could lead to bloodshed.

"I'm afraid there will be very tough violence. It will be Jew against Jew," Weiss said.

Interviewed in mid-July — shortly after Sharon declared Gush Katif a closed military zone in an effort to keep outside activists from heading there to foil the evacuation — Weiss said she believes security forces would arrest local hooligans if events threaten to spiral out of control.

Worst-case scenarios involve violent, messianic activists who dig themselves into explosive-rigged strongholds, threaten attacks on approaching forces and use children or adults as human shields.

Extremists and security forces continue to play cat-and-mouse games in Gush Katif, but a Shin Bet official said colleagues were girding for even greater challenges in the West Bank settlement Sa-Nur.

"One of the more severe scenarios is a cross between the bunker at Yamit and the Church of Nativity," he said, referring to the tense five-week standoff in Bethlehem between IDF troops and Palestinian gunmen in 2002.

Since Passover, 30 families and another 25 young men have moved to Sa-Nur to "assist us in our fight against the gov-

ernment's expulsion plan," the community spokeswoman, Miriam Adler, said.

Speaking to reporters in early July, ahead of the government's closure of Gush Katif, Adler said thousands of people might flock to Sa-Nur to join what she predicted could evolve into armed resistance. And while security forces also are expected to cordon off Sa-Nur and the other three northern West Bank settlements slated for evacuation after Gaza, residents say it will be much more difficult to limit the influx of supporters due to the area's hilly topography.

Adler said plans called for groups to hide in the hills, barricade themselves in structures and otherwise "drive the security forces crazy."

The IDF's Oded Tyrah, a retired brigadier general, said he's tired of the doomsday scenarios about withdrawal, which lend what he considers unwarranted credibility to "marginal criminals and hooligans" who he said are adept at employing psychological warfare on a nervous public.

Likewise, he said, politicians, rabbis, activists and even security officials need to tone down the rhetoric, and begin to think about the day after the withdrawal.

"Everyone is posturing for media attention. It's one promo after another, and it's doing nobody any good," he said. "After the evacuation, we'll have to live with these people and fight alongside them against the real enemy. So it's imperative that our government and our security establishment accomplish this mission with utmost determination and professionalism, but also with compassion."



Brian Hendler

Israeli army and border police practice evicting settlers from a building, during a training session at an army base on July 26 near the southern Israeli community of Tse'elim.

Project examines how to keep Jewish teachers

By CHANAN TIGAY

NEW YORK (JTA) — When Jewish educators who teach young children were asked in a recent survey what had attracted them to the field, only 1 percent said it was the money.

Asked what factors most contribute to keeping them in the field, just 3 percent mentioned their salaries. And asked what would worry them most if their children became Jewish educators, nearly 70 percent said income.

These findings aren't surprising, educators say. After all, the average salary of an early-childhood Jewish educator in the United States hovers somewhere around \$18,000 a year, and low salaries across the spectrum of jobs in Jewish education remain a chronic problem, observers say.

That's why, when the same group of teachers from Broward and Miami-Dade counties in Florida was asked what would most improve their jobs, 76 percent said increased salary would help, and another 34 percent mentioned better health insurance.

"Early-childhood education, of all the different divisions of a system — which is not seamless — of Jewish education, is the one in which people are generally paid the worst and receive the worst of everything, and it can be a crucial component of the Jewish education system," said Steven Kraus, director of day school, congregational and communal education initiatives at the Jewish Education Service of North America. "The Jewish community needs to find ways to understand the importance of early-childhood education and supporting those people who are on the front lines."

A new pilot project now operating in Florida aims to do just that. Project Kavod: Improving the Culture of Employment in Jewish Education, a program conducted by the Coalition for the Advancement of Jewish Education through a grant from the Covenant Foundation, is investigating ways to better recruit and retain qualified teachers trained in pedagogy and Jewish studies.

"We have a recruitment and retention crisis in personnel," said Eli Schapp, CAJE's assistant executive director. "You need the professionals and they need to be well trained and they need to be happy to work in this field."

"My question," Schapp added, "is, What do I need to pay to create the system I want to create, and what's the multiyear plan in order to get there?"

Project Kavod, a three-year pilot program, is working with four Miami institutions to help develop approaches and tools that creatively address personnel issues. The pilot institutions are the David and Mary Alper Jewish Community Center; the Conservative Bet Shira Congregation; the Reform Temple Beth Shalom; and the Rabbi Alexander S. Gross Hebrew Academy, whose student body is largely Orthodox.

In addition, Project Kavod — the Hebrew word for 'respect' — is working with the Miami-Dade Center for the Advancement of Jewish Education and the Greater Miami Jewish Federation.

The program has begun by gathering fiscal data on the four sites and forming a community committee to look at the survey data and make initial determinations.

A subgroup of the committee recently came up with 45 items that potentially could improve the culture of employment in early-childhood education. On July 28 they'll meet to decide which recommendations to pursue seriously.

In addition, several educators said, they'll have to work to educate the public about the importance of early-childhood education.

"I think there still needs to be an important education/advocacy piece when it comes to good early-childhood education," JESNA's Kraus said. A few "generations ago some people would have seen early childhood education as glorified babysitting. We're way beyond that in many places."

Further, said Patricia Bidol-Padva, the Project Kavod coordinator in Florida, Jewish parents need to learn about "what the salaries are and to make a commitment to doing something about it."

Project Kavod is also producing a manual of "change-management tools" for early-childhood education institutions and will put out a publication looking to answering three perennial questions: Why is Jewish education important; how should Jewish educators be treated; and what's the

obligation of Jewish educators to the communities they serve?

Those running the program say they hope that, in addition to aiding the four Florida pilot institutions, similar work will eventually be done at day schools, congregational schools and informal Jewish education programs elsewhere.

"There's a long way to go," Bido-Padva said.

That may be so, but for Rabbi Jeffrey Falick, director of Jewish life

and culture at the Dave and Mary Alper Jewish Community Center, it's no mere pipe dream. Teachers' salaries could be significantly improved if the JCC raised \$100,000 more a year, he said.

"That's not, on the scale of things, an unrealistic aspiration," he said. "The program is really helping us to build a case. It's not that people in the community aren't aware of this. But you need to really build up a solid case, to show the evidence on the ground."

While improved salaries and benefits have emerged as top priorities, Falick said, continuing education and a good work environment also need to be addressed.

Deena Messinger teaches in the kindergarten at the Sinai Akiba Academy in Los Angeles. Last year, she said, she considered switching over to a secular private school or a public school for better salary and benefits — even though her school actually pays well relative to other day schools, she said.

Still, her health benefits don't include a vision or dental plan. Further, Messinger said, as she and her husband look down the line to having children, paying for day-school education on their salaries — Sinai Akiba's tuition is now "pushing \$12,000," she said — seems daunting.

"Benefits and tuition are areas that could be used to improve recruitment and retention," she said.

In the end, Messinger chose to stay in Jewish education.

"It wasn't just about money. What kept me at my school was that I do really like teaching Jewish kids," she said. "Any choice you make in your life has trade-offs. There's no perfect place. But it's worth it. I love what I do and I think that's pretty rare."

'We have a recruitment and retention crisis in personnel.'

Eli Schapp

Assistant executive director, CAJE

**FOCUS
ON
ISSUES**

Architect chosen for Polish Jewish museum

By CAROLYN SLUTSKY

WARSAW (JTA) — With the selection of a design from a Finnish architect, the Museum of the History of Polish Jews is closer to becoming a reality.

COMMUNITY

TRANSITIONS

- The Claims Conference elected Joel Kaplan as vice president.
- Neil Greenbaum was appointed president and chief operating officer of the Hebrew Immigrant Aid Society.
- Real estate mogul and television host Leon Charney was named chairman of the American Society of the University of Haifa.
- Hope Kessler was named national executive director of Women's American ORT.
- Jonathan Jacoby, executive director of the Israel Policy Forum, will leave the group after October.
- Francine Lis was appointed assistant director of development and public affairs of the Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion in Los Angeles' Western region.
- Alain Goldschlager of the University of Western Ontario was appointed co-chair of the Ontario region of B'nai B'rith Canada's League for Human Rights.
- The Orthodox Union named Rabbi Daniel Korobkin as West Coast director of community and synagogue services.
- Deborah Dash Moore was named director of the Jean and Samuel Frankel Center of Judaic Studies at the University of Michigan.
- Estelle Strizhak was chosen to head the Nairobi office of the Hebrew Immigrant Aid Society.
- Lester Rosenberg and Rabbi Vernon Kurtz were elected members of the Jewish Agency for Israel's board of governors.
- Rabbi Lynne Landsberg was named senior advisor on disability issues for the Religious Action Center of Reform Judaism.
- Morton Yarmon, public relations director for the American Jewish Committee from 1963 to 1991, died in Manhattan at age 89.

HONORS

- The YIVO Institute for Jewish Research gave its Jan Karski and Pola Nirenska Prize to Jan Jagielski.
- The Anti-Defamation League honored Yediot Achronot correspondent Itzik Saban for saving a Palestinian teen from a lynch mob in the Gaza Strip.
- Edgar Bronfman Jr. was honored at the UJA-Federation of New York and the Music for Youth Foundation's 2005 Music Visionary of the Year Awards Luncheon.

Rainer Mahlamaeki of the Helsinki firm Lahdelma and Mahlamaeki Architects was chosen June 30 from a group of 250 architects, including Daniel Libeskind, the designer of the Jewish Museum in Berlin who is at work on the Freedom Tower in lower Manhattan, and Peter Eisenman, whose newly completed Berlin Holocaust Memorial opened in May.

"The concept of the museum is to provide narrative context for the Jewish story in Poland," Jerzy Halbersztadt, the project director for the venture, told JTA.

The idea for the Polish museum started in 1994, after the creation of the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum, in Washington, for which Halbersztadt also served as project director.

It will be located on the site of the Monument to the Ghetto Heroes, designed by Natan Rappaport, the current memorial to the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising, which stands in the old Jewish section of Warsaw.

Halbersztadt said that not disturbing the Rappaport monument, which was unveiled in 1948, was of particular concern because it has long stood as a symbol of Jewish resistance. "The architect had to have respect for the monument," he said.

"It's the most important emotional space, and we didn't want it diminished."

One of the main design elements of the new museum is a bridge that symbolizes the passage of Jews through history.

Land for the museum was donated by the city of Warsaw, which also donated \$13 million to the project. Poland's federal government contributed an additional \$13 million. Halbersztadt estimates the total cost of the building to be between \$33 million and \$35 million, with the balance being raised through private donations. The total cost of the project, including materials, is estimated at \$55 million.

In 2003, the Sejm, or Polish Parliament, made the decision to allocate funds for the museum. Stephen Solender, the former president of the North American federation system, United Jewish Communities, and the co-chairman of the North American

Council for the museum, said the U.S. House of Representatives' Subcommittee on Foreign Operations recently put money for the project into its budget for the coming year.

Solender told JTA that many people ask him why this museum should be built in Warsaw and not Jerusalem.

His answer: Many Jews visit Poland each year and see only the death camps and cemeteries, never learning about the rich history of the country's Jews, which spans a millennium. He hopes the museum — slated to break ground by the end of 2006 and open

by 2008 — will teach Jewish visitors about this long history as well as the lessons of the Holocaust. "To see only death and not life is wrong," he said. "We should remember both our tragedy and our lives."

Equally important, he said, will be for Poles to visit the museum and learn the history of Polish-Jewish coexistence.

Solender hopes that the museum, which will house 58,000 visual items, will ultimately be a required field trip for all Polish school students.

Halbersztadt anticipates that the museum will receive between 250,000 and 500,000 visitors each year. He hopes that the museum will play a pivotal role in supporting dozens of other Jewish-related projects and sites throughout Poland. With its educational and resource center for teachers and visitors, "it'll serve as an orientation center to the rest of the country," he said.

Before World War II, Poland was home to nearly 3.5 million Jews. Today there are an estimated 8,000 Jews in the country, according to the World Jewish Congress. Additionally, thousands of Jewish tourists visit Poland each year, and many non-Jewish Poles have taken a serious interest in Jewish history and culture.

The American businessman and philanthropist Tad Taube, whose Taube Foundation for Jewish Life and Culture is a major supporter of the museum, said he is actively involved in the museum's creation because he feels it is necessary to promote Poland's storied Jewish heritage.

"The museum isn't just a beginning but an exclamation point," he said. ■

The architect had to have respect for the monument. It's the most important emotional space, and we didn't want it diminished.'

Jerzy Halbersztadt

Project director, Polish Jewish museum

NEWS IN BRIEF

MIDDLE EAST

Palestinians rally to cheer withdrawal

An estimated 10,000 Palestinians rallied in the Gaza Strip to celebrate Israel's upcoming withdrawal.

"The evacuation of Gaza, their departure, is a step toward Jerusalem," Palestinian Authority Prime Minister Ahmed Qurei was quoted as saying at Thursday's rally.

The stage at the celebration was marked with images of the Al-Aksa Mosque in Jerusalem and a Palestinian carrying a rifle.

Abdullah: 'Road map' is the guide

Israel must go ahead with plans for a Palestinian state after it withdraws from the Gaza Strip, Jordan's king said.

Abdullah made the comments to Israeli Defense Minister Shaul Mofaz during a meeting Thursday in Aqaba, Jordan.

Abdullah emphasized the need for Israel to implement the "road map" peace plan, according to Jordanian officials.

On Wednesday, Abdullah reportedly told Palestinian Authority President Mahmoud Abbas to help ensure a smooth Israeli withdrawal, which is slated to begin later this month.

Israel plans more West Bank building

Israel's Housing Ministry issued bids for housing in the West Bank settlement of Beitar Ilit.

The settlement, part of a large settlement bloc near Jerusalem, would receive 72 more apartments, according to the plan, Ha'aretz reported.

This year, bids were issued for some 235 new apartments in settlement blocs in Jerusalem and the northern West Bank, Ha'aretz said.

WORLD

BBC: Britain sold Israel nuke material

Britain sold Israel material in the 1950s that can be used in nuclear production, the BBC reported.

The 1958 sale was for 20 tons of heavy water, which is used to make plutonium.

The deal was camouflaged as a non-nuclear transaction between Norway and Israel.

AMIA judge impeached

An Argentine judge was impeached because of "serious irregularities" in his handling of the investigation of a bombing at a Jewish center.

A special panel said Wednesday that Juan Jose Galeano committed a number of irregularities in the case of the 1994 bombing of the AMIA center, including paying \$400,000 to a witness to change his testimony, burning evidence and ordering illegal bugging operations.

The impeachment strips Galeano of immunity from prosecution, and he could face criminal charges.

Galeano denies wrongdoing.

The bombing of the AMIA social service center in downtown Buenos Aires on July 18, 1994, killed 85 people and injured hundreds. The case remains unsolved.

TV technician arrested in France

A TV sound technician in France was arrested for attempting to bring an object resembling a bomb into the Elysee Palace during Ariel Sharon's recent visit to Paris.

The technician allegedly made the object himself. He was at the palace July 27 to cover the meeting between French President

Jacques Chirac and the Israeli prime minister.

France 2 has launched an internal investigation. The technician says he doesn't know how the object got into his bag.

NORTH AMERICA

Black Hebrew soldier gets Jewish rites

A U.S. soldier who was a Black Hebrew received some Jewish burial rites after he died in Iraq.

Chaplain Jacob Goldstein and Elakhaz Hachohane, the uncle of Benyahmin Ben Yahudah, presided over the July 25 ceremony in Georgia, the Forward reported.

Ben Yahudah's body was prepared for the funeral according to Jewish tradition, but Goldstein did not do a full Jewish service because it was a military funeral, according to the Forward.

Ben Yahudah was killed in July by a suicide bomber in Baghdad.

Black Hebrews claim that they are descendants of Jews expelled by the Romans in 70 C.E., but Israel's Chief Rabbinate ruled that they are not halachically Jewish.

Instructor quits following untoward remarks

A journalism instructor at Boston University was fired for calling one of his students a "true Sabra," or native-born Israeli, who is "incredibly hot."

Michael Gee, formerly a sportswriter at the Boston Herald, lasted barely a month after a post on his personal Web log described a student as "so incredibly hot" that "it was all I could do to remember the other five students," Boston magazine reported.

Gee did not identify the student, but the magazine named her as Natalie Zfat, a 19-year-old from the University of Central Florida taking summer courses at B.U.

The student quit the course, telling Boston magazine, "You're entitled to feel safe and comfortable knowing that your professor is a professional, not a pervert."

She also noted that Gee got his facts wrong: "I'm from Brooklyn," she said.

Possible presidential candidate to Israel

Massachusetts Gov. Mitt Romney, a possible Republican candidate for president in 2008, will visit Israel in September.

Romney will land in Israel on Sept. 23 in what is being called a trade mission, The Boston Globe reported Wednesday.

The weeklong visit, which will be hosted by the American Israel Public Affairs Committee's educational branch, is viewed by some as an attempt to beef up Romney's foreign policy resume ahead of a potential presidential run.

"Mitt Romney will be the latest in a long line of elected officials, particularly governors, who want to burnish their foreign policy credentials," said former AIPAC chairman and onetime Massachusetts gubernatorial candidate Steve Grossman.

"I have no doubt if he runs, he will use the fact that he took the trip as a calling card to the American Jewish community."

Former federation P.R. director dies

Norman Eisenberg, a former director of communications for the UJA-Federation of New York, died Monday of lung cancer at age 50.

A graduate of the University of West Virginia and an Israeli soldier during the 1982 Lebanon War, Eisenberg worked at the federation from 1986 to 1998 and also spent several years working for the United Jewish Communities federation umbrella group.

A frequent speechwriter for federation leaders, Eisenberg was "one of the most eloquent and talented writers on Jewish issues," according to the federation's marketing director, Rob Rosenthal.