

IN THE NEWS
Marriage amendment kicked off Senate floor

A constitutional amendment that would ban gay marriage was defeated in the U.S. Senate on a procedural vote.

The Senate voted 49-48 on Wednesday against bringing the federal marriage amendment to the floor for debate. Orthodox Jewish groups supported it, while other Jewish religious streams opposed it.

France fined for deportation

The French government and the national railroad association lost a court case regarding their role in deporting Jews during World War II.

The court of Toulouse ordered the state and the railroad to pay \$77,000 in reparations to the Lipietz family.

Change in federation allocations shelved

A plan to change the way American Jewish federations allocate funds to national agencies failed to come up for a vote at governance meetings of the United Jewish Communities.

The proposal, which also would have set up a new domestic priority-setting committee of UJC, was taken off the table Tuesday after the Chicago, Cleveland and Philadelphia federations said they would abstain.

The New York federation, which has been pressing for a stronger planning mechanism to guide funding, said it would now consider pulling out of the National Funding Councils, and the Philadelphia federation has already declared its intention to do so.

New York provides nearly one-third of the funding for nine national agencies, which include Hillel, the Hebrew Immigrant Aid Society, the Jewish Community Centers Association of North America and several smaller agencies, including JTA.

WORLD REPORT

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As World Cup opens in Germany, authorities focus on tackling racism

By TOBY AXELROD

BERLIN (JTA) — Berlin is bedecked in soccer balls. Atop telephone booths, decorating the TV tower, overshadowing the famous Brandenburg Gate, the familiar ball has just about taken over as Germany hosts this year's World Cup of soccer.

For the first time in decades, Germany is hosting an international sports event. But the monthlong event, which begins Friday, is much more than fun and games.

"Sport is always political," says Daniel Wildmann, deputy director of the Leo Baeck Institute in London. "This doesn't mean it is bad or good. It is part of society and we have to take it into consideration."

Germany sees the games, which conclude July 9, as a chance to prove to 3 million visitors that it can host a major event without incident.

But in order to do so it must tame the racism that is a part of soccer culture and plagues contemporary German society, even though it is rejected by the mainstream.

In the run-up to the games, the German news media has been full of talk about anti-Semitism and xenophobia among some soccer fans; dire warnings to visitors to avoid "foreigner-free" zones in former East Germany; and arguments over whether Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad should be allowed to attend the games and be arrested on charges of Holocaust denial — a crime in Germany — if he shows up.

Neo-Nazis plan to show their solidarity with Ahmadinejad by welcoming the Iranian team when it plays in Leipzig on June 21.

All the above — not to mention the fears of terrorism — certainly are chilling.

The way Germany handles such matters is "a kind of mirror of how society functions," said Raphael Gross, director of the Jewish Museum in Frankfurt.

The treatment of Jews and other minorities "is like a litmus test of the society and that is also true for the championship."

But even as the world of soccer becomes more global, with players from Africa competing for top European soccer teams, eradicating racism has

proven difficult.

Most racism is directed against Africans, but in Holland, Dutch fans — especially opponents of Amsterdam's Ajax club, which is identified in the public mind with Jews — often shout things like, "Hamas, Hamas, hang the Jews in the gas."

Earlier this year in Italy, one player, Paolo Di Canio, earned notoriety and suspensions for giving the Hitler salute to his team's fans.

Germany is no different. About a week before the tournament, a newsmagazine show on the RTL television network focused on hooliganism in Germany's lower-level soccer leagues.

With a hidden camera, the program's editor, Burkhard Kress, filmed fans in the former East German city of Magdeburg singing the "Auschwitz song" — "We are building a U-bahn train, we are building a U-bahn, from Magdeburg to Auschwitz."

Soccer fans in other German cities also sing the tune, substituting their city for Magdeburg.

In a statement on its Web site, the Magde-

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HEADLINES**

■ Berlin is looking festive as it prepares for the World Cup, but it's not just fun and games

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burg team's fan club complained that Kress had taken the film without permission, and said it was not representative.

But "everyone responsible in the stadium knows what is up," Kress told JTA. "Most trainers also know that something has to happen, and that fan work must be done because this is the testing ground for neo-Nazis."

Martin Endemann of Football Against Racism in Europe agreed.

"The clubs and the soccer associations have to acknowledge the problem, because most of the time they are saying it is not as bad as it was before," he said.

The World Cup motto, "A Time to Make Friends," is meant to boost Germany's public image, Franz Beckenbauer, president of the World Cup organizing committee, recently told reporters.

But making friends will take place under strict scrutiny, said Germany's Interior Minister, Wolfgang Schauble.

A National Cooperation and Information Center will oversee security around the clock — and some of the 32 participating nations are supplying some 500 liaison officers to help German police nab foreign troublemakers.

Because of Germany's Nazi past, the problem has drawn special attention here, but while observers say Germany's top leagues have succeeded in reducing racism and anti-Semitism among fans, some of the secondary leagues have not tackled the problem.

"I would say that now everyone is afraid

of looking at the present problem because somehow it points to their past," says Wildmann. "The point is not so much whether there is a World Cup or not, the point is whether the German sports organizations are willing to come to terms with their past or not."

Two exhibits on the history of Jews in German soccer — one currently on display in the Jewish museums of Frankfurt

and Furth, the other one to go up after the World Cup at the Centrum Judaicum in Berlin — highlight intriguing Jewish aspects of Germany's soccer history.

German soccer history was often marked by tolerance and openness, said Daniela Eisenstein, director of the Jewish Museum of Furth, which co-curated the exhibit "Kick it Like Kissinger: A Soccer Alphabet," on display through early September.

While German gymnastics clubs were historically closed to Jews, soccer — championed here by Walther Bensemann, son of a Berlin Jewish banker — was an open sport until the Nazi period, Eisenstein said.

Bensemann, who organized the first international soccer game between Germany and France between the wars, "believed in the power of soccer to bring people together," Eisenstein said. "And I think he would be an optimist today."

The upcoming soccer exhibit at the

Centrum Judaicum — "Kickers, Fighters and Legends — Jews in German Football" — similarly deals with the Jewish roots of German soccer and the fate of Jewish athletes during the Nazi period.

Most Germans "prefer not to deal with this aspect of history," Swantje Schollmeyer, curator of the Berlin exhibit, said.

Last year, the German Soccer Association published "Football Under the Swastika," but "only

after pressure from German historians," she said.

Eisenstein said she believes attitudes are changing among German soccer clubs and fans, "and the positive ideals of soccer definitely outweigh these other aspects."

But just in case, teams during the quarter-finals will be carrying banners against discrimination and team captains will read statements against racism and xenophobia before kickoff, Schauble said.

What will happen after everyone goes home? Racism and xenophobia at the tournament is not the sole issue, Endemann says: "The problem is that people go out on the street and beat up Jewish people and blacks and Asians," he said.

Sports is not just "some kind of island where everyone can meet" and party, Wildmann said. "As long as you don't look back in anger, as long as you don't have a critical look at your past, you will stick to this idea of the island."

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Burkhard Kress

Editor, RTL

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Groups blast lawmaker for Holocaust remark

WASHINGTON (JTA) — Two Jewish groups urged a U.S. congressman to repudiate his statement comparing illegal immigration to a Holocaust. Rep. Steve King (R-Iowa) has been outspoken in opposing any plan that would allow some undocumented immigrants to legalize their status.

Speaking at a May 27 rally, King asserted that illegal immigrants are responsible for the deaths of 25 Americans a day through drug trafficking, drunk driving and sex crimes.

This was a "slow-motion Holocaust,"

he said. The National Jewish Democratic Council and the Anti-Defamation League, which had already called on King to back away from his accusations about illegal immigrants, urged him to repudiate the Holocaust remark.

"Your reference to a 'slow-motion Holocaust' demonstrates a profound lack of understanding about the nature and the magnitude of the crimes against humanity undertaken by Hitler and his regime," the ADL's national director, Abraham Foxman, wrote King in a letter Tuesday.

Docs reveal postwar U.S.-Nazi collaboration

By RON KAMPEAS

WASHINGTON (JTA) — A former Nazi rose to the highest ranks of a Western intelligence agency — and was a Soviet mole. A lead to Adolf Eichmann was ignored. A spy whose pathological lies made him useless still escaped prosecution for war crimes.

These are among the revelations found among some 8 million pages of documents released here Tuesday that deal with German and Japanese war crimes, including 27,000 pages that detail the relationship after World War II between U.S. government agencies and suspected Nazi war criminals.

The message threading the documents was clear: The price one pays for consorting with evil men far outweighs the return.

"Using very bad people can have very bad consequences," Elizabeth Holtzman, a former U.S. congresswoman and a member of the Interagency Working Group that released the documents, said at a news conference Tuesday at the National Archives. The group was established in 1999 to declassify rooms full of documents related to Nazi war crimes. The mandate was later extended to Japanese war crimes.

There is a pointed message as well for a United States currently at war with a terrorist enemy, speakers said.

Considering human rights issues in recruiting spies "may not only be the right thing to do, but the wise thing to do," Holtzman said. "We may want to understand this as a nation before we plunge ahead to repeat the mistakes of the past."

This week's release of documents came eight years after the U.S. Congress passed a law, the Nazi War Crimes Disclosure Act, requiring agencies to provide the information. Among other things, it was intended to paint a full picture of U.S. involvement with ex-Nazis after the war.

Four historians who examined the documents outlined cases in which the active U.S. and Western recruitment of former Nazis was questionable at best and disastrous at worst.

One of the most outstanding failures, outlined by historian Norman Goda of Ohio University, was Heinz Felfe, an SS officer who rose through the ranks of West Germany's Gehlen organization to become its counterintelligence chief in 1955.

The Gehlen organization, an anti-Soviet spy agency headed by Richard Gehlen, a

former German general during World War II, was a magnet for ex-Nazis who wanted U.S. sanction; the organization was sponsored by the United States.

Felfe was exposed as a Soviet spy in 1961, but not before he had done considerable damage, some revealed for the first time in the papers released Tuesday. For instance, Felfe successfully advocated for greater cooperation between the Gehlen group and the CIA, which made him "the West German official most knowledgeable about CIA operations in Eastern Europe," according to Goda.

He was consequently able to sabotage one of the CIA's most important spy operations, against the KGB base in East Germany. The CIA subsequently estimated that Felfe had compromised 15,000 items.

In another instance documented by Timothy Naftali of the University of Virginia, the CIA learned as early as 1958 that Eichmann, the architect of the destruction of European Jewry, was living in Argentina under the alias "Clemens."

In fact, Eichmann's alias was "Klement," but that was close enough to have led to his capture, Naftali concludes in his study.

The CIA refrained from action because of its policy of not pursuing Nazi war criminals.

In addition, BND, the West German spy agency that had reported the information to the CIA, feared repercussions for Hans Globke, the West German national security adviser who had been close to Eichmann when both men were Nazis; Globke had assisted in drafting the notorious 1935 Nuremberg laws, which effectively removed Jews from German public life.

In fact, once Eichmann was captured by Israel in 1960 — with no help from the CIA or other agencies — the CIA went the extra mile for Globke.

Eichmann paid for his defense by selling his autobiography to Life Magazine. Documents show that the CIA persuaded Life to drop references to Globke.

Another case, reported by Richard Breitman of American University, involved Tscherim Soobzokov, an SS agent recruited

from the Circassian community in the Caucasus, and who recruited other Circassians to the most brutal of Nazi enforcement agencies.

The CIA recruited Soobzokov to spy in Jordan, which has a substantial Circassian community, and then brought him to New Jersey to seek out possible Soviet spies in the Circassian community there.

A CIA examiner eventually concluded that Soobzokov was an "incorrigible fabricator," but that did not stop Soobzokov from obtaining U.S. citizenship in 1960, with CIA assent. In the 1970s, the CIA dissuaded immigration services from pursuing a war crimes deportation against him, although its own documentation suggested he was guilty of such

crimes.

Most telling, Breitman said, was that Soobzokov's Nazi past was seen by his CIA handlers as a boon, at least initially.

In 1953, a CIA official suggested that a war crimes record could be used to keep the spy in line. "Clear evidence of a war crimes record might also serve as a possible control," the official said.

The release of the documents took six years after the law was passed in part because the working group entrusted with making the files available to the public encountered difficulties with the CIA starting around 2002.

The CIA was insisting on a literal interpretation of the law, and wanted to confine requests for papers to known war criminals, and not to others suspected of Nazi affiliation. Intervention from Sen. Mike DeWine (R-Ohio) and Rep. Carolyn Maloney (D-N.Y.), who had sponsored the legislation creating the working group, persuaded the agency to back down last year.

Another factor in the release was the appointment in 2004 of Rep. Porter Goss as CIA director, who mandated greater openness in this case. Goss just recently resigned, but the working group officials said his successor, Michael Hayden, had pledged cooperation until the group ends its work next March.

Its next report, due by the end of summer, is to deal with Japanese war crimes. ■

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NEWS IN BRIEF

NORTH AMERICA

Controversial ex-justice loses governor bid

A former chief justice in Alabama who had displayed the Ten Commandments in his court lost a Republican primary for governor.

With 70 percent of precincts reporting, Roy Moore was losing to Gov. Bob Riley by 64 percent to 36 percent in Tuesday's primary, The New York Times reported. Moore took challenges to his display of a Ten Commandments monument all the way to the U.S. Supreme Court, which ordered the monument removed in May 2004.

A number of Jewish groups had filed briefs in the case, most of them against the monument's display. In 2003, Moore was removed as chief justice over the issue.

Also in Alabama, a Holocaust denier lost his bid to become the state's attorney general. Larry Darby, who had also railed against "Jew supremacy," lost by 56 percent to 44 percent, the Deep South Jewish Voice reported.

UJC approves budget

The United Jewish Communities' board of trustees approved an operating budget of nearly \$40 million for 2006-2007.

The \$38.8 million budget for the umbrella organization of Jewish federations, approved Tuesday, is the same as it was for the 2005-2006 period, UJC communications director Joe Berkofsky told JTA.

The operating budget has steadily decreased since the group's formation in 1999, he said, when it came in at \$46.2 million.

"UJC has always tried to be more efficient and deliver more value to federations," Berkofsky said. "One way to do that is to do more with less." The top three categories for the UJC's expenditures are, in decreasing size order: payroll and benefits, meetings and conferences, and rent, Berkofsky said.

Muslim group protests school calendar

A Muslim group is reportedly demanding that a school system in Maryland remove Jewish holidays from its calendar.

The Towson Times reported that The Baltimore County Muslim Council battled the Baltimore County school system for three years over adding two Islamic holy days, Id al-Fitr and Id al-Adha, to its calendar, which would make them vacation days.

When the request was not submitted to a vote, the Muslim council demanded that the Jewish holidays on the calendar be dropped, calling it an issue of equity, said the Times.

The move "is an attempt to wage de-facto warfare between Muslims and Jews" in the county, said Arthur Abramson, executive director of the Baltimore Jewish Council.

The Times quoted him as adding that the decision to have Jewish holidays adopted as vacation days was economic, since it is too costly to hire substitutes for all the observant Jewish teachers.

Worker killed in ritual bath accident

A worker was killed in a construction accident at a Jewish ritual bath in New York City.

Fire Department officials said the accident, which injured two others, occurred Tuesday in Brooklyn when the workers were trying to waterproof a basement in order to install the mikvah.

MIDDLE EAST

Israeli official: Palestinians drawn to Al-Qaida

Palestinian cells sympathetic to Al-Qaida have been cracked in Jerusalem and the West Bank, Israel's Shin Bet chief said.

"The defense establishment has discerned the first buds of an ideological infrastructure for global jihad in the area of Nablus and

Jerusalem," Yuval Diskin told the Knesset Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee in a briefing Tuesday, using a catch-all Israeli term for Osama Bin Laden's terrorist network and its various international affiliates and sympathizer groups.

Several members of the suspected cells were taken into custody, Diskin said, adding that evidence suggested they were at the early stages of planning attacks against Israel.

Palestinian girl treated in Israel

Israel is paying for the medical treatment of a Palestinian girl wounded during an Israeli airstrike in the Gaza Strip.

Maria Aman, 3, suffered serious injuries in a missile attack last month on a Palestinian terrorist in Gaza, and has been receiving treatment in Israel's Sheba Hospital ever since.

Three of her relatives were killed in the strike. Defense Minister Amir Peretz on Wednesday said the government would underwrite her treatment after it emerged that further funding was unavailable.

The Peres Peace Center has also offered to help pay for Aman to remain under long-term Israeli care, which will likely be received at Jerusalem's Alyn Pediatric Hospital. One of her uncles was wounded in the Israeli strike, and is also receiving treatment in Israel.

Hillel opens in Haifa

Hillel opened its fifth center in Israel, in Haifa.

The Haifa Hillel Chais Center opened at Beit Hecht in the Hadar neighborhood to serve students at Haifa University, the Technion and area community colleges.

An estimated 35,000 young adults are in Haifa-area schools.

Hamas said seeking WMDs

Palestinian terrorists in the West Bank have reportedly been trying to boost their bombs by adding chemical toxins. Citing security sources, Ha'aretz reported Tuesday that Hamas cells have been stockpiling explosives in anticipation of a new round of conflict with Israel after it carries out its planned selective withdrawals in the West Bank.

Intent on escalating their attacks to so-called "mega-terrorism," Hamas has experimented with adding chemicals to bombs, Ha'aretz reported. The new intelligence appeared to be connected to the interrogation of Hamas' military commander in the West Bank, who was captured by Israel last month after an eight-year manhunt.

WORLD

Woman to head Germany's Jews

Germany's secular Jewish community will be headed by a woman for what is believed to be the first time.

Charlotte Knobloch, longtime activist in postwar German Jewish life, was elected to head the Central Council of Jews in Germany.

Wednesday's election of Knobloch, 73, follows the death of the council's former president, Paul Spiegel, on April 30, at age 68.

Knobloch also is a vice president of the World Jewish Congress. There are an estimated 120,000 Jews living in Germany.

Moscow mayor goes to synagogue

Moscow's mayor spoke at the city's Choral Synagogue to celebrate the renovation of the synagogue's sanctuary.

"Thank God, children's voices are being heard in the synagogue more and more today," Yuri Luzhkov, who was wearing a white yarmulke, said Wednesday, addressing the many children in the audience. "This symbolizes that the faith will live."

The synagogue will celebrate its 100th anniversary in September.