

**IN THE NEWS**
**'Quartet' approves P.A. aid mechanism**

The "Quartet" approved a program to funnel emergency assistance to the Palestinians.

The mechanism, aimed at bypassing the Hamas-led Palestinian Authority, was drawn up last Friday by the European Union and endorsed Saturday by its three partners — the United States, United Nations and Russia.

The Palestinians, in a funding crisis since Hamas came to power in March and triggered a foreign aid blockade, welcomed the initiative.

**Bush extends delay on Jerusalem embassy**

President Bush extended for six months a stay on moving the U.S. Embassy from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem.

Bush cited national security considerations in announcing the delay on June 15.

Bush, like his predecessor, President Clinton, has routinely exercised his right to delay the move mandated by Congress in 1995.

**Bush approves ban on P.A. use of funds**

President Bush signed an emergency supplemental funding bill that includes language forbidding its expenditure on the Palestinian Authority.

The \$94.5 billion bill providing assistance for Gulf Coast hurricane victims and funds for the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq passed the U.S. Senate and the U.S. House of Representatives last week.

Bush signed it June 15.

The bill requires the secretary of state to certify that the Palestinian Authority has demonstrated its commitment to the principles of nonviolence, the recognition of Israel, and the acceptance of previous agreements and obligations before it receives any of the funds.

# WORLD REPORT

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## Presbyterian compromise appears to please Israel divestment opponents

By RACHEL POMERANCE

**B**IRMINGHAM, Ala. (JTA) — Members of a Presbyterian Church committee hope that altering a policy on Israel divestment will quell two years of controversy.

It appears they may have succeeded.

The new call for "corporate engagement" extends to companies involved in the Gaza Strip, the West Bank and eastern Jerusalem and posits the will for a balanced approach to peacemaking efforts between Israel and the Palestinian Authority.

After the Presbyterian Church USA passed a resolution initiating a "phased, selective divestment in multinational corporations operating in Israel" at its last General Assembly in June 2004, many Jews and Presbyterians felt blindsided by an action they considered both unfair and inappropriate.

At its General Assembly this week in Birmingham, lay and clergy all seem to have an opinion on the efficacy and justice of the matter.

The panoply of voices, including those of several Jewish officials, have had a platform here, beginning with a panel discussion June 15, followed by open hearings last Friday — where anti-divestment testimony was delivered by James Woolsey, a former CIA director, and Judea Pearl, the father of slain Jewish journalist Daniel Pearl — and speeches Saturday by backers of some 26 proposed resolutions before the church's peacemaking and international issues committee.

At the same time, the 60-member committee crafted a new resolution Saturday night on Israel divestment that will come before the

General Assembly for a vote on Wednesday.

The tenets of the resolution include:

- calling on the church to restrict its investments that relate to Israel, Gaza, eastern Jerusalem and the West Bank to peaceful pursuits;
- regretting the pain caused to the Jewish community and within the Presbyterian community for flaws in the resolution's initial process;
- urging peaceful cooperation among Israelis, Americans and Palestinians, and Jews, Muslims and Christians;
- calling for dismantling Israel's security barrier beyond its pre-1967 borders;
- and aiming to submit these proposals to U.S., Israeli and Palestinian politicians and religious leaders.

While the new resolution does not rescind divestment, anti-divestment activists are pleased with the new language.

"Divestment has been stopped," said the Rev. James Young, an anti-divestment proponent from Virginia Beach, Va. Previously, divestment was a mandate, he said. Now, the "probability that they will recommend any sort of divestment is extremely remote."

But not everyone felt totally vindicated.

Adam Fischer, a member of the committee, was one of six who voted against the motion. While the motion is a "step in the right direction," it still does not rescind the process that could lead to divestment, he said.

After the divestment resolution in 2004, the Presbyterian committee expanded its investigation to include companies that profit from violence against either Israelis or Palestinians. Initially, five companies were selected — Caterpillar, Citigroup, Motorola,

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**FOCUS  
ON  
ISSUES**

## ■ *The resolution does not rescind divestment, but anti-divestment activists were pleased*

*Continued from page 1*

ITT Industries and United Technologies.

Although companies with both Israeli and Palestinian clients are being targeted, Fischer says the company most talked about throughout this process is Caterpillar, which supplies bulldozers to Israel's military.

And he fears that Israel's detractors will misappropriate the Presbyterian action as an anti-Israel one. Fischer was among a group of Presbyterians who recently visited Israel on a mission sponsored by the National Christian Leadership Conference for Israel.

Several of the mission's participants, along with other Presbyterians in town for the conference, shared their support for Israel and the Jewish community by attending services and Shabbat dinner at Birmingham's Temple Emanu-El last Friday night.

Some 20 Presbyterians were invited to the dais, where several offered blessings to the congregation.

Later, they shared the slide show of their visit and expressed their convictions against divestment.

Divestment is a "battle for the soul of the Presbyterian church," the Rev. William Harter, from Chambersburg, Pa., told JTA.

Harter explained to the congregation the deep historical ties — some 150 years of missionary work in the region — that bind much of the Presbyterian leadership to the Palestinian cause.

The Rev. William Evertsberg, of Greenwich, Conn., reflected a general sense of

relief at the committee's move.

"We're going to be able to go back to our Jewish friends feeling pretty good about this, and I think we did justice to our Palestinian friends, too," he said.

Throughout the conference, sentiments on both sides of the issue could be seen.

Some anti-divestment attendees wore buttons and T-shirts featuring a red strike through the word "divestment."

A global marketplace in the basement of the Birmingham-Jefferson Convention Complex, where the General Assembly is held, houses a booth

of anti-divestment activists along with a booth for Friends of Sabeel — North America. The group supports the Jerusalem-based Ecumenical Liberation Theology Center — Sabeel, which advocates divestment.

Fliers posted around the conference center memorialize the life of Rachel Corrie, the pro-Palestinian activist killed by an Israeli bulldozer.

Corrie's cousin testified for divestment, and claimed that an Israeli Caterpillar bulldozer ran over Corrie twice.

But most seem to be genuinely struggling for a way to make an impact for peace in the complex web of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

And given the Presbyterians' identification with Palestinian Christians, many want desperately to help their brethren,

whom they believe are oppressed by Israel.

The 2004 resolution was a "great gift to the Palestinian people," said peacemaking committee member Nabeel Saoud of West Hills, Calif., in response to a suggestion to eliminate the word "occupation" from Saturday night's compromise resolution.

Saoud did not want to now pull the "rug from underneath" them, he said.

In the end, the word "compromise" was left in.

One thing at this conference is clear: The overwhelming sense among Pres-

byterians that a departure from the 2004 resolution is in order.

"Watching 60 members of the peacemaking committee discuss this issue was eye-opening because there was something between consensus and unanimity that a serious misstep occurred in 2004," said Ethan Felson, assistant executive director of the Jewish Council for Public Affairs. "The focus of their debate" was the placement of Israel's separation barrier, rather than completely denouncing it, which occurred two years ago.

"Changing the divestment policy seemed a given in their deliberations" — a result, he said, of two years of conversations between Jews and Presbyterians and among Presbyterians themselves.

"This church shouldn't be judged by the actions of two years ago."

**'We're going to be able to go back to our Jewish friends feeling pretty good about this, and I think we did justice to our Palestinian friends, too.'**

**The Rev. William Evertsberg**

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## Scholarships for Jewish campers

NEW YORK (JTA) — The Foundation for Jewish Camping announced a \$1 million scholarship program for young Chicago Jews to attend Jewish summer camps. The anonymous gift will help pay camp tuition for families of first-time and second-year returning campers.

Members of participating synagogues are eligible for \$1,250 for first-time campers and \$750 for second-year returning campers attending programs that are at least three weeks long at nonprofit Jew-

ish summer camps. "It is our hope that the total immersion experience of Jewish summer camp will have a significant impact on the lives of youngsters who would otherwise have little opportunity to bond with other Jews in a Jewish environment and under the influence of Jewish role models," said Rabbi Dennis Katz, of Congregation Shaare Tikvah, a trustee and administrator of the program. Information is available on the Web at [www.jewishcamping.org](http://www.jewishcamping.org).

# When Jewish met adventurous

By RACHEL SILVERMAN

NEW YORK (JTA)— There are Jews hanging from mountaintops all over Colorado. Others are lighting Shabbat candles on sailboats or discovering their spirituality on the ski slopes.

These Jewish adventure enthusiasts not only make an effort to do the hobbies they love with other Jews, but they do so looking for religious or spiritual meaning. By combining their dual interests, this growing cadre of adrenaline seekers is building a new definition of what it means to do, or be, Jewish.

## THIS WEEK

### MONDAY

- More than 2,000 representatives from across the globe will gather in Jerusalem for the 35th Zionist Congress. Among other issues, the congress debates the policies of the World Zionist Organization, which helps determine half of the \$350 million budget of the Jewish Agency for Israel.

- The American Jewish Committee hosts Anna Fotyga, the Polish foreign minister, in Washington.

### TUESDAY

- The Red Cross votes on whether to admit Magen David Adom in Geneva.

- King Abdullah II of Jordan and Elie Wiesel co-host a conference of Nobel laureates who will consider the Israel-Palestinian issue. Other issues to be discussed at the two-day Petra II Conference, include global security and the crisis in Darfur.

- The conference that is widely considered to be the most important economic conference in Israel opens. The Israel Democracy Institute's 14th Annual Caesarea Forum runs through Thursday. Scheduled speakers include Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Olmert.

### WEDNESDAY

- President Bush travels to Vienna for the U.S.-E.U. summit. Containing Iran's nuclear program will be on the agenda.

- The Greek Embassy in Washington launches a new book by the Central Board of Jewish Communities in Greece, called "The Holocaust of Greek Jewry."

### THURSDAY

- The U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum hosts Akbar Ahmed, an American University professor who recently toured the Muslim world to discuss anti-Americanism and anti-Semitism.

Take Rabbi Jamie Korngold. When Korngold realized that the Reform Jews she was trying to reach in Boulder, Colo., were more interested in skiing than sitting in synagogue on Saturday mornings, she strapped on a pair of snow boots and headed up the mountain.

"For 30 percent of us, synagogue life is working really well, but the other 70 percent, we need new ways of reaching those people," she explains.

"There are so many people whose religion is the outdoors, who really experience their spirituality outside of the synagogue," continues Korngold, who has biked from New York to San Francisco and competed in a 100-mile trail run. "So what I do is say, 'You're going to be outdoors, you say it's a spiritual experience. Let me show you how it's Jewish.'"

Korngold's "Adventure Rabbi" program challenges participants to discuss Torah passages, as well as Judaism's relationship to nature, during Mountain Minyan hikes, backpacking treks through the desert and Rosh Hashanah retreats to a ranch in the Rockies.

Her trips are so popular that Korngold says her main problem is finding enough time to meet demand.

"Our Web site gets 200,000 hits a month," she said. "Our e-mail list is larger than the local federation's."

Rabbi Howard Cohen, a Reconstructionist rabbi who runs the Vermont-based Burning Bush Adventures organization, also talks about the need to build bridges between Judaism and the outdoors.

"I know so many Jews who have essentially grown detached from the Jewish community because as they were growing up, they couldn't get what they wanted from the Jewish world," he says. "So they went outside of it.

"But Judaism doesn't have to be a separate part of their lives," he continues. "It doesn't have to be, 'Am I gonna be an environmentalist or an engaged Jew?'"

Cohen calls the stereotype of the unfit, nonathletic Jew "residual anti-Semitism," noting that Jews long have been involved in heart-pumping activities like boxing and farming.

He said Jewish camps have been relying on outdoor activity for years, and that the first Outward Bound school was started by a German Jew, Kurt Hahn, in 1941.

Cohen himself is proof of the Jewish athletic tradition. Before attending rabbinical school he spent 10 years working for Outward Bound, where he learned to dog sled, set up camp and navigate whitewater rapids.

Now he leads day-school students, among others, on such expeditions. Before going, participants are sent Torah portions, as well as a list of questions, quotes and readings.

Cohen instigates discussion on these materials out in the woods, and has students keep Shabbat and bake challah in the field.

Being with students in this context changes his ability to relate to them, Cohen says.

"There are a lot of rabbis who ski or play golf and put their kippah in their back pocket," Cohen says. "But rabbis who take their congregants skiing, they have a different bond."

Cohen admits that rabbis who follow this path may not serve Jewish community "needs," such as Shabbat services and bar mitzvah training, but he says they do provide some of the "wants" Jews have from their religion.

"People want to be engaged Jewishly in different ways," he says. "We're adding quality to the experience."

Rabbi Nachum Shifren, an Orthodox surfer who rides waves in a wet suit and full beard, said the surfing lessons he offers in Israel and southern California offer catharsis.

"It's definitely a therapeutic thing," Shifren says. "Once you're hooked on all that power and might of the ocean, you're just never going to be the same."

## FOCUS ON ISSUES

'You're going to be outdoors, you say it's a spiritual experience. Let me show you how it's Jewish.'

Rabbi Jamie Korngold

## NEWS IN BRIEF

### NORTH AMERICA

#### JTA takes top award

JTA won the American Jewish Press Association's top award for an investigative series for the third straight year.

"Tainted Teachings: Islam and Education," by Lisa Hostein, Sue Fishkoff and JTA staff, won first prize for comprehensive coverage or investigative reporting.

The Washington bureau's coverage of the FBI probe of two former AIPAC staffers took third prize in the same category.

Reporter Chanan Tigay won second prize in the news reporting category for a story on Israeli relief workers sneaking into New Orleans after Hurricane Katrina, while JTA's Jerusalem-based photographer, Brian Hendler, won first and third prizes for photography.

The Simon Rockower Awards were handed out June 15 at the AJPA's annual conference in Baltimore.

#### Firebomber's mother to stand trial

The mother of a teenager convicted of firebombing a Jewish school was ordered to stand trial.

The trial of Rouba Elmerhebi Faud is slated to begin Sept. 5 on charges of being an accessory after the fact.

Her son, Sleiman Elmerhebi, was released from prison in May after serving two-thirds of a 40-month sentence for torching the United Talmud Torah school in April 2004.

### MIDDLE EAST

#### Peretz against Gaza blast probe

Israel's defense minister rejected calls for an international probe into a Gaza Strip blast that killed seven Palestinians.

Amir Peretz was quoted Sunday as saying that the case was closed on the June 9 incident on a Gaza beach because the Israeli military had concluded it was not caused by one of its shells.

Israeli officials have suggested that the explosion that killed seven members of a Palestinian family may have been caused by a landmine planted by a local terrorist group.

But three British newspapers over the weekend reported evidence to the contrary, and Palestinian Authority President Mahmoud Abbas, as well as at least one Israeli lawmaker, have called for the United Nations to investigate.

#### Boim to be Washington envoy?

Ehud Olmert reportedly may appoint one of his closet political confidants as Israel's ambassador to the United States.

Israel Radio reported Sunday that Ze'ev Boim is expected to succeed Daniel Ayalon in Washington at the end of the summer.

Boim, a childhood friend of the Israeli leader, declined comment, saying only that he is busy in his role as minister for immigration absorption.

### WORLD

#### Israeli flag flies at World Cup

A jubilant player from Ghana waved the Israeli flag after his team scored in the World Cup.

Saturday's flag-waver was defenseman John Pantsil, one of three members of the African nation's World Cup squad who plays professionally in Israel.

According to the Jerusalem Post, Pantsil said before the Cup began that he would wave Israel's flag if Ghana scored a goal, which they did twice in their upset win over the Czechs.

Pantsil, who is not Jewish, plays for Hapoel Tel Aviv. "I love your

country," Pantsil told Israeli reporters after the game. "You've done everything for me, and thanks to you I made it to the World Cup.

So I wanted to bring you some happiness in return."

Cup viewers may have more chances to see the Israeli flag Thursday, when Ghana plays the United States in a game vital to both teams' hopes of advancing to the next round.

#### Lebanon will take Israel complaint to U.N.

Lebanon said it would take its claim that Israel killed two Palestinian terrorists to the U.N. Security Council.

A May 26 car bomb killed Mahmoud Majzoub, who headed Islamic Jihad in the Lebanese city of Sidon, and his brother, also a member of Islamic Jihad.

Israel denied involvement.

Such killings are often the result of internecine disputes, but Lebanon's government said June 15 it had evidence that Israel detonated the bomb from a plane, and would take its claim to the Security Council.

#### Arrest made in Uzbek Jewish murders

Police in Uzbekistan arrested a man suspected of killing a Jewish family there.

The 27-year-old man, whose name police have not released, has reportedly confessed to the June 15 robbery and killing of Karina Loifer and her mother, Svetlana.

The two women were found strangled in their apartment in the city of Tashkent.

The killing alarmed the Jewish community because Karina Loifer, 20, was the secretary to the country's chief rabbi.

But Jewish leaders in Uzbekistan have said they do not believe the killing was motivated by anti-Semitism.

#### Australian candidate riles Jews

An Australian candidate of Syrian descent will meet with members of Melbourne's Jewish community in a bid to save his political future.

Khalil Eideh, who has lived in Australia for 35 years, was selected by his party to compete for a seat in the Victorian State Upper House.

A newspaper report revealed he had been a signatory in letters sent to Syrian President Bashar Assad which included the phrase "the threat from the colonial and Zionist is increasing in our Arab world."

Jewish community leaders have already met with a representative of the Victorian State premier, Steve Bracks, to voice their opposition to the party for selecting Eideh to run.

#### Synagogue attacker found unfit to stand trial

A Russian man who earlier this year stormed into a synagogue and attempted to attack worshippers was found mentally unfit to stand trial.

A court in Rostov-on-Don ruled on June 9 that Vadim Domnitsky should undergo psychiatric treatment.

The man was facing hooliganism charges for his attempted attack last January.

#### Graffiti leads to hate conviction in S. Africa

A South African man who painted anti-Semitic graffiti on his neighbor's house was found guilty of a hate crime.

Gerhard Barkhuizen was found guilty last week.

He will be sentenced later this month.

Barkhuizen painted a swastika and the phrase "spiteful Hebrew bastard" on the home of Yaron Fishman, an Israeli-born businessman who has lived in South Africa for more than 20 years.