

11 SETTLERS ARRESTED OVER KILLING OF ARAB VILLAGER By Gil Sedan

JERUSALEM, June 25 (JTA) -- Eleven Jewish settlers were arrested over the weekend for killing one Palestinian youth and wounding another in an alleged armed attack on the village of Bani Zeit in the West Bank on Friday.

Three of the suspects were released on bail Sunday, apparently because they were the only ones involved who were not carrying firearms.

The settlers insisted they were on a peaceful hike in the vicinity when they were attacked by Arab youths from the village. They said they opened fire when their lives were "threatened."

Arab sources said the settlers, armed with machine guns, raided the village, and when local youths tried to drive them out, the settlers shot and killed Aziz Khamis Yousef Arar, 20, and wounded his cousin, Adnan Yousef Arar, 14.

Bani Zeit is located about four miles from Ariel, the largest Jewish settlement in the territory.

A resident of Ariel, Steven Frederick Rosenfeld, 48, was stabbed to death by Arabs from Burkin village on June 17. Three suspects were taken into custody two days later and reportedly confessed the crime.

Rosenfeld was hiking alone in the countryside when he was assaulted.

The settlers from Ariel said their hikes were a weekly routine, but they said the latest one was to demonstrate that they were not intimidated by Rosenfeld's murder.

The settlers ignored an Israel Defense Force warning that they were entering a closed military zone, in order to demonstrate that Jews can "move freely in Eretz Yisrael," they said.

The settlers were backed by the parliamentary factions of Likud and the far right-wing Tehiya party.

Those jailed include Israel Meidad, parliamentary secretary of the Tehiya movement, and Yitzhak Novak, who served a two-year prison term for membership in an anti-Arab Jewish terrorist underground broken up by the security forces in 1984.

The incident was the latest of the increasingly frequent confrontations between militant Jewish settlers and Arab villagers in the West Bank.

WEEKEND CLASHES KILL 2 PALESTINIANS; COURT SENTENCES 2 ARABS TO LIFE By Gil Sedan

JERUSALEM, June 25 (JTA) -- A Palestinian youth was shot to death and two others were wounded in an attack on an Israel Defense Force patrol in the Gaza Strip on Sunday, and another Palestinian was killed in a clash with the IDF in Hebron on Saturday.

According to military sources, the shooting Sunday occurred when a band of masked young Palestinians attacked the patrol with knives and axes.

The troops opened fire after the demonstrators failed to obey orders to halt, the spokesman said.

The youth killed Sunday was identified as Yussuf Abdul Karim al-Farah.

And on Friday, at the Ketziot detention camp in Gaza, an Arab was strangled to death by a fellow inmate, apparently because he was suspected of collaborating with the Israeli authorities.

Meanwhile, a Jerusalem district court imposed a life sentence Friday on Nidal Caloum, a 25-year-old Arab from Ramallah convicted of murdering two elderly Jews in downtown Jerusalem on May 3.

The victims, 60-year-old Kalman Vardi and 90-year-old Nissim Levy, both lawyers, were stabbed to death at a bus stop opposite the main post office.

Their assailant stabbed three other people before he was overpowered by police.

The court imposed two life sentences for the double murder and three 10-year sentences for attempted murder of the other persons stabbed.

Meanwhile, hopes were raised in Israel that the intifada may ease during the annual pilgrimage to Mecca by the Moslem faithful, which began Sunday.

The first group of 1,400 departed Sunday via the Allenby Bridge into Jordan. The trip by bus takes two days across hot desert terrain. A total of 5,400 are expected to make the pilgrimage this year.

ISRAEL SAYS AMERICAN KIDNAPPED COOPERATED IN HIS OWN ABDUCTION By Gil Sedan

JERUSALEM, June 25 (JTA) -- Israel found itself in conflict with an American relief organization Sunday after suggesting that the kidnapping of Chris George in the Gaza Strip may have been staged.

George, 35, head of the West Bank-Gaza section of the Save the Children Foundation, was released unharmed Friday 29 hours after he was abducted from his Gaza office by three armed Palestinians.

Israeli security sources, claiming George is hostile to Israel, said there was a large measure of cooperation between the victim and his kidnappers, who were known to him.

Neal Keny, regional director of Save the Children, was quoted by the news media as calling the insinuation of collusion "outrageous."

Other American relief workers reportedly accused Israel of trying to discredit George as well as the Palestine Liberation Organization, which was praised in Washington for its prompt condemnation of the kidnapping.

Israeli security forces, which conducted an exhausting and fruitless search for the relief worker, backed up their suggestion by noting that George was acquainted with one of the kidnappers, whom he identified as Mohammad Abu Nasr, a resident of the Jabalya refugee camp in Gaza.

But Israeli authorities said George refused to identify the other two men who abducted him, and refused to say where he had been held.

After interrogating him for a third time on Saturday, authorities dropped the accusation that George helped stage the abduction, but they still accused him of cooperating with his captors.

George was well known for his sympathy with the Palestinian cause, and it seemed unlikely that a terrorist organization would target a sympathizer for kidnaping, the Israeli sources said.

George was released in good condition.

After the kidnapping was reported Thursday, the abductors allegedly gave the International Red Cross a list of Palestinians imprisoned by Israel whom they wanted released in exchange for George.

Several notes reportedly surfaced making additional demands of the Israel government.

One note in Arabic attributed the kidnapping to a group calling itself the Palestinian Popular Army.

Defense Minister Yitzhak Rabin declared that Israel would not give in to any demands by kidnappers.

In Washington, the State Department reacted to the kidnapping saying it "strongly condemned" the unknown Palestinian group responsible.

After George was freed, State Department spokeswoman Margaret Tutwiler said "his release" to the Red Crescent Society -- the Moslem equivalent of the Red Cross -- was "extremely good news."

Asked about a statement from the PLO condemning the kidnapping, Tutwiler termed the PLO reaction "responsible."

In Tunisia on Thursday, U.S. Ambassador Robert Pelletreau met with Hakam Balaoui, the PLO's representative in Tunis, "to make him aware of the situation that had just happened in the Gaza (Strip)," Tutwiler said.

It appeared in Israel that the PLO scored another victory in its image-enhancement campaign, having claimed to have secured the release of George.

George's abduction was the first of an American in the Israeli administered territories, and it introduced a new, potentially dangerous element to the 18-month-old Palestinian uprising.

Abduction is a political weapon used extensively in Lebanon, where kidnappings and the taking of foreigners as hostages is endemic.

That, and other recent developments have raised fears among Israelis of the "Lebanization" of their country.

As for George, while authorities would like to see him leave, Israel cannot deport him.

But the authorities hinted Sunday that he would depart voluntarily within a short time by tacit agreement with the Israelis.

(JTA correspondent Howard Rosenberg in Washington contributed to this report.)

IDF KILL 6 HEZBOLLAH GUERRILLAS IN SWEEP OPERATION IN LEBANON

By Hugh Orgel

TEL AVIV, June 25 (JTA) -- Israel Defense Force paratroopers killed six guerrillas of the extremist pro-Iran Hezbollah on Friday, during a search and destroy mission north of the southern Lebanon security zone.

One Israeli soldier was slightly wounded.

"It wasn't the routine mop-up operation," said Maj. Gen. Yossi Peled, commander of the northern sector. "The soldiers encountered tough opposition."

The mission was carried out in difficult terrain and accomplished in accordance with the highest standards of the IDF, Peled said.

Sources in Lebanon said the clash occurred

less than three miles from the Syrian army's forward positions in the Bekaa Valley of eastern Lebanon.

An IDF spokesman said the paratroopers "initiated action aimed at preventing the organization and activity of terrorists in the vicinity of Maidoun."

JERUSALEM POLICE CHIEF DIES AT 42

By Gil Sedan

JERUSALEM, June 25 (JTA) -- Yosef Yehudai, the Jerusalem chief of police, died suddenly of a heart attack at his home shortly after midnight Friday. He was 42.

Considered one of the most promising young police officers in Israel, Yehudai was spoken of as a possible candidate for the office of national police inspector-general within the next 10 years.

His tenure in Jerusalem included the 18 months of the Palestinian uprising, which frequently spilled over into Arab East Jerusalem. Yehudai was credited with keeping the capital relatively calm compared to the West Bank and Gaza Strip.

Born in Romania in 1947, Yehudai emigrated to Israel in 1961. He had served with the paramilitary border police and the regular police since he was 17.

At the time of his death, Yehudai was investigating the murder of Professor Menahem Stern of the Hebrew University, one of Israel's most eminent scholars, who was fatally stabbed Thursday morning on his way to the campus.

NAVON JOINS WITH ACADEMICIANS IN EULOGIZING HEBREW U. PROF

By Gil Sedan

JERUSALEM, June 25 (JTA) -- Education Minister Yitzhak Navon delivered a eulogy Sunday for Menahem Stern, an internationally famous professor who was stabbed to death by unknown assailants on the way to the Hebrew University campus Thursday morning.

Other academicians joined the minister in paying tribute to their colleague, a winner in 1977 of the coveted Israel Prize for his work in Jewish history.

Hundreds of mourners attended the funeral.

One of Stern's colleagues, Professor Ephraim Urbach, said his murder recalled the massacre of Hebrew University doctors and scientists when their convoy was attacked on the road to the university's Mount Scopus campus during Israel's War of Independence in 1948.

The police have no information about the motive and nature of the crime. They now seem to think it was a terrorist act, but have not ruled out the possibility that the 64-year-old professor was attacked by a demented person.

No terrorist group has claimed credit for the killing.

Stern was stabbed five times but not robbed. His body was found by school children in bushes just off a path adjacent to the Israel Museum at about 9:30 a.m. local time Thursday.

Police said he had left his Rehavia home about a half hour earlier and walked, as was his habit, to the Hebrew University's Givat Ram campus.

Police said Thursday that the murder did not seem to have political motives and noted that Arabs rarely visit the neighborhood where the crime was committed.

SCHINDLER SPEECH TO REFORM RABBIS DRAWS SHARP CRITICISM FROM ORTHODOX

By Allison Kaplan

NEW YORK, June 25 (JTA) -- A strongly worded sermon Friday night by Reform leader Rabbi Alexander Schindler has come under sharp criticism from Orthodox organizations.

Schindler, addressing more than 600 Reform rabbis at the centennial convention of the Central Conference of American Rabbis, said that the spirit of modern Reform Judaism must be preserved and the movement must stand by its most controversial decisions against criticism from more traditional Jews.

"Our forbears did not forge Reform Judaism to have us trade it in for a tinsel imitation of Orthodoxy," said Schindler, who is president of the Union of American Hebrew Congregations.

Schindler's remarks were characterized as a "shameful, ugly, indefensible and false attack on Orthodoxy" by Rabbi Pinchas Stolper, executive vice president of the Union of Orthodox Jewish Congregations of America.

Both Stolper and Rabbi Moshe Sherer, of the Agudat Israel movement, said that Schindler's statements indicate he is under mounting pressure from elements within the Reform movement to re-evaluate his stand on patrilineal descent.

In a radical departure from traditional Judaism, the Central Conference of American Rabbis decided in 1983 that children of mixed marriages would be recognized as Jewish, even through the father's lineage.

"I think that Rabbi Schindler's shrill attack against Orthodoxy can only be explained by he himself being frightened by the growing voices in his own camp that warn him he is leading the Reform movement to a point of no return," said Sherer.

Stolper urged Schindler to "heed the voices" in the Reform movement that call for a re-evaluation of the "self-destructive policies of accommodation to intermarriage and assimilation."

'Stop Romanticizing Orthodoxy'

In his sermon, Schindler exhorted the rabbis to stop "romanticizing Orthodoxy."

"Where it alone prevails," he said, "stale repression, fossilized tradition and ethical corruption often holds sway. There is the danger in Israel today, is it not?"

Giving in to pressure from more traditional streams of Judaism on issues like patrilineal descent would mean, Schindler warned, that "we will only demean ourselves and lose our distinctive character."

Schindler said Reform rabbis should not be "snared by the delusion that a retreat on such issues as patrilineality will gain us the acceptance of the more traditionally inclined in Israel or anywhere else."

"Only total surrender," Schindler said, "will have such an effect in that arena."

Sherer admitted that the Reform movement would be not accepted among the Orthodox even if it renounced patrilineal descent, because of Reform's abandonment of halacha (traditional Jewish law).

But, he said, "it would at least continue the acceptance of Reform Jews as Jews."

If the Reform movement continues to recognize patrilineal descent, Sherer said, the Jewish people would be torn into "two segments that cannot even intermarry."

DOZENS FROM DEVELOPMENT TOWNS DEMONSTRATE OVER FINANCIAL WOES

By Gil Sedan

JERUSALEM, June 25 (JTA) -- Mayors and dozens of residents of development towns demonstrated outside the Prime Minister's Office on Monday to call attention to the "economic and social crises" that are affecting their lives.

Others met with Interior Minister Arye Deri, who promised to bring their problems before the regular weekly Cabinet meeting.

Mayor Shaul Amor of Migdal Ha'emek, who heads the organization of development town mayors, accused the government of neglecting the crisis.

He said one of its symptoms was the inability of more than 15 towns to pay their municipal employees' salaries.

Another is the disclosure that development town youths and those from poverty neighborhoods comprise most of the 25 percent of Israeli young men found unfit for military service.

Deri, who represents the ultra-Orthodox Shas party, called for a new approach to the problems of development towns. He said they couldn't be solved by saddling the towns with high interest loans every month to ease their financial burdens.

The mayors complained that they were being passed from one minister to another while nothing was being done.

In Kiryat Shmona, a development town on the Lebanon border, hundreds of residents staged a demonstration Sunday to protest "the deterioration of the education system."

The town's schools, from kindergarten on up, have been closed by a strike for more than a week because of inadequate funding of schools by the government.

KNESSET MEMBER SAYS DRAFT EXEMPTIONS WILL INCREASE SOCIAL POLARIZATION

By Hugh Orgel

TEL AVIV, June 25 (JTA) -- A Knesset member is engaged in a public dispute with the Israel Defense Force over what he sees as an inordinate number of exemptions from military service.

Laborite Raanan Cohen said the official figures of the IDF's manpower branch show that 23 percent of military-aged youth were not drafted in 1988, and that number could reach 25 percent in 1989.

Cohen charged that the trend was a "dangerous process which will increase the social polarization in Israel," where military service has always been regarded as the great social, ethnic and educational leveller.

But an IDF spokesman said the figures cited by Cohen were misleading.

According to the spokesman, exemptions from military service were given to 14.5 percent of military aged men and 31.1 percent of women last year.

He said Cohen's higher rate was achieved in part by averaging the number of male and female exemptions.

Among the men, the spokesman said, 5 percent were ultra-Orthodox who were exempted to study at yeshivas.

Two percent were exempted for sociological reasons, mainly for poor reading and writing skills, and 7 percent were rejected for medical reasons.

JEWISH LEADERS GATHER AT ASSEMBLY FOR DEBATE, DISCUSSION AND CHANGE

By Andrew Silow Carroll

JERUSALEM, June 25 (JTA) -- Diaspora Jewish leaders, Zionist organization representatives and Israeli officials gathered here this week for intense and often angry debate, but for the topics were neither the familiar issues of the Palestinian uprising nor "Who Is a Jew."

Instead, delegates to the Jewish Agency Assembly returned to traditional ideological and operational questions that have gnawed at the Diaspora-Israel relationship since, and even before, the founding of the Jewish state:

These issues include the best system for absorbing new immigrants into Israeli society; the efficiency of the money spent for Jewish education in Israel and the Diaspora; and the effectiveness of the present structure of the Jewish Agency.

Debates over these issues are being fueled not only by the large number of delegates -- more than 1,000 -- but a new sophistication on the part of Diaspora delegates on the workings of the Jewish Agency.

For the 1989-90 fiscal year, the Jewish Agency is operating under a budget of \$360 million, a \$28 million drop since last year.

It is in this spirit of fiscal austerity that the largest assembly ever is being held at the Ramada Renaissance.

The hotel's polished lobby is a grid-lock of Jewish professionals and volunteers, all plotting or arguing the points that will become resolutions at an all-day plenary on Wednesday, and, if adopted, will guide the Jewish Agency as it sets next year's policy.

Rabbi Daniel Allen, associate executive director of the United Israel Appeal said Diaspora delegates are "better informed about the issues than they ever were."

Outreach Efforts

Allen said the interest is due to the growth of Jewish Agency committees at local federations, the "opportunity" of resettling Soviet Jews and the UIA's own efforts in reaching out to its constituents.

According to Aubrey Herman, executive vice president of the Jewish Federation of Cincinnati, "It's more difficult to raise money today, therefore the donors need more accountability about where the money is going."

Howard Weisband, the secretary-general of the Jewish Agency Executive, said although there are some in the agency who resent the assertiveness of the so-called "fund-raisers," he welcomed the change.

"Their involvement is the key for a more substantive Israel-Diaspora bridge," he said.

That bridge is seen as suspended between the Diaspora organizations that raise millions of dollars on behalf of Israel and the non-governmental Jewish Agency which spends it.

The most hotly debated issues are the following:

- Soviet emigration. Officials in charge of the absorption of new immigrants are being overwhelmed by the new Soviet immigration.

Between 5,000 and 7,500 Soviet Jews are expected to immigrate within the fiscal year, and the costs of resettling the emigres are enormous. But Diaspora communities are already strapped by immigrants of their own.

- The "Transfer Agreement." A 2-year-old proposal to transfer all absorption activities from the Jewish Agency to the Israeli government has never been acted upon.

Some feel this will make absorption more efficient, while others argue that the Jewish Agency has the experience and historical mandate for the most successful operation of the service.

- Jewish education. The \$50 million spent by the WZO-Jewish Agency represents the single largest pool of money spent on Jewish education in the world.

Diaspora leaders, through a Committee on Jewish Education established in 1988, want to see the WZO's 27 educational facilities run more efficiently and with less duplication of services.

Many Zionist leaders feel the fund-raisers' intervention promotes a bland form of "pro-Israel" education over a truly ideological Zionism.

JEWISH PEACE GROUPS JOIN OTHERS AT U.N. SESSION ON PALESTINIANS

By Allison Kaplan

UNITED NATIONS, June 25 (JTA) -- Seven Jewish peace group joined here last week with some 80 organizations -- including Palestinian advocacy groups -- to hear speeches praising the Palestinian intifada, criticizing Israeli behavior in the occupied territories and scolding Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir's peace initiative.

The symposium was designed for grass-roots organizations to influence United States policy in support of Palestinian rights.

It was the sixth such gathering sponsored by the U.N.'s "Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People," a group made up of 23 U.N. member countries.

Israel's acting ambassador to the United Nations, Johanan Bein, has called the symposium part of ongoing "anti-Israel activity" at the U.N.

Speakers at the symposium included Palestinians, Israelis and Americans.

Israeli peace activist Matityahu Peled said Thursday that the 18-month-old intifada represented "legitimate resistance" and was therefore "enjoying moral support all over the world."

"Israel's intransigence leads even its strongest supporters to doubt its desire for peace," said Peled, a former general in the Israel Defense Force and a former member of Knesset in an Arab-Jewish coalition party.

Peled advocates an international peace conference as a means of solving the Arab-Israeli conflict, as did most of the speakers at the symposium.

In his address, Peled called the recent Shamir initiative, which proposes elections in the West Bank and Gaza, "muddle-headed."

A statement by Yasir Arafat, read by Zehdi Terzi, the PLO's observer at the United Nations, reiterated the position that elections should occur only after Israeli forces are withdrawn from the occupied territories.

Members of the organizations participating in the symposium also participated in how-to panels on generating popular support for the Palestinian cause.

The Jewish groups that took part in the symposium were American Jewish Alternatives; the International Jewish Peace Union; the Jewish Committee for Israeli-Palestinian Peace; the Jewish Peace Fellowship; Jewish for a Just Peace; New Jewish Agenda; and the World Organization of Jews from Islamic Countries.