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**VIOLENCE BREAKS OUT IN GAZA STRIP
AFTER DEATH OF IMPRISONED ACTIVIST**

By Gil Sedan

JERUSALEM, Nov. 4 (JTA) -- Violence in the Gaza Strip reached a new peak over the weekend, when one man was killed and at least 250 Palestinians were wounded in clashes with Israeli security forces.

The riots erupted following a report that a Palestinian from the Gaza Strip who had been arrested two weeks earlier committed suicide while in detention.

Family and friends of Attiya Za'anin, 36, refused to accept the Israeli account of his death, claiming he had been tortured to death.

Za'anin, a farmer from the village of Beit Hanun arrested on suspicion of being a member of the Al Fatah wing of the Palestine Liberation Organization, reportedly was found hanged to death in his prison cell.

A prison spokesperson said Za'anin, whose body was found Friday night, made a rope from his blanket and hanged himself. The prison service claimed a military doctor tried but failed to revive him.

The dead man's family has called for a report by an independent pathologist on the cause of death.

Za'anin, a father of seven, allegedly was a key Fatah activist in the Gaza Strip who had served long prison sentences in the past for underground activity.

Since the intifada began in December 1987, he was arrested twice and placed in administrative detention. Two weeks ago, he was brought to the interrogation section of the Gaza prison.

The riots following his death began Saturday in his village of Beit Hanun and from there spread throughout the Gaza Strip. On Sunday, the violence had reached the southern part of the strip, particularly the towns of Rafah and Deir el-Balah, as well as the city of Gaza in the north.

Several Contributing Factors

Angry youths threw stones, bottles and pieces of metal at Israel Defense Force troops, who responded with tear gas, gravel-spraying machines and live fire. Four firebombs were hurled at army patrols, but no Israelis were hurt.

A 19-year-old man was fatally shot in the back of the head.

A curfew was clamped on several tense refugee camps and neighborhoods.

Defense Minister Moshe Arens visited the Gaza Strip on Sunday, an indication of the gravity of the situation.

A senior officer explained that the army was trying to hit at the "hard core" of the intifada. He said that despite the large number of injured, the army was reacting in a "restrained fashion."

He said that under different circumstances, riots of the kind that took place Saturday would have elicited a much higher toll of people hurt.

Several factors in addition to Za'anin's death have contributed to the tension in the area. Palestinians are still angry at killing last month of at least 17 Arabs by Israeli police on the Temple Mount in Jerusalem.

But tempers have been fueled by the growing

trend of dismissing Palestinian workers from their jobs in Israel and replacing them with Jewish workers.

In any case, November is usually a tense month in the administered territories. Palestinians observe as days of mourning Nov. 2, the anniversary of the Balfour Declaration supporting a Jewish home in Palestine, and Nov. 29, the anniversary of the U.N. resolution on the partition of Palestine. Their observances are usually accompanied by increased violence.

**ISRAEL REJECTS U.N. PROPOSAL
ON PROTECTION OF PALESTINIANS**

By David Landau and Gil Sedan

JERUSALEM, Nov. 4 (JTA) -- Israeli officials voiced objections Sunday to a new U.N. proposal to take measures to ensure the protection of Palestinians living in areas captured by Israel in 1967, including East Jerusalem.

The proposal, contained in a report issued last Thursday by U.N. Secretary-General Javier Perez de Cuellar, would have signatories to the Fourth Geneva Convention of 1949 convene to discuss potential protective measures.

Foreign Minister David Levy, speaking to reporters, said the report "posed a question mark" over the sovereignty of Jerusalem, which Israel views as its undivided capital. He called the report a "shameful exploitation of a tragic event."

Perez de Cuellar drew up the report in response to a request contained in the Oct. 12 U.N. Security Council resolution condemning Israel for the fatal shooting of at least 17 Arabs by Israeli police on Jerusalem's Temple Mount four days earlier.

The resolution, adopted unanimously, called for a U.N. mission to be sent to Israel to investigate the killings. The Israeli Cabinet refused to receive the mission, but the secretary-general was still required under the resolution to submit a report concerning the shootings, as reaffirmed in a second resolution Oct. 24.

An official statement released by the Israeli Foreign Ministry after Sunday's weekly Cabinet meeting termed the secretary-general's report "disappointing" and "one-sided." It criticized the report for focusing solely on Israel and not calling on the Palestinians to cease violent actions.

Holding Israel To Double Standard

The statement pointed out that in 1967, Israel announced that although it did formally accept the applicability of the Fourth Geneva Convention to the administered territories, it would informally act under the humanitarian provisions of the convention, which addresses the rights of civilians living in occupied territories.

Government sources said Sunday's statement was intended to be "polite but firm."

In New York, the Conference of Presidents of Major Jewish Organizations, representing 46 national Jewish groups, criticized the United Nations for holding Israel to a double standard and for attempting to interfere in Israel's internal affairs.

"The secretary-general's proposal that the

Security Council involve itself directly in efforts for 'protection' of Palestinians living under Israeli rule goes far beyond the scope of the Oct. 12 resolution," the conference said in a statement released Friday.

Meanwhile, the government on Sunday introduced the first step in its plan to reorganize the police in the wake of an Israeli investigation into the Temple Mount violence.

The report was critical of the way police top brass handled the incident, though it said the use of live ammunition by police was justified.

Above all, the move affects the structure of the Jerusalem police force, which was ill prepared to contend with the violence that ensued when some 3,000 Arabs converged on the Temple Mount and threw stones at Jews worshipping at the Western Wall.

Police Minister Ronni Milo announced that the Jerusalem police force would soon be turned into a separate regional command, one of five in the country.

Ministerial Panel Appointed

As an immediate result of the decision, some 350 police will be added to the local force. A special command will be set up to deal with the Old City and Temple Mount, and a special, highly trained commando-like unit, known as the Gideonites, will soon start operating in its special capacity to deal with the Palestinian uprising in Jerusalem.

A senior officer will command the new police region. His name was still unknown Sunday, but it was already clear that the present police chief, Arye Bibi, who until October was considered the main candidate for the job, would not receive it. He will be reassigned to a different post, probably outside Jerusalem.

The police reorganization is expected to go into effect within several weeks. The plans reportedly have been in existence for quite some time, but their implementation was expedited due to the events on the Temple Mount.

In a related development, the Cabinet appointed a special ministerial committee to deal with the Temple Mount affair. It is headed by Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir and includes Shamir's two deputies, David Levy and Moshe Nissim, and the ministers of police, religious affairs, interior and justice.

BAKER SENDING MISSION TO IMPLEMENT AGREEMENT ON HOUSING LOAN GUARANTEES By David Friedman

WASHINGTON, Nov. 4 (JTA) -- A U.S. Agency for International Development team is expected in Israel soon to begin implementing the U.S. agreement to guarantee \$400 million in loans to build housing for Soviet immigrants.

Secretary of State James Baker on Friday told Israel's new ambassador to Washington, Zalman Shoval, that he had instructed AID to go ahead with the mission.

The AID team will evaluate Israel's plans for using the \$400 million before issuing the guarantee document, which allows Israel to seek the loans from an American bank.

There had been reports last week that Baker had delayed sending the AID mission because of continued concern about the settlement of Soviet Jews in the West Bank, Gaza Strip and East Jerusalem.

Baker had accepted Israel's assurances that

none of the \$400 million would be used for settling Soviet Jews in areas not under Israel's control before 1967. But he reportedly wanted greater assurances about Israel's overall housing plans beyond the Israeli government's promise that Soviet Jews are not being directed to the territories.

State Department spokeswoman Margaret Tutwiler repeated Friday that the delay in sending the AID team was due only to the need to work out details.

Shoval, who has not yet presented his credentials to President Bush, met with Baker for an hour Friday, just one day before the secretary left for visits to Turkey, Bahrain, Saudi Arabia and Egypt.

During his one-week trip, Baker also is scheduled to meet Tuesday with the Chinese foreign minister in Cairo and to go to Moscow for meetings Thursday with Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev and Foreign Minister Eduard Shevardnadze.

Shoval said his meeting with Baker demonstrated that the basic understanding between the United States and Israel continues, despite differences of opinion on some issues.

Disagreement between friends does not break an alliance, the ambassador said. The close ties are as strong as ever and can withstand disagreement.

Shoval told reporters he was outraged at the one-sided resolutions adopted by the U.N. Security Council in the aftermath of the Oct. 8 riots on the Temple Mount in Jerusalem. He said those who continue to bring the issue up before the Security Council are not looking for facts but want to divert attention from Iraq's invasion of Kuwait.

Since Israel gained control of the Old City in 1967, it has not infringed on the rights of Moslems to worship on the Temple Mount, Shoval stressed. He said Israeli law prohibits Jews from praying on the Temple Mount and that this has always been upheld by the Israeli Supreme Court.

SHAMIR, AT 75, SAYS ISRAEL MUST STAND FIRM ON PRINCIPLES By David Landau

JERUSALEM, Nov. 4 (JTA) -- Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir, just turned 75, says the lesson of history for a small state like Israel is to stand firm for its principles.

In a special birthday interview with the daily Yediot Achronot, the premier said it was for this reason that he would not waver or compromise in the current battle with the United States over a U.N. investigation into the Oct. 8 Temple Mount bloodshed.

"I have learned from history that in times of crisis, what counts in the end is the firm and unwavering stand of a nation sticking to its interests," Shamir said.

He recalled "South Vietnam, for instance," which "began its long path to disaster when its leaders became puppets of the United States and ceased defending their own national interests."

In Iran, too, he said, "the Shah lost the will to resist the revolutionary forces in his land, lost his power to fight. It was not the U.S. that was to blame for his downfall. He himself lost his faith in his own capacity to stand."

"I learn from this that we, for our part, must stand firm for our principles, consistently and determinedly," the premier said.

JEW DEPLORE BUSH'S COMPARISON OF SADDAM HUSSEIN WITH HITLER

By Howard Rosenberg

WASHINGTON, Nov. 4 (JTA) -- President Bush's assertion last week that Iraq's use of Western hostages as "human shields" had no parallel during the Third Reich has offended Jews across the political spectrum.

The fur began to fly after Bush, speaking at a political rally in Massachusetts last Thursday, blasted Saddam Hussein's decision to place hostages at Iraqi military installations and other strategic sites.

"I don't believe Adolf Hitler ever participated in anything of that nature," he said.

The president later defended his statement: "I was told that Hitler did not stake people out against potential military targets," he said. He also claimed that Hitler, unlike Hussein, respected "the legitimacy of the embassies."

In Los Angeles, Rabbi Abraham Cooper, associate dean of the Simon Wiesenthal Center, called Bush's statements "an outrage." Hitler's acts were, in fact, "much worse" than the atrocities perpetrated by Hussein, he said.

Cooper pointed out that Hitler indeed placed concentration camp workers at strategically located munitions factories. Those human targets were killed when Allied forces bombed Nazi weapons plants, he said.

'No Parallel To What Hitler Did'

In New York, Albert Vorspan, senior vice president of the Union of American Hebrew Congregations, agreed.

While "Bush is to be commended for effectively leading the world against the brutal aggression of Saddam Hussein," the president's "rhetorical comparison arguing that the Iraqi despot is even worse than Adolf Hitler is overblown and offensive," he said in a statement.

"To compare him with the monster who organized the Holocaust" is "insensitive hyperbole that is unhelpful to the truth," Vorspan said.

Even Alfred Lilienthal, a noted Jewish anti-Zionist, criticized the president's remarks, saying, "There is no parallel to what Hitler did."

But Lilienthal, who often criticizes parallels made between Nazi atrocities and those perpetrated by Arabs today, said that "demonizing Saddam Hussein will not lead us to a constructive end to this crisis."

Both the president and Secretary of State James Baker have made other comparisons between Hussein and Hitler.

Bush has repeatedly compared Iraq's Aug. 2 invasion of Kuwait to Hitler's invasion of Poland, which led to the outbreak of World War II.

The Nazi Death's Head regiments came in behind the regular armed forces of Germany "and systematically wiped out a lot of Polish people, lined up kids and shot them," Bush said last week. "And the same things are going on in Kuwait today."

At a congressional hearing in October, Baker entertained the possibility of holding war crimes trials, just as were held following World War II in Nuremberg, to address allegations that Hussein has committed atrocities against the Kuwaitis since the Iraqi occupation began.

In this matter, Cooper called the comparison legitimate. He expressed hope the United States would also sue U.S. firms that have supplied Iraq with chemical or biological weapons components.

NO ANTI-SEMITISM AMONG JAPANESE, AMBASSADOR ASSURES JEWS HERE

By David Friedman

WASHINGTON, Nov. 4 (JTA) -- Japan's ambassador to the United States sought to assure a Jewish audience last week that anti-Semitism is not prevalent among the Japanese people.

"I can say categorically anti-Semitism has no root in my country," Ambassador Ryohei Murata said at an Oct. 29 luncheon sponsored by the Washington chapter of the American Jewish Committee.

Murata said any anti-Semitism that has manifested itself in Japan is due to the fact that "most Japanese are not acquainted with Jewish culture and history. They have no concept of what anti-Semitism means."

The ambassador said he was "personally ashamed" by racist remarks about blacks and other U.S. minorities made by Japanese officials. He blamed any stereotyping of other ethnic groups on the homogeneity of the Japanese people.

Such stereotypes, he admitted, "die rather hard."

David Harris, the AJCommittee's new executive vice president, said his organization had become involved with Japan following news about the best-selling anti-Semitic books in Japan.

Since then, an AJCommittee delegation visited Japan, he said, and "we have quietly but persistently" met with Japanese government and private officials in the United States and Japan.

The anti-Semitic books are no longer best sellers, both Harris and Murata indicated. Harris said the AJCommittee met with Japanese publishers, not to suppress anti-Semitic books but to "make absolutely clear" that such books should not be published by mainstream publishers.

Growing Trade Ties

Despite all the publicity about anti-Semitic books, the book that most Japanese have read about Jews is the "The Diary of Anne Frank," Murata said. And while Japanese are not familiar with Jewish history, they do know a great deal about the Holocaust, he said.

He noted that during the time Japan was an ally of Nazi Germany, the Japanese consul in Lithuania provided 5,000 visas to Jews, allowing them to escape to the Far East.

Another book that many Japanese have read is "The Japanese and the Jews," by a Japanese author describing the similarities and differences between the Japanese and Jews. The book made "many Japanese feel much closer to Jewish people with whom they share many cultural traits," Murata said.

"The Japanese and the Jewish people, regardless of whether they are in the United States, Israel or elsewhere, must deepen each other's understanding of their similarities and differences, so they can cooperate more effectively, not only for their mutual benefit, but also contribute to the spiritual and material enrichment of the entire international community," the ambassador said.

Murata also described growing trade ties between Israel and Japan. Japan exported some \$100 million in goods to Israel in 1989 and imported \$750 million from Israel, he said.

This makes Japan the third-largest source for exports for Israel after the United States and Britain, the ambassador said.

BEHIND THE HEADLINES:**GROUPS OF DIVERSE PERSUASIONS
BACK LAW TO REVERSE COURT RULING**

By David Friedman

WASHINGTON, Nov. 4 (JTA) -- When the Supreme Court ruled last April that two American Indians could be denied unemployment benefits because they were fired for using an illegal drug, peyote, in a religious ceremony, many groups across the country realized the decision affected far more than Native Americans.

The result was the organization of an ecumenical coalition of religious and civil rights organizations, many of which have differed vehemently with each other on political or religious issues.

They came together out of fear that the April 17 decision in Oregon Employment Division vs. Smith would threaten religious freedom, especially for minority religions such as Judaism.

No one believes that Congress or a state legislature will adopt laws that specifically prohibit practices by minority religions, according to Rep. Stephen Solarz (D-N.Y.).

"The threat to religious freedom, to the extent there is one, essentially comes from the enactment of laws of general applicability which make it impossible for individuals to carry out the requirements of their faith," he explained.

Solarz drew up the Religious Freedom Restoration Act of 1990, designed to return the situation to what it was for some three decades before the court decision.

It was introduced in the House last summer and now has 99 co-sponsors, Democrats and Republicans, liberals and conservatives. A similar bill was introduced in the Senate just before Congress adjourned last week.

The crowded congressional calendar kept the bill from being adopted this year, but Solarz will introduce it again when the new Congress takes office in January, said David Lachman, a legislative assistant to the congressman from Brooklyn.

Requires Compelling State Interest

The proposed law would require federal or state legislation to demonstrate a compelling governmental interest before restricting someone's religious practices.

The government also would have to prove that the law was the "least restrictive means of furthering that compelling government interest." Such compelling interests have usually involved health and safety.

The need to prove a compelling state interest was rejected in the peyote case by Justice Antonin Scalia, who wrote the majority opinion.

"We have never held that an individual's religious beliefs excuse him from compliance with an otherwise valid law prohibiting conduct that the state is free to regulate," Scalia wrote.

Religious and civil rights groups claim this was tantamount to destroying the protection contained in the clause of the First Amendment that guarantees free exercise of religion.

Justice Sandra Day O'Connor, who voted with the court majority against the two American Indians, nevertheless dissented from Scalia's reasoning. She said the court has always respected the First Amendment in requiring the government to "justify any substantial burden on religiously motivated conduct by a compelling state interest and by means narrowly tailored to achieve that interest."

The anger over Scalia's decision resulted in 35 groups, including eight Jewish organizations, joining together in the Coalition for the Free Exercise of Religion, which is lobbying in support of the Solarz bill.

During a recent hearing by the House Judiciary subcommittee on civil and constitutional rights, coalition representatives said they were particularly incensed with Scalia's statement that the compelling interest test was a "luxury" a democracy could not afford.

Kiddush Wine And Kosher Slaughter

"But what we can ill afford is a court that misconstrues precedent and guts our free-exercise rights," said Robert Dugan Jr., public affairs director for the National Association of Evangelicals.

Witnesses at the hearing gave many examples of how generally applicable laws could bar religious practices. For Jews, this could mean making the drinking of sacramental wine illegal for minors; excluding an Orthodox basketball player from interscholastic competition for wearing a yarmulka; banning kosher slaughter and circumcision; and requiring government employees to work on religious holidays.

Agudath Israel of America, one of the members of the coalition, has expressed concern that zoning laws could be used to stop the establishment of new synagogues. Until now, the courts have rejected all such zoning restrictions as unconstitutional.

Members of the coalition point out that the Supreme Court has already sent back to the Minnesota Supreme Court a case with instructions to review it in light of the peyote decision.

The state court had upheld the right of the Amish to use on their horse-drawn buggies an alternative to the triangular signs that Minnesota law requires be placed on slow-moving vehicles. The Amish, who dress in black, consider the bright-orange signs too garish.

**BRITISH COMPANY BACKS OFF
FROM COMPLIANCE WITH BOYCOTT**
London Jewish Chronicle

LONDON, Nov. 4 (JTA) -- An international subsidiary of National Power, Britain's biggest state-owned electric company, has backed off from compliance with the Arab boycott of Israel.

The subsidiary, British Electricity International, an overseas consulting firm, came under strong pressure from Parliament and government circles before it disowned a decision by a top executive to reject a request for technical assistance from the state-owned Israel Electric Corp.

A National Power spokesman confirmed last week that the company is prepared to do business with Israel, and issued a statement denying that it supported the boycott.

That was not the case last July, when K. Bernard, BEI's regional director for the Middle East and Europe, informed Israel Electric's secretary, Pinchas Miara, that working with Israel in effect might jeopardize the British firm's position in Arab countries.

BEI's managing director, John Anderson, says now that he hadn't seen Bernard's letter in advance and that it was "misconceived."

Martin Savitt, chairman of the anti-boycott committee of the British-Israel Chamber of Commerce, has asked BEI for confirmation that it will accept commercial inquiries from Israel.