

**ARAB-JEWISH TENSIONS ESCALATE
WITH STABBING OF RABBI IN GAZA**
By Gil Sedan

JERUSALEM, May 27 (JTA) -- The second fatal stabbing of a Jew by an Arab this week has set off a new wave of fury in Israel, adding to the anti-Arab rage that followed the first murder on Sunday.

The latest victim was Rabbi Shimon Biran, rabbi of Kfar Darom, a Jewish settlement in the Gaza Strip. Biran, 32, the father of four, was attacked early Wednesday morning as he left the settlement gates and was about to cross the street.

His assailant, identified as Ahmad Ibrahim Ahmed, 19, a resident of the nearby Arab town of Deir el-Balah, was captured after a brief chase in which he was seriously hurt.

The stabbing followed by 72 hours the murder of 15-year-old Helena Rapp in Bat Yam, a seaside township south of Tel Aviv, while she waited for a bus to school outside her home early Sunday.

Although her assailant, a Gaza Arab, was swiftly taken into custody, the killing touched off two days of rioting in Bat Yam, Rishon le-Zion, Holon and other towns in the Greater Tel Aviv area, which had hardly subsided when the latest murder occurred.

In Wednesday's killing of the rabbi, police reported that the assailant stalked his victim from behind and killed him instantly with a single plunge of a knife.

A settler driving by chased the killer and struck him with his car. A soldier on guard at the entrance to Kfar Darom fired at the fleeing man, seriously wounding him.

Following the latest killing, Jewish settlers set Palestinian fields and hothouses ablaze. An Israeli photographer was reported beaten, as well as two Arabs, according to Israel Radio.

New riots erupted in Kfar Darom and in neighboring Gaza Strip settlements. Furious settlers descended on Deir el-Balah to wreak vengeance on the local Arabs.

Others set fire to fields cultivated by Arabs and burned two greenhouses.

Gaza Strip To Remain Closed

The settlers tried to take over a local school and threatened to harm the children inside. They were thwarted by Israel Defense Force soldiers, who evacuated the school. But settlers used a bulldozer to knock down a wall in the Arab town.

The army clamped a curfew on Deir el-Balah and also blocked entry to Kfar Darom to prevent other settlers from gathering there.

The IDF's measures aimed at preventing bloodshed aroused the settlers against the soldiers. At one point, armed settlers fired into the air during an attempt to break into the blockaded settlement.

In an unrelated incident, Israeli soldiers reportedly shot dead a Palestinian woman in the West Bank city of Jenin after a bus carrying soldiers was stoned.

Palestinians in Jenin closed their stores in a sign of mourning after Najjyeh al-Ayed Zakarneh, 55, was killed.

The incident was being investigated, Israeli military sources said.

The unrest in Gaza followed two nights of rioting in Bat Yam, where hundreds of Jewish demonstrators clashed with police. Gangs of angry youths ran amok searching in vain for Arab workers in local restaurants and catering halls where many are employed.

But no Arab has reported for work in the last four days. The IDF sealed off the Gaza Strip after Sunday's murder, mainly to prevent Arab day-workers from entering Israel proper while a lynch mood prevailed.

The territory originally was to be reopened Thursday. But the Defense Ministry announced Wednesday that it would remain closed until next week as a security precaution.

In the absence of Arabs, Jews bent on vengeance turned their wrath on the police. Several police officers were hurt and about 120 Jews were detained.

The Council of Jewish Settlements, the organization of settlers in the West Bank and Gaza Strip, urged the government Wednesday to take drastic measures to prevent further killings.

They demanded the immediate deportation of some 1,000 Arab terrorists who were freed in a 1985 prisoner exchange with the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine-General Command.

Mayor Ehud Kinamon of Bat Yam sympathized with the rioters. He said they had just cause following the murder of Helena Rapp.

Justice Minister Dan Meridor urged restraint. He observed that cries of "Death to the Arabs" have an unpleasant association from "other times."

**WAR WITH SYRIA IN SOUTH LEBANON
IS UNLIKELY, ISRAELI LEADERS SAY**
By Hugh Orgel

TEL AVIV, May 27 (JTA) -- Israeli leaders issued reassuring statements Tuesday that war is not likely to break out in southern Lebanon, despite the sequence of Hezbollah attacks and Israeli retaliation in the past week.

Foreign Minister David Levy and Defense Minister Moshe Arens said they do not believe Syria wants war at this time. According to the Israelis, Syria exerts de facto control in Lebanon and could restrain Hezbollah if it wanted to.

In fact, southern Lebanon was quiet Wednesday evening. For the first time in eight days there were no reports of hostile activity by either side.

The calm followed extensive Israeli air raids Tuesday. According to air force sources, eight aircraft attacked Hezbollah installations in the villages of Jabi Shafi, Jarjour, Aine Bouswar and Milta, all in the Iklim al-Tofah region northeast of Tyre.

At least two people were killed and 17 injured in the raids, which lasted over an hour.

On Monday, the Israeli air force struck at Jibsheit, Dardghaya and Majdal Silim villages. A local Hezbollah leader, Yasser Nassour, 33, his wife and two daughters were reportedly killed when Israeli bombers scored a direct hit on their home.

Israel blames Hezbollah for causing the

flight of tens of thousands of Shi'ite villagers from southern Lebanon.

According to the Israelis, if the extremist, fundamentalist Iranian-backed guerrillas had not entrenched themselves in the region, their villages would not have been attacked.

NEXT ROUND OF MULTILATERAL TALKS UNLIKELY TO BE HELD BEFORE AUTUMN

By David Landau

JERUSALEM, May 27 (JTA) -- Another round of multilateral talks on Middle East regional issues will convene in several venues around the world, but not until this fall.

The location of the meetings, but not the final dates, were decided Wednesday, when the steering group guiding the multilateral phase of the Middle East peace talks met in Lisbon.

The steering group, which consists of senior officials from more than a dozen countries in and outside the region, reviewed what was accomplished in the first series of five multilateral conferences held earlier this month.

According to Leonardo Mathias, a Portuguese diplomat who chaired the one-day session, all five achieved "small steps in the right direction."

He described the talks so far as "confidence-building" measures aimed at getting the Middle East antagonists to cooperate in solving regional problems that affect them all.

A senior official of the European Community observed, however, that "the central key of this process remains the bilateral Arab-Israeli talks" that got under way in Madrid last fall and met four times subsequently in Washington.

The bilateral talks, which have brought Israelis face to face with a Palestinian delegation, are scheduled to resume in Rome, possibly in July.

The entire process was established under the joint auspices of the United States and Russia. The multilateral phase was launched in Moscow in January. Five working groups held widely separated two-day sessions in various capitals between May 10 and 20.

Washington hosted disarmament and security talks. Refugee issues were discussed in Ottawa, with Canada playing host. The E.C. chaired talks in Brussels on economic development. The regional water problem was discussed in Vienna, and talks on environmental issues were held in Tokyo.

But Israel stayed away from the Ottawa and Brussels sessions because non-indigenous Palestinians were allowed to attend. Syria and Lebanon boycotted all five meetings to protest lack of progress in the bilateral phase.

More Working Groups Proposed

Reports from Lisbon said the Palestinians are pressing for the creation of two more multilateral working groups -- on human rights and the status of Jerusalem.

Israel has long been proposing a group on health problems.

The Lisbon meeting apparently decided where the next series of multilateral talks will be held but did not make it public. No final date was set, but Israeli participants said it would be "in the early fall."

July was ruled out because Israel, which holds parliamentary elections June 23, may not have a new government in place by then. August is vacation month in Europe, when virtually everything shuts down.

According to reports from Lisbon, the Egyp-

tian delegate raised the question of the current fighting between Israeli and Shi'ite guerrilla forces in southern Lebanon.

The head of the Israeli delegation, Yossi Hadass, replied that to be objective, the Egyptian should have mentioned the wave of fatal stabbings of Israelis by Arabs in Israel.

U.S. Assistant Secretary of State Edward Djerejian, co-chairman of the steering group, said both those issues were outside the scope of the multilateral talks.

Lisbon was the site of the meeting because Portugal currently chairs the E.C. Council of Ministers.

(JTA correspondent Yossi Lempkowicz in Brussels contributed to this report.)

PALESTINIAN DELEGATION TO TALKS SAYS IT TAKES ORDERS FROM THE PLO
By Hearlette Boas

AMSTERDAM, May 27 (JTA) -- The Palestinian delegation that negotiates with Israel in the bilateral peace talks is entirely controlled by the Palestine Liberation Organization in Tunis, two ranking Palestinian officials said at the end of a two-day visit here Tuesday.

Any separation between the delegation and the PLO is artificial, they said.

Nothing is said or decided by the Palestinian delegation without prior consultation with and approval from the PLO's top level, according to Hanan Ashrawi, spokeswoman for the delegation, and Nabil Sha'ath, political adviser to PLO chief Yasir Arafat.

They met Monday with Dutch Foreign Minister Hans van den Broek at The Hague and on Tuesday with the Foreign Affairs Committee of the Second Chamber of the Dutch Parliament.

The two Palestinians heaped blame on Israel for the meager progress made in peace talks so far and the unrest in the Israeli-administered territories. They insisted that Israel actually does not want peace and is constantly delaying the process.

They cited Israel's attacks on Hezbollah positions in southern Lebanon as evidence of its warlike intentions. They claimed the attacks are also intended to help Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir's Likud party in the Knesset elections next month.

Ashrawi, who is not an official member of the Palestinian delegation, contended that the unrest in the territories reflects Palestinian frustration that no tangible results have emerged from the peace talks.

If there is no full autonomy for the occupied areas by Nov. 1, peace will be seriously jeopardized, she warned.

The meeting with van den Broek was the first time a foreign minister of Holland has officially received a Palestinian delegation.

As the immediate past chairman of the E.C. Council of Ministers, he is one of the "troika" assigned to deal with Middle East issues, which consists as well of the current chairman and his successor.

But van den Broek's six-month stint as E.C. chairman, which ended Dec. 31, was not considered successful. Germany, France and Britain paid him no heed, and he is also in political trouble at home.

There is friction between the foreign minister and Prime Minister Rudolph Lubbers, who is expected to prevail.

LATEST DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS TIE ISRAEL TO BELARUS, SIERRA LEONE

By David Landau

JERUSALEM, May 27 (JTA) -- Israel has rapidly emerged from diplomatic limbo in the wake of the collapse of the Soviet Union.

In the past 18 months, it has established full diplomatic relations with the Soviet Union -- which soon became defunct -- with China and India, formerly hostile to the Jewish state, and with all the countries of Eastern Europe.

It also has re-established ties with most of the African states that broke them after the 1973 Yom Kippur War as a gesture of solidarity with Egypt.

This week, Israel renewed diplomatic relations with the West African nation of Sierra Leone and ceremoniously forged ties, for the first time, with Belarus -- formerly Byelorussia -- one of the 15 independent republics that once formed the Soviet Union.

Visiting Jerusalem for the occasion were the prime minister of Belarus, Vyacheslav Kebich, and his foreign minister, Pyotr Kravchenko. They were received by Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir and Foreign Minister David Levy.

Kebich was especially pleased that Israel participated in the international conference in Lisbon last weekend to find ways to aid the economies of the former Soviet republics.

He said Israel's know-how in agriculture and medicine could be of value to the republics. He believes Israel's attendance at the conference demonstrated the international community's serious resolve to put resources, manpower and skills at the republics' disposal.

Kebich and Kravchenko told their Israeli hosts their country would feel the effects of the 1986 nuclear accident at Chernobyl for 300 years.

Although Chernobyl is in Ukraine, Belarus got much of the deadly fallout. It intends to divest itself entirely of nuclear weapons and become a neutral state, the Israelis were told.

Visit By Experts Planned

Levy said Israel appreciated Belarus' efforts to prevent the transfer of tactical nuclear devices from the territory of the former Soviet Union to Middle Eastern countries.

Sierra Leone was represented here by its foreign minister, Ahmed Ramadan Dumbuya. Levy promised him that an Israeli mission of scientists and economists would visit his country shortly to decide in what areas Israeli help would be most productive.

Dumbuya noted that Sierra Leone is rich in natural resources but lacks trained manpower and know-how.

Sierra Leone not long ago issued stamps commemorating Columbus' discovery of the New World that specifically honored Jews who accompanied Columbus on his voyages.

Asked about this, a diplomat at the Sierra Leone Consulate in New York told a reporter that "the Jewish people, or Israel, left a very impressive impact in Sierra Leone when we had relations with them."

The envoy, who asked not to be identified, said that relations between the two countries from 1967 until 1973 "were very superb.

Israel made "very gigantic contributions to our development," the envoy said.

(JTA staff writer Susan Birnbaum in New York contributed to this report.)

ISRAEL SUPPORTERS EXPRESS REGRET OVER FASCELL DECISION TO QUIT HOUSE

By David Friedman

WASHINGTON, May 27 (JTA) -- Supporters of Israel are expressing regret over Rep. Dante Fascell's announcement Wednesday that he will not run for re-election after serving 38 years in the House of Representatives.

The 75-year-old Florida Democrat, who has been chairman of the House Foreign Affairs Committee since 1984, will be "sorely missed by the pro-Israel community," said Jess Hordes, Washington representative of the Anti-Defamation League.

Thomas Dine, executive director of the American Israel Public Affairs Committee, praised Fascell for having been "in the forefront providing guidance, friendship and support for the U.S.-Israel relationship."

"As chairman of the House Foreign Affairs Committee, Dante has led the way in providing needed aid to Israel, opposing arms sales to hostile Arab states, fighting the Arab boycott, strengthening U.S. opposition to terrorism, and serving as a persistent and invaluable voice on issues affecting our community and the welfare of the Jewish people," Dine said.

A champion of international human rights, he also has been a strong supporter of the Soviet Jewry cause.

While pro-Israel sources spoke warmly of Fascell, they were more hesitant about his probable successor as Foreign Affairs Committee chairman, Rep. Lee Hamilton (D-Ind.), who now chairs its subcommittee on Europe and the Middle East.

Although some consider Hamilton fair in his treatment of Israel, others see him as evenhanded but more and more critical of Israel in recent years.

Concern was expressed especially over Hamilton's chief aide on foreign affairs, Michael Van Dusen, who many consider an Arabist.

Fascell is the third Miami-area Democratic congressman to announce he is retiring from the House. The other two, both Jews, are veteran William Lehman, who suffered a stroke, and Lawrence Smith, one of the most ardent advocates for Israel in Congress.

BUSH TELLS MAYOR TEDDY KOLLEK JERUSALEM SHOULD REMAIN UNITED

By Howard Rosenberg

WASHINGTON, May 27 (JTA) -- Jerusalem should never again be divided, President Bush told the city's mayor, Teddy Kollek, during a White House meeting Wednesday.

The meeting was set up with prodding from the Anti-Defamation League in commemoration of the 25th anniversary of Jerusalem's reunification, which falls on Sunday.

Bush was asked at a photo opportunity with Kollek about U.S. policy on a reunified Jerusalem. "Our policy is very, very clear and has not changed," the president said.

A White House statement released after the meeting stated that Bush told Kollek that "U.S. policy toward Jerusalem was unchanged, namely, that Jerusalem must never again be a divided city and that its final status should be decided by negotiations."

During the meeting, Bush appeared to express interest in visiting Israel, though he did not indicate when he might do so.

CALIFORNIA COULD SEND 2 JEWS (AND 2 WOMEN) TO U.S. SENATE

By Tom Tugend

LOS ANGELES, May 27 (JTA) -- The scenario is optimistic but far from fanciful: When the 103rd Congress convenes next January, the two new U.S. senators from California will be women -- and Jewish.

Even more, with a record number of Jews vying for congressional seats, the nation's largest state is likely to send more Jewish representatives to Washington than ever before.

By a fluke, California will choose both its senators at the same time this year. One will fill the seat vacated by retiring Democratic Sen. Alan Cranston for a full six-year term. The second will serve the two years remaining in the term of Republican Pete Wilson, who was elected governor.

The state's June 2 primaries will pick the Democratic and Republican contenders for the long and short Senate terms. Among the 10 serious contenders, nine are considered pro-Israel and four are Jewish.

In the race for the two-year post, Dianne Goldman Feinstein, the former mayor of San Francisco, has jumped into an early lead. The polls for the Democratic primary show her with a 29 percent lead over her main rival, state Controller Gray Davis.

Her likely Republican opponent in November will be the incumbent, John Seymour, who was appointed by Wilson to fill the vacancy he left when he became governor. If the elections were held today, Feinstein would beat Seymour by 30 percent, according to the California Poll.

In the Democratic primary for the six-year term, Rep. Barbara Boxer, a Democrat from Marin County, north of San Francisco, is at this point slightly ahead of both Lt. Gov. Leo McCarthy and another Jewish member of Congress, Rep. Mel Levine of Los Angeles.

The race is too close to call, but if this is indeed the Year of the Women in politics, as pundits maintain, Boxer may have a slight edge.

16 Jewish Candidates

In the tight Republican primary for the six-year term, conservative television commentator Bruce Herschensohn has made his hard-line, pro-Israel stance a major campaign point against his more liberal opponent, Rep. Tom Campbell of Palo Alto. Trailing behind is former Palm Springs Mayor Sonny Bono, best known as actress Cher's ex-husband and former singing partner.

If both Feinstein and Boxer win their primaries and then triumph in November, they will in one blow double the number of women in the 100-seat U.S. Senate and add substantially to the Jewish bloc, which now stands at eight senators.

Both women have had to contend with some unwelcome publicity. The congressional check scandal revealed that Boxer had written 143 overdrafts at the now-defunct House bank.

And in a lawsuit filed by the state Fair Political Practices Commission, Feinstein was accused of misreporting \$8.4 million in expenses, loans and contributions during her unsuccessful 1990 bid for governor.

Neither of these derelictions appears to have seriously harmed the two politicians.

With voters' attention distracted by the Los Angeles riots, earthquakes, the state's first execution in 25 years and the presidential race, senatorial candidates are making few major public

appearances and are waging what has been described as an "invisible campaign."

Much of their time and energy is spent on raising funds to pay for TV commercials. Before it is over, the combined outlay by all senatorial candidates is expected to reach a \$50 million.

Following the 1990 census, the Golden State will have a bumper crop of 52 seats in the next House of Representatives, about 12 percent of the total, of which 31 are in Southern California.

Some 100 credible candidates are running in these 31 congressional districts, of whom 16 are Jews -- another record number -- including a strong contingent in San Diego. (One fringe candidate is Orthodox Rabbi Felix Rogin, who is running as a Libertarian and lists himself on the ballot as "rabbi and accountant.")

In the present 45-member California House delegation, six are Jews. Although Boxer and Levine are vacating their seats to run for the Senate, knowledgeable analysts are predicting that the state's next delegation may well include eight or nine Jewish representatives.

JEWS GROUPS PROTEST SHIFT IN POLICY ON HAITIAN REFUGEES

By Debra Nussbaum Cohen

NEW YORK, May 27 (JTA) -- American Jewish groups are decrying the Bush administration's new policy of intercepting Haitian refugees on the high seas and forcibly returning them to their native island without first hearing requests for political asylum.

No more refugees are being accepted at the U.S. naval base in Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, where in recent months they have found haven while applying for asylum in the United States.

Now they are required to apply at the U.S. Embassy in Port-au-Prince.

Still, hundreds are leaving Haiti in small boats every day, fleeing the military dictatorship that overthrew Haitian President Jean-Bertrand Aristide last Sept. 30.

The Bush administration announced the new policy over the weekend. By Tuesday, the U.S. Coast Guard had forced the return of at least one boat, which had on board 38 refugees.

Jewish groups, mindful of the fact that boats carrying refugees from Nazi-controlled parts of Europe were turned away from U.S. shores, have been outspoken on the Haitian refugee situation since the crisis erupted last fall.

The Anti-Defamation League issued a statement Wednesday saying that the administration's decision to return Haitian boat people to Haiti is "inconsistent with our country's traditional sympathy for people fleeing persecution and fails to deal with the underlying causes of the crisis."

Robert Lifton, president of the American Jewish Congress, said in a statement Tuesday that "it should be obvious to even the most uninformed political observer that a visit to the U.S. Embassy at this point would be the equivalent to signing one's own death warrant."

According to Gary Rubin, director of national affairs for the American Jewish Committee, "the embassy is inaccessible to many in the countryside and very restrictive in its decisions on refugee claims.

"Violence is endemic in Haiti since the overthrow of President Aristide, and the population lives in terror of uncontrolled military personnel and rural section chiefs. Our policy must recognize these basic facts," he said.