

**FATAL ATTACK AGAINST TWO SOLDIERS
SEEN AS BOOSTING CASE FOR EXPULSIONS**
By Gil Sedan

JERUSALEM, Jan. 31 (JTA) -- Government officials are pointing to a weekend attack by Moslem fundamentalists that left two Israeli soldiers dead as proof that Israel's temporary expulsion in December of 415 Palestinians was a justified response to Arab violence.

At the same time, U.S.-Israeli discussions on resolving the deportation crisis were stepped up, and there were signs that Israel was considering some compromise measures.

U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher had what was described in Washington as a "good conversation" Friday with Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin. The two reportedly discussed ways to defuse the crisis, but there were no further details of their exchange.

On Sunday, the Israeli Cabinet debated the issue, but apparently took no action.

The attack on the Israeli soldiers occurred Saturday, along the outskirts of a Jewish settlement in the Gaza Strip near the Arab town of Khan Yunis.

The Palestinian gunmen apparently knew that a single Israeli army jeep would be passing by the area on patrol. The men dug under an electronic security fence and then waited to ambush the patrol while hiding behind bushes near the settlement's greenhouses.

As soon as the jeep arrived, the gunmen opened fire with M-16 and Karl Gustav rifles from a distance of about 20 feet, killing two soldiers instantly.

The Druse commander of the patrol, Sgt. Ibrahim Na'il, jumped from the jeep and fired back at the attackers, but missed them. The Palestinians escaped after Na'il left the scene to summon help.

Hamas Believed Responsible

The slain soldiers were identified as Arik Arpi, 32, a reserve soldier from the Negev town of Sderot, and Salam al-Ghul, 22, from the Bedouin village of Aroer in the Negev.

Brig. Gen. Yom Tov Samia, commander of Israel's forces in the Gaza Strip, confirmed Saturday that dozens of wanted terrorists were still at large in the Gaza Strip.

In an effort to find the men, the army clamped a curfew on the Khan Yunis area, as well as the Jabalya refugee camp and the Shajaiya neighborhood in Gaza.

The Palestinians apparently stole a gun of one of the slain soldiers and escaped into Khan Yunis. By Sunday, the army lifted the curfew, and 27,000 day laborers left for work in Israel proper.

It was the first fatal attack against soldiers since the Dec. 17 expulsion of 415 Palestinians accused of leading Islamic fundamentalist groups such as Hamas and Islamic Jihad.

The army said it suspected Hamas had planned Saturday's ambush.

If so, the attack was a grim reminder that Hamas' operational powers have not entirely been impaired and that the battle against Hamas inside the administered territories remains costly and painful, as it had been prior to the expulsions.

As the country expressed outrage at the killings, Israel's ministers hotly debated in the Cabinet what steps, if any, should be taken to resolve the crisis over the deportations, which have been condemned by the United Nations and countries around the world.

The meeting took place amid threats that the U.N. Security Council would begin discussing what further action it should take, including the possibility of imposing sanctions, in order to force Israel into reversing the expulsions in compliance with a previous U.N. resolution.

Ambassador Stops By For Visit

The Cabinet did little other than to instruct a military advisory to review each deportee's case individually. The move was seen here as an indication that Israel might allow the return of at least some of the deportees.

Sunday's Cabinet meeting was interrupted at one point, when William Harrop, U.S. ambassador to Israel, came to Rabin's office for a brief visit.

During the Cabinet discussion, Rabin reportedly refused to allow Justice Minister David Libai, the only minister who originally objected to the deportations, the opportunity to speak.

Moshe Katsav, chairman of the Likud Knesset caucus, later urged Rabin not to give in to local and international pressure on the deportations. He promised Rabin the Likud's backing on the issue, support he noted that Rabin "did not receive from his own ministers."

Another Likud Knesset member, Benjamin Netanyahu, called on Rabin to tell U.S. President Clinton that Israel would pull out of the peace talks if the United Nations imposed sanctions on Israel.

Israel's attempt to let the Palestinians appeal their expulsions individually before military tribunals has so far been rejected by the deportees.

None of the deportees showed up during the weekend to submit an appeal request at the Israeli-controlled Zumriya checkpoint on the edge of the border security zone in southern Lebanon. The deportees are living in a makeshift tent camp stranded between the Israeli-controlled zone and Lebanese army lines.

The deportees seemed to be unified in boycotting any contacts with Israel and in demanding an unconditional and immediate return to their homes.

**ISRAEL ARRESTS ARAB AMERICANS
FOR FUNNELING MONEY TO HAMAS**

By Gil Sedan

JERUSALEM, Jan. 31 (JTA) -- Israeli security forces have arrested two Palestinian Americans accused of trying to reorganize the Islamic fundamentalist Hamas movement and funnel large amounts of foreign money to the group.

A third Palestinian American was also arrested for being a Hamas activist in the West Bank.

The arrests appear to substantiate recent media reports that the Hamas movement is receiving substantial direction and possibly considerable amounts of funding from Moslem fundamentalist leaders based in the United States.

Israeli security agents found \$100,000 in cash

and plans for military operations in the possession of Mohammad Abdul Hamid Salah, 39, known as Abu Ahmad. He had been renting a room at the YMCA in eastern Jerusalem.

Israel's domestic intelligence agency, the Shin Bet, arrested Abu Ahmad last week along with his partner, Joma Hilmi Jarad, 35, known as Abu Anas. The third American, unconnected to the suspected leaders, was arrested in the West Bank city of Ramallah.

Israel informed the American ambassador of the arrests, and the American consul was given permission to visit the men in jail.

Israeli officials made the arrests public as the country was reeling from an attack Saturday, allegedly carried out by Hamas activists, that left two Israeli soldiers dead in the Gaza Strip.

Distributed Thousands Of Dollars

According to military sources, Abu Ahmad and Abu Anas both had been living in Chicago and came to Israel in mid-January in an effort to rebuild Hamas after Israel expelled 415 Moslem activists to Lebanon, for terms ranging from six months to two years.

The two men, reportedly acting on instructions from Hamas leaders in the United States and Britain, immediately established contacts with Hamas activists in Ramallah, Jerusalem, Hebron and the Gaza Strip.

They distributed hundreds of thousands of dollars to enable Hamas operations to continue, the Israeli officials charged.

A report prepared by Abu Ahmad on his activities for his American superiors was reportedly seized by the security forces upon his arrest.

The capture of the two men led to the arrest of 40 more Hamas activists, security officials said.

According to security sources, a sum of \$300,000 was deposited in Abu Ahmad's Chicago bank account before he entered Israel.

His mission was reportedly to rebuild the Hamas network throughout the territories, and to re-establish links between the local Hamas activists and the organization abroad. Papers found in his hotel room reportedly described plans for "suicide attacks."

According to a senior security source, the two Hamas leaders also established contacts with Arab citizens of Israel active in the Israeli-based Islamic Movement.

COURT STAYS MANNINGS' EXTRADITION

By Hugh Orgel

TEL AVIV, Jan. 31 (JTA) -- An American Jewish couple wanted in the United States in connection with a 1980 mail-bombing have obtained a last-minute stay of their extradition from Israel.

The West Bank couple, Robert and Rochelle Manning, are accused of planning a parcel-bomb explosion that claimed the life of a secretary in California.

Although a three-justice panel of Israel's Supreme Court approved the Mannings' extradition, the court's president, Meir Shamgar, has agreed to hold a further hearing at the request of the couple's lawyer.

Shamgar said he postponed the extradition, which was authorized by the Supreme Court on Jan. 18, in order to hold another hearing due to the "difficult legal questions and principles (the case) raises."

DAUGHTER OF ISRAELI WAR HERO MEETS ARAFAT, BREAKING TABOO By Gil Sedan

JERUSALEM, Jan. 31 (JTA) -- Yael Dayan, Labor Knesset member and daughter of the late Israeli war hero Moshe Dayan, has created a stir by becoming the first government figure to meet with Yasir Arafat under a new law allowing contact with the Palestine Liberation Organization.

Whatever their personal political leanings, Israelis shook their heads in amazement this past weekend as they saw newspaper photographs of Yael Dayan standing beside a man many still consider to be Israel's archenemy.

Dayan flew to Tunis to meet with the PLO chairman on her own initiative. A dovish lawmaker who has admitted to meeting with lesser PLO officials in the past, Dayan said she went to the Tunisian capital to convince herself that the PLO holds the key to peace, "without which there is no life, neither for us nor for them."

Government officials, both from Dayan's ruling Labor Party as well as from opposition parties, criticized her for the meeting.

Ori Orr, Labor Knesset member and chairman of the Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee, said the meeting was "foolish and redundant, and had nothing to it but capturing headlines."

However, Orr rejected demands by the opposition Likud to remove Dayan from the committee.

Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin also criticized Dayan's actions before she even met with Arafat.

Dayan did receive some support. Labor Knesset member Avraham Burg, chairman of the Education Committee, praised his colleague for her move, saying that anything for the cause of peace ought to be commended.

No Sympathy For Hamas

Dayan left for Tunis soon after the Knesset on Jan. 19 repealed a law banning any contact between Israelis and PLO representatives. The only other Israeli to meet with the PLO chairman since then was peace activist Abie Nathan, who flew to Tunis immediately following the vote.

Dayan was warmly received by Arafat and they held a joint news conference after meeting together twice. She presented Arafat with a copy of her book, "My Father, His Daughter," about her late father, the former defense minister.

Both of Dayan's meetings, the first a mere courtesy call, and the second a lengthy political discussion, were attended by Palestinian leaders such as Faisal Hussein, Yasir Abed Rabbo, Nabil Sha'ath and Hisham Mustafa.

The meetings reportedly contained few surprises. Arafat told Dayan Israel's deportation in December of 415 Palestinians to Lebanon had created a crisis threatening the peace process.

But at the same time, Arafat and the other PLO officials betrayed no sympathy for the Islamic groups operating in the administered territories. They even went so far as to condemn the murder by fundamentalists in December of Israeli border policeman Nissim Toledano, which immediately preceded the mass expulsions.

However, Arafat made a point of reiterating his commitment to "his entire people," including those who fight against him. He spoke of the PLO's current predicament, in which the fundamentalist Hamas movement is growing in popularity, while his more moderate organization has no tangible gains to point to in the peace process.

MASSSES MARCH AGAINST RACISM 60 YEARS AFTER RISE OF HITLER

By David Kantor

BONN, Jan. 31 (JTA) -- Masses of German demonstrators crowded into the center of Berlin on Saturday night to protest against racism and anti-Semitism on the 60th anniversary of Adolf Hitler's rise to power.

Hundreds of German celebrities joined the demonstration, which attracted crowds estimated at being between 100,000 and a quarter of a million people.

The showpiece of the protest was a huge lighted banner which read "Never Again," the central message of the demonstration.

The event, organized by leading German authors, actors, television stars and artists, came against the backdrop in recent months of anti-foreigner violence in Germany. The protest was meant to lead Germans away from racism, and remind them not to repeat their unpleasant past.

The vigil marked the 60th anniversary of the day Hitler became chancellor.

In other towns in Germany, dozens of similar events took place. According to police, more than 2 million people participated in vigils and protest marches nationwide.

At a ceremony in Frankfurt, the chairman of the German Jewish community, Ignatz Bubis, rejected comparisons between today's Germany and the Weimar Republic. Bubis said democracy in today's Federal Republic is able to defend itself against neo-Nazi extremism.

Over the weekend, German television scheduled several broadcasts to mark the anniversary of the Nazi rise to power and warn against right-wing extremism.

President Richard von Weizsacker joined a vigil Saturday in the town of Rostock, the scene of violent attacks against asylum-seekers last year, including the torching of a refugee hostel. The violence in Rostock has come to symbolize the initial indifference with which the political system reacted to the neo-Nazi wave of violence.

Another Jewish Cemetery Desecrated

Von Weizsacker declared that citizen protest against right-wing extremism is justified and important, though it cannot replace action by the state authorities.

Interior Minister Rudolf Seiters said in a statement released in Bonn that the government would do whatever necessary to protect its Jewish community and to curb neo-Nazi violence against foreigners.

He also promised further action is in store to disrupt the organizations and groups practicing or propagating violence against foreigners.

Bubis, for his part, criticized Bonn for having banned only three neo-Nazi groups in recent months, while more than 80 exist in the country.

In two German towns, clashes with small groups of neo-Nazis were reported during vigils to protest the wave of violence against foreigners. Police made a few arrests and said the protest marches were not seriously interrupted.

Meanwhile, police reported that a Jewish cemetery was desecrated late last week in Eisenhüttenstadt, a town in Brandenburg state. Eleven gravestones were upturned and several others smeared with swastikas.

Although no one was arrested in connection with this incident, police announced they had

arrested two German youths in southern Germany found in possession of anti-Semitic and anti-foreigner pamphlets.

Two other neo-Nazis in the state of Mecklenburg-Pomerania were sentenced to jail terms for setting on fire a hostel for foreign asylum-seekers. One, a 23-year-old, was sentenced to two years and eight months and his 19-year-old friend was sentenced to two years.

PROMINENT TURKISH JEW SURVIVES AN ATTACK ON HIS LIFE IN ISTANBUL

By Susan Birnbaum

NEW YORK, Jan. 31 (JTA) -- A leading figure in the Turkish Jewish community survived an attack on his life last week in Istanbul, according to reports from Turkey.

Five heavily armed unidentified gunmen opened fire Jan. 28 on the armored car of businessman Jak Kamhi, whose guards returned fire. The gunmen escaped, leaving behind an anti-tank rocket, assault rifles, pistols and hand grenades.

Kamhi, 68, who is chairman of the Quincentennial Foundation of Istanbul, was unhurt.

The attack took place four days after a prominent Ankara journalist was killed by a car bomb. But sources said the two incidents were not necessarily linked.

In the earlier attack, three pro-Iranian Moslem groups and a Kurdish rebel party took responsibility for the Jan. 24 killing of Ugur Mumcu, who was an investigative reporter for the leading daily Cumhuriyet, where he had often criticized militant Islamic forces.

Protesters of his killing marched through Istanbul the day after the journalist's death, passing the Iranian Consulate, where they called out, "Here are the murderers."

Word of the attack on Kamhi upset colleagues here in the Jewish and specifically Sephardic communities. Kamhi is a member of the executive committee of the World Sephardi Federation.

"He is one of the finest people that ever put two feet on this planet," said Ed Alcosser, chairman of the board of the American Sephardi Federation.

"He worked the last two years on promoting tolerance between Moslems and Jews," said Alcosser. "That is what the Quincentennial Foundation of Istanbul is all about."

Abraham Foxman, national director of the Anti-Defamation League, wrote Kamhi a letter expressing outrage at the attack.

"Terrorists are using Turkey as a shooting gallery to undermine democracy," Foxman said. "It is time that the international community refocus its efforts -- moral and political -- on those who engage in terrorism rather than those who resist it."

The attack on Kamhi was the third time in less than a year that Jews or Jewish institutions were the target of terrorists in Turkey.

Last March 7, terrorists booby-trapped a car driven by the security chief at the Israeli Embassy in Ankara, killing him and badly wounding three Turkish bystanders. The blast, which occurred two days after Israel and Turkey established full diplomatic relations, was so powerful it left a 16-inch crater under the car.

A week earlier, two unidentified assailants hurled hand grenades at Istanbul's Neve Shalom Synagogue, slightly injuring a blind bystander but causing no damage to the building.

JEWISH GROUPS SPLIT OVER CLINTON'S EFFORT TO END MILITARY BAN ON GAYS

By Debra Nussbaum Cohen

NEW YORK, Jan. 31 (JTA) -- Like much of the nation, the organized American Jewish community is divided over President Clinton's efforts to end the ban on homosexuals in the military.

While gay and lesbian Jewish groups, and the Reform movement support Clinton's intention of overturning the ban, the Jewish War Veterans and a group of right-wing Orthodox rabbis oppose it.

Clinton announced Friday that parts of the military ban on gays and lesbians would be eased for six months pending detailed congressional hearings on his intention of ending such discrimination for good.

In the meantime, new recruits will no longer be asked to specify their sexual orientation, and homosexuality will not automatically be grounds for outright dismissal from the military. But discharge proceedings against gays will continue, though court action will be postponed for the time being.

Of Clinton's compromise, Barret Brick, executive director of the World Congress of Gay and Lesbian Jewish Organizations, said, "If what the president is doing is seeking a way to get full implementation as swiftly as possible, that's fine.

"But if it's merely a matter of compromising with bigots, then it's ultimately self-defeating and arguably shows a lack of leadership," he said.

To not allow gay men and lesbians "to serve our country openly and proudly is a manifest injustice. The ban should not be permitted to stand one minute longer," he said.

Rabbi Sharon Kleinbaum, religious leader of New York's gay and lesbian Congregation Beth Simchat Torah, said that most of the community agrees with the two-step approach that has ended enforcement of the ban while Congress conducts a six-month policy review.

"Clinton has done the prophetic thing, by holding out a vision of the best that we can be, but he has to be pragmatic and build a consensus to get us there," she said.

'Can't Function Normally'

The Jewish War Veterans of the United States, which claims to represent some 100,000 members, opposes homosexuals openly serving in the military.

At the group's 1992 national convention, held in Baltimore last August, the members "overwhelmingly" approved a resolution describing the effect of open gays and lesbians in the military as "insidious," according to Sgt. Warren Dolny, the group's national commander.

"The major problem is that when they're (gays and lesbians) open and accepted, they may be more aggressive than they were when they were not," said Dolny.

"If a soldier is concerned about that, he can't function normally. When another man or woman looks at you in the barracks or in the open showers or toilets, and perhaps you perceive lust in that person's eyes, you're not very comfortable. You can't be in that mental condition," he said.

The JWV resolution called on the Pentagon to "enforce regulations which forbid homosexual acts amongst U.S. military personnel," because 42 percent of soldiers infected with HIV, the virus that causes AIDS, admitted to homosexual sex. It pointed out that "in the last 10 years, the De-

partment of Defense has expended \$3 billion on AIDS-infected military personnel."

When asked why the resolution cites as its reason the minority of HIV-positive soldiers who have had gay sex and does not address the fact that the majority are apparently heterosexual, Dolny said that the membership voted it in, "and if that's the argument they picked, so be it."

The JWV's incorporation papers state that among the group's purposes are to "encourage the doctrine of universal liberty, equal rights and full justice to all men, and to combat the powers of bigotry and darkness wherever originating and whatever the target."

In light of those goals, Dolny was asked how he felt about the Jan. 28 decision of a federal judge in California to strike down the Pentagon's exclusion of gays and lesbians as unconstitutional.

In that case, Judge Terry Hatter instructed the Navy to permanently reinstate Petty Officer V. Keith Meinhold, who was discharged last year after saying he is gay on national television.

'Can't Turn Our Backs' On Gay-Bashing

Dolny said he personally would back the decision. "We support the Constitution, and if the policy is decided to be discriminatory, then I support that," he said.

But the leader of Reform Judaism, Rabbi Alexander Schindler, is troubled by the JWV's stance against homosexuals in the military.

Schindler, who is president of the Union of American Hebrew Congregations, recently wrote a letter to a JWV spokesman, Howard Metzger, saying he was "appalled that such an antediluvian attitude still persists within a group that calls itself Jewish."

"We, who were beaten in the streets of Berlin cannot turn our backs to the plague of gay-bashing," the Reform leader wrote Sept. 30.

Schindler served in the Army for four years during World War II, was wounded in action and awarded the bronze star for bravery. "And I can tell you that the only moral problems we ever encountered were from our heterosexual comrades in arms," he wrote.

The Reform leader had urged Clinton, and President Bush before him, to overturn the ban against gays and lesbians.

On the opposite end of the rabbinic spectrum, the Rabbinical Alliance of America, a 400-member organization of stringently Orthodox rabbis, urged last week that the ban be upheld.

President Clinton's effort to overturn it "really sends a message to all the children in the country that homosexuality is an acceptable lifestyle, which is completely against Torah Judaism," said Rabbi Herschel Kurzrock, administrative judge of the Rabbinical Alliance's beth din, or rabbinical court.

ISRAEL HIRES P.R. MAN TO POLISH IMAGE

TEL AVIV (JTA) -- The Israeli government has hired a top American public relations consultant to help it deal with the international media and improve Israel's image abroad.

The consultant, Michael Klepper, is expected to arrive in Israel within a few weeks to advise officials, especially government ministerial spokesmen, on how deal with the American media.

The Government Press Office insisted that the timing of Klepper's visit has nothing to do with media backlash against Israel caused by the expulsion of 415 Palestinians to Lebanon.