

**2 MORE JEWS STABBED BY ARABS,  
AS WAVE OF ATTACKS CONTINUES**

By Cynthia Mann

JERUSALEM, March 11 (JTA) -- A wave of Palestinian attacks on Israeli civilians continued into Thursday, when Palestinian workers from the Gaza Strip stabbed and wounded two Israelis in separate incidents.

The attacks were only the latest in a series of incidents over the past two weeks that have left four Israelis dead.

On Thursday morning, Moshe Sagi, 49, was attacked by a 19-year-old Palestinian who reportedly worked on Sagi's farm in Rehovot for three years.

Near one of Sagi's hothouses, the assailant apparently pulled out a knife and stabbed Sagi twice from behind.

The attacker fled, and Sagi was able to drive himself to get help. He was reported Thursday night to be hospitalized in moderate condition.

Also Thursday, Assaf Dayan, 15, of Ashkelon was stabbed by a 17-year-old Palestinian at a factory belonging to Dayan's family. The attack took place near the Erez checkpoint, at the northern entrance to the Gaza Strip.

Dayan sustained moderate injuries to the back of the neck.

It was also reported that David Liebskind, a reserve soldier who had been stabbed by Palestinians on Wednesday night, remained in critical condition at Rambam Hospital in Haifa.

The attack against Liebskind took place in the city of Nazareth. Residents there expressed hope that the attack would not damage relations between Israeli Arabs and Jews living there.

Police have detained 28 suspects, including at least four Israeli Arabs, for questioning in the search for Liebskind's attacker.

With attacks apparently escalating, Police Minister Moshe Shahal convened a meeting of top police officers to discuss necessary security measures.

The Knesset was scheduled to consider legislation that would institute the death penalty for terrorist murderers, but debate on the proposal was postponed until next week.

**BEHIND THE HEADLINES:****BOMBING SUSPECTS LINKED TO MOVEMENT  
WITH FAR REACH THROUGHOUT MIDEAST**

By Gil Sedan

JERUSALEM, March 11 (JTA) -- Developments in the investigation of the bombing of New York's World Trade Center point strongly to a conspiracy carried out by militants driven by Islamic fundamentalism, a decades-old movement that has spawned an increasing number of terror groups in recent years.

In Egypt, Moslem terrorists have managed to scare off tourists in a series of attacks that have killed several foreigners.

In Algeria, the government is engaged in a fight for survival against a well-organized and frequently violent Islamic opposition.

In Lebanon, the Hezbollah organization launches Katyusha rocket attacks and guerrilla

raids against Israel and its allies in the border security zone.

The list goes on and on.

Turkey suffers from Moslem fundamentalist terrorism; Sudan has already become a Moslem fundamentalist state and hosts training base for militants; and in Morocco, the reign of King Hassan II is threatened by Moslem extremists.

Israel, of course, faces Hamas, the Islamic Resistance Movement, in the Gaza Strip and West Bank, where militants have killed several Israeli soldiers in daring attacks during recent months.

But Islamic fundamentalism has also made great inroads among Israeli Arabs by providing basic services to the community and stirring religious awareness. This trend has some experts wondering whether the foundations of future violent rebellion are being laid within Israel proper.

This fear is prompted by the fact that an overarching aim of the Islamic movement is to replace secular political rule with theocratic Islamic rule.

Underpinning the entire movement throughout the Middle East and beyond, drawing on vast financial and political resources, is the theocratic regime of Iran.

The late leader of Iran, Ayatollah Khomeini, would be proud of his current-day ideological disciples, now spread throughout the world, even to secular New York.

Recent developments in the World Trade Center bombing investigation suggest that the prime suspects have connections to Islamic fundamentalist groups.

**Iran Plays A Critical Role**

Iran's role in encouraging Islamic movements worldwide has been critical, providing help both directly and indirectly.

Iran organizes religious conventions and seminars, assembling religious and political leaders from all over the world, much like Moscow used to organize Communists.

It sends material and financial help to Moslem organizations not only in areas of conflict with the West, but also to the Moslem republics of the former Soviet Union.

In the case of Hezbollah, Iran even provides direct training by Iranian military personnel, as well as equipment and money.

There is no direct chain of command from Teheran to areas of operation such as the Israeli-held territories, Egypt and Lebanon. Each of these areas has created its own, independent Islamic movement, tailored after the specific needs of the local population.

The Sunni Moslems in Egypt and Israel will not accept the authority of the Shi'ite Moslems of Iran, but they look up to them as a model for success.

Hamas regards itself as part of the Moslem Brotherhood movement, operating in the Arab world since its founding in 1928 by Hassan al-Bana in Ismailia, Egypt.

The Moslem Brotherhood believes in correcting social injustice prior to jihad, or holy war, against the infidels.

In some states, such as Jordan, the Brotherhood has entered politics by sponsoring candidates in parliamentary elections. It has walked a thin

line between trying to effect change by working within the system and rejecting it altogether.

The Brotherhood has always been active in providing social services to the needy, while at the same time keeping in mind its ultimate goal of replacing the secular regime with the "just rule of Islam."

#### Youth Groups And Medical Clinics

In the Israeli-administered territories, the Brotherhood has sponsored mainly educational, cultural, religious and social activities.

It has built mosques and kindergartens, operated after-school activities for the youth, and supported libraries, medical clinics and charity organizations.

Its umbrella group, Al-Mujama al-Islami, was even officially recognized by the Israeli authorities in 1978.

A crucial change came 11 years later, with the creation of Hamas, the militant branch of the Moslem Brotherhood.

Hamas aspires not only to end Israeli control of the territories, but to bring about the destruction of the State of Israel.

Its leader in the Gaza Strip, Sheik Ahmad Yassin, is serving a life sentence in an Israeli jail for his involvement in the murders of Israeli soldiers.

Another more militant arm of the Brotherhood is the Islamic Jihad movement, which has focused its efforts completely on military resistance, as opposed to social and cultural activities.

The Islamic Movement in Israel proper is very similar to the early stages of the Moslem Brotherhood in the territories, concentrating on social services, rather than political activities.

But the movement's years of social work and support for infrastructure projects, such as paving roads in Arab villages, have born political fruit.

The movement now controls five municipalities in Israel, including Umm el-Fahm, the second largest Arab town in Israel, after Nazareth, with a population of 25,000.

#### Waiting Patiently For Judgment Day

The movement's leaders, such as the mayor of Umm el-Fahm, Sheik Raed Salah Mahajneh, often express their views on political issues. They have, for example, spearheaded a campaign for the return of the Palestinians deported by Israel to Lebanon.

But they have refrained from taking direct part in Israeli politics. Despite their growing public influence, they have so far chosen not to form a political party and run candidates in the general elections.

Among the more moderate fundamentalist leaders is Sheik Abdullah Nimer Darwish. Darwish has said that if he lived in Egypt, he would have pushed to create an Islamic state. But since he lives in Israel, he realizes that goal is unattainable.

"Islam has a ladder of priorities," he said recently. "On the land of Palestine, there is the land and there are human beings, that's me and you. Land has no soul. God has created us from the land and given us spirit.

"Do I prefer land to human beings, or would I rather share the land and put an end to bloodshed? I prefer to share and wait patiently for Judgment Day."

But as Moslem fundamentalists spill blood in violent attacks across the world, Darwish's comments sound like a voice in the wilderness.

#### NEW ENVOY DEFENDS GOLAN POLICY IN EXCHANGE WITH JEWISH LEADERS

By Larry Yudelson

NEW YORK, March 11 (JTA) -- Israel's new ambassador to Washington, Itamar Rabinovich, this week found himself defending his government's readiness to withdraw from at least part of the Golan Heights.

His challenger was not an Israeli opposition politician but a Jewish leader from Houston, one of more than 30 communities participating in a nationwide satellite broadcast arranged by the Council of Jewish Federations and the National Jewish Community Relations Advisory Council.

During the broadcast Wednesday, Rabinovich was asked whether it would not be better to negotiate peace with Syria "without reference to the territorial issue."

"Yes, it would have been much better," replied the ambassador, who since last summer has headed the Israeli team negotiating with Syria. "But I'm afraid not realistic or feasible."

Rabinovich said he had a great deal of sympathy for the former Likud government's "peace for peace" approach, "but it doesn't cut much ice."

He added somewhat plaintively: "I must ask you to give us some credit. We've lived in this region for more than 40 years as a state. We've fought with Syria, we've dealt with Syria in negotiations. We will not be duped by nice words. Syria will not get away with a series of catch phrases."

"If Syria gets anything from us, it will get it with security arrangements, coupled by guarantees," he said. "We know exactly what to ask for, to make sure we are not being led down the garden path."

The exchange appeared to illustrate what some Israeli officials have described as a need to "re-educate" American Jews accustomed to defending hard-line policies espoused by the former Likud government that its Labor successor does not embrace.

#### Optimistic About Peace Talks

Rabinovich said he was "reasonably optimistic" about the negotiations with Syria, which are due to resume in Washington on April 20.

The ambassador also appeared optimistic regarding the Palestinians, who have announced that they are boycotting the talks until the fate of some 400 Palestinians deported by Israel to Lebanon is resolved to their satisfaction.

Having failed in their aim of stopping the resumption of the peace talks, the Palestinians will likely take up Israel's offer to readmit the deportees gradually, Rabinovich said.

He said that the American announcement that it planned on being "a full partner" in the peace talks was a message to the Palestinians that the United States, "without shedding its role as a facilitator and co-sponsor, will also try to intercede, gently, on behalf of the Palestinians, being the weaker partner in the negotiations."

The parameters of that role were agreed upon by Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin and Secretary of State Warren Christopher during the U.S. official's recent visit to Israel.

"As defined, (this) need not worry us, and it can allay the Palestinians at the same time," Rabinovich said. "All of this together offers the Palestinians a package that can bring them to the table."

## JEWIS JOIN OTHER RELIGIOUS GROUPS TO SUPPORT RELIGIOUS-FREEDOM BILL

By Deborah Kalb  
States News Service

WASHINGTON, March 11 (JTA) -- A broad-based coalition of religious groups joined together this week to support the introduction in Congress of the Religious Freedom Restoration Act, a bill that would make it harder for the government to encroach on free exercise of religion.

Sponsors of the bill, introduced Thursday in the House and Senate, predicted early passage.

President Clinton, a supporter of the legislation, sent a letter Thursday to co-sponsor Sen. Edward Kennedy (D-Mass.), saying he looks "forward to working with the Congress to secure speedy enactment" of the bill.

The legislation has broad support in most religious communities. It was designed to circumvent a 1990 Supreme Court ruling that gave state governments greater leeway in outlawing certain religious practices.

While the 1990 case dealt with ritual use of the hallucinogen peyote in Native American religious practice, Jewish groups consider the ruling a dangerous precedent for laws that could restrict such ritual practices as kosher slaughter.

At a news conference Thursday introducing the legislation, Kennedy praised the U.S. Catholic Conference for adding its support to the bill.

The important group had previously opposed the legislation, concerned that its provisions could be used to challenge government programs benefiting religious organizations.

Rabbi Mark Winer, interreligious affairs chair of the Synagogue Council of America, a Jewish umbrella group, represented the Jewish community at the news conference.

Winer said the act would "largely eliminate any conflict between the religious observance of Judaism and full participation of our community in American society."

He added that since the 1990 peyote decision, Oregon Employment Division vs. Smith, a number of religious-freedom cases have "directly undermined the religious rights of American Jews."

With successful passage of the bill, Winer said, "no longer will a Jewish prisoner have to choose between eating pork at a given meal or no food at all. No longer will an Orthodox Jewish family be forced to submit to the arbitrary autopsy of their loved one's body, contrary to their religious dictates."

### 'Reversed 50 Years Of Protections'

Many of the speakers at the news conference, which included representatives from the Catholic, evangelical Christian, and Mormon communities, noted the broad spectrum of religious groups supporting the bill, and the broad political spectrum represented by its sponsors.

In addition to Kennedy, who is viewed as a liberal, the bill is co-sponsored in the Senate by Sen. Orrin Hatch (R-Utah), a noted conservative.

In the House, the bill is sponsored by Reps. Charles Schumer (D-N.Y.) and Christopher Cox (R-Calif.), ideological opposites on some other issues.

Among the Jewish groups supporting the bill are Agudath Israel of America, American Jewish Committee, American Jewish Congress, Anti-Defamation League, B'nai B'rith, Council of Jewish Federations, Hadassah, Religious Action Center of

Reform Judaism and the Union of Orthodox Jewish Congregations of America.

Rabbi David Saperstein, director of the Religious Action Center, a group which has been active in pushing the legislation, said in a statement that if the bill is not passed soon, "we may well see 'dry' communities ban the use of ritual wine in the Jewish Sabbath service and Catholic Mass."

Abba Cohen, director of Agudath Israel's Washington office, said it was up to Congress to respond to the challenge posed by the Supreme Court.

"When the Supreme Court can assert the opinion -- as it did in the peyote case -- that Americans can no longer 'afford the luxury' of treating religious liberty on a par with other fundamental rights, the message is profoundly troubling," Cohen said.

Robert Lifton, president of AJCongress, said in a statement that the Supreme Court in the 1990 case "reversed 50 years of protections for the right to practice one's religion without interference from the state, unless the government proved it had a compelling interest in enforcing the law."

The Council of Jewish Federations said in a statement that the bill is important to the Jewish community because "as a religious minority we are acutely concerned with the preservation of the free exercise of religion."

"It is ironic," AJCommittee said in a statement, "that while the United States was celebrating the 200th anniversary of the ratification of the Bill of Rights, the Supreme Court was fatally weakening religious liberty. We must recapture this basic freedom" by passing the legislation.

The bill now has 32 co-sponsors in the Senate and 137 in the House. In the last Congress, the legislation died because Congress ran out of time during a busy election year, Kennedy said at the news conference.

## HUC-ISRAEL CALLS ON HIGH COURT TO REVERSE GOVERNMENT FUND BIAS

By Cynthia Mann

JERUSALEM, March 11 (JTA) -- The Israeli campus of Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion has asked the nation's High Court of Justice to reverse a government policy that denies the seminary funds because it is coeducational.

HUC, the Reform movement's rabbinical seminary, charges that the Religious Affairs Ministry's policy is discriminatory and that HUC is entitled to the same type of government funding given to Orthodox seminaries.

The ministry has defended its policy by saying it supports all-male and all-female yeshivot, or religious schools, but not coeducational religious institutions.

HUC, with additional campuses in Cincinnati, New York and Los Angeles, trains men and women to become rabbis, cantors and other professional Jewish leaders.

In 1990, its administration requested funding based on the religious ministry's formula for allocating aid to religious institutions.

The ministry rejected the request, saying it did not recognize HUC as a religious institution because men and women study together there.

HUC's petition states that the decision to turn down the funding request is "contrary to the letter and spirit of the law, as well as to the basic principles of the Israeli legal system."

## JEWISH AGENCY SURVEY RECOMMENDS NEW EMPHASIS ON JEWISH EDUCATION

By Larry Yudelson

NEW YORK, March 11 (JTA) -- The Jewish Agency needs to spend more money on Jewish education, particularly to bring Diaspora youth to visit Israel.

That is one finding of a survey designed to help the quasi-governmental organization funded by the United Jewish Appeal focus its efforts in the face of decreasing revenues.

The survey, which asked the agency's leadership how they would rearrange the organization's existing priorities, found broad support for its two currently central functions: immigration and absorption of new immigrants.

But two areas that had been at the center of the agency's work prior to the current wave of immigration from the former Soviet Union fared poorly: youth aliyah and regional development in Israel.

At the same time, the respondents indicated that programs should continue to aid all disadvantaged Israelis, not just the newcomers.

The survey was carried out to help the agency deal with declining federation fund-raising campaigns that come at a time of continuing immigration from the former Soviet Union.

The agency has accepted the results of the survey and has resolved to have the new priorities fully reflected in its 1996 budget.

"The question is, do we approach the budget deficit by amputating each department piece by piece, and end up with an army of the disabled, or do we take bold steps to restructure priorities as we see it?" said Shoshana Cardin last year, explaining the questions that led to the survey.

Cardin heads the Jewish Agency's Goals and Priorities Committee, which sponsored the survey.

The survey was conducted by respected Israeli pollster Hanoch Smith. Almost all of the nearly 300 delegates to the organization's assembly this past October responded to the poll. The results were discussed at the agency's Board of Governors meeting in February.

### Money Should Be Spent In Israel

Interestingly, given the tensions on other matters at the board meeting between Americans and Israelis over how to run the agency, the survey showed agreement between the two sides on most issues and priorities.

One issue where there was a difference of nuance was in Jewish education. Representatives of the World Zionist Organization ranked that the clear No. 2 priority, whereas the American representatives from the United Israel Appeal, affiliated with the UJA, favored immigrant absorption as a top priority.

Currently, the agency spends \$34 million on Jewish-Zionist education, out of a budget of \$500 million. Cardin said the survey implied that the education budget should rise to \$50 million or even \$75 million, although all changes in priorities would be phased in gradually.

The delegates indicated a strong desire that money for Jewish education be spent in Israel, to give Diaspora youth an "Israel experience."

This accords with the recent decision by the UJA to participate in a consortium promoting youth trips to Israel, but contrasts with the current budget, which spends more than half its education budget in the Diaspora.

Another area for increased education fund-

ing, falling under the rubric of aliyah, would be programs for potential immigrants from the former Soviet Union.

"The questionnaires showed that the emphasis in the former Soviet Union should be on young families and teen-agers. That would be pre-aliyah programs, visits to Israel, summer camps, youth groups, informal education, not formal education," said Cardin.

## ISRAELI FINANCE MINISTER DISCUSSES FOREIGN AID ISSUE WITH U.S. OFFICIALS

By Deborah Kalb  
States News Service

WASHINGTON, March 11 (JTA) -- In a series of meetings with Clinton administration officials and members of Congress this week, Israeli Finance Minister Avraham Shohat discussed the touchy issues of foreign aid and U.S. loan guarantees to Israel.

Shohat's visit is being played out against a backdrop of questions relating to U.S. foreign aid practices. And the meetings came at a time when Israel is about to receive the first installment of the once-controversial package of U.S. loan guarantees for \$10 billion.

The finance minister met with a wide variety of American officials, including Treasury Secretary Lloyd Bentsen, Commerce Secretary Ron Brown, Trade Representative Mickey Kantor and Deputy Secretary of State Clifton Wharton.

In addition, he met with members of Congress, including Sen. Patrick Leahy (D-Vt.), chairman of the Senate Appropriations subcommittee on foreign operations, which appropriates foreign aid money.

The Israeli Embassy here had little to say about the meetings. An embassy spokesperson said Shohat emerged from the meetings feeling the administration "understood the importance of foreign aid to Israel, especially in light of the peace process."

While Secretary of State Warren Christopher this week reiterated the Clinton administration's position that U.S. aid to Israel should be maintained for next year at its current level of \$3 billion annually, he would not say how much aid the administration would request from Congress in future years.

At a news conference Wednesday inviting the various Middle East parties to return to the peace talks April 20, Christopher said it is hoped that progress in both the peace talks and economic reform in these countries will lessen the need for American aid.

Shohat's visit comes at a time when American officials are less likely to look favorably on a continuation of the current system of granting U.S. foreign aid. In a political climate where Americans are being asked to make financial sacrifices, foreign aid is an unpopular topic.

In over two hours of testimony to the House Appropriations subcommittee on foreign operations Monday, Assistant Secretary of State Edward Djerejian was grilled about U.S. foreign aid by the panel's chairman, Rep. David Obey (D-Wis.).

Obey pressed Djerejian on the issue of continuing aid to Israel and Egypt at their current levels, observing that the countries had economic problems not being quickly resolved.

Djerejian spoke positively about Israel's efforts to improve its economy, but he said that a "serious question" exists about "moving up the pace of economic reforms in Israel."