

**5 STUDENTS STABBED IN JERUSALEM
BY KNIFE-WIELDING PALESTINIAN**

By Cynthia Mann

JERUSALEM, March 22 (JTA) -- A Palestinian stabbed five students and a principal outside a high school here Monday, adding to an ongoing wave of violence and triggering attacks by angry mobs against Arabs in the neighborhood.

Unrest also continued in the Gaza Strip, where a 10-year-old Palestinian boy was shot and killed and two other Arabs were seriously wounded, the army said.

Palestinian sources said three Arabs were killed in violent clashes between rioting residents and Israeli troops.

In the Jerusalem stabbing attack, eyewitnesses said the Palestinian assailant burst into the yard of the ORT John F. Kennedy Apprenticeship Center in the East Jerusalem neighborhood of Talpiyot early Monday morning.

Twenty students and the school principal were in the yard as the man charged at them, yelling "Allahu Akbar," or "God is Great," and stabbing people with what looked like a long kitchen knife.

The school's guard, who was unarmed, and the principal apparently used a chair to subdue the 22-year-old attacker.

School authorities then prevented students, who had begun to hit him, from beating him to death.

The Palestinian assailant reportedly came from an Arab village close to Talpiyot.

The man was identified as Hamdan Shkeirat, who was released from jail a year and a half ago after serving a two-year sentence for torching cars and throwing fire-bombs, sources said.

Students, parents and residents, shaken and angry, gathered outside the school afterward, blasting the Rabin government and shouting anti-Arab slogans.

Dozens of residents and workers in the area's nearby industrial zone threw stones, bottles and other objects at Arab-owned cars, injuring at least two Palestinians and lightly injuring an Israeli border policeman.

Arab Beaten By Mob

One Arab was beaten by a mob that fled before police arrived.

In New York, the president of the American ORT Federation, Murray Kopelman, said: "This attack is particularly painful. I recently met with the principal and students at ORT Kennedy and they are wonderful kids.

"Most of the 450 students at the school, 50 of whom are Arabs, are hard-luck kids who have a history of failure at other schools."

Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin, who was visiting the Gaza Strip to pump up the army's morale and calm the country over the security situation, called the morning stabbings an "atrocious" that should have been prevented by the government-financed school guard.

Rabin was forced to defend the government's security policy in the Knesset on Monday during two no-confidence motions from right-wing parties following the school yard attack.

"We'll cope with all the measures that are

allowed to us by Israeli law," he said in Gaza, adding that the army and all the security branches of the police "are operating with one goal: to reduce to a minimum the violence."

At the same time, Rabin said it was unrealistic to hold the government accountable for providing its citizens with absolute security.

Rabin added that the nation is in a "violent confrontation" with Palestinians in the territories that can be solved only at the negotiating table and not through military means.

But Rabin also emphasized: "We have to make it clear that violence, terror, will not change our position."

The government has decided to beef up the nation's police force by adding 1,000 to 2,000 extra recruits to deal with the rising tide of violence.

Right-wing Jewish groups protested against Arab violence at demonstrations in the city center and outside the Knesset.

Police broke up a protest in downtown Jerusalem, after demonstrators refused a police request to disperse.

NEWS ANALYSIS:**RABIN FACES SECURITY AND POLITICAL
CHALLENGES UPON RETURN FROM U.S.**

By David Landau

JERUSALEM, March 22 (JTA) -- Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin has returned from his successful visit in the United States only to face a barrage of challenges at home, ranging from the worsening security situation to new political crises in his ruling coalition.

The need for Rabin to regain control over security was re-emphasized by the latest attack in the current wave of violence when a Palestinian stormed into a Jewish schoolyard here on Monday, wounding five students and a teacher.

On the political level, the prime minister faces fierce criticism from opposition parties as well as bickering between the left-wing Meretz and the Orthodox Shas parties within his coalition.

And finally, on the diplomatic front, Rabin has little to show with regard to progress on the peace process.

Although Rabin was able to point to the unusually warm tone of his talks with President Clinton, the Americans were unable to assure him that the Palestinians would return to the next round of peace negotiations, scheduled for next month in Washington.

In the Knesset on Monday, Likud members spearheaded a bitter assault on the government, flaying Rabin in a debate on no-confidence motions submitted by all the rightist factions.

Rabin, who also holds the defense portfolio, was blasted for his handling of the current spate of violence, which has claimed 10 Israeli lives this month.

Former Likud minister Ariel Sharon also lashed out at the government in a newspaper editorial in which he said the army was signaling weakness, impotence and disorder to the Palestinians.

Rabin, both in Washington and back home in Jerusalem, has asserted repeatedly that ultimately

the real solution to the terrorist threat is a political settlement between Israel, the Palestinians and the Arab countries.

But the still-to-be-resumed peace process has shown no signs of an imminent breakthrough.

The Palestinian delegation to the peace talks, and its leadership in Tunis, the Palestine Liberation Organization, were sending mixed signals on whether they were prepared to resume negotiations before a satisfactory resolution to the deportees issue is reached.

The 400 or so Palestinian activists deported by Israel from the administered territories are still encamped in south Lebanon and continue to reject Israel's offer to repatriate 101 of them at once and the rest before the year's end.

Rabin has acknowledged that his pre-election campaign promise that an autonomy accord would be signed within nine months of his election was overly sanguine.

Regarding the negotiations with the Syrians, Rabin himself has spoken in terms of a three-to-six-month "feeler" period before Israel and Syria are ready to enter nuts-and-bolts bargaining over a land-for-peace deal on the Golan Heights.

Rabin's difficulties on the security and diplomatic fronts have inevitably sapped his strength to deal with recurring problems in his coalition.

While Rabin was off in the United States last week, the Knesset voted to remove the parliamentary immunity of Rafael Pinhasi, deputy minister of religion and a leader of the Shas party, so that he could face charges of corruption in dealing with party finances.

The upshot was a surge of resentment within Shas focused on the Labor Party, several of whose Knesset members voted in favor of stripping Pinhasi's immunity.

Some Shas leaders were calling for the Sephardic Orthodox party to withdraw from the coalition.

"The day Rabbi Ovadia Yosef (spiritual mentor of Shas) instructs us to walk out will be the happiest day of my life," said Interior Minister Arye Deri, head of Shas.

But political observers insisted that Deri's statement was merely rhetoric and that the interior minister, who is facing a rigorous police interrogation over alleged financial improprieties, has no interest in having Shas quit the government.

Shas Under Pressure To Leave Government

Nevertheless, Shas is under heavy pressure to leave the government both from its own mainly hard-line constituency and from rival Orthodox parties.

Deri has called on Rabin to broaden the base of the ruling coalition by adding additional partners. Deri argued that if more parties joined the coalition, pressure on Shas would be eased.

Given the current coalition's slim majority, the government would fall if Shas withdrew its support.

However, Rabin's other partner, Meretz, opposes the addition of either the National Religious Party or the right-wing Tsomet party.

Meretz might accept United Torah Judaism, another Orthodox party, but that party's rabbis have demanded the removal of Meretz's strident and outspoken leader, Shulamit Aloni, from the sensitive education portfolio.

One compromise solution would be for Rabin to shift Aloni to head another ministry.

For the time being, Aloni refuses to switch positions and her party colleagues are supporting her.

Commentators have suggested that Aloni might be willing to become foreign minister, but that would mean shifting Shimon Peres, who currently holds that position.

This in turn would only work if Rabin were prepared to name Peres defense minister, something Rabin appears loath to do.

The stability of Rabin's coalition was to be tested March 24, when the Knesset was scheduled to choose Israel's new president, a largely ceremonial post.

Labor has put forward as its candidate former minister Ezer Weizman and asked its coalition partners to vote for him.

Shas sources were rumbling about voting for the opposition candidate, former Knesset Speaker Dov Shilansky, as an expression of their disgruntlement.

Some observers believe that if the coalition held together to ensure Weizman's election, then Rabin will have shown he is still in control, despite his many pressing problems.

SHARON CALLS FOR EMERGENCY POWERS TO COUNTER TERRORISM WAVE IN ISRAEL By Hugh Orgel

TEL AVIV, March 22 (JTA) -- Likud Knesset member Ariel Sharon called for the establishment of an emergency government -- which he would head -- to put an end to the wave of terror engulfing Israel.

In a hard-hitting article published in Monday's Jerusalem Post, Sharon attacked virtually everyone in military and political circles in past and present governments.

"The confused statements we hear from ministers and senior commanders lead to one conclusion only: there is no leadership -- neither political, nor military," Sharon wrote.

The Israel Defense Force "in Judea, Samaria and Gaza is signaling weakness, impotence and lack of order," he added.

"The IDF has definitely lost its power of deterrence in the Gaza Strip."

He offered a solution to the crisis: "Let me carry out a policy that has already proven successful against terror," he wrote.

Those who still maintain that his own successes in crushing terrorism in the Gaza Strip were relevant to what was happening there 20 years ago, but that things are quite different now, are wrong, Sharon continued.

"So it is my right and obligation today to ask all those responsible for the present situation: Having failed in all you have undertaken, what stops you from letting me carry out what has already been proven in the war on terror, within the framework of the law and government directives?"

"I do not say this lightly, but take upon myself a heavy responsibility.

"We need to take an urgent, short-term step: the establishment of an emergency government of experts for a specified, limited period with the declared aim of smashing terror, to enable a confrontation between the various historical, ideological and political streams of thought -- away from the threat of the Arab daggers dripping blood.

"I am ready to take on this task, for I know how to perform it."

FRENCH JEWS UPSET BY RIGHT-WING GAINS, BUT CONFIDENT IN CONSERVATIVE ALLIANCE

By Michel Di Paz

PARIS, March 22 (JTA) -- French Jewish leaders said they were concerned about the dramatic gains made by the far-right in nationwide parliamentary elections this week, but insisted they have good relations with the conservative parties that appeared to win by a landslide.

The big losers in the first round of elections held Sunday were the ruling Socialists, who won only 19 percent of the vote.

A coalition of two conservative parties garnered about 40 percent of the vote, but seats in the 577-member National Assembly will only be parceled out after a second round of voting next week in those districts where no one candidate won 50 percent or more of the ballots.

After the two conservative parties -- the Union for France and Gaullist Rally for the Republic -- and the Socialists, the nation's third-largest political force became Jean-Marie Le Pen's right-wing National Front, which won a resounding 13 percent of the vote.

Le Pen's racist and anti-Semitic National Front party is mostly known for its campaign against immigration.

Jean Kahn, head of CRIF, the umbrella organization representing the French Jewish community, said after the results: "Too many people were going around saying that the National Front was losing ground. I did tell them they were wrong. I'm sorry to be proven right."

Kahn added: "But I cannot believe that over 13 percent of the French are racists and anti-Semites. I think that most of those who voted for the National Front did so as a protest against the current economic and political situation."

However, despite the fact that Le Pen's party won 13 percent of the vote, it will most likely win only two or three seats in the Parliament because the party's vote is spread out over many districts.

The Communists, although they came in behind the National Front at 9 percent, might pick up anywhere from 10 to 25 seats in the National Assembly because their supporters are highly concentrated in certain districts.

Focus On Second Round Next Week

The country's left wing, as well as Jewish leaders, urged voters to shore up moderate forces in the second round of elections, to be held Sunday.

Kahn said that "one just cannot sit on his hands. This week we will have to strengthen the moderate right-wing candidates in the opinion that they can win without the help of the National Front."

Political commentators were predicting that Edouard Balladur, a close friend of Jacques Chirac, head of the Gaullist Rally, could become France's next prime minister.

Last week, Kahn said he had met Balladur on several occasions and that the Turkish-born politician has visited Israel twice.

Balladur "is well aware of the situation there (in Israel), and he has learned about the Jewish community here. Our relations are very good," Kahn said.

For the time being, according to observers here, the National Front does not constitute a danger for the Jewish community, as long as the moderate conservative parties stick to their policy

of not cooperating or making political alliances with any of Le Pen's people.

France's bleak economic situation appeared to be the cause of the Socialists' downfall.

On the eve of the elections, there were 3 million people unemployed, or over 10 percent of the work force.

When first elected in 1981, Socialist President Francois Mitterrand and his party promised to "Change Life."

"They did," say the cynics. "For the worse."

AUSTRALIAN LABOR PARTY WIN HAILED BY JEWISH COMMUNITY

By Jeremy Jones

SYDNEY, Australia, March 22 (JTA) -- The Labor Party's victory in last weekend's federal election has been welcomed by Australian Jewish leaders, despite ongoing differences with the ruling party's Middle East policies.

Preceding the election, the Labor Party made a series of campaign promises to the Executive Council of Australian Jewry, the umbrella organization of the Australian Jewish community, on the subjects of anti-racist legislation, family reunification in immigration laws and ethnic radio programs.

Prime Minister Paul Keating said his party "would make it a criminal offense to incite racial hatred against persons in Australia by reason of their race, color or national or ethnic origin."

The opposition Liberal/National Party promised only "wide community consultation and discussion about legislation."

Executive Council President Isi Leibler called anti-racism legislation "the most important Jewish issue of domestic concern over the next 12 months."

Leibler said he welcomed the government's renewed commitment in this area.

The government also promised that a special immigration program will be maintained that allows immigrants from the former Soviet Union to sponsor family members still in Russia and other republics in their applications as new immigrants to Australia.

Jewish radio programs, in Hebrew, Yiddish and English, should also be expanded, if the government honors a campaign commitment to sponsor a national "ethnic radio" network.

The network would supplement existing state channels which carry "Jewish-language" programs.

In its campaign, the Labor Party also made a series of statements on Middle East policy, in response to questions posed by the Australia/Israel Review.

Keating promised to continue to oppose the Arab boycott of Israel "in public and in private," and said his party "is continuing to keep under review the possibility of Australian anti-boycott legislation."

Both the Labor Party and the opposition said they supported the current peace process.

The opposition said it would oppose contact with the Palestine Liberation Organization until that organization shows it "accepts explicitly Israel's right to exist, that it is genuinely committed to peace and that it is prepared to back its words on both matters with consistent action."

By contrast, the Labor government said discussions with the PLO would continue as part of its effort "to encourage the moderate factions within the PLO that support the peace talks."

ARGENTINA MARKS ANNIVERSARY OF ISRAELI EMBASSY EXPLOSION

By Victoria Verlichak

BUENOS AIRES, March 22 (JTA) -- One year after a terrorist bomb destroyed this city's Israeli Embassy and killed 30 people, Argentine and Israeli leaders paid homage to victims of the attack and promised to bring the perpetrators to justice.

Standing at the site where the embassy once stood, Argentine President Carlos Menem commemorated the one-year anniversary of the March 17, 1992 bombing and said he received a cable from Israeli Foreign Minister Shimon Peres claiming Israel knew who was behind the deadly attack.

Sources from Jerusalem have said investigators determined Iran was responsible for the bombing, which also left more than 250 people injured.

But Argentine authorities have been unable, at least publicly, to show any progress in the investigation. They have so far only determined that at least 110 pounds of explosives were in the pickup truck used in the bombing.

Argentine officials have announced they would try to obtain new information from Israel so that the two countries "can seek justice together."

Jorge Passero, chief of the nation's federal police, said the attackers were "international terrorists" and that security agencies around the world were searching for a Pakistani man seen minutes before the blast.

Several ceremonies in synagogues and public places took place last week to commemorate the attack.

A monument to the bomb's victims was unveiled in a religious ceremony at the Jewish cemetery of La Tablada on March 14.

The monument is a replica of the menorah which was miraculously saved from the exploded building. The original now stands intact in the temporary offices of the embassy.

President Menem Attends Ceremony

During the commemoration ceremony at the site of the old embassy last Wednesday, Menem was accompanied by the Israeli ambassador to Argentina, Yitzhak Shefi, Buenos Aires Rabbi Ben Hamu, and Ruben Beraja, the president of the DAIA, Argentina's Jewish umbrella organization.

The same day, the Argentine Congress also commemorated the bloody anniversary, remembering those who died or were wounded in the explosion.

In a special open session attended by diplomats, Jewish leaders and other public figures, members of all political parties in the lower house condemned the bombing and expressed solidarity with victims of the explosion.

They also called on the police and justice system to solve the case quickly.

The Senate also issued a statement condemning the attack.

Earlier in the day, the archbishop of Buenos Aires, Cardinal Antonio Quarracino, spoke at the reopening of the Mater Admirabilis Church, which is across the street from where the embassy used to stand and was partially destroyed in the same attack.

Among the killed were Catholic school children.

Those responsible for the bombing "should

be forgiven but the attack should not be forgotten," Quarracino said.

The church opened with a service in memory of a friar and other victims killed in the blast.

A historic museum around the corner from the embassy opened an exhibition of all the restored works of art that had been damaged by the explosion.

Survivors of the attack, as well as relatives of the victims, were also present at some of the ceremonies.

Of the 30 people who died, nine worked at the embassy. Five were Argentines and four were Israelis.

Among the more than 50 people who now work at the diplomatic mission, only 20 were there one year ago.

One person who stayed is Israeli Consul Danni Carmon, a father of five who lost his wife in the explosion.

The Argentine government, which promised after the blast to give loans or grants to victims and owners of damaged property, is still processing claims.

Government officials said they have paid out nearly \$3 million to 262 people, resolving less than half of the 587 still-pending cases.

Officials this week also announced the site for the new Israeli mission. The embassy will be built on a quiet tree-lined street in the Belgrano neighborhood. Nearby are a school, a church, the foreign minister's private residence and several other embassies.

ATTORNEY GENERAL JOINS EVENT RECALLING DANISH HELP FOR JEWS

By Deborah Kalb
States News Service

WASHINGTON, March 22 (JTA) -- In a year commemorating the 50th anniversary of many grim events relating to the Nazi Holocaust, Jews gathered here last week to celebrate one bright spot of 1943: the rescue of the Jews of Denmark.

The Danish people, unlike so many others in Europe, protected their Jewish citizens from Nazi death camps, hiding Jews in Danish homes and smuggling most of the Jewish community to the nearby neutral country of Sweden.

Among the speakers at the commemoration, held at a synagogue in Washington, was Attorney General Janet Reno, who is of Danish ancestry.

Reno called the event "a symbol that each of us has to rededicate ourselves to stand up against evil."

U.S. Ambassador to Denmark Richard Stone read a letter from President Clinton, who cited the Danish "example of courageous kindness."

About 1,500 people attended the commemoration, which was organized by Washington Hebrew Congregation and a group called Thanks to Scandinavia, whose purpose is to make people aware of the Danish rescue.

Peter Dyvig, the Danish ambassador to the United States, called the events of 1943 "the first large-scale human rights action in the history of man."

And Henrik Liljegren, the Swedish ambassador to the Washington, noted that in his country, "heroic acts were performed more by individuals than by the authorities."

The event, lasting over two and a half hours, included performances by a Danish Jewish pianist, and a Danish actress whose father was a resistance fighter in World War II.