

**ISRAEL CLOSES TERRITORIES
AS TERROR ATTACKS ESCALATE**

By Dvorah Getzler

JERUSALEM, April 7 (JTA) -- The Israeli government has sealed off the administered territories in the wake of two days of attacks by Palestinian rejectionists that have left 9 Israelis dead and more than 50 wounded.

The closure, which went into effect Thursday evening and which is expected to last until after Israeli Independence Day celebrations on April 14, will prevent Palestinians from entering Israel from the West Bank and Gaza Strip. Eastern Jerusalem will similarly be off-limits to visiting Palestinians.

The attacks brought condemnation from the Clinton administration, the United Nations and Arab American groups.

In Israel, the closure of the territories comes almost a year to the day after Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin clamped down a similar closure following a series of attacks by Palestinians on Israelis.

Thursday's step was taken after members of the Islamic fundamentalist Hamas movement launched a wave of terror attacks in retaliation for the Feb. 25 Hebron massacre of at least 29 Palestinians in the West Bank town's Tomb of the Patriarchs.

On Wednesday, a 19-year-old member of Hamas launched a suicide car-bombing at a bus stop in the northern Israeli town of Afula. Eight people were killed, including four teen-agers, and more than 50 were wounded in the powerful explosion.

The next day, as the nation laid to rest the victims of the attack in Afula, Hamas struck again when an 18-year-old resident of the Shati refugee camp in Gaza opened fire with an Uzi submachine gun at a group of soldiers standing at a hitch-hiking shelter on the Ashdod-Tel Aviv highway.

One Israeli was killed and another four were wounded, two of them seriously. The dead Israeli was later identified as Yishai Gedassi, 31. He was an army reserve lieutenant colonel.

The assailant was shot dead on the spot by Israeli soldiers who were waiting at the Ashdod junction for a ride.

Hamas Promising More Attacks

In Gaza on Thursday, there were two stabbings in separate incidents.

In the Katif region of Gaza, a farmer who had gone to pick up his Arab workers was stabbed by one of them. The attacker and his fellow workers ran off. None of them had permits to work in Israel. The farmer was only lightly wounded.

In the second incident, an Israeli was stabbed by a Palestinian at an industrial park near the Erez crossing point. Civilians and soldiers fired at the assailant, who managed to escape although he was apparently wounded.

Hamas, which bitterly opposes the negotiations between Israel and the Palestine Liberation

Organization, swore it would launch more attacks on Israelis in the days before Independence Day.

In a reference to the Hebron massacre, which took place during the Islamic holy month of Ramadan, Hamas spokesmen said they would "make of Israel's Independence Day an Israeli tragedy that would match the tragedy an Israeli made for us of Ramadan."

Some 24 hours after the Afula attack, the PLO issued a statement from Cairo regretting the incident and expressing condolences to the bereaved families.

"The PLO expresses its regrets for the incident in Afula which cost the life of a number of civilians," the statement read.

But PLO leader Yasser Arafat has so far said nothing about the attack. Arafat, who was in Cairo on Wednesday, walked away from reporters when asked to comment on the Afula incident.

Arafat's Silence Criticized

On Thursday, President Clinton condemned the Hamas attacks and indirectly criticized Arafat for not speaking out against the use of terror, as Rabin had done almost immediately after the Hebron murders.

"On behalf of the American people, I condemn in the strongest possible terms the murders of Israeli citizens on April 6 and 7 and offer condolences to their families," Clinton said in a statement. He added that those involved in the peace process should "condemn unequivocally these crimes."

A State Department official, speaking with the Jewish Telegraphic Agency, was more direct in criticizing Arafat's silence.

"We think Arafat should personally condemn the incident," the official said. "Rabin responded very quickly (after the Hebron killings). Arafat has not. We would have liked to have seen him respond quickly as well."

In the United States, both the National Association of Arab Americans and the Arab American Institute condemned the attacks in Afula and Ashdod.

The Arab American Institute called the killings "senseless, criminal acts."

The organization added that the "claim that these murderous acts are to avenge the massacre of Muslim worshipers in Hebron makes a tragic mockery of their deaths and defiles the memory of those innocent victims."

The National Association of Arab Americans condemned the attacks "in the strongest possible terms." The association said Palestinian individuals or groups who commit attacks against innocent civilians "clearly undermine the credibility of their own cause and desecrate the memories" of Palestinian victims of massacres.

In Israel, opposition parties plan to organize widespread demonstrations against the Rabin government and its peace policy to highlight what they called the "government failure to ensure even minimum personal security" for Israelis in the face of terrorist attacks.

(Contributing to this report was JTA correspondent Deborah Kalb in Washington.)

FOR 1ST TIME SINCE 1948, ATTACK ON ISRAEL DRAWS U.N. CONDEMNATION

By Larry Yudelson

UNITED NATIONS, April 7 (JTA) -- For perhaps the first time since 1948, a terrorist attack against Israel has been denounced at the United Nations.

The U.N. secretary-general and the president of the Security Council have condemned the April 6 suicide bombing of a bus in Afula, which killed at least seven Israelis.

"The members of the Security Council view with shock and outrage the attack on Israeli civilians on a passenger bus in the town of Afula on April 6, 1994," said New Zealand Ambassador Colin Keating, who holds the rotating presidency of the Security Council.

"The members condemn this act of terror and extend sincere condolences to the wounded and the families of those who lost their lives," he said.

Statements from the council president enable the council to make its views known without convening the council or issuing resolutions.

Israeli Ambassador Gad Yaacobi specifically requested that the council not convene.

Last month, the council met to condemn the murders of worshipers in a Hebron mosque, which led to a resolution calling for foreign observers in the West Bank city.

In a letter to the secretary-general asking for condemnation of the killings, Yaacobi explained that the peace process is best advanced by the parties involved.

An Israeli official at the United Nations said the council president's statement fell short of general protocol. Instead of being prepared for publication as an official U.N. document, as is usually the case, Keating simply read remarks without entering them into the official record.

Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali's remarks came in an official statement by his spokesman, which said he "strongly condemns this act of violence" and extended condolences.

His remarks also expressed the hope "that this outrageous incident will not be permitted to impede the ongoing negotiations between the government of Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organization."

The U.N.'s denunciations of Arab terror against Jews are thought to be the first in more than four decades.

"As far as our long memory goes," said the Israeli official, "we remember that the Security Council did condemn such attacks -- in 1948."

CHRISTIAN TOURISTS OUTNUMBER JEWS VISITING ISRAEL TO SEE HOLY SITES

By Michele Chabin

JERUSALEM (JTA) -- For Anne Allen, a devout Christian from Arizona, spending Easter in the Holy Land was the realization of a lifelong dream.

Last Sunday, Allen and her daughter Nadine, from Alaska, made an Easter pilgrimage to the Church of the Holy Sepulcher, in the Christian Quarter. According to Christian tradition, the church, which is home to six different denominations, is the site where Jesus was crucified, buried and resurrected.

On Easter Sunday, the church was filled with holiday visitors. Tour guides, speaking a myriad of languages, led groups of Christian pilgrims through the alleyways of the Old City and into the church courtyard.

A hush fell as they entered the 1,000-year-old church, where pilgrims from dozens of countries were already deep in prayer.

Though Easter is an especially busy time at the nation's Christian holy places, they are far from deserted the rest of the time. Christian tourism is a lucrative 365-day-a-year business.

Although many are uncomfortable admitting it, the majority of tourists are Christians.

According to the Ministry of Tourism, about 40 percent of last year's 1.96 million tourists were Jews, while virtually all the rest were Christians. Of these, an estimated 40-45 percent had a religious motivation for visiting Israel.

Whereas tourism officials once looked to Diaspora Jews as the key to successful tourism, they have gradually come to the realization that Christian tourism will make or break the industry.

"Let's face it," said Aryeh Zomer, director of overseas operations for the Ministry of Tourism. "Only 20 percent of American Jews have ever visited Israel.

"Unfortunately," he said, "it's been difficult to raise this percentage, because the younger generation of Diaspora Jews is largely unaffiliated with the Jewish community."

'The Sky Is The Limit'

On the other hand, said Zomer, "the sky is the limit when it comes to Christian tourists.

"Most are motivated to come by their church leaders, and they will come even if there is (political) tension. They are less likely to cancel their plans," according to Zomer.

At least 90 percent of those who visit do so as part of a group pilgrimage.

The Tourism Ministry also sponsors junkets for Christian journalists, who are encouraged to report directly from Israel.

In addition, the ministry enlists the aid of influential American Christians, such as entertainer Pat Boone, who has been an unofficial "goodwill ambassador" for the past three years.

Despite these efforts, "the Israeli tourism industry isn't doing enough to cater to Christians," asserted Jan Willem van der Hoeven, spokesman of the International Christian Embassy.

Based in Israel with offices around the world, the embassy organizes visits for tens of thousands of pro-Israel Christians each year.

"While there are many good tour guides, most do not show pride in their own country," van der Hoeven said. "Israelis aren't hypocrites. They will not say something they do not believe themselves."

"Some tour guides will start off saying, 'Look, I'm an agnostic, but I'll describe these sites to you.' They've lost their audience even before they've started!" van der Hoeven said.

Many tourists ask, 'How can you give back Jericho, which figures so prominently in the Bible?' said van der Hoeven.

"Why not take them to the settlement of Beit El, which has both religious and political significance?" he asked. "Such a visit would go a long way toward informing visitors, who then go back home and discuss what they've learned."

JACKSON HEADS TO ISRAEL TO 'PUT LIGHT IN DARK PLACES'

By Steven Weiss

WASHINGTON, April 7 (JTA) -- The Rev. Jesse Jackson announced this week that he will travel to Israel and the territories on a mission of peace at the invitation of Israeli and Palestinian leaders.

At a news conference here Wednesday before parting for Tel Aviv, Jackson said he would visit Jerusalem, Hebron and Gaza and would meet with officials, including Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin and Likud leader Benjamin Netanyahu.

He is also scheduled to speak at a conference in east Jerusalem marking the 30th anniversary of the Palestine Liberation Organization.

"We hope to be able to put light in dark places, and heat in cold places, and have a renewed commitment to keep this (peace) accord on course," said Jackson, who was accompanied at the news conference by representatives from the Jewish and Arab communities.

In January 1993, Jackson was invited to visit Israel by Deputy Foreign Minister Yossi Beilin. No date for the visit was set at the time, but the parties agreed that it would probably take place within a year.

Jackson did not say whether this trip was in response to Beilin's invitation, but said he had been invited by Rabin, Foreign Minister Shimon Peres and PLO Chairman Yasser Arafat.

Jackson last visited Israel in 1979, at his own initiative.

The Israeli Embassy said last year that Jackson was invited so he could see how the country has changed since his previous visit.

Jackson met earlier this week with Secretary of State Warren Christopher and with White House officials to discuss the trip.

Before departing, Jackson emphasized that "there must be some renewed commitment to the institutional development for the Palestinian people. We're sensitive to the pain of Palestinian people and the fears of Israeli people."

Accompanying Jackson on the trip was James Zogby, president of the Arab American Institute.

Jack Moline, chair of the social justice committee of the Rabbinical Assembly -- the umbrella group of Conservative rabbis -- and rabbi of Agudath Achim congregation in Virginia, praised Jackson at the news conference for his effort to bring a "message of peace" to Israel and the territories.

"He is truly interested in encouraging a dialogue that brings about a just and rightful action," Moline said.

Moline acknowledged that there might be suspicion within the Jewish community regarding the trip, but said the invitation from the Israeli government shows that Jackson is welcome there.

POPE JOINS HOLOCAUST SURVIVORS AT A CONCERT OF COMMEMORATION

By Polly Stroud

VATICAN CITY, April 7 (JTA) -- Highlighting the Roman Catholic Church's commitment to the fight against renewed anti-Semitism, Pope John Paul II joined with Holocaust survivors at a concert Thursday commemorating the Shoah.

On the eve of Yom Hashoah, Holocaust

Remembrance Day, thousands gathered in the Vatican's Paul VI auditorium to hear the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra of London pay tribute to the 6 million Jewish victims of the war.

The concert marked the first time since the end of WWII that the Vatican has officially commemorated the Holocaust.

It followed the establishment in December of diplomatic ties between the Vatican and Israel.

The 7,500 guests included the chief rabbi of Rome, Elio Toaff; Avi Pazner, Israel's ambassador to Rome; Italian President Oscar Luigi Scalfaro; and representatives of Catholic and Jewish groups from around the world.

The Holocaust survivors in attendance at the concert, who came there from 12 different countries, wore special scarves marked with the letter "J" to identify themselves.

In a meeting with about 100 survivors and their families before the concert, the pope expressed hope that listening to music together would confirm the shared resolve of Catholics and Jews "to consolidate the good relations between our two communities so that, with the help of Almighty God, we can work together to prevent the repetition of such heinous evil."

American Jewish conductor Gilbert Levine led the Royal Philharmonic in Max Bruch's setting of the Yom Kippur prayer "Kol Nidrei," with cellist Lynn Harrell as soloist.

The Cappella Giulia Choir of St. Peter's Basilica sang a setting for Psalm 92 in Hebrew composed by Franz Schubert for the inauguration of a synagogue in Vienna in 1826.

Oscar-winning actor Richard Dreyfuss narrated parts of Leonard Bernstein's "Kaddish," and the program also included selections from Bernstein's "Chichester Psalms" in Hebrew.

The concert opened with a brief ceremony in which Holocaust survivors lit six candles in memory of each million who perished.

Pope Calls For Moment Of Silence

Following the performance, the pope called for a moment of silence to "hear the voices of those who say 'do not forget us.'"

The concert -- which was broadcast live on European television and will be shown on public television in the United States -- was the brainchild of conductor Levine, a Long Island native whose mother-in-law survived Auschwitz.

Levine is conductor laureate of the Philharmonic Orchestra of Krakow and acts as one of the pope's musical advisers.

In 1988, Levine conducted the Krakow Philharmonic in a concert marking Pope John Paul's first 10 years in office. He also conducted the 1993 Vatican concert in Denver.

Two years ago, Levine suggested the idea of a concert commemorating the Holocaust to the pope, who then offered to hold it at the Vatican.

Funding for the concert came from both Catholic and Jewish sources, including \$50,000 donated by Holocaust survivors.

In the meeting with survivors, the pope stressed his commitment to Jewish issues and warned against new waves of anti-Semitism.

"It is not enough that we remember; for in our own day, regrettably, there are many new manifestations of the anti-Semitism, xenophobia and racial hatred which were the seeds of those unspeakable crimes," he told the survivors.

**CONFERENCE HELD IN UKRAINE
ON PRESERVATION OF JEWISH SITES****By J.A. Sisman**

KIEV, Ukraine (JTA) -- A conference on the preservation of Jewish sites was held here in the wake of a recent accord between Ukraine and the United States that guarantees government protection of all Ukrainian Jewish sites.

The two-day seminar, which was held March 20-21, was sponsored by the Jewish Preservation Committee.

The group was established last year by the Union of Jewish Religious Organizations of Ukraine and the Association of Jewish Organizations and Communities in Ukraine.

The seminar brought together leading researchers and preservationists of Jewish sites to begin an ambitious project of documenting all Jewish cemeteries, synagogues and communal buildings in Ukraine.

Documentation is seen as the first step toward the preservation of many of these sights.

"After seven decades of Communist rule, combined with the mass destruction of the Nazi occupation of Ukraine, the biggest problem now is that no one knows where many of these historical sites are located. As it stands now, they are literally lost to history," said Henry Filvarov, a speaker at the conference.

Following the 1917 Bolshevik Revolution, hundreds of Jewish synagogues and communal buildings in Ukraine were confiscated by the government and turned into factories, schools or warehouses.

During the Nazi occupation of Ukraine, hundreds of such sites, along with many Jewish cemeteries, were destroyed.

It was only during the past several years, following the collapse of the Soviet Union, that any preservation or documentation work on Jewish sites was allowed.

"There are literally hundreds of important historical and religious sites located within the borders of modern-day Ukraine. Tragically, many of them remain in terrible condition as a result of the tragic events of the past century," said Rabbi Yaakov Bleich, chief rabbi of Ukraine.

Numerous Synagogues Returned To Jews

During the early March visit to Washington by Ukrainian President Leonid Kravchuk, an accord was signed by U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher and Ukrainian Foreign Minister Anatoliy Zlenko calling for the protection of all Jewish sites in Ukraine.

The accord also sought to protect the cultural heritage of all religious and minority groups in that country.

Since Ukraine attained independence in 1991, numerous synagogues which had previously been confiscated were returned to local Jewish communities.

The Ukrainian government has also initiated legislation for the return of all confiscated religious property. The restitution program in Ukraine is considered the most comprehensive of all the former Soviet republics.

The seminar is the first of several programs planned here by the Jewish Preservation Committee.

Since it was established last year, the com-

mittee has been working with local Jewish communities on the preservation effort.

The committee has also worked in association with the U.S. Commission for the Preservation of America's Heritage Abroad, a group headed by New York Rabbi Arthur Schneier.

**BRITISH JEWISH WAR VETS TO BOYCOTT
CONTROVERSIAL ANNIVERSARY OF V-E DAY**
London Jewish Chronicle

LONDON (JTA) -- Jewish veterans are set to boycott a parade to mark next year's 50th anniversary of V-E Day, following Prime Minister John Major's proposal to include veterans of the Third Reich.

Harry Shepherd, national vice-chairman of the Association of Jewish Ex-Servicemen and Women, known as Ajex, told the London Jewish Chronicle, "The suggestion that former Wehrmacht and SS units should march side by side with British soldiers is ill-advised, inappropriate and insensitive.

"It is an insult to those ex-servicemen and women, both Jewish and non-Jewish, who laid down their lives fighting German soldiers, some of whom perpetrated the vilest acts against not only their own citizens but peoples of those countries they invaded," he said.

Shepherd continued: "Just when racism is raising its head in Europe, it is the wrong signal to give to fascists, who will be only too pleased to join in. If the Germans want to march, then let them, but not on the streets of London."

The former German service personnel are expected to be allowed to wear their uniforms and campaign medals in the proposed parade through the capital, which will include a service at St. Paul's Cathedral.

Shepherd said, "We will continue our annual ex-service parade in November" to "honor the 60,000 British Jews who fought in WWII and the 6 million Jews who died in the Holocaust."

Major's decision follows the exclusion of Helmut Kohl, the German chancellor, from plans for Western leaders to mark the 50th anniversary of D-day with an Allied remembrance service in Normandy in the summer. Major said the occasion would be a celebration of "50 years of peace and reconciliation."

Shepherd called the plan "a political move by John Major to appease the Germans."

"Reconciliation with one's former enemies is an excellent policy in the cause of future peace and harmony in the world.

"It should not extend to Germans marching on British soil where people's memories about the loss of loved ones in battles against the Nazis and in the bombing of our cities are still so fresh," said Shepherd.

DUTCH THROG TO SEE 'SCHINDLER'S LIST'
By Henriette Boas

AMSTERDAM, April 7 (JTA) -- The award-winning film "Schindler's List" has been seen by some 25,000 people in Holland in its first 25 days of public showing, despite the fact that only 17 prints of the film were available here.

Post-elementary-school students have been given reduced rates to see Steven Spielberg's film about the Holocaust because of its educational value.