

**HEZBOLLAH STRIKES AGAIN IN LEBANON,  
KILLING ONE ISRAELI, WOUNDING ANOTHER**  
By Naomi Segal

JERUSALEM, Dec. 6 (JTA) -- An Israeli soldier was killed and another moderately wounded when an explosive device went off near an army patrol in the western sector of the security zone in southern Lebanon on Tuesday.

The Iranian-backed Hezbollah movement claimed responsibility for setting off Tuesday's explosion, which killed Staff Sgt. Avi Abouksis, 20, from the city of Dimona in the Negev.

In a separate incident, an Israeli soldier was lightly wounded in clashes with Hezbollah gunmen in the eastern sector of the security zone.

The Hezbollah attacks coincided with a visit to the region by U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher, who was here in an effort to jumpstart stalled negotiations between Israel and Syria.

Hezbollah traditionally steps up its attacks against Israelis during such diplomatic visits.

**SUMMIT OF THE AMERICAS TO ADDRESS  
WAYS TO COMBAT INTERNATIONAL TERROR**  
By Matthew Dorf

WASHINGTON, Dec. 6 (JTA) -- The United States plans to join forces with its Latin American neighbors to press for concrete ways to combat international terrorism.

When the nations of the Western Hemisphere come together in Miami for the Summit of the Americas beginning Friday, terrorism will be on the agenda, according to Philip Wilcox, coordinator of the State Department's Office of Counterterrorism.

Efforts to combat terrorism are a "high priority" at the State Department, Wilcox said in an interview this week.

Following the terrorist attack against the Jewish community center in Buenos Aires in July, which left nearly 100 people dead, Secretary of State Warren Christopher began the push to include terrorism on the summit's agenda, according to Wilcox.

In addition, leaders from Uruguay and Panama wrote to the Clinton administration last month, urging that summit participants address the issue.

Among those who wrote to Clinton was Joseph Harari, a leader of Panama's Jewish community and chairman of the Latin American section of B'nai B'rith International.

Panama's Jewish community was also stung by terrorism over the summer, when a bomb exploded a commuter plane carrying 21 people. All the passengers and crew, including 12 Jews, were killed. The community is still not certain whether the attack was an act of terrorism aimed at Jews in general or an act of revenge by Colombian drug lords aimed against one Jewish businessman.

"Terrorism is not just a problem localized to the Middle East," Wilcox said. "Terrorism is a global problem that can strike anywhere at any time as we all saw here with the World Trade Center bombing."

Wilcox refused to reveal what specific proposals will be under consideration at the three-day summit in Miami.

But in a letter to the World Jewish Congress, Uruguay's President Luis Alberto Lacalle outlined his country's position and said that he hoped a similar resolution would be adopted at the summit.

Lacalle called for cooperation among the American states to adopt international norms that aim "at regulating the prevention and elimination of terrorism."

He said that the assessment of the cause of terrorism "should not be an obstacle to the adoption of practical, concrete, global and urgent measures" necessary to fight terrorism.

Meanwhile, Wilcox is spearheading an effort to combat terrorism in the United States.

Plans are afoot to introduce anti-terrorism legislation early in the next Congress that among other areas will give law enforcement officials "new and important ways to go after terrorists receiving funds from American citizens," he said.

**PANAMA'S JEWS PARANOID AND FRUSTRATED  
AS PROBE INTO JULY EXPLOSION DRAGS ON**  
By Larry Luxner

PANAMA CITY, Dec. 6 (JTA) -- Nearly five months after the bombing of a small Panamanian commuter plane in which 21 people, including 12 Jews, died, authorities still do not know whether the attack was the work of Islamic fanatics or Colombian drug thugs out to kill one specific Jew aboard the plane.

The lack of answers has led to frustration, anger and a certain degree of paranoia among Panama's 8,000 Jews, most of whom are wealthy and very religious.

At Congregation Shevet Achim in Panama City's Bellavista neighborhood, three teen-age boys stood guard one recent afternoon, suspiciously eyeing two Jewish visitors who had asked to meet with the rabbi.

When community leader Ruben Abadi finally came out, he would not let the visitors in and he refused to discuss the bombing.

"The press has taken all our comments out of context. I'm not talking to any more journalists," Abadi snapped, turning his back on the visitors and retreating into the synagogue.

Joseph Harari, president of Shevet Achim and chairman of the Latin American section of B'nai B'rith International, later apologized for the incident. But he said that it illustrates the suffering felt by Panama's Jews in the wake of the worst tragedy ever to hit the close-knit community. The bombing in Panama occurred one day after a powerful bomb ripped apart the Buenos Aires offices of Argentina's central Jewish organization, killing nearly 100 people.

In a Nov. 29 letter to President Clinton, Harari was one of several Latin Americans to ask that the issue of terrorism be placed high on the agenda at the Summit of the Americas, scheduled to begin Friday in Miami.

Harari said Latin America's Jews "need a

pledge from each country that economic involvement with terrorist-spawning states will not take precedence over the life interest of the public at large."

Neither the White House nor any of the agencies investigating the July 19 crash have any solid answers.

"Among the Jews, there is a sense of despair," said Harari, a Panama City businessman who lost a nephew in the attack.

The Alas commuter plane, carrying 21 people on a 50-mile flight from Colon to Panama City, crashed in mountainous terrain shortly after takeoff.

On board were 12 Jews -- including four Israelis -- who ran businesses in the Colon Free Zone, which annually transships about \$11 billion worth of electronics, liquor, designer clothing and other luxury goods from the Far East to Latin America. Four non-Jewish Americans were also killed in the crash.

The Lebanese-based Party of God terrorist group immediately claimed responsibility for the bombing. Panama's Civil Aeronautics Board launched an investigation, bringing in the FBI, the U.S. Federal Aviation Administration and Israel's Mossad.

To date, the investigation has centered on Lya Jamal, a Lebanese national who was on the plane and whose body was the only one left unclaimed after the crash. Panama's leading newspaper, La Prensa, recently reported that Jamal refused to give airline employees a local address when purchasing his ticket, and that he had entered Panama illegally.

Harari said that Jamal's body was the most mutilated by explosives, and that "our contacts with intelligence organizations give us the general impression that this is linked with the Middle East, above all because of the type of explosive utilized in this attack," he said.

#### **Questions Over Who Was The Target**

Yet some prominent Panamanians have suggested that the attack was not aimed at Jews in general, but against one Jew in particular, Saul Schwartz, who reportedly was under investigation by Italian authorities for his alleged links to the Medellin, Colombia cocaine cartel.

A few weeks before the crash, said Harari, someone planted a bomb in the car of a cousin, Alan Schwartz, but no one was injured in that attack. According to Roberto Eisenmann, publisher of La Prensa, "Saul Schwartz was definitely in the hanky-panky business. There were people in the free zone who wouldn't get on the same plane with Schwartz."

According to Eisenmann, "Most of the Jewish community would prefer to call it an anti-Semitic act than to accept that one of their own was involved in drug trafficking."

What is not clear, however, is why a suicide bomber would be sent to assassinate a single person. On the other hand, if the point was to attack Panamanian Jews in general, there were much easier targets, such as the Jewish community center, or the free zone itself.

Regardless of the motive, security has been noticeably tightened at all Panamanian airports in the months since the disaster, and authorities have stepped up immigration controls at Tocumen International Airport outside Panama City.

#### **U.S. JOINT CHIEFS OF STAFF CHAIR: TOO EARLY TO DISCUSS PEACEKEEPING** By Naomi Segal

JERUSALEM, Dec. 6 (JTA) -- Gen. John Shalikashvili, the chairman of the U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff, said this week that it is premature to discuss sending American troops to the Golan Heights to act as peacekeepers between Israel and Syria.

However, he said during his visit here that "the United States has always supported the peace process," and that when the time comes to speak about the specifics of any Israeli-Syrian peace settlement, "you can be sure that the United States will do so as it has in the past."

Shalikashvili spoke to reporters after meeting with Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin on Tuesday at the conclusion of his two-day visit to Israel.

During their meeting, Rabin reiterated his position that Israel would need American troops on the Golan to ensure that any peace treaty with Syria would be respected, adding that the forces would not be sent there to protect Israel's borders.

"When a peace agreement is achieved with Syria, we will need American soldiers to oversee the implementation of the military annex of the agreement," Rabin said in a statement.

After meeting with Rabin, the Polish-born general toured the Yad Vashem Holocaust Memorial in Jerusalem.

#### **U.S. FINES THREE COMPANIES FOR VIOLATING ANTI-BOYCOTT LAWS** By Jennifer Batog

WASHINGTON, Dec. 6 (JTA) -- The Commerce Department slapped three companies with civil penalties this week for allegedly violating the anti-boycott provisions of the Export Administration Act and Regulations.

The companies -- Habib Bank Ltd., of New York, Jack Schwartz Shoes, Inc., also of New York, and the Texas-based Import Export Management Services -- agreed to pay the penalties, but they neither admitted nor denied the alleged violations.

The Commerce Department fined Habib Bank Ltd., a branch of a Pakistani bank, \$60,000 for allegedly giving information about other people's business relationships with Israel to the United Arab Emirates and Oman on five occasions between February 1988 and February 1992.

In addition, the bank allegedly failed to report receiving 84 boycott-related requests from those countries, as required by the Export Administration Act and Regulations.

Jack Schwartz Shoes, Inc., an athletic shoe manufacturer, agreed to pay a \$15,000 penalty for alleged violations involving four transactions with a Saudi Arabian company, the Commerce Department said.

Import Export Management Services, an office supply exporter, allegedly gave information about its business relationships with Israel to a Syrian company in May 1993.

The company also failed to report two requests for boycott-related information, one from Syria and one from Kuwait, the Commerce Department reported. The company will pay a \$7,500 civil penalty.

## ON EVE OF NOBEL PEACE PRIZE CEREMONY, COMMITTEE'S LONE DISSENTER SPEAKS OUT

By Michele Chabin

JERUSALEM, Dec. 6 (JTA) -- When the 1994 Nobel Peace Prize is awarded to Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin, Foreign Minister Shimon Peres and Palestine Liberation Organization Chairman Yasser Arafat in Oslo this weekend, Kaare Kristiansen will not be at the ceremony.

Kristiansen, the Nobel Prize committee member who resigned in protest in October after Arafat was named one of the peace prize recipients, instead flew to Jerusalem this week to show support for Israel.

A former president of the Norwegian Parliament and a longtime supporter of Israel, Kristiansen said he could not attend the awards ceremony, slated for Saturday night, in good conscience.

Instead, he jumped at an invitation from the World Zionist Organization to attend a Christian Friendship Conference taking place in the capital this week.

Interviewed at a kibbutz guest house on Monday, Kristiansen, a spry 74, said he had no regrets about resigning, despite the storm of controversy generated by his anti-Arafat position.

Explaining why he took the stand, he said, "I found it impossible, both with respect to my own convictions and, more important, with respect to the peace prize and its founder, to accept Arafat as qualified for this most prestigious prize in the world."

Citing Arafat's involvement in terrorism over the years, Kristiansen maintained that the PLO leader should never have been considered for the prize in the first place.

"Arafat has been one of the most renowned terrorists in the world," Kristiansen said. "He has, so to speak, built the bridges for many other terrorists in other countries.

"He has killed a lot of innocent people," he said.

Kristiansen said he decided to resign, rather than hold his tongue, because he was afraid others would view his silence as a vote for Arafat.

He said that because the committee's statutes require "an absolute consensus" among its five members, he had to resign in order to voice his dissent.

Since resigning from the committee, Kristiansen said he has received "mixed reactions."

The international media has meted out some "very harsh criticism," while ordinary citizens have been extremely supportive, he said.

## CONGRESSIONAL BLACKS AND JEWS ARE ALIGNED ON KEY ISSUES, STUDY FINDS

By Debra Nussbaum Cohen

NEW YORK, Dec. 6 (JTA) -- Despite a popular perception that blacks and Jews no longer share a common core of values, their representatives in Congress have been closely aligned on key issues of concern to the two communities, a new study has shown.

The American Jewish Congress conducted a study of the voting patterns of the 39 members of the Congressional Black Caucus and the 32 Jewish members of the House of Representatives on issues important to the Jewish community.

The issues included foreign aid, public funding of private schools and school prayer.

The study built enlarged on work done by the black-led Joint Center for Political and Economic Studies, a respected Washington think tank that recently published a "report card" examining the voting records of congressional representatives on issues important to the black community.

The center looked at issues including low-income housing, alternatives for sentencing young people and gun control.

AJCongress analyzed the information and found that "Jewish members of Congress were far more likely to support votes by the Congressional Black Caucus than the other members of the House of Representatives," according to the report.

By the same token, "on vote after vote, black members of Congress supported the Jewish community position in significantly larger percentages than did other members of Congress."

The Jewish community position was represented in the study by the AJCongress position, which generally reflects the views of the community at large, but not always.

Jewish members of Congress supported the Black Caucus' position an average of 72 percent of the time, far in excess of the 49 percent average of the total House.

Likewise, an average of 79 percent of Black Caucus members supported Jewish issues, as opposed to 53 percent of the full House.

"There is more commonality than discordance" between the two ethnic groups when it comes to policy issues, said Flora Perskie, chairman of AJCongress' Commission on National Affairs, in a news conference Tuesday announcing the results.

Phil Baum, AJCongress executive director, said the purpose of the analysis was "to put the rumors of extremists in both communities to rest."

## 'We Must Not Underestimate Our Power'

The study proves that the perception that blacks and Jews no longer share the same interests is "unfounded and wrong," he said.

Also at the news conference was the Rev. Jesse Jackson who met with AJCongress leaders earlier that day.

"Over the centuries our interests have converged again and again.

"We must not underestimate our power to protect our interests when we coalesce," said Jackson, who serves as the non-voting shadow senator for D.C. statehood representing the District of Columbia.

Citing an example of how that coalition can work outside Congress, Jackson said that former Ku Klux Klan leader David Duke would be governor of Louisiana "if not for the black-Jewish coalition, since 55 percent of whites voted for him" in 1991.

The Rev. Al Sharpton also attended the news conference, though he did not speak.

The alignment of blacks and Jews in the House was in part based on the fact that the majority of both groups were Democrats, according to the report.

Their relationship may shift in the newly elected Congress, where there will be nine fewer Jews and a greater proportion of Republicans.

**NEWS ANALYSIS:****AS ISRAEL'S PUBLIC CONFIDENCE ERODES, CABINET MULLS TINKERING WITH ACCORD**

By Cynthia Mann

JERUSALEM, Dec. 6 (JTA) -- The mounting terror attacks against Israelis launched by Islamic militants are steadily eroding public confidence in the Palestinian self-rule accord signed last year in Washington.

As a result, the government of Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin, mindful of recent polls showing the Labor Party running neck-and-neck with the Likud opposition, is beginning to question whether it might be necessary to change the accord.

On Sunday, the Cabinet met for one of two special sessions this week to hear assessments of the current state of Palestinian self-rule from army and intelligence officials.

The Cabinet also debated what course the government should adopt in the next phase of Israeli-Palestinian negotiations.

The negotiations, which resumed this week in Cairo, focused for the first time on the next step in the implementation of Palestinian autonomy. The next phase includes withdrawal of Israeli army troops from the West Bank, which under the terms of the self-rule agreement must take place before Palestinian elections are held.

Given the recent spate of terrorist attacks, there is a growing conviction among members of the Rabin government that it will be impossible to pull Israeli troops out of the West Bank and at the same time ensure the security of the Jewish settlements located there.

Uri Dromi, the head of Israel's Government Press Office, summed up the issue by saying this week, "Holding elections is important, but the safety of Israelis is just as important and maybe has an overriding force."

At Sunday's Cabinet session, security officials reportedly said the Islamic militants were gaining ground over Yasser Arafat's Palestinian Authority and that the militants were responsible for the deaths of 32 Israelis since October.

**'It Is Clear Oslo Isn't Working'**

With such statistics, little wonder that last year's euphoria over the Israel-PLO agreement negotiated in Oslo is beginning to ring hollow.

"It is clear Oslo isn't working. The question is what do you conclude from that fact?" said Dore Gold, an analyst with Tel Aviv University's Jaffee Center for Strategic Research.

"The whole idea of Gaza-Jericho was to create a test to see whether the concept of empowering the PLO made sense," Gold said, referring to the first stage of the self-rule accord giving the PLO control over the Gaza Strip and West Bank Jericho enclave.

The Cabinet is now divided, he said, with some ministers "unwilling to admit the concept of empowering the PLO failed."

"The Israeli government has tried for a long time to put as good a face as possible on Palestinian compliance" with the agreement, but "at this point it's no longer possible," said Dan Polisar, director of Peace Watch, a group monitoring both Israeli and Palestinian compliance with the agreement.

"Everyone knows terrorism is up," said Polisar, who noted the Palestinians have not

extradited any suspects accused of carrying out terrorist attacks against Israelis, despite six specific requests by Israel.

Because of these security concerns, Polisar believes Israel can claim a right to call for modifications in the self-rule accord. Israel can argue that the terms of the agreement should be altered "because the Palestinians aren't fulfilling" their part of the bargain, he said.

Arafat's ability to deliver on security was a major focus of Sunday's Cabinet meeting, where several Israeli military and security experts gave Arafat low grades, saying he has failed to disarm his opposition and ensure security in Gaza.

Maj. Gen. Danny Rothschild, who announced on Monday that he was resigning as coordinator of the territories, reportedly told the Cabinet that the West Bank -- which has some 120,000 Jewish settlers living among 1 million Palestinians -- presents an even more complex security situation than Gaza, home to some 4,000 settlers.

Rothschild, who also resigned as Israel's chief negotiator in talks with the Palestinians, told Israel Television on Monday night that he had informed Rabin of his plans to resign from the Israel Defense Force two months ago.

He said that he was not resigning out of protest or disagreement with the government and that he still supported the peace process.

The ministers were reportedly also told that the Israeli military could not ensure the protection of West Bank settlers if it redeploys and the settlements remain in their current locations.

**Downplaying Alarms**

Rabin later sought to downplay the alarms sounded in Sunday's briefings, saying that much of the terminology employed -- such as "Lebanonization" -- had been exaggerated. He also denied Arafat's claims that groundwork is being laid to suspend negotiations with the Palestinians.

"I'm committed to the continuation of negotiations," he said.

But at the same time, he conceded the difficulties that lie ahead.

"No doubt, we'll have to keep in mind the lessons we have learned so far" in Gaza, he said.

But several Cabinet ministers continued to go public with their own opinions, exposing the differences among them and the possibility that Israel will seek modifications in the accord.

Meanwhile, Economics Minister Shimon Shetreet suggested that overall security in the West Bank should remain in Israeli hands and no settlements should be moved.

Environment Minister Yossi Sarid, an ardent dove, also appeared to back away from a full deployment of Israeli troops, suggesting it be applied only to some West Bank areas.

Sarid and others, including Absorption Minister Yair Tsaban and Agriculture Minister Yakov Tsur, have also called for the evacuation of some settlements, in effect seeking to speed up the terms of the self-rule agreement.

The Palestinian Authority, for its part, has rejected renegotiating the agreement and has demanded Israel withdraw its troops as planned.

With the two sides so far apart, a Foreign Ministry source said, "Without a change in both Palestinian and Israeli positions, it will be very difficult, maybe even impossible to reach an agreement."