



NEWS AT A GLANCE

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■ Martin Indyk, the newly appointed U.S. ambassador to Israel, presented his credentials to President Ezer Weizman. Indyk told reporters that Palestine Liberation Organization Chairman Yasser Arafat must prove his ability to fight terror before the next stage of the Palestinian self-rule accord can be implemented. [Page 3]

■ President Clinton praised federation leaders in Los Angeles for creating a model of public and private cooperation. In what was billed as the first address by a sitting U.S. president to a local Jewish federation, Clinton also denounced Sunday's terrorist attack in the Gaza Strip. [Page 3]

■ An Israeli soldier was lightly wounded in exchanges with Hezbollah gunmen in the southern Lebanon security zone. Sources in Lebanon said Israel shelled Hezbollah strongholds in the area of Sidon after Hezbollah members launched mortar and rocket attacks in the central sector of the security zone.

■ Tunisia and Israel reportedly reached an agreement to open economic interest sections soon in Tel Aviv and Tunis. The opening had been scheduled for early March, but the move was delayed because of disagreements over a Tunisian plan to dispatch a representative to the Palestinian-governed Gaza Strip. [Page 3]

■ The commemoration of the 50th anniversary of the liberation of the Buchenwald concentration camp was marred over the weekend by plans to install a special exhibit on Nazi prisoners who were interned at the camp after its liberation by the U.S. Army. [Page 4]

■ A new translation of the Haggadah into Serbo-Croatian was published just in time for use this Passover by the beleaguered Jewish communities in all parts of the former Yugoslavia. [Page 4]

NEWS ANALYSIS

Latest terrorist attack bodes ill for peace process

By David Landau

JERUSALEM, April 10 (JTA) — The Israeli-Palestinian peace process may be dying because its two chief protagonists — Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin and Palestine Liberation Organization Chairman Yasser Arafat — lack the political will or the political strength to push it to a successful conclusion.

After the latest terror outrages in the Gaza Strip on Sunday, this assessment can be heard in both Israeli and Palestinian governing circles, and it is being articulated louder than ever.

In two attacks taking place two hours apart on Sunday, suicide bombers drove into an Egged bus filled with Israeli soldiers and settlers and, later, exploded a bomb near an Israeli border police jeep.

The attacks claimed the lives of at least seven Israelis and one American and left more than 50 injured.

The attacks, launched by members of the fundamentalist extremist groups Islamic Jihad and Hamas, were reportedly not coordinated by the two groups. But they succeeded in provoking yet another wave of frustration with the pace and spirit of the peace process.

On the Israeli side, the frustration was implicit in statements made by two prominent dovish ministers, Environment Minister Yossi Sarid and Tourism Minister Uzi Baram, in the aftermath of the attacks.

Both Sarid and Baram have espoused the view that the settlements of Netzarim and Kfar Darom, located near the sites of Sunday's two terrorist bomb attacks, should be evacuated because of their isolated location in Gaza.

"This is not the moment to issue political calls," Baram said on Israel Television on Sunday night, "but I have not moved one iota from my position. On the contrary, I am strengthened in my position."

When the interviewer pointed out that Baram's statements put him at odds with the prime minister, Baram affirmed that this was indeed so, and added pointedly, "This is not the only matter of dispute between us."

Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin has repeatedly said that under the Israeli-Palestinian accord, Israel has no obligation to move the settlements and should not do so at this time.

Challenges to the political foundation of Rabin's government

Sarid, a leader of the Meretz bloc, Labor's coalition ally, caused a political storm over the weekend when he not only called for the dismantlement of the two settlements, but added that the step should serve as a model for the evacuation of some settlements in the West Bank.

After Sunday's two suicide bombings, some opposition figures and government ministers publicly attacked Sarid for his remarks, which they sought to link to the attacks.

But Sarid hit back, terming these assaults on him demagoguery and reiterating his position that the isolated Jewish settlements should be evacuated.

Sarid added that "many" Cabinet ministers held the same view, though he conceded that this was not the time to embark on withdrawal, because it would look like a surrender to terrorists.

The importance of Baram and Sarid's positions goes far beyond the polemics surrounding them, beyond even the glaring dissonances that they expose in Rabin's Cabinet.

The two ministers, along with the others at the Cabinet table who support the idea of dismantling certain settlements, are in effect challenging the moral and political foundation of Rabin's rule.

The thrust of their argument is that the logic of the Palestinian self-rule accord, though not its actual wording, necessitates the dismantling of these outlying settlements. The alternative, they say, is to employ whole regiments of soldiers to protect the settlements.

The problem inherent in deploying large numbers of soldiers to protect a relatively small number of settlers became evident Sunday, when seven such soldiers met their deaths aboard the bus outside Kfar Darom.

The soldiers' presence at the settlements, moreover, poses a constant

challenge and target to the Islamic militants who are determined to drown the prospects of peace in Jewish blood.

Israel's rightist opposition accuses the prime minister of wantonly endangering the lives of the settlers with his peace policy.

Rabin's critics from within his own coalition, in effect, agree. But their conclusion is diametrically different from that of the opposition.

The Likud says Israel should halt the peace talks altogether. The coalition critics call instead for the dismantlement of endangered settlements in order to allow the Palestinian Authority to consolidate its control over Gaza, if not the West Bank as well.

Rabin's critics within his own coalition maintain that the peace policy cries out for new political boldness on the part of the prime minister.

And with the popular standing of the government in steady decline — a trend that is likely to accelerate after Sunday's incidents — there is no guarantee that the coalition doves will remain passively loyal to Rabin.

On the Palestinian side, there are indications of similar disagreements among high-level officials.

In a first-ever public appearance in Tel Aviv on Sunday before a high-powered audience of Israeli public figures, the police commander of the Palestinian Authority, Gen. Nasser Yusef, dropped hints of his frustration with Arafat's political restraints.

After offering the oft-made Palestinian argument that in more than 27 years of occupation, Israel failed to quell terror in the territories and after pledging that his forces would soon successfully root out Hamas and Islamic Jihad armed activity, Yusef shed light on his own constraints.

Arafat fears being branded a 'collaborator'

In a pointed answer to a question from Gen. Shlomo Lahat, the former mayor of Tel Aviv, as to whether Arafat was stopping him from acting more vigorously against the armed fundamentalists, Yusef said: "You should come to Gaza and ask him that."

Palestinian sources say the Palestinian police and security service have the firepower to overwhelm, disarm and disband the military wings of Hamas and Jihad. But, they say, Arafat's political will is missing to allow them to do the job.

The problem, according to these sources, is that Arafat fears being branded by his enemies as a "collaborator" with the Israelis — especially after the April 2 explosion at a Hamas bomb factory located in an apartment building in the heart of Gaza City. Islamic fundamentalists claimed that the incident was a joint Israeli-Palestinian operation.

True, Arafat had his security forces arrest more than 150 Hamas and Islamic Jihad activists after Sunday's two terrorist attacks in Gaza.

In addition, a military court Arafat created two months ago sentenced on Monday an Islamic Jihad activist to 15 years in prison for recruiting suicide bombers.

But for many, Arafat's latest actions against the militant fundamentalists in his midst — limited until recently to rounding up the usual suspects after a terror attack, only to release them within a matter of days — represented too little, too late.

A well-placed official in the Palestinian Authority said Sunday, "There are criminals everywhere. But what is no less criminal is letting them act."

Like other critics of the chairman, this official is increasingly troubled by the sense that the opportunity for peace and Palestinian independence is being squandered by a lack of leadership and determination on Arafat's part.

On the Palestinian side, such disgruntlement is usually stifled quickly, for there is no democratic process through which dissent can gain effective political expression.

But one thing seems certain: The fact that similar sentiments are being heard among official Israelis and official Palestinians — even the most ardent supporters of the peace process — bodes ill both for the respective leaders and for the process itself. □

Death toll in terror attack rises as Brandeis student dies

By Naomi Segal

JERUSALEM, April 10 (JTA) — The death toll from Sunday's terrorist attacks in the Gaza Strip rose to eight Monday, when two more people involved in the first attack died of their wounds.

Alisa Flatow, 20, a Brandeis University student from West Orange, N.J., had been traveling to a Gaza resort when a suicide bomber drove an explosive-laden van into an Egged bus.

Flatow was declared brain dead. On Monday, her parents decided to disconnect her from life-support systems and to donate her organs for transplants, Israel Television reported.

Sgt. Avraham Arditi, 19, of Jerusalem, who was critically wounded in the explosion near Kfar Darom, also died of his wounds.

The six other soldiers killed in the attack were laid to rest Monday.

Fundamentalist militants belonging to Islamic Jihad and Hamas launched the suicide bombings near the Jewish settlements of Kfar Darom and Netzarim. Hamas denied that the two attacks had been coordinated.

Dozens of individuals who were wounded in the suicide attacks remained hospitalized Monday. Several were listed in serious condition.

In the wake of Sunday's violence, the Israel Defense Force closed off two main Gaza access roads to Palestinian vehicles.

Palestinian security forces reportedly rounded up some 150 Islamic Jihad and Hamas activists Monday.

Meanwhile, a Gaza military court sentenced an Islamic Jihad activist Monday to 15 years in jail for recruiting two others to carry out suicide attacks against Israelis.

This was reportedly the first such sentencing of a fundamentalist militant by the Palestinian Authority.

In Jerusalem, Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin held political consultations Monday to discuss the attack.

Members of the government stressed that even though Israel would put pressure on Palestine Liberation Organization Chairman Yasser Arafat to disarm Islamic Jihad and Hamas, the peace negotiations with the Palestinians would continue.

And in Cairo, the Israeli and Palestinian negotiating teams discussing issues related to Palestinian elections convened for their scheduled meeting.

The head of the Israeli delegation, Foreign Ministry legal adviser Yoel Singer, said suspending the talks would, in effect, reward the efforts of the suicide bombers.

Police Minister Moshe Shahal said unless Arafat takes any real action against the terrorists, Israel will not let any Palestinians into Israel.

According to Shahal, Arafat recently told a senior Israeli official that he had tried to reach an understanding with Hamas and Islamic Jihad, but that it failed.

"He himself acknowledged that he tried to reach compromise with them and that it did not work," Shahal said. □

Clinton condemns terrorism, praises Jewish federation efforts

By Tom Tugend

LOS ANGELES, April 10 (JTA) — In what was billed as the first address by a sitting U.S. president to a local Jewish federation, President Clinton praised leaders here for creating a model of public and private cooperation.

He also took the opportunity to denounce Sunday's terrorist attack in the Gaza Strip, which occurred only hours before his scheduled talk.

Clinton expressed his condolences to the Israeli people and government over the attack, which left eight people dead.

At the same time, he said attacks such as the one that took place that day would "stiffen our resolve" to continue the Middle East peace process.

"You will not succeed, you must not succeed," he warned the terrorists.

Clinton addressed 700 leaders and supporters of the Jewish Federation Council of Greater Los Angeles.

In the Middle East and other global trouble spots, as on the domestic scene, constructive developments "are accompanied by the seeds of disintegration," the president said.

The very act of creating peace in the Middle East, he said, has given terrorists new openings to strike at their victims and disrupt the process.

The same struggle between integration and disintegration faces Mexico, the Baltic states and even Japan, Clinton said. It also confronts the people of the former Soviet Union, who have thrown off the shackles of tyranny but must cope with a wave of organized crime, he added.

Within the United States, the promise of the new information age threatens to leave behind an entire class of people unable to cope with the new technologies, he said.

To tackle these and other social problems in America, Clinton called on the "sense of mission and purpose" shown by the Jewish federation to strengthen its partnership with the federal and state governments.

"I have tried to do what I could to be a good partner," said Clinton. He cited the joint efforts of the federal government and the federation after last year's earthquake in Los Angeles.

Other areas of fruitful interaction have been in the resettlement of refugees and assistance to the elderly, he said. "Because you have a social conscience," Clinton told his audience, "you are critical to our future."

Joining the president and first lady Hillary Clinton on the dais at the Regent Beverly Wilshire Hotel were a mix of Jewish community leaders, public officeholders and Hollywood celebrities. Among the latter were Barbra Streisand, who got the biggest hand, and MCA Chairman Lew Wasserman.

On Saturday evening, producer-director Steven Spielberg and his wife hosted the Clintons at an all-star, \$50,000-a-couple fund-raiser, which enriched Democratic coffers by some \$2 million.

Earlier in the day, Clinton played golf at the Hillcrest Country Club, the ritziest Jewish gathering place in the city. □

New U.S. ambassador in Israel says Arafat must fight terror

By Naomi Segal

JERUSALEM, April 10 (JTA) — Martin Indyk, the newly appointed U.S. ambassador to Israel, presented his credentials to President Ezer Weizman in a formal ceremony held here this week.

After meeting with Weizman on Monday, Indyk

told reporters that Palestine Liberation Organization Chairman Yasser Arafat must prove his ability to fight terror before the next stage of the Palestinian self-rule accord is implemented.

Arafat and the Palestinian Authority must take stronger measures to ensure that "the bombmakers are found and the bombmaking factories shut down," said Indyk.

"Chairman Arafat has on a number of occasions made clear that he intends to do that. We need to see a 100 percent effort in that regard," he said.

Indyk, discussing the Israeli-Syrian peace talks, told reporters that he intended to play an active part in the negotiations.

He said he believed that Syrian President Hafez Assad does intend to make peace with Israel. "He plays his cards very close to his chest," Indyk said.

"He will not make any concessions prematurely. When he makes a concession, he expects something in return."

Indyk, 44, worked as a consultant for the pro-Israel lobby, the American Israel Public Affairs Committee, for about nine months in the mid-1980s. He served most recently as President Clinton's National Security Council adviser on the Middle East.

He is well-known for his dual containment approach toward Iran and Iraq, which advocates a strong U.S. policy against each nation.

He also served as the founding executive director of the influential Washington Institute for Near East Policy, a pro-Israel think tank.

The Australian-born diplomat became a naturalized American citizen two years ago.

Indyk is the first Jew to serve as an American ambassador to Israel. □

Tunisia and Israel move closer toward low-level diplomatic ties

By Joseph Kopel

BRUSSELS, April 10 (JTA) — Tunisia and Israel have agreed to open economic interest sections in Tunis and Tel Aviv soon, according to news reports here.

In October, the two countries announced that they would exchange interest sections in March, but the move was delayed because of disagreements over a Tunisian plan to dispatch a representative to the Palestinian-governed Gaza Strip, Morocco's Maghreb Press Agency reported here.

Israel agreed to grant the future Tunisian representative in Gaza a "quasi-diplomatic status" and "freedom of movement" between Israel and the Palestinian self-rule zones, the Moroccan news agency reported this week. But under the agreement, the representative would not have the benefits of full diplomatic immunity.

Interest sections are seen as a first step toward the establishment of full diplomatic relations.

Because the two countries have not yet agreed to establish embassies or consulates, each country's representatives are to be stationed in the Belgian embassies in Tel Aviv and Tunis.

According to the news agency, Tunisia named Khmeiss Ghinaoui, now a Tunisian economic counselor based in Asia, as its bureau chief in Tel Aviv.

Israel will reportedly send Shalom Cohen to Tunis. Cohen, who is of Tunisian origin, is now a political counselor at the Israeli Embassy in Brussels.

The Palestine Liberation Organization maintained its headquarters in Tunisia from 1982 until last July, when PLO Chairman Yasser Arafat moved his headquarters to Gaza. □

Plans for Nazi exhibit mar Buchenwald liberation event

By Miriam Widman

BERLIN, April 10 (JTA) — The 50th anniversary of the liberation of the Buchenwald concentration camp was marred over the weekend by plans to install a special exhibit on Nazi prisoners who were interned at the camp after its liberation by the U.S. Army.

More than 30,000 so-called "small-time Nazis" were interned in the camp by the Russians, according to German media reports.

Prisoners of the original camp, located near Weimar in the German state of Thuringia, strongly protested plans to erect an exhibit about these internees.

Willi Schmidt, a former Buchenwald prisoner, said that if a separate exhibit were erected, it should at least be clearly separated from the Buchenwald camp with a fence.

But others protested more strongly, saying an exhibition on Nazi prisoners had no place on the grounds where Jews, Gypsies and political prisoners were persecuted and killed.

John Ranz, the head of the Survivors of the Buchenwald Concentration Camp, USA said prior to leaving for the commemoration that the "brewing controversy" over the exhibition was "one of the most painful things on a 50th anniversary."

Despite the controversy, the 50th anniversary helped to put events into perspective.

An exhibition on the camp installed in 1937 was given an historical face lift. In the days before German reunification, visitors to the Buchenwald concentration camp learned only about the struggles of Communists against Germany's fascist regime, even though less than 20 percent of the prisoners were Communists.

A new exhibit, which describes the horrendous conditions in which some 235,000 prisoners from more than 35 countries toiled as slave laborers, gives visitors a better perspective of what happened there.

More than 56,000 prisoners died, most of them Jews, many while working in the underground munitions factory at the nearby Mittelbau-Dora camp.

Of the 2,000 Jews who survived Buchenwald, half of them were children. Nobel Peace Prize winner Elie Wiesel was one of the children liberated 50 years ago.

At the ceremony Sunday near Weimar, Buchenwald survivors recalled how the SS murdered inmates by injecting poisons into their hearts, drowned prisoners in latrines and worked them to death at the nearby stone quarry.

Buchenwald was liberated April 11, 1945, by the U.S. Army under the command of Gen. George Patton. The general ordered 1,000 residents of Weimar to see what had been occurring within a few miles of their homes. The citizens reportedly were forced to look at body parts and bones in the camp crematorium.

Rabbi Yisrael Meir Lau, now Israel's chief Ashkenazi rabbi, was then prisoner No. 11704. He was 7 years old when Patton's army entered the camp.

Although he was not the key speaker at Sunday's ceremony, Lau's speech before a packed audience of hundreds was the most emotionally gripping.

Noting the coming of Passover, the child survivor compared the camp's liberation to Moses' liberation of the Jews from Egypt.

Lau also recalled a hug he received upon liberation from an American rabbi with the U.S. forces.

"He asked me how old I was and I said, 'I'm older than you,'" Lau told the attentive audience, which included Ignatz Bubis, the head of the German Jewish community.

"You laugh like a child," Lau recalled telling the rabbi. "I don't laugh. Tell me who is older."

Lau also told of a U.S. soldier who, with one hand, held his small, emaciated body high in the air.

"He lifted me up and said to the people of Weimar, 'Look at your enemy,'" Lau said.

Bernhard Vogel, president of the German state of Thuringia, opened the ceremony, saying he feels ashamed when he thinks of what occurred in Germany's name.

Before Sunday's ceremonies, a memorial to the Gypsies was erected, with Gypsy leaders calling for their minority to be awarded the status of a recognized minority, such as the Danish or Serbian minorities, in Germany. □

Senator raps Canberra paper, denies that Jews 'peddle lies'

By Jeremy Jones

SYDNEY, Australia (JTA) — A top Australian official has assailed a newspaper here for publishing a headline and story that claimed that his spokeswoman had said members of the country's Jewish community are involved in "peddling lies."

The Canberra Times, the only daily in Australia's capital city, reported that a spokeswoman for Sen. Gareth Evans, Australia's minister for foreign affairs and trade, used that phrase in describing Jewish protest of a government invitation to Palestine Liberation Organization official Farouk Kaddoumi.

The article identified Australia/Israel Publications and the Executive Council of Australian Jewry as the organizations opposed to Kaddoumi's visit here.

Colin Rubenstein, editorial chairman of Australia/Israel Publications, said the article and the headline were "grossly offensive" and represented "an extraordinary lapse in standards and judgment."

Evans, who defended his invitation to Kaddoumi and said he did not agree with all of Kaddoumi's positions, told the Senate that the newspaper headline "ascribing the view to my press spokeswoman of Jewish elements 'peddling lies'" is a "wildly inaccurate account of what was said."

He also said, "The words in quotation marks were never said by the government and do not reflect the government's position." The Canberra Times has since acknowledged that the words in question were a construction of the reporter and not a quotation of any source.

Rubenstein said that "The Canberra Times is, to this point, not accepting responsibility for what we are advised is clearly defamatory."

He has written to the newspaper demanding an apology. □

Haggadah translated into Serbo-Croatian

By Ruth E. Gruber

ROME, April 10 (JTA) — A new translation of the Haggadah into Serbo-Croatian has been printed just in time for use this Passover by the beleaguered Jewish communities in all parts of the former Yugoslavia.

The Haggadah was prepared by Eliezer Jajcanin, a rabbinical student in Israel who comes from the Bosnian capital of Sarajevo. It was printed with funds provided by the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee.

"The Haggadah includes complete instructions to permit even those who have never seen a seder before to conduct the ceremony," a spokesman for the JDC said.

Communal seders were scheduled to be held this week in many cities in the former Yugoslavia, including Sarajevo; the Croatian cities of Zagreb, Split, Makarska and Osijek; and in the Yugoslav capital of Belgrade. □