



NEWS AT A GLANCE

■ **Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin vowed the peace process with the Palestinians would continue despite a suicide bombing attack against a commuter bus in Ramat Gan.** Palestine Liberation Organization leader Yasser Arafat was among the world leaders to condemn the attack, which killed five Israelis. [Page 1]

■ **President Clinton is expected to sign soon a spending cuts package that forgives Jordan's \$275 million debt.** The Senate voted 90-7 to approve the rescissions bill, which would cut \$16.3 billion from existing domestic programs, including social service programs.

■ **Paraguay extradited to Argentina five Lebanese and two Brazilians in connection with the bombing attack last year on the Jewish headquarters building in Buenos Aires.** The seven were wanted in connection with a separate investigation into illegal stocks of weapons found near Buenos Aires in April 1994. They were also suspected of links to the March 1992 bombing of the Israeli Embassy in the Argentine capital. [Page 2]

■ **A German Jewish leader compared the persecution of Bosnian Muslims to that of Jews in Nazi Germany.** His comments were the starkest among statements issued by world Jewish leaders against the carnage in Bosnia. [Page 3]

■ **The first man to face war crimes charges in England since the passage of the War Crimes Act in 1991 was released on bail.** Meanwhile, Scotland Yard announced that at least 14 others are under investigation. [Page 4]

■ **The bodies of two Israeli air force officers killed in a training accident off the coast of Nahariya have been recovered from the sea.** Lt. Col. Roni Shlomi and Capt. Yuval Binyamin were killed when their F-16 plane collided with another during the July 18 training exercise.

■ **Britain's leading animal welfare organization criticized the kosher method of slaughter as painful and distressing to animals.** Jewish organizations condemned the group for attacking religious rights. [Page 4]

Rabin vows to pursue peace as Israelis reel from bus attack

By Naomi Segal

JERUSALEM (JTA) — Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin has vowed that the peace process with the Palestinians would continue despite this week's terrorist attack on a commuter bus on the outskirts of Tel Aviv.

Monday's attack, which killed five Israelis as well as the suicide bomber who detonated the blast, drew condemnation from world leaders, including top Arab officials.

Soon after the incident, Palestine Liberation Organization leader Yasser Arafat phoned Rabin to extend his condolences to the victims' families. Earlier in the Gaza Strip, Arafat had condemned the bombing, calling it a terrorist attack aimed at sabotaging the peace process.

King Hussein of Jordan also phoned Rabin to condemn the attack and extend his condolences, as did U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher.

President Clinton, in a written statement, said he joined "with all those working for peace in expressing our outrage and condemning in the strongest possible manner this brutal act."

The attack, the third suicide bus bombing inside Israel in nine months, came on the eve of a July 25 deadline Israel and the Palestinians had set for completing an agreement on expanding self-rule in the West Bank.

Rabin, who said the Israeli-Palestinian negotiations would continue after funerals were held for the victims, reaffirmed Israel's commitment to the peace process.

"A small Israeli-Palestinian team will determine the time and place for continuing the talks," he told reporters at the Knesset. "We must not let the murderers from the Islamic Jihad and Hamas achieve their goal."

The Israeli opposition, meanwhile, has called on the government to halt all negotiations immediately and to hold early elections.

In the Knesset, the opposition introduced five no-confidence motions against the government — all of which were defeated.

During the debate, Likud leader Benjamin Netanyahu blasted Rabin, asserting that the time had come to take action against terrorists, instead of rewarding the Palestinians with more concessions.

Protests and prayer vigils

President Ezer Weizman met with Rabin Monday night to discuss the situation.

Earlier, Weizman called on the leaders conducting negotiations to consider their actions carefully before deciding how to proceed.

"It can't go on like this," said Weizman, who in the past has urged the suspension of negotiations because of terror attacks.

The five Israelis killed in the attack were identified as Moshe Shkedi, 75, of Ramat Gan; Zahava Oren, 60, of Tel Aviv; Zvia Cohen, 62, of Ramat Hehayal; Rachel Tamari, 65, of Tel Aviv; and Nehama Lubovitch, 61, of Tel Aviv. The remains of a sixth person were believed to be those of the terrorist.

Of the 33 people wounded in the attack, 25 remained in the hospital on Monday night. Three were listed in critical condition. The majority of injuries were listed as moderate to light.

Protests and prayer vigils took place at several locations in Israel on Monday, including at the site of the attack, where the debris had been cleared away by Monday night and replaced by memorial candles lit by passers-by.

As of late Monday night, police were still unsure of the bomber's identity and the organization to which he belonged.

Shortly after the attack, an anonymous caller phoned news organizations, claiming responsibility in the name of the Hamas fundamentalist group.

But Israel Television reported that Israeli security sources discredited the caller's claim, saying the same person was known to have called after previous terror attacks.

A caller to Israel Radio's Arabic service said the attack was the work of Hamas member Yehiya Ayash, known as "the engineer," who is believed to have masterminded previous bomb attacks against Israelis.

The explosion took place at about 8:40 a.m. local time, as the Number 20 Dan bus was taking passengers from Ramat Gan to Dizengoff Street, in central Tel Aviv. As the bus approached the 40-story Diamond

Exchange in Ramat Gan, a huge explosion tore through it. Eyewitnesses said the blast thrust body limbs out of the bus and left singed bits of flesh inside.

"There was a huge explosion," one female witness told Army Radio.

"Hands flew in the air and heads flew from the windows of the bus. It was unbearable," she said.

Emergency medical teams and rescue crews arrived minutes after the blast and began clearing away the dead, treating the wounded and checking for any additional explosive devices.

Most of the wounded were evacuated to nearby Ichilov Hospital, where relatives anxiously searched lists of the wounded and gathered around television sets to watch reports broadcast live from the scene of the blast.

Throughout the day, hundreds of people responded to an appeal to donate blood.

Although hospital officials said they had enough supply to treat the wounded, they said national reserves were low during the summer months.

The force of the explosion shattered windows in buildings in the diamond district and caused extensive damage to the surrounding area.

Police said the bomber had probably gotten on the bus at a previous stop near the Ramat Gan Mall, where Arab laborers often wait to be picked up for work.

A huge hole in the center of the bus indicated where the suicide bomber had stood before detonating the device, police said.

They said the bomb was most likely a pipe packed with explosives weighing about 5 pounds — smaller than the devices used in the Jan. 22 terror attack near Netanya and the Oct. 19, 1994, bombing of a Tel Aviv bus. More than 20 people were killed in each of those attacks.

Immediately after Monday's blast, a total closure was imposed on the Gaza Strip and West Bank.

Police Minister Moshe Shahal said the closures would last indefinitely, preventing Palestinians from entering Israel.

In the wake of terror attacks during the past year, Israel has strictly limited the number of Palestinians it allowed to work inside Israel, drawing sharp protests from the PLO about the economic hardships to innocent Palestinian people caused by the closures.

Until Monday's attack, some 34,000 Palestinians were working in Israel, compared with more than 100,000 in past years.

Arriving at the scene to survey the situation, both Shahal and Rabin had to be protected from angry protesters shouting anti-government slogans.

The prime minister later said that he was shocked by the devastation and that he understood the hurt felt by Israelis.

Addressing the Labor Party caucus later in the day, Rabin rejected reports that the PLO had persuaded the fundamentalist groups Hamas and Islamic Jihad to call off attacks against Israelis until Arafat assumes control in the West Bank.

He said the relatively quiet and terror-free period during the past few months was due to Israeli security operations and to a crackdown by the Palestinian Authority on Islamic militants. □

Argentina will not sell nuclear reactor to Syria

By Naomi Segal

JERUSALEM (JTA) — Argentina's foreign minister has said his country will not go ahead with a deal to sell a small nuclear reactor to Syria if Israel objects.

Foreign Minister Guido di Tella, on a visit here

this week to meet with Israeli leaders, was asked to clarify his country's position in the wake of media reports that Syria had sought to purchase a reactor from Argentina.

Although the reactor would reportedly be used for medical research, di Tella told Israel Radio, "We will not do anything that will compromise in the eyes of the main actors, the peace process and the peace in this part of the world."

"We haven't signed anything, we haven't committed ourselves to anything, so I am a bit surprised the Israeli press speaks about negotiations that are going on," he added.

Di Tella, speaking about his country's ongoing investigation of the bombing of the Jewish community headquarters in Buenos Aires on July 18, 1994, said the hunt for suspects would continue.

"There is no intention whatsoever of interrupting" the investigation, he said.

But he cautioned against building too much hope on every new development.

On Sunday, Paraguay extradited to Argentina five Lebanese men and a Brazilian man and woman in connection with the bombing.

The seven were wanted in connection with a separate investigation into illegal stocks of weapons found near Buenos Aires in April 1994.

They were also suspected of links to the March 1992 bombing of the Israeli Embassy in Buenos Aires. That attack claimed the lives of 29 people and wounded more than 100.

Argentine officials hope that the seven will shed new light on the ongoing investigation into the bomb attack on the Jewish headquarters last year.

The Argentine government has come under sharp criticism for its handling of the investigation into the bombing, which killed 86 people and left at least 300 wounded.

One year after the bomb was detonated, the Argentine government's investigation has yielded only four arrests and no conclusive explanation of the bombing. □

Infant at army base leads IDF to weigh paternity leave policy

By Michele Chabin

JERUSALEM (JTA) — The Israel Defense Force is examining the issue of paternity leave after a reserve officer showed up at his army base with his 4-month-old son.

Ariel Cohen had tried unsuccessfully to get an exemption for his reserve duty before reporting to the army base, according to news reports.

Cohen had taken a year's leave of absence from his job to care for his son, Avshalom, while his wife, a lawyer, worked outside the home.

When Cohen, a reserve captain, joined his unit this week with Avshalom in tow, the army gave him an immediate exemption.

The case, which has received a great deal of media coverage here, has focused new attention on the army's policy toward new fathers.

"The army has no regulations regarding new fathers," an IDF spokesman said in an interview. "Until now, every case has been handled on its own merits."

The spokesman added that "hundreds of thousands of soldiers receive exemptions from reserve duty every year, and Mr. Cohen was no exception."

He acknowledged that because of the publicity, "the IDF will look into the problem."

Paternal exemptions "were never an issue before, since no one had made them an issue," he added. □

Plight of Bosnian Muslims compared to persecution of Jews

JTA Staff Report

NEW YORK (JTA) — In one of the starkest outcries against the current carnage in Bosnia, a Jewish official in Germany has compared the persecution of Muslims in Bosnia to that of Jews in Nazi Germany.

"The expulsion terror practices in Bosnia today is quite comparable to what happened from the beginning of the Third Reich to the outbreak of the war," Ignatz Bubis, chairman of the central council of Jews in Germany, told German radio last week.

Bubis said he could not understand why the United Nations and NATO have not learned the lessons that came from appeasing the Nazis prior to the outbreak of World War II.

In the interview, Bubis said he supported Western military intervention on behalf of the Bosnian Muslims, who, after a three-year-old war, are under increasing attack by the rebel Bosnian Serb forces.

However, Bubis limited his comparison of the Bosnian plight to the plight of the Jews prior to the "systematic annihilation of the Jewish people."

Similar outcries have echoed throughout the Jewish world over the past week, as Bosnian Serb forces have heightened their assault against the U.N. "safe havens" in Bosnia.

Bosnian Serbs captured Srebrenica, one of the U.N. "safe havens" last week. They have also stepped up attacks on others, including the Bosnian capital of Sarajevo.

The takeover of Srebrenica has also set off a new round of emergency aid shipments by Jewish organizations.

Sixty tons of supplies held up

Last week, the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee set into motion an emergency shipment of food, medicine and clothing for tens of thousands of refugees from Srebrenica.

The shipment from Split, Croatia, set out Monday and is expected to reach Tuzla — where many of the refugees from Srebrenica are located — with minor difficulties because it will have not have to encounter Bosnian Serb checkpoints, said Yechiel Bar-Chaim, the Joint's country director for the former Yugoslavia.

A total of 60 tons of supplies destined for the besieged capital of Sarajevo are being held up by Bosnian Serbs 10 miles outside the city, Bar-Chaim said in a telephone interview from Split.

The Joint is working in conjunction with La Benevolencija, the humanitarian aid society of the Sarajevo Jewish community, and World Jewish Relief, the British humanitarian organization.

As a group, the Jews in Bosnia have not taken sides in the war. This allows them to carry out their humanitarian missions.

In Britain, a newly created coalition of Jewish organizations launched what has been described as an unprecedented emergency appeal for Bosnian war victims.

Britain's chief rabbi, Jonathan Sacks, said, "There is a moral imperative for Jews everywhere to intervene in the face of racism and xenophobia."

At the same time, however, the Jewish Board of Deputies, British Jewry's umbrella organization, was considering toning down a statement on the situation for fear of creating a backlash against Jews in Serbia.

"There is a feeling that anything said by Jews outside is liable to misinterpretation by anti-Semitic factions," said Neville Nagler, chief executive of the board.

In the Middle East, Israel and Jordan joined forces to coordinate a humanitarian aid effort for Muslim refugees in Bosnia.

Under a joint operation called "Peace in the Middle East — Peace in the World," two planes, one Israeli and one Jordanian, are scheduled to fly to Bosnia this week to bring medical supplies, clothing, blankets and other aid to the war victims.

Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin last week called Jordan Television during a telethon to raise money for the Bosnian Muslims. He made a personal pledge of \$3,000.

Rabin told the television audience that he condemned the attacks by the rebel Serbs on the Muslims in Bosnia, adding that Israel opposes all assaults on people based on their religion, be they "Jewish, Muslim or Christian."

Back in the United States, leaders of the organized Jewish community, though silent for many months, are again raising their voices against the escalating war in Bosnia.

The National Jewish Community Relations Advisory Council said it was outraged at the deterioration of the situation in Bosnia.

"We deplore the United States' failure to provide effective international leadership while millions of people have been forced to flee their homes and hundreds of thousands have been killed because of their ethnicity or religion," said Lynn Lyss, the umbrella group's chair, in a statement earlier this month.

Both NJCRAC and the American Jewish Congress called on President Clinton and Congress to end the arms embargo on Bosnia.

In a letter to Clinton, David Kahn, the AJCongress president, and Phil Baum, its executive director, wrote: "It is time for our leaders to recognize the clear failure of the present policies, and at long last allow the Bosnian government to defend its citizens from further aggression and put a stop to the genocide."

The Los Angeles-based Simon Wiesenthal Center has also written to the president, urging him to commit to prosecuting the Serbian leaders who are responsible for the current policy of ethnic cleansing in Bosnia.

Failure to prosecute "will make a mockery of the legacy set down 50 years ago at Nuremberg that such crimes must not go unpunished," the letter said.

The letter was reproduced in a full-page ad in last Friday's New York Times.

'Barbaric acts' against Muslims

An earlier communication from Simon Wiesenthal, the famed Nazi hunter, to Clinton identified Bosnian Serb President Radovan Karadzic and Ratko Mladic, army commander, as those mainly responsible for the atrocities.

U.N. human rights envoy Tadeusz Mazowiecki said Monday that Bosnian Serbs had engaged in "barbaric acts" against Muslims after capturing the "safe haven" Srebrenica.

Mazowiecki said the Serbs had forbidden his group access to areas where thousands of Muslim males are believed to be held, but that there is considerable evidence of human rights abuses on the part of the rebel Serbs.

"What requires investigation is the scale and dimension, but we can say barbaric acts have been committed," he said.

Dutch U.N. peacekeeping troops, who were in Srebrenica when the Serbs overtook it earlier this month, have said they witnessed Serb soldiers executing and mutilating Muslims. □

(JTA correspondents Gil Sedan in Bonn and Simon Rocker in London and JTA intern Avi Stieglitz contributed to this report.)

Alleged Nazi released on bail; Britain investigating 14 others

By Bernard Josephs

London Jewish Chronicle

LONDON (JTA) — The first man to face war crimes charges here since Parliament passed the War Crimes Act in 1991 has been released on bail.

Szymon Serafimowicz, 84, is accused of murdering four Jews between 1941 and 1942 in Nazi-occupied Byelorussia, now an independent nation known as Belarus. Serafimowicz, a retired builder and carpenter who lives in Surrey, came to Britain in 1947 and became a citizen.

At his hearing last week, he made no plea to any of the charges. After the hearing, his solicitor, Nicholas Bowers, said, "Our client is completely innocent of these charges and a full and vigorous defense will be prepared."

The defendant was released on bail on the condition that he does not leave the country or apply for travel documents. He is due to appear in court again Oct. 5.

Meanwhile, Scotland Yard said last week that at least 14 investigations of alleged Nazi war criminals living in Britain are under way. The Metropolitan Police war crimes unit is handling the investigations, a police spokesman said.

According to news reports, one of the 14 suspects is a former SS guard who was stationed at the Mauthausen concentration camp in Austria. □

British animal rights group blasts Jewish ritual slaughter

By Bernard Josephs and Hadas Altwarg

London Jewish Chronicle

LONDON (JTA) — An attack on Jewish ritual slaughter by Britain's leading animal welfare organization has led to a confrontation with the Jewish community.

In a 22-page booklet on farm animal welfare, the Royal Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals described shechitah, the kosher method of slaughter — as well as halal, the Islamic code of animal slaughter — as painful and distressing to animals.

"It is a fundamental right of religious groups to practice their beliefs without hindrance," the booklet stated. "But where those beliefs are directly responsible for animal suffering, that right has to be challenged."

"Surely it is not unreasonable to suggest that, in the light of new scientific knowledge and society's more caring attitudes to animals, religious traditions might be changed," it added.

The booklet elicited condemnations from the Jewish Board of Deputies, the umbrella group representing secular Jewish organizations, and from the Federation of Synagogues and the London Shechitah Board.

A Board of Deputies official this week accused the animal rights group of "attacking religious rights" in the booklet, which has been sent to the group's branches and to its school liaison officers.

Board of Deputies President Eldred Tabachnik called for an early meeting with the animal welfare group.

"We will defend the religious and civil rights of our community, including the right to practice shechitah. Of course, we are right to be concerned over any manifestation of cruelty to animals. But there is no convincing scientific evidence that bears out the claim that shechitah is cruel," Tabachnik said.

The head of the group's farm animals department, Martin Potter, said his organization did not want a confrontation with the Jewish community. "We want a constructive dialogue, and I am sad to think that the views in our booklet — which deals only briefly with religious methods

of slaughter — are seen as a threat," Potter said. He added that the animal rights group wanted a "modification" of shechitah, in which the animal could first be stunned.

He noted that portions of the local Islamic community had already agreed to this suggestion. □

Fiercely anti-Israel group to rally in Trafalgar Square

By Bernard Josephs

London Jewish Chronicle

LONDON (JTA) — Thousands of people are expected to take part in a rally in the heart of London next month that is being organized by the fiercely anti-Israel Islamic group Hizb ut-Tahrir.

The gathering is expected to be the biggest event staged by the fundamentalist organization since 8,000 people attended a similar event here last year.

Western society and values will be attacked at the rally, which will be held in Trafalgar Square, according to advance publicity for the event.

Hizb ut-Tahrir, whose literature has called for the killing of Jews and has also sharply attacked Hindus and homosexuals, said the rally would "shake the very foundations of Western civilization."

Leaflets, pasted on walls in several parts of London, described freedom and democracy as "intellectual diseases" that were "evil, insidious and spiritless."

The rally, to be held Aug. 13, would also provide a chance for "non-Muslims to embrace Islam," the leaflets added. Among the speakers scheduled to appear is Omar Bakri Mohammed, leader of the organization's British branch.

Hizb ut-Tahrir has drawn sharp criticism from most mainstream British Muslim groups.

It has been banned in several Arab countries.

A spokesman for the Jewish Board of Deputies, the umbrella organization of British Jewish groups, said the organization intended to consult with police officials before the rally is held. □

Japanese terrorist sect no stranger to anti-Semitism

By Alissa Kaplan

NEW YORK (JTA) — The Japanese terrorist sect Aum Supreme Truth, responsible for the deadly sarin nerve gas attack in a Tokyo subway in March, is also involved in promoting anti-Semitic themes in Japan.

An article, titled "A Guide to Fear: The Jewish Aspiration — Total World Conquest," appeared in one of the sect's publications in early 1995, according to The AntiSemitism Monitoring Forum.

The article claims that Jews took advantage of Japan's devastation in World War II in order to promote their interests and the final aim of universal control, said the forum, an interministerial committee of the Israeli government that gathers information on anti-Semitism and cooperates with organizations and Jewish communities around the world.

In the article, Aum also claims that the United States is controlled by Jewish capital, which serves the aims of the secretive Freemasons.

Anti-Semitic writers often point to the Freemasons, asserting that they are an international Jewish group that conspires to control the world.

The Aum piece purports that the Freemasons use the United Nations as a tool to achieve universal control, which means that the Japanese ambassador to the United Nations is a puppet of the Jews. Other Japanese leaders are described as puppets in the article as well. □