

NEWS AT A GLANCE

■ Israeli security forces arrested two members of the Hamas fundamentalist movement suspected of involvement in Monday's suicide bomb attack in Jerusalem and in the July 24 suicide bus bombing in Ramat Gan. The arrests came as Joan Davenny, the American teacher killed in Monday's attack, was buried in Jerusalem. [Page 3]

■ Israel lifted the closure it imposed on the Gaza Strip after Monday's bus bombing in Jerusalem. But Israel kept in place the closure on the West Bank as Israeli security officials said they expect Hamas to attempt more suicide attacks. [Page 3]

■ An Argentine appeals court overturned an extradition order against accused Nazi war criminal Erich Priebke. An Argentine public prosecutor said he would appeal the court's decision on Priebke, who is wanted in Italy for his role in the 1944 killings of 335 Italian civilians.

■ U.S. Middle East peace envoy Dennis Ross joined Israeli and Palestinian negotiators in an effort to hammer out the final details of an interim self-rule accord. [Page 3]

■ Israeli officials launched plans to close down Orient House, the Palestine Liberation Organization's de facto headquarters in eastern Jerusalem. Police Minister Moshe Shahal said he plans to issue warrants to close down all Palestinian institutions operating in eastern Jerusalem suspected of illegal ties with the Palestinian Authority. [Page 4]

■ An Israeli road construction worker was shot and wounded in the West Bank town of Jenin by Arab gunmen who later fled with the victim's revolver. The victim, an Israeli Druse, was working on a bypass road for Jewish settlements near Jenin.

■ Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak called on Israel to hold trials for former Israeli soldiers allegedly responsible for killing Egyptian POWs during the Sinai Campaign of 1956 and the 1967 Six-Day War.

BEHIND THE HEADLINES**As Jews grapple with Bosnia, vows of 'never again' echo loudly**

By Matthew Dorf

WASHINGTON (JTA) — As war began to engulf the former Yugoslavia four years ago and reports of atrocities assaulted the senses, American Jews began to wonder whether they were betraying the sacred vow of 'never again.'

"Why have we betrayed a solemn promise — 'never again' — that was forged out of the ashes and pain of the Holocaust?" said Henry Siegman, then-executive director of the American Jewish Congress.

"The people who have betrayed that promise have faces and names, as the victims do," Siegman said during Chanukah 1992 at the first major Jewish rally protesting atrocities in the former Yugoslavia. "They are our own leaders, those in Europe and, finally, they are us."

Siegman had joined a dozen Jewish activists on a rainsoaked lawn in freezing temperatures for the rally across from the U.S. Memorial Holocaust Museum, which was still under construction at the time.

Since then, American Jews have been among the loudest critics of the atrocities in the former Yugoslavia and among the strongest advocates of U.S. action to end the conflict.

Now, as the 4-year-old war stands at a crossroads between the possibility of peace and the threat of a wider conflict, frustration over the carnage continues.

As Yugoslavia began to crumble in 1991 and Croatia declared independence, Serbian and Croatian forces engaged in fierce battles. Within a year, the fighting had spread to Bosnia, where Bosnian Serbs, initially aided by Serbia, rebelled against the newly independent, predominantly Muslim Bosnian government.

Amid endless reports of mass murders, rape and ethnic cleansing, Jewish groups lobbied the White House, met regularly with Bosnian leaders, sent news releases, formed coalitions and staged rallies and protests against the atrocities.

'Always more that can be done'

But many of the same questions that plagued American Jews continue today:

Should Jews have been more forceful in calling for military intervention during the early stages of the war? Should there have been major civil disobedience protests? Should Jews take into account the history of the warring parties' collaboration with the Nazis during World War II?

Could the Jewish community have done more? Should the Jewish community have done more?

"I don't know of any situation where I can say that we've done all that we can," said Martin Raffel, associate executive vice chairman of the National Jewish Community Relations Advisory Council, an umbrella Jewish group.

"Presumably there's always something more that can be done," he said. "Should we have been chaining ourselves to the White House fence? Marching? Taking out more ads? I don't know."

The NJCRAC has been among the more vocal Jewish organizations protesting the atrocities in Bosnia and calling for a lifting of the arms embargo and use of limited air strikes.

Although Jews grappled with the moral and political dilemmas involved with their approach to the war in Bosnia, there was also a deep sense of pride over the Jewish community's role in successfully sustaining a major nonsectarian humanitarian relief effort for refugees struggling to survive in Bosnia.

As recently as this week, the Bosnian Jewish relief organization La Benevolencija, which is heavily supported by the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee, managed to get a truckload of supplies to Sarajevo. It was the latest in a succession of relief supplies distributed to Jews and non-Jews in the region during the war.

But most of the focus was on the political role of American Jews here. Dissatisfied with the level of activism by the organized Jewish

community, some rabbinical students in Philadelphia started their own group, Jews Against Genocide in Bosnia.

"I'm proud of what the Jewish community has done, but clearly it's not enough," said Joyce Galaski, chairwoman of the activist group and a third-year student at the Reconstructionist Rabbinical College in Wyncote, Pa.

"We could raise our voices a lot louder than we have, more often and more insistently. This is such a desperate situation."

As the Jewish community continues to struggle with the questions of what can be done and what could have been done differently, the course of the war appears to have shifted yet again.

In recent weeks, Croatian forces soundly defeated Serbs in the arena where fighting first broke out in 1991.

Western diplomats hope to capitalize on these developments to bring the warring parties back to the negotiating table.

As fighting continues in Bosnia and Croatia and a widening of the war is seen as the major alternative to peace talks, there is a new sense of urgency to broker a division of territory between the Serbs, Croats and Bosnians.

For Jewish activists, horrific images of starving Bosnian Muslims rounded up in internment camps spurred the 1992 rally at the Holocaust museum.

Reminiscent of images of Nazi concentration camps, photos of virtually naked near-skeletons behind barbed wire awakened the world to the plight of the Muslims in Bosnia.

These images and calls to action were reinforced during recent months as the world remembered the 50th anniversary of Allied forces liberating Jews from the concentration camps.

War crimes indictments

The shock and horror of the world ultimately led to the Nuremberg trials of the Nazi captors and their leaders.

And now for the first time since World War II, a U.N. war crimes tribunal has been established.

Although it is still unclear what its impact will be, the Yugoslav War Crimes Tribunal last month indicted Bosnian Serb political leader Radovan Karadzic and his top general, Ratko Mladic, accusing them of war crimes.

As reports of catastrophic human rights violations mount, so does the frustration among Jews, who, as a people, collectively share the unique history of the Holocaust.

"Relatives and survivors of the most horrible atrocities in the history of man must express our horror," said Hyman Bookbinder, a longtime Jewish activist.

"Any persecution, ethnic cleansing, any atrocity should shock every human being, but ever more so, a Jewish person," Itamar Rabinovich, Israel's ambassador to the United States, said in a recent interview.

Outraged by the killings and atrocities, most Jewish groups have called on the United States to lift unilaterally the arms embargo on Bosnia.

Their call long preceded any congressional action on the issue.

But difficulties in persuading U.S. government officials to pursue a different course has left many Jewish activists wondering how to proceed.

"History will not forgive this generation," Leonard Fein wrote in a recent column in the Forward newspaper. "Our children watching the documentaries will ask where we were, what we could have been thinking as we will frown and mumble a shoddy alibi and be sick to our stomachs."

Jewish efforts have been complicated by a number

of factors, including concern for the Jews living in the region.

Last spring, the president of the Sarajevo Jewish community appealed to American Jews to tone down their appeal for lifting the arms embargo, according to officials in the Jewish community.

The Jewish community in Sarajevo, numbering about 600, feared that if the American Jewish community was seen as leading the charge, there would be reprisals against the Jews in Bosnia, who have maintained their neutrality throughout the conflict.

They also feared repercussions on their successful humanitarian assistance program, which provides more than 300 meals per day to Sarajevo residents and operates two pharmacies.

It is such concerns that prompt Jewish officials here to at least publicly emphasize their neutrality.

"We don't have an investment in either side in the war," said Phil Baum, executive director of the American Jewish Congress.

"Our investment is in stopping the atrocities and the horror."

Another source of frustration was the timing of the war. With the outbreak of this Bosnia war coming so soon after the Persian Gulf War, when the Jewish community was seen as particularly supportive of U.S. military intervention, some Jewish activists expressed concern that the Jews not be too vocal in calling for military action without other coalition partners.

Historical memories linger

Numerous attempts to reach out to other religious communities failed, except in the case of some local Muslim organizations, adding another layer of general frustration.

"There was private tension in the Christian community about military intervention" at the outset of the war, said Rabbi James Rudin of the American Jewish Committee. "It is still there."

American Jewish efforts have further been complicated by knowledge of the Jewish experience in the region during World War II.

Many in the Jewish community have struggled to get beyond that history. But others, including many Holocaust survivors, have no sympathy for Bosnian Muslims, many of whom cooperated with the Nazis during World War II, or for Croatia, which set up a Nazi puppet regime known as the Ustashe during World War II and whose current president, Franjo Tudjman, has been criticized for anti-Semitic writings.

In contrast, the Serbs, who have widely been seen as the aggressors in the current war, fought against the Nazis during World War II.

An estimated 60,000 Jews perished in the former Yugoslavia during the Holocaust, most of whom were victims of Nazi collaborators in Bosnia and Croatia.

But for Miles Lerman, a Holocaust survivor who chairs the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Council, the past, while not to be forgotten, should not deter Jewish activism today.

At a recent ecumenical prayer service at the Holocaust museum, designed to call attention to the carnage in Bosnia, Lerman reproached Bosnia-Herzegovina's ambassador to the United States for his nation's failure to admit to the Bosnian history of collaborating with the Nazis during the World War II.

At the same time, however, he told the gathering: "Fifty years ago we watched with anguish" as the "world stood by and did nothing to stop atrocities."

"Today as we watch the carnage in the former Yugoslavia," he said, "we cannot remain silent." □

**Israel nabs Hamas activists
suspected of planning attacks***By Naomi Segal*

JERUSALEM (JTA) — Israel's domestic intelligence service has arrested two senior Hamas operatives suspected of planning the two most recent suicide bombings in Israel.

The two suspects, who were arrested by Shin Bet agents who infiltrated a Hamas cell in the West Bank, were suspected of having recruited the suicide bombers who carried out Monday's attack aboard a bus in Jerusalem and the July 24 suicide bus bombing in Ramat Gan.

The two were identified as A-Nasser Issa and Hatam Ismail, both from the Gaza Strip.

In addition to making the arrests, the Shin Bet also identified the suicide bombers in the two most recent attacks as Palestinians from the West Bank.

The arrests came as Israeli and Palestinian negotiators continued their talks in Eilat in an effort to complete the interim agreement that would extend Palestinian self-rule in the West Bank. The man who carried out Monday's bombing in Jerusalem was identified as Sufiyan Salam a-Rabbo Sabiah, 26, from the Hebron area. Five people, including the bomber, were killed in the attack, which also left more than 100 wounded.

The three identified victims of Monday's attack were Rivka Cohen, 26, a student volunteer at Hadassah Hospital; Noam Eisenman, 35, a police officer; and Joan Davenny, 47, an American teacher at a Woodbridge, Conn., Jewish day school who was spending the year in Israel. Davenny was buried in Jerusalem on Wednesday at a funeral attended by some 200 relatives and friends.

Among those at the funeral was U.S. Ambassador to Israel Martin Indyk.

Other terrorist attacks

The two other bodies recovered from Monday's blast remained unidentified Wednesday.

Forensic experts were investigating the possibility that one of the bodies, a woman estimated to be in her late 30s, was a German tourist. The other body was believed to be that of the bomber.

The suicide bomber who carried out the Ramat Gan attack — in which six Israelis were killed and 32 others wounded — was identified as Labib Anwar Fariz Azam, 22, from the Nablus area.

The head of the Shin Bet said Wednesday that after breaking up the Hamas cell they had infiltrated, security agents learned that the cell's members had plans to carry out car bombings, kidnappings of Israeli soldiers and other attacks to demand the release of jailed Hamas members. The Shin Bet head said the arrests had been made over the weekend and that the details of the cell's plans came out Tuesday as a result of interrogations of the arrested Hamas members.

The interrogations, he said, were carried out according to guidelines he had issued after consulting with legal officials. In addition, he said, the Shin Bet had discovered a bombmaking factory in Nablus and had arrested some 30 people connected to it.

According to information released Wednesday, the two Hamas operatives who were arrested had links to Hamas fugitive Yehiya Ayash. Known as "the engineer" for his bombmaking expertise, Ayash is believed to have masterminded several suicide attacks against Israelis.

After being trained by Ayash in explosives, the arrested Hamas members, Issa and Ismail, moved from Gaza to the West Bank with forged documents and began planning the attacks and recruiting the bombers.

Palestinian security forces in Gaza were reportedly

continuing their hunt for Ayash, who was believed to be hiding out there.

Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin, speaking about the arrests during a tour of the Golan Heights on Wednesday, did not discount the possibility that the bombers had received their marching orders from Damascus.

"The inspiration might have come from the outside," Rabin said, but he stressed that the actual planning and execution of the attacks originated in the West Bank. "The explosives were prepared there and the people who carried them were from there," he said.

Wednesday's revelations came amid newspaper reports of intense intelligence efforts to foil another Hamas attack. Israeli newspapers reported that Israeli intelligence sources were warning that Muslim extremists were planning more suicide attacks in the coming weeks, as Israeli and Palestinian negotiators hammer out a final agreement for expanding Palestinian self-rule in the West Bank.

Responding to the reports, Environment Minister Yossi Sarid said the chances of another suicide attack were no greater than at other times. "There is nothing new in the last days," he said. "We have to be on watch, on guard, all the time. We are trying to do our best in order to avoid such unfortunate and very tragic events."

The opposition Likud Party welcomed the Shin Bet arrests, but called them further proof that the government's peace policy has failed. The Likud said in a statement that the fact that the people who planned the attacks were trained in Gaza — within the boundaries of Palestine Liberation Organization leader Yasser Arafat's self-rule authority — proved that the government policy was hopeless.

Meanwhile, opposition members and other right-wing activists, including reserve army generals, rabbis, municipal leaders and families who lost members to terror, began a hunger strike Wednesday opposite the Prime Minister's Office in Jerusalem to protest the government's peace policy. They planned to demonstrate until the end of the seven-day mourning period for the victims killed in Monday's Jerusalem bus bombing.

Hunger strike is 'ridiculous'

The strikers said they were calling on the government to do three things: fight terror, halt and reassess the peace process and bring the interim self-rule agreement before the Israeli public for a national referendum.

"This government has brought us back maybe to the most dangerous situation since the War of Independence in 1948," said Likud Knesset member Ariel Sharon.

Ran Cohen, leader of the dovish Meretz faction, called the hunger strike ridiculous, particularly in light of the latest Shin Bet operation.

In Gaza, meanwhile, several thousand Palestinian workers returned to jobs in Israel after Israel lifted the closure it had imposed after Monday's attack. But the closure on the West Bank remained in effect, amid the intelligence reports of possible future attacks.

At the Israeli-Palestinian talks in Eilat, U.S. Middle East peace envoy Dennis Ross joined the process, where he held separate and joint discussions with the heads of the two delegations, Israel Radio reported. He joined the talks as part of a U.S. effort to reach an agreement quickly.

At the same time, U.S. diplomatic sources were quoted as defending the decision to hold a signing ceremony in Washington next month. Their statements came after reports in Israel said some members of the Labor Party were concerned that an over-hyped "celebration" was being planned. The U.S. sources were quoted by Israel Radio as saying that one reason the United States was pushing for a White House signing was to underscore the continuing American support for the peace process. □

IDF chief: Iraq poses no nuclear threat to Israel*By Naomi Segal*

JERUSALEM (JTA) — The Israel Defense Force chief of staff has been quoted as telling a Knesset committee that Iraq has no nuclear or chemical weapons to use against the State of Israel.

Lt. Gen. Amnon Shahak also told the committee that Iraq probably had no Scud missiles and "a very select few" missile launchers, according to an official at the hearing.

Shahak was also quoted as saying that without a threat from Iraq, Israel would not have an "eastern front."

His remarks came in the wake of an interview broadcast on Israel Television last week in which a member of the Iraqi opposition said Iraqi leader Saddam Hussein had 37 Scud missiles remaining in his arsenal.

Should Hussein's regime collapse, his parting shot would be to load the missiles with chemical and germ warheads and launch them at Israel, the Iraqi official said.

Shahak also reportedly said Israel looks forward to gaining information about Iraq's nonconventional weapons program in the wake of the Aug. 10 defections to Jordan of two high-ranking members of Hussein's regime, both of whom are Hussein's sons-in-law.

One of the defectors, Lt. Gen. Hussein Kamel Hassan, was the head of Iraq's weapons programs. He was responsible for the development of Iraq's arms industry, particularly chemical and biological weapons, in the run-up to the 1991 Persian Gulf War.

Shahak's assessments came as U.N. weapons inspector Rolf Ekeus held a four-hour meeting in Amman on Tuesday with Hassan.

Ekeus was attempting to verify what he had described as significant new information about Iraq's weapons program he had received during a visit to Baghdad earlier in the week.

Israel Radio reported that after meeting with Hassan, Ekeus had decided to meet with him again and that he was expected to remain in the Jordanian capital until Thursday.

Ekeus heads the U.N. special commission in charge of disarming Iraq under the terms of the 1991 Gulf War cease-fire agreement.

Speculation on collapse

During his appearance before the Knesset committee, Shahak praised the efforts of Ekeus' U.N. inspection team.

After the defections earlier this month, there was much speculation that Hussein's regime was on the verge of collapse.

The Pentagon said Tuesday that Iraq was continuing a pattern of unusual troop movements, but that the United States did not believe that Iraq was on the verge of invading any of its neighbors.

Responding to those movements, the Pentagon launched an operation it termed "Vigilant Sentinel."

The operation included sending troops and warships closer to the Persian Gulf, joint military operations with Jordanian forces and plans to hold a military exercise in Kuwait later this month.

Israeli security sources were quoted in the Israeli daily Ma'ariv as saying that the American show of force would provide an adequate deterrent to any aggressive steps Saddam Hussein might consider taking.

The sources added that Hussein's regime is not about to collapse. They also said the Iraqi leader was not about to launch an attack on Jordan or Kuwait, and that he was far from taking any final, desperate measures. □

Israel to close Orient House, other eastern Jerusalem sites*By Naomi Segal*

JERUSALEM (JTA) — Israel has decided to adopt measures to bring to an end what it describes as illegal Palestine Liberation Organization activities in Jerusalem.

The measures will include closing down Orient House, the de facto Palestinian headquarters in eastern Jerusalem.

The decision was made at a meeting Wednesday of members of the Ministerial Committee on Jerusalem — which includes Police Minister Moshe Shahal and Justice Minister David Libai — who conferred with security and legal advisers and with Jerusalem Mayor Ehud Olmert. The group agreed to meet again to plan a line of action.

Shahal said he plans to issue warrants in the near future to close down Palestinian institutions operating in eastern Jerusalem that are suspected of having illegal ties with the Palestinian Authority.

The Israeli daily Ha'aretz reported Wednesday that intelligence sources had recommended removing from Jerusalem the Waqf Islamic Trust, which administers the Temple Mount complex in Jerusalem and other Islamic holy sites. The paper reported that the measures were aimed at preventing the establishment of a shadow Palestinian municipality in eastern Jerusalem.

The report said that in recent months, the Palestinian Authority has had a deepening influence in eastern Jerusalem. One example given in the report was the sphere of education, where the education department of the Palestinian self-rule government was controlling the curriculum of 50 percent of the students in private schools in eastern Jerusalem, a role previously held by Jordan. □

Israeli minister expects fewer American tourists*By Naomi Segal*

JERUSALEM (JTA) — The Israeli Tourism Ministry expects fewer tourists from North America after an American was killed in a terrorist bombing of a bus here Monday.

"It's very sad, but we can overcome it," Tourism Minister Uzi Baram told Israel Radio, adding, "I have no actual figures. I can predict that less tourists will come, but our plan is to bring 2.5 million Jews to Israel" as tourists.

Among the five people killed in the attack was Joan Davenny, a teacher at a Jewish school in Woodbridge, Conn., who was spending the year in Israel on a special program for Jewish educators.

Baram said the Tourism Ministry had launched an aggressive advertising campaign in the United States after American student Alisa Flatow was killed in an April 9 bus explosion in the Gaza Strip that also claimed the lives of seven Israeli soldiers.

Those wounded in Monday's bombing included a number of foreign students. Many of them were on their way to The Hebrew University's Mount Scopus campus for Hebrew language classes.

Avraham Burg, head of the Jewish Agency for Israel, said 18 new immigrants studying in the agency's absorption program were among the injured.

Burg said many of the young people had just moved to Israel and are in the process of becoming Israelis. They included students from the United States, the former Soviet Union, France and Switzerland, Burg said.

"Without mentioning any names, a few of the more seriously injured were these students," Burg told Israel Radio. "There was one guy who is suffering from back and lower body problems." □