

NEWS AT A GLANCE

■ **Matthew Eisenfeld and Sara Duker were remembered at a prayer service at the Jewish Theological Seminary, where he was a rabbinical student and she led High Holiday services last year. The two, both killed in Sunday's suicide bombing attack in Jerusalem, will be buried together in Connecticut.**

■ **Israel said the closure imposed on the Gaza Strip and West Bank immediately after the twin suicide bombing attacks would continue for a long period. "I don't think it is our duty to be concerned about the jobs of Palestinians," Internal Security Minister Moshe Shahal told Israel Radio. "Our obligation is only to the security of our citizens."**

■ **Prime Minister Shimon Peres called on Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat to disarm all Palestinian terrorists. "There is no value to the majority which the PLO won" in the Jan. 20 Palestinian Council elections in the West Bank and Gaza Strip "if a minority of armed persons can undermine its authority," Peres said in an impassioned speech before the Knesset.**

■ **An unrepentant Louis Farrakhan, the leader of the Nation of Islam, said he was not cavorting with dictators when he visited Iraq and Libya on his recent 18-nation tour of Africa and the Middle East. Farrakhan, who was called to appear before a congressional subcommittee that will investigate his activities, said in a Chicago speech that he is ready for "a showdown."**

■ **Russian ultranationalist Vladimir Zhirinovskiy lashed out at Pat Buchanan, accusing the GOP presidential hopeful of rebuking his overtures because of Jewish pressures. Meanwhile, Zhirinovskiy's spokesman maintained that his boss does not espouse anti-Semitism. [Page 4]**

■ **A car driven by an Arab American crashed into a shelter at a Jerusalem bus stop, killing one person and injuring 22. Israeli police officials said an investigation showed that the driver, who was shot dead by civilians at the stop, had lost control of the car and that the incident was an accident. [Page 2]**

ON THE ELECTION TRAIL**Jewish backers tout Dole as the 'man of the moment'**

By Cynthia Mann

NEW YORK (JTA) — When Bob Dole made his first run for the Senate in 1968, Esther Levens and her husband, Vrem, hosted 500 people in their back yard in Johnson County, Kan., so people could get a close look at him.

"He was a congressman from western Kansas and no one knew whether he was a Democrat or a Republican," Levens said.

She and her husband, who is now dead, formed a close friendship with the former congressman, who is now the 72-year-old Senate majority leader and major contender for the Republican presidential nomination.

Over the years, they grew to admire what she described as Dole's "brilliance," his "strong legislative skills" and "his loyalty to causes and to people."

"He is as honorable and decent a man as you can find," she added.

Levens, the president of a group called Voices United for Israel and now a national activist for Dole's presidential campaign, acknowledges that she has some differences with Dole on domestic policy issues, such as abortion, but she has made peace with those differences.

"I'm pro-choice, but I don't think I can agree with a candidate on every issue," she said. "You have to establish priorities, and my priority is Israel."

In her political calculations, Levens is somewhat typical among Jewish Republicans.

Although President Clinton is expected to garner as much as 85 percent of the American Jewish vote come November — Jews traditionally embrace the Democrats — Jewish support in the Dole campaign is significant.

Five of Dole's 15 national campaign co-chairmen are Jewish. In addition, Dole is expected to win the overwhelming majority of the Jewish GOP vote throughout the primary season.

Jewish supporters describe their man as a steady, proven leader with a character shaped by an early struggle with poverty, a heroic fight against Nazi tyranny and a devastating war injury that taught him compassion for and dedication to those with disabilities.

They say he is a longtime friend of Israel, advocate for Soviet Jewry and supporter of foreign aid. They also point to his recent sponsorship of the congressional initiative to move the U.S. Embassy in Israel to Jerusalem.

But his record, say critics, is far from stellar.

Dole supporters claim 'extenuating circumstances'

Even his supporters acknowledge that he called for cuts in aid to Israel in 1990 and has lashed out at times at Israel and the pro-Israel lobby. Dole opposed the recognition of Jerusalem as Israel's capital as recently as 1990.

But supporters of the veteran senator contend that those positions involved "extenuating circumstances" that should not cloud Dole's overall record. "Dole has a 30-year relationship with Israel, longer than any other candidate, including the president," said A. Mark Neuman, an active Dole supporter who was an associate director of political affairs in the Reagan White House.

"He has voted for aid to Israel" countless times "as a member from the state of Kansas, which doesn't exactly have a big foreign aid constituency," said Neuman, now the Washington representative for The Limited Inc., the business headed by Leslie Wexner, who is one of the Dole campaign's national co-chairmen.

"Dole is probably the most important supporter in the United States of the peace process being pursued by the elected government of Israel," Neuman added. "Without his support we'd be in big trouble."

While Jewish supporters concede that during this election campaign Dole has come down to the right of them on certain issues, they insist that he is a true moderate at heart who has to be "flexible" to win the nomination of a party contending with right-wing candidate Pat Buchanan.

Those who have worked with or watched Dole in the Senate over the

years note that he has long been a champion of traditionally liberal causes such as food stamps and nutrition programs for mothers and infants, but that he has moved notably rightward as the presidential election season has heated up.

For instance, Dole has recently ratcheted up his opposition to abortion, except in cases of rape, incest or when the life of the mother is endangered.

He had supported a constitutional amendment that would ban abortion, but recently retreated from that position.

And he led the fight against the nomination of Dr. Henry Foster, who had performed a number of abortions, for surgeon general.

Dole also has touted his support for voluntary prayer in public schools, a position opposed by many Jews.

And he likes the idea of vouchers to enable parents to choose between public and private schools for their children.

"Today we find that voluntary prayer is forbidden in our classrooms, that the moral code we nurture in our churches and synagogues is under attack from our government," Dole said in a speech in April of last year in Des Moines.

Dole gets one of his strongest votes of confidence from Max Fisher, the veteran Jewish statesman who serves as honorary chairman of the Dole campaign.

"I've known Bob Dole since 1969, and I'm 100 percent behind him," Fisher said.

"There will be things we don't agree on," but "on balance, he's been good."

"He's the man of the moment," added Fisher, especially "given the emergence of Pat Buchanan," whom he termed "a disgrace to the political system."

"Especially at times like these, we need somebody with a steady hand who can bring people together."

In Neuman's view, "the Jewish community has a stake in ensuring the Buchanan candidacy is defeated and repudiated" and one way to do that is to throw support behind Dole.

Still, statements from his past continue to haunt Dole.

In 1990, Dole proposed 5 percent across-the-board cuts in aid earmarked for Israel and other top recipients in exchange for aid to emerging democracies.

Criticizing American Jewish leaders' support for U.S. aid to Israel, Dole was quoted as saying:

"They wouldn't give one penny to anybody else. It's selfishness."

In a subsequent effort to explain his remarks, Dole said his assertion was not intended as "personal or ethnic attacks on anyone in the Jewish community."

Feeling of betrayal

Dole also is remembered for having lashed out when Israeli commandos in 1989 seized a Hezbollah cleric, Sheik Abdel Karim Obeid.

U.S. Marine Lt. Col. William Higgins was hanged by his kidnappers in Lebanon in apparent retaliation for Obeid's abduction.

"I would hope the Israelis would take another look at some of their actions, which they must know in advance will endanger American lives," Dole was quoted as saying in the Washington Post.

"Perhaps a little more responsibility on the part of the Israelis would be refreshing," he added.

Sources say the bitterness of some of Dole's remarks came from a feeling of betrayal after he helped engineer the Senate's 1986 ratification of the Genocide Treaty, which recognized genocide as an international crime, nearly 40 years after the United Nations adopted it.

Dole was deeply hurt, they say, when the Jews who had enlisted his help in the ratification effort later succumbed to pressure by the Turkish government to fight against the inclusion of the 1915 massacres of Armenians by Turks as examples of genocide to be displayed at the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum in Washington and at other memorials.

Dole apparently has profound attachments to the Armenian community, prompted in part by the Armenian surgeon who restored the partial use of his arm, which was critically injured when a shell exploded on a World War II battlefield in Italy.

Dole was also rumored to be angry that he did not get PAC money for his prior presidential election campaigns.

Sen. Arlen Specter, R-Pa., the only Jewish Republican in the Senate, recently threw his support behind Dole and defends his record on Israel.

Specter, who made his own brief bid for this year's Republican nomination, has known Dole since Specter was 12 years old and moved to Dole's hometown, Russell, Kan., a town of 4,498 with only one Jewish family — the Specters.

Specter's father ran a junkyard, where Dole's father ran the elevator.

"Bob Dole is a terrific guy," Specter said. "He's clearly the best choice of everybody who's out there."

"He's very strong on civil rights and equal opportunity."

For George Klein, a vice chairman of the Dole Campaign Finance Committee and a former chairman of the National Jewish Coalition, the choice is clear.

Although the National Jewish Coalition, the Republican Jewish group, will not endorse any particular candidate, two of the coalition's big supporters — Klein and Fisher — are on board with Dole.

Dole is "the kind of man we need to be president, with strength and vision," Klein said.

Especially in the face of the Buchanan rise, Klein added, Dole "needs to articulate that vision. The soul of the party is at stake." □

Fatal car crash ruled accident

By Naomi Segal

JERUSALEM (JTA) — One person was killed and 22 others injured when a rental car driven by an Arab American crashed into a bus stop at a busy intersection near Jerusalem's French Hill neighborhood.

Two Jewish settlers from the West Bank settlement of Shilo, who were waiting at the bus stop, opened fire on the driver, killing him.

"This was not a deliberate attack, but an accident," Jerusalem Police Chief Arye Amit told reporters at the scene.

"There are long skid marks, indicating that the car went out control."

The driver, Ahmed Abdel Hamidi, "had rented the car for seven days in East Jerusalem, and was staying in Ramallah," Amit said.

The incident came amid the tense atmosphere generated in the wake of Sunday's attacks in Jerusalem and Ashkelon, in which 27 people, including the two suicide bombers, were killed.

Pedestrians reportedly were waiting at the stop for buses or rides to settlements in the Ramallah area, when a black Fiat Uno, traveling at a high speed, crashed into the shelter.

The injured were taken to hospitals in Jerusalem, where they were treated for mostly light and moderate injuries. □

BEHIND THE HEADLINES
Mix of Israeli society felled by suicide bombing attacks

By Michele Chabin

JERUSALEM (JTA) — As the 25 victims of Sunday's two terrorist bombings in Jerusalem and Ashkelon were laid to rest this week, the grim statistics took on a human face as friends and family members recalled the last time they had seen their loved ones alive.

Even before the funerals, the Israeli public learned that one of the older victims was a Holocaust survivor; that another was a recent immigrant from the former Soviet Union; that a soldier killed in Jerusalem had already lost a brother; and that another soldier killed Sunday had recently picked out her wedding dress.

The bride-to-be, 20-year-old Hofit Ayash, was on leave before being discharged from the army.

She had gone back to her base to return her gear and to say goodbye to her army buddies.

After catching a bus from her parents' home in Ashdod, Ayash arrived at Ashkelon Junction.

Soon afterward, the bomb went off and she was killed instantly.

She had planned a June wedding.

"Instead of getting ready for your wedding, we're getting ready for your funeral," her mother tearfully told reporters.

"This is a black year. Two weeks ago, my husband, Michael, lost his mother; a year ago, his father. Now he is burying a daughter."

German-born Peretz Ganz, 61, lost his entire family in the Holocaust.

Sent to France when he was 8 years old, he moved to Israel a decade later.

A resident of the Jerusalem neighborhood of Ein Kerem, he regularly took the No. 18 bus to Mount Herzl, where he drove his own bus route.

"When he didn't arrive, we thought he had been in the explosion," said a co-worker. "We were prepared for any kind of injury, any prognosis — but not to hear that he had died."

"He was a real family man," said Ganz's friend Nadav Bar-Noy. "Losing his family in the Shoah strengthened Peretz's resolve to live in Israel. How sad and ironic that he died this way."

Boris Shapolinsky, 64, had lived in Israel just nine months before the Jerusalem blast took his life.

Originally from Ukraine, he shared a small apartment with two roommates.

Killed on way to work

Described as a cultured, educated man with a passion for music and Israeli politics, Shapolinsky was killed on his way to work.

"He always took that bus, and when I heard about the blast I began to worry," said a close friend. "I couldn't find him at work. Later, I identified his body at the forensic institute."

"Boris found it hard to learn a new language and to deal with a lower standard of living," the friend added.

"And now, ironically, when he'd found a job and was happy, this catastrophe struck."

Another of Sunday's victims was a more recent arrival from Ukraine.

Michael Yarigin, 16, was studying at Kibbutz Ma'barot, located near Netanya, as part of the Jewish Agency's "Na'aleh 16" Project, a program designed for youngsters from the former Soviet Union who arrive in Israel without their parents.

He came to Jerusalem last Friday to visit his sister,

Lila, 17, who was studying at the Israel Goldstein Youth Village under the same program.

He was killed on the No. 18 bus as he was traveling back to the kibbutz. The bomb destroyed the bus near Jerusalem's central bus station.

The family of Merav Nahum, a 19-year-old soldier from Jerusalem, learned of their daughter's death from the television news.

As the first scenes of the Jerusalem bomb blast were broadcast, 8-year-old Ranana Nahum spotted her sister's watch in the wreckage.

Merav's death is the second tragedy to befall the Nahum family: Eight years ago, Merav's younger brother, Hanan, died of a heart condition.

"The parents still haven't recovered completely from Hanan's death, and now Merav is gone," said Shuli Sini, an aunt. "When Hanan died they couldn't bear to live in the same house, so they moved. Perhaps now they'll move again."

Merav, who began her army service three months ago, was about to be assigned to an intelligence unit.

Six soldiers serving in her unit carried her flag-draped coffin to its resting place at Jerusalem's Mount Herzl Military Cemetery.

For some, however, the sorrow was accompanied by feelings of relief.

Bebe Kramer, an American who has lived in the Jerusalem suburb of Ma'aleh Adumim for several years, was walking along Jaffa Road when the No. 18 bus blew up.

The next thing she knew, she was in Hadassah Hospital with relatively minor injuries.

"She doesn't remember anything about the blast," said her Jerusalem Post co-worker Joe Charlawf. "She just remembers waking up in the hospital with cuts on her face and splinters in her legs."

"I talked to her five minutes ago, and her spirits are high. She kept saying, 'Baruch haShem (Thank God), I'm all right.'"

Luckier still is the American immigrant who disembarked from the No. 18 bus just a couple of stops before it exploded — the second time he had narrowly escaped a bus bombing in the past couple of years.

"My husband isn't in the country at the moment, so I'd rather not speak in his name," his wife said in an interview. "He was upset when he learned that I had told the story to other people. He is very upset about the tragedy, but grateful to be alive." □

Pleas entered in Rabin conspiracy

By Naomi Segal

JERUSALEM (JTA) — Brothers Yigal and Hagai Amir and friend Dror Adani pleaded innocent to charges of plotting the murder of Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin.

The three entered their pleas Monday in Tel Aviv District Court.

The lawyers for Hagai Amir and Adani said their clients were not aware of any plan by Yigal Amir, who has confessed to the killing, to murder the prime minister.

Rabin was shot as he left a Nov. 4 peace rally in Tel Aviv.

Yigal Amir, who is being tried separately on murder charges, has since said he meant only to paralyze Rabin and to remove him from the political arena. That trial will resume March 3.

His lawyers said this week that they may consider arguing that Amir was not in full control of himself at the time of the shooting.

Amir agreed to the court's request that he undergo psychiatric evaluations. □

Zhirinovsky rebukes Buchanan for snubbing congratulatory overture

By Lev Krichevsky

MOSCOW (JTA) — Russian ultranationalist Vladimir Zhirinovsky has sent Pat Buchanan an abusive, obscenity-filled letter after the Republican presidential hopeful refused to be associated with Zhirinovsky's politics.

"You are crap, Pat," Zhirinovsky reportedly wrote. "You filled your pants as soon as you got my congratulations. Who are you afraid of? Zionists?"

Zhirinovsky's letter also contained sarcastic suggestions that he would like to see Jews "dominating government and the parliaments of all countries."

It was sent this week after Zhirinovsky was apparently stung by Buchanan's effort to distance himself from a previous message Zhirinovsky sent congratulating Buchanan on his victory last week in the New Hampshire primary.

In that earlier message, the leader of Russia's Liberal Democratic Party referred approvingly to a comment Buchanan made repeatedly in the months preceding the 1991 Gulf War that the U.S. Congress is "Israeli-occupied territory."

"We have the same situation in Russia," Zhirinovsky's earlier message continued. "The United States and Russia are not free countries, but are under occupation.

"So, to survive, we could set aside places on U.S. and Russian territories to deport this small but troublesome tribe."

After receiving Zhirinovsky's first message, Buchanan reportedly responded that he wanted to have nothing to do with what he called "the politics of hatred."

Buchanan also reportedly replied that he would provide safe haven to persecuted minorities if — "Lord forbid" — Zhirinovsky were ever elected Russia's president.

An effort to sue

Zhirinovsky's press secretary, Maj. Gen. Viktor Filatov, confirmed in an interview the contents of last week's congratulatory message to Buchanan.

But he denied that Zhirinovsky was referring to the deportation of Jews.

"These were not Jews whom Zhirinovsky called 'this small tribe,'" Filatov said. "He was talking about dissenters who do not like living in Russia.

"We know that there are a lot of people like these in America."

"We mentioned Israel in this letter because it was mentioned by Buchanan. Had he said that 'Congress is occupied by the blacks' we would have put 'the blacks,'" Filatov added.

Meanwhile, the leadership of the Russian Jewish community expressed deep concern about Zhirinovsky's earlier message to Buchanan.

Alexander Osovtsov, executive vice president of the recently established Russian Jewish Congress, said in an interview that "the Congress will make an effort to sue Zhirinovsky for the anti-Semitic statement."

Zhirinovsky, whose Liberal Democrats are the third largest bloc in the lower house of the Russian Parliament, is running for the Russian presidency in June's elections.

According to a poll conducted last week by the Russian Public Opinion Institute, Zhirinovsky was the second most popular candidate after Communist Party candidate Gennady Zyuganov.

Russian President Boris Yeltsin placed third in the poll. □

Bosnian Serb leaders reject Klarsfeld's appeal to surrender

By Lee Yanowitch

PARIS (JTA) — Bosnian Serb authorities have expelled a famed Nazi hunter from their self-proclaimed capital of Pale after he traveled there in an effort to persuade their leaders to surrender to an international war crimes tribunal.

"They obviously got my message, which was too strong for them," said French lawyer Serge Klarsfeld, who had gone to Pale to convince Bosnian Serb leader Radovan Karadzic and army commander Gen. Ratko Mladic to surrender to the U.N. war crimes tribunal.

Klarsfeld, 60, was interrogated for three hours by Bosnian Serb police before being forced to return to areas held by the Bosnian Muslim and Croat confederation, his son Arno said in an interview.

"Three police and an interpreter went to his hotel in the evening and took him to the police station," Arno Klarsfeld said.

He said his father was "forced to accept a ride" back to Sarajevo on Saturday morning by two men who he believed were security agents.

The war crimes tribunal in The Hague has indicted both Karadzic and Mladic on charges of crimes against humanity for ordering the ethnic-cleansing campaigns of mass killings, torture and expulsions of Muslims during the nearly four-year Bosnian war.

Serge Klarsfeld brought a letter for the two Bosnian Serb leaders that he gave last Friday to the Pale media center run by Karadzic's daughter, Sonja.

"If they consider themselves innocent," he said in the letter, then facing the war crimes tribunal "will be the best way to publicly establish this innocence."

"If they consider themselves guilty, which appears obvious to us because war crimes and genocide were committed by Bosnian Serb armed forces under their political and military authority," the letter also said, "Mr. Karadzic and Mr. Mladic must take into consideration that the international community will not allow them to remain unpunished."

A reply from Bosnian Serb officials said Karadzic was not in Pale and not interested in what Klarsfeld had to say and told him to leave the next morning.

Arrested several times

Klarsfeld, who brought Klaus Barbie, the former Gestapo chief of Lyon, France, to justice in 1987, flew from Paris to Sarajevo on Feb. 22, then drove to the border of Serb-held territories.

By walking, hitchhiking and taking a taxi, he arrived in Pale last Friday.

He and his wife, Beate, have been arrested several times during their Nazi-hunting missions.

Arno Klarsfeld, who also is one of the lawyers who in 1994 won the conviction of former Lyon militia chief Paul Touvier for committing crimes against humanity during World War II, said his father might go to Croatia to try to convince accused Croatian war criminals to stand trial.

"There are Bosnian and Croatian war criminals as well. It's the same mission," Arno Klarsfeld said.

The Hague tribunal has named 52 people suspected of war crimes in Bosnia.

The overwhelming majority of them are Bosnian Serbs.

NATO peacekeeping troops have been ordered to arrest Karadzic and Mladic on sight.

However, the troops are not authorized to track them down. □