



NEWS AT A GLANCE

■ **Three Israeli soldiers were killed and two others wounded in an ambush in the Jordan Valley by gunmen who apparently crossed into Israel from Jordan overnight. [Page 1]**

■ **Israel blamed Iran for the attack on the U.S. military housing complex in Saudi Arabia. After meeting with Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak and Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat, U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher detoured to Saudi Arabia to inspect the site of the explosion that killed at least 19 Americans. [Page 1]**

■ **The Jewish Agency for Israel Assembly unanimously adopted a compromise resolution proposed by Chairman Avraham Burg calling on the government not to harm the existing situation regarding religious legislation and not to change the Law of Return. The assembly also adopted a resolution to form a commission to pursue these issues with the Israeli government.**

■ **Shimshon Shoshani, the outgoing director general of Israel's Education Ministry, was chosen by the Jewish Agency for Israel to serve as its new director general.**

■ **A delegation of the Conference of Presidents of Major American Jewish Organizations met with Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and other Cabinet ministers in Jerusalem to express its support for the new government. The group was told that the relationships between the Israeli government and Diaspora Jewry are considered an integral part of the national security of the State of Israel.**

■ **A former security official in Nazi-occupied Lithuania was stripped of his U.S. citizenship, the Justice Department announced. [Page 3]**

■ **German prosecutors issued an arrest warrant for former SS Maj. Karl Hass, who admitted that he took part in the 1944 massacre of 335 Italian civilians outside Rome. [Page 3]**

■ **Poland reportedly adopted a plan to preserve the Auschwitz death camp as a place of remembrance.**

Terror incidents explode Christopher's Mideast mission

By Naomi Segal

JERUSALEM (JTA) — Terrorism exploded in the face of U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher's peace mission to the Middle East this week.

Two separate attacks — one in Saudi Arabia, which killed at least 19 Americans, and one in Israel, which killed at least three Israeli soldiers — prompted renewed calls for cooperation in combating terrorism around the world.

The attacks overshadowed the U.S. secretary of state's visit and raised new fears about a new round of terrorism in the region.

But even before the explosions, it appeared that Christopher's talks with Israeli and Arab leaders had done little to ease the recent friction between the two sides.

The tensions stemmed from Arab charges that the new Israeli government has abandoned the land-for-peace principle, and Israeli accusations that the Arabs were trying to set preconditions on negotiations.

Christopher cut short his visit in the Egyptian capital to fly Wednesday to Saudi Arabia, where a powerful truck bomb exploded the night before, killing at least 19 people and seriously wounding nearly 400 at a U.S. Air Force housing complex in Dhahran.

Speaking earlier in Jerusalem, where he met President Ezer Weizman, Christopher vowed that the United States would hunt down those responsible.

"We will not rest until these terrorists are brought to justice," he told reporters. "We will hunt them down and find them, and will not be deterred in taking the action necessary to protect our forces and carry out our mission."

President Ezer Weizman and Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu both extended condolences to the American people in messages conveyed to Christopher.

Although no group had yet claimed responsibility for the attack, Weizman pointed an accusing finger at Iran, which is believed to train, support and direct Muslim militant groups.

"I bet that the Iranians are behind" the bombings, he said, "and it is time the world realized it."

Netanyahu, meanwhile, accused Syria of increasing its support of terrorist activities in the region. The Israeli leader said he would suggest practical and international steps to pressure Syria when he meets President Bill Clinton on July 9 in Washington.

Three Israeli soldiers killed

His remarks came after terrorism struck again — this time in Israel's Jordan Valley.

Israel Defense Force sources said a group of three to five gunmen infiltrated into Israel overnight. They are believed to have laid their ambush several miles north of Israel, in the reeds and bushes that line the banks of the Jordan River.

A Damascus-based splinter group of the Palestine Liberation Organization, the Palestine National Liberation Organization, reportedly claimed responsibility for the attack.

When Israeli troops on a routine patrol passed by the gunmen's hiding place at about 8 a.m., the gunmen opened fire at close range. Three of the Israeli soldiers, who were on foot, were killed.

They were identified as (Res.) Staff Sgt. Asher Bardugo, 22, of Kiryat Bialik; (Res.) Cpl. Ya'acov Turjeiman, 33, from Rishon LeZion; and Sgt. Ashraf Shibli, 20.

Another soldier in the patrol's command car was wounded. A second patrol arrived, and in the subsequent exchange, a second soldier was moderately wounded.

The gunmen then fled, apparently back across the Jordan River into Jordan, leaving behind two Kalachnikov rifles and some personal equipment.

Large numbers of Israelis troops as well as helicopters began sweeping the area in search of the gunmen.

Contact was established with Jordanian security forces, and the Israeli

helicopters were given permission to fly into Jordanian territory to try to track down the terrorists.

Netanyahu sent condolences to the bereaved families and wishes for recovery to the wounded soldiers.

He said Israel and Jordan would coordinate efforts to locate the terrorists, and added that he doubted that the incident would hurt relations between Israel and Jordan.

"We will work with Jordan to prevent a renewal of such attacks and assaults" from the other side of the border, he told Israel Radio.

"There were incidents in the past of single soldiers, with fundamentalist beliefs, crossing or trying to cross into Israel."

Jordan's King Hussein telephoned Netanyahu upon hearing of the attack.

He extended condolences and pledged his continuing support in the fight against terror.

Palestinian officials were quoted as saying that terrorism would only stop once a full peace agreement is reached in the region.

The attack in the Jewish state came as Christopher shuttled to Cairo to brief Arab leaders on his talks with Israeli leaders.

His was a critical welcome, as Egyptian papers chastised Christopher for remarks he had made the previous day in Jerusalem.

The Egyptian media accused the U.S. official of "blindly" supporting the new Israeli government's positions.

Christopher had said at a news conference with Netanyahu that he understood Israel's primary concern for security as it approaches negotiations.

Arab leaders have interpreted Netanyahu's remarks, and the policy guidelines of his government, as a hard-line approach that rejects the land-for-peace principle accepted by the previous government.

Christopher met in Cairo with Palestinian Authority leader Yasser Arafat and Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak.

At a news conference after the meetings, Egyptian Foreign Minister Amre Moussa said the principle of land-for-peace in negotiations is the only way to achieve positive and sustainable agreements.

Arafat said he was committed to the peace process and hoped that Israel would carry out its end of the agreements.

'Must be studied first'

Prime Minister Netanyahu stressed this week that his government intends to deepen contacts with the Palestinian Authority and has every intention to negotiate with it, even Arafat. In an interview with Israel Radio, he confirmed that ministers in his government would soon meet with Palestinian representatives.

His office, however, would neither confirm nor deny an Israeli television report that his foreign policy adviser, Dore Gold, had met secretly with Arafat's top aide, Mahmoud Abbas, better known as Abu-Mazen.

At the same time, he remained vague on his plans for an Israeli troop redeployment in Hebron, which Palestinians view as the first test of his intentions.

"It is a complicated matter, which must first be studied," he told the Israeli daily Yediot Achronot.

Israel's new defense minister, Yitzhak Mordechai, echoed the premier's remarks during a tour Wednesday in Hebron. After meeting with Palestinian and Jewish leaders there, Mordechai said Israel wants to fulfill its agreement with the Palestinians.

But Mordechai said the Jewish state must be careful not to make any mistakes that could have grave consequences. □

Arens speaks tough to group of U.S. Jews

By Debra Nussbaum Cohen

NEW YORK (JTA) — Moshe Arens, the veteran Israeli politician and diplomat who is widely known as the new prime minister's political mentor, has delivered a strong message about the direction the peace process will take under the leadership of Benjamin Netanyahu.

"The Arabs are going to have to learn that the time has come that they're not going to get whatever they want from the Israeli government," Arens said here Monday at a small dinner given for supporters of the College of Judea and Samaria, which is located in the West Bank city of Ariel.

"Under Peres, whatever they asked for, they got," said Arens, who is also being touted as a serious contender to become the next Israeli ambassador to the United States.

The gathering was organized by the National Council of Young Israel and held at Mendy's, a kosher deli in midtown Manhattan.

Arens served as ambassador to Washington under then-Prime Minister Menachem Begin during the active phase of the war in Lebanon. He also served as Israel's minister of defense, most recently under the Shamir government.

He was born in Lithuania but spent part of his youth and young adulthood in the United States, where he served in the army. He immigrated to Israel in 1948.

Of the extremely narrow margin by which Netanyahu beat Shimon Peres, he said, "We were just saved from the abyss."

"Now we will have a government that will lead us in the right direction." □

Middle East tourism meeting postponed in wake of elections

By Alissa Kaplan

NEW YORK (JTA) — Doubts about the Arab-Israeli peace process have resulted in the delay of a meeting in Tunis of Middle Eastern tourism groups.

"Some members had asked for a postponement of the meeting a few days before the Cairo Arab summit," a source close to the Middle East-Mediterranean Travel and Tourism Association reportedly said. "They wanted to look at its results over normalization with Israel."

The meeting of the tourism association, which is headquartered in Tunis, is now scheduled for September.

Arab leaders met in Cairo last weekend in response to the victory of the Likud's Benjamin Netanyahu in the prime ministerial election.

It is not known exactly which members of the tourism association asked for the postponement. The group's founding members are; Cyprus, Egypt, Jordan, Israel, Morocco, the Palestinian Authority, Tunisia and Turkey.

But according to an Israeli official, the Jewish state agreed to the postponement, but not for political reasons. The official said more time was needed before the meeting for projects that are under way.

Tunisian President Zine el-Abidine Ben Ali addressed the Arab summit, demanding that Netanyahu follow through on Israel's peace commitments.

At the same time, a Tunisian economic delegation was in Jerusalem, meeting with Foreign Minister David Levy to discuss areas of cooperation. The six businessmen, one of whom is the son-in-law of the Tunisian president, invited their Israeli counterparts to visit Tunisia.

Tunisia and Israel recently exchanged economic interest sections. □

Court revokes U.S. citizenship of Lithuanian who aided Nazis

By Heather Camlot

NEW YORK (JTA) — A federal court has revoked a man's U.S. citizenship because of his service in the Nazi-sponsored Lithuanian security police during World War II.

Kazys Gimzauskas, 88, went back to Lithuania more than two years ago while he was under investigation by the Justice Department's Office of Special Investigations. He had been living in St. Petersburg, Fla.

The government charged that Gimzauskas headed the Saugumas Interrogations/Investigations Section in Kaunas, Lithuania, between July 1941 and October or November 1941. He then served in Vilnius, Lithuania, as deputy chief of the Saugumas until July 1944, in which he became second in command to chief Aleksandras Lileikis.

Lileikis was stripped of his U.S. citizenship on May 24 and returned to Vilnius on June 19. He was interrogated this week by Lithuanian authorities.

Documents signed by Gimzauskas and found by the OSI at the Lithuanian Central State Archives established that he had ordered civilians turned over to the German police for execution. One of the civilians was an American-born woman who had been arrested because she was "suspected of being a Jew."

Gimzauskas arrived in the United States in 1956 under the Refugee Relief Act of 1953.

Eli Rosenbaum, director of the OSI, said, "Others who, like Kazys Gimzauskas, played a provable role in the Nazi regime's genocidal reign of terror should be on notice that the government remains steadfast in its commitment to tracing them, revoking their ill-gotten U.S. citizenships and removing them from these shores as expeditiously as possible."

The OSI has filed a denaturalization suit against another former Vilnius Saugumas member, Algimantas Dailide, now living in Cleveland. The trial is scheduled for November. □

Priebke lawyer tells writer judges assured Nazi's freedom

By Ruth E. Gruber

ROME (JTA) — The lawyer for Erich Priebke has told an Italian author that he had assurances from judges that the former SS captain would be acquitted.

Priebke, 82, is on trial before a military court here for his part in the Nazis' 1944 execution of 335 civilians, some 75 of them Jews, in the Ardeatine Caves south of Rome.

In an interview with the Rome daily *Il Messaggero*, Mary Pace, a writer who has been interviewing Priebke in jail for a book, said Priebke's lawyer had made clear from the start of the trial that Priebke would go free.

She quoted defense lawyer Velio De Rezze as saying, "The president [of the tribunal] is with me and [another] judge, too. I have a source in the tribunal that keeps me informed about everything."

The trial was suspended last week after the prosecution demanded dismissal of the three-judge court, charging that at least one of them intended to exonerate Priebke all along.

Chief Judge Agostino Quistelli has denied the charges of judicial impartiality.

The military court will meet next week behind closed doors to consider the motion.

Meanwhile, during the weekend, posters signed by a skinhead group calling for Priebke's freedom were plastered on war memorials in Boves, a northern Italian town devastated by the Germans in World War II. □

Germany issues warrant for ex-Nazi tied to Priebke

By Ruth E. Gruber

ROME (JTA) — German prosecutors have issued an arrest warrant for an ex-Nazi who admitted while testifying in the trial of former Nazi Capt. Erich Priebke that he, too, took part in the World War II massacre of 335 Italian civilians.

Italian prosecutor Antonino Intelisano said prosecutors in Dortmund had issued an arrest warrant for former SS Maj. Karl Hass.

Hass, 84, had been presumed dead for years.

But after depositions by Priebke, he was found to be living in Italy. He fled briefly last month to Switzerland, but voluntarily came to Rome to testify in the Priebke trial.

Priebke is on trial before a military court for his part in the 1944 massacre of 335 civilians, about 75 of them Jews, in the Ardeatine Caves south of Rome. He has admitted to drawing up a list of victims, checking it off at the caves and personally shooting two people.

Just hours before Hass was scheduled to appear in court June 7, he tried to escape from his Rome hotel by jumping from a balcony and broke his pelvis.

He was questioned in a special court session held in a military hospital. During questioning, he said both he and Priebke had been ordered to kill the Roman civilians or be killed themselves. □

Le Pen seeks retribution against France for fining him

By Lee Yanowitch

PARIS (JTA) — French extreme-right leader Jean-Marie Le Pen has said he asked the Strasbourg-based European Court of Human Rights to punish France for fining him \$230,000 for calling the Nazi gas chambers "a detail of history."

Le Pen, who heads the National Front, was first convicted in 1990, when a French court ruled that he had cast doubt on the Nazi persecution of Jews and Gypsies in a statement he made during a radio interview.

He was found guilty of inciting racial hatred and given a symbolic fine of one franc. He appealed that ruling, but a Versailles court rejected his arguments and fined him 1.2 million francs — about \$230,000.

"I am not saying the gas chambers did not exist," Le Pen said in the 1987 broadcast.

"I did not see them myself. I have not studied the question, but I think it is a mere detail in the history of World War II."

Le Pen said he asked the European court to order France to pay him \$1.5 million for what he calls a violation of his freedom of speech and right to a fair trial.

The Movement Against Racism and for Friendship Between Peoples said it hoped that the court would issue a resounding disavowal of Le Pen, who "loudly applauds negationists and who has repeatedly been convicted of racism and inciting racial hatred."

The movement said in a statement, "How can a man whose behavior, words, history, culture and ideology generate racism, anti-Semitism and xenophobia demand reparations?"

Earlier this month, Le Pen said Nazi collaborators were welcome in his anti-immigrant party.

"The National Front welcomes all French people who have not dishonored themselves, whether they fought in the Resistance or worked for Vichy," Jean-Marie Le Pen told a news conference, referring to the regime that governed Nazi-occupied France. □

Argentine Jewish officials probe justice minister's past

By Sergio Kiernan

BUENOS AIRES (JTA) — The Argentine minister of justice, Rodolfo Barra, is at the center of a growing scandal involving his alleged anti-Semitic past — and the prestige of the local judiciary.

Jewish officials here, at first reluctant to speak out on the issue, are now coming forward with questions and concerns.

After being accused by the local magazine Noticias of belonging in his youth to an extremist, anti-Semitic group, Barra answered with a paid newspaper advertisement. In his ad, Barra quotes a 1937 papal encyclical against Nazism and says he rejects "any racist ideology."

According to the just-published story, a 14-year-old Barra belonged from 1962 to 1963 to UNES, the student branch of the extremist right-wing group Tacuara. Tacuara carried out hundreds of anti-Semitic attacks in the 1950s and 1960s, including the murder of Jewish lawyer Alberto Alterman, several episodes of vandalism against synagogues and a racist riot in this city's Jewish neighborhood.

As justice minister, Barra has been directly responsible for the investigation of the unsolved bombings in Buenos Aires of the Israeli Embassy in 1992 and of the Jewish community headquarters in 1994.

Barra denied belonging "to the group shown in the photographs published by the local media." He was referring to a black and white photograph showing a group of teens around a table with their right arms held out in a Nazi-style salute. The photo shows a young Barra standing in the middle of the group with his arm held high and stiff.

Barra said in his ad that he never belonged to any organization that "I could perceive, with the experience and knowledge of a 14-year-old, was Nazi."

But Tuesday, Ruben Beraja, the president of the Argentine Jewish umbrella organization DAIA, said he had talked to Barra, who "admitted belonging to UNES when he was 14 years old, but said he quit the group when he was 15."

'Revolted by revelations'

Reactions from local Jewish officials were quiet at first.

On Saturday, Luis Steimberg, vice president of DAIA, said, "I do not consider it proved that Barra was a Nazi in his youth."

On Monday, Beraja raised the subject during the weekly meeting of DAIA's executive assembly.

"We have to follow this issue closely," Beraja told the assembly. "Barra's explanations are ambiguous and unsatisfactory, but we have to be careful not to be entrapped in the fractional fights within the government."

"I am trying to clearly determine if that teen-age militant was truly left behind by the grown-up politician the minister is today," said Beraja, who said DAIA's executive committee would discuss the issue soon.

While other Jewish officials refused to comment publicly on Barra's past, many said privately that they were "revolted" by the revelations.

The Argentine media flayed Barra, calling the revelations "one more scandal tarnishing the image of the Argentine judiciary." In an editorial Tuesday, the local English-language newspaper, The Buenos Aires Herald, said, "If the strength of a judicial system works only if recognized and accepted by the people, it is anyone's guess how the reputation of the Justice Ministry stands following the exposure of Minister Barra's Nazi past."

The Herald said that "the ministry is under suspicion" and called for Barra's dismissal. □

Wiesenthal Center charges Argentina still Nazi haven

By Sergio Kiernan

BUENOS AIRES (JTA) — More than 50 years after the end of World War II, Argentina may still be a haven for Nazi war criminals.

According to Shimon Samuels, the director of the Simon Wiesenthal Center for Europe and Latin America, up to 17 wanted war criminals may be alive and at large in the South American nation.

In a recent interview with an Argentine newspaper, Samuels said he had surrendered "again and again" a list of Nazi officials allegedly living here to "three interior ministers of the Carlos Menem administration."

Argentine authorities took no action to find and extradite those on the list.

In the immediate postwar era, Col. Juan Peron, who became the president of Argentina in 1944, transformed the nation into one of the world's principal sanctuaries for Nazi war criminals, including Adolf Eichmann.

Samuel's list includes two Dutch nationals, Abraham Kipp and Jan Olij Hottentot, wanted by Dutch authorities on charges of genocide for their role in the deportation of Dutch Jews and anti-fascist activists during the German occupation of Holland.

Hottentot is also charged with torturing war prisoners in the Russian front and with killing Jews while commanding an extermination group.

Hottentot was seen in 1992, when a reporter from the local Clarin newspaper took his picture at his home at a Buenos Aires suburb. Shortly after that, he disappeared.

Also included on the list is Croatian national Ivo Rojnica, who lived in Argentina under the name of Ivan or Juan Rajcinovic, and who became notorious here in late 1991 for being named Croatian ambassador to Argentina by President Franjo Tudjman.

Wanted 'a better life'

Rojnica never assumed his diplomatic office because he had by then become an Argentine citizen and because the Argentine government was then opening its files relating to Nazi officials and war criminals here.

Although there were no formal charges brought against Rojnica, his past, which includes service as a Ustashi officer and allegations of his persecuting Jews and Serbians, proved to be too embarrassing to the then-new Croatian government.

Samuels' allegations coincide with a British investigation of the only wanted British war criminal, Thomas Cooper. The Sunday Times said Scotland Yard is on the trail of Cooper, who left London in 1939 to seek what he called "a better life" in Germany.

Cooper fought on the Russian front, was wounded and was promoted to commander of an SS police unit.

Captured by Allied troops in 1945, he was tried and convicted, but his sentence was commuted in 1953, when he was released and vanished.

The British government recently requested Cooper's extradition from Japan, but according to a story in the Argentine English-language newspaper The Buenos Aires Herald, Scotland Yard is also investigating allegations that "Cooper lived in Argentina for the past 40 years."

British sources quoted say the 76-year-old Cooper is "in good health and is a Buddhist convert."

In addition, Samuel's allegations come in the wake of reports that a passport belonging to German Nazi official Martin Bormann surfaced last week in the northern Patagonia resort city of Bariloche. Bormann allegedly lived for many years in Argentina and Chile using an Uruguayan passport under the name of Richard Bauer. □