

NEWS AT A GLANCE

- **Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said Scud missiles recently test-launched by Syria did not pose a threat to Israel, but he accused Damascus of using Hezbollah to wage war against the Jewish state. A leading Israeli academic, meanwhile, warned of a possible Israeli-Syrian military clash. [Page 3]**

- **The United States ended its case against three Islamic fundamentalists accused of plotting to bomb U.S. airliners in Asia to punish America for its support of Israel. The three militants have been on trial in Manhattan federal court since May for their alleged plan to blow up the planes last year and kill some 4,000 passengers. The defendants include Ramzi Ahmed Yousef, who faces a separate trial as the alleged mastermind of the 1993 World Trade Center bombing.**

- **An Israeli soldier was killed and another wounded in southern Lebanon when members of the same patrol unit mistakenly opened fire on fellow troops. [Page 3]**

- **The architects of the Palestinian self-rule accord convened along the shores of the Sea of Galilee to mark three years since the agreements were secretly initialed in Oslo. No representatives from the Netanyahu government were at the gathering. [Page 2]**

- **The Jewish state successfully test-launched its Arrow 2 anti-missile missile, which is being developed jointly by Israel and the United States. [Page 3]**

- **A shipment of lumber headed for Jordan arrived in Israel's northern port city of Haifa, the first such shipment under trade agreements reached in conjunction with the 1994 peace treaty between the two countries. Trucks then picked up the lumber and drove it through Israel to Amman.**

- **The Israeli Supreme Court disclosed that Israel kidnapped four Lebanese civilians accused of aiding enemies of the Jewish state. The four are suspected of kidnapping in Lebanon a Palestinian man who allegedly worked for the Mossad and then handing him over to Syria.**

BEHIND THE HEADLINES**Crown Heights' Jewish leaders still charge official neglect***By Debra Nussbaum Cohen*

NEW YORK (JTA) — When Lubavitch Jews in the Crown Heights section of Brooklyn called police and city officials for help as blacks rioted against them five years ago this week, they received no immediate response.

Now, leaders of the Crown Heights Jewish community are charging that police are neglecting them in an effort to placate the black community, lest the long-simmering tensions spark into violence once more.

As residents of the neighborhood look back, both blacks and Jews, in separate interviews, make it clear that the resentments are far from resolved and that the community continues to walk a fine line between tension and violence.

The feeling in the neighborhood between the two communities "is medium, maybe medium-plus. Five years ago it was worse," said Josef Motchkin, a resident of the neighborhood for 30 years.

The 1991 violence was ignited when a car driven by a Lubavitcher spun out of control onto a sidewalk where two black children were playing. One was injured and the other, 7-year-old Gavin Cato, was killed.

Angry black residents began beating the car's driver. A private Hatzolah ambulance was first to arrive and began attending to the child pinned under the car.

When the city ambulance arrived, the technician instructed the Hatzolah driver to take the Lubavitch driver to the hospital, to remove him from the escalating scene.

That infuriated some of the black residents crowding around, and rumors of the Jew being taken away first while a black child remained under the car quickly flew through the neighborhood.

Some began running down the streets yelling, "Get the Jews!"

A young Orthodox Holocaust researcher from Australia, Yankel Rosenbaum, was fatally stabbed that night by a mob of 10 to 15 angry black teens and men. The violence continued for three days until hundreds of police officers — clad in riot gear — came on foot, on motorcycle and on horseback and restored a restive calm.

Until then, Jewish residents of Crown Heights and reporters were beaten up, cars were overturned and set afire, and stores were looted and firebombed by furious black residents and outsiders as they rampaged through the streets.

At a memorial service-cum-political rally Monday in honor of Rosenbaum, speaker after speaker said the Jewish residents are still being neglected by government officials. They all called on authorities to bring Rosenbaum's murderers to justice.

Several speakers on the Republican-dominated dais condemned what they described as U.S. Attorney General Janet Reno's sluggish investigation of Rosenbaum's case.

Pressure from political figures

After federal officials were pressured by political figures and Jewish community leaders, Reno initiated an investigation, which led last week to the federal indictment of Lemrick Nelson and Charles Price.

Nelson, 21, was indicted on federal charges of violating Yankel Rosenbaum's civil rights, and a second suspect was indicted for the first time.

Nelson was earlier acquitted of criminal charges brought against him by the state. Price, 43, has been identified by prosecutors as the man whose tirades against Jews helped ignite the riots Aug. 19, 1991.

Several speakers at the rally, attended by many of New York's top political figures, applauded Bob Dole, the former Senate majority leader who is now the Republican presidential candidate, for writing to Reno three years ago, urging her to quickly bring Rosenbaum's killers to justice.

"Without Dole's support, we would not have been able to go forward," Yankel's brother Norman Rosenbaum said in an interview.

"To Senator Dole — thank you and good luck," Isaac Abraham, an organizer of the event, said to loud applause.

Rosenbaum, whose once-red beard is now mostly gray, said he had

lost count of the dozens of trips he has made to New York and Washington from his home in Australia to try to get his brother's killers punished.

Five years after the unrest, people in the neighborhood — both black and Jewish — say their day-to-day relationship is cordial and respectful.

Most of the time.

There have been a series of violent clashes in the last several months. Lubavitchers accuse blacks of beating up Jews and yelling anti-Semitic epithets. Members of the Chasidic neighborhood patrol, known as Shmira, were arrested after being accused of beating up a black man.

"It's hard to say if things are changed," said Sylvia Houzell, a retired executive secretary who is black and has lived in the neighborhood for 35 years.

"I never had any problems myself, but I didn't feel comfortable for a long time" after the riots.

It was only a month ago that she first felt comfortable going into a bagel shop on Kingston Avenue, a street dominated by Jewish-owned stores.

The clerk behind the counter "was pleasant and I felt relieved about it," Houzell said.

Richard Green, chief executive of the Crown Heights Youth Collective, has, since the 1991 unrest, been trying to forge better relationships between blacks and Jews and is a key liaison for the black community, the Lubavitchers and police.

"Things are working here," he said in an interview before the memorial service. "We're doing what we didn't do before — we're talking."

But the communities were unable to come together even to commemorate Rosenbaum's murder.

Members of a group called Stop the Violence, founded by New York City police officer James Davis, who is black, placed a wreath Sunday at the spot where Rosenbaum was fatally wounded.

Monday's memorial was sponsored by the Crown Heights Jewish Community Council. Few black people besides Green attended the service, which attracted about 200 Lubavitchers.

Lubavitchers say being neglected by city officials and police during the riots in 1991 was an experience few have forgotten.

Systematic and conscious neglect

The state government's official investigation into the riots found that city authorities and police had not responded appropriately.

Today, leaders of the Crown Heights Jewish community claim that the police have, during the last 18 months, begun again to systematically and consciously neglect them to keep the black community placated.

According to Faigie Horowitz, executive director of the Crown Heights Jewish Community Council, police fear that the black community will again riot if too many black people are arrested for crimes.

As a result, she and others said, there is a conscious effort being made by the police precinct to dissuade Jews who are crime victims from filing complaints.

"There is a clear effort to stop the Jews from pressing charges, from complaining, to make sure that Jews drop the charges when they are victims of crimes by blacks in the neighborhood," Sara Karasik, program director at the Crown Heights Jewish Community Council, said in an interview in the council's office.

"The police are neglecting us, mistreating us and this is a pattern," she said. "Police-community relations are lower than they've been at any time since 1991."

The precinct's commanding officer denied the charges. "When there is conflict, our job is to make arrests when they have to be made and not to when it's not

appropriate," said Deputy Inspector Joseph Fox, the commanding officer of the 71st Police Precinct. "These things happen and not everybody is always happy."

Fox said he speaks frequently with the leaders of both communities in the neighborhood because he wants to prevent anything like the 1991 riots from happening again.

"When there is an incident that could result in community unrest and conflict between the Chasidic and African American community, we're on the phone with leaders of the groups right away," Fox said.

"Where you have such diverse groups together — and, let's face it, there have been conflicts — it just makes good sense to limit the spread of misinformation." □

Architects of self-rule accord hold reunion at Sea of Galilee

By Naomi Segal

JERUSALEM (JTA) — The architects of the Palestinian self-rule accords convened this week along the shores of the Sea of Galilee to mark three years since the first agreement was secretly initialed in Oslo.

No representatives from the Netanyahu government were at Monday's gathering, which included former Prime Minister Shimon Peres and Palestinian and Norwegian officials.

Explaining why no one from the current government attended, one official who spoke on condition of anonymity said, according to a news report, "It is not our deal."

A month after the secret deal was initialed, Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organization signed the Declaration of Principles on the White House lawn.

Labor Knesset member Yossi Beilin, who was a key figure in the secret talks in Oslo, said that Monday's gathering was not a celebration, but was not a funeral, either.

Aug. 19, 1993, "was very important. We changed the face of the region," he told Israel Radio.

"But I'm not sure if this government will really be able to reach a permanent solution with the Palestinians."

Netanyahu has stated his intention to honor the self-rule accords that the previous Labor government signed with the Palestinians.

But he has yet to implement a redeployment from the West Bank town of Hebron as stated in the Interim Agreement signed in September in Washington.

Netanyahu has also stated his opposition to the establishment of an independent Palestinian state.

"There is a danger that they won't find an agreement upon a permanent solution, seeing the government is not ready to withdraw in the West Bank at all," Beilin said.

While Labor Party members criticize Netanyahu for his hard-line stances, Jewish settlement leaders are now accusing him of continuing the policies of the previous Labor government.

Representatives from Hebron's Jewish community and other settler leaders held an urgent meeting this week in the nearby settlement of Kiryat Arba.

They decided to launch a campaign against the Hebron redeployment under the slogan, "The Redeployment From Hebron is Bad for the Jews."

Participants at the meeting concluded that "the government does not have the mandate to implement policies of the previous government, which the public rejected" in the elections.

The settler leaders also called on the government to strengthen the Jewish community in Hebron, where some 450 Jewish settlers live in fortified enclaves among a population of 100,000 Palestinians. □

Tensions between Israel, Syria rise amid warnings of conflict*By Naomi Segal*

JERUSALEM (JTA) — Weeks after Syria and Lebanon rejected a proposal from Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu for withdrawing Israeli troops from southern Lebanon, increasingly ominous warnings are emanating from Jerusalem and Syria.

The increase in saber-rattling on both sides has led several observers here, including the head of one of Israel's leading think tanks, to question whether a military clash between Israel and Syria can be far off.

The questioning intensified Monday, when reports surfaced in the Israeli press that Damascus had recently test-launched Scud C ground-to-ground missiles.

With a range of more than 300 miles, the missiles are capable of striking targets anywhere in the State of Israel.

On Tuesday, Netanyahu declared that the missiles did not in any way pose a new threat to the Jewish state.

"There is no basic change in the strategic capabilities of Syria," Netanyahu told reporters after he took part in a meeting of the Knesset Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee.

"Syria has been arming itself for quite some time," the prime minister added.

"What it's doing now is moving from purchasing to manufacturing."

Syria had obtained the Scuds, and a factory for manufacturing them, from North Korea, according to the Israeli daily Ha'aretz.

On Tuesday, in a move that appeared to be far from coincidental, Israel successfully test-launched a weapons system designed to destroy incoming Scuds: the Arrow 2 anti-missile missile.

It was the third test of the system being jointly developed by Israel and the United States.

And it was the first in which the Arrow struck a target missile.

Meanwhile, Israel's defense and foreign ministers stressed that Israel remains committed to peace negotiations with Damascus, even though Syria appeared to be signaling otherwise.

"If Syria wants peace, the tone and style is not with missiles or weapons like that," Foreign Minister David Levy said of the Scud tests.

'Drums of war'

He added that the Jewish state's "strategy is to reach peace."

"It has passed messages in that direction," the foreign minister said.

"We expect that Syria will prove its intention for peace by answering the Israeli message and we will be able to sit and talk peace."

Meanwhile, the official Syrian press Tuesday accused Israel of "beating the drums of war" and of "escalating tension and waving flagrant threats against Lebanon and Syria."

The sharp words came a day after Netanyahu toured southern Lebanon and warned of a possible escalation of hostilities on the border between Israel and Lebanon.

"We have proposed to Syria, Lebanon and Hezbollah to resolve this conflict," Netanyahu told reporters.

"If we don't, it will no doubt lead to an escalation which will be painful for the other side."

Netanyahu's statement echoed similar warnings issued by Israeli officials during the past week of the harsh

Israeli retaliation that would come if Hezbollah launched attacks on northern Israel.

The warnings came after the Israel Defense Force chief of staff, Lt. Gen. Amnon Shahak, told the Knesset Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee last week that Hezbollah might have obtained longer-range Katyusha rockets.

Earlier this month, Syria and Lebanon flatly rejected Netanyahu's "Lebanon First" proposal.

The proposal called for the withdrawal of Israeli troops from Lebanon in exchange for the disbanding of Hezbollah militias there.

Syrian President Hafez Assad viewed the proposal as an attempt by Netanyahu to avoid the central issue: an Israeli withdrawal from the Golan Heights in exchange for a full peace with Syria and Lebanon.

Netanyahu was quoted Tuesday as telling the Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee that Syria was using Hezbollah as a proxy to fight a war with Israel in southern Lebanon.

The head of the Jaffee Center for Strategic Studies, Ze'ev Maoz, said this week that Netanyahu's positions regarding the Israeli-Syrian negotiating track had increased the probability of war breaking out between Israel and Syria.

"The current position of Israel represents a complete withdrawal to before" the 1991 Madrid peace talks, Maoz told Israel Radio.

Maoz said Assad had come to believe that the Netanyahu government had abandoned the land-for-peace principle with regard to the Golan.

As a result, Maoz said, Assad would try to force a political solution through armed conflict.

Writing in the Israeli daily Ha'aretz this week, Maoz said that even if Syrian military capabilities were lower than Israel's, Assad could try to break the stalemated negotiations through a limited war.

"If the political deadlock continues for a long time, and Syria reaches the conclusion that there is no solution in the political option, it may reconsider the military option as a viable one," he wrote. □

IDF soldier killed in 'friendly fire'*By Naomi Segal*

JERUSALEM (JTA) — An Israeli soldier was killed and another seriously injured in southern Lebanon this week when they were mistakenly fired on by another group of Israel Defense Force soldiers.

The soldiers, belonging to the Givati brigade, were returning from patrol early Tuesday in the western sector of the security zone.

According to reports, the soldiers split into two groups because of fear of an ambush by gunmen from the Islamic fundamentalist Hezbollah while they were passing through the overgrown terrain.

At one point, one group of soldiers thought that there was movement in the bushes and opened fire before realizing that it was the other group of Israeli troops.

The dead soldier was identified as Staff Sgt. Valery Ganzman, 22, of Upper Nazareth.

Members of his family said Tuesday night that Ganzman had one week left of army service before his discharge.

The second soldier, who was taken to a hospital in Nahariya, was wounded in the chest and legs.

The soldier was listed in serious but stable condition.

Israeli soldiers have in the past inadvertently opened fire on each other in the tense southern Lebanon security zone. □

BEHIND THE HEADLINES
Gazans vent anger at Israel, Palestinian Authority leaders

By Gil Sedan

GAZA (JTA) — Two years after falling under the control of the Palestinian Authority, many residents here believe that the Israeli occupation of the Gaza Strip still exists.

The only thing that has changed, they say, is that the Israeli leash has grown longer.

True, Israeli soldiers can no longer be seen in Gaza City. The endless lines at the city's civil administration building are gone and voices on loudspeakers have ceased proclaiming a curfew every other day.

Widespread frustrations nonetheless persist.

When Palestinian Authority leader Yasser Arafat triumphantly entered Gaza in July 1994, some people complained that Gaza was still a jail and that only the warden had changed.

In the two years since, the complaint remains the same — and the numbers of those voicing it appears to have increased.

“Salam, salam, kulu kalam” — Peace, peace, it's all talk — said an elderly man on the beach promenade near the Shati refugee camp.

When the man began recounting his grievances, a friend hushed him, pointing to a nearby Palestinian policeman.

To a recent visitor on a tour of Gaza organized by the Tel Aviv-based International Center for Peace in the Middle East, the residents' fear of the authorities was palpable.

According to the repeatedly issued complaints of Palestinian civil rights groups, Arafat has yet to establish a Palestinian state, but he has already formed a police state.

Yola Haddadin, director of the Center for Rights and Law in Gaza, counted nine Palestinian prisoners who recently died of torture in Palestinian jails.

Palestinian leaders, as well as the average citizen, place the blame for the repressive security apparatus squarely at the man at the top.

In the same pigeonhole

“Arafat creates tension in the society,” said Haidar Abdel-Shafi, the statesman who in 1991 led the Palestinian delegation to the first round of peace talks in Madrid and now is an elected member of the Palestinian Council, the legislative body in the self-rule areas.

“Nobody feels comfortable, and we are very worried and angry that human rights principles are not respected.”

An outspoken critic of the self-rule accords and a bitter enemy of Arafat, Abdel-Shafi put the former Israeli authorities and the Palestinian leader in the same pigeonhole: “It seems that both Israel and the Palestinian Authority do not respect human rights.”

Opposition to Arafat has grown considerably in the past few months. In Gaza, the core of that opposition is the Hamas fundamentalist movement. In the West Bank, it is more widespread, including members of Arafat's own Fatah mainstream movement.

The Palestinians are increasingly disenchanted with Arafat's failure to bring them deliverance.

For most, the economic situation has worsened, mostly due to the closure that Israel imposed on the West Bank and Gaza when Hamas launched a series of terror attacks on Israel in February and March. Israel has eased the closure in recent weeks, but unemployment among Gazans is still estimated to be about 50 percent.

Because of strict security controls, Gaza residents

not only need permits to work in Israel; they must also get approval to travel abroad.

To cross the border from Gaza to Egypt, for instance, they need to pass first through the Palestinian checkpoint, then the Israeli and finally get the nod from Egyptian police. There is always a good chance that one of the authorities will not grant the requisite approval, and the would-be traveler simply has to go back home.

One might expect Gazans to be directing much of their frustration at Israel, but few people expressed such anger. The reason is that they are so dependent on Israel, because they realize, as Hisham Dasouki, a Palestinian official in charge of border passes, put it, “Without Israel we cannot exist.” The economy of Gaza is totally dependent on imports, mostly from Israel.

Dasouki said there were some 10,000 electrical appliances — washing machines, stoves, televisions — that the Israelis have prevented from entering the strip unless the Gazans pay the same rate of customs as Israelis do.

In theory, the Israelis have a case. They want to prevent the smuggling of cheap electric appliances from Gaza into Israel.

But the argument loses some steam when one considers that the average monthly salary in Gaza is \$250 — for those lucky enough to be on a payroll. The average Israeli salary is four times as much.

Despite the constant reminders of poverty, one can find areas of Gaza City that provide a spark of hope.

Industrious entrepreneurs — with Persian Gulf money in their pockets — have invested in tourism projects, such as the Nawrass Seagull Tourist Resort and three glamorous hotels that have been built in the city during the past two years.

But only a relatively small segment of the population — businessmen who have learned how to turn giant profits in dire times — can take advantage of such places as the five-star Windmill Hotel, which charges \$100 per night for a room.

It is also true that the city's streets are cleaner than ever before, a result of public works projects initiated by the Palestinian Authority with funds provided by international donors. For the first time in the history of Gaza, there are clearly posted street and traffic signs.

New apartment dwellings are being erected — a partial solution to the high rate of unemployment — but it remains an open question where the average citizen will find the money to live in them.

At Israel or Arafat?

Despair among Gazans runs deep, not only because many fear that the peace process is going nowhere, but also because they are so frustrated with Arafat's leadership.

The lack of progress in the peace process, the abuse of human rights, the growing economic hardships — all these factors have pushed people away from Arafat.

But just how far? Is a renewed intifada, or Palestinian uprising, just around the corner? And would it be directed at Israel or Arafat?

Almost everyone encountered during the visit here ruled out either possibility.

“I have a message to the Israeli people,” said the man at the Shati refugee camp: “Do not count on an internal Palestinian strife, because all the people here are brothers and cousins. Even if the present situation continues for 100 years, there will not be a civil war between the Palestinians.”

Bassem Id, a human rights activist, also discounted the possibility of an intifada, regardless of at whom it was directed. The reason he gave struck to the heart of the despair felt by many here: “The people are too tired and frustrated for another uprising.” □