

NEWS AT A GLANCE

■ Israeli security forces disclosed the identities of four of the five terrorists believed to have carried out two recent suicide bombings in Jerusalem. Officials said the breakthrough came after an arrest of suspected Hamas terrorists. [Page 3]

■ American state insurance commissioners established a committee to decide how to pressure U.S. subsidiaries of European insurance companies to pay claims to Holocaust survivors and their families. The commissioners set up the committee after hearing testimony from survivors.

■ Ten homeless families returned to Israel after spending nearly a month in Jericho, where they had sought temporary asylum from the Palestinian Authority. They left after being evicted from a Jewish Agency for Israel absorption center, where they had illegally moved in with other families.

■ New Jewish schools opened in Budapest and Vienna. Both schools are being financed by American philanthropist Ronald Lauder.

■ The American Jewish Committee took out a full-page advertisement in *The New York Times* asking why Israel is not allowed to sit on the United Nations Security Council. All of the 185 countries able to sit on the council are listed on one side of the page, while Israel, which has not been allowed to entry into one of the regional groupings, stands alone on the other side.

■ Former Israeli Prime Minister Shimon Peres announced the establishment of a peace center in his name, which will work to advance regional cooperation and peace efforts in the Middle East. Peres told a news conference in Tel Aviv that the creation of the center is especially needed now that the peace process has stalled.

■ An American doctor called for universal circumcision in Europe. In a report published in a medical journal, Dr. Edgar Schoen said circumcision protects against a variety of diseases. Only a minority of men are circumcised in Europe.

PROFILE**Just who is Irving Moskowitz?
A retired doctor-turned-bingo king**

By Matthew Dorf

WASHINGTON (JTA) — An Israeli doctor working in a Manhattan hospital asked his colleague last week, "Who's the prime minister of Israel?" "This week, of course, it's Dr. Irving Moskowitz," Joseph Frager told his questioner.

While they laughed, the real Israeli prime minister, Benjamin Netanyahu, locked horns with Moskowitz, the Miami millionaire who at least for the moment is setting Israel's political agenda.

Moskowitz threw Netanyahu's government into turmoil last week when he opened the doors of a house he had purchased in Ras al-Amud to three Jewish families.

After heated negotiations, Netanyahu convinced Moskowitz to kick the families out of the Arab neighborhood in eastern Jerusalem, on the Mount of Olives. Instead, 10 yeshiva students will guard and maintain the property.

For years, Netanyahu had supported Moskowitz's Jerusalem land purchases.

They have been close ever since Moskowitz was instrumental in opening a research institute named after Netanyahu's brother, Yonatan, who died during the famous Entebbe rescue effort.

Now, Netanyahu's longtime political supporter and friend has put the prime minister on the defensive and thrown yet another wrench into Israeli efforts to restart peace talks with the Palestinians.

To Frager, the president of the American Friends of Ateret Cohanim, which supports a yeshiva and land purchases in eastern Jerusalem, this makes Moskowitz "a champion, a hero in my eyes."

But to many Israelis, the soft-spoken Orthodox American Jew is no hero.

The Israeli press has vilified Moskowitz for using his money to pressure the government on Jerusalem.

Editorial cartoons last week depicted Moskowitz as a "Daddy Warbucks" figure, tossing matches from afar into the tinder box of Israeli-Palestinian relations.

Israeli peace groups hoisted banners asking, "How many wars have you fought in, Moskowitz?"

It was Moskowitz, after all, who is credited with pressing Netanyahu into opening the Hasmonean tunnel in Jerusalem's Old City last year. The move led to days of Palestinian rioting and the deaths of more than 70 people, including 15 Israelis.

A plaque with his name hangs in the tunnel.

A retired doctor who can't escape the spotlight

As Israelis examine how one man can so dramatically set their agenda, last week's incident has many wondering aloud, "Who is Irving Moskowitz?"

In short, he's a 69-year-old retired doctor of internal medicine who has lived in Miami Beach since 1980.

But as Netanyahu and others can testify, there is nothing short or simple about Moskowitz.

For years, he toiled in the background, supporting Jewish organizations seeking to strengthen Israel's sovereignty in Jerusalem.

He has given at least \$2.5 million to American Friends of Ateret Cohanim, a group dedicated to rebuilding the destroyed temple, where the Dome of the Rock stands today.

But few Americans or Israelis had ever heard of him until recently.

Moskowitz, who has shunned publicity, refused numerous requests to be interviewed for this article. But as he continues to work on his political agenda, Moskowitz cannot escape the spotlight.

Born in New York City and raised in Milwaukee, Moskowitz is the ninth of 12 children.

In a handful of interviews and speeches over the years, Moskowitz has said his experiences in Milwaukee had a profound impact on his life.

A city with a large German population, Milwaukee was not a very

comfortable place for a Jewish teen-ager during World War II, he has said.

Moskowitz's older brother, a mailman, regularly delivered anti-Semitic newspapers to homes along his route.

Like many teen-agers, Moskowitz used sports as an escape. After excelling as a star center fielder with a powerful bat — he hit clean-up — a local minor league team tried in vain to sign him.

But by then, Moskowitz had decided that medicine was his ticket to escape poverty.

He graduated the University of Wisconsin Medical School in 1952. Then 23, Moskowitz moved to California to begin his career as a doctor.

A few years later, Moskowitz bought his first hospital in California, the first in a series of shrewd business decisions.

Soon after, he visited Israel with his wife, Cherna. It would be the first of dozens of trips. Of his eight children, two live in Israel. Cherna owns a Judaica shop in a Miami mall.

As early as 1969, Moskowitz began to sell his hospitals to buy property for yeshivas in Jerusalem.

Moskowitz took great pride in his 1985 purchase of the Shepherd Hotel, just outside the Old City, for more than \$1 million.

The Mufti of Jerusalem once lived there, and Israeli police leased the building from Moskowitz during the intifada, the Palestinian uprising.

Just as he began running out of hospitals to sell to increase his holdings in Israel, he was offered a cash cow beyond his wildest dreams, earning him the label "bingo king."

Through the connections he built in the hospital business, Moskowitz came to Hawaiian Gardens, a tiny city near Los Angeles that sits on less than one square mile of land and has about 14,000 residents.

Celebrating 'Irving Moskowitz Day'

In 1972, the city celebrated "Irving Moskowitz Day" when he opened its first hospital.

Even today, he is one of the city's major benefactors, donating more than \$500,000 a year to social service agencies and a food bank.

So when the city faced the prospect of losing \$200,000 in revenue from its bingo parlor, the commissioners turned to Moskowitz and asked him to take over.

Under the arrangement, the city would get 1 percent of the gross receipts and Moskowitz's non-profit foundation, the Moskowitz Foundation, would reap any profits.

On Sept. 13, 1988 — exactly five years before Israel and the Palestinians signed their first peace accord — Moskowitz took over the bingo hall.

It was a move that changed his life — and ultimately, he hopes, the character of Jerusalem.

Through bingo profits, Moskowitz's charitable giving has soared from the thousands to the millions and propelled his foundation to one of the top 1,000 private foundations in the United States.

Moskowitz's foundation gave away \$57,000 in 1987.

In 1991 he gave away \$1.5 million, according to the foundation's tax returns. By 1994, he had given \$4.3 million, and about \$6 million in 1995. More current figures are not available.

Although his relations with Hawaiian Gardens — he never actually lived there — have suffered over the years, his bingo contract is not in danger. In fact, Moskowitz stands poised to win his current battle to open a card hall.

If successful, the Moskowitz foundation's income could once again soar.

An examination of the Moskowitz Foundation's 1994 tax return shows his close financial ties to American groups sympathetic to Israel's right wing.

In 1994, Moskowitz gave more than \$1 million to American Friends of Everest, a group he formed to purchase land in Jerusalem.

Among the other largest recipients were: American Friends of Ateret Cohanim — \$576,000; National Council of Young Israel — \$514,000; Zionist Organization of American — \$200,000; PRO-Israel — \$157,000; Center for Security Policy — \$85,000; and Americans for a Safe Israel — \$73,000.

In a 1996 interview with the Los Angeles Times, Moskowitz minced no words when he talked about Israeli politics. The peace process is "a slide toward concessions, surrender and Israeli suicide," he said.

I'm doing the "natural thing for a Jew," he said, trying to "save our nation."

Comparing Rabin to Chamberlain

The year before, he compared slain Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin to Neville Chamberlain, who sought to appease the Nazis.

"I was 10 years old at the time and still vividly remember the profound sadness that enveloped our home in the wake of the Munich signing. There was an atmosphere of mourning for the tragedy we knew would follow, since belligerent dictators can never be truly appeased," he told The Jerusalem Post in October 1995.

"Under political pressure at home and abroad or in the hope of being remembered in the history books — or simply out of sheer desperation — prime ministers can take steps in the name of 'peace' that actually lead to war."

More recently Moskowitz has defended his right to build in an Arab neighborhood of Jerusalem.

"If the peace process is incapable of digesting the presence of 50 Jewish families 860 yards from the Western Wall and barely a mile from the King David Hotel, then its fragility is indeed beyond repair," Moskowitz wrote in a letter to the editor of The Washington Post last week.

"To rule out the construction of a 50-unit Jewish apartment project on Mount of Olives because of its proximity to Arab residences is to enfranchise Yasser Arafat's thesis that Palestinians are incapable of living on common ground with Israelis in Jerusalem.

"That would be defined as racism anywhere outside the Middle East."

For now, Moskowitz has promised to continue his fight for the city.

When he visited the families in his Ras al-Amud home before they left, Moskowitz signed the guest book, "The people of Israel build their nation."

Moskowitz is also sitting on several other properties in Arab neighborhoods. He has sought government approval to build in Abu Dis, which was considered by some peace activists as a possible site of a future Palestinian capital.

Moskowitz also owns a now-closed hotel in the Sheikh Jarrah neighborhood that he reportedly wants to renovate and reopen.

Even if he delays some of his projects, Netanyahu may soon be faced with another housing grab in Jerusalem.

Ronn Torrosian, a spokesman for the families who moved into Ras al-Amud last week, said in a telephone interview from Israel that there is another Jewish American businessman who will turn over land in an Arab Jerusalem neighborhood to Jews.

"There's another Ras al-Amud to come in the next few weeks," he said. □

Mass arrests of Palestinians reveals identities of bombers*By Naomi Segal*

JERUSALEM (JTA) — Israel's recent mass arrests of suspected terrorists have netted a dramatic payoff.

The arrests, according to Israeli officials, helped the Shin Bet security service identify four of the five suicide bombers that carried out two recent terror attacks in Jerusalem.

Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu later placed a portion of the blame for the attacks on the Palestinian Authority, maintaining that the bombers had been released from Palestinian jails as part of a "revolving door" policy in which militants are let go shortly after their detention by Palestinian officials.

The four men identified by the Shin Bet on Tuesday lived in the West Bank village of Ashira Eshamaliya, in the Nablus area, according to Israel Television.

The village is in an area in which the Palestinian Authority has responsibility for all civil affairs, including public order, but in which Israel has overall security control.

The identifications made by the Shin Bet bolstered Netanyahu's charge that the bombers had not come from abroad, as Palestinian Authority Chairman Yasser Arafat has maintained.

Israeli officials said the breakthrough in the bombing probe came as a result of a recent wave of arrests of suspected Hamas terrorists and activists in the Nablus area and elsewhere in the West Bank.

Some 500 Palestinians have been detained since the two bombing attacks.

Three hundred of them were placed under administrative detention orders.

More than 100 suspected activists were arrested this week alone.

A senior official in the IDF central command was quoted as saying that one purpose of the crackdown was to "destroy, once and for all, the Hamas infrastructure in these areas.

"However, it is clear to us that without cooperation from Palestinian security forces, we will not be able to do that."

The 'final confirmation we needed'

After the Shin Bet announced the end of an identification effort that has taken weeks, Netanyahu said Tuesday that forensic specialists had received the "final confirmation we needed of visual confirmation from a family member."

Alleging that the bombers had been released from Palestinian jails, Netanyahu added that they had "topped a list of 88 wanted fugitives we submitted to the Palestinian Authority and demanded that it arrest.

"If they had, we could have saved the lives of many innocent civilians."

The Shin Bet identified the four as Muayeh Jarara, 23; Bashir Sawalha, 24; Tawfik Yassin, 25; and Yousuf Asholi, 22.

Two of those whom the Shin Bet said it had identified blew themselves up July 30 in Jerusalem's Mahane Yehuda market, killing 15 Israelis and wounding at least 170 others.

Two others carried out the Sept. 4 bombing on the nearby Ben Yehuda pedestrian mall, killing five Israelis and wounding more than 190.

The third bomber in the second attack has not yet been identified.

Israel Television reported that the four were wanted by Israel after being involved in a shooting attack two

years ago near Nablus, in which an army doctor and soldier were wounded.

At the time, the four fled to the Palestinian self-rule area in Nablus, where they were arrested by Palestinian police.

Palestinian officials maintain that the four had broken out of prison.

Shin Bet officials suspect that the explosives used in the two bombings were manufactured at a Hamas bomb-making factory uncovered earlier this year in Beit Sahour, near Bethlehem.

At the time, Israeli security officials were quoted as saying that they suspected a number of bombs made at the factory were already in the hands of terrorists and would be used in coming attacks. □

Postal workers win battle for time off on High Holidays*By Faygie Levy*

NEW YORK (JTA) — They won the battle, but the war continues for Florida Jewish postal employees who were denied time off for the High Holidays.

After receiving phone calls in support of the employees and intervention by the Anti-Defamation League, the manager of the U.S. Postal Service in Coral Springs, Fla., agreed to rework schedules so that anyone who needs the holidays off this year can take them.

There was "enough pressure to give [us] time off," said Sid Gradman, a Jewish postal carrier.

Postal officials declined to comment, but Karen Schultz, spokeswoman for the South Florida District Postal Service, said the manager found non-Jewish employees who were willing to switch days off with the Jewish employees.

"Everyone is quite happy with the situation," Schultz said.

The battle began earlier this month when Jewish employees were denied time off for Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur.

According to a postal regulation, no more than six people can take time off on the same day.

Of the nearly 100 people in the office, at least eight are Jewish.

Management claimed that six people had already asked and been approved for those days off.

Schultz had said the Jewish employees should have put in a request 60 days in advance, the earliest one can ask for a day off.

But the employees argued that under the previous management, they were able to come in anytime and ask for the holidays off and their request would be granted.

The current management took over last year.

Postal carrier Dan Rosner said the manager told him that he didn't like "to give out so much time over something like this."

Rosner said his boss made him feel that it was "bad practice to be a Jewish employee in the Coral Springs post office."

Management has warned the employees that next year, they will have to file for the time off 60 days in advance, and then vacation requests will be processed on a first come, first served basis.

Once again, some Jewish employees may have to fight for the time off.

This fight is "not resolved for the future," said Gradman, who hopes something can be done to resolve this issue permanently.

Rosner said he and the other Jewish employees are considering filing a discrimination suit against the post office to ensure that the incident does not recur. □

A call to action on day schools: Group seeks nationwide support

By Sid Singer
JUF News

CHICAGO (JTA) — Jewish communities across the country are being challenged to take up the gauntlet for day school funding.

A resolution intended to make funding for Jewish day school education a high communal priority will likely face delegates at the General Assembly of the Council of Jewish Federations when they meet in Indianapolis in November.

The proposed resolution — which commits communities to work to make quality day school education available to all Jewish children — came out of the first meeting of the National Jewish Day School Scholarship Committee held here on Sunday.

The committee is a newly formed coalition of representatives from 14 Chicago-area Jewish day schools, ranging from Reform to Lubavitch.

Participants in the conference, which attracted 170 Jewish educators, day school officials and federation leaders from around the country — also agreed to bring similar resolutions before local federations.

In a rare show of intradenominational unity, the conference drew delegates from the Reform, Conservative and Orthodox movements and received letters of support from the national leadership of each of those movements.

The premise of the conference, as stated by committee chairman George Hanus, was a simple one: Jewish day schools, which many American Jews view as the best antidote to assimilation, are seriously underfunded.

“Unless additional revenue sources are found,” said Hanus, president of Chicago’s Ida Crown Jewish Academy and a board member of the Chicago federation, “the day school system as we currently know it will be bankrupt.”

Because of the schools’ insolvency, he said, the children who attend are primarily from wealthy and upper-middle-class families. Many Jewish parents who would like to send their children to day schools simply can’t afford to, even with the modest scholarship assistance that many schools offer, he said.

‘Stepchild of American Jewish philanthropy’

The average day school tuition during the 1995-96 academic year was \$5,465 at Reform schools, \$6,083 at Conservative schools, and \$5,131 at Orthodox schools, according to “The Financing of Jewish Day Schools,” a recent study conducted by Dr. Marvin Schick and funded by the Avi Chai Foundation in New York.

Speaking to the conference, Schick of New York called day schools “the stepchild of American Jewish philanthropy.”

Conference participants discussed a variety of strategies for translating resolutions into more money for day school education. Schick suggested that federations and private philanthropies give more funding to day schools in the United States and less to Israel, and that more Jews support voucher and school choice plans.

Framing recommendations from a federation perspective was Steven Nasatir, president of the Jewish Federation of Metropolitan Chicago, which currently allocates nearly \$2.7 million to area day schools.

Nasatir stressed the need to find new sources of funding, rather than taking away from other needs.

Nasatir suggested a three-pronged approach: supplemental gifts to federations for day schools, in addition to annual campaign contributions; coordinated capital giving programs to offset costs of new and ex-

panded buildings; and federation help to develop — perhaps even provide seed contributions — for community-wide endowments for day schools.

Eli Genauer, a trustee of the Samis Foundation in Seattle, demonstrated the effectiveness of focused-giving strategies.

Briefing conference participants on the tuition-reduction program at Seattle’s Northwest Yeshiva High School, he said funds provided to the school from the Samis Foundation endowment had resulted in tuition being reduced by more than 50 percent — and a resulting increase in enrollment.

Rabbi Nathan Laufer, president of the Wexner Heritage Foundation and moderator of the conference, proposed that local day schools of all streams work with local federations to establish community endowments for day school education. He also proposed the idea of a national trust fund for day school education.

Laufer urged day school leaders to approach federations as allies, not adversaries.

“Don’t come in confrontationally,” he said. “Come in because you share a communal agenda.”

Hanus, who organized the conference, and Lawrence Friedman, chairman of the Chicago federation’s education committee, also urged participants to work within the federation system to accomplish their objectives.

At least one conference participant wondered whether a policy to strengthen the day school movement would cause communal tension, given the disproportionate day school enrollments of Orthodox Jews.

“We’re not interested in saving schools for Orthodox Jews,” Friedman responded. “We’re interested in saving schools for Jews.”

‘National honor roll’ planned

Laufer also urged conference participants to work toward enrolling more Jews in day schools of all denominations. “Day school education is one of the few things that has the possibility to reunite the community toward one commonality — the survival of the American Jewish community,” he said.

That view was shared by many of the out-of-town participants, who came from cities such as Baltimore, San Diego, Minneapolis and Indianapolis.

“We have to convince the Jewish population that the role a day school plays in establishing the Jewish identity of our children is really unique and unmatched by any other Jewish-affiliated program or institution,” said Jeff Wasserman of the Albert Einstein Academy in Wilmington, Del.

That, according to Hanus, is the impetus for passing resolutions both at the local and national levels.

Hanus said his committee would publish a “national honor roll” of federations that pass the proposed resolution, titled the Resolution for Individual Federations.

Leaders of all three denominations — Norman Lamm of Yeshiva University (Orthodox); Ismar Schorsch of the Jewish Theological Seminary of America (Conservative); and Eric Yoffie of the Union of American Hebrew Congregations (Reform) — sent letters endorsing the resolution, which promises that moral and financial support for day schools will be of the highest priority.

Additional action of his committee, he said, might include creating a clearinghouse of funding information and ideas; publishing a newsletter to report on the progress of local communities; and convening further meetings to move the day-school funding agenda forward.

“There’s an opportunity here,” said Schick. “Let’s not lose the moment.” □

(Pauline Dubkin Yearwood of the Chicago Jewish News contributed to this story.)