



Daily News Bulletin

Vol. 77, No. 151

Thursday, August 12, 1999

82nd Year

TOP NEWS IN BRIEF

Suspect wanted to 'kill Jews'

The suspect in Tuesday's shooting rampage at a Jewish community center near Los Angeles turned himself in to authorities in Las Vegas.

Buford O'Neal Furrow, 37, told investigators that he "wanted this to be a wake-up call to America to kill Jews," a source told the Associated Press. Furrow was a member of the white supremacist Aryan Nations, according to the Seattle Times, and the Simon Wiesenthal Center said that a book written by a former member of the American Nazi Party was found in a van believed to be used by Furrow. [Page 1]

Barak, Arafat may meet soon

Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Barak and Palestinian Authority Chairman Yasser Arafat may meet in the coming days to finalize a timetable for Israel's next withdrawals from the West Bank, according to Israeli press reports.

Israeli and Palestinian representatives were due to meet Wednesday to discuss the withdrawals called for under the Wye agreement.

Olympics book stirs controversy

The families of terrorist victims are pressuring American booksellers to refrain from selling a controversial book written by the mastermind of the 1972 Munich Olympics massacre.

"Palestine: From Jerusalem to Munich," by Abu Daoud, was published earlier this year in France and had been slated for release this summer by Arcade Publishing, but a publication date has not been officially set.

Abu Daoud, also known as Mohammed Oudeh, admits in the book that he planned the hostage-taking at the Games, which led to the murder of 11 Israeli athletes. [Page 4]

Israel 'eclipsed' by sun

Thousands of people gathered in Israel on Wednesday to watch the solar eclipse. In Jerusalem, crowds gathered beneath a special filtering canopy to watch the edipse.

In northern Israel, spectators gathered in the Gamla Nature Reserve to observe the behavior of birds who nest in a ravine at the site.

At the height of the edipse, 80 percent of the sun was covered from Israel's vantage point.

Suspect in JCC rampage has history of involvement in racist organizations

By Tom Tugend

LOS ANGELES (JTA) — When Buford O'Neal Furrow walked into the North Valley Jewish Community Center and opened fire Tuesday, he reportedly wanted his action to serve as "a wake-up call to America to kill Jews."

A source said the white supremacist, suspected in a shooting spree at the North Valley Jewish Community Center that injured five, made the comment as he turned himself in to FBI authorities in Las Vegas on Wednesday, 24 hours after the assault.

The gunman's attack at the center in the San Fernando Valley community of Granada Hills sent shock waves and demands for tighter security throughout the Jewish community, still tense from arson attacks on three Sacramento, Calif., synagogues on June 18.

Carli Morgenstern, 17, was one of three counselors watching over 14 kindergartners and first-graders in the "Aleph" classroom. Morgenstern said she heard the gunshots and then saw the wounded counselor run into the room, blood dripping down her leg. The other counselors frantically gathered the kids together and ran to the center's parking lot and then across the street before heading for the convalescent home next door.

Morgenstern said the center had held no fire drills and that the counselors had not received any training in how to handle an emergency.

"I never thought about security or that we didn't have a security guard," she said later. "It never bothered me. This is such a friendly place; everybody knows everybody else."

Responding to security fears, the United Jewish Communities and the Anti-Defamation League formed an alliance Wednesday to work with Jewish community relations councils to spread security awareness, especially as the High Holidays and the Jewish school year near. In the coming weeks, the groups will open a security hotline and will post the ADL's security handbook on the Internet.

Manuals for emergency planning and crisis management are regularly provided to staff at Jewish Community Centers Association affiliates.

In a news release, the JCCA advised all of its affiliates to contact their local law enforcement agencies and to take appropriate precautions. The statement commended the "the calm, concerned manner" with which Jewish community centers across the continent "dealt with the situation" and the Los Angeles staff at the center and the Los Angeles police and fire departments "for their swift and courageous response to this difficult event."

Most seriously injured was a 5-year-old boy, not yet identified, who was shot twice, one bullet piercing his abdomen, the other his foot. After undergoing six hours of surgery, the boy, whom doctors described as "a real fighter," was in serious but stable condition.

Lesser injuries were sustained by Isabelle Shalometh, 68, the center's receptionist; Mindy Finkelstein, 16, a camp counselor; and Joshua Stepakoff, 6.

Another injured 6-year-old boy was not identified at his parents' request.

Authorities said that they filed a warrant charging Furrow, 37, with five state counts of attempted murder and that he will be extradited to Los Angeles after an arraignment. Federal civil rights charges may also be brought.

Police and media reports say Furrow has had a history of mental problems, criminal assaults and has been affiliated with various racist and anti-Semitic groups. The Seattle

MIDEAST FOCUS

Israel clamps down on West Bank

Israel sealed off part of the West Bank after a Jewish settler was wounded in a shooting attack there. The settler was ambushed while he was driving in his car Tuesday evening near the Palestinian self-rule town of Jenin.

The attack came after a Palestinian twice drove his car Tuesday into a group of Israeli soldiers, wounding 12.

The attacker reportedly had no ties to terrorist groups, but had been reading the biography of a Hamas bomb-maker widely believed to have been killed by Israel.

Clinton speaks with Barak

President Clinton and Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Barak spoke by telephone on Tuesday to discuss the peace process, according to a White House official.

During the 25-minute conversation, the two leaders also spoke about Secretary of State Madeleine Albright's planned visit to the Middle East in September.

Dore Gold to step down

Israel's ambassador to the United Nations is expected to step down on Oct. 28.

Dore Gold, whose successor has not been chosen, will conclude his term after the kickoff events for this year's U.N. General Assembly.

Are Eichmann excerpts real?

Adolf Eichmann didn't hate Jews and didn't believe in the Nazis' race theory, according to excerpts purported to be from Eichmann's memoir published Wednesday in an Israeli newspaper.

But experts said it is impossible to know whether the excerpts printed in Yediot Achronot are genuine. Israel decided Tuesday to release Eichmann's actual memoirs, written while he was in an Israeli jail in 1962.

Times reported that Furrow was also a member of the white supremacist Aryan Nations.

The Los Angeles-based Simon Wiesenthal Center said a munitions-laden van, apparently abandoned by Furrow after the shooting, contained a book written by Richard Kelly Hoskins, a former member of the American Nazi Party and an adherent of the anti-Semitic Christian Identity movement.

"Hoskins believes that Jews are a satanic threat to civilization and that 'people of color' are subhuman," said Rabbi Marvin Hier, dean of the Wiesenthal Center.

Rabbi Abraham Cooper, associate dean of the Simon Wiesenthal Center, told CNN that Furrow had visited the center's Museum of Tolerance recently and was thrown out for "abnormal" behavior.

Furrow is a resident of Olympia, Wash., and reportedly once lived with Debbie Mathews, widow of Robert J. Mathews, founder of the hate group called The Order. Mathews was killed in 1984 when his hideout caught fire during a shootout with federal agents.

Some 22 Order members were accused of numerous crimes, among them the 1984 murder of Alan Berg, a Jewish talk-show host in Denver.

Thom Mrozek, a spokesman for the U.S. attorney's office in Los Angeles, told the Associated Press that federal prosecutors would also charge Furrow in the slaying of Joseph Iletto, 39, a postal worker killed in Los Angeles about an hour after the JCC shootings.

Iletto was found dead in a driveway. He had just delivered mail to a home and was returning to his truck when he was shot several times, Mrozek said.

The incident has also prompted renewed calls for stricter gun control laws.

Although few believe sweeping changes can be enacted, even in the wake of the string of assaults across the country, some U.S. lawmakers and gun control advocates say it is time for Congress to act on pending legislation that would impose some restrictions on gun sales.

The Senate has already passed a juvenile justice bill that would subject individuals purchasing guns at gun shows to background checks, ban the import of magazines with a capacity of more than 10 rounds and require that trigger locks or other safety devices be sold with handguns.

But the House of Representatives, following a fierce lobbying effort by the National Rifle Association, rejected those proposals in June.

In the wake of Tuesday's shooting, some Jewish activists are taking lawmakers to task.

"Congress' inaction has left loopholes in our gun control laws, but more importantly it has fostered the culture of violence that spawns tragic and potentially tragic events every week," said Rabbi David Saperstein, director of the Religious Action Center of Reform Judaism.

"We must both mitigate the availability of guns and work to mend our society, to create a nation where violence is not tolerated," he added.

The Jewish Council for Public Affairs, an umbrella body, said in an advisory sent to its member organizations that recent events "underscore the vital importance of enacting vigorous gun control measures to keep arms out of the hands of individuals who threaten the safety of our children and all members of society."

Jewish leaders slated to meet with President Clinton on Thursday are likely to discuss the need for gun control measures, as well as concerns about the recent spate of anti-Semitic attacks from California to Illinois.

President Clinton on Tuesday called the California attack "another senseless act of gun violence."

But he stopped short of calling for new gun legislation, saying only, "It calls on all of us not only to give our thoughts and prayers to the victims and their families, but to intensify our resolve to make America a safe place."

Meanwhile, the North Valley JCC, which normally welcomes 200 to 300 youngsters daily, vowed to carry on. Activities were transferred to a nearby church Wednesday and will be returned to the center as soon as the police allow. □

(JTA correspondent Daniel Kurtzman in Washington, JTA staff writer Julia Goldman in New York and Wendy J. Madnick of The Jewish Journal of Greater Los Angeles contributed to this report.)



Daily News Bulletin

Caryn Rosen Adelman, President
Mark J. Joffe, Executive Editor and Publisher
Lisa Hostein, Editor
Howard Levy, Managing Editor
Lenore A. Silverstein, Business Manager

JTA DAILY NEWS BULLETIN is published five days a week, except holidays, by the Jewish Telegraphic Agency Inc., 330 Seventh Ave., New York, N.Y. 10001-5010. For information about how to subscribe by e-mail, fax or regular mail, call (212) 643-1890, or visit our Web site at www.jta.org.
© JTA Reproduction only by previous arrangement.

JEWISH WORLD

Russian rabbi speaks out

Russia is not "responding adequately to political and violent anti-Semitism," said the chief rabbi of Moscow.

Noting a recent spate of anti-Semitic acts, including the July 12 knifing of a prominent member of the Moscow Jewish community, Pinchas Goldschmidt told a gathering of American Jewish leaders in New York that neither the Moscow city government nor the country's federal government is fulfilling its promises to provide security for Jewish sites in Russia.

At a news conference at Anti-Defamation League headquarters, Goldschmidt also formally announced the creation of a joint American-Russian institute to monitor anti-Semitism in Russia.

Brief filed in church-state case

The American Jewish Congress joined a coalition calling for a U.S. appeals court to overturn a decision upholding a clergy-only counseling program in a Texas school district.

The Beaumont Independent School District violated the constitutional guarantee separating church and state when it instituted a clergy-only student counseling program, the AJCongress and its partner agencies maintain in a friend-of-the-court brief.

The school district maintains that the clergy provide "especially powerful role models" for the students.

Seven Righteous Gentiles named

Israel's outgoing ambassador to the Baltics, Oded Ben Hur, recently presented Righteous Gentile awards to seven Lithuanians who helped rescue Jews during the Holocaust.

A total of 416 Lithuanians have now been honored for their wartime heroism.

Ben Hur has criticized the Baltic nation for its poor record of prosecuting suspected Nazi war criminals.

Women to get libido boost, too

A plant extract produced by Israeli Arab researchers to boost the libido of men and women is being touted as the new Viagra, the Israeli daily Ma'ariv reported.

According to the newspaper, the treatment contains the essence of a regional flower which has been traditionally used by Arabs to treat infertility.

One of the researchers, Khaled Khalil, an expert in pharmacology and herbal healing, said the product is being produced in capsule form.

He added that companies in Kuwait and Norway had expressed interest in purchasing the marketing rights.

Father recounts prayers, long drive to pick up son from shooting scene

By Tom Tugend

LOS ANGELES (JTA) — Prayer is part of the daily routine for Richard Macales. But when he thought his young son might be in danger from a gunman at his Jewish day camp, Macales' prayers took on a new urgency.

And they were answered.

Macales was working in his office at the University of California at Los Angeles, Tuesday morning when his mother called to say that there had been a shooting at the North Valley JCC, where Richard and Beverly Macales' 3-year-old son, David, attends nursery school.

Macales frantically phoned his wife at their home in Granada Hills, but couldn't find her.

To make matters worse, he had traveled to work in a van pool.

Toni Lawrence, Macales' boss, immediately offered to drive him to the scene.

Traveling north on the freeway "felt like the second longest drive of my life," Macales recalled. The first was 10 years ago, when his first child unexpectedly died of natural causes.

As more news of the shooting came over the car radio, Macales, a bearded, Orthodox Jew who wears a yarmulka, recited the Tehillim, the Psalms of David, frequently offered in time of danger.

Approaching the North Valley JCC, Macales had to park several blocks away because police had set up barricades all along the perimeter.

His son, David, a blue-eyed boy who also wears a yarmulka, somehow had managed to strike out on his own and was sitting quietly on a curb.

David cried "Abba," or Dad, and hugged his father, but otherwise seemed quiet and composed.

Recalling the moment, Macales said, "By saying the Psalms of King David, I was able to find my own little King David."

Then father and son were surrounded by television cameras and crews, including two from Israel.

But Macales' anxiety wasn't over. His other son, 2-year-old Aaron, attends the JCC nursery school three times a week, and Macales wasn't sure whether his wife had sent Aaron to school that day.

He finally tracked down his wife at his mother's house. She had been shopping, blissfully unaware of the crisis.

She reassured her husband that Aaron was with her.

Beverly Macales agreed that David had apparently survived the ordeal well.

"He just told me, 'Eema (Mom), I heard a loud pop, then the teacher told us to hold hands and we ran outside.' "

□

Australia conference may be boycotted

SYDNEY (JTA) — Jewish doctors and dentists in Australia may boycott a major conference, unless the town's mayor and a councilor retract anti-Semitic comments or resign.

Two weeks ago, Coffs Harbour Mayor John Smith was identified in the Sydney Morning Herald as a leader of the Christian Identity movement, an anti-Semitic, anti-black and anti-gay group based in the United States.

Smith and one of his strongest supporters, Councilor Bob Burton, both had said they did not accept that the Holocaust happened. Burton also said Jews are "not a productive race" and "they are a race of moneylenders."

The Ninth Biennial Conference of the Australasian Jewish Medical Federation, expected to attract close to 500 people, is scheduled for January 2000.

The president-elect of the federation, Les Schrieber, has publicly called on the people of Coffs Harbour not to re-elect Smith and Burton in elections scheduled for September 11.

□

Families want retailers not to sell Olympic massacre planner's book

By Daniel Kurtzman

WASHINGTON (JTA) — Families of terrorist victims are pressuring American booksellers not to sell a controversial volume written by the mastermind of the 1972 Munich Olympics massacre.

The issue has touched off debate between the retailers, who cite their First Amendment right to publish the book, and the families, who believe an accused criminal should not be given the chance to make money off his story.

Abu Daoud, also known as Mohammed Oudeh, admits in the book "Palestine: From Jerusalem to Munich" that he planned the hostage-taking at the Munich Olympics, which led to the murder of 11 Israeli athletes.

One of those killed was David Berger, a dual American-Israeli citizen from Cleveland who was a member of the Israeli Olympic weightlifting team.

Germany has issued a warrant for Abu Daoud's arrest. In June, Israel barred him from entering the West Bank, where he had been living for the past three years. Abu Daoud had been in Jordan, but his current whereabouts are unknown.

The book was published earlier this year in France and had been slated for release this summer by Arcade Publishing, but a publication date has not been officially set.

Following word of plans to release the book in the United States, the families of Americans killed in Palestinian terrorist attacks protested to the publisher and the nation's leading book retailers.

The Zionist Organization of America and former Ohio Sen. Howard Metzenbaum, who now serves as chairman of the Consumer Federation of America, also raised objections.

In a letter sent to the heads of Borders Group, Barnes & Noble, amazon.com and Crown Books Corporation, Metzenbaum, who had been a close friend of Berger, said the fact that Abu Daoud is walking free "is very painful to me."

"The idea that the terrorist stands to profit from the sale of a book in which he boasts about his role in the murder is all the more painful," he wrote.

In a letter to Jonathan Bulkeley, CEO of barnesandnoble.com, Stephen Flatow, whose daughter, Alisa, was killed in a 1995 suicide bombing attack in Israel, wrote: "Having myself experienced the tragic loss of a child to terrorists, I can well imagine the pain it will cause Dr. and Mrs. Berger to go to your Web site and see that you are selling a book in which the killer of their son boasts of the murder."

Arcade Publishing, based in New York, said it would look into the matter, but a representative did not return phone calls seeking comment.

Borders Group spokeswoman Ann Binkley said, however, she was told by the publisher that no publication date has been set, adding, "They don't know when — if ever — it will come out."

She also said if the book is published, Borders would carry "a limited number of copies" in some stores.

Refusing to sell the book would be "censorship," she said.

"One of our policies has always been that we respect our customers as intelligent individuals and we give them the right to choose what they buy, what they listen to and what they read," she

added. Lizzie Allen, a spokeswoman for amazon.com, said the book presents a "tough issue," but "basically our policy and our commitment is to the First Amendment and free speech and we will carry any book that is published as long as it is not illegal or banned."

At the same time, she said, "We will never promote a book like that, and that book will be very difficult to find."

Barnes & Noble did not return phone calls seeking comment, but in a letter responding to Flatow, Bulkeley of barnesandnoble.com wrote: "The guiding principle we use to determine what we carry is simple: we carry almost everything published, and we allow our customers to decide what to buy and read. To restrict or monitor that choice would mean deciding for them."

Responding to the letter in an interview, Flatow said, "It's certainly a form letter blowing me off. He didn't get the point of my letter at all."

Those who have raised objections to the potential sale of Abu Daoud's book stress that the issue should not be considered a matter of free speech.

"I am not questioning your legal right to carry Abu Daoud's book," Metzenbaum wrote in his letter, noting that state laws prohibiting killers from profiting from books or movies about their crimes do not necessarily apply to crimes committed overseas.

"But surely the spirit of such laws mandates that you refrain from selling such a book, and I appeal to your sense of moral judgment," he wrote.

Morton Klein, president of the ZOA, said booksellers make decisions all the time about which books are suitable for sale. Klein urged that Abu Daoud's book be rejected on moral grounds.

"If these book companies help killers of Americans make money from books," he said, "then we Americans should do what we can to make sure these book companies don't make money from us." □

Germany probes online booksellers

LOS ANGELES (JTA) — Germany is investigating whether the two largest Internet booksellers are illegally shipping Nazi and racist literature to customers in Germany.

A spokesman for the German Justice Ministry confirmed it is looking into a complaint by the Simon Wiesenthal Center that one of its German researchers had successfully ordered Adolf Hitler's "Mein Kampf" and the anti-Semitic "The Protocols of the Elders of Zion" from amazon.com and barnesandnoble.com.

Both books are prohibited in Germany and are not sold by the German affiliate of amazon.com.

However, a German customer can easily circumvent the law by ordering directly from U.S.-based sites and having the books sent to his home address.

Amazon.com followed up its confirmation of orders for Hitler's book and "The Protocols" by suggesting additional reading, including "White Power" by George Lincoln Rockwell, the late leader of the American Nazi Party.

Rabbi Abraham Cooper, associate dean of the Wiesenthal Center, initiated the complaint through letters to German Justice Minister Herta and Paul Daubler-Gmelin and to the CEOs of amazon.com and of Bertelsmann, the German media conglomerate that owns 50 percent of barnesandnoble.com. □