



# Daily News Bulletin

Vol. 77, No. 169

Wednesday, September 8, 1999

82<sup>nd</sup> Year

## TOP NEWS IN BRIEF

### **Baptist leaders: Pray for Jews**

Southern Baptist leaders in the United States are calling on members to pray during the High Holidays that Jews will convert to Christianity.

A prayer guide distributed by the Southern Baptist International Mission Board in Richmond, Va., urges Baptists to "pray for Jewish individuals you know by name." Some Jewish officials described the call as arrogant and offensive. [Page 3]

### **Bombers were Israeli Arabs**

Israel's Arab population should not be subject to wholesale discrimination because of the crimes of isolated individuals, Prime Minister Ehud Barak said.

"Extremists, as serious as they may be, will be dealt with as individuals," Barak told Israel Radio's Arabic service on Tuesday. "There is no place for generalizations." His comments came as police officials confirmed that the three people responsible for carrying out near-simultaneous car bombings Sunday in Tiberias and Haifa were Israeli Arabs. [Page 4]

### **Cabinet to mull withdrawal map**

Israel's Cabinet is expected to convene Wednesday to approve the first withdrawal from the West Bank called for in the agreement signed in Egypt over the weekend.

Under the terms of the pact, Israel will transfer 7 percent of West Bank land from sole Israeli control to joint Israeli-Palestinian control.

### **Book attacks wartime pope**

The author of a new biography of Pope Pius XII claims the wartime pontiff had a deep-rooted anti-Semitism that led him to refuse to openly condemn the Holocaust.

Historian John Cornwell cited secret Vatican records and the pope's own files to support his conclusions in "Hitler's Pope: The Secret History of Pius XII." The Vatican has consistently defended the conduct of Pius XII, claiming his behind-the-scenes activities saved thousands of Jews.

Because of the Rosh Hashanah holiday, the JTA DAILY NEWS BULLETIN will not be published Monday, Sept. 13.

## FOCUS ON ISSUES

### **Hate crimes, guns, religious freedom top the agenda for returning Congress**

By Daniel Kurtzman

WASHINGTON (JTA) — After a summer marred by anti-Semitic violence, Jewish lobbyists are vowing to push legislators to enact stricter laws to combat hate crimes and control guns.

As Congress returns from its August recess, both efforts are likely to garner a high profile, although it remains unclear whether meaningful changes will be adopted.

Ensuring greater protections for free religious practice and maintaining current spending levels for social service programs are also key concerns for the Jewish community on the domestic front, while efforts to contain Iran and secure funding for Israel and the Palestinians to implement the Wye River land-for-peace deal will be the focus of activity in the international arena.

Gun control, meanwhile, is shaping up as the toughest battle.

The Senate has already adopted 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.

While most Jewish activists continue to back those proposals, some are urging Congress to go much further, particularly following the recent spate of deadly assaults across the country, including shooting rampages targeted at Jews in Illinois and California.

One effort, led by the American Jewish Congress, seeks to build grass-roots support for sweeping federal gun control legislation.

The group hopes to rally the religious community and members of Congress around proposals requiring all gun buyers to pass background checks and for all guns to be licensed and registered, much like cars.

"The problem is that Congress has failed to enact effective gun control legislation and we believe, as many do, that there are a substantial number of lawmakers who would support meaningful gun control legislation if they had the chance to do so," said Matthew Dorf, director of the AJCongress' Washington office.

The organized Jewish community has been calling for more stringent gun control measures for years, but what was once considered something of a low-priority issue has taken on a new sense of urgency.

"There were lots of members of the Jewish community who had glazed eyes when we talked about gun control and gun safety issues in the past, and unfortunately I think Buford Furrow and Benjamin Smith have gotten the attention of the Jewish community as to why gun control is a Jewish issue," said the Anti-Defamation League's Washington counsel, Michael Lieberman, referring to the white supremacists suspected in the shootings of Jews and other minorities in California and Illinois.

At the same time, recent hate crimes have also generated momentum for legislation aimed at strengthening the federal hate crimes statute.

In July the Senate unanimously approved the Hate Crimes Prevention Act, which allows the federal government to prosecute hate crimes sparked by a victim's sexual orientation, gender or disability.

Current federal law applies only to crimes motivated by race, color, religion or

## MIDEAST FOCUS

### Pollard petitions high court

Convicted spy Jonathan Pollard is petitioning Israel's Supreme Court, demanding that Prime Minister Ehud Barak take steps to secure his freedom.

Pollard, a former U.S. naval intelligence analyst serving a life sentence for spying for Israel, maintains that Barak has done nothing to seek his release.

### Law sought to soften ruling

Right-wing Israeli lawmakers said they will introduce legislation to soften a landmark Supreme Court ruling that bars the use of physical force in interrogations carried out by the Shin Bet domestic security service.

Critics of the court's decision, which was handed down Monday, have said the restrictions make it difficult for the security service to prevent terror attacks against Israeli targets.

### Saddam planning for papal visit

Iraqi President Saddam Hussein is ordering the renovation of the city Ur, the biblical birthplace of Abraham, Baghdad newspapers reported Tuesday.

The renovations would come before an expected trip by Pope John Paul II to Ur as part of millennial celebrations.

The planned papal visit to Iraq has drawn criticism from U.S. and Jewish officials, who fear Saddam will exploit the trip for political purposes.

### Jets strike deep in Lebanon

Israeli jets struck deep inside Lebanon on Tuesday, hitting an area in the northeastern corner of the country near the Syrian border.

### Army's chief rabbi to retire

The chief rabbi of the Israeli army submitted his resignation, ending 23 years in the position. Gen. Gad Navon, 78, cited his age and health as being among the reasons for his decision.

national origin.

The House has already held hearings on the measure, but it remains unclear whether there will be enough support to overcome opposition from conservative Republicans, who have argued that the bill designates special classes of citizens who are already protected under existing state laws against violence.

On the religious freedom front the Jewish community's long-standing goal of ensuring that Americans can practice their religion free from government intrusion faces an uncertain fate.

After the House passed the Religious Liberty Protection Act in July, activists will be turning their attention to the Senate.

The bill, crafted following a 1997 U.S. Supreme Court decision that struck down the protections for religious practice contained in the Religious Freedom Restoration Act, appeared at the outset to be relatively uncontroversial.

A wall-to-wall coalition of religious and civil liberties groups, including every major Jewish organization, formed in support of the bill.

But as the measure moved through the House earlier this year, support began breaking down among Democrats amid a dispute over whether religious liberty or civil rights laws should take precedence when the two come into conflict.

The coalition now also risks fracturing over the same concern.

At issue is the question of whether the proposed legislation could be used to justify violations of state or local anti-discrimination laws.

Opponents argue that landlords and employers in states and cities with laws prohibiting discrimination against homosexuals could invoke their religious principles as a defense for refusing to rent to or hire gays and lesbians.

Rep. Jerry Nadler (D-N.Y.), an original sponsor of the bill who ultimately voted against it, encapsulated the concerns many have expressed over the legislation when he said, "RLPA should be a shield for the religious liberty of all — not a sword against the civil rights of some."

Jewish activists, meanwhile, will also be focusing their attention on a host of other issues in the domestic and international arenas, among them:

- **Social spending:** As the Clinton administration and Congress try to complete a budget agreement, Jewish activists intend to push to secure more funding for social service programs. Republican lawmakers have proposed scaling back social service block grants to the states and other programs that help fund local federation agencies, Jewish nursing homes, hospitals and various human services.

Diana Aviv, director of the United Jewish Communities' Washington office, criticized Congress for calling for budget caps that would necessitate "harsh" cuts in such programs, and said her organization intends to urge lawmakers to use money in the budget surplus not earmarked for social security to at least maintain funding for the programs at current levels.

- **The Ten Commandments:** In June the House adopted an amendment to the juvenile justice bill that permits states to allow the display of the Ten Commandments in schools and other public places. The move, which some lawmakers said was aimed at instilling children with traditional values in the wake of school shootings, has drawn swift condemnation from Jewish groups and church-state watchdogs.

The Senate did not include the provision in its version of the legislation, and activists say they will lobby to have it struck from the final bill.

- **Containment of Iran:** Pro-Israel activists will be pushing for passage of the Iran Non-Proliferation Act, which seeks to keep Russia from helping Iran develop weapons of mass destruction. The bill would condition future U.S. payments to Russia to help Moscow meet its obligations for participation in the international space station project on Russian compliance in checking the flow of dangerous technologies to Iran.

- **Aid to Israel and the Palestinians:** Activists also plan to urge Congress to approve the \$1.2 billion in special aid for Israel and \$400 million for the Palestinians that President Clinton promised last year in return for implementation of the Wye agreement. The money has not yet been included in foreign aid legislation.

- **Holocaust assets:** Jewish groups are supporting legislation that would exempt Holocaust survivors from paying federal income taxes on payments stemming from settlements of Holocaust-era claims. □



## Daily News Bulletin

Shoshana S. Cardin, *President*

Mark J. Joffe, *Executive Editor and Publisher*

Lisa Hastein, *Editor*

Howard Lovy, *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](http://www.jta.org).

© JTA Reproduction only by previous arrangement.

## JEWISH WORLD

### More German firms to join fund

German Chancellor Gerhard Schroeder met Tuesday with representatives of the nation's leading firms to discuss ongoing negotiations for compensating Nazi-era slave laborers. Nineteen additional firms agreed to contribute to a settlement fund, bringing the total to 35 industrial participants.

But the nation's negotiator with victims groups, Otto Lambsdorff, later said the number was still too low: "There was hardly a German company that did not use slave or forced labor during World War II."

### Minister cites Shoah-era woes

The embarrassment that Switzerland suffered between 1996 and 1998 over disclosures of its financial dealings with the Nazis could have been avoided if the Alpine nation had a larger military intelligence service, according to the Swiss defense minister.

A beefed-up intelligence community could have alerted the government to the importance of the disclosures and the effect they could have on Switzerland's reputation, Adolf Ogi said. His comments came amid a scandal hitting the intelligence community that has some Swiss citizens questioning whether the country needs an intelligence service at all.

### Shanghai shul plans services

The Ohel Rachel Synagogue in Shanghai plans to hold its first Rosh Hashanah service in 47 years. The synagogue serves some 200 businessmen, diplomats and journalists who reside in Shanghai. First Lady Hillary Rodham Clinton and U.S. Secretary of State Madeleine Albright were among those attending a ceremony marking the restoration of the synagogue in June 1998.

### Reform center opens in Moscow

Russia's first Reform Jewish community center was dedicated this week in Moscow. The center includes a synagogue and Hebrew school as well as special programs for young and elderly people. The center also houses an institute for social workers. On completion of the institute's two-year program, 21 men and women from Russia, Ukraine and Belarus will work in some of the 62 Reform congregations that have sprung up in recent years across the former Soviet Union.

### Director admits Hitler fascination

Film director Ingmar Bergman says he was enthralled by Adolf Hitler as a young man but that he underwent a change of heart after seeing photos of concentration camps, according to a forthcoming book.

Bergman, 81, recounts his past in a chapter of journalist Maria-Pia Boethius' "Honor and Conscience," which discusses whether Sweden was genuinely neutral in World War II.

## Southern Baptists urge holiday prayers that Jews will find Jesus

By Julie Wiener

NEW YORK (JTA) — The High Holidays are traditionally a time of Jewish soul-searching. But during this year's festivities, a number of evangelical Christians will also be eyeing those souls.

In an effort Jewish leaders describe as "arrogant" and "offensive," an organization that claims to represent almost 16 million Southern Baptists is distributing a new booklet offering suggestions on how to pray that Jews find Jesus.

The booklet, titled "Days Of Awe," offers background information on Jewish traditions around the High Holidays and urges Baptists to "pray for Jewish individuals you know by name."

The booklet offers prayers for each day from Rosh Hashanah to Yom Kippur, asking Baptists to focus prayers on Jews of different countries each day, although it does not include American Jews.

For example, on the first day of Rosh Hashanah, the book suggests Christians pray for the Jews of Israel.

"On Rosh Hashanah, when observant Jews around the world begin 10 days of seeking God, Southern Baptists will be praying they find his Son," according to an article about the effort in the Baptist Press, which is the publication of the Southern Baptist Convention.

The same article quoted Randy Sprinkle, director of the convention's International Mission Board, as saying that the effort is "an act of love."

"Christian intercessors are people of love," he is quoted saying. "They love the Jewish people, even scattered across the earth as they are, because God first loved the Jewish people."

The group also targets other non-Christians. It published a similar guide to help Christians pray for Muslims during Ramadan and plans to publish guides for prayer efforts focusing on Hindus and Buddhists.

Jewish critics see the prayer effort as an outgrowth of the convention's vote three years ago to direct energies and resources toward converting Jews to Christianity.

Rabbi A. James Rudin, national interreligious affairs coordinator for the American Jewish Committee, said this is the first such prayer effort he knows of timed to coincide with the Jewish High Holidays.

"Many Southern Baptists, particularly politicians, want to put the Ten Commandments in schoolrooms and courtrooms, but this program counters two of the commandments: thou shalt not steal and thou shalt not covet," said Rudin, saying the action was equivalent to stealing Judaism from Jews and "expropriating the Jewish religion."

"It's particularly offensive and it's not going to work," he said.

He said the International Mission Board does not represent all Southern Baptists, noting that the denomination includes those with more moderate beliefs.

Rabbi Eric Yoffie, president of the Reform movement's Union of American Hebrew Congregations, said, "We are deeply offended" by the effort.

"We are particularly saddened that this campaign comes during the holiest time of the Jewish year, shortly after a number of violent, anti-Semitic acts have been committed in cities throughout America," he said.

James Beasley, the director of the Richmond, Va.-based International Mission Board's resource center, said that "a large number" of Southern Baptist congregations had requested copies of the prayer guide, but did not give an exact count.

Asked to respond to Jewish criticisms of the effort, Beasley referred to the comments of Don Kammerdiener, the International Mission Board's executive vice president, in the introduction to the prayer guide.

Kammerdiener acknowledges that "many Jewish leaders reject such efforts as being wrongheaded, arrogant or even contributing to the spiritual and cultural equivalent of the holocaust."

But, he writes, "the Bible is clear in giving Christ's followers guidance regarding the necessity of sharing the gospel with the Jews." □

**NEWS ANALYSIS****Wave of attacks revive concerns about Israeli Arabs' radicalization***By Gil Sedan*

JERUSALEM (JTA) — Just as Israel agreed to release hundreds of Palestinian security prisoners and just as the High Court of Justice ruled against some interrogation methods used by Israeli security service officials against Arab suspects, terrorism struck again.

This time around, however, it was not Palestinians from the territories who were involved in three incidents that took place over the past two weeks.

The crimes were carried out by Israeli Arabs.

On Sunday — hours after Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Barak and Palestinian Authority Chairman Yasser Arafat signed an agreement in Egypt for advancing the peace process — near-simultaneous car bombings occurred in Tiberias and Haifa.

By Tuesday, Israeli police confirmed that the three who carried out the bombings were Israeli Arabs.

And last week, a 20-year-old Israeli Arab confessed to killing a young Israeli couple who were hiking in a forest in northern Israel because he "wanted to kill Jews."

Although Israeli officials — Jews and Arabs alike — were quick to say that the entire Israeli Arab population should not be condemned for the crimes of a few, the incidents prompted serious concerns.

First, as has happened in the past whenever there were any advances in the peace process, there was a resurgence of terror against Jewish targets.

Second, the attacks renewed concerns about the growing alienation of some members of Israel's Arab community, who make up one-fifth of the population of the Jewish state.

Third, Israeli security officials pointed to the growing radicalization of a political group that has a strong following in the Israeli Arab community — the Islamic Movement.

Prime Minister Ehud Barak was among those who said that Israel's Arab population should not be subject to wholesale discrimination because of the crimes of isolated individuals.

"Extremists, as serious as they may be, will be dealt with as individuals," Barak told Israel Radio's Arabic service on Tuesday. "There is no place for generalizations."

Israeli Arab legislator Talab el-Sana of the United Arab List sounded the same theme, cautioning that "one should not blame the entire Arab population in Israel."

But at the same time, he added, the involvement of Israeli Arabs in the attacks should lead to some "serious soul-searching."

Sunday's car bombings, still a subject of an ongoing police investigation, have prompted theories that Hamas recruited Israeli Arabs to carry out their missions because of an ongoing clamp-down on their activities in the territories by Israeli and Palestinian security officials.

The two car bombs apparently exploded prematurely, killing the two occupants in the car in Tiberias and seriously wounding an Israeli Jewish woman who was passing by.

An almost simultaneous explosion in Haifa killed the driver.

It remains unclear whether the bombers were recruited by any organization or acted on their own, but the incidents mark the first

time that Israeli Arabs were believed involved in attempted suicide bombings.

In the case of Abdullah Aghbariya, who confessed to murdering a young Israeli couple last week, it seems clear that he acted on his own.

Just the same, he told his interrogators that recently he had read a number of religious books that contained sharply worded attacks against the state, blaming the Jews for heresy and Israel for having unlawfully confiscated Arab land.

Aghbariya, like Sunday's three car bombers, did not live in a vacuum. All of them may well have been motivated by a growing anti-Israel rhetoric.

Such rhetoric comes not only from the militant Palestinian groups Hamas or Islamic Jihad, which are based in the territories and in neighboring Arab lands, but from some elements of the Islamic Movement in Israel itself.

Aghbariya came from Musherfeh, an Arab village in Israel's Wadi Ara region.

About a year ago, local residents engaged in violent clashes with the police over an army plan to confiscate Arab land for a military training base. Following the clashes, the land confiscation plan was put on hold. Just the same, the incident created scars among the local population.

Although Aghbariya was not a member of the Islamic Movement, Wadi Ara is the leading hotbed of Muslim nationalism in Israel. The village of Musherfeh is actually a suburb of Umm el-Fahm, the second largest Arab town in Israel after Nazareth.

The mayor of Umm al-Fahm is Sheik Raed Salah Mahajneh, leader of the radical wing of the Islamic Movement in Israel, which boycotts formal participation in Israel's wider political life.

In contrast to moderate elements in the movement that have joined forces with non-religious groups to form the United Arab List, the largest Arab party in the Knesset, radical Muslims in Umm el-Fahm have deliberately stayed out of Israeli politics to underscore their alienation from the Jewish state.

The Islamic Movement has developed its own social services — including kindergartens, medical services and libraries — as a substitute for what it says are insufficient services provided by the state.

Although Israeli security officials said the Islamic Movement was not involved in last week's murders, they expressed concern that the group was creating an atmosphere in which people like Aghbariya would be motivated toward acts of violence.

"What is worrying about this story," said an unnamed security source, "is the fact that the Islamic Movement allows for the growth of weeds like Aghbariya."

Sheik Abdullah Nimer Darwish, one of the leaders of the Islamic Movement in Israel, said that involvement of Israeli Arabs in terrorist attacks should be condemned with no "ands, ifs or buts."

The murders committed by Aghbariya, as well as the involvement of other Israeli Arabs in Sunday's attacks, will now create a new challenge for Israeli security officials as they attempt to clamp down on terror.

At the same time, it may well provoke some of the soul-searching that legislator Talab el-Sana called for — from Israeli officials as they deal with Arab citizens of the Jewish state, and from leaders of the Israeli Arab community, who may have to become more circumspect in their anti-Israel rhetoric. □