



Daily News Bulletin

Vol. 78, No. 186

Tuesday, October 3, 2000

83rd Year

TOP NEWS IN BRIEF

Death toll in clashes rises

U.S. Secretary of State Madeleine Albright is slated to meet with Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Barak and Palestinian Authority President Yasser Arafat on Wednesday in Paris in an attempt to end the ongoing violence in Israel, the West Bank and Gaza Strip.

The first Israeli Jewish civilian was killed in clashes Monday, bringing the number who have died in the fighting between Israelis and Palestinians to at least 45.

Meanwhile, thousands of Jordanian protesters called on their government to sever ties with Israel as anti-Israel demonstrations spread to both the Hashemite Kingdom and to Egypt. [Page 1]

Pope tries to make amends

Pope John Paul II tried to patch up strained relations with other religious leaders in the wake of a recent Vatican document that rejected the idea that other religions could be equal to Roman Catholicism. [Page 2]

Clinton, Putin note new year

President Clinton applauded Russian Jewish efforts to rebuild community life there in a Rosh Hashanah message to the Russian Jewish community.

In the statement, Clinton also said Russia's support for religious freedom and interethnic tolerance will directly affect "its standing in the international community and our ability to support Russia's international integration."

Meanwhile, Russian President Vladimir Putin sent Jewish New Year's greetings to the chief rabbis of two Jewish umbrella organizations.

Putin's greetings to the Federation of Jewish Communities of Russia and the Russian Jewish Congress, in which he mentioned the importance of preserving Judaism and keeping interreligious peace, may be an attempt to reconcile these two rival groups.

Israeli kayaker captures bronze

Israel won its only medal of the 2000 Olympic Games when kayaker Michael Kolganov earned a bronze medal in the men's K1 500-meter sprint.

The medal won on Sunday by Kolganov, an immigrant from the former Soviet Union and a member of Kibbutz Degania Bet, partially erased a disappointing Olympics by Israeli athletes.

Israel holds Palestinian leaders responsible for the deadly clashes

By Gil Sedan

JERUSALEM (JTA) — The catalyst for a spate of violence here may have been an Israeli politician's visit to a Muslim and Jewish holy site, but Israeli officials are holding Palestinian leaders directly responsible for the bloodshed.

At least 45 people have been killed, mostly Palestinians, in rioting that touched off Sept. 28 when Likud Party leader Ariel Sharon visited the Temple Mount in Jerusalem.

Bloody riots on the Temple Mount spread to the West Bank, Gaza Strip and parts of Israel, where Israeli Arabs launched their own actions against Israel.

Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Barak is urging Palestinian Authority President Yasser Arafat to intervene to end the clashes.

The general consensus in the Israeli government is that Arafat orchestrated the riots in the West Bank and Gaza Strip for his own political purposes.

In contrast, riots in Israel proper were seen as spontaneous and led by street gangs, with no clear guiding hands.

Acting Foreign Minister Shlomo Ben-Ami blamed the Palestinian Authority for the clashes, but stressed that one should not allow the tragic clashes to derail the peace process.

Although similar confrontations have occurred in the past, the riots over the Rosh Hashanah holiday were unprecedented in their magnitude and in the use of arms.

Palestinian police opened fire on Israel Defense Force soldiers in Gaza, Ramallah and Nablus.

The IDF responded with live fire, the use of gunships and missiles.

As the fighting intensified Monday, Israeli troops rolled out tanks.

An Israeli Jewish man was shot and killed on the road to the West Bank settlement of Ariel, reportedly when he stopped to change a tire.

The man, not immediately identified, was reportedly the first Jewish civilian killed in the clashes.

The White House said Sunday it would head an inquiry of Israeli and Palestinian security officials to determine who caused the violence. They won't be able to meet, however, until the situation calms down.

The main points of confrontations in the territories were in the Netzarim junction in the Gaza Strip, the Beit-El junction near Ramallah and Joseph's Tomb at the entrance to Nablus, a Palestinian town where a group of yeshiva students maintain a presence.

Israeli police officer Midhat Yussuf died in an exchange of fire in Nablus.

Anger heated up inside Israel proper, following the broadcast of pictures of Palestinian Mohammad al-Darrah, 12, who was shot to death at the Netzarim Junction — apparently by Israeli fire — during an exchange between Israeli soldiers and Palestinian policemen.

Inside Israel, rioters closed off traffic arteries in Arab towns — and even on a main street in downtown Jaffa, where a small community of 20,000 Arabs lives.

Arab youth confronted police with stones and bottles, and police reported some cases of the use of live firearms and Molotov cocktails.

Barak said the escalation among Israel's Arabs was a "very serious development" and that the closing off of highways and disruption of everyday life inside Israel was "unacceptable."

He urged the law enforcement agencies "to guarantee order." Barak also called on the Israeli Arab public not to follow the views of radical forces, and urged them to abide

MIDEAST FOCUS

Poll: Arabs won't follow accords

Most Arabs in Syria, Lebanon and Jordan refuse to consider themselves personally bound by peace agreements with Israel, according to a poll conducted by the American University of Beirut.

Respondents were suspicious of the peace process and Israel's motives, and regarded recent accords with Israel as a temporary truce rather than a permanent end to hostilities.

Barak: Russia should get involved

Israel's prime minister said Russia should increase its involvement in the Middle East because there are so many Russian-born Israelis.

Ehud Barak's comments were broadcast Saturday on Russian state television in what was seen by some observers as a move to court the Russian emigre community, which makes up about 20 percent of the Israeli electorate.

Israel's population density high

Israel's population density is among the highest in the world, with an average of 278 people per square kilometer, according to the Statistical Yearbook just issued by the Israeli government.

The nation's total population is 6.3 million, up 2.5 percent this year, with immigration accounting for 34 percent of the growth.

Jews account for approximately 82 percent of Israel's population.

Israelis reportedly hurt in Prague

Several Israeli protesters detained during recent demonstrations in Prague against the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank were beaten in prison, according to protest organizers.

The Israeli Embassy in Prague said up to five Israelis were among more than 850 arrested during the protests, but added that the police had acted "very decently."



Daily News Bulletin

Shoshana S. Cardin, *President*

Mark J. Joffe, *Executive Editor and Publisher*

Lisa Hostein, *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.
© JTA Reproduction only by previous arrangement.

by the law. Barak stopped short of criticizing Sharon for his visit to the Temple Mount, but one senior Israeli official told The New York Times, "It's clear to everyone that it's the Sharon show that created the original damage."

U.S. Secretary of State Madeleine Albright also criticized Sharon for his actions.

Israeli columnist Nahum Barnea wrote Sunday that it was true that Sharon ignited the match, but it was Arafat who provided the explosives.

"This was an impressive cooperation between the Likud and the Palestinian Authority, one might say the beginning of a wonderful friendship," Barnea wrote.

Israeli columnist Ron Ben-Yishai wrote that Arafat had been searching for a development that would tilt world public opinion back toward him. Sharon provided that opportunity, he wrote.

Sharon, meanwhile, said he shares no responsibility for the violence.

"This has nothing to do with me," Sharon told The Washington Post. "It's the result of a pre-planned campaign by Arafat." □

Pope says church document misinterpreted as 'arrogance'

By Ruth E. Gruber

ROME (JTA) — Pope John Paul II is trying to patch up strained relations with other religious leaders after a controversial Vatican document rejected the idea that other religions could be equal to Roman Catholicism.

Clearly concerned that the negative reaction to last month's document could take a heavy toll on the course of interreligious dialogue, the pope devoted much of his weekly Sunday message to the faithful to damage control.

John Paul reaffirmed his support of the Sept. 5 document, but said there had been "many wrong interpretations" of it. He said he hoped misunderstandings could be overcome.

The document repeated Roman Catholic Church teachings that non-Christians are in a "gravely deficient situation" regarding salvation and that other Christian churches have "defects."

But the pope said it is wrong to interpret the document to mean that non-Christians are denied salvation.

He added that it had not intended to express "arrogance which shows contempt for other religions."

In fact, the pope said, the Vatican had been trying to help the process of interfaith dialogue by "clarifying essential Christian elements" in order to lay firm foundations for interreligious contacts.

"Dialogue without foundations," he said, "would be destined to degenerate into empty verbosity."

The document in question was issued by the Vatican's Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith.

Protest over its contents was one reason why Rome Jewish leaders pulled out of a Catholic-Jewish dialogue seminar that had been scheduled for Tuesday.

But the document provoked an outcry from Protestant leaders, as well as from Jews.

Other Christian leaders, in fact, were especially bitter, as the document seemed to imply that Roman Catholicism is the only true form of Christianity.

The archbishop of Canterbury, leader of the world's 70 million Anglicans, was particularly vocal in branding this position unacceptable. □

ADL warns Lieberman on Farrakhan

NEW YORK (JTA) — The Anti-Defamation League is warning Democratic vice presidential candidate Joseph Lieberman that if he were to meet Nation of Islam leader Louis Farrakhan, he would be legitimizing a "bigot, an anti-Semite and a racist."

The warning follows Lieberman's comment on a radio program that he would be willing to meet Farrakhan. □

JEWISH WORLD

BEHIND THE HEADLINES

U.S. Supreme Court actions may provide hint on prayer, vouchers

By Sharon Samber

WASHINGTON (JTA) — Despite a dearth of high-profile cases on the Supreme Court's docket this term, Jewish groups are watching a number of Supreme Court actions that could affect school prayer, religious liberty and vouchers.

The fate of prayer at graduation ceremonies remains unclear as the court, in one of its first acts on opening day, refused Monday to hear a case challenging the right of public school students to choose a classmate to give a prayer or other message at high school graduations.

The Florida county policy involved in the case, *Adler vs. Duvall County School Board*, allows a student to decide the message's content with no review by school officials.

The justices Monday ordered a federal appeals court to restudy the case in light of their decision in June to bar student-led prayers at public high school football games.

The move suggests that the justices are leaning toward extending their position on student-led prayer at football games to student-led prayer at graduation ceremonies, according to Jeffrey Sinensky, the American Jewish Committee's legal counsel and director of domestic policy.

"We are cautiously optimistic," said Sinensky, whose organization is one of many in the Jewish community that opposes prayer at public school events.

In 1992, the Supreme Court barred clergy-led prayers at public school graduation ceremonies. But its stand on student-led prayers has been less clear.

In 1993, the justices refused to review a federal appeals court ruling that allowed student-led prayers at graduation ceremonies. That ruling conflicts with another federal appeals court decision barring student-led graduation prayers.

The court's latest action, coupled with its June decision on prayer, may have implications for school vouchers, which provide government funds for students to attend parochial or private schools.

The nationally debated voucher issue continues to be of concern for those most adamantly opposed to violating the separation of church and state — though some traditional anti-voucher groups are now rethinking the issue.

In its prayer case, the court had rejected the school's use of a student to lead prayer at football games as a "circuit breaker," or a way to show that the school was not directly endorsing prayer.

That same approach is often used in voucher cases, where the parent is considered the "circuit breaker," and the argument is made that the government is not actually giving money directly to private schools.

The high court does not have a vouchers case before it this term, but several are working their way up from lower courts.

The justices have had the chance to rule on the constitutionality of vouchers in the past few years.

But so far they have chosen to sidestep the issue by declining specific cases.

A voucher case currently in the 6th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals could make it on to the Supreme Court docket later in the term.

Jewish groups also are watching several cases that deal with the breadth of congressional power to regulate intrastate activities.

In recent years, the court has struck down certain civil rights laws, such as the Religious Freedom Restoration Act, arguing that Congress had exceeded its authority.

A wide spectrum of Jewish and civil rights groups had lobbied hard for that 1993 legislative initiative, and were disappointed to see it derailed by the Supreme Court.

Congress passed a pared-down version of that act this session but that legislation could face challenges if the court continues in its direction toward limiting Congress' role vis-a-vis the states.

The Anti-Defamation League and the American Jewish Congress are among Jewish groups closely watching these cases. □

Wiesel endorses Hillary

Elie Wiesel endorsed Hillary Rodham Clinton in her bid for the U.S. Senate seat from New York.

Clinton has "always been on the side of those who fight hatred and fanaticism," Wiesel said last week, noting that it was his first political endorsement.

Jews, NAACP back convictions

Jewish groups joined the NAACP in seeking to uphold the federal convictions of two black men in the 1991 killing of a yeshiva student in Brooklyn, according to the *New York Jewish Week*.

The brief filed last week in the case claims that a 1968 civil rights law gives the government jurisdiction in prosecuting Lemrick Nelson Jr. and Charles Price, who were sentenced for their roles in the death of Yankel Rosenbaum.

Haider backs tolerance at forum

A far-right Austrian politician called for compensation for World War II-era slave laborers and tolerance for ethnic minorities at a gathering that has been criticized for being a festival for aging Nazis.

Jorg Haider, whose Freedom Party is part of Austria's government, made his comments at the same festival of Austrian and German World War II veterans where nine years ago he praised Hitler's employment policies.

Kosovo's Jews celebrate holiday

The 40 remaining Jews in Kosovo celebrated Rosh Hashanah in the ancient town of Prizren, where the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee coordinated services that included apples and honey, and prayer books in Hebrew and Albanian.

Man turns up volume on services

A Long Island man disturbed Rosh Hashanah services at a Chabad congregation next to his home by blasting rap and rock music over the weekend, according to *New York's Newsday*.

Michael Waldman, who congregants said had spoken at town meetings two years ago against the synagogue's proposal to move in next door, turned the music off when police showed up at his house.

Groups back RU-486 decision

Some Jewish groups applauded the U.S. Food and Drug Administration's decision to approve the "abortion pill" RU-486 for use in the United States.

"Jewish values affirm the rights of women as moral decision makers, capable of making responsible choices about every aspect of their own lives," the Religious Action Center of Reform Judaism said in a statement.

AROUND THE JEWISH WORLD

Female rabbi-led services give Jews in Warsaw another choice

By Ruth E. Gruber

WARSAW (JTA) — For what is believed to be the first time, a female rabbi is conducting High Holiday services this year in Warsaw.

U.S. Conservative Rabbi Cynthia Culpeper was brought to Warsaw for Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur by Beit Warszawa, a new liberal Jewish group recently established in the Polish capital by expatriate and Polish Jews.

"While Beit Warszawa did not specifically search for a female rabbi for the High Holidays, the fact that Rabbi Culpeper was chosen is exemplary of the liberal and egalitarian attitude with which the members of Beit Warszawa approach Judaism," said Krzysztof Kulig, one of the group's founders and an executive search consultant in Warsaw.

The Beit Warszawa services means that for the first High Holidays in decades, Jews in Warsaw have a choice of services to attend.

Culpeper, who has served with a congregation in Birmingham, Ala., is leading services to be conducted in Polish, English and Hebrew, in a Warsaw theater rented for the occasion.

Beit Warszawa members — many of whom are international businesspeople or other professionals — pooled frequent flier miles to pay for Culpeper's plane ticket. One member donated a Torah scroll that has been in the possession of his family for several generations. Group organizers issued an e-mail appeal for 50 yarmulkes and tallitot.

Orthodox services, followed on Rosh Hashanah by a communal dinner from the community's kosher kitchen, took place, as usual, in the city's Nozyk Synagogue, the only synagogue in Warsaw to have survived the Holocaust.

These services are being led by Rabbi Michael Schudrich, an American who served for a decade as Warsaw director of the New York-based Ronald S. Lauder Foundation. This summer, he was hired as the official rabbi of the Warsaw Jewish community.

The Lauder foundation has played a leading role in sponsoring Jewish education and youth activities in Poland and in other Central European countries since the fall of communism.

Schudrich's activities with the Lauder foundation were essential in attracting hundreds of Polish Jews to reclaim their Jewish identity and learn about Judaism and Jewish traditions, history and culture.

Organizers of Beit Warszawa said they did not want to compete with the Nozyk synagogue services, but want to offer an alternative for American and other Jews who are not comfortable with Orthodox practice.

"One of the greatest strengths of Judaism is the pluralistic way in which Judaism is practiced throughout the world," said Kulig.

"The Nozyk Synagogue is an outstanding synagogue, but many Jews prefer to practice their religion according to the more liberal traditions offered by the other denominations of Judaism," he said.

"This is true for some Polish Jews who are exploring their Jewish heritage for the very first time and find the strict Orthodox practices, such as the separation of men and women in the syna-

agogue, difficult to accept," he said. Some Polish members of Beit Warszawa said they feel intimidated by the Nozyk Synagogue.

"I am not ready for it," said a Polish-American man in his 40s who traveled from southern Poland, where he runs a business, to attend a Friday night gathering of the group this month.

He said his family emigrated to the United States when he was a child, and his memories of Jewish life in Warsaw were negative.

"We were very poor," he said. "We got food from the Jewish community soup kitchen."

Beit Warszawa is modeled on Beit Praha, a similar organization created several years ago by local Jews and expatriates in Prague. At Beit Warszawa — as at Beit Praha — women and men sit together and participate equally in all services, which include extensive explanations of prayers and traditions.

Beit Warszawa was founded this summer and began holding informal Friday night meetings in private homes once a month. The evenings are as much social occasions as they are religious experiences.

"Over the years, there has always been a group of us saying that the synagogue here is great, but that it is not the type of Judaism we grew up with. We didn't feel that it was ours," said Jonathan Mills, an American business entrepreneur who has lived in Warsaw for nine years.

"Finally, after years of talking, we got together and organized a Friday night dinner, and 35 people showed up," he said.

He said about one-third of the group is American and two-thirds are Polish. Contacts were made by word of mouth and by setting up an e-mail network.

Some members of the established Warsaw Jewish community warmly welcomed the liberal alternative. They also welcomed the chance to include more "emerging" Jews within Warsaw's Jewish world.

"It's exciting, and a very good development," said one woman active in communal life.

But others, including Schudrich, expressed initial concern that the new group could divide or prove a threat to the established religious community, which is still fragile despite the great strides made during the past decade.

"We need to see how we can work together," said Schudrich, who also, for the first time, will offer services in English as well as Hebrew this year.

Despite his reservations, Schudrich and the leaders of Beit Warszawa said they would co-sponsor an Oneg Shabbat or other joint event between Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur.

For their part, Beit Warszawa leaders see the establishment of their group as a further demonstration of the new dynamism in Polish Jewish life. Several hundred Jews are members of the established religious community or of secular Jewish organizations in Warsaw. But Schudrich and others estimate that there may be as many as 3,000 or 4,000 Jews in the city.

"The development of Beit Warszawa and its style of practice is the logical next step in the revitalization of the Jewish community in Poland over recent years," said American businessman Clifford Aron, another of Beit Warszawa's founders, who has lived in Warsaw for four years.

"As an American Jew of Polish descent, I have met so many Poles who wish to rekindle their Jewish heritage. This group provides another important outlet for anyone wishing to have a Jewish experience in Warsaw," Aron said. □