



# Daily News Bulletin

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## TOP NEWS IN BRIEF

### **Arafat condemns Israel**

Palestinian Authority President Yasser Arafat condemned Israel after a two-hour White House meeting with President Clinton.

"I am not the one who initiated the violence," Arafat told reporters. "My tanks are not sieging Israeli towns." [Page 1]

### **Kristallnacht marked in Germany**

More than 200,000 people marched through Berlin on Thursday in memory of victims of Kristallnacht, the Nazis' anti-Jewish pogrom in 1938.

German Chancellor Gerhard Schroeder led the demonstrators, who held banners that read "No to Neo-Nazis," from prewar Berlin's main synagogue to a rally at the Brandenburg Gate.

Thousands more demonstrated in other cities across Germany.

### **Arabs plan protests at G.A.**

Thousands of Arab protesters from across the United States plan to hold a mass demonstration outside the United Jewish communities' General Assembly in Chicago next week to protest Israeli policy toward the Palestinians, according to the Chicago Sun-Times.

The paper reported that Chicago police, working with the U.S. Secret Service and State Department, plan a heightened presence.

Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Barak and opposition leader Ariel Sharon are expected to speak at the gathering of more than 5,000 activists from local and national Jewish organizations.

### **Israel kills militia member**

An Israeli helicopter fired on a Palestinian car in the West Bank, killing a senior member of Yasser Arafat's Tanzim militia and wounding at least five others.

Israeli troops said they had identified armed members of the militia preparing to fire on them near an entrance to the town of Beit Sahour. [Page 4]

### **Israeli flags fly at half-mast**

Israeli flags flew at half-mast to observe the fifth anniversary of former Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin's assassination. [Page 4]

## NEWS ANALYSIS

### **Can a lame-duck president bring Mideast back from abyss?**

*By David Landau*

JERUSALEM (JTA) — How lame is a lame-duck president?

In their separate meetings with President Clinton at the White House this week and next, Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Barak and Palestinian Authority President Yasser Arafat are finding out.

The hope on both sides of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict is that a new chapter can be written in America's political science textbooks — a chapter suggesting that the widely believed weakness of an outgoing president is, in fact, a source of strength.

Weakness, of course, is a characteristic that all three leaders currently share.

Clinton is on his way out and the attention of the world is fixed on his successor.

In terms of the Middle East, moreover, the American president's weakness stems from the ongoing crisis in the West Bank and Gaza Strip, which has come close to undoing all the feverish effort he has put into the Oslo peace process during the past seven years.

Barak is also weak — because his minority government is living on borrowed time. The fervently Orthodox Shas Party recently gave his government a one-month "safety net," during which Shas legislators would not support any motions to topple him. Likud and the other parties of the opposition are pressing Shas officials to reduce that time frame, or at least not to extend it.

Arafat is no less feeble, but for different reasons.

His fragmented Palestinian Authority is infinitely weaker, militarily and economically, than Israel.

The uprising in the territories is causing widespread suffering to his people while he, as leader, has yet to show a tangible political achievement that makes the suffering all worthwhile.

Topping the agenda of the Washington meetings was the need to end the violence and shore up the still-largely unimplemented agreements made last month at the Sharm el-Sheik summit.

Those agreements included ending the violence and finding a path back to peace talks.

Beyond this, however, the two sides appeared to have very different goals for their talks with Clinton.

Reportedly included on Barak's agenda for his Sunday meeting is a desire to revise, in light of the ongoing violence, some of the security arrangements discussed at the Camp David summit in July — particularly the repeated incidents in which Palestinian gunmen have opened fire on Israeli troops.

Barak is also said to have reconsidered his previous willingness to consider granting the Palestinians control over Arab neighborhoods in eastern Jerusalem.

Arafat, during his meeting with Clinton on Thursday, pressed for an "internationalization" of the peace process so that the United States would no longer have the sole role of mediator in the talks.

As part of this drive, Arafat is also urging that a U.N. peacekeeping force be deployed in the West Bank and Gaza Strip.

He, along with Israel's ambassador to the United Nations, was slated to debate the idea at the U.N. Security Council on Friday.

Israel adamantly rejects the idea, and Barak this week denied reports that U.S.

## MIDEAST FOCUS

### Lynched soldier's family sues

The family of a soldier lynched by a Palestinian mob last month in Ramallah sued the Palestinian Authority and its president, Yasser Arafat.

The family of Vadim Nourzitz, one of two soldiers killed by the mob, said the Palestinian police made it known to the public that it was holding the soldiers.

### Israelis won't meet U.N. official

Israel's Foreign Ministry refused to meet with the U.N. commissioner for human rights after she refused to meet with Israeli right-wing leaders, including Likud leader Ariel Sharon.

The move by Mary Robinson, in the midst of a one-week visit to investigate the violence in the West Bank and Gaza Strip, came after the Palestinian Authority said Robinson would not be welcome if she met with the hawkish Sharon.

### Prayer allowed at Rachel's Tomb

Israeli troops allowed right-wing legislators to hold prayers at Rachel's Tomb near Bethlehem after initially barring the services due to security concerns.

Earlier, leading rabbis had urged worshipers to heed a ban on worshiping at the shrine, which has been a focal point of clashes with Palestinians in recent weeks.

Thursday marked the anniversary of the biblical matriarch's death.

### Arabs visit family of slain Israeli

Colleagues of the Israeli woman murdered in a Palestinian shooting attack in the Gaza Strip on Wednesday said she had exceptional relations with her Palestinian co-workers.

A colleague of Noa Dahan told the Israeli daily Yediot Achronot that despite the tensions in the territories, Palestinian co-workers have been conveying condolences to Dahan's family.

officials had floated such a proposal with Israel. U.N. Secretary-General Kofi Annan said Tuesday that the United Nations would need Israel's agreement before it could deploy the peacekeepers.

Clinton, who told a Chicago radio station Monday that Israel's opposition to such a force means "it can't happen," concentrated instead in his meeting with Arafat on efforts to restore calm to the region and to restart the peace process.

Arafat, meanwhile, condemned Israel after his two-hour White House meeting with Clinton.

"I am not the one who initiated the violence," Arafat told reporters. "My tanks are not sieging Israeli towns."

Despite the differing positions of Israel and the Palestinian Authority, Israel's foreign minister, Shlomo Ben-Ami, remained optimistic that a way could be found back to the negotiating table.

"If Arafat wants to return to the negotiations, and the calm in the territories continues to take hold, it is certainly possibly to renew negotiations," Ben-Ami told Israel Army Radio on Monday.

His comments came as Israeli officials noted a drop in the number of clashes in the territories.

Still, the death toll among Palestinians continued to mount daily.

And at the same time, attacks on Israeli targets took on a new dimension this week, when a Palestinian attempted to blow up an Israeli navy ship off the coast of the Gaza Strip in what the navy called a bungled suicide bombing.

The man blew up his fishing boat late Monday night when Israeli sailors on a patrol boat approached to investigate.

The blast killed the man and sank his boat without causing Israeli casualties, navy officials said.

On Wednesday — the eve of Arafat's visit to the White House — Palestinian gunmen killed an Israeli woman who worked as a customs agent when they opened fire on a car at the Rafah border crossing between the Gaza Strip and Egypt.

Two Palestinian teen-agers were also killed during fighting in Gaza.

Despite the violence, Barak issued a letter to world leaders in which he made an explicit offer to help create a "viable" Palestinian state.

But, Barak added, the state would be created as a result of negotiations, not through violence or a unilateral declaration.

Later Wednesday, Israel brought in tanks after Palestinian police joined with other Arabs in a gun battle with Israeli troops at the Karni Crossing between Israel and the Gaza Strip.

And on Thursday, an Israeli helicopter fired on a Palestinian car in the West Bank, killing a senior member of the Fatah Tanzim and wounding at least five others.

Given such continued violence, can the three leaders overcome their individual weaknesses and pull the tortured region back from the abyss?

This week, only diehard optimists were prepared to subscribe to this prospect.

These optimists argue that Clinton, freed from all considerations linked to the elections, will be able to be more creative, and if need be, tougher toward both sides.

They assume that America's president-elect would be only too pleased to give Clinton his full moral support to finish the job of Israeli-Palestinian peacemaking — rather than face the prospect of inheriting a potentially explosive situation in one of the world's most dangerous flashpoints.

Where Barak is concerned, the optimists believe that his sole chance of political survival is to go to the electorate with a peace treaty, and that this will drive him to cut a deal with Arafat.

But is Arafat still interested in a peaceful resolution of the conflict?

The optimists say that this may be the only way for him to remain as the leader of his people.

The intifada, now in its sixth week, has unleashed new and potent forces within the Palestinian community, including within Arafat's own Fatah movement.

If the violence continues, there can be no guarantee that the old generation, personified by Arafat, can continue riding the tiger without falling off.

Without doubt, however, there are numerous pessimists out there who do not expect much of anything from the Washington meetings. □



## Daily News Bulletin

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## Jews elected to 107th Congress

### SENATE

Barbara Boxer (D-Calif.)  
 Russell Feingold (D-Wisc.)  
 Dianne Feinstein (D-Calif.)\*  
 Herb Kohl (D-Wisc.)\*  
 Carl Levin (D-Mich.)  
 Joseph Lieberman (D-Conn.)\*\*  
 Charles Schumer (D-N.Y.)  
 Arlen Specter (R-Pa.)  
 Paul Wellstone (D-Minn.)  
 Ron Wyden (D-Ore.)

\*re-elected Tuesday

\*\*will not serve if elected vice president

### HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Gary Ackerman (D-N.Y.)  
 Shelley Berkley (D-Nev.)  
 Howard Berman (D-Calif.)  
 Eric Cantor (R-Va.)\*  
 Benjamin Cardin (D-Md.)  
 Susan Davis (D-Calif.)\*  
 Peter Deutsch (D-Fla.)  
 Eliot Engel (D-N.Y.)  
 Bob Filner (D-Calif.)  
 Barney Frank (D-Mass.)  
 Martin Frost (D-Texas)  
 Benjamin Gilman (R-N.Y.)  
 Jane Harman (D-Calif.)\*  
 Steve Israel (D-N.Y.)\*  
 Tom Lantos (D-Calif.)  
 Sander Levin (D-Mich.)  
 Nita Lowey (D-N.Y.)  
 Jerrold Nadler (D-N.Y.)  
 Steve Rothman (D-N.J.)  
 Bernard Sanders (I-Vt.)  
 Jan Schakowsky (D-Ill.)  
 Adam Schiff (D-Calif.)\*  
 Brad Sherman (D-Calif.)  
 Norman Sisisky (D-Va.)  
 Henry Waxman (D-Calif.)  
 Anthony Weiner (D-N.Y.)  
 Robert Wexler (D-Fla.)

\*did not serve in previous Congress

Two other races involving Jewish candidates have not been decided, pending vote recounts. They are:

Elaine Bloom (D-Fla.)  
 Dick Zimmer (R-N.J.)

## ELECTIONS 2000

### Defeat of Conn. lawmaker means loss of peace advocate

By Peter Ephross

NEW YORK (JTA) — No stranger to political cliffhangers, longtime U.S. Rep. Sam Gejdenson finally fell in Tuesday's elections.

Gejdenson (D-Conn.) was the ranking Democratic member on the House International Relations Committee, which like all other committees in the Republican-dominated House, will be headed by a GOP representative in the 107th Congress.

But sources say that with another Jewish representative, Tom Lantos (D-Calif.), in line to become the ranking House Democratic member on that committee, the Jewish perspective will still have a strong, influential voice in foreign policy debates.

In fact, some pro-Israel activists say that Lantos' support for Israel may be less tied to the Oslo peace process than was Gejdenson's.

During his 10 terms representing Connecticut's 2nd District, Gejdenson, the son of Holocaust survivors who was born in the Eschwege displaced persons camp in Germany, carved a niche for himself in foreign affairs.

Gejdenson was involved in Israel and the Middle East, and Jewish organizational officials say Gejdenson was known as being there for Israel at critical moments.

But he was considered to be ideologically closer to Labor Party governments in Israel — and the peace process — than the more hawkish one of Benjamin Netanyahu.

Gejdenson played a "special role" and took leadership on the peace process and mediation efforts in the Middle East, said Tom Smerling, executive director of the Israel Policy Forum, a Washington think tank that has been a strong advocate for the peace process.

"Sam has been one of the members of Congress who understands most clearly the strategic importance of the peace process to Israel and the United States," Smerling said.

His close ties to the peace process and the Israel Policy Forum apparently caused some friction at times with the pro-Israel lobby, the American Israel Public Affairs Committee, according to sources in Connecticut.

"Sam Gejdenson was a longtime supporter of Israel who had very deep and strong feelings about Israel, and we wish him well," said Kenneth Bricker, a spokesman for AIPAC.

AIPAC officials declined to comment on the controversy.

Gejdenson was also involved in Third World debt relief and pressed for U.S. payment of money it owed to the United Nations. He was also heavily involved in defense issues. The second largest supplier of U.S. military submarines is housed in Groton, which is part of his district.

Gejdenson "was a strong voice for U.S. engagement in the world, and much of that conviction that the United States must be a leader expressing its true values grew from his personal experience, and his family's experience during the Holocaust," said Jason Isaacson, the American Jewish Committee's director of government and international affairs. Gejdenson's focus on foreign affairs made him an easy target for attacks from his opponent, Republican Rob Simmons, that he was out of touch with his district.

Gejdenson still owns a house on his family's farm inside the 2nd District, which is a working-class district with a small Jewish population.

But he spends some time, particularly during the summer, at his second wife's home outside the district, and Simmons hammered away at this fact in television ads.

The strategy appeared to pay off, as Simmons won with 51 percent of the vote.

It was not the first time that Gejdenson has faced a tough race. In 1994, for instance, he won by just 21 votes.

His strengths, including his knowledge of foreign affairs and defense, was offset by Simmons' background as a Vietnam veteran who won two bronze stars.

Simmons also worked for the CIA and was staff director for the Senate Intelligence Committee. □

(JTA staff writer Julie Wiener contributed to this report.)

## Jewish federations consider getting involved in Fla. lawsuits

By Matthew E. Berger

WASHINGTON (JTA) — Jewish officials in Florida and around the country are monitoring the election controversy in the Sunshine State, as many Jewish voters say they mistakenly chose the wrong candidate.

Although a recount began Wednesday in Florida, many people are looking beyond to the thousands of ballots that were excluded in Palm Beach County, which is heavily Jewish and Democratic, as well as several thousand votes for Reform Party candidate Pat Buchanan. Local Jewish officials said they believe a confusing ballot may have led some voters to pick Buchanan when they wanted to choose Vice President Al Gore, or caused them to vote for both candidates.

"This entire election is now focused on a retired little old lady in Century Village in Boca Raton who cast the wrong ballot," said Jan Lederman, executive director of the Sarasota-Manatee Jewish Federation.

Lederman said his organization has received calls from voters and has been helping them contact state officials. More than 19,000 ballots were thrown out in Palm Beach County.

With the recount indicating by Thursday afternoon that fewer than 400 votes divided Gore and George W. Bush in that state, those excluded ballots could make a difference in who wins the state.

Observers for both major presidential candidates are in Florida, meeting with election officials and watching the state's recount.

There is precedent for a state judge to adjust the voting in the election because of problems with the ballot, according to several sources, and lawsuits have already been filed on that issue.

The local Jewish federations are considering participating in lawsuits on behalf of their members, Lederman said, but will wait until the recount is concluded before making a formal decision.

Another remaining question is whether the numbers for Buchanan are correct in Palm Beach County.

The close to 4,000 votes for Buchanan trumps his showing in other counties in the state, and even Buchanan himself has said the votes are wrong.

"The very idea of elderly Jews casting votes for Pat Buchanan" is "anathema," said Diana Aviv, vice president for public policy at United Jewish Communities. □

## Jewish support for Gore high, but not extraordinary

By Matthew E. Berger

WASHINGTON (JTA) — Despite a Jewish vice-presidential candidate, Democrat Al Gore only garnered a bit more support among Jews than President Clinton received when he ran for re-election four years ago.

According to exit polls compiled by Voter News Service, Gore and Sen. Joseph Lieberman (D-Conn.) captured 79 percent of the Jewish vote, 1 percent more than Clinton in 1996 and 1 percent less than Clinton received in 1992. Both times, Clinton faced not

only a Republican candidate but Ross Perot, who got 9 percent of the Jewish vote in 1992 and 3 percent four years later.

Texas Gov. George W. Bush came away with a larger share of the Jewish vote than other Republican candidates have in recent elections. Bush received 19 percent, compared with 16 percent in 1996 for Bob Dole and 11 percent for Bush's father in 1992.

Ralph Nader, who ran on the Green Party ticket, garnered 1 percent of the Jewish popular vote Tuesday.

Popular wisdom had predicted a larger share of the Jewish vote for Gore, given the traditional Jewish inclination to vote Democratic combined with the assumption that some voters might switch parties to see a Jewish vice president. □

## Five years after Rabin death, Israel wonders what he'd do now

By Naomi Segal

JERUSALEM (JTA) — Israel this week held state observances marking the fifth anniversary of the assassination of Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin, whose peace efforts with the Palestinians have been shattered by the ongoing violence in the West Bank and Gaza Strip.

Flags flew at half-mast Thursday as the state marked the day, according to the Hebrew calendar, when Yigal Amir, an extreme nationalist opposed to conceding land to the Palestinians, shot Rabin as he left a rally in Tel Aviv.

At a graveside memorial ceremony at Jerusalem's Mount Herzl cemetery, Prime Minister Ehud Barak said the murderer would never be granted amnesty.

"I swear, and swear for all the presidents of Israel, and prime ministers and justice ministers who are here and who will come, that we will never forget and never pardon" the murder, Barak declared. "He will rot in jail until his last day."

The memorial day came as violence escalated in the territories. The Fatah Tanzim vowed to extract revenge for Israel's killing earlier in the day of a senior militia leader, when the car he was traveling in near Bethlehem was rocketed by an Israeli helicopter.

Several other Palestinians were wounded.

Israel said the official, Hussein Abayad, was responsible for the killing of two Israeli soldiers and the wounding of a border policeman in the recent violence, as well as for Palestinian shooting attacks on the Jerusalem neighborhood of Gilo and the area near Rachel's Tomb.

Barak, who sees himself as following in Rabin's footsteps, wondered how his mentor would deal with the situation today.

"We try to guess, what would he have said today. How would he respond," Barak said, vowing to uphold Rabin's pursuit of both peace and security.

"If we are persistent, without veering from daily headlines or passing moods," he said, and remember "the thousands of years of history behind us," the day will come when "we can assemble here, opposite this place of rest of Yitzhak Rabin, and say, 'Yitzhak, your work has been completed. . . your way has won,'" Barak said.

The Knesset convened in a special session. In opening remarks, Likud opposition leader Ariel Sharon also wondered how Rabin would have dealt with the current situation.

"It is impossible to know what Rabin would have done in these days. Even I wonder this often," said Sharon. □