



# Daily News Bulletin

Vol. 78, No. 218

Tuesday, November 21, 2000

83rd Year

## TOP NEWS IN BRIEF

### Israel retaliates for bus bombing

Israeli helicopters and navy ships struck targets in Gaza City after terrorists attacked an Israeli school bus elsewhere in the Gaza Strip.

Two Israelis were killed and nine others, including five children, were wounded in the roadside bombing of the school bus. Among the injured were three young siblings who had to have their arms or legs partially amputated.

The United States later called on the Palestinian Authority to issue a "clear and unambiguous" condemnation of the attack. [Page 1]

### Reports: Israel may OK observers

U.N. Secretary-General Kofi Annan met with Israeli and Palestinian envoys on the possible deployment of a U.N. observer force to help quell violence in the West Bank and Gaza Strip.

The talks came amid reports that Israel is reconsidering its earlier opposition to such a force.

### Jewish woman loses House race

A Jewish woman lost her bid for a U.S. congressional seat, but another House race with a Jewish candidate is still undecided. Elaine Bloom conceded defeat to Republican incumbent Clay Shaw in Florida last Friday. But in New Jersey, former U.S. Rep. Dick Zimmer is calling for a recount in his race to unseat Democrat Rush Holt, who has already declared victory.

### Red Cross denies Lebanon role

The International Red Cross is denying reports that it is helping Israel and Hezbollah negotiate an exchange of prisoners, the Israeli daily Ma'ariv reported.

The organization's spokesman in Israel was responding to remarks by the Hezbollah secretary-general that the Red Cross is serving as a mediator after Israel reportedly rejected offers from Spain, Germany and Russia to try to negotiate the release of three Israeli soldiers and a civilian held by the Shi'ite group in Lebanon.

Because of the Thanksgiving holiday in the U.S., the JTA DAILY NEWS BULLETIN will not be published Friday, Nov. 24.

## NEWS ANALYSIS

### School bus terror attack spurs rethinking of response to violence

By Naomi Segal

JERUSALEM (JTA) — A terror bombing against an Israeli school bus in the Gaza Strip is forcing Prime Minister Ehud Barak to re-evaluate his response to Palestinian violence.

Since violence erupted across the region in late September, Barak has adhered to what he has described as a policy of restraint in hopes of avoiding an escalation of the conflict and leaving the door open to resume negotiations with the Palestinians.

Monday's attack — which claimed the lives of two Israeli civilians and wounded nine others, including five children — has raised new questions about whether the Palestinian Authority wants to resume talks.

Hours after the attack, Israeli army helicopters and navy ships rocketed Palestinian targets in Gaza City.

Barak said Israel would continue to strike back against the violence, and he denied reports that the hands of the army are being tied by the political echelon.

"We will continue to act as needed to ensure that the violence stops. We are not going into a picnic, but a difficult battle," Barak told reporters during a visit to the Beersheva hospital where the Israelis wounded in the bombing attack were being treated.

The air and sea strikes began shortly after dusk Monday, following a lengthy Security Cabinet meeting. The attacks were intended as a message to Yasser Arafat that he and his organizations are being held accountable.

Some 40 missiles were fired at nine targets, including buildings used by various Palestinian security agencies and by the Palestinian Authority president's Fatah movement, and a Palestinian television relay station.

Reports said at least one Palestinian was killed and 25 others were wounded in the strike, which also knocked out electricity in portions of the city.

The Palestinian Authority, which has denied involvement in Monday's bus attack, condemned the rocket strikes, accusing Israel of "choosing the path of war."

Israel's response stood in marked contrast to what happened over the weekend, when an Israeli soldier was killed.

On Saturday, a Palestinian policeman infiltrated the Jewish settlement of Kfar Darom in Gaza, killing the soldier and seriously wounding two others before being shot dead by Israeli troops at the site.

The soldier killed in the attack, Staff Sgt. Baruch Snir Flum, 21, of Tel Aviv, was among the last Israeli troops to withdraw from Lebanon in May. He had four months left until his army discharge.

On Sunday, Barak told his Cabinet that he did not plan to retaliate for the attack.

But Monday's attack against civilians put new pressure on Barak to retaliate harshly against Palestinian violence.

Following the explosion, the words "This Is What We Get for Restraint" were spray-painted in Hebrew on the wreckage of the school bus. And Jewish demonstrators blocked the main entrance to Jerusalem, demanding that the army respond more forcefully to Palestinian violence.

Jewish settler leaders, who met with President Moshe Katsav on Monday to discuss the security situation, said the prime minister must let the army do what it takes "to win."

Monday's developments came just a few days after Arafat said he ordered

## MIDEAST FOCUS

### Security firm helping settlements

Jewish settlement leaders hired a private security company to help the Israel Defense Force protect settlements and roads.

The head of the Binyamin regional council, Pinchas Wallerstein, said the activities were coordinated with the IDF to boost security while eliminating rumors of the establishment of "settler militias" to patrol the roads.

### Probe: Settlers misled army

A group of settlers who got into a firefight during Sukkot with Palestinian gunmen in the hills near Nablus were hiking in the area after their leader misled the Israel Defense Force about their planned route, according to an Israeli probe.

A Jewish settler was killed by Palestinian gunfire during the ensuing daylight battle.

### Blacklist issued in Jordan

Jordanian professional associations and unions issued their official blacklist of citizens who have dealt with Israel.

The list contains the names of 22 journalists, academics, artists and others who have advocated for closer cultural and economic ties with the Jewish state.

The groups publishing the list want to punish those who promote closer ties with Israel and to discourage others from doing so.

### Tobacco firm offers to pay

Israel's Dubek tobacco company agreed to pay compensation to smokers whose health has been seriously affected by cigarettes in the past seven years. Under the agreement reached with lawyers representing smokers in class-action suits against the company, the compensation fund will be created through an increase in cigarette prices.

The Israeli government must still approve the compromise.



## Daily News Bulletin

Shoshana S. Cardin, *President*  
Mark J. Jaffe, *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](http://www.jta.org).  
© JTA      Reproduction only by previous arrangement.

Palestinian gunmen to stop firing at Israelis from Palestinian-ruled areas.

Arafat's call came after U.S. Middle East peace envoy Dennis Ross met separately last week with Arafat and Israeli leaders.

Ross reportedly made some progress in persuading the two sides to agree to talks aimed at not only reducing the violence, but also leading back to negotiations.

On Monday, Danny Yatom, Barak's security chief, rejected Arafat's public call last week to halt shooting at Israeli from Area A, which is under sole Palestinian control, as "cynical."

"That he told them not to carry out attacks in Area A, he basically gave them permission to attack in Areas B and C," where Israel has overall security control.

Yatom said the Security Cabinet had approved a number of other measures, including economic actions, and that the government would also launch an information campaign to explain to the world that "this is an unacceptable situation" in which Arafat "expects to conduct some sort of dialogue with us, alongside shootings, incitement and terrorist attacks."

Some Israeli observers suggest that Arafat still considers violence the most effective means to attain his political goals. There are also some who question whether Arafat really has the ability to stop the violence.

In addition to the renewed activities of Islamic militants — many of whom were released from Palestinian jails during the ongoing violence — members of Fatah have joined armed militias that may or may not respond to calls for a cease-fire.

The Palestinian Authority denied any involvement in Monday's bombing, and a senior Palestinian official was quoted as saying that the self-rule government would launch an inquiry into the attack. But Deputy Defense Minister Ephraim Sneh later said there was a clear connection linking the attack to the Palestinian security establishment.

"This puts heavy responsibility, grave responsibility, on the Palestinian Authority," Sneh told reporters.

Claims of responsibility for the bombing came from three little-known groups: Palestinian Hezbollah, Al-Aksa Martyrs and Omar al-Mukhtar.

Israeli security officials did not rule out possible links between the groups and the more well-known fundamentalist militant groups, Islamic Jihad or Hamas.

The school bus had left the settlement of Kfar Darom early Monday. Students and teachers were en route to an elementary school in the Gush Katif settlement bloc in southern Gaza.

The Israeli army said it appeared that three assailants hid in the bushes near the road and detonated the explosive by remote control when the school bus approached.

The bus, which according to the army was heavily armored and under a military escort, was badly damaged by the explosion of a heavy mortar shell that was attached to a detonator. The shell was surrounded with pieces of metal "to inflict as many injuries as possible," an army statement said.

The attack occurred on a road controlled by Israel. The surrounding area, indeed most of the Gaza Strip, is under Palestinian control.

The attackers fled into the self-rule area after detonating the explosion, according to Israeli authorities. Witnesses said several pieces of shrapnel went clean through the bus, which held about 30 passengers. Israeli military officials said the protective covering of the vehicle prevented additional casualties.

The two victims were teachers at the school: Miriam Amitai, 35, a mother of four; and Gavriel Biton, 34, a father of six. Both were residents of Kfar Darom.

Among the injured were three young siblings who had to have their arms or legs partially amputated, according to medical workers. The attack on a school bus filled with children has prompted some observers to suggest that the attackers were trying to kill off any chances that negotiations would be resumed any time soon.

In a possible sign of the premier's own emerging conclusion that there really is no Palestinian partner in the diplomatic process, Barak reportedly has renewed contacts with Israel's opposition parties to consider forming a unity government.

For the time being, though, he has no takers. Likud opposition leader Ariel Sharon said he would not enter into a government with someone whom he claimed would divide Jerusalem and give back the Jordan Valley.

Sharon also accused Barak of holding secret negotiations with the Palestinians despite the violence — a charge Barak denied. □

## JEWISH WORLD

### Progress in lame-duck Congress could depend on White House race

By Sharon Samber

WASHINGTON (JTA) — As the 106th Congress prepares to put finishing touches on its much-maligned legislative track record, Jewish groups are hoping their top agenda items will get addressed before it's too late.

Whether or not Congress — which faces criticism that it hasn't accomplished much — will feel hard-pressed to move on issues such as immigration or hate crimes when it reconvenes Dec. 5 depends on a number of factors.

Republicans, who will retain control of both the Senate and the House of Representatives in the next Congress as a result of the elections earlier this month, may have little incentive to compromise with President Clinton's outgoing administration over outstanding legislation.

But much still depends on the outcome of the still-undecided presidential race.

If Texas Gov. George W. Bush wins the White House, Republicans may try harder to block Clinton's initiatives and hold off on legislative initiatives until Republicans control both Congress and the presidency. But if Democrat Vice President Al Gore wins, it is not clear whether there would be an attempt at bipartisan cooperation or lingering animosity against Gore for the way he achieved his victory.

Jewish organizations, in particular, are watching an immigration bill, one of the issues holding up the budget, that would restore certain benefits — including Medicaid and food stamps — taken away by welfare reform laws in 1996.

In addition, provisions of the bill, known as the Latino and Immigrant Fairness Act, would ease the process for undocumented immigrants, including Jews from the former Soviet Union, who have resided in the United States for a long time and require permanent resident status to remain here legally.

Clinton is pushing to grant a form of amnesty to this group of immigrants, some of whom may be illegal, who have lived in the United States for 15 years or more.

With the support of the White House and some key legislators, the law could pass, according to Gideon Aronoff, Washington representative for the Hebrew Immigrant Aid Society. Opponents of the immigration bill say it helps illegal immigrants and gives benefits to people instead of making them take responsibility for themselves.

Another issue Jewish groups are hoping will get Congress' attention is hate crimes legislation, which has been strongly promoted by the Clinton administration.

The Senate passed hate crimes legislation in June but despite support in the House, the measure was stripped out of a defense bill because of objections from the Republican leadership. The controversial legislation would authorize federal prosecution of crimes motivated by sexual orientation, gender, or disability, expanding the current laws that protect victims of crimes motivated by race, color, religion or ethnicity. State and local law enforcement would still have primary responsibility for investigating and prosecuting hate crimes.

Some Jewish groups are also looking to stave off charitable choice provisions in education and urban development legislation.

Charitable choice, passed as part of the 1996 welfare reform, allows religious institutions to bid for government social service contracts. Some charitable choice provisions already have been passed in connection with health legislation.

Although Israel's annual foreign aid package is set, the White House sent a request last week to Capitol Hill for additional aid to Israel.

The Clinton administration wants Congress to approve \$450 million this year to Israel for military purposes and to help defray the cost of its withdrawal from Lebanon. The White House also wants to give an additional \$225 million to Egypt and \$75 million to Jordan. Under different circumstances the request might have been somewhat routine, but with politically volatile situations in Israel and the United States and the continued violence in the Middle East, the aid package might get more scrutiny.

U.S. Rep. Sonny Callahan (R-Ala.), the chairman of the House Appropriations subcommittee on foreign operations, which must clear the legislation, has not indicated whether or not he would support the bill. □

#### Russian politician beaten

The former deputy governor of the Kursk region in central Russia was hospitalized after he was severely beaten at the governor's office.

A local official called the victim, Sergei Maksatchov, "a Yid who should be finished off." Former Gov. Alexander Rutskey called on President Vladimir Putin to intervene after Monday's attack. Last week, the newly elected governor of the region, Alexander Mikhailov, apologized for anti-Semitic remarks he made earlier this month.

In another incident, a dozen teen-agers attacked three pro-Israel demonstrators outside Palestinian offices in Moscow, according to the Moscow office of the Anti-Defamation League. Police arrested the teens, who accused officers of "assisting the Zionists."

#### U.S. gallery returns looted oil

The Washington-based National Gallery of Art said it would return a painting it believes was confiscated by the Nazis from the Stern family in Paris in 1941. The painting "Still Life with Fruit and Game" by the Flemish artist Frans Snyders, brings to 11 the number of paintings the gallery has found in its collection that passed through Nazi hands.

#### Yahoo! faces French court order

A French court ordered Yahoo! to prevent its French users from accessing Web pages that sell Nazi memorabilia. Monday's decision by the court came seven months after two French anticacist groups sued the Internet portal for violating a French law against racial incitement.

#### Museum given Auschwitz history

A U.S. historical commission gave a newly revised English translation of the history of the Auschwitz death camp to the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum in Washington.

The five-volume "Auschwitz: 1940-1945," presented by the Commission for the Preservation of America's Heritage Abroad, contains diagrams, photographs and copies of Nazi documents.

#### Poll: Romanian extremist gains

A Romanian nationalist whose two newspapers are vehicles for anti-Semitic attacks is gaining support and expected to place second in presidential elections scheduled for Sunday, according to a new poll.

Coneliu Vadim Tudor, who promises to punish "traitors of the nation," would gain 19 percent of the vote, second to former President Ion Iliescu.

If no candidate receives at least 50 percent of the vote in Sunday's election, when Romanian voters will also choose representatives for their 467-seat Parliament, a runoff would be held Dec. 10.

## Canada suffers epidemic of anti-Semitic violence

By Bill Gladstone

TORONTO (JTA) — Canada's Jewish community has experienced a spate of anti-Semitic violence that some observers say is "the worst concentrated outbreak of anti-Semitism, particularly against religious institutions, since the Second World War."

That was the assessment of Manuel Prutschi, national director of community relations for the Canadian Jewish Congress.

The CJC has counted at least 50 incidents of arson, assault, graffiti and vandalism against Jewish targets since Israeli-Palestinian tensions increased in the Middle East in late September.

There have been four reported assaults, all in Montreal: Two students wearing yarmulkas were beaten up in a subway station, another was bullied in a schoolyard and a man was beaten as he walked home from synagogue.

Bricks have shattered windows of two Toronto synagogues, and anti-Semitic or pro-Palestinian graffiti spray-painted on at least five Toronto synagogues. Jewish shops and institutions have likewise been targeted in London, Hamilton and Ottawa, all in the province of Ontario.

The five reported incidents of arson include the fire-bombing of synagogues and the headquarters of a Jewish burial society in Montreal, Ottawa and Edmonton. Yousef Sandouga, 20, was charged with arson after a Molotov cocktail thrown at a window of Beth Shalom synagogue in Edmonton caused about \$1,000 in damage to an external wall.

In one incident, police responding to a bomb threat searched a Jewish community center in downtown Toronto on Yom Kippur without disrupting prayer services. The Israeli Embassy in Ottawa also received a bomb threat.

Jewish officials also say they have received numerous telephone death threats aimed at them or the entire Jewish community. As a result, congregations and Jewish institutions across Canada have increased their security precautions, and many have hired full-time security staff.

By special arrangement with the Jewish community, the Montreal Urban Community Police has taken to patrolling outside synagogues once every hour, said Robert Libman, mayor of Cote Saint Luc, a Montreal municipality with a high proportion of Jewish residents. "The Montreal police have been very helpful and very cooperative and very sensitive to our concerns," said Libman, who is also B'nai Brith Canada's regional director for Quebec.

"No community in Canada should have to endure what the Jewish community has had to endure over the last month," Prutschi said. "The political, religious and ethnic leaders all have a responsibility, repeatedly and publicly, to condemn and repudiate such acts, not only because they threaten the Jewish community, but because they are an assault on the multicultural fabric of Canada."

The Canadian Jewish Congress was quick to condemn graffiti scrawled in October on Palestine House, the headquarters of the Canadian Palestinian community in Mississauga, outside of Toronto.

"We were appalled by this attack, and we issued a statement condemning it as totally reprehensible," said Prutschi, who said the local Arab community does not repudiate specific acts of violence

against Jewish targets in Canada. In November, several rabbis and a Muslim imam in Ottawa issued a joint statement urging that relations between the Jewish and Arab communities in Canada should not be affected by the conflict in the Middle East.

"The fact that you have six rabbis to one Muslim religious leader signing that tends to imply that the Jews are primarily on the giving end rather than on the receiving end" of such initiatives, Prutschi said.

The National Post, a conservative national newspaper, asserted in a recent editorial that Canada's vote in favor of an October U.N. resolution critical of Israel has created a climate of anti-Semitism in the country.

Although the government's U.N. vote has been seen to draw away many Jewish votes from the ruling Liberal Party in advance of the scheduled Nov. 27 national election, Prutschi disagreed, saying it had not sparked anti-Semitic activity in Canada.

"The U.N. vote was not helpful in terms of the overall atmosphere in Canada, but it is simply one of many elements" behind the wave of anti-Jewish violence, he said.

Participants of anti-Israel demonstrations in Toronto have called for "Death to the Jews," he noted, and sported signs equating the Star of David with the swastika, and Israeli Prime Minister Barak with Adolf Hitler.

Some parts of the Arab world have called for a jihad or holy war against Israel and the Jews and issued edicts to kill Israelis and Jews anywhere they may be, Prutschi observed, adding that such statements have helped to incite attacks on Canadian Jews.

The number of anti-Semitic incidents in Canada for the month of October has doubled over the same period last year, according to B'nai Brith Canada's League for Human Rights.

"Fire-bombings, assaults, synagogue defacings and threats go far beyond the political discourse we are used to in Canada, and straight into hate-motivated criminal activity," said Stephen Scheinberg, national chair of the league. □

## Choirs to sing at site of Nazi rally

LOS ANGELES (JTA) — Seven choirs from Israel, Canada and the United States will soon perform Leonard Bernstein's "Kaddish" Symphony on the site in Nuremberg, Germany, where Hitler rallied his storm troopers in the 1930s.

The Nov. 25 and 26 concerts in Meistersinger Hall will commemorate three November anniversaries: the 10th anniversary of Bernstein's death, the 62nd anniversary of the Kristallnacht pogroms in Germany, and the 950th anniversary of the founding of Nuremberg. Joining the Nuremberg Symphony Orchestra in the two concerts, which will open with Beethoven's Fifth Symphony, will be the Tel Aviv Chamber Choir and the Efroni Children's Choir, the latter based near Haifa.

Also joining in Bernstein's Symphony No. 3, "Kaddish," which premiered in 1964 in Israel, will be the Toronto Jewish Chamber Choir and four choral groups from Los Angeles.

Nuremberg's Jewish community, 900 strong and growing, will also host a concert on Nov. 23, featuring Yiddish and Holocaust-themed music. The entire Nuremberg experience, including rehearsals, the concerts and a view of the city's past will be documented in a 90-minute television and educational film by Oscar-winner Delbert Mann. □