



Daily News Bulletin

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TOP NEWS IN BRIEF

Bombers target Jerusalem

Two separate explosions rocked Jerusalem, killing at least one person, apparently a bomber, and wounding dozens. Police said at least 30 people were wounded, one of them critically, when a suicide bomber blew himself up early Tuesday afternoon.

About five hours earlier, five people were wounded when a car bomb detonated in a Jerusalem shopping area. [Page 1]

U.S. to Arafat: Arrest terrorists

The U.S. State Department called on Palestinian Authority President Yasser Arafat to crack down on terrorism by "arresting those responsible and bringing them to justice."

It also condemned Monday's killing of a 10-month-old Jewish girl in Hebron and two terror bombings Tuesday in Jerusalem.

Supremacist given 2 life terms

A white supremacist was given two life sentences Monday for a 1999 shooting spree in Los Angeles in which he killed a Filipino American postal worker and wounded five people.

Before shooting the postman, Buford Furrow Jr. opened fire in the North Valley Jewish Community Center, injuring three boys, a teen-age girl and a woman. [Page 3]

Goussinsky released on bail

Spanish officials released a Russian media tycoon and Jewish leader from jail on \$5.5 million bail pending a court ruling on his extradition to Russia, where he faces fraud charges.

Vladimir Goussinsky's lawyers said Monday's move indicates that Spain is not going to extradite him.

Arafat, Assad reconcile at summit

Palestinian Authority President Yasser Arafat and Syrian President Bashar Assad met for 45 minutes on the sidelines of an Arab summit in Jordan.

The meeting, the first in years between Palestinian and Syrian leaders, focused on coordinating policy toward Israel.

The Syrian president's late father, Hafez Assad, never forgave Arafat for negotiating the 1993 Oslo accords with Israel.

Two bombings in Jerusalem test Israeli response to terror

By Naomi Segal

JERUSALEM (JTA) — Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon is reconsidering his policy of restraint following two more terrorist bombings that wounded more than 30 people in Jerusalem.

Israeli officials viewed the two bombings Tuesday — which came a day after Palestinian snipers shot and killed a 10-month-old Jewish baby in Hebron — as a deliberate attempt to provoke a harsh Israeli response as Arab leaders convened for a summit to show support for the Palestinian uprising.

There have been six bombings within Israel since Sharon took office Feb. 6 — and several foiled terrorist attacks. Last week, Israeli pundits said Sharon was waiting until after his inaugural Washington trip to unveil an iron fist. This week, they credited the restraint to the Arab summit in Jordan.

Some are questioning the wisdom of basing an Israeli response on the diplomatic calendar, which always has some imminent event that could justify Israeli restraint.

Israelis who swept Sharon into office on his promise to restore security now are clamoring for a strong counterblow that will quell Palestinian violence.

Senior sources in Sharon's office, however, said Israel would not play into the Palestinians' hands.

Foreign Minister Shimon Peres expressed similar sentiments in his reaction to the attacks.

"With force," the Palestinians "will not achieve anything," Peres said. The bombings are an attempt "to make an impression on the Arab summit and on us, but it will not. We must do everything so the peace process does not stop."

In the first bombing Tuesday, an explosives-packed car blew up in the morning near a mall in the neighborhood of Talpiot.

The driver of a passing bus was moderately hurt, and four other people sustained light injuries.

The car, which had been illegally parked, had been stolen from the center of the country several weeks ago. Islamic Jihad militants claimed responsibility for the attack.

In the second attack, about five hours later, a suicide bomber wearing a belt of nail-studded explosives blew himself up beside a bus at the busy French Hill intersection, wounding at least 30 people, one of them critically.

Witnesses said the bomber boarded the bus but got off quickly when other passengers became suspicious.

The two attacks came as tensions ran high in Hebron after the murder of the baby girl a day earlier.

Shalhevet Pass was with her father, Yitzhak, when snipers opened fire on Hebron's Avraham Avinu enclave from the Palestinian neighborhood of Abu Sneineh, which overlooks the Jewish neighborhood.

Shalhevet, who was shot in the head, is the youngest victim of the six-month-old Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Her father also was injured.

Jewish residents of Hebron demanded that the army take control of Abu Sneineh. Several groups of Jewish settlers entered the area Tuesday and damaged Palestinian property.

Immediately after Shalhevet's murder, Sharon and Defense Minister Benjamin Ben-Eliezer ordered that Hebron be sealed off and a curfew imposed on Abu Sneineh. The Israel Defense Force responded by firing with tanks and machine guns at the Palestinian neighborhood, and army officials advised Palestinians living there to evacuate their

MIDEAST FOCUS

Infant's family demands action

The family of Shalhevet Pass, the 10-month-old baby murdered in a Palestinian sniper attack in Hebron, threatened to delay the funeral until the Israel Defense Force takes control of the Palestinian neighborhood from which the shots were fired. Israel's chief Ashkenazi rabbi, Yisrael Meir Lau, said he understood the family's pain, but said it should not use the child's murder to pressure the government.

Bomb found in Petach Tikva

Israeli police suspect terrorists planted a bomb that was discovered near a falafel stand in Petach Tikva. After the bomb was found Monday night, police experts safely detonated it.

Shas legislator wants dress code

A fervently Orthodox Israeli legislator proposed legislation requiring a dress code for civil servants, as well as bank tellers, supermarket cashiers and other clerks who work in positions that have contact with the public.

Shas Knesset member Amnon Cohen said the legislation is aimed at preventing discomfort for the fervently Orthodox public caused by what was termed "revealing" clothing that some women wear during the summer.

Reservoir near Gaza bursts

Residents of Israel's Kibbutz Nahal Oz were evacuated when the walls of a regional reservoir burst, flooding the area near the Gaza Strip with water. Israeli officials are investigating the cause of Monday's flooding.

Palestinian exchange may close

The Palestinian Stock Exchange may soon close down, according to Palestinian officials. Trading on the exchange has dropped sharply since the outbreak of violence six months ago.



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homes pending a further Israeli response. Tuesday's suicide bombing in French Hill occurred as Sharon was meeting with security officials to discuss how to respond to the earlier bombing and Shalhevet's murder.

Until now, Sharon has said he would respond with a policy of restraint, targeting those responsible for the violence while avoiding collective punishment on the Palestinian population.

Sources in Sharon's office said the policy of restrained response will continue only until the end of the week, Israel Radio reported. The sources said Israel wants to prevent an escalation of the conflict during the Arab League summit.

Members of Sharon's cabinet also said the government would respond differently in the future, but would not elaborate.

"The public will see a real change in the policy of the government. We will take the necessary steps to fight terrorism and restore security," Likud Cabinet member Danny Naveh told Israel Radio.

The surge in violence has increased domestic pressure on Sharon for a more severe response. Sharon overwhelmingly defeated Labor incumbent Ehud Barak in February elections by promising to restore security and deal differently with Palestinian violence — and right-wing legislators reminded Sharon of this on Tuesday.

"From what we've seen in the past few weeks, he has started off on the left foot," legislator Michael Kleiner of the National Union Party told Israel Radio.

President Moshe Katsav said Israel had reached the limit of its restraint and needed new steps to prevent terror attacks.

At the Arab summit in Amman, Palestinian Authority President Yasser Arafat said the Palestinians oppose terrorism and violence — though he characterized military and economic measures Israel has taken in response to Palestinian attacks as "terrorism" and the "utmost forms of violence."

Arafat appealed to Arab leaders to provide financial support so the Palestinians can continue their struggle against Israel.

U.N. Secretary-General Kofi Annan, who spoke Tuesday at the summit, said the international community has every right to criticize Israel for occupying Arab land and for its "excessively harsh response" to the Palestinian uprising.

Annan adopted a more balanced approach later in his speech, speaking of the need to reach a peace agreement that would respond "both to the legitimate desire of the Palestinians for national independence, and to the legitimate claims of the Israelis for recognition and security."

Jordan's King Abdullah told the summit the Arab world should support the Palestinians against Israel.

Syrian President Bashar Assad said Israelis who voted for Sharon in February were "more racist than the Nazis." Assad also urged the United Nations to renew a now-revoked resolution equating Zionism with racism. □

Cantor pleads guilty in sex ring

CHICAGO (JTA) — A Chicago-area cantor and his wife have pleaded guilty to charges of involvement in a prostitution ring.

G. Joel Gordon and Alison Ginsberg each received six months of court supervision and a fine of \$200 for the crime after their March 20 pleas.

Gordon resigned from the Conservative movement's Cantors Assembly after he was arrested last November.

A 10-week undercover investigation last year focused on three Chicago-area apartments used by employees of Golden Touch Massage.

Gordon previously served as a cantor in other Chicago-area congregations, as well as in New Jersey and Atlanta.

At Temple Sinai in Atlanta, Rabbi Phil Kranz said of Gordon, "We knew there was a problem. He was given a few hours to pack and be out and he left in the dark of night."

Gordon later served at Temple Chai in Long Grove, Ill., where his contract was not renewed. Most recently, Gordon served Congregation Shirat Emet, in the Chicago suburb of Buffalo Grove, Ill., before it disbanded in mid-2000. □

JEWISH WORLD

Hospice group OKs programs

Programs involved with the treatment and care of terminally ill Jews can now receive accreditation through a national organization.

The New Jersey-based National Institute for Jewish Hospice is accrediting programs for institutions that undergo its specialized Jewish training program and commit to following a set of care guidelines based on Jewish values and traditions.

Slave labor talks planned for April

Negotiations to break a legal deadlock over German compensation payments to victims of forced and slave labor during World War II are slated to take place in Berlin on April 4.

Germany has earmarked \$5.2 billion for the fund, but payments were delayed after a U.S. judge refused to dismiss Holocaust-related lawsuits against German companies.

Germany is refusing to make payments until all such lawsuits are dropped.

'Mein Kampf' e-salesman fined

A man who sold Czech translations of Hitler's "Mein Kampf" over the Internet was fined almost \$3,000 after being convicted of supporting a movement suppressing the rights of Czech citizens.

Vit Varak faces a one-year prison sentence if he fails to pay the fine.

Film to focus on Warsaw Ghetto

Filming began in Slovakia for "Uprising," a story about the lives of Jews in the Warsaw Ghetto during World War II, The Associated Press reported Tuesday.

Sets representing the Polish city were built in Bratislava's old town, and the ghetto was built near the Danube River.

Some 6,500 extras were hired for the movie, which stars U.S. actors Donald Sutherland and David Schwimmer.

Jewish charity ball held in Prague

About 400 people attended the annual Jewish Charity Ball at the headquarters of Radio Free Europe in Prague.

The event raised around \$8,000 for the Prague Jewish Community Foundation.

PBS to examine U.S. Jewish life

Many public television stations across the United States are slated to air in the coming months a two-part documentary on early Jewish history in the United States. "They Came for Good: A History of the Jews in the United States" chronicles U.S. Jewish life from 1654 to 1880.

Sobs and screams fill courtroom as white supremacist gets life in jail

By Tom Tugend

LOS ANGELES (JTA) — Victims of a 1999 racist shooting spree expressed grief and anger as a white supremacist was given two life sentences this week for killing a Filipino American postman and wounding five people at a Jewish community center.

Before shooting the postal worker, Buford Furrow Jr. opened fire in the North Valley Jewish Community Center in Granada Hills, Calif., injuring three boys, a teen-age girl and a woman.

"Your actions were a reminder that bigotry is alive," Judge Nora Manella told Furrow during sentencing Monday.

He also ordered Furrow to pay \$690,294 in restitution.

Furrow is now indigent, but any money he might make by selling a book or the rights to a movie about his life could be seized.

Furrow, 39, was spared a possible death sentence due to a history of mental illness. He appeared pale and docile as he read a statement that said, "I think about what happened every day, and I will grieve for it every day for the rest of my life."

He also said, "I do not harbor ill feelings toward people of any race, creed, color or sexual orientation."

The contrite courtroom assertion was in sharp contrast to his initial statement to FBI agents that spraying 70 bullets at children and workers at the North Valley Jewish Community Center was meant as "a wake-up call to America to kill Jews."

A longtime member of the racist and anti-Semitic Aryan Nations, Furrow followed up his Aug. 10, 1999, shooting spree at the Jewish center by murdering mailman Joseph Iletto.

Furrow said he killed Iletto because he was angered by the sight of a nonwhite federal employee.

Before Furrow was given the life sentences — which came without hope of parole, release or appeal — his victims and their relatives vented their grief and anger during a wrenching 80-minute session.

"I feel deep inside that" Furrow "knows the difference between right and wrong," said Iletto's mother, Lillian. "When he killed my son, he also killed part of me."

Perhaps the most agonizing testimony came from Mindy Finkelstein, who was a 16-year old counselor at the Jewish center when Furrow shot and wounded her.

Through sobs, Finkelstein told Furrow that he had sent her to "hell and back."

"Buford Furrow tried to kill me and he failed," she said. "But in a way he succeeded."

Later, Finkelstein said that she had been in and out of hospitals and had dropped out of college because of the psychological aftereffects of the shooting.

"This will be with me for the rest of my life," she said.

During the court session, Donna Finkelstein, Mindy's mother, told Furrow, "You stole my daughter's innocence just because she's Jewish, but you didn't take away her bravery or her ethnic pride."

Gail Powers, whose son also was at the Jewish center but escaped injury, called Furrow a coward.

Several speakers told Judge Manella that they wished Furrow had received the death penalty.

David Finkelstein, Mindy's father, said he told prosecutors, "I'd like to kill him myself."

The Simon Wiesenthal Center was an initial target of Furrow, along with the Skirball Cultural Center and the University of Judaism. All are in the Los Angeles area.

"Because Furrow admitted his guilt, and because he did not receive the death penalty, he will at least not become the poster boy and martyr for hate groups," said Rabbi Abraham Cooper, the associate dean of the Wiesenthal Center. "I wish those who do not believe that there are hate crimes had been in the courtroom, to see how hate can infect an entire community."

David Lehrer, a regional director for the Anti-Defamation League, said, "Justice has been served. A clear message has been sent that the commission of hate crimes will result in conviction and a severe penalty." □

BEHIND THE HEADLINES

Proposed 'death tax' repeal has Jewish charities worried

By Sharon Samber

WASHINGTON (JTA) — With tax cuts the talk of the town, Jewish philanthropists are worried about another part of President Bush's fiscal plan — repeal of the estate tax.

Many funders are concerned that charitable giving will suffer if the estate tax — which levies a high tax on the estates of recently deceased individuals — is repealed. Some are calling to reform, rather than end, the tax.

Marcia Hazan, a trustee with Foster Family Foundation in San Diego, said she "absolutely" stands to gain if the tax is repealed, "but as my father always says, it's a privilege to pay taxes. Particularly I feel that way, because I didn't earn the money, he earned the money."

Hazan and other representatives of family foundations and philanthropies discussed the issue at a Jewish Funders Network meeting last week in Atlanta where philanthropist Edith Everett called for reforming the estate tax. Everett suggested making adjustments for family farms and people with smaller estates, but objected to a repeal.

Everett told JTA that hundreds of people approached her and thanked her for speaking out. "There wasn't a single person who said, even in a nice way, 'I disagree,'" Everett said.

Everett and hundreds of other philanthropists, including William Gates Sr. and George Soros, have signed a petition asking that the estate tax, which many believe serves as an incentive to leave one's wealth to charity, be preserved. Responsible Wealth, a project that brings together people who are concerned about deepening economic inequality, is organizing the petition.

The Bush administration argues that the estate tax, or "death tax," impedes economic growth because it levies another layer of taxes and creates a disincentive for seniors who want to save for their children or grandchildren.

The Clinton administration had opposed the repeal of the estate tax, saying it was fiscally unwise, would reduce the overall fairness of the tax system and would harm charitable giving.

Estate tax is paid only on the wealthiest 2 percent of estates. Some studies have estimated that repealing the tax could reduce charitable gifts and bequests by close to \$6 billion annually.

The organized Jewish community has stayed quiet on the issue, worried about offending some of their biggest donors.

United Jewish Communities, the North American Jewish community's central fund-raising and social services agency, has not taken a position. One lay leader who asked not to be named said a repeal could discourage charitable giving.

Others note that while no one gives to charities simply because of the estate tax, it does provide a powerful incentive. The warning, then, is that charitable-minded people will still give if the tax is repealed, but they may give significantly less.

The Jewish Council for Public Affairs is looking into the issue. The Reform movement's Union of American Hebrew Congregations has not officially come out against the repeal, but its Commission on Social Action has spoken out against it.

Another major concern is revenue lost to the government, which could mean cuts in services and programs, if the estate tax is repealed. According to some estimates, eliminating the estate tax would reduce government coffers by \$28 billion.

The repeal of the estate tax is drawing more attacks than the rest of President Bush's 10-year, \$1.6 trillion tax cut plan.

Bush's plan would expand the federal charitable deduction so that people who do not itemize on their tax returns can deduct contributions to charities. But the amount they would contribute is unlikely to offset the amount wealthier people would give under the estate tax — since non-itemizers tend to be in a lower tax bracket.

White House officials now say plans to repeal the estate tax might be delayed to keep down initial costs of Bush's tax plan.

Repealing the estate tax is popular with many members of Congress and is supported by a powerful small-business lobby that Bush hopes will help him to sell his tax plan.

Sue Hoffman of the Shefa Fund — a Philadelphia-based nonprofit organization that supports liberal and pro-peace causes, primarily in Israel — says her group will support the petition to preserve the estate tax and has heard from many other Jewish funders that the estate tax should stay. Hoffman views the estate tax as a codification of Jewish beliefs into law.

"Tax cuts that benefit the wealthy are unfair and are not the best reflection of Jewish values," she said. □

(JTA Staff Writer Julie Wiener in New York contributed to this report.)

After learning about his uncle, man compiling list of WWI soldiers

By Bill Gladstone

TORONTO (JTA) — A prosecutor who heads New York state's investigation into the fate of Holocaust victims' assets held in Swiss banks is attempting to compile the first list of the roughly 3,000 American Jewish soldiers killed in World War I.

Irwin Nack, the Investigative Counsel for the New York State Banking Department, said he embarked on the unrelated project after extensive research led him to the gravesite of his great uncle, David Levene, an American soldier killed during World War I.

"I was astounded by the fact that in the immediate vicinity of his grave were no less than 14 other soldiers," Nack said. "All of them were Jewish Americans who had died in World War I and whose remains were transferred back to the United States for burial in a private Jewish cemetery."

As most died unmarried, the graves are neglected, Nack said. Several of the headstones have been vandalized, and two are "almost unreadable and on the verge of collapse."

"I find this state of affairs to be particularly disturbing in light of the sacrifices made by these men. It was clear that they and their deeds have been all but forgotten."

The National Museum of American Jewish Military History, located in Washington, does not have a comprehensive list of American Jews killed in World War I. Neither does the Jewish War Veterans of America.

"Sure, we'd like to have such a list," said Herb Rosenbleeth, the national executive director of the Jewish veterans' group.

Nack requests that anyone with knowledge of an American Jewish soldier killed in World War I send him the following details: the soldier's full name, home state, regiment, date of death, burial location and other relevant information.

He intends to make the list available to researchers at the National Museum of American Jewish Military History and other institutions. □

Nack's e-mail address is inack@ix.netcom.com.