



# Daily News Bulletin

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84th Year

## TOP NEWS IN BRIEF

### **Bush applauds Tenet's effort**

President Bush called CIA Director George Tenet to congratulate him for helping to arrange the Middle East cease-fire, the White House said Wednesday.

"The United States is looking for progress, and so is the world," Bush told Tenet.

Tenet brought together senior Israeli and Palestinian security officials Wednesday to begin implementing the cease-fire.

### **U.S. Arabs back TV anchor**

An Arab American group is calling on Muslims in the United States and "other people of conscience" to contact ABC-TV news anchor Peter Jennings and thank him for what they call his honest and fair coverage of events in the Middle East.

"Honest, even-handed coverage of the Palestinians is difficult to find in American media," an official with American Muslims for Jerusalem said.

Jennings has recently come under attack for his purported anti-Israel bias in his nightly evening news show.

### **Female settler wounded**

Palestinian gunmen shot and wounded an Israeli woman near the Jewish settlement of Ofra in the West Bank, Israeli police said Wednesday.

In another incident, Palestinians fired mortars at an Israeli army post near a Jewish settlement in the Gaza Strip, but no injuries were reported. [Page 1]

### **Judge eyes French railroad case**

A U.S. judge is deciding whether to proceed with a class-action lawsuit brought by Holocaust survivors against France's national railroad.

The lawsuit calls on the railroad to pay damages for shipping some 75,000 Jews to Nazi death camps, but lawyers for the defendant argue that the railroad cannot be sued in an American court.

### **Environmentalists blast Bush**

Jewish environmental groups are criticizing President Bush's response to concerns about global climate change. Sharon Bloome, national chair of the Coalition on the Environment and Jewish Life, said the president's approach is "grossly inadequate" and Bush is "delaying domestic action and obstructing international solutions to global warming."

## NEWS ANALYSIS

### **Mideast tenses as cease-fire push results in unenthusiastic agreement**

*By Naomi Segal*

JERUSALEM (JTA) — Israel and the Palestinian Authority have agreed to a U.S. plan for a Mideast cease-fire, but prospects for its success remain murky.

Both sides are skeptical about the "working plan," as it is being called, but they did not want to reject it, knowing it could cost them points in the court of world opinion.

"I can't say I'm enthusiastic about the plan," Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon said Wednesday. After consultations with senior security officials, however, he decided to accept it to "see whether it can lead to a reduction of violence."

On the Palestinian side, Information Minister Yasser Abed Rabbo noted that while Palestinian Authority President Yasser Arafat had agreed verbally to the cease-fire plan, he had not signed the document.

There were further grounds for pessimism Wednesday, when security officials discussed how to begin implementing the U.S.-brokered cease-fire. According to a U.S. official present at the talks, the meeting was marked by broad disagreements.

Adding to the problematic forecast, Hamas officials announced that they will not abide by the cease-fire, and another fundamentalist group, Islamic Jihad, called the deal an insult.

Increasingly, however, Israel is holding Arafat and the Palestinian Authority responsible for all violence committed by Palestinians, arguing that as head of the Palestinian government, Arafat bears overall responsibility for actions committed by all Palestinian factions.

Much of the deal's success appears to hinge on the Palestinian Authority's readiness to crack down on the terrorist infrastructure it has allowed to flourish alongside eight years of peace negotiations.

After a late-night session Tuesday with CIA Director George Tenet, Palestinian leaders accepted Tenet's plan for a cease-fire, with several reservations. Israel had accepted the plan earlier in the day.

Negotiations had stalled Tuesday over two main sticking points: The Palestinian refusal to rearrest some 20 Hamas and Islamic Jihad terrorists they released from jail shortly after violence began last fall; and a disagreement over whether diplomatic negotiations should resume immediately — as the Palestinians demand — or after the cease-fire is tested during a "cooling-off" period of six weeks to two months, as Israel is demanding.

Palestinian officials later noted another objection, citing the plan's call for buffer zones to separate Israeli and Palestinian forces. The officials charge that the zones would impinge on Palestinian territory, limiting the amount of land under P.A. control.

According to media reports, the proposal calls on Israel to stop attacks on Palestinian Authority targets, withdraw troops to their positions before violence began last September and refrain from reprisals that would hurt Palestinian civilians.

The proposal calls on the Palestinians to arrest terrorists, round up mortars and other illegal weapons, close explosives factories, prevent attacks from Palestinian-ruled territory and refuse haven to terrorists after attacks.

Skeptics in Israel noted that the Palestinian Authority has pledged to take similar measures in numerous previous agreements, then ignored its commitments.

Palestinian officials have said they will arrest terrorists actively planning attacks, but will not rearrest those it released from jail for earlier attacks. Israel fears that the terrorists released last fall — including several of the fundamentalist organizations' top

## MIDEAST FOCUS

### E.U. team monitors cease-fire

A team of E.U. officials is observing the implementation of a fragile Israeli-Palestinian cease-fire. The four-member team has visited a variety of flashpoints between Israeli troops and Palestinian gunmen in the West Bank and Gaza Strip.

Swedish Prime Minister Goran Persson said Tuesday that the European Union had coordinated the placement of the observers with Israeli Foreign Minister Shimon Peres, following reports that there had been no coordination with Israel.

### Arabs caught during arson attack

Israeli police arrested two Arabs on Wednesday as they were setting fire to brush on a street in Jerusalem behind the King David Hotel, according to the Jerusalem Post.

The fire was extinguished, but two cars sustained severe damage.

### Egyptian lawyers to try Sharon

The Egyptian Bar Association plans to try Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon in absentia for "war crimes against the Palestinian people," Israel's Army Radio reported Wednesday.

The group said it is mounting the trial because the International War Crimes Tribunal in the Hague is too weak to do so, according to the report.

### Egyptian acquitted on spy charge

An Egyptian court acquitted an Egyptian man of spying for Israel, ending a trial that raised strong nationalist passions. Another defendant identified as a Russian was found guilty in absentia in the same case and given a life sentence with hard labor.

### Knesset passes rape law

Israel's Knesset on Wednesday passed a law defining rape as any sexual situation in a which a woman says "no," even if no physical force is used.

military strategists and master bomb-makers — will return to planning attacks.

Violence has lessened somewhat since Arafat called for a cease-fire after a massive terror bombing in Tel Aviv on June 1, but the calm is relative: Israel Defense Force officials noted 124 "major" Palestinian attacks — mostly gunfire, bombs or mortars — in the nine days following Arafat's gesture.

Citing Arafat's behavior in dozens of previous cease-fires over the decades, Israeli pundits predicted that he would manipulate the agreement to maintain Palestinian violence on a lower flame, avoiding terror attacks severe enough to justify a massive Israeli response but causing enough damage to prod Israel into diplomatic concessions.

For example, on Wednesday — just hours after Arafat agreed to the U.S. plan — Palestinian gunmen shot and wounded an Israeli woman near the Jewish settlement of Ofra in the West Bank, Israeli police said.

In another incident, Palestinians opened fire on a Jewish settlement in the Gaza Strip, but no injuries were reported.

On Tuesday, Palestinian gunmen shot up an Israeli car traveling on a major highway between Jerusalem and the bedroom community of Ma'aleh Adumim in the West Bank. The victim, who was killed, turned out to be a Greek Orthodox monk.

Palestinian officials complain that certain sections of Tenet's proposals go beyond a plan — released last month by an international commission under former U.S. Sen. George Mitchell — to end the violence and renew diplomatic negotiations.

Israel Radio said the Palestinians sought to accept the Mitchell Commission recommendations as a package, without separating its security elements from the political elements — such as a call for a freeze on Israeli settlement-building in the West Bank and Gaza Strip.

The commission had called for an immediate, unconditional cease-fire to be followed by a "cooling-off" period, then a series of confidence-building measures from each side and, ultimately, a resumption of peace negotiations.

An American official said Tuesday, however, that pressure likely will be exerted to resume the diplomatic process even during the "cooling-off" period.

Briefing the Knesset's Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee this week, a senior Israeli intelligence officer said Arafat had taken steps to thwart several attacks in Israel since the June 1 Tel Aviv bombing brought the Sharon government to the verge of massive retaliation.

But the officer called the measures "superficial," saying they appeared aimed primarily at reaffirming Arafat's appearance of control over the situation in the territories, and easing international pressure on him.

In any case, the officer's assessment was dismissed by Deputy Defense Minister Dalia Rabin-Pelosoff, who said there is no evidence that the Palestinian Authority has acted to stop attacks. □

## Israeli shipper moving offices after bomb, fire in South Africa

By Suzanne Belling

JOHANNESBURG (JTA) — An Israeli shipping company in a Johannesburg suburb will move its offices after a bomb was discovered in a prestigious business complex located on the same street as a synagogue.

Police are still investigating the cause of a fire at Rutherford Estate in Waverley, Johannesburg, and have not ruled out the possibility that a pipe bomb found at the scene could have been intended for an Israeli shipping company, Polaris Shipping.

The branch manager of Polaris, Bruce Dorkin, said a gardener found the plastic pipe bomb, filled with gunpowder and encrusted with screws and nails, on Friday.

A fire engulfed the office block the following day, causing extensive damage to about 10 offices, including those of Polaris.

Dorkin said he is waiting for the results of the police investigation, but that he himself suspects both incidents are linked to the fact that the shipping line is Israeli. Polaris plans to move immediately to another area with tighter security, Dorkin said.

"We did have 24-hour security linked to armed response, but we're obviously going to have to look at stricter measures," he said. □



## Daily News Bulletin

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## JEWISH WORLD

### Communist, Nazi links studied

The secret police in Communist Czechoslovakia recruited Nazi war criminals as agents, according to documents published by the Czech Republic's Office for Investigation of Crimes of Communism.

Investigators say Antonin Zapotocky, president of Czechoslovakia in the 1950s, pardoned four former high-ranking Nazis, at least two of whom later worked with the secret police.

One was named as Max Rostock, who was held responsible for the wartime massacre of residents in the Czech village of Lidice.

### Anti-Semite runs in Russian city

A candidate who called for the expulsion of all Jews from Russia is marring the mayoral campaign in a Russian city, according to the Union of Councils for Soviet Jews.

Oleg Kitter, a former deputy mayor of Samara, is running for mayor there, although he is also standing trial for inciting ethnic hatred.

### Warsaw hosts Jewish festival

Warsaw hosts its first Jewish culture festival next week.

The June 17-24 event features concerts, exhibitions, performances, films, lectures, workshops and guided tours of Jewish historic sites, including the Warsaw Ghetto and the historic Jewish cemetery.

A Jewish culture festival has taken place annually since 1988 in the Polish city of Krakow.

### Belarus monument vandalized

Vandals defaced a monument in Belarus to Jews killed during the Holocaust, according to the Union of Councils for Soviet Jews.

In Monday's incident in the city of Brest, the vandals scrawled swastikas as well as anti-Semitic epithets.

The monument was built in 1992 by a close relative of former Israeli Prime Minister Menachem Begin.

Begin was born in Brest and had several relatives die in the Brest Ghetto during the war.

### Former HIAS president dies at 80

Edwin Shapiro, a president of the Hebrew Immigrant Aid Society from 1979 to 1984, died Tuesday of cancer at 80.

During his tenure at HIAS, Shapiro directed efforts to provide services for Jews leaving the Soviet Union and resettling in Israel, the United States and other countries.

Shapiro also served as chairman of the executive committee of the New York Association of New Americans.

## British Jews breathe sigh of relief as voters ignore Muslim campaign

By Richard Allen Greene

LONDON (JTA) — British Jewish leaders are relieved at the failure of a Muslim campaign aimed at unseating pro-Israel legislators.

Votesmart, a Web site run by British Muslim volunteers, campaigned against a number of legislators who belong to Labor Friends of Israel, a lobbying bloc associated with Prime Minister Tony Blair's victorious governing party.

All the targeted candidates won re-election in the June 7 general election, many by larger margins than they garnered in the last elections in 1997.

"The Muslim campaign had no effect at all," said Barry Kosmin, director of London's Institute for Jewish Policy Research, a think tank.

Votesmart's emphasis on the Middle East, to the exclusion of all other issues during the campaign, proved ineffective, Kosmin said.

"Foreign policy, and especially Palestine, doesn't play any role in British elections," he said.

Mike Whine, a spokesman for the Community Security Trust, an organization that deals with local Jewish security issues, agreed.

"The election seems to suggest that Muslim voters are more concerned with national issues" than foreign ones, "which is to be welcomed," he told JTA.

Mike Gapes, a target of Votesmart, said the campaign may actually have backfired.

Gapes, the vice chairman of Labor Friends of Israel, was rated a minus 5 — the lowest possible rating — on Votesmart's online guide.

Despite the rating, he said, "I had very large support from Muslims in my community."

"Quite a lot of Muslims decided they wanted nothing to do with this and actively campaigned for me," Gapes said.

The Muslims affiliated with the site campaigned so heavily against Gapes that on one occasion police were called in to keep peace between the lawmaker's supporters and his opponents, he said.

"They campaigned outside mosques and on polling day at polling stations," which is against the law, Gapes said. Police ordered the Muslim campaigners to move away from the polling station.

While pro-Israel activists are pleased by the overall result — a repeat of Labor's landslide 1997 victory — there is concern about the success of the far-right British National Party in the north of England.

The BNP captured 16.4 percent of the vote in Oldham West — the best-ever result for a far-right party in England — and 11 percent in neighboring Oldham East.

A depressed industrial town, Oldham East was the scene of riots between Muslims of Pakistani origin and white residents in the past few months.

"Oldham shows the effect a racist party can have on a despondent electorate," the CST's Whine said.

There were few other surprises for Jewish candidates or voters in an election that Kosmin characterized as "amazing, in that it was a complete rerun of 1997."

One of the Britain's most prominent Jewish politicians, former Foreign Secretary Sir Malcolm Rifkind, failed to recapture a Scottish seat he lost to Labor in 1997.

And Rudi Vis, the Labor legislator in a heavily Jewish neighborhood of London, was re-elected comfortably despite his opposition to an eruv — a wire boundary allowing Orthodox Jews to carry belongings on Shabbat — in the district. □

## Chasidic rebbetzin dies at 89

NEW YORK (JTA) — Faiga Teitelbaum, a guiding force in the Satmar group of Chasidim, died June 2 at 89.

Teitelbaum became a powerful member of the community behind the scenes when her husband, Joel, the Satmar grand rebbe and spiritual leader, suffered a stroke 36 years ago. She ultimately helped her husband build the largest Chasidic school system in the country. □

## Italy's Jews divided as tycoon includes far-rightists in Cabinet

By Ruth E. Gruber

ROME (JTA) — Italian Jews are sharply divided over the new center-right government headed by media tycoon Silvio Berlusconi that includes two controversial politicians with far-right links.

Berlusconi, whose Freedom House coalition swept the center-left from power in general elections last month, was sworn in Monday as prime minister of Italy's 59th government since 1945.

"Like Italians at large, Italian Jews voted for both sides," said Amos Luzzatto, president of the Union of Italian Jewish Communities, Italian Jewry's umbrella organization.

In part, Jewish voters were torn between concern over Israel and domestic issues such as racism and anti-fascism.

On the one hand, Berlusconi's new administration probably will be the most pro-Israel government in Italy in years.

Defense Minister Antonio Martino, for example, is vice president of the Italian Friends of Israel association.

Many Italian Jews also were drawn to Berlusconi's promise of lower taxes.

On the other hand, in addition to his own business-oriented Forza Italia Party, Berlusconi's coalition includes political forces that many Jews deeply distrust.

These include the National Alliance, which has its roots in neo-fascism, and the Northern League, which once aimed to separate northern Italy from the rest of the country and is known for its overt anti-immigrant policies.

National Alliance leader Gianfranco Fini is now Berlusconi's deputy prime minister — and the Northern League's hot-tempered leader, Umberto Bossi, renowned for his vulgar language and rabble-rousing behavior, is Berlusconi's Cabinet minister in charge of reforms.

Political divisions in Italian Jewry are personified in the conflicting views of two of the country's most prominent Jewish leaders: Luzzatto and Cobi Benatoff, a Milan businessman who once headed the Milan Jewish community and now is president of the European Council of Jewish Communities.

As chief lay leader of all 35,000 Italian Jews, Luzzatto, a scholar and doctor, did not specifically urge Jews to vote for a particular party during the campaign.

In his statements before the election, however, he stressed what he called "strong moral values" that voters should bear in mind, including minority rights and the need to combat racism while dealing with immigration issues.

Luzzatto's personal sympathies clearly are with the left side of the political spectrum.

In particular, he manifests a strong distrust of National Alliance leader Fini despite the fact that, for years, Fini has tried to shake off his party's neo-fascist associations and turn it into a mainstream right-wing force.

"I'm sorry to say that the National Alliance has not yet completed its transition," Luzzatto said.

"I need to hear from Fini explicit words that recognize the moral and political responsibility of fascism in the extermination of the Jews," he said.

"When he does that, I'll even shake his hand."

Bossi, he said, was just as much of a concern — maybe more so.

Among other things, Luzzatto noted that members of the Northern League have close relations with far-right Austrian politician Jorg Haider.

"Haider is spending more and more time in Italy," Luzzatto said. "What does he want here?"

Israel, meanwhile, will not protest the inclusion of far-right parties in the Italian government, as it did when Haider's party joined the Austrian government last year.

"We have a lot of friends in this government," said Amos Vidan, currently in charge of the Israeli Embassy in Rome. "Democratic elections were held, and we do not intervene in the process.

"The party of Bossi is a legitimate party in Italy, and we do not boycott it."

Sources in Israel said they could not rule out the possibility that Fini would be offered an invitation for an official visit — depending on the European Union's stance on Fini's role in the Italian government.

"Israel should not be the first to host him, but he should not be rejected off-hand, and the matter should be considered seriously," Vidan said.

"Fini is not a product of the fascist era, and we believe that there is room to view him in a different light."

Likewise — and in contrast to Luzzatto — businessman Benatoff welcomes the new political lineup.

"I have a lot of hope in the new government for a change of attitude vis-a-vis Israel," he told JTA. "The people in power have a more sympathetic approach to Israel, especially Berlusconi himself."

Benatoff criticizes the attitude of Luzzatto and other Jewish leaders toward Fini and feels that Jews should accept the National Alliance's overtures in good faith.

"I do not believe that the National Alliance is an anti-Semitic party," he said.

"The National Alliance is on the road to normalization and is keen to normalize its relations with the Jews. At some point, they may not want to do this anymore."

These types of political divisions among Italian Jews mirror divisions in the country as a whole.

A recent incident, however, has raised concern that other potentially explosive rifts are developing.

An article by Giorgio Gomel, a well-known Jewish peace activist, that was critical of current Israeli policy appears in the latest issue of the local Jewish magazine, *Shalom*.

Last week, as he was walking toward the Israeli Embassy to attend a vigil in support of the Jewish state, Gomel was accosted by other Jews who called him a "friend of Arafat" and tried to attack him.

"Nothing like this has happened in our community for years," one member of Rome's Jewish community said. □

## Pro-Israel rallies held Down Under

SYDNEY, Australia (JTA) — Thousands of Australian Jews attended Israel solidarity rallies this week.

A Sunday night rally in Melbourne drew more than 1,000 people, and another 300 were turned away due to lack of space.

A similar number who braved the early winter weather at an outdoor rally in Sydney on Monday night heard a senior government minister pledge Australia's support for peace and Israeli security. □