



# Daily News Bulletin

Vol. 79, No. 142

Thursday, August 2, 2001

84th Year

## TOP NEWS IN BRIEF

### **Palestinian killed in Hebron fight**

Israeli soldiers shot dead a Palestinian man in the West Bank city of Hebron during a fierce battle with Palestinian gunmen that lasted several hours.

At least three other Palestinians, including a 3-year-old boy shot in the hand, were wounded in the fighting. A Jewish settler was slightly hurt in the battle, Israeli officials said.

### **Deadline looms for bank claims**

Holocaust survivors or their heirs who believe they have valid claims for dormant Swiss bank accounts dating back to the Holocaust era have until next week to file claims.

Further information and claims forms are available at: <http://www.dormantaccounts.ch>. [Page 4]

### **Palestinians demand revenge**

Tens of thousands of Palestinians called for revenge against Israel during funerals Wednesday for eight Palestinians killed Tuesday in an Israeli air strike on a Hamas office in the West Bank city of Nablus.

The attack drew widespread international condemnation, including from U.S. officials, who called it a major setback to peacemaking efforts.

Citing its "basic right to self-defense," Israel said it will continue its policy of targeting Palestinian militants believed to be planning attacks on Israeli targets. Prime Minister Ariel Sharon reached the decision Wednesday during a five-hour meeting of his Security Cabinet.

In another development, Hamas officials said they are issuing orders calling on their followers to attack Israeli political leaders.

According to Israeli media reports, the targets include Prime Minister Ariel Sharon, Foreign Minister Shimon Peres and members of Israel's Parliament.

### **Report: 'Human shields' aid P.A.**

Peace activists from the United States are volunteering as "human shields" in Palestinian areas where battles erupt with Israeli forces, according to Reuters.

After arriving in the region last week, members of the Christian Peacemakers group say they plan to help Palestinians dismantle roadblocks and challenge village closures by Israeli forces.

The Israeli government said the volunteers are pawns in a Palestinian propaganda exercise.

## NEWS ANALYSIS

### **Arab efforts at Durban conference not just rhetorical attack, Jews say**

By Michael J. Jordan

NEW YORK (JTA) — The renewed campaign to equate Zionism with racism — the presumed lowlight of an upcoming U.N. conference in South Africa — is not merely a quest by the Palestinians and their Arab allies for a symbolic or rhetorical victory, Jewish activists say.

Rather, the campaign aims to undermine the moral legitimacy of the State of Israel, these activists say, and subsequently would brand pro-Israel Jews everywhere as racists.

Delegates from some 100 nations are meeting in Geneva hammering out the language of the declaration that will be on the table at "The World Conference Against Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance," beginning Aug. 31 in Durban, South Africa.

Among the phrases under consideration is whether Israel — founded on an ideology "based on racial supremacy" — is an "apartheid, racist and fascist state" committing a "holocaust," "genocide" and "ethnic cleansing" against the Palestinians in its "quest to create a Jewish settler state."

Also upsetting to Jews is use of the term "holocaust" with a lower-case "h" — an intentional effort to demean the uniqueness of the Holocaust, they say — and portrayal of Jewish settlements on the West Bank as crimes against humanity.

"If this resolution were revived," said Harris Schoenberg, chairman of the U.N. caucus of Jewish nongovernmental organizations, "the terrible impact would be renewed demonization of Israel, and it could have a devastating effect on the small and exposed Jewish communities around the world."

Adds Amy Goldstein, national director of Israel, Zionist and international affairs for Hadassah: The Women's Zionist Organization of America: "This is a smoke screen to deny Jews a basic human right — the right of Jewish self-determination."

In the process, Jewish observers say, the relative ease with which the huge bloc of Arab and Muslim states has been able to hijack preparations for the conference further erodes the image of the United Nations and underscores its need for reform.

It was essentially the same crowd that in May conspired to oust the United States from the Geneva-based U.N. Commission for Human Rights, and which repeatedly pushes for U.N. resolutions that lay all blame for the past 10 months of Middle East violence at Israel's feet.

Observers say such actions reinforce Israeli perceptions of the United Nations as irrevocably biased and unworthy of a significant role in the Mideast conflict.

If so, that would seem to damage Palestinian interests: Palestinian Authority President Yasser Arafat routinely pushes for the "internationalization" of the conflict and a diminished role for the United States.

Now, however, growing numbers of U.S. and U.N. officials are speaking out against reviving "Z=R," the equation between Zionism and racism.

President George W. Bush's administration is threatening to boycott the conference if the Z=R resolution — which his father helped defeat in 1991 after 16 years on the U.N. books — appears on the conference agenda.

The United States boycotted the two previous world conferences on racism, in 1978 and 1983, for the same reason.

The Bush administration also opposes the efforts of an African bloc to denounce the legacy of slavery and push for financial reparations from the United States and European colonial powers. Jewish leaders, including Mortimer Zuckerman, president

## MIDEAST FOCUS

### Bomb found in Jerusalem

A pipe bomb exploded in a public park next to the King David Hotel in Jerusalem, but it caused no damage or injuries. The bomb was discovered Wednesday by two municipal workers.

In another incident, five Israelis were wounded, one of them seriously, in a West Bank shooting attack Tuesday night in the Ramallah area.

### Teen knifed in Petach Tikva

An 18-year-old Israeli teen-ager was moderately wounded after being stabbed in the back in Petach Tikva on Tuesday night.

Police later arrested three Israeli Arabs suspected of carrying out the attack, Army Radio reported.

### Arafat to meet with pope

Palestinian Authority President Yasser Arafat arrived in Rome on Wednesday for a two-day visit. During his stay there, he is slated to meet with Prime Minister Silvio Berlusconi and Pope John Paul II.

### Israel gets no-smoking law

A law barring Israelis from smoking in all public places went into effect Wednesday.

Owners of cinemas, theaters, restaurants, cafes, waiting rooms and high schools may establish separate smoking rooms with walls up to the ceiling and proper ventilation, according to the Jerusalem Post.

An estimated 27 percent of Israelis are smokers, the paper reported. Smokers violating the new law will be fined about \$50.

### Jerusalem's Hilton gets renamed

Israel's Jerusalem Hilton hotel was renamed the David Citadel Hotel on Wednesday after it cut ties with the Hilton chain following a dispute.

Officials from the hotel chain said they plan to try to block the move, adding there is a contract that remains in effect until the year 2048.



## Daily News Bulletin

Shoshana S. Cardin, *President*  
Mark J. Joffe, *Executive Editor and Publisher*  
Lisa Hostein, *Editor (on leave)*  
Michael S. Arnold, *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.

of the Conference of Presidents of Major American Jewish Organizations, and Malcolm Hoenelein, the group's executive vice chairman, met with U.N. Secretary-General Kofi Annan on July 25 and pressed him to intervene.

"We made the point that these things have ramifications on the ground," said Hoenelein, who described Annan as "very responsive."

On Monday, Annan publicly addressed the issue, saying the Durban conference "must help heal old wounds without reopening them."

Even U.N. human rights chief Mary Robinson, whom Israelis generally perceive as pro-Palestinian, urged the Arabs to abandon their Z=R efforts.

The conference falls under the purview of Robinson's office.

"The United Nations has already dealt with this issue at great length," Robinson said — though she didn't criticize the resolution itself.

"It is inappropriate to reopen this issue in any form here, and anyone who seeks to do so is putting the success of the Durban conference at risk," she said.

At least one Arab American activist disagrees, albeit with hyperbole.

"There's no place on earth where you can find a situation worse than in the occupied territories, so to have a world conference and not talk about Jewish settlements would be a travesty, a sick joke, like having a conference on racism in the 1970s and not talking about the situation in South Africa," said Hussein Ibish, spokesman for the American Arab Anti-Discrimination Committee.

"While the U.S. is prepared to talk about racism elsewhere, we are not prepared to talk about racism that hits too close to home — our own history of racism or racism practiced by our most politically influential ally, Israel," Ibish said.

Israel's supporters, though, say the linkage between Zionism and racism is a gross distortion. In boycotting the first world racism conference in 1978, President Carter said, "The definition of 'racism' has been perverted for political ends by including Zionism as one of its forms. The United States cannot associate itself with (it), so long as it endorses the patently false definition."

Schoenberg remembers the atmosphere after the U.N. adopted the "Zionism Is Racism" resolution in 1975.

An expert on the workings of the U.N., Schoenberg recalls how Zionism became a bogeyman blamed for many global woes — from poor housing to mistreatment of women to "the economic and social evils" of developing lands.

Anti-Semitism — veiled as anti-Zionism — became fashionable.

Zionism was lumped in with Nazism and apartheid, used by the Soviets to justify anti-Semitic propaganda and by Muslim terrorists to justify airplane hijackings in Lebanon in 1985 and India in 1986, Schoenberg writes in his new book, "The World Conference on Racism: The Adoption and Repeal of the Z=R Resolution and the Implications for U.N. Reform."

Many Jewish student groups in the United States and Britain were ostracized as racist and were shut out of discussions on discrimination, the book says.

"When a lie gets repeated over and over again, it tends to carry legitimacy through many parts of the world," said Michael Colson, the outgoing executive director of the Geneva-based watchdog U.N. Watch.

"In much of the world, the United Nations is revered "as legitimate, authoritative and just."

The threat of a U.S. boycott, together with the opposition of Annan and Robinson, may be enough to keep Z=R off the conference agenda and to tone down the anti-Israel vitriol.

If not, the question is whether America indeed should boycott.

Many say the document's credibility rests on whether the world's sole superpower — and self-proclaimed beacon of democracy — signs it.

Jewish activists hope for a boycott. Ibish, the Arab American activist, urged Washington to attend and defend its stance.

A U.S. boycott, though, would dilute what was meant to be a warm, fuzzy international conference to condemn a universal evil — racism.

If that happens, Colson said, "the blame should be laid squarely on the Arab governments and their friends who insisted on holding the conference hostage on behalf of a specific, political conflict that does not belong there, without any regard for the impact of their behavior."

## JEWISH WORLD

### Senators back Israeli Red Cross

Jewish groups applauded U.S. congressional calls to have the International Red Cross accept Israel's Magen David Adom.

Sens. Peter Fitzgerald (R-Ill.) and Hillary Clinton (D-N.Y.), together with 51 other senators, sent letters Wednesday to Secretary of State Colin Powell and Red Cross officials urging that the Red Cross admit the Israeli organization.

Israel's humanitarian relief agency uses a red Star of David and has been barred from the Red Cross movement.

### Bill would force insurance lists

Two U.S. legislators introduced a bill that would force insurance companies with operations in the United States to disclose the names on Holocaust-era policies.

Rep. Henry Waxman (D-Calif.), who introduced the bill Wednesday along with Rep. Eliot Engel (D-N.Y.), said it is "outrageous" that the companies are trying "to avoid their responsibility" to pay survivors' claims.

### Researchers grow heart cells

Israeli researchers said they have grown heart cells from human embryonic stem cells.

The researchers at the Technion-Israel Institute of Technology and Rambam Medical Center said Wednesday they envisioned injecting these cells into damaged areas to create healthy cardiac muscle that restores heart function.

U.S. Jewish groups are generally in favor of stem cell research, but some opponents consider embryos human beings and believe that destroying them for research would be immoral. President Bush is still considering whether to permit federal funding of research involving stem cells.

### Canadian solidarity trips planned

Backed by a \$1 million donation from a philanthropist, a group called Israel Solidarity International is offering discounted trips to Israel so that Canadian Jews can make solidarity visits.

According to a report in the Canadian Jewish News, participants are being asked to pay about \$600 to join the first mission, which departs for Israel on Aug. 20.

### Berlin museum merits stamp

German officials plan to issue a postage stamp to mark the September opening of Berlin's Jewish Museum.

In an announcement Tuesday, Germany's finance minister, Hans Eichel, called the upcoming occasion "worthy of a special stamp."

## Jewish leaders blast decision lifting Britain's ban on Farrakhan

By Richard Allen Greene

LONDON (JTA) — Lawyers for Nation of Islam leader Louis Farrakhan have succeeded in overturning a 15-year-old ban on his visiting Britain.

Jewish groups had been instrumental in getting Farrakhan barred from the United Kingdom in 1986 on the grounds that his presence could stir up racial tension.

Jewish leaders reacted with dismay after the High Court in London struck down the ban Tuesday.

"Louis Farrakhan has long espoused racist and offensive views. He has never repudiated his obscene anti-Semitic comments," said Neville Nagler, director general of the Board of Deputies, an umbrella organization that represents most British Jews.

Lord Janner, chairman of the British-based Holocaust Educational Trust and a vice president of the World Jewish Congress, described it as "a sad day for all of us in Britain who work for good race relations." He said Farrakhan's "nasty references to Jewish people" had "stirred up racial tension" in the past.

A spokesman in Britain for the Nation of Islam, Minister Hilary Muhammad, said there were "literally thousands of black and white people in the U.K. who would like to hear what Louis Farrakhan has to say even though they may not agree with his teaching."

The Nation of Islam — a black nationalist movement that differs significantly from mainstream Islam — is estimated to have as many as 10,000 members, supporters and sympathizers in Britain. It organized a Ten Thousand Man March in Britain in 1998, modeled on Farrakhan's 1995 Million Man March in Washington.

Last November, then-Home Secretary Jack Straw justified excluding Farrakhan because he had expressed "anti-Semitic and racially divisive views."

The Jewish community has long had concerns about Farrakhan.

In 1984, he praised Hitler as "a very great man."

In another speech that year, he said, "The nation of Israel will never have any peace because there can never be any peace structured on injustice, thievery, lying and deceit and using the name of God to shield your dirty religion."

The Nation of Islam argues that Farrakhan's quotes have been taken out of context and points out that in the Hitler speech, he added that he was "not proud of Hitler's evil toward Jewish people."

"A lot of quotations used to exclude Louis Farrakhan are misquotes, misrepresentations, or words not said by him," said his British lawyer, Sadiq Khan.

Khan argued that "Farrakhan is not anti-Semitic and does not preach a message of racial hatred and antagonism." But in interviews on Tuesday, he refused to say that Farrakhan repudiated or condemned the anti-Semitic quotes attributed to him.

Another lawyer for Farrakhan, Nicholas Blake, said in court that the Nation of Islam leader regrets the offense and hurt he had caused the Jewish community.

But David Pannick, who represented the government in the High Court hearing, said Farrakhan's consistent message is that "Jews have money and power, black people are the victims of the fact that Jews have money and power, and they are responsible for holding down black people."

Beverley Hughes, a Home Office minister, said the government was "very disappointed by the ruling."

Farrakhan, who is 67 and was treated for cancer last year, will not be allowed to enter Britain until the High Court publishes the reasoning behind its decision on Oct. 1.

The government has until then to decide whether to appeal. □

## Study: Israeli prostitutes arrive illegally

JERUSALEM (JTA) — The first-ever study by Israeli researchers on prostitutes in Israel has found that 82 percent came to the country illegally.

The Ben-Gurion University study found that 75 percent knew their future profession prior to arriving in Israel. Of the 55 women who participated in the study, most came from Eastern Europe. □

## 'Holocaust Never Happened' ad prompts lawsuit and controversy

By Toby Axelrod

BERLIN (JTA) — A German Holocaust survivor is suing to stop a controversial fund-raising campaign for a planned national Holocaust memorial in Berlin.

He says the ad campaign — which is appearing across Germany and features the phrase, "The Holocaust Never Happened" — fuels Holocaust denial.

Jewish leaders have been divided about the ad, in which smaller text underneath the headline reads: "There are still many people who make this claim. In 20 years, there could be even more." The plaintiff, a Berliner who lost family members in Auschwitz, said the clarifying statement does not stand out enough to counteract the negative effect of the opening line.

The man, whose name has not been released, filed his suit with the Berlin police on July 18 — one day before the campaign was officially unveiled. According to a German law in effect since the early 1990s, Holocaust denial is punishable by a fine or jail sentence of up to five years.

The head of the foundation responsible for the fund-raising campaign, Lea Rosh, rejected the claim as "laughable" and said the campaign, launched in July, has already brought in more than some \$500,000 in donations for the memorial.

Designed by American architect Peter Eisenman, the memorial will include some 2,700 cement columns resembling giant grave-stones, to be erected on an area as large as a football stadium in the heart of Berlin. The foundation hopes to raise \$2.5 million to fund a document center that will lie beneath the monument. The entire project is expected to cost about \$25 million.

While the new president of Berlin's Jewish community, Alexander Brenner, took part in the unveiling of the fund-raising campaign on July 19, others in the Jewish community have not been as supportive.

Michel Friedman, a vice president of the Central Council of Jews in Germany, expressed doubts about the campaign, calling it a "public relations gag."

Artur Susskind, head of the board of representatives of Berlin's Jewish community, said he understands why people might have mixed feelings about the campaign. "But I find it good," he added.

At the campaign's unveiling in Berlin, the city's new mayor, Klaus Wowereit, defended the ad.

"Provocation leads to discussion," he said. □

## Canadian Jews disgusted by attempted auction of bracelet

By Bram Eisenthal

MONTREAL (JTA) — Canadian Jewish leaders are outraged by the attempted auction of a bracelet made from a tooth and human hair that may have come from a Nazi concentration camp.

Auctioneer Olivier Chalifoux says he learned the bracelet came from a death camp only shortly before the July 15 auction began — and then pulled the item before it received any bids.

The incident was reported by a local newspaper, which contacted Karen Mock, national director of B'nai Brith Canada's League for Human Rights.

"We didn't hear about this until the reporter called, asking me

to comment," Mock told JTA. "I'm being very careful to use the term alleged, as we have no evidence the object originated in the Holocaust, and we are investigating further."

"I would have hoped someone would have turned this bracelet over to the proper authorities, but apparently, Mr. Chalifoux destroyed it."

Chalifoux said he "broke off the tooth with one good stomp of my heel, used scissors to cut the hair and tossed it into the garbage."

Mock called this "an even further indignity," adding that it could have been properly disposed of, or placed in a museum.

A French-speaking resident of Quebec, Chalifoux says he is president of a local group called the Friends of Israel, which he says has 17 members. The antique dealer also said he often writes letters in support of Jews.

"I fight Nazism and authoritarianism," he told a reporter. He said he had not come across Holocaust-related objects on the market in some eight years.

Chalifoux could not be reached by JTA for comment.

Chalifoux unsuccessfully ran as a candidate for the mainstream New Democratic Party in the province's Frontenac-Mégantic district during last year's federal election.

Reports about the bracelet have brought interested collectors out of the woodwork, according to Chalifoux.

Meanwhile, Mock said B'nai Brith would consider taking action against those responsible for the bracelet if the group's investigation turns up evidence that the allegations are true. That may prove impossible now that the item has been destroyed.

David Birnbaum, director of the Canadian Jewish Congress's Quebec region, said the incident trivializes the Holocaust.

He also questions the bracelet's authenticity. □

## Deadline approaches for claims on dormant Swiss bank accounts

By Fredy Rom

ZURICH (JTA) — Holocaust survivors or their heirs who believe they have a valid claim on a dormant Swiss bank account dating back to the Holocaust era have until next week to file claims.

In February, Swiss banks published the names on 21,000 accounts that may have belonged to Holocaust victims. At the time, they imposed a six-month deadline to claim those accounts.

The Claims Resolution Tribunal, which is overseeing the claims process, says it has already received some 25,000 claims.

The tribunal also says it has processed 10,000 of these claims and approved payments to Holocaust survivors totaling \$40 million.

The total number of names published in February was far lower than what some U.S. banking officials had sought.

Jewish groups representing survivors had a similar reaction, saying the process of returning survivors' assets necessitates full access to bank records.

Swiss banking officials refused — but said claimants who have a reasonable case could request a full database search. Survivors have long complained about delays in the restitution process.

Given the survivors' advanced age, every delay means that some survivors would not live long enough to get their money.

Advocates for survivors estimate that some 1,000 survivors around the world die each month.

Further information and claims forms are available at: <http://www.dormantaccounts.ch>. □