



# Daily News Bulletin

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85th Year

## TOP NEWS IN BRIEF

### Suicide bombing rocks Jerusalem

A suicide bomber struck in Jerusalem, killing one man and wounding more than 100 people.

For the first time since the intifada erupted in September 2000, the attack was carried out by a woman. [Page 4]

### Hamas building missiles

Hamas said it is developing missiles that could hit Jerusalem from the West Bank. The announcement, which confirms reports from Israeli military intelligence, came during a CBS interview with a top Hamas official.

Last Friday, Palestinians fired a shorter-range missile at the Erez industrial area in the Gaza Strip, but there were no injuries. Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon has warned Palestinian Authority President Yasser Arafat against firing missiles at Israeli cities.

### Europe commemorates Holocaust

Several European countries commemorated Holocaust Remembrance Day on Sunday. The events came on the 57th anniversary of the Jan. 27, 1945, liberation of Auschwitz.

Germany introduced its Holocaust Remembrance Day in 1996, after which the governments of Italy, Sweden and Britain followed suit.

In Italy, where the remembrance was first introduced last year, events were staged Sunday in many cities.

### Six Palestinians escape jail

Six Palestinian terrorists escaped from a jail in Bethlehem after their families attacked and took control of the prison, according to Palestinian security sources. The six belonged to Islamic Jihad, the sources said.

A spokesman for Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon blamed the Palestinian Authority. "I expect it's part of their revolving-door policy on jailing militants," Ra'anana Gissin said. "If they don't let them out themselves, then they let them get sprung."

### Gunshot hits French school bus

A gunshot hit a school bus carrying Jewish children near Paris.

The single shot caused no injuries, although the bus' windshield was shattered, police reported.

## BEHIND THE HEADLINES

### After Sept. 11 and weapons ship, new push to cut ties to Palestinians

By Matthew E. Berger

WASHINGTON (JTA) — For the first time since the Oslo peace process began, both the White House and Congress are considering cutting ties with the Palestinian Authority and its president, Yasser Arafat.

Israel's advocates in Congress have been seeking sanctions against the Palestinian Authority since the Palestinian intifada began more than a year ago, but both the Clinton and Bush administrations rebuffed attempts to restrict relations with the Palestinians.

Now, however, growing frustration in the White House over Arafat's refusal to take responsibility or provide answers for a huge weapons shipment Israel seized earlier this month finally has put both branches of government on the same page.

"I am disappointed in Yasser Arafat," Bush said last Friday. "He must make a full effort to rout out terror in the Middle East."

Instead, Bush noted, the P.A.'s weapons smuggling only served to enhance terror.

On Sunday, Vice President Dick Cheney added to the criticism of the Palestinian Authority — and of Arafat. "Based on the intelligence we've seen, the people that were involved were so close to him it's hard not to believe that he wasn't involved in the weapons smuggling, he told "Fox News Sunday."

Cheney also says the incident points to disturbing links between Arafat and international terrorism. "What he's done is gone to a terrorist organization, Hezbollah, and a state that supports and promotes terrorism, that's dedicated to ending the peace process, Iran, and done business with them," he said.

Over the past week, the Bush administration has held numerous meetings to discuss possible sanctions against the Palestinian Authority, with Bush reaching out to his Cabinet and lawmakers who met with Arafat recently on Mideast trips.

Administration officials feel Arafat has not made enough effort to curb violence, despite unprecedented U.S. and international pressure.

The weapons shipment is seen as a further sign that Arafat's true goal is to exacerbate rather than end the conflict. The P.A.'s apparent cooperation with Iran in the affair seen as a new low for the Palestinian leader.

A U.S. Jewish leader said he supports sanctions against Arafat.

"It's the only reality Arafat will react to," said Malcolm Hoenlein, the executive vice chairman of the Conference of Presidents of Major American Jewish Organizations. "He has constantly bailed out" on clamping down on terror.

Hoenlein added that he believes the administration is exasperated.

"Clearly their patience with Arafat has run out," he said.

Still, the administration has not reached a consensus on how to proceed. Cheney and Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld reportedly favor cutting ties with Arafat. On the other hand, Secretary of State Colin Powell reportedly favors more moderate steps, such as suspending the mission of U.S. envoy Anthony Zinni. Zinni's return to the region has been delayed because of the weapons-smuggling incident.

Rep. Saxby Chambliss (R-Ga.), who met with Bush on Jan. 23 to brief him on Chambliss' trip to the Middle East, said Bush is reluctant to cut ties with Arafat.

"If you slam the door in somebody's face, you automatically shut the dialogue," said Chambliss, chairman of a House subcommittee on terrorism and security.

For now, the Bush administration has sufficed with stiffening its rhetoric. Last Friday, Powell described a telephone conversation he had with Arafat on Jan. 23.

"We continue to give a strong message to Chairman Arafat that he must act, and

## MIDEAST FOCUS

### Arafat blocked from E.U. meeting

Israel refused Yasser Arafat's request to leave Ramallah. The Palestinian Authority leader wanted to attend a meeting of European Union foreign ministers in Brussels. Prime Minister Ariel Sharon said Arafat is not fighting terrorism and has not yet arrested the assassins of Israeli Cabinet minister Rehavam Ze'evi.

### Druse minister resigns

Israel's first Druse minister resigned. Minister without Portfolio Saleh Tarif, facing bribery allegations, submitted his letter of resignation to Prime Minister Ariel Sharon on Sunday.

Sharon praised Tarif, who was responsible for Arab affairs, for being Israel's first non-Jewish minister. He said he hoped Tarif would prove his innocence quickly.

### Shin Bet bill to face vote

Israel's Knesset will soon vote on a bill defining the responsibilities and authorities of the Shin Bet domestic security service. After nearly 12 years of public and political debate, a special parliamentary committee on Sunday completed work drafting the legislation.

It will be submitted to the Knesset Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee for final approval before presentation to the Knesset for votes.

### Assassin's brother to serve in IDF

The brother of Yitzhak Rabin's assassin will be allowed to serve in Israel's army. Despite Defense Ministry reservations, Sagiv Amir, the brother of Rabin assassin Yigal Amir, will be permitted to serve in the army's religious Nahal unit.

Amir, 19, petitioned Israel's High Court of Justice this month against an earlier decision by the Defense Ministry not to let him enlist. He argued he was being discriminated against because of his brother's deeds.

we continue to review our policy with respect to the Palestinian Authority under Chairman Arafat, and I expect I'll be speaking to him again in the future to see what he is able to do or what progress we can make," Powell said.

Bush recently sent letters to the leaders of Egypt, Jordan and Saudi Arabia, showing proof that the Palestinian Authority was involved in smuggling 50 tons of weapons aboard the Karine A ship that Israel seized in the Red Sea on Jan. 3.

The White House also has stopped urging Israel to show restraint, justifying the placement of Israeli tanks around Arafat's Ramallah headquarters — a move that in effect has kept Arafat under house arrest. "We understand Israel's need to take steps to ensure its security," State Department spokesman Richard Boucher said Jan. 24.

The debate over what to do with Arafat is expected to continue for some time, as U.S. officials will wait for Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon's visit to Washington on Feb. 7 before making a final decision. The meeting was arranged at Bush's invitation, Israeli officials say.

An aide to Arafat warned that a U.S. decision to cut ties "will cause an earthquake in the region that no one will be able to stop."

"What is needed is to isolate Sharon," Nabil Abu Rudeineh said, urging Bush administration officials not to invite Sharon to Washington.

In a press release, the P.A. Cabinet blamed Israel for the American position.

"The Palestinian Authority is astonished by the positions of some Americans who have been convinced by the Israeli propaganda and lies," the statement said. "The Israelis are aiming in this way to destroy the important American role in the region."

If the United States doesn't cut ties, it still can take other symbolic or substantive measures against the Palestinian Authority, including cutting humanitarian aid to the West Bank and Gaza, closing the Palestine Liberation Organization's Washington office or placing the Palestinian Authority, the PLO or its Fatah faction on the State Department's list of terrorist organizations.

Cutting ties with Arafat or the Palestinian Authority is considered unlikely, but many in Congress have been pushing for it since Palestinians erupted in violence in September 2000.

Numerous pieces of legislation have been introduced calling for sanctions to punish the Palestinian Authority for its alleged ties to terrorism. Those bills rarely have gone through the legislative process, thwarted by White House pressure not to tie the administration's hands as it tries to forge Mideast peace.

Those bills that have become law have included national security waivers, which presidents have used to avoid the sanctions, ostensibly in the interest of U.S. security.

Many lawmakers visited the Middle East during Congress' winter vacation, though several pointedly refused to meet with Arafat.

As Congress returned to work this week, more bills were proposed to sanction the Palestinians. The prevailing view is that if there ever were a time that the White House would defer to Congress' will on sanctions, it is now.

"They've come around to our point of view," said Rep. Gary Ackerman (D-N.Y.), ranking minority member of the House subcommittee on the Middle East.

Ackerman introduced legislation last year to sanction the Palestinian Authority if the president found it was not upholding its commitments to Israel. The move passed the House as part of last year's foreign aid bill, but was watered down in the Senate under pressure from Powell. Ackerman plans to push for the bill to be passed again as a stand alone measure, and believes it has a better chance of becoming law this time.

Action by Congress would give the administration a chance to take a stance against the Palestinian Authority without appearing to be too proactive. The White House could sign and enact legislation without having to initiate the sanctions.

That would alleviate pressure from the Arab community, which undoubtedly would react unfavorably to sanctions.

Also driving the discussion is the "Bush doctrine," based on Bush's comments after the Sept. 11 terror attacks on the United States. At the time, Bush said that countries either work for terrorism or against it — and that those that support terrorism would be punished.

That new mentality, coupled with Arafat's actions, has led to the reassessment.

If the president does take significant steps against the Palestinians, he may have trouble selling it to the Arab world or even his own State Department. But the reception on both sides of the congressional aisle is likely to be favorable. □



## Daily News Bulletin

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## JEWISH WORLD

### Ad calls for no ties with P.A.

More than 60 Jewish and Christian leaders are calling on the United States to cut ties with the Palestinian Authority. The leaders are listed in advertisements that will appear in *The New York Times*, the *Weekly Standard* magazine, and other American Jewish and Israeli publications.

Sponsored by the Zionist Organization of America, the campaign includes leaders from various Jewish organizations as well as the Christian Broadcasting Network, the National Religious Broadcasters and the National Religious Roundtable.

### Britain's WWII actions attacked

Britain did not do enough to help Jews escape the Holocaust, according to a leading historian.

Tens of thousands of Jews fleeing Nazi Germany were refused entry into Britain, said David Cesarani, a professor of history at Southampton University and an adviser to the British government. "While there is more to be proud of than to regret, there were shameful episodes that have tended to be swept under the carpet of historical forgetting," he told Reuters.

"The uncomfortable truth is that Britain failed to respond with urgency to a genocide in progress when it could do something about it."

### Czech Jews remembered

A plaque was erected to some Czech Jews who were sent to concentration camps. Only 200 of the more than 2,600 Jewish residents of Pilsen, who were sent to concentration camps in 1942, survived World War II. Pilsen's mayor apologized to survivors that it had taken 60 years for the city to put up the plaque, which was unveiled last Friday.

### Neo-Nazis celebrate Hitler

Russian neo-Nazis celebrated Hitler's memory at a gathering in Moscow. Anti-Semitic publications and videotapes of Nazi Party rallies and Hitler's speeches were distributed and sold at the Jan. 20 gathering.

A poetry reading consisted mostly of slogans praising Hitler and the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks, while the audience responded with shouts of "Beat the kikes!" and "Sieg Heil!"

### Olympic gold medal winner dies

Jack Shea, the Jewish scion of a three-generation Olympic family, died on Jan. 22 at 91 after a car accident.

His death came less than a month before his grandson, Jim Jr., is scheduled to compete at the Salt Lake City Games. Shea won two gold medals in speed skating at the 1932 Olympics in Lake Placid. His son, Jim, competed in skiing in the 1964 Winter Games in Innsbruck, Austria.

## Former president on the spot in investigation of AMIA bombing

By Florencia Arbiser

BUENOS AIRES (JTA) — Former Argentine President Carlos Menem finds himself on the defensive as new clues have emerged in the investigation of the 1994 bombing of Argentina's central Jewish institution.

Last week, a spokesman for the Swiss justice system said authorities there were checking the possibility that Menem, Argentina's president during the bombing, had received \$10 million from Iran to cover up the Islamic regime's responsibility for the attack — and that the money is currently in a Swiss bank account.

Menem says the charge is baseless.

In July 1994, a bomb leveled the building of the AMIA, the main Jewish institution in Buenos Aires, killing 85 people and wounding some 300.

Menem's bank account, which has been frozen, totals \$10 million dollars, according to lawyers in the AMIA case. To people involved in the investigation, it seems like more than a coincidence: It's the same amount that a witness — a former employee of Iran's intelligence service who for years was protected by the German government — testified Menem received to disguise Iran's responsibility for the attack.

Abolghasem Mesbahi — or Witness C, as he is known in the case — testified before Judge Juan Jose Galeano in Mexico in May 2000.

That followed a meeting between Mesbahi and Galeano in Germany in 1998. At that time, Mesbahi reportedly told Galeano that he had more to say but that conditions were not ripe in Argentina, where Menem still was president. Menem left office in December 1999.

When they met in Mexico two years later, Mesbahi said Menem had received the money after sending Argentine government employees to Iran to finalize the bribe.

Galeano long has worked on the hypothesis that the Iranian government gave the order for the attack.

Mesbahi described an Argentine government employee, aged between 45 and 50, whose beard was shaped like padlock. In coming weeks, Mesbahi will be shown photographs of about six Menem employees who match that description, prosecutor Alberto Nisman told JTA.

"It is very important to have the date of those money operations and the origin, in order to confirm if the deposit was made after the attack," Nisman said.

Sources in the Argentine justice system already say, unofficially, that the deposit was not made before the bombing.

As Galeano tried to arrange a third meeting with Mesbahi — which didn't materialize — prosecutors in the AMIA case met last November with a German police official to inquire about Mesbahi.

According to Nisman, the German official explained that Mesbahi no longer was under the protection of the German government.

Prosecutors notified Galeano — who is leading the investigation into both local and international connections to the attack — and judges at a trial in Buenos Aires that is exploring the local angle.

"I was urged to have" Mesbahi "testify again. Now I think it is also useful to put together new elements about Menem's account in Switzerland," Nisman said.

The Swiss spokesman said authorities are looking for a former Iranian state employee and a particular bank, but he refused to be more specific.

Sergio Widder, Latin American representative of the Simon Wiesenthal Center, told JTA that the center asked Switzerland to "officially and immediately spread any information" that could help uncover and punish "terrorist actions against the democratic world."

As for the AMIA case, Widder said, "Menem's situation has to be investigated and he has to testify at the trial."

Despite repeated requests, Menem has not testified, and it is not certain that he ever will.

"The suspicion that the Argentine state was part of the local connection for the bombing is what Memoria Activa" — a group of relatives of the bombing victims — "has been expressing for many years," Widder said. □

## Latest Palestinian terror attack has new element, a female bomber

By Naomi Segal

JERUSALEM (JTA) — Israeli officials are once again going to have to revamp their profile of the type of person who carries out suicide bombings.

For years, security officials were particularly watchful for Palestinian men who were in their late teens or early 20s, were unmarried and unemployed.

That profile had to be readjusted after older men, some of whom had families and were gainfully employed, agreed to be recruited for suicide bombings.

Now, following a suicide bombing Sunday in Jerusalem, the profile has to be altered once again.

For the first time since the intifada erupted in September 2000, a terror bombing was carried out by a woman.

It was the second attack to take place on Jaffa Street in Jerusalem in less than a week.

Businesses in the area had scarcely repaired the damage from a terrorist attack on Jan. 22 when the bomber blew herself up in the already-battered shopping district Sunday, killing one person, wounding more than 100 others and wreaking vast damage.

The Hezbollah-run television station Al-Manar identified her as a student from An-Najah University in the West Bank city of Nablus.

Israeli officials said Palestinian Authority President Yasser Arafat bore personal responsibility for the attack because of his failure to crack down on terrorism.

Aides to Prime Minister Ariel Sharon said there would be an Israeli response, in accordance with a previous Cabinet decision authorizing immediate reprisals for all Palestinian attacks.

The Palestinian Authority issued a statement condemning Sunday's attack. It also called on Israel to ease its restrictions on Arafat — who has been under virtual house arrest in Ramallah since December, when Israel said it would restrict his movements until he arrests those responsible for the October assassination of Tourism Minister Rehavam Ze'evi.

In its statement, the Palestinian Authority also called on the United States to send its envoy, Anthony Zinni, back to the region.

Zinni's return to the region has been delayed amid growing frustration in the White House over Arafat's refusal to take responsibility or provide answers for an illegal arms shipment Israel seized earlier this month on the Red Sea.

Last Friday, President Bush said he is "disappointed" in Arafat, adding that the Palestinian leader "must make a full effort to rout out terror in the Middle East."

On Sunday, Vice President Dick Cheney put more pressure on Arafat, telling "Fox News Sunday" that the arms shipment points to disturbing links between Arafat and international terrorism.

Sunday's suicide bombing was the third attack on an Israeli city in less than a week.

In the Jan. 22 attack, a Palestinian gunman opened fire on passers-by on Jerusalem's Jaffa Street, killing two women and wounding more than 40 people.

And last Friday, a suicide bomber blew himself up in a crowded pedestrian shopping mall in Tel Aviv, killing himself and wounding 24 others.

Sunday's bombing took place near the Sbarro pizzeria, where 15 people were killed in a suicide bombing last year.

The attack occurred shortly after noon Sunday near the intersection of Jaffa and King George streets.

Storefronts were shattered, as glass shards and shrapnel blasted through the area.

An 81-year-old man died in the blast. Pinchas Takatli was a seventh-generation Israeli who conducted guided tours at the Western Wall tunnel.

Witnesses said ambulances arrived within minutes.

Avi, a medic, witnessed the explosion and immediately began treating the wounded.

"There was a lot of smoke, screams," he told reporters. "I took a woman in my hands who had a large gash in her throat. I put some cloth on it, and someone else helped me put her in an ambulance."

Among the injured was Mark Sokolov, a survivor of the Sept. 11 attack on New York's World Trade Center.

Sokolov, along with his wife and a daughter, had traveled abroad to visit another daughter who is studying in Israel.

Sokolov recalled how he and his family were walking out of a shoe store when the explosion occurred.

He and one daughter were evacuated to one hospital, while his wife and the other daughter were taken to another.

"We walked out and all of a sudden I heard a blast. I felt a blast, like a boom. Almost it didn't seem real," he told Israel Radio. "A number of people came over to help me. They put me into the back of an ambulance. I remembered that I had to go see if my wife and daughters were okay. I got out of the ambulance to try to find them, but I couldn't find them anywhere."

Many of the wounded in Sunday's attack had been injured in the previous week's shooting spree.

One of the wounded, an employee at the Sbarro pizzeria, had gone to pick up a form from work relating to his injury last week, when the explosion occurred.

Israeli security forces have been on heightened alert for terror attacks.

Jerusalem Police Chief Mickey Levy said shortly after the Sunday attack that police officers were believed to have been among the wounded.

After briefing reporters at the scene of the attack, Levy went to a nearby hospital complaining of chest pains.

He suffered a heart attack and was listed in stable condition after undergoing an angioplasty procedure.

Doctors later described his condition as good and said he would be able to return to work soon.

Police Commissioner Shlomo Aharonishky told reporters that many terrorist attacks have been thwarted by Israeli forces.

"But with all the effort, we cannot 100 percent succeed in stopping them all," he said.

"We must understand this reality. I call on residents of Israel and Jerusalem to understand this difficulty. We must be strong," Aharonishky added. □

## Targeted killings taken to court

JERUSALEM (JTA) — Human rights groups petitioned Israel's High Court of Justice to end "targeted killings" of suspected Palestinian terrorists.

The Public Committee Against Torture and the Palestinian human rights organization LAW argue that the policy of assassinating alleged terrorist leaders is "patently illegal" and that those involved in the policy may be engaged in war crimes. □