



# Daily News Bulletin

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## TOP NEWS IN BRIEF

### Israel to create buffer zones

Israel said it would create buffer zones to defend itself from Palestinian attacks.

Prime Minister Ariel Sharon made the announcement in a televised speech Thursday that was mostly a pep talk to a nation that has faced nearly 17 months of Palestinian violence and sees no end to the conflict.

[Page 3]

### Wall Street reporter dead

Kidnapped Wall Street Journal reporter Daniel Pearl is dead.

State Department officials said Thursday that U.S. law enforcement officials saw a videotape with credible evidence of Pearl's death, but they refused to immediately elaborate.

The news came after a suspect believed to be involved in the abduction said Pearl was kidnapped last month in Pakistan because he was "anti-Islam and a Jew."

Pearl disappeared in Karachi, Pakistan, in late January.

### Argentine money approved

The Jewish Agency for Israel approved a \$140 million budget for Argentine Jews who immigrate to Israel.

The money is based on the possibility of 20,000 Argentine Jews moving to Israel during the next few years.

The decision to aid Argentine aliyah came during a meeting in Jerusalem this week of the Jewish Agency's Board of Governors.

### Demjanjuk loses citizenship

A U.S. judge revoked the citizenship of Nazi guard John Demjanjuk.

The judge agreed Thursday with U.S. prosecutors, who argued that Demjanjuk had fraudulently become a U.S. citizen after the war by covering up his past as a guard at several Nazi concentration camps.

Demjanjuk, 81, was extradited to Israel in 1986 to stand trial for crimes against humanity on evidence that he was the sadistic Nazi camp guard "Ivan the Terrible."

But the Israeli Supreme Court determined that there was reasonable doubt Demjanjuk was the Treblinka guard. [Page 4]

## NEWS ANALYSIS

### As Palestinian attacks intensify, Israelis feel miserable, hopeless

By David Landau

JERUSALEM (JTA) — The new editor of Ma'ariv, Amnon Dankner, best summed up the mood of the nation: "It can't carry on like this," was the headline of his front-page piece on Sunday.

Dankner's article ran alongside a gallery of smiling young faces — the weekend's Israeli death toll as the Palestinians escalated their terror offensive.

Like the headline on Dankner's story, the paper's main headline was a cry from the heart. "Israel: This Is War," it proclaimed — as though anyone could call it anything else.

As the week wore on, the frequency of attempted and realized terror attacks intensified. The bombings, shootings and funerals seemed to blur in a constant catalog of misery. City streets and shopping malls looked bleak and desolate, despite the spring-like weather.

Fear stalks the land. And not just fear — but a growing sense, which pollsters can now quantify, that the leadership has no solutions to offer.

According to polls published last Friday, barely half of Israelis have a positive view of Prime Minister Ariel Sharon's performance, a sharp decline from his approval ratings as little as a month ago.

Yet Sharon, back at work Sunday after a 10-day bout with the flu, is determined to fight the atmosphere of panic and despair, while not acceding to pressures from his own right wing to launch an all-out war against the Palestinians.

"What are you proposing?" Sharon asked witheringly of a hard-line Likud Knesset member, Yuval Steinitz, at a party caucus Monday. "That we go back into Gaza and run the lives of the people there? The advice of self-proclaimed experts who have done nothing and accomplished nothing in this area — well, I am not going to go back into Gaza."

The remark about "self-proclaimed experts" also was taken as a swipe at former Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu.

Uninhibited now in his campaign to depose Sharon as Likud leader — and later as prime minister — Netanyahu advocates the destruction of Yasser Arafat's Palestinian Authority, which he considers a terrorist regime.

Sharon, who heard President Bush's views on this matter barely a fortnight ago, dismisses Netanyahu's rhetoric as demagoguery.

Sources close to Sharon say the Bush administration thoroughly despises Arafat, but opposes his removal for fear of the regional turmoil that could result — at a time when Washington needs relative quiet in the Middle East as it appears to be preparing a campaign against Saddam Hussein in Iraq.

Despite his steady slippage in the polls, Sharon in effect is offering the Israeli public more of the same.

"Much more of the same," in the words of an Israel Television commentator midweek, following a series of top-level consultations between the prime minister, key ministers and the senior Israel Defense Force command.

That means more retaliatory bombings of P.A. installations, more targeted killings of terrorist leaders, more incursions into Palestinian cities, more violent searches for arms and terror suspects, more closures and roadblocks in the Palestinian territories and more beefed-up policing of Israel's own streets.

In addition, as Sharon told his party colleagues, there also will be more meetings

## MIDEAST FOCUS

### Israel launches more strikes

Five Palestinians were killed in an Israeli assault Thursday on Gaza City. Palestinian sources said dozens of people were wounded in the assault, which involved Israeli tanks, infantry and air power and came in retaliation for the point-blank slaying of six Israeli soldiers on Tuesday.

About 20 Palestinians have been killed in a series of Israeli reprisals launched after the six were killed by Palestinian gunmen at a Ramallah-area roadblock.

Along with Thursday's attack on Palestinian security targets in Gaza City, Israeli helicopters hit similar targets elsewhere in the West Bank and Gaza.

### P.A.: Murder suspects arrested

Palestinian security forces said they arrested three suspects in the murder of Israeli Tourism Minister Rehavam Ze'evi. Israel Radio quoted a senior Palestinian security official as saying the three had been apprehended in Nablus, where they were hiding.

Israel has demanded the arrest of Ze'evi's murderers as a condition for lifting travel restrictions on Yasser Arafat.

### Iranian pilgrims blast U.S., Israel

Thousands of Iranians making a pilgrimage to Mecca called for the destruction of Israel and the United States. Thursday's rally came despite a Saudi ban on political demonstrations among those making the haj pilgrimage.

### El Al president resigns

The president of El Al airlines resigned. After 15 months on the job, David Hermesh quit Wednesday, citing "substantial professional differences" with the airline's chairman, Michael Levy. Among the points of dispute between the two was a strategy for rehabilitating the airline, which has suffered substantial losses because of sagging tourism to Israel.



## Daily News Bulletin

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with top Palestinian officials, like the meeting he held at his home three weeks ago with three senior Arafat aides — Ahmed Karia, speaker of the Palestinian Parliament; Mahmoud Abbas, Arafat's deputy; and Mohammed Rashid, Arafat's top economic adviser.

"Whatever it needs to produce a cease-fire, I will do it," Sharon declared.

Foreign Minister Shimon Peres, too, will continue his separate efforts with Karia to develop a cease-fire plan.

The effort has Sharon's consent — though neither Sharon nor Defense Minister Benjamin Ben-Eliezer, from Peres' own Labor Party, believe the plan has much chance of success.

What there will not be is the kind of stepped-up warfare advocated, for instance, by Housing Minister Natan Sharansky. Sharansky is urging that the army be ordered to temporarily reoccupy Palestinian cities to conduct house-to-house searches for weapons.

All weapons in the West Bank and Gaza would be confiscated under Sharansky's plan. Later, the Palestinian police would be issued pistols — but nothing more.

Avigdor Lieberman, the minister of infrastructures and Sharansky's rival for the votes of the Russian immigrant community, calls for even tougher action. His ally in the National Union-Israel, Our Home faction, Tourism Minister Binyamin Elon, openly talks about "transfer" — that is, the physical relocation of millions of Palestinians to other countries.

The settler leaders in the West Bank and Gaza openly voice their disillusionment with Sharon, once their hero, who they believe has "gone soft."

Others believe that, despite his public pronouncements, Sharon indeed is intent on bringing down Arafat's regime — but is too diplomatically sensitive, and patient enough, to do it slowly and carefully.

In any case, Sharon's resistance to right-wing pressure appears to be earning him scant praise on the left.

On Saturday night, some 10,000 people attended a Peace Now rally in Tel Aviv. Speakers, among them Sari Nusseibeh, the Palestinian aristocrat-academic who represents the PLO in Jerusalem, and Yossi Sarid, leader of the opposition Meretz Party, blasted the Sharon government and called for an Israeli withdrawal from the West Bank and Gaza Strip.

Attendance at the rally was hardly massive, compared to the size of peace rallies in the past.

Still, it was the largest anti-government rally since Sharon took power.

Sharon said recently that Israel will win this "war" with the Palestinians — if Israelis remain steadfast.

Yet intelligence officials say cracks in Israeli morale — such as the recent letter from some 200 reserve soldiers and officers who refuse to serve in the West Bank and Gaza Strip — are emboldening Arafat to escalate the intifada. More Israeli casualties, Arafat believes, will quicken the growth of dissent and ultimately force the Israeli government to accede to Palestinian demands.

In fact, the day after the peace rally, the Israeli daily Ha'aretz disclosed that the Council for Peace and Security, a prominent center-left group of retired army generals and Mossad and Shin Bet officers, had endorsed the concept of a unilateral Israeli withdrawal.

The Council now advocates a pullback from all of Gaza — save the borderline with Egypt — and much of the West Bank. The plan would involve dismantling some 50 settlements.

Yet such unilateralism is spurned by the hard-core left — the school of Peres and former Justice Minister Yossi Beilin — as a counsel of despair, because it is predicated on the conclusion that efforts to reach a negotiated agreement with the Palestinians presently are hopeless.

Others fear that withdrawing unilaterally will give the Palestinians less incentive to negotiate.

The left and center, therefore, continue to be as fragmented and disoriented as the right — which only exacerbates the mood of hopelessness sweeping the country.

Dankner ended his article as powerfully and plaintively as it began: "If there is a policy," he wrote, "military or politics, strategic or tactical — let it appear at once." □

## JEWISH WORLD

### Stolen Chagall returned

A stolen Chagall painting was returned to the Jewish Museum in New York. The 1914 painting, "Study for 'Over Vitebsk,'" was discovered missing from the museum on June 8.

A group calling itself the International Committee for Art and Peace later said the painting would be returned only after the Israelis and Palestinians made peace.

A work believed to be the stolen painting surfaced in late January in a mail facility in Topeka, Kan. It was authenticated last week by a granddaughter of the artist who is a leading authority on his work.

### Court upholds 'Amen' poster

A French court refused to ban a controversial film poster that merges a crucifix with a Nazi swastika. The poster promotes director Costa-Gavras' movie "Amen," about a failed effort to convince Pope Pius XII to condemn the Nazi persecution and murder of Jews.

In his ruling Thursday, the judge said there was nothing about the poster that would warrant limiting freedom of expression. Jewish leaders had joined with Catholic officials in criticizing the poster.

### Boycott threat gains momentum

A Catholic group joined a proposed boycott of an upcoming show at New York's Jewish Museum.

"Usually, it's Catholics whom the 'creative types' in the artistic community like to offend. Now it's Jews," William Donohue, president of the Catholic League for Religious and Civil Rights, said in a statement.

The museum says the exhibit, slated to open March 17, seeks to present Nazi horrors in a thought-provoking manner. Critics say the exhibit is an affront to the Jewish community in general and Holocaust survivors in particular.

### French extremists convicted

Two French extremists were convicted of inciting racial hatred. Thursday's convictions of Jean-Yves Douissant and William Renard of the National Front came for their participation in a neo-Nazi march at which "Death to the Jews" was chanted.

The two received suspended 18-month prison terms and are barred from holding public office for five years. Two other defendants, both of whom organized the 1999 rally, were sentenced to prison terms of 23 and 19 months, respectively.

### Hitler masquerader arrested

A man who wore a Hitler mask at a carnival in eastern Germany was arrested. The man faces charges of violating the nation's laws against glorification of the Nazi era. Before his arrest, he won the carnival's prize for most original costume.

## Sharon calls on Israeli people to 'stand united' as crisis persists

By JTA Staff

JERUSALEM (JTA) — After much debate among politicians, military officials and pundits, Israel has decided to create buffer zones to defend Israelis from Palestinian terrorists.

Prime Minister Ariel Sharon made the announcement in a televised speech Thursday that was mostly a pep talk to a nation that has faced nearly 17 months of Palestinian violence and sees no end to the conflict.

Sharon gave virtually no details about the buffer zones, which he said would be created "in order to increase the security of Israeli subjects."

After discussions "held at the Security Cabinet a few days ago," he said, "we decided to establish buffer zones and to set up obstacles along those border zones."

Though pressed during the question-and-answer period with reporters that followed his speech, Sharon did not indicate how the zones would be demarcated nor what might happen to those settlers who might find themselves on the wrong side of the boundary.

During remarks a day earlier, when he addressed a visiting delegation of U.S. Jewish leaders, Sharon said there is a "war going on here."

In his televised remarks Thursday, however, Sharon made less pointed references to the ongoing crisis as a war.

Israelis have to be "calm and have to preserve coolness in times of war and peace," he said. "We must not act hastily. Everything in good time, neither too late nor too early. That is the only way we can be victorious in war, and that is the only way to achieve a stable peace."

"We are a people that has accumulated a great deal of experience in dealing with troubles," he added.

His speech came amid calls from some quarters in Israel — including from a group of reservists refusing to serve in the West Bank and Gaza Strip — for Israel to halt its military reprisals.

Referring to these dissenting voices, Sharon said Israel's enemies "have misinterpreted our internal debates, which are the very essence of a democracy and which are actually one of the sources of our strength."

"They have misunderstood this situation. They think that there are cracks in our people," he added. "And of course they are encouraged to think that from the expressions of people calling for refusal to serve in the territories, but they are wrong. This people is stronger and more united than they could possibly imagine."

Sharon repeatedly spoke of Israel's yearning for peace with its Arab neighbors.

But he also reiterated that negotiations with the Palestinian can only begin after there is a complete halt to hostilities.

"First, terror must stop. There must be calm, and only then will we talk about peace," he said.

At the same time, Sharon voiced his willingness to meet with Palestinian "personalities" in an effort "to prevent any escalation and to prevent a slide into overall, total war."

While he said he was willing to engage in dialogue, Sharon made it clear that there would be no compromises where Israel's security is concerned.

"I said in the past, and I say it again today, for the sake of true peace, there must be painful concessions, but there will be no concessions with regard to the security of Israel and its citizens," he said.

Sharon spoke during a week marked by some of the worst violence since the intifada erupted in September 2000. On Thursday, Israel launched a land and air assault on Gaza City and on several cities in the West Bank in retaliation for the point-blank slaying of six Israeli soldiers on Tuesday.

About 20 Palestinians have been killed in a series of Israeli reprisals launched this week after the six were killed by Palestinian gunmen at a Ramallah-area roadblock.

In his speech, Sharon addressed some of his remarks to those "Palestinians who do not want war and who are not engaged in terror. Do you intend to go on sending your children to commit suicide as bombers?" he asked. "Or do you intend to follow those who suggest prosperity and advancement?" □

## Community relations conference tries to spread pro-Israel message

By Sharon Samber

WASHINGTON (JTA) — Knowledge = power.

That was the Israel advocacy message for representatives of local federations and community relations councils from 123 communities who convened in Washington this week at the annual conference of the Jewish Council for Public Affairs.

Skills-training workshops on *hasbarah* — a Hebrew term that falls somewhere between explanation and propaganda — focused on how local communities can more effectively explain what is happening in Israel and how to balance media coverage of Israeli-Palestinian violence.

The four-day conference, which concluded Tuesday, also addressed domestic issues such as the balance between security policy and civil liberties, and updates on immigration and energy policy. But there seems to be a real thirst for knowledge about the situation in Israel and a desire to reconnect with the Jewish state, said Isabel Goldman of Rochester, N.Y.

"People are very anxious to have a better understanding of Israel," she said.

Goldman believes the Jewish community grew complacent about Israel over the last few decades. Now, Jews are concerned about the political situation and wish to understand it better.

With the ongoing Palestinian intifada now nearly 17 months old, an effective *hasbarah* effort on Israel's behalf is even more necessary, plenum participants said.

The CRCs want to give activists and others the tools to feel secure in their support for Israel and the ability to articulate that support to others.

People were shocked at the anti-Israel sentiment they began hearing in their communities and were ill-equipped to answer it, according to Hannah Rosenthal, JCPA's executive director.

"We have to get back to 'Israel 101' and 'Advocacy 101,'" she told JTA.

Larger communities find themselves with more resources but a more organized opposition to Israel, while smaller communities with fewer resources are still left not knowing how to respond to anti-Israel arguments, Rosenthal said.

Many communities bring in speakers to help disseminate information and advocate for Israel. Speakers' bureaus consistently were listed as effective means to rally a community to events and spread the word about disseminating the pro-Israel message.

"People want to get involved but they don't know how," said Lynn Liss, of St. Louis.

The St. Louis CRC has a detailed plan, which includes getting speakers for community briefings on Israel, making speakers available to campuses and schools and recruiting participants for an Israel Speakers' Bureau for adults and teens.

The plan also calls for maintaining e-mail lists, distributing background information and advocacy material to newspapers and other media, and creating and maintaining "Israel committees" in synagogues and Jewish community centers.

Among the most important places to start in the Jewish community is on college campuses, many leaders agree. Whether the campus is a "battle ground" or simply a place where Jewish students are hungry for information and to organize a response, the communities recognize their importance.

Richard Joel, president and international director of Hillel: The

Foundation for Jewish Life on Campus, said Hillel is working to get the facts, speakers and trained professionals to the campuses and to work with different Jewish organizations to launch a more coordinated effort, he said.

Students have to stick to the basics, Joel said, and be able to explain Israeli democracy and the need for a Jewish homeland. □

## Demjanjuk again loses citizenship as court rules he covered Nazi past

By Peter Ephross

NEW YORK (JTA) — A U.S. judge has once again revoked the citizenship of John Demjanjuk — but it could be a few years before the former Nazi guard is forced to leave the country.

The judge agreed Thursday with U.S. prosecutors, who argued that Demjanjuk, 81, had fraudulently become a U.S. citizen after the war by covering up his past as a guard at several Nazi concentration camps.

In his decision, District Court Judge Paul Matia in Ohio found that Demjanjuk "willingly" served the Nazis in four camps, and at one of them, Sobibor, participated "in the process by which thousands of Jews were murdered by asphyxiation with carbon monoxide" in the camp's gas chambers.

The director of the Justice Department's Nazi-hunting unit said he is gratified by the ruling.

"John Demjanjuk outlasted nearly all of his thousands of victims. He outlasted nearly all of his cohorts as well. But he could not outlast this government's determination to serve a measure of justice on behalf of those who perished," said Eli Rosenbaum, director of the Office of Special Investigations.

Despite the conviction, deportation is not automatic.

Demjanjuk's son-in-law, Ed Nishnic, said the decision would be appealed, and until appeals are exhausted, the U.S. government cannot deport Demjanjuk, who worked for Ford Motor Co. after the war and lives outside Cleveland.

During that time, a foreign country could ask for his extradition. Among the possible countries to do so are his native Ukraine or France, which lost thousands of Jews in the camps — Trawniki, Majdanek and Flossenburg, in addition to Sobibor — where Demjanjuk served.

Demjanjuk formerly lost his U.S. citizenship in 1981 on evidence that he was the sadistic Nazi guard "Ivan the Terrible" at Treblinka from 1942-43. Demjanjuk was extradited to Israel in 1986 to stand trial for crimes against humanity.

An Israeli court convicted Demjanjuk of being Ivan the Terrible and sentenced him to death in 1988.

He spent five years on death row before the Israeli Supreme Court determined in 1993 that there was reasonable doubt that Demjanjuk was the Treblinka guard. He subsequently returned to the United States.

Following the Israeli Supreme Court's reversal, the Office of Special Investigations was criticized by a U.S. appellate court for "reckless" withholding of evidence that Demjanjuk could have used to fight extradition.

Since proceedings began against him 25 years ago, Demjanjuk has maintained that he did not serve as a guard at any concentration or death camp. He has said he was a farmer in Poland and then a Soviet Red Army soldier who spent most of the war in a German prisoner-of-war camp. □