



# Daily News Bulletin

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## TOP NEWS IN BRIEF

### Israeli soldier dies in Ramallah

An Israeli soldier died Wednesday afternoon of injuries sustained earlier in the day in a gun battle near Ramallah.

Lt. Gil Badihi, 21, died from head wounds he suffered during exchanges of fire.

The Israeli incursion in Ramallah on Tuesday left 32 Palestinians dead and scores wounded. Three Israeli soldiers were wounded.

By Tuesday night, an Israeli division had taken over nearly all of Ramallah, halting just 20 yards from the West Bank headquarters of Palestinian Authority President Yasser Arafat.

On Wednesday, Israeli tanks were patrolling the streets to enforce a curfew in the West Bank city.

### Both sides back resolution

Both Israel and the Palestinian Authority welcomed a U.N. Security Council resolution calling for a Palestinian state alongside the Jewish state.

But the two sides applauded different portions of the resolution, sponsored by the United States, which also called for an "immediate cessation of all acts of violence, including all forms of terror, provocation, incitement and destruction."

Israeli Foreign Minister Shimon Peres said that Israel "welcomes the efforts of the United States to include within today's Security Council resolution a clause calling for the immediate cessation of terrorism and incitement."

Nabil Abu Irdeineh, a spokesman for Palestinian Authority President Yasser Arafat, applauded the resolution, saying, "The whole world is behind a Palestinian state."

The resolution passed the Security Council late Tuesday by a 14-0 vote.

Syria abstained from the vote. [Page 4]

### Bush: Israeli actions 'not helpful'

President Bush criticized Israeli incursions into Palestinian territories.

"Frankly, it's not helpful what the Israelis have recently done in order to create conditions for peace," he said at a news conference Wednesday. "I understand someone trying to defend themselves and to fight terror but the recent actions aren't helpful."

Bush also said it is important for both Israelis and Palestinians to work hard for peace.

## NEWS ANALYSIS

### Cheney and Zinni Mideast trips show convergence of interests

By David Makovsky

WASHINGTON (JTA) — The twin trips of Vice President Dick Cheney and peace envoy Anthony Zinni to the Middle East this week are seemingly unrelated, but in fact, they fit together.

President Bush dispatched his vice president to demonstrate resolve in combating Iraq's weapons of mass destruction, a resolve that could include military action against Baghdad. He wanted Cheney to consult with a variety of Arab countries, most prominently Saudi Arabia, amid hope that he can elicit their cooperation in this effort.

The Bush administration views confronting Iraq as a linchpin for its regional strategy, given Iraq's proven record for troublemaking.

If the United States were successful in installing a friendlier regime in a country that has huge amounts of oil reserves, some figures in the Bush administration believe, other Arab oil states would lose their ability to blackmail the United States.

The ability to achieve these objectives remains very uncertain, but they could have a significant impact on the future prospects for Israeli-Arab peace.

As the 1991 Gulf War demonstrated, only when radicalism in Iraq was dealt a sharp blow was there any genuine hope for Israeli-Arab peacemaking, and not the reverse as some Arabists claim. When Saddam Hussein was dealt a serious setback, Arabs agreed to attend the landmark Madrid peace conference later that year.

A U.S. war against Iraq is not inevitable, but it seems increasingly likely, even though it is much more difficult to launch a change in regime than to expel Iraq from Kuwait, as President Bush's father did.

Even if Saddam agrees to acquiesce on arms inspections, in keeping with U.N. resolutions, Bush administration officials believe such acquiescence would mean little more than foot-dragging and a cat-and-mouse exercise, as has happened so often in the past. If the United States does take action, it would be launching a preventive rather than a traditional retaliatory war.

Former Secretary of State Henry Kissinger argued in a recent column that such a war is morally justified since Saddam not only has such weapons, but he has used them twice, including against Kurds who lived in his own country.

Sept. 11 demonstrates, according to Kissinger, that the danger is real and it is suicidal to wait for the United States to be attacked first.

In his mission, Cheney is seeking not only Arab political cover for a move against Iraq, but also options for any military action. The use of Saudi air force facilities and air space would make a strike against southern Iraq much easier — as would the use of bases in Turkey for a strike from the North.

There is a belief in Washington that the Saudis may support U.S. actions against Iraq if the United States finishes the job this time. Any halfway measures that leave Saddam in power would leave Riyadh feeling politically exposed for supporting the United States.

The Bush administration's view is that the best way to obtain multilateral support is to demonstrate unilateral determination. Hence, the importance of the Cheney mission. Enter the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

The Bush administration fears that Cheney's mission could be marred if, instead of the focus being Iraq, Saudi Arabia's Crown Prince Abdullah and other Arab leaders start launching tirades about how it is hard to support the United States in confronting Iraq while pan-Arab satellite Al-Jazeera television broadcasts images of Israelis killing

## MIDEAST FOCUS

### Italian journalist killed

A freelance journalist was killed in Ramallah. Israeli officials said they were investigating whether Israeli or Palestinian fire caused the death Wednesday of Italian journalist Raffaele Ciriello and the wounding of a French photographer.

The officials added that Ramallah had been declared a closed military area the night before and was off-limits to civilians. While not taking responsibility, Israel's Foreign Ministry expressed "sorrow for any harm caused to civilians and members of the press." Ciriello, 42, was on assignment for the Italian daily *Corriere della Sera*.

### 2 stabbed in settlement attack

Two Israelis were stabbed Wednesday in a terror attack in a West Bank settlement. Israeli security forces launched a search for the terrorist, who escaped following the attack at a settlement near Ramallah.

### Saudi paper alleges blood libel

A Saudi government-run newspaper claimed that Jews use human blood to fill hamantashen.

The March 10 article in the *Al-Riyadh* newspaper detailed how the blood is allegedly obtained — either by draining it using a needle or slaughtering the victim "as a sheep is slaughtered."

The Jewish propensity to use blood for ritual purposes is "one of the main reasons for the persecution and exile that were their lot in Europe and Asia at various times," the article explained.

### Next IDF chief nominated

Israeli Defense Minister Benjamin Ben-Eliezer nominated the next Israel Defense Force chief of staff.

Maj. Gen. Moshe Ya'alon currently serves as deputy chief of staff under Lt. Gen. Shaul Mofaz, whose four-year term ends in July. Ya'alon's nomination must be approved by Prime Minister Ariel Sharon.

Palestinians during the current violence. Bush, fearing that Arab complaints on this issue would undercut the focus on Iraq, decided to dispatch Zinni to the region amid hopes that he could help tamp down the violence.

This marks a change for the Bush administration, which over the last two months — in the aftermath of the discovery that the Palestinian Authority sought to smuggle Iranian weapons on the *Karine A* ship into the Gaza Strip — offered no criticism of Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon's handling of the current crisis.

The success of the Cheney mission is no less important to Israel than it is to the United States, given that Saddam has always been a leading Arab rejectionist of Israel.

Indeed, the case could be made that there is a greater strategic convergence between the United States and Israel today than in virtually any other moment of the history of the Jewish state. In singling out Iraq and Iran as part of an "axis of evil" against the United States, Bush, in his State of the Union speech, was pointing out the two biggest threats to Israel's existence as well.

Yet anti-Semites are wrong when they say the United States is aligned against these states because America is doing Israel's bidding.

The United States views these regimes as threats because of their unremittingly hostile view of the United States and their proven ability to utilize a variety of methods — ranging from weapons of mass destruction in the case of Iraq to terrorism with both Tehran and Baghdad — to attain their goals.

Too often, such forces don't hate the United States because of Israel, but hate Israel because it embodies the United States.

This proved to be the case through much of the 20th century: The enemies of the United States have also been the enemies of the Jews, whether they be Nazi Germany, the Soviet Union, or more recently, a militant variant of political Islam.

Israel understands the importance of maintaining strategic convergence with the United States, and thus the idea of sending Zinni to ease the Cheney mission was welcomed in Jerusalem.

To facilitate his trip, Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon ultimately accepted a request put forward in a phone call last week by Secretary of State Colin Powell to drop the precondition for seven days of quiet as a prerequisite for a cease-fire. And when the Palestinian Authority arrested the last of the suspected killers of Tourism Minister Rehavam Ze'evi, Sharon announced that Arafat would have more freedom of movement.

The U.S. focus on the Saudis may also lead Zinni to focus on a second package deal, enabling Arafat to attend the Arab summit in Beirut at the end of the month in return for a meaningful cease-fire with Israel.

It is at that summit where Arab countries are expected to focus on a Saudi proposal for Arab diplomatic relations with Israel in exchange for Israeli withdrawal from lands it conquered in the 1967 Six-Day War.

The United States is under no illusion that a Saudi plan promising Arab world 'normalization' with Israel in return for withdrawal from the territories will produce peace. There is an understanding in Washington that the core problem is Palestinian attitudes toward Israel, and a recognition that any peace deal must make both parties feel safer and less vulnerable than today.

Israel has ample reason to question whether any pre-Passover cease-fire will merely be a tactical maneuver — given a long slew of broken promises by Arafat in the past — or something more durable. Some inside and outside the Bush administration believe the only hope for halting violence will require both a mechanism for compliance — and defined consequences for the Palestinians if they don't — and incremental steps to revive the shattered confidence on both sides.

The bottom line is that Sharon would like Cheney to succeed, and realizes that the timing of the Zinni mission is designed to maximize such prospects. However, it is not just up to Sharon. During the last six months of 2000, the United States had hoped that it was on the verge of conflict resolution in the Middle East.

Now given the escalating violence, the prospect of crisis stabilization is a tall order. Given failures in the past, it is hard to be overly optimistic about the prospects of the Zinni mission. Yet the horrific death toll on the ground coupled with the Cheney trip to the region underscores the urgency of its success. □

*(David Makovsky is a senior fellow at the Washington Institute for Near East Policy and a contributing editor to U.S. News and World Report. He is currently working on his second book on the Middle East peace process.)*



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## JEWISH WORLD

### Argentine Shoah survivors get aid

The Claims Conference is allocating more than \$500,000 to help needy Holocaust survivors in Argentina. In one grant, the Claims Conference is allocating \$493,000 to the Jewish umbrella organization DAIA for its continuing program of helping needy survivors.

The program provides health care, food, clothing and legal assistance, among other things. In a second grant, the Claims Conference is providing \$50,000 to a group that will provide two meals a day to 100 survivors in Buenos Aires.

### Interfaith group meets with pope

Israel's deputy foreign minister was among a group of interfaith leaders who met with Pope John Paul II.

Earlier this year, Rabbi Michael Melchior and the other religious leaders from the Middle East signed a declaration emphasizing religion's role in fostering peace in the region. During the audience, the pope appealed for an end to Israeli-Palestinian bloodshed. "We are all saddened by the daily instances of violence and death in Israel and the Palestinian territories," he said.

### Report eyes French racism

A "white paper" is being published in France detailing 405 anti-Semitic acts since the start of the Palestinian intifada in September 2000.

The report, released by France's largest Jewish student union and the anti-racist organization SOS-Racism, will be in bookstores throughout France this week. A survey of youths between the ages of 15 and 24 also examines the attitudes of the younger generation in France toward anti-Semitism.

According to its findings, 87 percent of French youths view anti-Semitic acts against French synagogues as "scandalous" and favor "severe punishment" for those responsible.

### Russian church charges dropped

Charges against Russian Orthodox Church officials for distributing anti-Semitic materials were dropped.

Prosecutors determined that there was not enough evidence to press the case against church officials in Yekaterinburg for distributing the anti-Semitic book "The Protocols of the Elders of Zion."

### Poet's monument vandalized

A monument in Russia to Jewish poet Osip Mandelstam was vandalized for the second time in three months. Unveiled in December, the monument in the city of Vladivostok had to be restored after it was smeared with paint in January. Mandelstam was killed in 1938 in Stalin's gulag.

## Pearl memorial captures images of Bar Mitzvah, visit with refuseniks

By Tom Tugend

LOS ANGELES (JTA) — When Daniel Pearl was a baby, his parents noticed a curious omission in his genetic makeup — he was born entirely without malice.

"When he was a few months old, we had to pull out a cushion on which he was lying. Danny didn't cry, he just rearranged his position," recalled his father, Judea Pearl.

The ability to quietly adapt and cope with any situation characterized the life of Daniel Pearl, relatives and friends remembered at a private memorial service here on Sunday for The Wall Street Journal reporter.

Pearl was kidnapped and slain in Pakistan while working on a story about Islamic extremists.

It was this adaptability and a knack for getting out of tight situations that buoyed the hope of his wife, parents and friends during an almost monthlong wait after Pearl's abduction on Jan. 23.

"We were sure that some good fairy would take care of him, and she did for 38 years," said the father.

More than a dozen speakers at the two-and-a-half hour service, held at the Skirball Cultural Center, testified to Pearl's lasting impact on their lives and to his wide range of interests.

There was the accomplished musician and violinist, the brightest student in the class who never showed off, the goofball kid and the klutzy baseball player who somehow always came up with the ball.

Later, he became the journalist who talked to any stranger and found all people intriguing, who looked for the shades of gray in the world rather than black and white.

Then there was the son of Israeli-American parents, growing up in southern California, who in his last words before his execution, affirmed his Jewish identity.

A slide show and video collage illustrated various stages in his life: the Bar Mitzvah celebration at the Western Wall in Jerusalem; a trip to Moscow in 1986, where he met with Jewish refuseniks, and was instrumental in bringing one family to the United States; and a journey on the Trans-Siberian railroad to China, where he conducted an impromptu Passover seder, using rice cakes in place of matzah.

Some 450 invited guests attended the service, some coming from as far as Pakistan, India and England.

One guest was boxing legend Muhammad Ali, who had made an impassioned plea for Pearl's release.

In words and song, those on the stage and in the audience, celebrated Pearl's extraordinary life and gift for friendship.

Rabbi Harold Schulweis of Valley Beth Shalom in Encino, Calif., recalled a man who "saw journalism as a calling" and was relentless in his search for truth.

LA-Shir, a Los Angeles Hebrew choir, formerly directed by Judea Pearl, sang "Uf Gozal," a song that includes the lyrics "Take wing, nestling/ Cut through the heavens/ Fly wherever you wish/ But don't forget/ There are vultures in the sky/ Beware."

In a different musical style, members of Daniel Pearl's old band, called Clamp, performed a song composed during a jam session to help a pregnant friend deliver her overdue baby. The refrain was "Come out, come out, the world is not such a bad place."

The last speaker was the slain journalist's wife, Mariane, who is expecting their first child, a son, in May.

She observed that "living with Danny was like living in a comic book. So many things happened to us all the time."

When they married in 1999, the couple wrote their own wedding contract, in which they pledged to be open to all cultures and to inspire others by the example of their own relationship.

Shortly before Pearl was kidnapped, his pregnant wife asked him whether, after moving from Paris to Bombay, they might finally settle down.

No, he replied, "we're going to change the world."

Mariane Pearl concluded by saying, "I have made a commitment that Danny will live through me and my son."

"They may have blown out a candle, but the light is still on." □

## NEWS ANALYSIS

**U.N. calls for Palestinian state;  
Israel braces for rights criticism**

By Michael J. Jordan

NEW YORK (JTA) — As violence between Israelis and Palestinians has escalated over the past month, so, too, has U.N. pressure on Israel.

Aided by their diplomatic and bureaucratic allies throughout the U.N. system, the Palestinians have stepped up rhetorical attacks from all directions against the Jewish state, advocates for Israel say.

On Tuesday, U.N. Secretary-General Kofi Annan demanded that Israel end what he described — for the first time, aides said — as its “illegal occupation” of portions of the West Bank and Gaza Strip. In a surprise move, the U.N. Security Council approved a resolution Tuesday night calling for a Palestinian state next to Israel. It was the first time the council explicitly has endorsed the idea of a Palestinian state.

The resolution was sponsored by the United States and was approved by a 14-0 vote, with Syria abstaining. Both Israel and the Palestinian Authority welcomed the resolution. Nabil Abu Irdeineh, a spokesman for Palestinian Authority President Yasser Arafat, said, “The whole world is behind a Palestinian state.”

Israeli officials, for their part, noted that the text “demands immediate cessation of all acts of violence, including all forms of terror, provocation, incitement and destruction.”

Israel’s U.N. ambassador, Yehuda Lancry, termed the resolution balanced — “which is quite a novelty for Israel,” he said.

Yet Jewish observers still are braced for next week’s reconvening of the historically anti-Israel U.N. Commission on Human Rights in Geneva — the first such session since the United States lost its seat last year to other Western countries.

“It could be a difficult session” for Israel without its trusty defender, an American official said.

But the slew of anti-Israel resolutions anticipated at the Geneva forum will, at most, be symbolic victories that fuel the Palestinian-led campaign against Israel, observers say.

Of greater import, they say, is what happens at the Security Council, because of its legally binding authority. The council is the institution responsible for ensuring global peace and security.

Indeed, it was in a speech to the Security Council that Annan criticized both the Israelis and Palestinians, saying he was disturbed that “escalation has been met with escalation with little — in some cases no — regard for innocent civilian lives.” But he seemed to concentrate a bit more on Israeli responsibility for the bloodshed.

Annan decried the “increasing use of heavy weaponry by Israel in civilian areas” against those “already subjected to severe physical and economic hardships.”

Actions like these “further fuel the fires of hatred, despair and extremism among Palestinians,” he said.

“You have the right to live in peace and security within secure, internationally recognized borders,” he said to Israel. “But you must end the illegal occupation.”

As for the Palestinians, Annan said, they “have played their full part in the escalating cycle of violence, counter-violence and revenge” and described their acts of terror and suicide bombings as “morally repugnant.”

“You have the inalienable right to a viable state within secure internationally recognized borders,” he said.

“But the deliberate targeting of civilians,” he said, “is doing

immense harm to your cause, by weakening international support, and making Israelis believe that it is their existence as a state, and not the occupation, that is being opposed.”

Lancry downplayed Annan’s remarks, telling Reuters that Israel had already agreed in principle to a Palestinian state, but that negotiations were required to get there. He was quoted as saying that Israeli forces were “compelled” to follow their strategy because of a Palestinian terrorist campaign that was often more deadly and did more damage than the Israeli army.

Hours after Annan’s speech, Washington introduced its resolution on Palestinian statehood. U.S. Ambassador John Negroponte said the surprise move was intended to give momentum to the peace mission being launched this week by U.S. Middle East envoy Anthony Zinni. The text expresses “a vision of a region where two states, Israel and Palestine, live side by side within secure and recognized borders.”

The resolution was not without its detractors, however.

Syria’s U.N. envoy dismissed it as “a weak resolution that fails to deal with the root cause of the problem — namely, the Israeli occupation of the Palestinian territories.”

Hamas and the Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine called the resolution “incomplete,” because it did not call for the removal of Israeli troops and settlements from the West Bank and Gaza Strip and ignored Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon’s alleged “bloody and tragic crimes” against the Palestinians.

Several of the Security Council’s 15 members, especially Syria, are said to be champing at the bit to enter the Middle East fray. Many eyes are turned to an Arab summit scheduled for March 27-28 in Beirut, which is expected to focus on a Saudi proposal to grant Israel diplomatic relations with Arab countries in exchange for an Israeli withdrawal to pre-Six-Day War borders.

Depending on the summit’s outcome, Palestinian supporters are expected to bring to the Security Council a resolution that will either reiterate a call to send international monitors to the disputed territories, or will demand a complete Israeli withdrawal to the 1967 borders — or both.

In either case, Israel will resist.

The American official, who asked not to be identified, said Washington would seek to discourage the Security Council from taking concrete action.

“At the end of the day, the only way to get a resolution is for the parties to sit down and work out their differences for themselves,” the official said.

Given U.S. support for Israel, no one-sided, anti-Israel resolution has much of a chance of reaching the Security Council and becoming law.

Since the Palestinian intifada broke out in September 2000, a handful of anti-Israel resolutions have come close but only one passed — when the U.S. abstained from a vote early on in the bloodshed, in October 2000.

Behind the current anti-Israel diplomatic activity, observers say, is a two-pronged Palestinian and Arab strategy: in the long term, an overarching effort to “delegitimize” the Jewish state; in the short term, a renewed push to “internationalize” the conflict.

Palestinian supporters, the reasoning goes, seek to marginalize the United States in favor of a third party more sympathetic to their cause, like the United Nations or European Union.

The world body is clearly preoccupied with the Palestinians, Jewish observers say, by dint of a huge Arab-Muslim bloc of member states that routinely dictates the U.N. agenda. □