



# Daily News Bulletin

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## TOP NEWS IN BRIEF

### 2 suicide bombers attack

Palestinian suicide bombers carried out two attacks Sunday. Meanwhile, Israeli troops exchanged fire Sunday with guards at Yasser Arafat's Ramallah headquarters.

The battle came as Israel's Security Cabinet met Sunday to discuss how to deal with Arafat. [Page 1]

### Israel may evict foreigners

Israel threatened to forcibly remove foreigners from the West Bank city of Ramallah after declaring it a closed military zone. The Israeli military issued a statement saying nonresidents would be removed by force "if necessary," after more than 40 people who sympathized with Palestinian Authority President Yasser Arafat walked past Israeli tanks into his headquarters.

The army has already taken over the Ramallah offices of foreign news organizations and is forcing reporters to leave the city. In another development, Israel Radio reported that a reporter working for the Boston Globe was shot and wounded Sunday in Ramallah. It was not immediately clear who was responsible.

### Anti-Semitic attacks in France

There were three anti-Semitic attacks in France over the weekend. No one was hurt when a man opened fire in a kosher butcher shop on Saturday near the southern city of Toulouse.

Earlier Saturday, vandals drove two cars into a synagogue in Lyon, setting the sanctuary on fire. Hundreds of people held an interfaith service at the synagogue after the attack.

"We must not accept terrorist acts," the chief rabbi of Lyon, Richard Wertenshlag, said at the service, where he was joined by the director of the city's main mosque. Prime Minister Lionel Jospin said he is "revolted" by the attack.

In other violence, a French Jewish couple was injured in a weekend attack in the southern part of the country.

Because of the Passover holiday, the JTA DAILY NEWS BULLETIN will not be published Thursday, April 4 and Friday, April 5.

## Israel considers its next move as terrorists launch daily strikes

By Jessica Steinberg

JERUSALEM (JTA) — With Palestinian Authority President Yasser Arafat surrounded by Israeli troops at his Ramallah headquarters, Israel has to decide what to do with him.

Israel's Security Cabinet met Sunday to discuss the question, but there were no indications that any final decision had been reached.

Prime Minister Ariel Sharon may have to choose from the lesser of several evils, according to some Israeli analysts.

"Sharon finds himself at a crossroads of entanglement, at a junction leading to situations that might not end well," wrote Yoel Marcus, a Ha'aretz commentator.

"Who knows the truth more than we do, from the days of the British Mandate: It's not easy to wipe out an entire people's aspiration for independence."

Israel is insisting it won't harm Arafat, and Defense Minister Benjamin Ben-Eliezer said soldiers had strict orders not to harm the Palestinian leader.

After Sunday's Security Cabinet meeting, Sharon made a brief televised address to the nation in which he said a daily series of Palestinian terror attacks launched against Israel were "activated, coordinated and directed by one man" — Arafat.

Sharon also called Arafat "an enemy of Israel and an enemy of the free world."

"Citizens of Israel: the State of Israel is at war, a war against terror," Sharon said. "We must fight this terrorism, in an uncompromising war to uproot these savages, to dismantle their infrastructure because there is no compromise with terrorists."

He also compared Palestinian suicide bombers to the terrorists who carried out the Sept. 11 attacks against the United States.

In an attempt to rally public support in the face of unremitting Palestinian terror, Sharon said Israel is "at a decisive point in its history. The situation is not easy," but Israel "will prevail."

Sharon spoke after three straight days of attacks in which suicide bombers struck targets in Israel's three largest cities: Sunday in Haifa, Saturday in Tel Aviv and last Friday in Jerusalem.

Israel invaded Arafat's compound in Ramallah last Friday, cutting off electricity and phone lines.

Seven Palestinians and two Israeli soldiers were killed during the operation, which came after Sharon declared Arafat an "enemy" following a March 27 suicide bombing at a Passover seder in a Netanya hotel.

Twenty-two people were killed in that attack.

President Bush backed the Israeli operation, saying Saturday that Israel has the right to defend itself against terror attacks.

Bush also said the Palestinian Authority president "has got to speak out. He has got to make it absolutely clear that the Palestinian Authority does not support terrorists."

On Sunday, Sen. Joseph Lieberman (D-Conn.) lashed out at Arafat, blaming him for the recent surge of terror attacks against Israel.

Speaking on the TV show "Fox News Sunday," Lieberman also said he feared the Palestinian leadership had been "hijacked" by extremists whose goal was not statehood, but the "annihilation of Israel."

"This is not the time to stop the Israelis from doing what they are doing in their own self-defense," Lieberman added.

Arafat, meanwhile, remained defiant.

Arafat told an Arab television station over the weekend that he is ready to die as a

## MIDEAST FOCUS

### U.S. envoy to stay in Mideast

U.S. officials said envoy Anthony Zinni would remain in the Mideast, despite the escalating violence. Last week's announcement came even as new Palestinian suicide bombings and Israel's invasion of Palestinian Authority President Yasser Arafat's Ramallah compound cast new doubts on Zinni's goal of reaching a cease-fire.

The latest violence halted any momentum gained March 28, when the Arab League approved a Saudi peace initiative that calls for normal relations with Israel in return for a withdrawal from all lands Israel captured in the 1967 Six-Day War.

### Powell backs Israeli move

Colin Powell said the Israeli invasion of Ramallah was self-defense in the face of Palestinian terrorism. But the U.S. secretary of state urged Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon to consider the consequences of the move.

Other world leaders, meanwhile, called on Israel to end its offensive and for greater international intervention to reduce tensions.

### Pope issues appeal for peace

Pope John Paul II appealed for concrete steps to end the "horror and despair" caused by the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

In his Easter message Sunday, the 81-year-old pontiff denounced the "tragic spiral of abuse of power and killings that bloody the Holy Land, plunged again in these very days into horror and despair."

### Tel Aviv shares fall

Shares on the Tel Aviv Stock Exchange fell sharply following the recent wave of terrorist attacks.

Trading was light Sunday as investors reacted to the series of terror attacks and military retaliation during the first days of the Passover holiday.



## Daily News Bulletin

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"martyr" for the Palestinian cause. With a candle and a machine gun on his desk, Arafat used a cell phone to place calls to world leaders, asking them to exert pressure on Israel. He also said he is just one of "millions" of Palestinians willing to die in the battle with Israel for control of Jerusalem.

On Saturday, the U.N. Security Council called on Israel to withdraw its troops from the West Bank.

The council's call, however, did not set any specific time frame for an Israeli withdrawal.

The resolution, which had the support of the United States, passed by a vote of 14-0. Syria, which had wanted harsher criticism of Israel, abstained.

U.N. Secretary-General Kofi Annan opened an emergency meeting last Friday by telling Israel to halt its assault on the Palestinian Authority and said Palestinians had to stop their "horrific terrorist attacks" against Israeli civilians.

Those attacks have been relentless and deadly.

Sunday's terror attack in Haifa came after Israeli security officials warned that an attack was imminent and set up checkpoints throughout the country in an effort to nab terrorists.

But by mid-afternoon, a bomber struck at a restaurant in Haifa, killing at least 13 people and wounding about 35 others.

The restaurant, which is located in a gas station complex owned by Israeli Arabs, was frequented by Jews and Arabs, said Wakid, an Israeli Arab whose brother-in-law owns a kiosk next to the restaurant.

In an interview with Channel Two television, he said the restaurant did not have a guard.

According to Amos Matzna, mayor of Haifa, there are going to be a lot more guards posted at public establishments in the city.

"We just signed an order, an hour before the bombing, that all places of business must have a guard if ordered to do so by the police," Matzna told Channel Two.

Security guards have become a familiar site in Jerusalem, where most cafes and restaurants have someone standing at the door.

A security guard, Haim Smadar, was killed last Friday at a Jerusalem supermarket, while blocking a suicide bomber from entering the crowded store. Another person was also killed in the attack.

Hours after Sunday's attack in Haifa, a second bomber detonated his explosives outside a clinic in the West Bank settlement of Efrat, wounding at least four people.

A spokesman for Israel's Magen David Adom ambulance service told Israel Radio the bomber had targeted an ambulance dispatch station. One of the wounded was a paramedic.

Sunday's attacks took place during the intermediate days of Passover, when Israelis traditionally take to the road and travel the country.

But not this year.

Streets were empty in many of Israel's major cities, as locals stayed away from cafes and crowded areas.

In Tel Aviv on Saturday night, 30 Israelis were wounded when a terrorist blew up a Tel Aviv cafe Saturday night.

The blast occurred at about 9:30 p.m. at the My Coffee Shop, on the corner of Allenby and Bialik Streets in central Tel Aviv.

The Al-Aksa Brigades, the military wing of Arafat's Fatah movement, claimed responsibility for the blast.

In last Friday's attack at a Jerusalem supermarket, along with the two Israelis who were killed, 30 others were wounded.

The Al-Aksa Brigades again claimed responsibility. The bomber was identified as a teen-aged woman from a refugee camp.

She was the third Palestinian woman to carry out a suicide bombing since the intifada began in September 2000.

Confronted with the unremitting Palestinian terror, Israel is preparing to expand its military activities.

The Israel Defense Force may take control of Palestinian cities in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, Army Radio reported Sunday.

In a move reflecting the possibility of more military action, the army issued 20,000 call-up notices for reservists last Friday. □

## JEWISH WORLD

### Museum staffers can go to Israel

The U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum will allow staff members to travel to Israel for a conference on Holocaust survivors.

The museum had decided last week to cancel its participation in the April 8-11 conference at Jerusalem's Yad Vashem Holocaust Memorial because of the security situation in Israel.

"We have reflected further," the museum said in a statement, "and although we remain quite concerned about safety, we have decided that it is important that individual employees who want to attend this conference should make that decision for themselves and should attend if they so choose."

The new chairman of the museum's council, Fred Zeidman, said many Israelis interpreted the original decision not to attend as a betrayal.

### Americans mistrust Saudi plan

Only 26 percent of Americans believe the Saudi peace initiative is sincere, according to a new poll.

In a poll of more than 1,000 Americans, 31 percent believe the Saudis launched the initiative to improve their image in the United States. Sixty-two percent of respondents believe the Saudis are not ready to accept Israel's right to exist.

The plan calls for the Arab world to make peace with Israel in return for a withdrawal from all lands Israel captured in the 1967 Six-Day War. The survey, commissioned by the Institute for Jewish & Community Research, has a 3 percent margin of error.

### Durban anti-Semitism condemned

The South African government condemned the anti-Semitism at last summer's anti-racism conference as "disgraceful." The nongovernmental conference was held in Durban last August, just before an official U.N. conference against racism.

Jewish participants at the conference described the anti-Semitism there as the worst seen in public since the 1930s.

Aziz Pahad, South Africa's deputy minister for foreign affairs, said at the recent annual conference of the South African Zionist Federation in Johannesburg that Muslim activists had taken over the Durban conference and turned it into an anti-Semitic event, according to the Israeli daily Ha'aretz.

### Slovak leader meets survivors

The president of Slovakia received a delegation of women who survived the Holocaust. President Rudolf Schuster's move came March 26, on the 60th anniversary of the first transport of Slovak Jews to Auschwitz.

Most of the 70,000 Slovak Jews who were sent to concentration camps during the war were killed.

## Want a cheap trip to Auschwitz? You just have to endure a sales pitch

By Magnus Bennett

PRAGUE (JTA) — A Czech company has come under fire for offering inexpensive day trips to the site of a former concentration camp in order to sell health equipment.

Aesculab Reisen has been trying to sell \$350 "oxygen biogenerators" and health mattresses as tourists are bused from the Czech Republic to Auschwitz in Poland.

Day-trippers are shown a presentation of the health equipment after "a tasty breakfast" and "a fantastic lunch" on the way to the camp. The several-hundred-mile round trip costs the equivalent of \$4.

The story surfaced after a Czech man, who is not Jewish, took exception to an advertising leaflet distributed by the company in his home town of Hlucin.

"I found a stack of leaflets under the mailbox of our apartment block and I was so angry that I took them all away and destroyed them," said Tomas Blazka, a salesman. "I don't agree with the idea of commercializing the Holocaust."

Petr Horava, who also saw the leaflet, was also angry. "There are lots of companies in this country which try to sell goods on excursions, but as far as I am concerned they are just using the Jewish tragedy to sell their goods," he said.

Aesculab Reisen, which launched its first trip last week, said it had no plans to drop the excursions.

A sales manager for the company, Lucie Cervenkova, said the firm would continue the trips on a regular basis as long as there is demand.

"We don't see any ethical problem," she said. "People who would otherwise not be able to afford to go to Auschwitz can do so because the trip is cheap. All they have to do is listen to a presentation about certain products."

She said the first trip had been a success. "Everyone found the visit to Auschwitz very interesting."

The chairman of Prague's Jewish community, Tomas Jelinek, said he did not want to condemn the company without establishing the nature of its trips.

"I support the idea of Czech people going to visit Auschwitz, but I would attack any company strongly if it arranged a tour that was not tasteful or professionally handled with proper lectures and museum visits," he said. □

## Attack and anti-Semitic slogans leave students reeling in England

By Claire Levy

LONDON (JTA) — Students in northwest England are bracing for more violence after the defeat of an anti-Zionist motion at a student union resulted in an attack on a Jewish residence hall.

Proposed by Manchester University's Islamic Society, the motion called for the student union to label Israel an apartheid state.

With tensions high before the early March meeting, Jewish students were assailed as "Nazis" and "baby butchers."

The General Union of Palestinian Students distributed anti-Zionist literature on the day of vote, the first time the Palestinian group had resorted to openly anti-Semitic slogans.

A week later, bricks were thrown through the windows of Hillel House, and a poster reading "Slaughter the Jews" was pasted on the building's door.

Meanwhile, Orthodox Chief Rabbi Jonathan Sacks publicly voiced his concern over the apparent rise of anti-Semitism in the United Kingdom in recent years.

Speaking to the Parliamentary Council Against Anti-Semitism recently, Sacks issued a "cry of warning," stressing the events in Manchester.

He maintained that the Israeli-Palestinian conflict was being used as a platform for open displays of Jew-hatred.

An official with the Union of Jewish Students, Clive Gabay, said the Islamic Society's motion had resulted in "the persecution and victimization of Jewish students on campus," and warned of further threats to Jewish students in Manchester. □

BEHIND THE HEADLINES**As countries preen for NATO,  
Jews are in a pivotal position***By Adam B. Ellick*

BUCHAREST, Romania (JTA) — At first glance, it appeared a bit odd: An American Jewish leader addressing 10 Eastern European prime ministers at a military summit.

So odd that when Rabbi Andrew Baker, international director of the American Jewish Committee, entered the NATO Aspirant Summit in Bucharest, Romania, last week, he asked himself, Why am I here?

"We sometimes suggest Jews are the proverbial 'canary in the cage,' a litmus test of what's going on in society," Baker said. "They play that role in this region, with their ability here to revive, function and be accepted in society. It's useful for people sitting in judgement of NATO enlargement if Jews feel comfortable. That says something about the society. If Jews feel anxious, insecure and have problems, that says something of those communities, too."

The NATO military alliance expects to add seven new member states in November.

Among the criteria for candidate countries is a free market economy and various defense stipulations, but also a "high standard in treatment of national ethnic and religious minorities" and "shared values," according to NATO spokesman Robert Pszczel.

Enlargement is a political decision and requires approval by the parliaments of all 19 NATO member states, including two-thirds of the U.S. Senate.

The AJCommittee organized a roundtable discussion with Jewish leaders from NATO aspirant nations, in the shadow of the summit.

The purpose, Baker said, was to put pressing Jewish issues — such as anti-Semitism, Holocaust restitution, education and commemoration — on the radar screen of political leaders who may be especially responsive while their bids for NATO entry are under consideration.

"I really think the fact that Jewish leaders were included in the summit with prime ministers indicates the seriousness of Holocaust issues," said Bruce Jackson, president of the U.S. Committee for NATO, a watchdog organization that monitors Jewish affairs among NATO hopefuls.

"If you don't get the past right, you aren't going to get the future right."

Jewish issues are among the top five areas the U.S. State Department checks when examining NATO aspirants, said Heather Conley, deputy assistant secretary for European affairs.

"To say these countries will reach a state of perfection before November is not realistic, but we can expect a commitment on educational work, and restitution," she said.

Jewish leaders from aspirant nations Bulgaria, Croatia, Macedonia, Latvia, Estonia, Lithuania, Slovenia and Romania issued status reports on their governments' performance, as did leaders from the Czech Republic, Poland and Hungary, which entered NATO in 1999.

No country stood out clearly as the best. Instead, Jackson said, each country is like a teenager, maturing at its own pace.

Lithuania's lagging record on communal property restitution is the most outstanding NATO issue in the Baltics, Jackson said, but he praised its ambitious Holocaust education program.

Estonia, meanwhile, restituted Jewish property, but its

textbooks contain just three sentences on the Holocaust.

If recent history is any guide, action on issues of Jewish interest may constitute more rhetoric than action.

Promises by the Czech Republic, Poland and Hungary to return certain properties have gone unfilled since the countries joined NATO.

"When we were joining NATO there were important Jewish declarations, but after they joined it was negligence in restitution," said Ferenc Olti, vice president of the Association of Hungarian Jewish Communities. "Practically nothing happened in the last two years."

Tomas Kraus, from the Czech Republic, warned his colleagues to "make appeals as quickly as possible, because in a couple of years it won't be there."

Despite some unresolved issues, Hungary's cooperation is relatively good, and "the problems there might be worse without them being under this NATO umbrella," Baker said.

Nicholas Lane, chairman of the AJCommittee's international committee, took a more skeptical view.

"It's a game of bluff," he said. "Americans insist NATO requires shared values and they're right. The difficulty is that once you're in NATO, there isn't a police force that goes around checking if you still have the values. So we work on principle and argue for what we want, and see if they're anxious enough or conscientious enough to take action."

Perhaps expectations of NATO's effectiveness are a bit too high.

The alliance is not a police force, after all, and cannot be "the solution to cultural, religious problems in Europe," Jackson said.

Still, "it does provide a hell of a lot of leverage," he noted. "The question for NATO is, are these societies committed to the first step?"

"Eradicating anti-Semitism will take the better part of the coming century, but NATO can give it a stab."

A baby step occurred on March 15 in the Latvian capital of Riga, when the Latvian National Soldiers Association decided to cancel its annual procession commemorating Latvian legionnaires who fought alongside Nazi troops against the Soviets in 1943. The group said it feared any commotion would damage Latvia's bid to enter NATO.

In neighboring Lithuania, controversy over the Holocaust has raged for years.

In January the government ended a six-year debate by handing over more than 300 Torah scrolls to world Jewry, a move that Jackson says helped Lithuania's NATO bid.

The Torah exchange even was discussed when Lithuanian President Valdas Adamkus visited President Bush in January.

European leaders, for their part, often take offense when their cooperation on Jewish matters is portrayed as appeasement to Western leaders.

"All human rights and democratic issues, we are not doing for NATO. We are doing them for ourselves," said Giedrius Cekuolis, Lithuania's chief negotiator for NATO and vice foreign minister. "I see human rights and Holocaust issues" as important "not because they are asking us, but because it's a part of Lithuania's history."

Still, the importance of joining NATO cannot be overstated in Eastern Europe.

The alliance offers a virtual insurance of security — a precious gift to countries like Lithuania, which saw German, Polish and Russian forces occupy its territory during the 20th century. □