



Daily News Bulletin

Vol. 80, No. 69

Tuesday, April 16, 2002

85th Year

TOP NEWS IN BRIEF

Solidarity rally in Washington

A crowd of Israel supporters that organizers said numbered more than 100,000 converged Monday on Washington to express solidarity with the Jewish state. [Pages 1, 4]

Jenin, Nablus withdrawals vowed

Israeli troops will withdraw from Jenin and Nablus before the week is up, Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon said. In an interview Monday with CNN, he called Ramallah and Bethlehem more "problematic," adding that it would take longer for Israeli troops to withdraw from the two cities.

He also dismissed Palestinian claims that 500 Palestinians had been killed during fierce fighting last week in the Jenin refugee camp. As other Israeli officials have said this week, Sharon said that only several dozen Palestinian gunmen had been killed in the fighting, which also claimed the lives of 23 Israeli soldiers.

Palestinian militia head nabbed

Israeli forces arrested Marwan Barghouti, head of the Palestinians' Tanzim militia in the West Bank. Barghouti, who is on Israel's wanted list for allegedly masterminding terror attacks on Israeli targets, was captured Monday in an apartment in the West Bank city of Ramallah.

He is secretary-general of Yasser Arafat's Fatah movement and has been considered a possible successor to Arafat.

Israeli forces have been searching for Barghouti, who went into hiding when Israel launched its military operation in the West Bank on March 29 in an attempt to round up terrorists and collect illegal arms in Palestinian-controlled cities.

Jewish woman attacked in Berlin

A young Jewish woman wearing a Star of David necklace was attacked at a Berlin subway station Monday. Police reported that the attackers appeared to be of Arab origin.

The perpetrators fled the scene, and no arrests have been made. According to one report, two individuals asked the woman about the necklace she was wearing and whether she was Jewish. They then punched the woman in the face and tore the necklace from her neck.

'We knew we had to come,' say Jews gathered at pro-Israel rally

By Michael J. Jordan

NEW YORK (JTA) — It was 90 minutes into the community's largest public mobilization in 15 years, and Jews from around the country continued to stream toward the U.S. Capitol, clamoring to get into the pro-Israel rally.

In the shade of a nearby acacia tree, just to the left of the Capitol rotunda, Mikaella Kagan and Marina Fox-Rabinovitz found refuge from the sweltering heat.

They looked out onto the sea of faces and took a moment to reminisce back to Dec. 6, 1987, when they joined more than 200,000 Jews who had thronged the nation's capital on behalf of the "refuseniks" — Jews of the former Soviet Union who demanded the right to emigrate to freedom.

Mikaella and Marina, friends for a quarter-century, were themselves refuseniks from Moscow, who had made their way to America only months before.

"I remember it like it was yesterday," said Mikaella, now 66, of Bethesda, Md.

"We know from our experience that it's important not to feel alone, that someone is thinking of me, that someone remembers that I am here. For refuseniks, it would have been easier for the government to destroy us if someone outside hadn't known about us. Now that we are free, we want to do the same for Israel."

Added Marina, 57, "If not Jews, who else will support Israel?"

"Jews feel themselves to be like a family. We want Israelis to feel they are loved and supported — and will be always." Within the Jewish family out on the Capitol lawn — organizers put the number at more than 100,000 — emotions ran high.

Criticized by both Israeli officials and the Jewish grass-roots for a perceived lack of visibility, the Jewish communal leadership received an overwhelming response to a rally organized only a week earlier.

It drew Jews of all ages, seemingly from all political and religious stripes, with impressive delegations arriving from the East Coast, Midwest and South.

Some 150 Jews from Toronto even made the sojourn south.

"When I grow up and have kids and tell them about the intifada," said Daniella English, 19, of Toronto, "I can tell them I did everything I could to support Israel. I went to Washington."

There had been talk beforehand about what sort of unified message the rally should send Washington and Jerusalem: support for Israel itself, or support for the government of Israel. But even without the relentless heat — which several demonstrators succumbed to — temperatures were elevated.

Indeed, after 19 months of the intifada, a spate of suicide bombings, an Israeli military incursion into the West Bank and at least 450 Jews killed, the gathering in Washington seemed almost cathartic for some.

"When I read about the rally, I told my wife, 'I gotta go; it'll be good for my soul,'" said Alan Geller of Elmwood Park, N.J.

"And she said, 'Al, you're 71. You're too old.' But 10 minutes later — she always does this — she says, 'Al, you're right. Go.'"

The sentiment was echoed across the Capitol lawn.

"We've felt frustrated and helpless in trying to show our support for Israel," said Debby Weinstein of Memphis, Tenn.

"We knew we had to come here to take a stand, and to say we're so proud of the support President Bush and his administration are showing for Israel, and for standing up to the rest of the world."

The thousands of placards on display ran the gamut. They expressed solidarity with

MIDEAST FOCUS

Powell to hold more talks

Secretary of State Colin Powell is slated to hold more discussions with Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon and Palestinian Authority President Yasser Arafat on Wednesday.

It will be Powell's third round of talks with Sharon and his second with Arafat. In another development, U.S. Middle East peace envoy Anthony Zinni left the region for personal reasons on Monday. He was expected to return later this month.

Lebanon backs Hezbollah attacks

Lebanon rebuffed Secretary of State Colin Powell's request that it rein in Hezbollah, which has been launching cross-border attacks on Israel. Powell traveled Monday to Lebanon and Syria, warning that violence along the Israel-Lebanon border could escalate throughout the region.

In response, Lebanese Foreign Minister Mahmoud Hammoud described Hezbollah's cross-border attacks, which focus on the Shabaa Farms border region, as a legitimate resistance to Israeli occupation.

Arafat's wife backs bombers

Yasser Arafat's wife endorsed Palestinian suicide attacks as legitimate resistance against Israel.

In an interview published Friday in *Al-Majalla*, a London-based weekly magazine, Suha Arafat said that if she had a son, there would be "no greater honor" than to sacrifice him for the Palestinian cause. Both she and her daughter are currently living in Paris.

E.U. won't impose sanctions

The European Union will not convene to review its trade agreement with Israel, British Foreign Secretary Jack Straw said. Straw said Israel would not face E.U. economic sanctions because of its military operation in the West Bank, as several E.U. states had threatened in recent days.



Daily News Bulletin

Ivan Michael Schaeffer, *President*

Mark J. Joffe, *Executive Editor and Publisher*

Lisa Hostein, *Editor*

Michael S. Arnold, *Managing Editor*

Lenore A. Silverstein, *Finance and Administration Director*

Paula Simmonds, *Marketing and Development Director*

JTA DAILY NEWS BULLETIN is published five days a week, except holidays, by the Jewish Telegraphic Agency Inc., 330 Seventh Ave., New York, N.Y. 10001-5010. For information about how to subscribe by e-mail, fax or regular mail, call (212) 643-1890, or visit our Web site at www.jta.org.
© JTA Reproduction only by previous arrangement.

Israel — "Wherever we are, we stand with Israel" and "Self-defense is Not Murder" — to denunciations of Yasser Arafat — "Terrorist Bastard" and "Arafat: How Much More Blood Do You Hunger For?" and of suicide bombers — "Murderers Not Martyrs" and "Palestinians Danced on 9-11."

Some equated the Israeli and American wars on terrorism and urged Washington to support Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon. "Finish the Job" and "Destroy Arab Terrorism," the posters read.

Many rally participants were in no mood for talk of a "cease-fire" or a "return to negotiations."

They roared their approval when Christian radio commentator Janet Parshall boomed, "We will never give up the Golan; we will never divide Jerusalem. And we will call Yasser Arafat what Yasser Arafat is — a terrorist!"

Many in the crowd then booed when Paul Wolfowitz, the U.S. deputy defense secretary, referred to "innocent Palestinian victims" and the "future Palestinian state."

One teen-age boy, while passing a reporter, muttered: "They should kill Arafat."

And with no Arabs or Muslims to confront, some Jews turned on each other.

A lone placard, stating "We Have Faith in Coexistence," up near the front seemed likely to draw some attention.

"I haven't gotten any verbal complaints, but I do think it will be an unpopular sign," said Micah Bycel, who studied in Israel last year and was among two busloads of Hillel students making the 16-hour trip from the University of Wisconsin at Madison.

"But it's still a necessary sign. Many signs around here are destructive signs," he said.

"I'm as pro-Palestinian as I am pro-Israeli. Israel needs to withdraw from the territories and recognize Palestinian statehood."

Sure enough, within minutes, an older man from Chicago approached to berate Bycel.

After challenging Bycel on which borders Israel should withdraw to, the Chicagoan — who only gave his first name, Shael — erupted.

Jabbing his finger in Bycel's chest, he shouted, "And you want to live with Palestinians who use babies' heads as bowling balls? You're just going to stand there and be passive?"

"I'd be happy to discuss it with you, but please don't touch me," replied the Wisconsin senior.

But the scene turned uglier as a group from the political left and right converged.

Eventually, Bycel lost it, too, screaming, "It's very offensive to me that you're saying I don't stand with Israel."

A schoolmate of Bycel's tried to intervene: "Hey guys, chill out. It's a peace rally!"

And then a burly friend of Shael's accosted a reporter who had earlier been interviewing Bycel, taunting him with the comment: "You must work for Al-Jazeera" — referring to the Arab news network.

Shael later said that Bycel and his friends were "naive, and haven't lived life long enough. The only human rights they're concerned about are the Palestinians', not the Israelis'. Kids like that have betrayed us because they think that way."

At which point, another college student intervened.

"I don't want you to think that all young people are in support of Peace Now" — the dovish group of the left, said Daniela, a Stern College student from Scranton, Penn.

"There are other college-age students who realize there's no imminent peaceful solution, and that giving in to whatever demands of the Palestinians is not all they want."

Another Wisconsin student took in stride the strife among Jews.

"This is one of the only issues in my life that I feel passionately enough about to make the drive," said Rachel Heilbronner, 22.

"I just wanted to experience this feeling of standing with all these Jews, who might not feel the same way about the conflict, but who can agree that Israel has a right to exist as a Jewish state."

And like Mikaella and Marina, an Israeli at the rally said he was sure that message and others of solidarity would be well-received back in the Jewish state.

"I'm pretty sure the citizens of Israel will appreciate this; it's coming from the heart," said Jacob, who lives in New York. He said he "had to" attend this rally after missing a smaller one in the city two weeks ago. □

JEWISH WORLD

AROUND THE JEWISH WORLD

French youth reject anti-Semitism, but issue isn't simple, study shows

By Andrew Diamond

PARIS (JTA) — Is “dirty Jew” a serious insult in France? The answer may not be so obvious in the milieu of urban French youth.

In fact, in a recent survey of 400 French youths between the ages of 15 and 24, only 44 percent believed it was indeed a “very serious” offense. Yet an overwhelming majority of the respondents — 87 percent — agreed that “anti-Semitic acts are scandalous, and those found responsible should be very severely punished by the state.”

The survey is part of a new study of anti-Semitic aggression co-sponsored by France's largest Jewish student union and the militant anti-racist organization SOS-Racism. It attempts to make sense of such contradictions in the perceptions of the younger generation toward Jews and the issue of anti-Semitism.

The 242-page “Antifeuj,” which hit the shelves of French bookstores last month, documents 405 anti-Semitic incidents in France between Sept. 1, 2000 and Jan. 31, 2002.

Bringing together the efforts of several established academics and politicians of all stripes, the book represents one of the most exhaustive analyses to date of what many are calling “the new face of French anti-Semitism.”

As the title is intended to signal, what is groundbreaking about this latest contribution is its youthful perspective on a wave of anti-Jewish aggression committed predominantly by adolescents and young men of Maghrebin, or North African, descent.

“Feuj” is slang for Jew in an urban youth argot that — taking its cues from the rap and hip-hop music hits — creates terms by inverting the letters of words, such as “Juif.”

In the same slang, “dirty” is used to qualify just about anything, which may help explain why youths apparently tolerate the expression “dirty Jew.”

For example, when a high school student was reprimanded for uttering the phrase in a classroom last December, his classmates defended him by claiming that African and Arab teens constantly refer to each other as “dirty blacks” and “dirty Arabs.”

Antifeuj examines whether incidents like these constitute somewhat innocent transgressions or whether they reveal what some Jewish leaders and scholars consider the “banalization of anti-Semitism.”

One of the book's principal authors, Patrick Klugman, president of the Union of French Jewish Students, has been an outspoken advocate of this latter viewpoint over the past year.

Last November, around the time he announced the Antifeuj project, Klugman was adamant about the spread of anti-Semitic attitudes in French primary schools, high schools, and universities.

“I don't like that ‘feuj’ is a phrase that all French Jews under the age of 25 have heard,” he wrote in an editorial in the French daily *Le Monde*. “It's the kind of subconscious anti-Semitic expression that feeds off of boredom, idleness, mistrust, and bitterness.”

Like many other Jewish community leaders, Klugman has been critical of the French government's inaction in the face of anti-Semitic aggression.

President Jacques Chirac and several top-level officials in the Socialist government repeatedly have denied the gravity of the threats against Jews, which has led some Jewish leaders around the world to label France an anti-Semitic country.

French Jews have been less willing to condemn French society as a whole, and Klugman and the president of SOS-Racism, Malek Boutih, are no exceptions.

“France is not an anti-Semitic country,” they state in their preface to *Antifeuj*. “This book is an act of confidence in France, our country.”

The results of the *Antifeuj* survey may bolster their confidence.

In addition to the clear-cut repudiation of anti-Semitic acts, 80 percent of the youths said they would have “no problems” living in the same apartment as a Jew.

A similar number of respondents seemed largely uninfluenced by the anti-Semitic myth of excessive Jewish power over the economy, media and world politics. Only 18, 21 and 22 percent of the respondents expressed some agreement with the three respective versions of this idea. □

Shul explosion may be intentional

Last week's explosion at a synagogue on the Tunisian island of Jerba may have been a deliberate attack, according to German Chancellor Gerhard Schroeder.

“There are indications of an attack, but no final certainty,” Schroeder said Monday. But the possibility reinforced the need to keep up the fight against global terror, he added.

Fifteen people, 10 of them German tourists, were killed April 11 when a truck carrying natural gas crashed into the synagogue. Israeli officials have rejected Tunisia's contention that it was a simple road accident, saying it clearly was an attack on the synagogue.

U.N. resolution called pro-terror

U.N. Watch criticized European states for voting at the Geneva-based U.N. Commission on Human Rights for a one-sided resolution against Israel. The resolution includes a thinly veiled endorsement of Palestinian terror attacks, the group said Monday.

Ambassador Alfred Moses, chairman of U.N. Watch, said a vote in favor of this resolution is a vote for Palestinian terrorism, and an abstention suggests ambivalence toward terror.

Voting for the resolution were Austria, Belgium, France, Portugal, Spain and Sweden; Croatia, Italy and Poland abstained.

Chechen kidnappers sentenced

A Moscow court sentenced 12 members of a Chechen gang to five to 10 years in prison for the kidnapping of a 12-year-old Israeli boy in 1999. Adi Sharon, son of an Israeli businessman, was held for more than nine months in a small, dark pit after his abduction from Moscow.

To pressure his father into paying the ransom, the Chechens beat Adi, cut off the tips of two fingers and then sent the fingers and a video of the beatings to his father.

Following the intervention of a special police squad and a negotiator familiar with the tactics of Chechen abductors, Sharon was freed in June 2000 in the city of Penza, some 500 miles east of Moscow.

Heritage Week proclaimed

President Bush proclaimed this week as Jewish Heritage Week. In his proclamation, Bush noted the many contributions Jewish Americans have made to the arts, education, industry, science and the American way of life.

“The values and traditions of Judaism have contributed greatly to our culture and history; and they have played a major role in the success of our great nation,” he said.

Speakers sound consensus theme at national solidarity rally for Israel

By Sharon Samber and Matthew E. Berger

WASHINGTON (JTA) — More than 100,000 Jews from across America converged on the U.S. Capitol for a rally expressing solidarity with Israel this week, and by and large they got what they came for.

Participants' political opinions spanned the spectrum of American Jewish life, but most speakers at Monday's event kept to the central — and consensus — theme of standing with Israel and fighting terrorism.

Security was tight as local police officers searched the bags of all participants as they crossed through two major checkpoints leading to the front of the Capitol, where the program was held beneath a sweltering sun.

Access was tightly controlled once the program began. Many people who arrived late to the 1 p.m. event because of delayed bus arrivals were not admitted to the central site.

Less strictly controlled was the speakers' rhetoric. Mortimer Zuckerman, chairman of the Conference of Presidents, said there was a deliberate effort to allow all voices to be heard.

"We were happy to invite people from the Labor Party and Likud," he told JTA. "We're not going to censor their message."

The Conference of Presidents of Major American Jewish Organizations and the United Jewish Communities threw the rally together in less than a week, as the Bush administration began pressuring Israel to end its military incursion into the West Bank and try again to strike a deal with Palestinian Authority President Yasser Arafat.

Audience members were reminded again and again of the terrorist threat Israel faces.

Nobel laureate Elie Wiesel condemned suicide bombings, warning that terrorism knows no boundaries.

Some called for more American engagement as a way to move out of the present impasse.

"We cannot stand on the sideline as the prospects for peace are undermined," said House Minority Leader Richard Gephardt (D-Mo.). Gephardt said the United States must work to preserve and strengthen Israel's security, and the Palestinian Authority must turn "unequivocally" against terrorism.

Official signs included "I Stand with Israel for Peace," "U.S. and Israel — United Against Terror," and "Israel's Fight = America's Fight."

The familiar speech ending of "God Bless America" was changed a number of times to "God Bless America and Israel."

The audience was less receptive when reminded of the Palestinians' plight.

Deputy Secretary of Defense Paul Wolfowitz, the sole representative of the Bush administration at the rally, told the crowd that "innocent Palestinians are suffering and dying as well. It is critical that we recognize and acknowledge that fact."

Wolfowitz was booed and drowned out by chants of "No More Arafat."

Conservative views were better received. Mention of Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon — criticized by some left-wing groups for Israel's military operation in the West Bank — brought cheers from the crowd.

A Christian radio talk show host received roars of approval when she said, "We will never give up the Golan! We will never

divide Jerusalem!"

Former Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu called Arafat the "quintessential terrorist" and said Israel could not make peace with Arafat because the Palestinian leader doesn't want real peace.

"Arafat does not want a Palestinian state next to Israel, he wants a Palestinian state instead of Israel," Netanyahu said.

Netanyahu called for the dismantling of Arafat's regime and said other Palestinians will rise up to take leadership positions "once terrorism is defeated."

The charismatic Netanyahu had the crowd shouting and cheering. "Americans know Yasser Arafat is nothing more than Osama bin Laden with good public relations," he said.

William Bennett, a well-known conservative and chairman of Americans for Victory Over Terrorism, said Israel should be allowed to fight its war against terror, and Americans will benefit.

House Majority Leader Dick Armey (R-Texas) said attacks on innocent civilians were terrorism whether "it happens in New York, the Pentagon" or "the heart of Jerusalem." He rejected any kind of moral equivalency between Palestinian terror attacks and Israeli retaliation.

Monday's rally was believed to be the largest gathering of Jews in Washington since the rally for Soviet Jewry in December 1987, which drew more than 200,000.

The swarm of visitors created havoc not only for Washington commuters, but for travelers throughout the Northeast Corridor. Congestion resulted in long lines on subway trains and delays on major roads.

Dan Nichols, spokesman for the Capitol Police, said huge backups were reported on New York Avenue, a main entranceway to Washington from the Northeast. The Metro lines had more than 50,000 riders above normal Monday. The Metro station closest to the Capitol building had to be closed to all people trying to exit trains at around 3:15, spokesman Steven Taubenkibel said.

The number of buses entering RFK Stadium, the designated parking area, exceeded the 1,100 capacity, so Abe Pollin, owner of the Washington Wizards and Capitals and a Jewish philanthropist, allowed overflow buses to go to U.S. Airways Arena, which he owns.

Given the short planning time and the multiplicity of views in the Jewish community, advocates for dovish and hawkish viewpoints both had expressed apprehension about the message before the event.

Groups like Americans for Peace Now wanted the rally to focus on support for the Israeli state and people, but not the policies of Prime Minister Ariel Sharon.

The Zionist Organization of America was concerned that the message would not be supportive enough of Israel's military incursions. In the end, leaders for both groups said they were satisfied with the results.

"It seems like people stuck to what the guideposts were for the event," said Lewis Roth, assistant executive director of Americans for Peace Now.

"The message of the rally is very clear, standing with Israel," said Richard Heideman, president of B'nai B'rith International. "People can choose however they want to stand with Israel by themselves."

Israel's Minister of Housing Natan Sharansky glossed over the differences in message from the speakers or the crowd.

"We are not fighting for one or another political solution," he told JTA. "We are fighting for our existence." □