



Daily News Bulletin

Vol. 80, No. 109

Wednesday, June 12, 2002

85th Year

TOP NEWS IN BRIEF

One killed in terror bombing

A 15-year-old girl was killed and eight other people were injured after a suicide bomber struck outside a restaurant in the Israeli coastal city of Herzliya. Police launched a search for the person who drove the bomber to the fast-food restaurant.

In another terror attack earlier Tuesday, three Israeli teens were wounded in a roadside bombing near Hebron. The bomb exploded as dozens of students who had been picking cherries left a field near the settlement of Kiryat Arba and headed toward their bus. The three youths, students at a yeshiva high school in Kiryat Arba, sustained moderate to serious wounds.

Sharon thanks U.S. lawmakers

Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon held a series of meetings Tuesday with U.S. legislators. Sharon used the sessions to thank legislators for their strong support of Israel.

During one meeting, he was informed about Tuesday's suicide attack in Herzliya. After telling those present about the attack, Sharon reiterated that Israel does not have a peace partner. "This is an example of what Israel is facing," he said. "The Palestinian Authority does nothing to stop these attacks."

Sharon expected to meet Wednesday in London with British Prime Minister Tony Blair before returning to Israel.

UJC passes budget

The umbrella group for North American federations passed its 2002 budget. Meeting in Chicago on Monday, the delegate assembly of the United Jewish Communities approved a \$42.5 million budget, down from last year's budget of \$44.7 million.

The new budget includes cuts in UJC's regional staff members, who act as liaisons to local federations, and has cuts in travel subsidies for overseas missions.

Survey: U.S. anti-Semitism rising

Anti-Semitism in the United States is increasing, according to the Anti-Defamation League. According to a survey the ADL released Tuesday, 17 percent of Americans are strongly anti-Semitic, up from 12 percent four years before. The survey also said 48 percent of Americans hold no prejudices against Jews, down from 53 percent in 1998.

NPR reaches out to Jews and Arabs to assuage critics of Mideast coverage

By Sharon Samber

WASHINGTON (JTA) — National Public Radio has mounted a public relations campaign among Jews and Arabs in an effort to avoid being known as National Protest Radio. At the same moment that the president of NPR was addressing Jewish newspaper editors in Chicago about coverage of the Middle East, the ombudsman for NPR was talking about the very same thing to an Arab group in Washington.

The speeches last Friday were part of an outreach effort by the nonprofit radio organization to convince its listeners that its reporting of the Israeli-Palestinian crisis is both fair and unbiased. NPR, along with other major media outlets, has been accused by both Jewish and Arab audiences of unfair coverage of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

The outreach comes after Jews boycotted some major newspapers such as The New York Times and The Washington Post because of a perceived anti-Israel bias.

Arabs have complained bitterly as well, citing what they see as a pro-Israel slant to many stories in the Times and Post, among other media.

Kevin Klose, president and CEO of NPR, acknowledged the complaints against his organization. "We're not immune to that," he said in a telephone interview. "We pay a great deal of attention to criticism."

Klose is looking for more dialogue with both communities and he believes NPR is trying to be as careful as possible about its reportage.

"But we're not indifferent to errors," he said. "We change; we correct the record."

Part of the problem is the nature of the story, Klose told Jewish newspaper editors gathered last week in Chicago at the annual meeting of American Jewish Press Association.

"This has been nothing but a terrible story for 20 months," said Klose, a former reporter and editor at The Washington Post. And people with close ties to the issues, he said, "listen with an extraordinary intensity."

NPR has hired a public relations firm, DCS Group, that does work for Arab and Jewish groups, including Birthright Israel, to help with its outreach to both communities.

NPR serves an audience of more than 19 million Americans each week via 680 public radio stations and the Internet and in Europe, Asia, Australia and Africa through NPR Worldwide. Jeffrey Dvorkin, the NPR ombudsman, says the outreach effort is to help the organization understand the communities better and to encourage people to help NPR do its job better.

"If there's a boycott, then it's too late," he said.

NPR's outreach to the Jewish community includes visiting various communities around the country and speaking to the national convention of Hadassah this summer.

Dvorkin told JTA he spoke recently in a synagogue in Maryland where he heard from "a lot of angry people," but in a visit to the Miami Jewish federation he said people seemed to understand NPR's efforts to be fair.

Last month, the NPR Web site started posting full transcripts of its reports from the Middle East so people could see the full text, officials said. While most of the critics respond with letters, e-mail and voice mail complaints, there have been some financial repercussions as well.

Some major donors to a public radio station in the Boston area stopped their funding because of what they saw as an anti-Israel bias in NPR.

At least six underwriters have withdrawn their support to WBUR, according to Mary Stohn, spokeswoman for the local station. She said that other smaller donors had

MIDEAST FOCUS

Army operates in West Bank

Israeli soldiers carried out operations Tuesday in Ramallah and Tulkarm. In Ramallah, the soldiers imposed a curfew and arrested nine suspected Palestinian terrorists. Troops discovered 21 cars stolen recently in Israel and three cars with explosives in them, Army Radio reported.

In Tulkarm and surrounding villages, the army also imposed a curfew following warnings that terrorists from the area were planning to launch attacks in Israel.

In the Gaza Strip, the body of a Palestinian man was found Tuesday near the security fence with Israel. He was killed when a bomb he was trying to plant detonated prematurely, the army said.

Work on fence set to begin

Construction of a security fence between Israel and the West Bank is set to begin this week. The director general of Israel's Defense Ministry, Amos Yaron, told a legislative committee this week that it would take about one year to complete the first section of the fence. The section will run about 75 miles, from northeast of Tel Aviv to southeast of Haifa.

Yaron estimated that each mile of fencing, including security mechanisms, will cost about \$500,000 to build. Some right-wing legislators and Jewish settler leaders oppose the fence, warning that it will leave Jewish settlements on the other side and establish a precedent for political borders.

Saudi minister to meet Bush

Saudi Arabia's foreign minister is planning to meet this week with President Bush. Prince Saud Al-Faisal is expected to urge Bush to call for a timetable for Palestinian statehood.

On Saturday, after meeting with Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak, Bush said the United States is "not ready to lay down a specific" timetable.



Daily News Bulletin

Norman H. Lipoff, *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.

also not renewed their support and the station anticipated further action on the part of both smaller and larger donors. She said WBUR has already lost at least \$1 million in funding because of protests about NPR's coverage of Israel.

NPR officials said they were not aware of any other stations that have lost funding as a result of their Middle East coverage. And NPR's president, Klose, said that in general, financial support for public radio is up.

Two of those who withdrew their support in Boston were members of the Committee for Accuracy in Middle East Reporting in America, or CAMERA, a group that has long criticized NPR reporting. CAMERA has called for people to end their support of their local stations because of NPR's "anti-Israel distortions."

According to a CAMERA study of NPR coverage during two months in late 2000, less air time was afforded to Israeli speakers, and many programs excluded Israeli voices entirely. In an updated survey from March and April 2002, CAMERA evaluated 57 segments and found 16 Israeli speakers, 43 Arab speakers, 21 neutral commentators and six pro-Arab speakers.

CAMERA also charged that NPR did not do human interest stories on Jewish victims of terrorism. Aside from a story on Jewish victims last month, CAMERA doesn't see any recent alterations to NPR's coverage and believes NPR continues to skew its stories.

"People are more concerned about the Middle East and NPR is subject to heightened scrutiny," said Alex Safian, CAMERA's associate director. "The Jewish community is not as willing to overlook this sort of thing."

NPR's Dvorkin questions the group's findings and says his evaluations of coverage have shown different results.

Jewish organizations such as the Anti-Defamation League, the American Jewish Committee and the Jewish Council for Public Affairs have been meeting with NPR for several years to discuss concerns about Middle East coverage.

A recent study by the ADL said that NPR is not fundamentally biased against Israel, but that it had "significant imbalances in coverage," particularly when Israel responded militarily after Palestinian suicide bombings.

"NPR has demonstrated that it can be objective and fair-minded in its presentation in terms of giving Israel's perspective as well as that of the Palestinians, in terms of personalizing the suffering on the Israeli side as well as the Palestinian side, and in terms of interviewing as many mainstream Israelis as Palestinians," said the report, which ADL decided not to release.

"However, this must happen on an ongoing basis, not only when Israelis are victimized and showing restraint, but also when Israel decides it has an obligation to protect its people militarily," the report said.

For their part, some Arab Americans also take issue with NPR's coverage of the conflict. Hussein Ibish, communications director for the American-Arab Anti-Discrimination Committee, said NPR does not have an anti-Arab bias, but its reporting can be problematic and there is a "radical imbalance" in its commentary. He said his group makes practical suggestions to NPR and encourages it to do better.

Meanwhile, NPR has its Jewish fans as well. Edith Everett, a major contributor to NPR, says counting the minutes given to each side doesn't necessarily tell the whole story.

In general, Everett, a philanthropist who lives in New York, said she finds NPR coverage outstanding and adds that NPR officials have been receptive to her comments about problems with Middle East reporting.

Michael Kotzin, the executive vice president of the Jewish United Fund/Jewish Federation of Metropolitan Chicago, agreed, calling for a constructive dialogue between the Jewish community and the media.

Speaking alongside Klose at the American Jewish Press Association meeting last week, Kotzin said the media needed to take a serious look at how they are treating the Middle East conflict.

He also said he was concerned that the media is increasingly dismissive of their critics as "emotional advocates for one side."

At the same time, he said he believes the Jewish community "needs to demonstrate the same kind of fairness and understanding about the media that we are demanding of them." □

JEWISH WORLD

ZOA activists visit DC

The Zionist Organization of America is holding a pro-Israel lobbying mission on Capitol Hill. ZOA activists include delegations from all over America.

The 250 activists plan to urge U.S. officials to stop pressuring Israel, cut diplomatic relations with Palestinian Authority President Yasser Arafat and end all U.S. aid to the Palestinians.

Interfaith group runs ads

An interfaith group is running an ad campaign underscoring evangelical Christians' support for Israel. "Evangelical Christians are among the strongest supporters of Israel in the world today," says an ad appearing in Tuesday's Washington Post.

The campaign is being spearheaded by Stand for Israel, a project of the International Fellowship of Christians and Jews. Similar ads are planned for major newspapers and radio stations.

Latin Jewish leaders meet

The Latin American Jewish Congress convened in Brazil. Jewish leaders from across Latin America attended the congress, held last Friday through Monday in Sao Paulo.

Attendees discussed the needs of their communities, ongoing interfaith projects and the impact of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict on local politics. Among those attending were Edgar Bronfman and Avi Beker, president and secretary-general of the World Jewish Congress, respectively.

Champion of religious rights dies

Samuel Rabinove, the American Jewish Committee's legal director from 1966 until 1997, died at 79. A champion of religious pluralism, Rabinove led the AJCommittee's efforts in defense of religious liberty, freedom of expression and the rights of Jews and all minority groups.

A longtime advocate of church-state separation, Rabinove wrote frequently on religious liberty issues for a variety of publications. "Sam's extraordinary contributions to our country, the Jewish people and the quality of all our lives will be his lasting legacy," said David Harris, the AJCommittee's executive director.

Jewish Film Festival in Berlin

The eighth annual Jewish Film Festival opened in Berlin. Among the films to be screened is the controversial documentary by German TV journalist Esther Schapira, "Three Bullets and A Dead Child." The documentary examines how videotapes of the September 2000 shooting death of a 12-year-old Palestinian boy, Mohammad al-Darrah, were turned into anti-Israel propaganda by Arab media, despite evidence that the boy was killed by Palestinian gunfire.

Few embrace call for vigilantes to guard Jewish areas of New York

By Max Heuer

NEW YORK, June 11 (JTA) — An announcement by the little-known Jewish Defense Group that it will begin organizing patrols of armed residents of Jewish communities around New York has alarmed American Jewish leaders.

The announcement by Rabbi Yakove Lloyd, head of the Jewish Defense Group, came after reports that the planners of the 1993 bombing of the World Trade Center originally had intended to attack heavily Jewish neighborhoods around New York.

Jewish communities throughout Europe have seen an increase in anti-Semitic attacks since the Palestinian intifada began in September 2000. Jewish communities in the United States have experienced fewer threats, but there is a heightened awareness of potential risk, especially since Sept. 11.

"We're glad people are concerned about security, but we do not support vigilante or fringe groups, which this group seems to be," said Joel Levy, the Anti-Defamation League's Northeast director.

Hannah Rosenthal, executive director of the Jewish Council for Public Affairs, an umbrella group for local Jewish community relations councils, described her Brooklyn Heights area as "the most diverse neighborhood in New York City."

"I don't want to see armed camps in my neighborhood," she said. "I'm sad people are literally taking to arms. I'm no more under siege than the rest of the country."

The move to arm Jewish civilians came in response to the revelation on CBS News' "60 Minutes" of the 1993 World Trade Center plotters' intent to attack Jewish communities in Brooklyn.

"We will do nothing illegal," Rabbi Lloyd told reporters, but concern over vigilantism prompted a response from New York City's police department.

"Anyone attempting to patrol the streets armed with weapons will be arrested," Police Commissioner Raymond Kelly told The Associated Press.

Lloyd criticized the NYPD for not patrolling enough in heavily Jewish neighborhoods. Jewish Defense Group patrols, he argued, "will be a very effective deterrent against terrorism directed at American Jews and other targets."

Lloyd could not be reached directly for comment.

His call found little support among Jewish groups and leaders.

"This is unequivocally not needed," said Assemblyman Dov Hikind, whose district includes Borough Park in Brooklyn. Lloyd "is trying to take advantage of people's insecurities after Sept. 11th.

"I don't know where this guy comes from," Hikind said, "but we don't need outsiders in our community carrying around weapons."

The plan was also denounced by City Council Member David Yassky (D-Brooklyn) and several Brooklyn community leaders.

Both Rosenthal and Levy said their organizations' efforts to bolster security measures, in cooperation with the NYPD, were far more reasonable.

The ADL addresses security measures in weekly meetings with Brooklyn police and local Jewish representatives, Levy said.

He encourages private security as a supplement to city police, but "carrying around shotguns and bats is certainly not what the mainstream groups are doing," Levy said.

Rabbi Avi Shafran, a spokesman for the fervently Orthodox Agudath Israel of America, said, "We take strong exception to the irresponsible notion that Jewish security in this country is enhanced by encouraging civilians" to go on patrol.

He continued, "While citizens are entitled to call as necessary on New York's finest, and to work with them to upgrade security in times of potential danger, they should not attempt to stand in police officers' stead." □

Israel extradites suspect to Russia

JERUSALEM (JTA) — Israel extradited to Russia a man charged with murder, robbery and fraud. A Russian TV station showed the man, identified as Andrei Zhuravlyov, in Russian police custody at Moscow's airport. □

Anti-Semitism on rise after 9/11, according to new survey by ADL

By Max Heuer

NEW YORK (JTA) — A new Anti-Defamation League survey shows an increase in American anti-Semitism in the wake of the devastating terror attacks of September 11th.

"We are greatly concerned that many of the gains we had seen in building a more tolerant and accepting America have not taken hold as firmly as we had hoped, and to some degree been reversed," said Abraham Foxman, ADL's national director.

The survey by ADL and Marttila Communications, called "Anti-Semitism in America: 2002," is based on interviews with 1,000 Americans of different ethnic, religious, age and regional backgrounds. The margin of error was 3 percent.

The interviews were held in late April and early May, just after the Israeli army's controversial incursion into the Jenin refugee camp.

The ADL has been conducting surveys to measure anti-Semitism for nearly 40 years.

The survey inserts 10 anti-Semitic questions into a group of neutral questions about Jews, and respondents are broken down into three groups according to their level of anti-Semitism. To be considered "strongly" anti-Semitic one must answer "true" to at least six of the anti-Semitic questions.

The new survey combined the 1,000 interviews with smaller "over-surveys" of African-Americans and Hispanic-Americans, as well as smaller, concentrated surveys among college students and professors.

Among the survey's most dramatic findings:

- 17 percent of respondents were "strongly" anti-Semitic, a 5 percent increase from 1998, while 48 percent appeared to hold no prejudice at all, a 5 percent decrease from 1998;

- 51 percent of respondents believed the Bush administration had tilted too far in favor of Israel;

- 35 percent of Hispanic-American respondents were strongly anti-Semitic. Furthermore, 44 percent of foreign-born Hispanic-American respondents showed strong anti-Semitic beliefs, compared to only 20 percent of Hispanic-Americans born in America, a new statistic in this year's survey;

- 35 percent of African-American respondents had strongly anti-Semitic views, a number consistent with years past.

- Only 3 percent of respondents among U.S. college and university students were strongly anti-Semitic, while just 5 percent of professors were strongly anti-Semitic.

- In May 2002, 626 anti-Semitic incidents were reported to the ADL, an 11 percent increase from the previous year.

- 20 percent of respondents agreed that "Jews have too much power in the U.S. today," while 24 percent concurred with the statement that "Jews have too much power in the business world."

The figures seem to indicate a shift in anti-Semitic sentiment in America, showing that hatred of Jews today concentrates more on perceptions of Jewish power and political influence rather than the social stereotypes more prevalent in older surveys.

"Political anti-Semitism is more sinister" than social anti-Semitism, "and these numbers are very significant since September 11th," Foxman said.

"If you see the Jewish lobby and nothing else, if you believe that Jewish influence controls American legislation and foreign

policy, then you believe in the most classical anti-Semitism," he said.

Foxman also responded to a recent poll, which found that fully a third of Arab-Americans believe Arabs were not responsible for the Sept. 11 attacks.

Much of the world "believes that Israel is responsible for 9/11. It is being taught in schools in Pakistan and Jordan," Foxman said.

The report's exploration of anti-Semitic attitudes among Hispanic-Americans, specifically those born outside the United States, marks a departure from previous surveys.

Hispanic-Americans now represent 12 percent of the U.S. population. According to the survey, 54 percent of foreign-born Hispanic-Americans receive their news from Spanish-language sources, while a quarter of foreign-born Hispanics never attended high school.

"We have to reach out," Foxman said. The ADL "has Spanish language as well as church facilitators to deal with this challenge."

Foxman also said that education is the only known "antidote" for anti-Semitism, citing extremely low levels of intolerance among those with high educational levels.

However, Jewish activists working in the field question the accuracy of the survey's findings on anti-Semitism among college students and educators.

One activist argued that questions discriminated against the less educated, while leaving little room for the muted anti-Semitism often found in academia under the guise of opposition to Israel, they said.

Others took issue with the ADL's findings in the Hispanic community.

The Foundation for Ethnic Understanding conducted a survey of 500 Hispanic-Americans and 500 Jewish-Americans in March 2001. The foundation's president, Rabbi Marc Schneier, called the ADL findings "remiss."

According to the foundation's poll last year, 35 percent of Hispanic-Americans agree there is anti-Semitism in their community, yet on certain issues — such as Holocaust education — they are quite sympathetic to Jewish interests, the foundation poll found.

While Foxman said ADL poll results have shown the Jewish community to be the most tolerant, the foundation's poll found that 36 percent of Hispanic-Americans feel there is "anti-Latino" sentiment among Jews.

"There is a perception of an anti-Latino bias among Latin-Americans, and coalition building is a two way street," Schneier said. But Schneier did acknowledge that anti-Israel bias in the media may have contributed to a rise in anti-Semitic feeling in recent months.

Outside of language barriers and education, Foxman also speculated that the high degree of anti-Semitism among foreign-born Hispanics could be related to Christian religious teaching in Latin America that blames Jews for the death of Jesus.

Foxman said the ADL plans to meet with Hispanic leaders. Yet he expressed some pessimism about their anticipated reaction, explaining that efforts to reach out to the African-American community after past polls were dismissed with attacks on the accuracy of ADL's polling.

Schneier also debated the consistency of African-American anti-Semitic sentiment. "Every major civil rights organization's head is a friend of Jews and of Israel. Now, of course, this must trickle down to the masses, but it is something that ADL poll doesn't allow for." □