



Daily News Bulletin

Vol. 80, No. 150

Tuesday, August 13, 2002

85th Year

TOP NEWS IN BRIEF

Palestinians approve attacks

Members of leading Palestinian groups on Monday rejected language to end attacks on civilians inside Israel, and instead backed a continuation of their uprising.

The groups have been holding talks in Gaza City with the aim of drafting a unified political platform, which would include terrorist groups such as Hamas and Islamic Jihad. Yasser Arafat's Fatah movement, which initiated the meetings, offered a draft proposal that called for an end to attacks against civilians inside Israel, according to participants at the talks. However, that language was scrapped during debate.

Daniel Pearl laid to rest

The father of Daniel Pearl intoned Kaddish as the slain Wall Street Journal reporter was buried Sunday.

Pearl's body was returned to the United States last week. Sunday's funeral was held at an undisclosed location in Encino, an area of southern California where Pearl's family lives.

N.Y. street to be named for victim

New York officials plan to name a street for Brooklyn resident Janice Coulter, who was among those killed in the July 31 terror attack at Hebrew University.

The speaker of New York's City Council, Gifford Miller, made the announcement during a wreath-laying Monday at the site of the attack. Miller and other council members are currently on a solidarity visit to Israel. Coulter worked in the New York office of the American Friends of Hebrew University.

Israeli court OKs expulsions

An Israeli military court approved the expulsion of three Palestinians from the West Bank to the Gaza Strip. The three, who are relatives of alleged Palestinian terrorists, have 12 hours to appeal the decision to an Israeli civilian court. The expulsions are part of a new Israeli tactic aimed at discouraging Arab terror attacks.

Israel's attorney general ruled that expulsions must be limited to family members with direct ties to their relatives' terrorist activities, leaving only these three Palestinians eligible for expulsion from an original group of nearly two dozen arrested.

NEWS ANALYSIS

Mutual mistrust appears to shelve efforts to resume diplomatic track

By Leslie Susser

JERUSALEM (JTA) — The wheels are spinning beneath the battered chassis of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, but the brakes are being applied by that perennial opponent of Mideast progress: mistrust.

As Israeli and Palestinian officials try to hammer out a plan to test Palestinian security guarantees, voices on each side accuse the other of tricks.

Israeli Defense Minister Benjamin Ben-Eliezer's "Gaza First" plan proposes a cease-fire in the Gaza Strip and part of the West Bank to test the Palestinian Authority's willingness and ability to crack down on terror against Israel.

Palestinian Authority Interior Minister Abdel Razak Yehiyeh suggested Bethlehem as the "pilot" cease-fire city in the West Bank. If successful, the plan would be extended to other West Bank areas.

The Palestinian Authority approved the Ben-Eliezer proposal in principle. But leaders of the dozen or so Palestinian paramilitary organizations were highly critical of the P.A.'s decision, seeing it as a trap to legitimize Israeli occupation of Palestinian cities.

Some even suggested that Arafat was buying into the proposal in a desperate attempt to regain his "relevance" on the international stage.

Israel was equally emphatic in its suspicion of Palestinian motives. Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon declared at Sunday's Cabinet meeting that P.A. approval of the "Gaza First" idea was "simply a ruse to please the Americans" while a Palestinian delegation was talking with Bush administration officials in Washington.

The very name of the "Gaza First" plan — which recalls the "Gaza and Jericho First" plan that in 1994 initiated Palestinian Authority rule under the Oslo accords — symbolizes the extent to which the two-year-old intifada has rolled back the gains of years of peacemaking and trust-building.

Israelis were equally skeptical of reports that Palestinian factions were once again on the verge of pledging not to attack Israeli civilians, at least inside Israel proper.

Palestinian officials had claimed they were about to issue a cease-fire in July until Israel assassinated Salah Shehada, the head of Hamas' military wing in the Gaza Strip, killing some 15 civilians in the process.

Palestinians staged several spectacular terrorist attacks, ostensibly in revenge for Shehada's death. But then they again considered the possibility of declaring a cease-fire — albeit one that would sanction attacks on Israelis in the West Bank and Gaza Strip.

Israelis dismissed the talk as a public relations exercise or as diplomatic cover that would allow Palestinian fighters to regroup and prepare for future attacks.

They also feared a repetition of Israel's experience in Lebanon, where the two sides agreed on a moratorium on attacking civilians. In practice, that allowed Hezbollah fighters to shelter behind Lebanese civilians while attacking Israeli soldiers.

All those questions appeared to become moot early this week, however, as the Palestinian factions dropped the cease-fire initiative and instead called for continued attacks.

"We stress the legitimacy of our resistance against" the Israeli "aggression and the occupation, and the Israeli settlements," the groups said in a draft statement. The statement affirms both violence and "political work" as legitimate tools toward the Palestinians' goals. Beyond the bluster, however, some Israelis detected signs that the

MIDEAST FOCUS

Nine indicted in hall collapse

Nine Israelis were indicted Monday in connection with the May 2001 collapse of a wedding hall in Jerusalem.

The nine, who include the building contractor and the owners of the hall, face a variety of charges, including manslaughter and negligence, according to the Jerusalem Post.

Twenty-three people were killed and nearly 400 injured in the collapse.

Wanted Palestinian killed in Jenin

Israeli security forces killed a wanted Palestinian after he tried to escape Monday following his capture in Jenin.

Israeli troops detained Ghaseel Israhah during house-to-house searches Sunday night. The army said Israhah had planted a number of bombs in the Jenin area with the intention of killing Israeli civilians or soldiers.

Soldier fires at Israeli journalist

An Israeli soldier in the West Bank opened fire Sunday on a taxi carrying a prominent Israeli journalist. Gideon Levy, a correspondent for the Israeli daily Ha'aretz, said Monday the shots were fired without warning.

Along with Levy in the car were a Ha'aretz photographer and a representative from the organization Physicians for Human Rights.

They were not injured.

The army blamed the incident on a communications breakdown and said the taxicab had been mistakenly redirected to an area "it never should have entered."

An officer and the soldier who opened fire received a 21-day suspended jail sentence and a 25-day detention to base respectively, an army statement said.

intifada's physical, economic and diplomatic toll was exhausting the Palestinians.

The fact that Palestinian Authority President Yasser Arafat's Fatah movement was reaching out to other groups to consider even a partial cease-fire shows a recognition that the war against Israel has failed, and that Palestinians are searching for a way out, some Israeli analysts said.

For several weeks now, the "Supreme Intifada Monitoring Committee," an umbrella group of all Palestinian factions, has been working on a covenant meant to produce a joint, binding definition of Palestinian goals and the means to achieve them. It also grapples with the need for reform of P.A. institutions.

Palestinian spokesmen insist the covenant is not meant as a concession either to Israel or America, where President Bush in late June demanded comprehensive P.A. reforms, including Arafat's replacement, as a condition for Palestinian statehood.

The covenant was to have been signed in mid-August, but the signing ceremony was deferred when Hamas officials asked for more time to consider their position. Earlier, the Latin Patriarch of Jerusalem, Michel Sabah, met Hamas leader Sheik Ahmed Yassin in Gaza to advance agreement on the covenant.

Particularly galling to Hamas, which rejects Israel's right to exist, is the document's call for a Palestinian state only in the West Bank and Gaza Strip. Hamas leaders say that even if they sign the document, they will reserve the right to continue advocating a Palestinian state not next to Israel, but in place of it.

Israelis, meanwhile, asked how much of this development constituted genuine change on which new peace agreements could be built?

To what extent was it tactical maneuvering to enable battered terrorist groups — which the Palestinian Authority is obligated to disband rather than co-opt — to regroup and fight another day? How much of it was simply a way for the discredited Arafat to hang on to power?

Part of the Israeli mistrust stems from the fact that the covenant would establish a joint Palestinian decision-making body that includes all Palestinian factions, with Arafat at its head.

This could simply be another way for Arafat to retain power — and as long as he does, Israelis argue, nothing positive will happen.

To help overcome the mutual mistrust and create conditions for a cease-fire, the Americans are pushing ahead with plans to reform the Palestinian security services. After spending several weeks in the region, a CIA team recently made detailed recommendations for changes in the structure, assignment, operation, recruitment and training of the Palestinian security services, which would be placed under a unified command.

The Americans also will soon send an envoy to the region to assess reforms in Palestinian government and economic procedures.

But in their dealings with the Palestinians, the Americans, and the Israelis for that matter, face an acute dilemma: In order to promote the reform program they need to talk to Palestinians in positions of authority, but often those Palestinians are close confidants of Arafat, the man the reforms are supposed to sideline.

In early August talks in Washington, for example, Saeb Erekat said openly that he was there representing Arafat. It is, therefore, by no means clear whether the reforms and the strong undercurrent of Palestinian criticism of the leadership are pushing Arafat out, or whether Arafat is controlling the reforms and the protesters to solidify his grip on power.

If it is the former, the cease-fire efforts may have a chance; if the latter, Israeli intelligence sources contend, the terror will not stop for any length of time.

Still, even a partial and largely tactical Palestinian cease-fire will put tremendous strains on Israel's already fragile national unity government.

On Sunday, Sharon made it clear that he is considering going to early elections over the budget. A cease-fire, which the National Religious Party on the right will almost certainly reject as a trap, could set off a process of disintegration of the Likud-led coalition.

And on the left, Labor leaders already are predicting a January election, in which relations with the Palestinians will be a key issue. □

(Leslie Susser is the diplomatic correspondent for the Jerusalem Report.)



Daily News Bulletin

Norman H. Lipoff, *President*

Mark J. Joffe, *Executive Editor and Publisher*

Lisa Hastein, *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.

JEWISH WORLD

Y.U. to allow gay housing

Yeshiva University's medical school will allow gay and lesbian couples to live together in its married student housing.

Y.U.'s decision, reportedly reached late last month, ends a long-standing lawsuit launched in 1998 by two lesbian medical students whose domestic partners were not allowed to live with them in university housing at the Bronx-based Albert Einstein College of Medicine.

Yeshiva won earlier court battles on the case, but the New York State Court of Appeals reinstated the lawsuit last year.

It is unclear whether the policy change affects others schools in the Yeshiva system.

California gov. backs Israel

California's governor spoke out against petitions launched on University of California campuses calling on the state to divest itself of stocks in companies doing business with Israel.

"As long as I am governor of this state, we will continue to stand side by side with our friends in Israel, both in business and friendship," Gray Davis said in a statement. "The people of Israel are going through tremendous difficulties right now. They live with daily unrest, violence and death. California will not abandon its friends in their time of need."

Davis, who is running for re-election, noted that California exported \$818.2 million worth of products and services to Israel in 2001, making Israel the state's 22nd largest trade partner.

Nuremberg shul remembered

Jewish and Christian leaders met in the German city of Nuremberg to commemorate the destruction of the city's main synagogue 64 years ago.

Officials used the ceremony to issue calls against anti-Semitism and to proclaim support for Israel.

"There are still brutal people who are trying to defame" Jews and foreigners, said Arno Hamburger, head of the city's Jewish community.

He said he was 15 when he watched "fanatic Nurembergers" fill the streets to applaud the destruction of the synagogue on August 10, 1938. The destruction was ordered by Nazi official Julius Streicher, publisher of the virulently anti-Semitic newspaper *Der Sturmer*.

Russian Jewish official harassed

A Russian Jewish official was harassed recently at an airport in Russia.

Police hurled anti-Semitic slurs at Boris Usherenko, the executive director of the Russian Jewish Congress, when they learned that he worked for a Jewish organization.

In article, Warsaw Ghetto leader urges Palestinians to halt attacks

By Ruth E. Gruber

ROME (JTA) — The last surviving leader of the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising has called on Palestinians to halt their attacks on Israeli civilians and start talks with Israeli leaders.

But Dr. Marek Edelman's appeal — published last week as an open letter in Poland's leading newspaper, *Gazeta Wyborcza* — has drawn criticism from some Jews because Edelman never used the word "terrorism."

He also appears to evoke comparisons between today's Palestinian gunmen and the outnumbered Warsaw Ghetto fighters who made a brave but futile fight against the Nazis in 1943.

"There is no need for such a comparison," Pnina Frymer-Greenspan, who fought under Edelman in Warsaw, told the Israeli daily *Ha'aretz*.

"It pains me. I also think its very problematic that he does not call them terrorists."

She did, however, back Edelman's call for negotiations.

Edelman, 81, addressed his letter not to Palestinian politicians, but "to all the commanders of Palestinian military, paramilitary and guerrilla organizations; to all the soldiers in Palestinian combatant organizations.

"My name is Marek Edelman; I am the former vice commander of the Jewish Fighting Organization; I am one of the leaders of the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising," he went on, establishing his credentials both as a Jew and as a guerrilla fighter.

To some observers, Edelman appeared to fault the Palestinians on their tactics, rather than their goals or ideals.

He recalled how in 1943, "we fought for the life of Jewish society in Warsaw. We fought solely for life, not for territory and not for national identity . . . our weapons were never aimed at a defenseless civilian population. We did not kill women and children."

Nonetheless, he said, "To this day, urban guerrillas have never been victorious anywhere in the world, but neither have the armies against which they fought ever won.

"The war you are fighting will also lead to nowhere," he wrote.

"Once again, blood will be spilled needlessly and people on both sides will lose their lives."

Edelman indirectly criticized the Palestinian use of suicide bombers, saying that the ghetto fighters "never gambled with our lives. We never sent our soldiers to a certain death; after all, you only live once. A man must not take another's life. It is time for everyone to understand that."

Edelman is a prominent figure in Poland because of his World War II history and his more recent years as a political activist.

From his youth, he was a member of the Bund, the Marxist Jewish party that opposed Zionism, and after the Holocaust he chose to remain in Poland, which he considers his homeland and where he still lives.

"He is a venerable and controversial figure, known for his distance to Zionism," said Stanislaw Krajewski, the Warsaw consultant for the American Jewish Committee.

A cardiologist by profession, Edelman was an active supporter of Poland's anti-Communist Solidarity movement in the 1980s.

Since the fall of communism, he has taken prominent stands on human rights issues.

Despite his anti-Zionism, he has visited Israel several times.

"This open letter falls squarely within the scope of Edelman's earlier lines of action; he continues to feel involved in world events," Rudi Assuntino, who edited an Italian book on Edelman in 1998, told JTA.

"It is important to note that it is almost in the form of a manifesto, and that he addresses the heads of the Palestinians combatants directly."

In his letter, Edelman urged Palestinians and Israelis alike to look to the lesson of Northern Ireland, where a peace accord was recently signed, and to Poland, where the Communist regime was ousted "without a single shot being fired." □

At international sports event, sneakers serve as cultural bridge

By Max Heuer

MEMPHIS (JTA) — Robbie Lipkin, a 16-year-old from Chicago, was practicing his jump shot during warmups on the Jewish Community Center basketball court when Ori Shahan, a 16-year-old from Israel, walked up and asked him about his shoes.

Lipkin was sporting a new pair of white-and-blue "And 1" basketball sneakers. Shahan had noticed that the shoes matched his Israeli team's uniforms, and wanted to know where he could get a pair. "In Israel, there is no 'And 1,'" the skinny, brown-haired Shahan explained as he looked down at his own aging green Nikes.

The two are among the 6,500 teen-age athletes from North America, Israel, Europe and South America competing this summer in the 2002 JCC Maccabi Games, an annual event celebrating its 20th anniversary. Modeled after the Maccabiah Games in Israel — an Olympic-style collection of amateur Jewish athletes — the JCC Maccabi Games are for Jewish teens between the ages of 13 and 16.

Though Shahan couldn't play in at least one basketball game because of a foot injury, he said he was still enjoying his first trip to the United States.

Escaping from the daily terror attacks in Israel, Shahan could relax, play basketball and meet other Jewish teens.

"I like the cars here, and the girls are cuter," Shahan added before the team of 15- and 16-year-old Israelis played its first game against a delegation from Cleveland.

Others shared Shahan's sentiments.

"We're happy to come here, I want to see what" the U.S. is like, said Shahan's teammate, Yair Blaier, 16. He and the other Israeli athletes know "all the stories and see the movies. Now I want to be here."

Organized by the Jewish Community Centers Association, Maccabi USA/Sports for Israel, the Maccabi World Union and Maccabi Canada, the Games are being held throughout the month of August. They rotate among different cities each year, and are organized in delegations formed through local community centers.

The Games began in Memphis in 1982 with just 300 athletes. Memphis is serving again as host this year, along with Omaha, Neb., Baltimore, Montreal and Springfield, Mass. Each city will host the Games for a week.

The Games have come a long way in those 20 years.

Beth and Phil Kohler began coaching swimming at the Games in 1984. That first year, when the Games were just "grass-roots sports," their uniforms consisted of matching blue T-shirts, Phil Kohler said.

Now every delegation is outfitted with fancy warmup gear and uniforms, purchased through local JCCs.

As chairwoman of the Philadelphia delegation, the largest visiting group, Beth Kohler said the Games are "infusing culture onto kids."

Rachel Kohler, 13, has been traveling to the Games since she was 13 months old. Finally old enough to compete on the dance team, she called her participation a "lifelong dream."

The logic behind the Games remains the same as it was 20 years ago: to offer an "informal Jewish education," according to the Games' continental director, Lenny Silberman.

Israeli Uri Alkan, 22, is volunteering at the Games. He just finished his service as a platoon commander in the Israeli army and is running "Hang Time," a hands-on learning activity using trivia questions and a map to teach the athletes about Israel.

The activity is a "new experience about Israel," Alkan said. For many of the teen-age athletes, "there is not a positive connection" to Israel "because of the bombing and the issue with the Palestinians."

Through "Hang Time," Alkan said, he and other Israelis can "show what Israel means to us. It is our home."

But at the Maccabi Games, informal Jewish education mainly means competing and socializing with other Jewish teens.

By combining a Jewish event with pop culture and sports — ranging from baseball and soccer to table tennis and bowling — organizers hope less-affiliated Jewish teens will move closer to Israel and Judaism.

The opening ceremonies testified to this belief. Held in the Pyramid sports arena, home to the NBA's Memphis Grizzlies, the show featured the Grizzlies' dance team and basketball star Shane Battier, along with a fireworks show and video montage. The team's mascot even joined the crowd by flying in from the ceiling on a rope.

The bear got stuck on his descent to the stage, but the rest of the show ran smoothly. Delegations paraded into the arena as more than 1,000 parents and supporters cheered.

Despite the fancy special effects, the Israeli delegation elicited the most excitement. The crowd erupted as the delegation entered and the announcer boomed out that they represented "Israel, the homeland of the Jewish people."

"It's very exciting. When we entered the pyramid, everyone stood up; I almost cried," Shahan said.

While the Israeli delegation took center stage at the opening ceremony, there was little talk of politics and terrorism on the court and during social activities.

The Jewish Community Centers "use the Games as a catalyst. They are heavily Jewish, but focus on the ethnic, cultural and social" aspects of Jewish life, said Steven Reiner, the chair of the Games.

Indeed, the Memphis JCC teemed with boys sporting sideways visors and spiked hair, and girls in midriff tank tops and flip flops at its registration, when local host families were paired with their respective teenagers and prepared for a week in the hot Memphis sun.

Daniel Rubin, of Columbus, Ohio, is an attorney who coaches baseball during the summer. He began his connection to the Games as a host, and now is in his fourth year as a coach.

It's "fun to be able to go to different places," he said. "I've been to Florida, Tucson and this is my first time in Memphis."

His daughter, Aaryn, 15, will be competing on the dance team. She had accompanied her father to the Games for the past three years, but hadn't competed because she never knew there was a dance team and wasn't so interested in other sports.

Now she is "nervous to dance by myself, and afraid I'll forget my steps," she said.

But she has a whole team to support her, and her father is confident she'll do fine.

He added, "I wish I had it when I was a kid." □

(Max Heuer traveled to the JCC Maccabi Games in Memphis as a guest of the Jewish Community Centers Association.)