



# Daily News Bulletin

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85th Year

## TOP NEWS IN BRIEF

### Jewish groups take Iraq stands

The Reform movement's congregational arm offered qualified support for President Bush's Iraq policy.

In a policy memorandum, the Union of American Hebrew Congregations said it would support an attack on Iraq if the Bush administration first met four conditions: It sought international cooperation; it sought nonmilitary means to avoid a crisis; it sought international backing for any attack; and it received congressional authorization before using force.

The executive committee of the American Jewish Congress also voted to back military action against Iraq. In contrast, the Jewish Council for Public Affairs, the umbrella organization for federations' community relations councils, postponed a decision on Iraq policy.

Reflecting the disparate views of its members, JCPA's board of directors decided in a conference call Thursday to table a vote until Oct. 14.

### Israel fires rocket at Gaza car

Israeli and Hamas officials disagreed over whether the leader of the Hamas military wing in Gaza was killed in an Israeli helicopter strike Thursday in Gaza City.

At least two people were killed and 25 wounded when the helicopter fired a rocket at a car.

Israeli military officials claimed that Mohammed Deif, who has topped Israel's most-wanted list for years, was one of the two killed.

Deif was named the Hamas military commander in Gaza after his predecessor, Salah Shehada, was killed in an Israeli air strike in July. Hamas official Abdel Aziz Rantissi denied that Deif was killed in Thursday's strike. Rantissi vowed revenge.

### Israeli officer killed in West Bank

An Israeli officer was shot and killed Thursday by a Palestinian gunman near Tulkarm.

Capt. Harel Marmelstein was killed as his unit was searching for wanted terrorists in a village near Tulkarm. Soldiers returned fire and killed the gunman, a local Hamas leader.

REMINDER: The JTA DAILY NEWS BULLETIN will not be published Monday, Sept. 30.

## ISRAEL'S ARAB MINORITY

### Large rally seen as evidence that young Israeli Arabs are alienated

By Gil Sedan

JERUSALEM (JTA) — The writing was on the wall — literally.

At the Islamic Movement's giant rally last Friday in Umm el-Fahm, the stage was decorated with a picture of the Al-Aksa Mosque in Jerusalem and the slogan, "Al-Aksa in Danger."

To the 60,000 Israeli Arabs who cheered in support, the meaning of the phrase was clear: The Jews were out to destroy the Muslim holy site on top of the Temple Mount.

If anyone needed a reminder that relations between Jews and Arabs in Israel are deteriorating badly, last Friday's rally provided it. As the second anniversary approaches of the October 2000 riots, in which Israeli police killed 12 Israeli Arabs, the rift between the two communities seems deeper than ever.

According to a new book, it's not just the Islamic Movement that is rejecting accommodation with the Jewish majority in Israel: An entire generation of young Arabs is distancing itself from the Israeli mainstream, according to "The Upright Generation" by Khaula Abu-Baker, an Arab social worker from Acre, and Danny Rabinowitz, a Jewish anthropologist from Tel Aviv University.

These young Arabs were born in the State of Israel, carry Israeli passports, vote in Knesset elections, read Israeli newspapers and even write in them, and speak Hebrew fluently — yet they have never been more alienated from Israeli society since the founding of the state 54 years ago.

"Israelization is the gravest threat to Palestinian uniqueness in Israel," Israeli Arab journalist Zuheir Andreus recently wrote in *Al-Quds al-Arabi*, an Arabic daily printed in London.

Assimilation threatens to turn Israeli Arabs "into a deformed group in the present and a frustrated group in the future," he wrote.

Abu-Baker and Rabinowitz's book focuses on the third generation of Israeli Arabs since the establishment of the state in 1948. The first generation is that of the "Survivors" from the 1948 War of Independence, weak and humiliated, the authors write. The second is that of the "Worn-Out Generation," who were born after the establishment of the state and tried in vain to integrate into Israeli society.

Theoretically, members of the young generation, who are now in their late 20s or 30s, are best fit for the process of "Israelization." However, Abu-Baker and Rabinowitz write, they have turned their backs on Israeli society not because they feel more Palestinian, but because they feel Israeli society has not been willing to accept them and open all doors to them.

The authors named the young generation the "Upright Generation" because in their view it is a generation that no longer knocks on the door, begging; it makes demands. It will join the rest of Israeli society only if it is fully accepted on its own terms, without reservations or limits.

Television reporter Riad Ali, a representative — at least by age — of the Upright Generation, feels the authors have placed too much emphasis on Jewish rejection in molding the young generation's Palestinian identity.

In Ali's view, young Israeli Arabs also have been strongly affected by their identification with the suffering of the Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza Strip.

"Undoubtedly if the Palestinian problem had not existed, the Palestinian identity of the young generation of Israel's Arabs would have come out in a different way," Ali

## MIDEAST FOCUS

### Jerusalem steps may be ignored

The White House may ignore a law expected to pass Congress that calls on the State Department to take steps recognizing Jerusalem as Israel's capital. The State Department Authorization Act, which passed the House of Representatives on Wednesday, includes language requiring the State Department to bring the U.S. Consulate in Jerusalem under the auspices of the U.S. Embassy in Tel Aviv and to recognize residents of Jerusalem as Israelis.

The bill is expected to pass the Senate and be signed by the president, but sources tell JTA that the White House may ignore the Jerusalem provisions, claiming that they violate the separation of powers between Congress and the executive branch.

### Israel blasts U.N.-hosted forum

Israeli officials are criticizing the United Nations for hosting a pro-Palestinian conference.

The U.N. Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People hosted the conference, which was attended by non-governmental organizations. In a letter to the United Nations, Israel's U.N. mission called the meeting a "flagrant misuse of organs and premises of the U.N." and said the participation of official U.N. bodies constituted a "violation of the U.N. Charter." In a declaration at the end of the conference, participants said they were "gravely concerned" that a U.S. war on Iraq "could be used to conceal the 'transfer' — ethnic cleansing — of Palestinians from their homeland."

### Knesset to have openly gay man

Israel's Knesset is poised to swear in its first openly gay member when it reconvenes next month.

The Meretz Party announced Wednesday that Tel Aviv University chemistry professor Uzi Even, 61, will succeed outgoing legislator Amnon Rubinstein. Even lives with his partner and has raised a son with him.



## Daily News Bulletin

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said. "They would have stressed more civilian issues than nationalist issues."

Israeli novelist A.B. Yehoshua, whose latest best seller "The Liberating Bride" deals extensively with the issue of Israel's Arabs, told JTA he agrees in principle with the basic thesis of Abu-Baker and Rabinowitz. Yet he believes it would have been easier for the young Arab generation to integrate into Israeli society if there had been a basic separation between Israel and the Palestinian territories.

"Due to the lack of border with the Palestinians, they were drawn into a strong process of Palestinianization," he said.

The Israeli Arab political leadership contributed to the process. By strengthening ties with Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza Strip for their own political ends — and by repeatedly testing the line between political speech and incitement against the state — they earned the distrust of Israeli Jews.

"It must be a national goal to integrate the Arab population into society, because if trouble starts there then we are really in deep trouble," Yehoshua said.

The authors of the Upright Generation believe that responsibility for repairing the rift lies mainly with the Jewish majority. It needs to cease defining Israel as a Jewish state willing to tolerate its Arab minority, and instead see itself as a "state of all its citizens" that accepts the Arabs not only as equal citizens but as a Palestinian national minority within Israel.

"I don't have any illusions," Rabinowitz said in an interview. "I know that it is a far-reaching goal, but I am not a politician. I am a social scientist who reads the political map and points out the best solutions. It is up to the political leaders and society at large to carry them out."

It is not going to be easy. The Umm el-Fahm rally and the comments of opinion-shapers are a case in point. Andreus wrote that it is time to set up a separate Palestinian educational system in Israel, independent of the Ministry of Education.

He also suggested that Israeli Arabs boycott Knesset elections.

"It is unacceptable to watch an Arab politician swear allegiance to the Hebrew state. This phenomenon is the climax of the dangerous Israelization process," Andreus wrote. "Moreover, on our way to the Parliament we give the Hebrew state the opportunity to brag before the world that it is a democratic state, just because it allows the Arabs to present their candidacy to the legislative branch."

The thousands in Umm el-Fahm were more virulent.

"With our blood and our spirit we will liberate Al-Aksa," they chanted against the background of the huge poster of the mosque.

"In the past, we said Al-Aksa is in danger. Today, we say Al-Aksa is in greater danger, because it is clear to us that the Israeli establishment is trying by force to extend and strengthen its occupation in the mosque, and, at the same time, prevent in every possible way any Arab-Muslim-Palestinian sovereignty over the mosque, which is the natural sovereignty, as history testifies," Islamic Movement leader Sheikh Raid Salah told the crowd.

"I call on the Islamic nation and the Arab world and Arab leaders all over the world and say to them: Every second that passes, the Aksa Mosque remains under occupation," he continued, "and all of you will be responsible for what happens in the future."

Such rhetoric — especially given the absence of any actual threat to the mosque — is not likely to do wonders for intercommunal relations.

Israeli President Moshe Katsav said Sunday that there is a link between statements like those of Islamic Movement leaders at the rally and the growing involvement of Israeli Arabs in terrorist attacks against Israel. Justice Minister Meir Sheerit said he would look into the possibility of outlawing the Islamic Movement and bringing incitement charges against speakers who denounced Israel at the rally. □

### El Al gaining market share

NEW YORK (JTA) — Fewer Americans are visiting Israel, but a higher percentage of those who do are flying El Al, the company's new president said.

At a New York news briefing Wednesday, Amos Shapira said the number of American tourists to Israel fell by 25 percent in the first half of 2002, but El Al's market share grew from 65 percent to 75 percent. □

## JEWISH WORLD

### Survivors to get high payments

A U.S. judge ordered that payments from a \$1.25 billion Swiss bank settlement to Nazi victims be sped up and in some cases increased.

Wednesday's court order also approved a 45 percent increase in payments from the fund to Nazi-era slave laborers and to Jewish refugees turned back from neutral Switzerland or mistreated by the Swiss after they were admitted.

Judah Gribetz, a court official supervising the payments to Holocaust victims, told Judge Edward Korman that the settlement fund could afford the increased payments because it already had earned more than \$100 million in interest and because of tax relief granted by the U.S. Congress.

### NPR to air series on conflict

National Public Radio will air a seven-part series on the history of the Arab-Israeli conflict starting Sept. 30.

The series, which begins with the history of the Zionist movement, ends with the collapse of the Oslo peace process and the current intifada.

Some critics in the Jewish community have blasted NPR for what they charge is a longtime pro-Palestinian tilt in its Mideast coverage, especially during the two-year-old Palestinian uprising. NPR also got hit with a boycott campaign earlier this year.

### Religious discrimination fought

A U.S. agency filed a lawsuit on behalf of a Sabbath-observant Orthodox Jew whose religious practices cost her a job.

The U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission took action Wednesday to help Amanda Nathan, whose offer of employment was rescinded by the French Connection, an international clothing retailer, after she told them she needed to leave early on Friday afternoons but was willing to work extra hours on other days of the week to make up the time.

The Orthodox Union praised the agency for combating religious discrimination in the workplace.

### Shtetl-search novel wins prize

A humorous novel about a college student's search for his grandfather's shtetl in Ukraine won the National Jewish Book Awards' annual fiction prize.

In addition to Jonathan Safran Foer's "Everything is Illuminated," David Lieber and Jules Harlow earned the nonfiction award for editing "Etz Hayim: Torah and Commentary," and Norman Finkelstein won the award for children's literature for "Forged in Freedom: Shaping the Jewish-American Experience."

The 52nd National Jewish Book Awards, presented in more than a dozen categories by the Jewish Book Council, will be presented Oct. 30 in New York.

## N.Y. insurance agency probes possible discrimination in rates

By Rachel Pomerance

NEW YORK (JTA) — With Jewish groups complaining of staggering insurance hikes since last year's terrorist attacks, the New York State Insurance Department is investigating the possibility of discriminatory behavior.

New York is trying to discern whether the increased rates are "specifically against Jewish groups or just part of larger trends," said Gregory Serio, the department's superintendent.

Those larger trends reflect a contraction in the market since Sept. 11, 2001. The insurance industry has suffered a \$50 billion loss since then, seconded only by the \$20 billion incurred after Hurricane Andrew in 1992, according to Serio.

Providers have passed those costs to their clients, along with cutting back on the terror coverage they once provided.

For Jewish organizations, that has translated into increases as high as 100 percent.

In some cases, federations and other Jewish groups have had to make up the costs by diverting critical funds from programs and staffing.

New York's investigation comes as the United Jewish Communities, the umbrella group of North American federations, has been collecting data from its member federations on their experiences with costly insurance.

"The general assessment we're making is we have a crisis in insurance coverage," said Diana Aviv, UJC's vice president of public policy.

"Choices are having to be made between program activities and paying the cost," she said, citing several examples around the country, including a Jewish community center in Miami that had to cut its programs for the elderly and for children to make its payments.

But neither Jewish leaders nor Serio himself know whether Jewish organizations are being singled out.

"I have no evidence to date" that Jewish groups are being targeted, said Ronald Soloway, managing director of government relations for UJA-Federation of New York.

"What I do know is the cost has gone up extraordinarily for all our Jewish agencies," which have had to move money from services to pay the insurance, he said.

"I can assure you" the insurance issue is a "pressing concern," said Soloway, who estimated that his federation's rates have climbed 100 percent.

As for discrimination, Soloway said that he's "waiting to see the results of what our state commissioner finds." He noted that he knows of a non-Jewish agency whose property insurance rates quintupled.

So far, the New York State Insurance Department has received anecdotal evidence that "may indicate there is discrimination of sorts going on," said Joanna Rose, a department spokeswoman.

"We are still looking into it," Rose said. She declined to say what action would be taken should such behavior be confirmed.

For its part, UJC recently urged the directors of state government affairs from around the country to find out from their state insurance commissioners whether Jewish organizations are being treated differently.

So far, said Aviv, they are finding that "is not the case."

If in fact there is a finding that Jewish organizations are being targeted, she said, there will be a "whole different strategy."

As part of a series of meetings with state government officials, the UJA-Federation of New York invited Serio to address the issue at a meeting earlier this month at its New York headquarters.

At the meeting, Serio told the group he expects the insurance troubles to last through 2004 due to the beating the insurance industry took from Sept. 11, along with the dips in the stock market and economy.

But he offered his offices to intervene when appropriate.

Serio also distributed questionnaires for Jewish groups to detail their experiences as part of the department's investigations. □

## Muslim attack on Jews after party shocks L.A.'s Iranian communities

By Tom Tugend

LOS ANGELES (JTA) — After a recent evening at a “Persian Night” in a Los Angeles club, some 20 young Iranian Muslims followed two young Iranian Jews into the street and, hurling threatening epithets, allegedly attacked the two.

The shocking incident raises questions about the relationships between the Iranian Muslim community in Southern California, estimated at anywhere between 500,000 and 1 million, and the 30,000-strong community of Iranian Jews. Each is the largest community of its kind in the United States.

West Hollywood’s Goodbar club had been booked for three Jewish birthday parties on the night of Sept. 14.

There were about 200 young people at the club throughout the evening, said manager Ivan Urlich, but he sensed no tensions and the place closed at 2 o’clock on Sunday morning.

“Usually when there is a fight it starts in the club, and we throw out the troublemakers,” Urlich said. “But this time there was no trouble inside.”

Fareed Kanani and his friend Michael Kashany, both 25, tall and strapping, say they left the club shortly before 2 a.m.

“We were walking and turned around and saw between 15 to 20 guys following us,” Kanani recalled. “They asked us, ‘Are you Jewish?’ and I said ‘That’s irrelevant.’ Then they started shouting, in Farsi and English, ‘We’ll kill all the Jews,’ and started punching us.”

After some 10 minutes of fighting, the two Jews made a break for a nearby high-rise apartment, where they were shielded by a security guard until police arrived.

Sheriff’s deputies arrested five Muslims, but Kashany and Kanani could identify only two, Daoud Mohammed Mavid and Mohammed Hassan Aref, as among the attackers.

Mavid and Aref were arrested and booked on a charge of assault with intent to inflict great bodily injury and committing a hate crime. They were released on \$55,000 bond each.

There are strong generational differences in both the Muslim and Jewish communities, according to Pooya Dayanim, spokesman for the Council of Iranian-American Jewish Organizations. The older generation has the shared experience of living together in Iran, and still has strong ties to the homeland.

“However, in the generation born in America, the young Muslims are more Muslim than Iranian and the young Jews are more Jewish than Iranian,” Dayanim said.

In addition, he said, “There has been an increase in fundamentalist Islamic activity in Los Angeles and Orange County, which has led to greater anti-Semitism.”

Sam Kermanian, secretary-general of the Iranian American Jewish Federation, sees the relationship between Muslims and Jews as generally positive.

“We meet and work together at the Iranian Center and Rotary Club and we go to the same concerts and restaurants,” he said.

One difference, though, is that the Iranian Jewish community has organized much faster and better than have the Muslims.

“Muslims are not used to seeing Jews openly assert their Jewishness,” said George Haroonian, CIAJO’s president. “In Iran we kept a very low profile.”

At the regional office of the Anti-Defamation League, associate director Marjan Keypour Greenblatt reported a growing number of incidents between Iranian Jews and Muslims.

“The cases are not as virulent as attacks by white supremacists, but they do show the need for community leaders to pay close attention to the problem of anti-Semitism,” Greenblatt said.

Sadegh Namavikhah, president of the Iranian Muslim Association of North America, said people shouldn’t turn their personal problems into religious and community confrontations.

If Jewish and Muslim business partners have a dispute over a business matter, he said, they may “then try to make it into a fight between the two communities.”

As for the West Hollywood incident, he said, “The kids go to a nightclub, they have too much alcohol, they have a fight, but they have no right to make it into a religious problem.”

Namavikhah, a dentist who recently retired from the University of Southern California faculty, said the Israeli-Palestinian conflict has aroused sensitivities among local Muslims and Jews.

“I hope we can stay away from this topic,” he added. “There is no way one side here can convince the other, and we can’t solve the problem of the Middle East here.”

The generally conciliatory picture of Jewish-Muslim relations painted by community leaders is sharply contradicted by some Jewish students at the University of California at Los Angeles.

“The relationship has changed completely since the intifada started two years ago,” said David Yadegav, a 24-year-old history major. “There was always anti-Semitism” by the Muslims, “but it was hidden,” he said.

“Now we are witnessing their true feelings,” he said. “When we held an Israel support rally, the Muslims showed up with Hamas headbands.”

Yadegav believes the anti-Semitism also is fueled by the fact that the Iranian Jewish community in Los Angeles has had greater success, financial and otherwise, than the Muslims.

Detective Scott Petz of the West Hollywood Sheriff’s Office said he is still checking for additional suspects and will submit the case to the district attorney in about two weeks. Mavid and Aref are slated to be arraigned Nov. 18.

Kanani suffered a broken nose and Kashany cuts and bruises.

“We’re both strong physically and psychologically, but the thought that they actually wanted to kill us is a very scary thought, a very disturbing thought,” Kanani said. “These guys weren’t drunk, and they really wanted to kill us.”

Kashany added: “It’s been a great shock, but I wouldn’t blame all Muslims. I’m really cool with some Muslims, but they also have their punks and extremists.” □

## ADL blasts Saudi media

NEW YORK (JTA) — An English-language newspaper in Saudi Arabia published a cartoon comparing President Bush to Hitler.

The cartoon, published Saturday in *The Arab News*, was published days after the Anti-Defamation League issued an open letter to the leaders of Saudi Arabia calling for a halt to the almost-daily barrage of anti-Semitic and anti-American statements in the Saudi media.

“Clearly, all of our appeals to Saudi leaders have fallen on deaf ears,” said Abraham Foxman, the ADL’s national director. □