



# Daily News Bulletin

Vol. 80, No. 188

Friday, October 11, 2002

85th Year

## TOP NEWS IN BRIEF

### Israeli killed in suicide attack

An elderly Israeli woman was killed and more than 20 people wounded when a suicide bomber blew himself up after trying to board a crowded bus near Tel Aviv on Thursday.

The driver of the bus said the terrorist had tried to board the bus via the back door at the stop next to Bar-Ilan University, but slipped and fell.

The driver got off the bus and along with another person went to see if he was hurt.

Then the two saw the terrorist's explosives belt. They pinned the bomber's arms down and ordered everyone on the bus to flee.

The driver later said that while they waited for the police to arrive, the terrorist began to struggle. Fearing the terrorist would detonate the bomb, the two decided to let go of him at the same time and run.

The bomber got up, ran toward a crowd of people and blew himself up. The sole fatality was identified as Sa'ada Aharon, 71, of Ramat Gan.

### Hungarian Jew wins Nobel Prize

Imre Kertesz, a Hungarian who survived Auschwitz, won the Nobel Prize in Literature.

The prize committee singled out his 1975 debut novel, "Fateless," about a young man deported to a concentration camp.

"For him, Auschwitz is not an exceptional occurrence," the committee said. "It is the ultimate truth about human degradation in modern experience."

Kertesz, a 72-year-old Jew born in Budapest, was deported to Auschwitz in 1944, then to Buchenwald, where he was liberated in 1945.

Israeli authors Amos Oz and David Grossman were said to be among 20 writers nominated for this year's prize.

### Tel Avivians told to stock up

The Tel Aviv municipality instructed residents to stock up on supplies in preparation for an Iraqi attack in retaliation for a U.S. strike on Baghdad.

The municipality told residents to prepare public and private shelters, and equip them with water, canned food, emergency lighting and other supplies, the Israeli daily Ma'ariv reported.

During the 1991 Gulf War, Iraq fired 39 Scud missiles at Israel, most of which were directed at the Tel Aviv area.

## BEHIND THE HEADLINES

### Israeli public remains calm as leaders debate Iraq policy

By Gil Sedan

HAIFA (JTA) — Israelis might be excused for being a bit pessimistic these days: They've lost more than 600 people in a two-year terrorist onslaught, the economy is in the dumps, the country is internationally isolated and another war is looming in the region.

So it's noteworthy that so many Israelis walk around these days with the feeling that they won't suffer from an American war against Iraq.

It's noteworthy because of the accepted wisdom that if the United States attacks Iraq, Iraq is likely to attack Israel, just as it did in the 1991 Persian Gulf War.

It's noteworthy because, according to recent news reports, the home front is not fully prepared for an Iraqi missile attack and authorities may have to rely more on good luck than on serious planning.

The reason for the public calm may be the reassuring comments by the Israel Defense Force chief of staff, Lt.-Gen. Moshe Ya'alon, who said he worries about the Palestinian front but "does not lose sleep" over Iraq.

The calm may result from intelligence estimates that Iraqi President Saddam Hussein has little in the way of chemical and biological warfare capabilities, and in any case will be reluctant to expose those programs by using such arms against Israel.

It may be reports that Israel's anti-missile defense system is now much better than it was during the Gulf War.

It might be Defense Minister Benjamin Ben-Eliezer's prediction that a U.S. military attack against Iraq won't begin until the end of November, letting Israelis push off their worries for a few more weeks.

Or it might just be that after two years of Palestinian terrorist attacks, Israelis are exhausted and indifferent.

"I'm not afraid. I figure that whatever will be, will be," said Bella Aharon, a secretary at a Haifa youth center.

"The reason may be that my three adult daughters live in the United States, so I don't need to worry about them."

Aharon stocked up with 40 bottles of mineral water, "just in case." But when her next-door neighbor suggested that the families pool several thousand dollars to turn their conventional air-raid shelter into an atomic-proof shelter, she turned him down.

"I can find better use for my little savings," Aharon said.

The Iraq-Israel-Palestinian triangle will be among the issues discussed when Prime Minister Ariel Sharon meets President Bush in Washington next week.

Unlike British Prime Minister Tony Blair, Bush largely has tried to keep the Iraqi and Palestinian crises separate, at least overtly.

He has, however, criticized recent Israeli military responses to Palestinian terrorism, fearing they jeopardize American efforts to build an international coalition for war with Iraq.

In his meeting with Sharon, Bush is expected to repeat the U.S. request that Israel stay out of the Iraqi conflict — even if attacked — and keep a low profile in the conflict with the Palestinians.

At the last Cabinet meeting, Sharon instructed his ministers to stop talking about Iraq. Though Sharon says Israel reserves the right to respond if attacked, it's unclear what ultimately will happen. Sources close to Sharon suggest that even in case of a

## MIDEAST FOCUS

### Zinni: Israel will be drawn in

A former U.S. envoy to the Middle East said he believes Israel will be drawn into a war against Iraq. Anthony Zinni, speaking at the Middle East Institute on Thursday, also said he believed an Israeli retaliation for an Iraqi attack would play into the hands of extremist groups that would like to have Israel enter the fray.

While expressing support for Israel's right to defend itself, he added that an Israeli retaliation would be "catastrophic" for the region. Zinni, former commander in chief of the U.S. Central Command, also said he believes U.S. military action against Iraq is not necessary now and that quelling violence between Israelis and Palestinians, as well as other issues in the region, are more important.

### Rabbi blasts Barghouti lawyer

The chief rabbi of Safed issued a ruling that forbids praying in a minyan with Shamai Leibowitz, the Israeli lawyer who is part of the defense team representing Palestinian militia leader Marwan Barghouti. Rabbi Shmuel Eliahu made the ruling in reply to a question by someone who wanted to know if it would be permissible to curse Leibowitz if he came to the local synagogue.

In another development, the trial of Barghouti was postponed five weeks to give the court time to prevent the altercations that marked previous sessions, according to Israel Radio.

### Artists win peace prize

An Israeli and a Palestinian artist were the first recipients of a peace prize that Yoko Ono created in memory of husband John Lennon.

On Wednesday, Ono presented \$50,000 checks to Zvi Goldstein and Khalil Rabah, and thanked them "for being so creative and inspirational despite the intense political situation we all live in."



## Daily News Bulletin

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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](http://www.jta.org).  
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missile attack against Israel, "the tendency will be not to respond unless there are many casualties, or in case of the use of biological or chemical warfare."

On the Israeli street, however, there is no evident tension or nervousness, and certainly no hysteria. Sensationalistic media reports — such as the one about Ramat Gan's plans to evacuate the entire city in case of missile attacks, or to turn a nearby park into a mass graveyard — have been few.

In any case, Israelis take such reports with a grain of salt: They regard them mainly as attempts by the authorities to show that they are prepared for the worst.

However, there are some signs that the establishment is not quite ready. An emergency exercise last week at the giant Pi Gllilot gas depot in northern Tel Aviv showed that local firefighting services are ill-equipped to deal with a massive disaster.

The state comptroller's report released this week pointed out massive holes in the Tel Aviv municipality's emergency services.

And members of the Knesset Interior Committee warned this week that the authorities have not really prepared the public for the possibility of a missile attack.

"Suppose a missile hits my town and I live on the seventh floor," Committee Chairman Moshe Gafni of United Torah Judaism said to Col. Gilad Shinar, an IDF official. "What do I do — close myself in a sealed room? Run down to the shelter? Why don't you start telling the public what to do?"

"The public is calm," Shinar replied. "All information will come in due course."

Some wonder if the techniques learned for the Gulf War more than a decade ago — sealing a room with tape and having a gas mask at the ready — are useful now, especially if Saddam uses nonconventional weapons. Reports after the Gulf War said neither step would have helped in the case of a chemical or biological attack.

"Sealed room, my foot," Aharon scoffed. "Seal my room with masking tape against missiles? Come on!"

By and large, the only real action most Israelis have taken so far is to visit IDF distribution points for gas masks, where they replace their old masks and get atropine syringes against possible biological infection.

There are conflicting reports as to whether the army has sufficient masks in stock, and about which masks need to be replaced and when.

"How can I tell whether I need to replace my old mask?" a man recently asked the soldier guarding a distribution point in Haifa. The soldier scratched his chin.

"When did you last get it?" he asked.

"In 1998," the man replied.

"Well," said the soldier, "why don't you bring the mask with you, and we'll see what we can do."

Eyal Golan, 42, a computer engineer from Shekhanya in the Galilee, believes war with Iraq is inevitable, but he doesn't think Israel will be attacked as long as it keeps a low profile. However, if it is attacked Israel should not just sit idly without responding, as it did in 1991 under fierce American pressure, most Israelis believe.

Golan has two children, Guy, 8, and Maya, 14.

"They are not nervous and neither are we," he said. "Living away from the large population centers, we feel that nothing much can happen."

Should Israel use the window of war with Iraq to launch a peace "offensive" with the Palestinians, as happened after the Gulf War? The Madrid peace conference later in 1991 set the stage two years later for the Oslo peace accords.

"We don't need to wait for the war," Golan's wife, Tamar, replied. "We should do it right now." □

## Cemetery grass leads to firing

NEW YORK (JTA) — The Warsaw Jewish community fired the caretaker of the Jewish cemetery after police destroyed a plot of marijuana growing in the vast graveyard. According to sources within the community, police three weeks ago discovered and destroyed a number of cannabis plants in the cemetery.

This week, police interrogated the chair and vice chair of the Jewish community, who said it was the first they had heard about the incident. The community board decided to remove the caretaker as a disciplinary action. □

## JEWISH WORLD

### IBM tech used at Auschwitz?

IBM technology was used at Auschwitz, according to a historian. Until now, Edwin Black has built a case against the giant computer company because of the role IBM technology played during the Holocaust. But there was no link to Auschwitz, the most infamous concentration camp.

A recent discovery prompted by a coincidental finding in a phone book from the 1940s, however, shows that machines produced by IBM — such as punch card machines, sorters and tabulators — were in fact used at Auschwitz's slave labor camp, according to Black, author of "IBM and the Holocaust." IBM denies aiding the Nazi regime, but acknowledges that the Nazis used equipment manufactured by IBM's German subsidiary.

### Court bars commandments

A U.S. appeals court barred the Ten Commandments from display on the State Capitol grounds in Kentucky. The size and placement of the display constituted state endorsement of a religious message, the court ruled.

### Anti-Semitic forum in jeopardy

An anti-Semitic conference planned for Saturday in Verona will not take place, according to Italy's deputy prime minister. Gianfranco Fini said the city government of Verona has barred the neo-Nazi group Nuovo Ordine — New Order — from using public space in the city for such a meeting.

The Simon Wiesenthal Center described it as a conference "of anti-Semites, neo-Nazis, Holocaust deniers and speakers who promote the 'big lie' that the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks were carried out by the United States and Israel."

### Federation drops actor over book

The Jewish Federation of Greater Seattle dropped actor Leonard Nimoy from its Oct. 23 fund-raiser because of images in his book of photographs. The cover for Nimoy's book, "Shekhina," shows a woman wearing tefillin and her right breast visible through a translucent garment. The work is entirely "reverential," Nimoy told The Associated Press. "It's a photographic essay on the subject of the Shekhina, which is the feminine presence of God, the feminine aspect of divinity."

Federation director Barry Goren told The Seattle Times that he dropped the former star of "Star Trek" after receiving "some expressions of concern." He added that he had little choice. "If you were running a charity fund-raising dinner and there were going to be images of naked women or naked women with Jewish ritual objects draped on them, that might be offensive to some folks," he said.

## For man overseeing Sept. 11 fund, terrorist tragedy hasn't gone away

By Sharon Samber

WASHINGTON (JTA) — It's been more than a year since the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks, and some people no longer think about the tragedy every day.

Kenneth Feinberg does.

As the special master overseeing a congressionally mandated compensation fund for victims' families, Feinberg is constantly reminded of the relatives' pain and grief.

Feinberg, a Washington attorney and Georgetown University law professor in his mid-50s, approaches his task with pragmatism and a philosophical outlook: He knows he has a job to do, but he also probes questions of morality behind the issue, even questioning the whole compensation program.

The idea of a public program is wonderful, he says, yet he still wonders about how the fund of "public compassion" is working out in practice.

He says he has not resolved in his own mind why such a program is justified, when families of victims of other terrorist attacks do not have the same recourse.

Working with such an emotionally charged issue and with grief-stricken families takes its toll, and Feinberg reaches back to his Jewish roots to keep himself grounded.

"What's helped me is being brought up in a Jewish home," he said. "The concepts of tzedakah," or charity, "and helping your fellow man — they've helped me be sensitive."

Only 750 families, out of 3,300 who are eligible, have applied for compensation so far, Feinberg said.

Feinberg believes many families have not signed up because they are clinically depressed and cannot bring themselves to apply. He is trying to find a way to help them register before the program expires in December 2003.

The compensation program allows victims and families to apply for federal money to cover lost wages, pain and suffering, if they agree not to file lawsuits against the airlines and other entities.

The Sept. 11 victims fund began amid much controversy and criticism. Families were unsure if their cases would be heard fairly, and skeptics wondered if compensation awards would be sufficient.

The first awards were announced in August. Fourteen cases were decided late last month for an average award of \$1.75 million each, prompting the families' attorneys to praise the fund.

At last week's annual meeting of the Jewish Federation of Greater Washington, Feinberg told several hundred attendees how important the work of charities has been to many families.

"I have renewed faith in charities," he said, praising the federations and calling them essential to the functioning of the Jewish community.

Feinberg has won praise from victims' families for his sincerity and his willingness to help. He has years of experience in resolving disputes in class-action tort cases, having overseen a program for Agent Orange litigation after the Vietnam War.

He also serves as an arbitrator for the allocation of legal fees in Holocaust slave labor litigation.

Feinberg continues to oversee such difficult issues as how people should apply for compensation and whether the program should pay for victims' lawyers.

The job has affected Feinberg's personal life as well. On most days he is up at 5:30 a.m., giving dictation. As a result, says Feinberg's wife, Didi, her "part-rabbi, part-shrink" husband rarely stays up past 9:30 p.m.

Feinberg questions the congressional instructions to base awards on a victim's former earning potential.

"There's a problem in valuing life based on economic wherewithal," he said.

Under a special part of the fund, victims' relatives can meet with Feinberg to describe special circumstances for the compensation formula.

"But how do you adjust awards fairly?" he asked. □

## NEWS ANALYSIS

**Israel's two main parties roil as leadership battles approach***By Leslie Susser*

JERUSALEM (JTA) — Ariel Sharon may still be the most popular politician in Israel, having proven himself remarkably skillful at navigating the country's fractious political culture.

But the political forces that could bring about the prime minister's downfall are now in motion.

With general elections at most a year away, the domestic political situation in Israel is buzzing. Within the space of just a few months, both the Likud and Labor parties could have new leaders.

In the Likud, former Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu is expected to challenge Sharon for the party leadership in the fall.

Labor chooses a leader on Nov. 19, and whoever wins is likely to pull the party out of Sharon's national unity government and mount a vigorous challenge from the opposition.

While party elections might seem like an internal issue, at stake is the direction of the blocs that will contend for power as Israel struggles to break out of military, diplomatic and economic crises. Opinion polls currently show Sharon leading Netanyahu and all the various potential Labor leaders, but things could change dramatically by Election Day, depending on developments in the Israeli-Palestinian crisis and on the economic front.

This week Sharon and Netanyahu crossed swords in a crucial preliminary duel. The 305,000-strong Likud membership went to the polls Monday to elect the 2,500 delegates who form the Central Committee, the party's highest policy-making body.

The outcome of the vote won't be known until next week, given organizational gaffes that led to pandemonium and a delay in the balloting in Jerusalem and some other localities.

Still, the composition of the party's new central committee will give a first indication of the balance of power between Sharon and Netanyahu; the first sign could be whether the convention chooses a Sharon backer or a Netanyahu supporter as its chairman.

Netanyahu cohorts accuse Sharon of planning to use his control of party machinery to manipulate the central committee's operations. Sharon's people dismiss Netanyahu's claims, but even they have to concede that the gap among Likud supporters — as opposed to party members — is closing. The latest independent poll in the Ma'ariv newspaper shows Sharon's lead over Netanyahu closing from 12 percentage points to just 2, 43 percent to 41 percent.

Netanyahu has tried to outflank Sharon from the right and blast the government's economic performance. For example, he urges tougher military and political action against the Palestinians — including the expulsion of Palestinian Authority President Yasser Arafat — and claims to have the economic training and vision Sharon lacks.

Labor politicians also are mounting a two-pronged attack on Sharon. At their party convention in late September, Labor Party members cited Sharon's attitude toward the Palestinians and the country's ailing economy as reasons to leave the national unity government.

The unity government has provided a remarkable measure of stability during the past 18 months as Israel has faced one of the

gravest crises of its history. But Labor has found it difficult to project a distinct image to voters as it criticizes Sharon's policies but, because of its position in the unity government, shares responsibility for them.

More than Defense Minister and party leader Benjamin Ben-Eliezer, those politicians reflected the convention's mood. When Ben-Eliezer suggested supporting the country's budget — with changes to be proposed later — the delegates rejected the idea and said Labor should take a stand on socioeconomic issues.

Indeed, Ben-Eliezer seems to have been the convention's big loser. He incurred widespread anger when he implied that his leadership of the party was being challenged because of his Sephardi background.

Haim Ramon, chairman of the Knesset's Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee and one of the three contenders for Labor leadership, emerged the big winner. He called for immediate withdrawal from the government, accusing the party's Cabinet ministers of following Sharon's line.

The third candidate, Haifa Mayor Amram Mitzna, still seems to be the front-runner by a comfortable margin, making up for his lack of oratorical skill with quiet-spoken conviction.

A new survey shows Mitzna with 36 percent support within the party, far above Ramon and Ben-Eliezer, who have 25 percent each. But some pundits predict Mitzna will start losing ground to Ramon, who, since the convention, has picked up support from a number of Labor heavyweights, including Knesset Speaker Avraham Burg.

To make sure the doves win the party leadership from the more centrist Ben-Eliezer, Mitzna and Ramon could join forces shortly before a runoff; the question is which of the two would be the candidate.

Mitzna, the most outspokenly dovish of the candidates, received a minor setback this week with reports that Palestinian officials had offered financial support for his campaign. Though he rejected the offer, the fact that Palestinians are so eager to see Mitzna elected may worry Israeli voters.

But there is another twist in the tale. If Ben-Eliezer confounds the polls and wins — as when he upset Burg for the party leadership last year — Labor could split in two.

Former Cabinet minister Yossi Beilin has made it clear that if Ben-Eliezer wins he will break away and lead other dovish Laborites into a coalition with Meretz, the small Russian immigrant Democratic Choice Party and an Arab group led by the former secretary-general of Israel's Communist Party, Salim Jubran.

Another complicating factor is that the next general election will be held under the old one-ballot system of proportional representation. Unlike the last three national elections, in this election voters will not directly elect a prime minister.

But voters still are likely to be strongly influenced by the identity of the party leaders.

And though polls today show the Likud winning about twice as many seats as Labor, who knows what will happen if there is a leadership reshuffle, a remaking of the political landscape, or major diplomatic and economic changes by the time of the elections.

All of which could jeopardize Sharon's continued hold on power. □

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