



# Daily News Bulletin

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## TOP NEWS IN BRIEF

### Worker killed in West Bank attack

A road worker was killed in a West Bank shooting attack Monday, a day after three Palestinian groups declared a temporary cease-fire.

The victim, a Bulgarian road worker, was driving a truck near Jenin in the northern West Bank when he was shot in the head by gunmen. The Al-Aksa Brigade, the terrorist militia of Yasser Arafat's Fatah movement, claimed responsibility for the attack.

### Powell: Cease-fire not enough

U.S. Secretary of State Colin Powell said the cease-fire Palestinian terrorist groups have begun "won't be enough."

Calling the agreement a "step in the right direction," Powell said Monday that a cease-fire leaves intact the capability for future terrorist attacks. Speaking on CBS' "Early Show," Powell called the transfer of authority from Israel to the Palestinian Authority in part of the Gaza Strip "the important step over the weekend."

### Charity added to E.U. terror list

The European Union added a Palestinian charity to its list of terrorist organizations.

Monday's action followed a decision by the Netherlands to freeze accounts belonging to the group, Al Aqsa Netherlands.

The group is believed to fund some of Hamas' activities and to help the families of suicide bombers. Al Aqsa Netherlands denies the charges.

### Sharon, Abbas to meet

Ariel Sharon and Mahmoud Abbas are expected to meet Tuesday to discuss implementation of the "road map" peace plan.

The prime ministers of Israel and the Palestinian Authority will meet in Jerusalem, The Associated Press reported.

Sharon has instructed the Shin Bet security service to review which Palestinian security prisoners may be eligible for release, Israel Radio reported.

Because of the Independence Day holiday in the U.S., the JTA DAILY NEWS BULLETIN will not be published Friday, July 4.

## NEWS ANALYSIS

### Just getting to the cease-fire was hard enough, but what comes next?

By Leslie Susser

JERUSALEM (JTA) — As Israel and the Palestinians begin a long-awaited truce, both sides are holding their breath — and wondering what the United States will do next to advance the "road map" peace plan.

Indeed, the late June cease-fire by the three main Palestinian terror groups, declared as the intifada approached the 1,000-day mark, underlined the vital importance of the American role.

Without U.S. pressure on the Palestinian Authority to crack down on terror groups, and on European and Arab nations to cut off their funding, the cease-fire never would have been achieved, Israeli analysts say.

More importantly, the analysts agree that unless Washington keeps up the pressure on both Israel and the Palestinians, the new deal could quickly unravel.

Then, instead of moving ahead on the internationally accepted peace plan toward a longer-term settlement, the sides could find themselves locked in an even worse cycle of violence.

Much will depend on how the Bush administration handles a number of key issues:

- Will it force Palestinian Authority Prime Minister Mahmoud Abbas to go beyond a cease-fire and dismantle terrorist groups like Hamas and Islamic Jihad, as he has agreed to do under the road map?
- Will it restrict Israel's freedom of action if the Palestinians violate the cease-fire?
- Will it pressure Israel to release Palestinian terrorist prisoners as a goodwill gesture?
- Will it lean on Israel to dismantle illegal settlements outposts and established settlements?
- Will it insist that Israel stop building a security fence Israel says is essential to keep terrorists from infiltrating from the West Bank, but which the Palestinians say is taking their land?

The cease-fire declaration coincided with a visit by Condoleezza Rice, the White House's national security adviser. Her main purpose was to make clear to both sides what the United States expects of them, and to signal the U.S. determination to push the road map.

In her talks with Abbas in Ramallah, Rice was firm on dismantling terrorist groups: She used Abbas' own slogan — "one authority, one command and one armed force" — and echoed Secretary of State Colin Powell and President Bush in insisting that the United States would accept nothing less than the disarming of the groups and the collection of their weapons.

Beyond the rhetoric, the United States reportedly is considering granting the Palestinian Authority as much as \$1 billion, partly to help it disarm the militants. Some of the funds would be used to help build an alternative welfare system to Hamas'.

Through this money and other investment, the United States hopes to dramatically improve socioeconomic conditions in the West Bank and Gaza Strip, showing that peace pays and encouraging further steps in that direction. Much of the money would be held back, pending convincing evidence that the Palestinians really are decommissioning illegal weapons.

The Americans also are exerting heavy, and apparently successful, pressure on European and Arab countries, especially Saudi Arabia, to clamp down on funding for

## MIDEAST FOCUS

### Bethlehem security transfer near

Israel is due to withdraw troops from Bethlehem on Wednesday.

The withdrawal from the West Bank city was agreed to Monday in a meeting between the Israeli coordinator for the West Bank and Gaza Strip, Maj.-Gen. Amos Gilad, and Palestinian Authority security chief Mohammed Dahlan.

### Poraz: Recognize conversions

Non-Orthodox conversions should be recognized in Israel, Israel's interior minister said.

Avraham Poraz said Monday that the current situation — in which Reform and Conservative conversions conducted abroad are recognized, while those performed in Israel are not — is absurd.

### Jews visiting Temple Mount again

Some Jews are again being allowed to visit the Temple Mount in Jerusalem.

The mount, the holiest site in Judaism, has not been officially re-opened to non-Muslims, but small groups of tourists, including Jews, have visited the holy site in recent days without opposition from Palestinian leaders.

The current round of Israeli-Palestinian violence began on Sept. 28, 2000, a day after Ariel Sharon, then the leader of Israel's opposition and now prime minister, visited the site.

### Anti-torture group fingers envoy

A Danish anti-torture group is renewing efforts to launch proceedings against Israel's ambassador in the Scandinavian country.

Denmark's justice minister rejected a similar effort two years ago on the grounds that Carmi Gillon, who critics charge was responsible for the torture of suspected terrorists when he was head of Israel's Shin Bet security service, has diplomatic immunity.



## Daily News Bulletin

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Hamas as part of the struggle to strengthen the Palestinian Authority and weaken the fundamentalists. But what if the Palestinian Authority is unable to impose its authority on all factions, and the shooting continues?

On Monday, the day after the cease-fire was declared, gunmen from Abbas' own Fatah movement shot and killed a Bulgarian worker in the West Bank whom they mistook for an Israeli.

To Israel, Rice made very clear that the United States expects it to act with restraint and give the Palestinian Authority time to organize its forces.

In talks with Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon and his Cabinet, Rice acknowledged Israel's right to defend its citizens and act against "ticking time bombs" such as suicide bombers on their way to attack — if the Palestinians, after being given the relevant information, fail to stop them.

But, she said, Israel should "think twice" before retaliating against terrorist acts or plans, taking into account the effects its actions could have on the wider peace process. Israel, Rice said, should be careful not to do anything that weakens Abbas and the Palestinian Authority.

Major Israeli strikes in Palestinian areas will undermine the P.A.'s credibility on the Palestinian street, the Americans believe. Rice also urged Sharon to release as many Palestinian prisoners as possible to boost Abbas' standing and show the Palestinian street what can be gained by sticking to the road map.

Israel is holding around 3,000 Palestinian detainees, and Sharon is ready to free several hundred — but not those who have killed Israelis or directly ordered others to do so.

Sharon has asked the Shin Bet security service to prepare a list of prisoners whose release "would not harm Israel's security."

If the Palestinians adhere to the cease-fire, the United States also can be expected to pressure Israel to continue dismantling illegal outposts, but not bona fide Jewish settlements.

The first phase of the road map refers only to outposts set up since March 2001. Calls for the evacuation of settlements proper will come only in the second phase, which calls for the establishment of a Palestinian state in temporary borders, with "maximum territorial continuity."

One area of emerging disagreement between Israel and the United States is the security fence. Abbas told Rice that the Palestinians would have no problems with a fence along the pre-1967 border, but that the route Israel currently plans allegedly would leave only 45 percent of the West Bank in Palestinians hands, divided into three "cantons" — hardly the viable state envisaged by President Bush.

Rice asked Sharon to reconsider the route. Sharon, however, argued that the fence would constitute a security line rather than a political border, and could be moved later.

Rice was skeptical: To many people, she said, the route looks like an attempt to create a political border unilaterally, and this is seen as problematic.

Israel's nightmare scenario is that the cease-fire will break down after the Palestinian Authority fails to disarm Hamas and the other terror groups. The question then will be whether the United States, after playing the honest broker, tolerates Israel moving back into the West Bank and Gaza Strip in self-defense.

Much will depend on whom the Americans blame for the breakdown of a process in which, by then, they will have invested so much. □

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

## Take me out to the mitzvah

NEW YORK (JTA) — A campaign to raise emergency funds for Israel is looking to New York-area baseball fans for donations.

A Jewish New Yorker is buying group tickets to Yankees and Mets games at a reduced cost, then charging buyers the difference, to raise money for the United Jewish Communities' Israel Emergency campaign.

Ronald Tabak has organized the fund-raiser for a variety of charities since 1991. It is the second year Tabak has raised funds for the campaign, which has gained more than \$1,000 from his efforts. □

## JEWISH WORLD

### Romania vows to make amends

Romania promised to make amends for denying that its leaders collaborated in the Holocaust.

In a meeting Sunday with officials from Israel's Yad Vashem Holocaust Memorial, Romania's ambassador to Israel promised that Romania's prime minister will investigate who released the denial, which Romania has apologized for. He also said the country's education minister will visit Yad Vashem.

### ADL: Egypt's anti-Semitism down

Anti-Semitism in Egypt is "diminished but still potent," according to the Anti-Defamation League.

Last year, when Egyptian television aired a drama based on the anti-Semitic forgery "The Protocols of the Elders of Zion," it sparked an international outcry.

The group said Monday that anti-Semitism in the Egyptian media has declined, but anti-Semitic canards and caricatures still appear in the media and books.

### Rabbis: No Torah, no peace

The "road map" peace plan violates Jewish law, a U.S.-based Orthodox rabbinical group said.

"The only true road map to peace is found in the Torah, which, when followed, assures security for both Jews and Arabs," the Rabbinical Alliance of America, which represents more than 500 rabbis in the United States and elsewhere, said in a statement released Monday.

The group said it backs a similar statement made by a group of fervently Orthodox rabbis in Israel.

### Muslim cleric blasts bombings

A Muslim cleric with ties to the Iranian leadership has condemned the killing of civilians "of any faith, whether Jewish, Muslim or Christian."

Sayed Safavi, whose brother is the commander of Iran's Revolutionary Guards, also implicitly recognized the State of Israel in a letter to London's Daily Telegraph newspaper, and called for religious leaders to have a "central and major role" in promoting peace between peoples. It is rare for a hard-line Iranian cleric to make such a declaration.

Safavi did not explicitly condemn suicide bombings, as some Jewish leaders hoped he would, but said, "For Muslims to kill civilians unconnected with any attack on them is a crime."

### It's yeshiva week in Berlin

Fifteen young European men are participating in Berlin's first Central Europe Yeshiva Week. The program is split between intensive yeshiva-style learning and visiting Berlin, said Rabbi Josh Spinner, director of the Ronald S. Lauder Foundation, which is sponsoring the event.

## Thurmond and Jewish community differed on policy, but not respect

By Matthew E. Berger

WASHINGTON (JTA) — When Hyman Bookbinder, the American Jewish Committee's longtime Washington representative, watched the Senate approve a national holiday in memory of Martin Luther King, Jr. in 1985, one of the most significant moments was the "aye" vote by Sen. Strom Thurmond (R-S.C.)

"It was a sign," said Bookbinder, who watched the vote from a Senate visitors gallery with Coretta Scott King, the civil rights leader's widow. "When he voted in support of civil rights goals, he reflected what was happening in this country."

Thurmond, the longest-serving member in the history of the Senate, died June 26 in South Carolina, the state he had represented for 47 years. He was 100 years old, and had left the Senate in January.

Jewish leaders in Washington and South Carolina remember the longtime lawmaker as a bellwether for the civil rights movement, and as a friendly and gentle man who made time for members of the Jewish community even though he frequently disagreed with them on policy issues.

A vocal opponent of the civil rights movement, Thurmond, then a Democratic governor, ran for president in 1948 as a "Dixiecrat," opposing Harry Truman's civil rights platform for the Democratic Party.

He lost, but was elected to the Senate as a write-in candidate six years later. In his first years in Congress, he was a strict segregationist, filibustering civil rights laws, but his position changed over time.

He eventually supported the appointment of black federal judges and employed several African-Americans on his staff.

Thurmond became a Republican in 1964. But no matter what party he affiliated with, he often disagreed with the Jewish community.

"The original Thurmond was a guy who was against civil rights, the war on poverty, the liberal agenda," said Bookbinder, who began working in Washington in 1951. "The liberal agenda was distasteful to him and he became distasteful to us."

Thurmond often opposed foreign aid, a pet issue for a Jewish community seeking to help Israel.

He also had little personal affinity for the South Carolina Jewish community, which was predominantly Democratic.

However, that didn't stop him from reaching out to the small Jewish community in his state.

"On a one-on-one level he would always respond to you," said Samuel Tannenbaum, a Jewish leader in the state's capital, Columbia. "That was the ultimate success for him."

To garner Thurmond's support, Tannenbaum said, issues had to be formulated in a way that coincided with his worldview.

For example, Thurmond could be convinced to support Israel once the issue was placed in the context of combating the Soviet Union and the rise of communism in the Middle East.

In his last years, Thurmond was known more for the longevity of his service than for his policy platform. He often had to be told how to vote by staffers, as his mental capacities evidently were failing.

After celebrating his 100th birthday, he chose not to run for re-election last year.

But that faded legislator wasn't the man that many people remembered.

Steven Turner, executive director of the Columbia Jewish Federation in South Carolina, recalled meeting Thurmond a decade ago, when the senator was still relatively vigorous.

Turner asked Thurmond whether he would be interested in meeting the Israeli consul general, who was visiting from Atlanta. Thurmond said he preferred to speak to Turner, since he could vote in the state.

"He could crack a joke with the best of them — and when he shook my hand, I needed to check to make sure my fingers were intact," Turner said. □

## ARTS &amp; CULTURE

**'Passions' rise before Gibson film on death of Jesus hits the screen**

By Joe Berkofsky

NEW YORK (JTA) — The ghosts of virulently anti-Semitic nuns may haunt Mel Gibson's new film about Jesus' final days, some Catholic and Jewish scholars are warning.

The growing hype concerns charges that "The Passion" blames Jews for Jesus' death. Gibson denies any anti-Semitic intent, and little attention has focused on the sources for his screenplay.

Scholars — some of whom have seen an early version of the script — fear it relies partly on the teachings of a 19th-century nun who blamed Jews collectively for the crucifixion of Jesus.

These theologians also warn that the movie may splice the New Testament's multiple gospels about Jesus into a cinematically sharpened, but distorted, anti-Jewish passion play.

"Mel Gibson ought to take special care, because the people he is relying on" for the movie's narrative "are people who are very antagonistic toward Jews," said Rabbi Marvin Hier, dean and founder of the Simon Wiesenthal Center in Los Angeles.

The Anti-Defamation League last week also endorsed a highly critical report by some of these scholars based on a pirated, early version of the script.

Media focus on the film increased after The New York Times published a lengthy article earlier this year about Gibson's fundamentalist Catholic sect, which rejects the Vatican's authority and its modern-day reforms.

Gibson has issued a single statement saying, "Neither I nor my film are anti-Semitic." A spokesman last week dismissed the pre-release criticism.

"Just getting rabbis and priests and whomever to just guess on the issue — they don't really know what they're talking about," said Gibson's spokesman, Alan Nierob.

At the heart of the controversy lies the question of Gibson's intent, and the issue of which sources he is using to shape the film's narrative. Now editing the film, Gibson said two weeks ago that the movie "conforms to the narratives of Christ's passion and death found in the four Gospels of the New Testament."

But some reports contradict that.

Several experts on Catholic-Jewish issues said one source of inspiration for the film seems to be Sister Anne Catherine Emmerich, a mystic in the late 1700s and early 1800s who saw visions of Jews with "hooked noses," Hier said.

According to a 1976 biography of Emmerich by the Rev. C. E. Schmoeger, Emmerich described one vision of an "old Jewess Meyr" who admitted "that Jews in our country and elsewhere strangled Christian children and used their blood for all sorts of suspicious and diabolical practices."

A March article about the film in The Wall Street Journal, written by Raymond Arroyo, said the movie also is based on a 17th century nun, Mary of Agreda, whom critics say also is anti-Semitic.

One of those critics is Philip Cunningham, a Boston College theology professor and executive director of the college's Center for Christian-Jewish Learning.

Cunningham was on a nine-member, ad-hoc panel that the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops and the ADL organized to review an early version of "The Passion" screenplay.

Their assessment provoked Gibson to threaten a lawsuit. The

Conference of Bishops later backtracked, claiming it did not authorize or review the report.

One concern for Cunningham is that an Italian Web site that claims to be an unofficial site for "The Passion" says the film "is based upon the diaries of St. Anne Catherine Emmerich."

"Any kind of drama based on such a work would be fraught with peril in terms of anti-Semitic sentiments," and would violate current church teaching, Cunningham said.

Emmerich's diary includes images of servants of the high priest bribing fellow Jews to demand Jesus' death, paying some of his killers and describing scenes of Jesus' crucifixion as more "brutal" than those in the New Testament, Cunningham said.

Rabbi James Rudin, another expert on Catholic-Jewish issues, said this material had served as the "toxic" source for centuries of anti-Semitic passion plays.

Rudin likened such "extra-biblical" material to Jewish midrash, or post-biblical analysis.

"It's all midrash. If Gibson uses that as kosher, than he is really going against the authorized Catholic teaching of the Vatican," Rudin said. "To use that is distortion and dangerous."

The scholars are equally troubled by references to Mary of Agreda, who blames Jews throughout the ages for Jesus's death.

Hier cites a passage from her writing that refers to Jews, saying: "Although they did not die, they were chastised with intense pain. These disorders consequently upon shedding the blood of Christ, descended to their posterity and even to this day continue to afflict this group with horrible impurities."

Such attitudes had a direct influence on modern anti-Semitism and even on the Holocaust, said Father Michael Cooper, director of the Center for Catholic-Jewish Studies at St. Leo University in Florida.

Nierob, Gibson's spokesman, said he had "never heard" of Emmerich or Mary of Agreda. He also questioned criticism of Emmerich.

"Is everything she wrote anti-Semitic?" he said.

The scholars also voiced worries that Gibson might weave together the most anti-Semitic portions of the gospels into his film.

By editing the gospels into a single montage, Cunningham said, "you end up with a multiplication of anti-Jewish elements that ends up being more powerful than any one gospel would have been."

"It takes enormous sensitivity to strip" the gospels "of anti-Semitic teachings," Rudin added.

Fears that the film relies on anti-Semitic sources echo the controversial recent report by the panel of Catholic and Jewish scholars, who now are blasting the bishops conference for washing its hands of the study and leaving them "high and dry."

In a strongly worded letter to the bishops requesting a meeting with William Cardinal Keeler of Baltimore, Rev. Lawrence Frizzell and Mary Boys said one of the panelists received "four vicious, anti-Semitic letters" and harassing phone calls, apparently from Catholics.

"It seems that at least supporters of Mel Gibson are quite content to view a film that portrays the Jews as implacable, violent enemies of Jesus of Nazareth," they wrote.

The bishops conference declined to discuss the matter further until the film appears.

Meanwhile, Hier, who wrote an Op-Ed about the film in the Los Angeles Times last week, said he had urged Gibson to meet with him and others to discuss their concerns.

Gibson's spokesman likened such calls to censorship. □