



Daily News Bulletin

Vol. 81, No. 159

Wednesday, August 27, 2003

86th Year

TOP NEWS IN BRIEF

Israeli strike kills one

A Palestinian bystander was killed in a failed Israeli missile attack in the Gaza Strip.

Hassan Hamlawi, 65, was killed in Tuesday's strike near the Jabaliya refugee camp.

The assault targeted a member of Hamas' military wing, who reportedly was traveling in a car that was hit.

More than two dozen people were wounded.

U.S.: Killing must stop

The State Department said the killing of innocents "has got to stop" as part of the effort toward ending the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

State Dept. spokesman Philip Reeker called on Israel and the Palestinian Authority on Tuesday to meet the commitments they have made under the "road map" peace plan and work toward ending the killing of innocents. When asked specifically about the targeting of terrorists, Reeker said, "Israel has a right to defend itself."

Bush: Cut ties to terror

President Bush called on Middle Eastern leaders to cut funding and ties to Palestinian terrorists.

Speaking to the American Legion national convention on Tuesday in St. Louis, Bush said Middle Eastern leaders, friends of the Palestinian people and the Palestinians themselves need to sever ties to terrorist groups if they hope to achieve a Palestinian state.

Memorial backers file lawsuit

Supporters of a Ten Commandments monument at Alabama's Judicial Building filed a lawsuit to block its removal.

A Christian radio talk show host and a pastor filed a lawsuit in federal court Monday.

They claim that the monument's removal would violate the constitutional guarantee of freedom of religion.

A hearing is set for Wednesday.

Because of the Labor Day holiday in the U.S., the JTA DAILY NEWS BULLETIN will not be published Monday, Sept. 1.

NEWS ANALYSIS

With bus bombing as backdrop, sides reconsider peace policies

By Leslie Susser

JERUSALEM (JTA) — Last week's massive bus bombing, which killed 21 people, most of them fervently Orthodox Jews and some of them children, may turn out to be a defining moment in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

It signaled the collapse of the cease-fire, or "hudna," declared by Palestinian terrorist organizations in late June and generated potentially far-reaching Israeli, American and Palestinian policy reappraisals.

Israel launched a string of targeted strikes against terrorist leaders, warning that it would no longer distinguish between political and military echelons of any organization waging terror, including Palestinian Authority President Yasser Arafat's Fatah movement.

The United States exerted unprecedented pressure on the Palestinian Authority to unite its armed forces, collect illegal weapons and smash terrorist organizations before a new cycle of terror and reprisal spins out of control.

And the Palestinians made some tentative moves against terrorists, while urging a new cease-fire that Israel suspects is designed to tie the Jewish state's hands and avert the need for the Palestinian Authority to take more tangible steps against groups like Hamas and Islamic Jihad.

Officially, Israel and the Palestinians continue to back the American-initiated "road map" peace plan. Indeed, both parties claim the breakdown stems from the other side's failure to implement its obligations under the road map, and both maintain that their new moves are designed to force more scrupulous execution.

Some critics, however, say the flaw is not in the failure to implement the road map but in the plan itself, and they are calling for a new approach.

Former Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Barak, never a fan of the road map, has revived his call for a unilateral Israeli withdrawal from the West Bank and Gaza Strip.

Martin Indyk, a former U.S. ambassador to Israel, has reiterated his proposal for an American trusteeship over Palestine.

For different reasons, both say the road map in its present form will never work.

Still, Israel remains committed to the plan — and aides say Prime Minister Ariel Sharon hopes the renewed policy of targeting Hamas leaders will help get the plan back on track. Critics charge that the targeted killings are a ploy to undermine a peace plan Sharon never wanted, but his aides claim the strikes make clear to the Palestinian Authority what will happen if it continues to evade a confrontation with Hamas.

Moreover, Sharon aides say, knowing they are targets could convince Hamas leaders to suspend hostilities. If they don't, Israel believes, eradication of the top leadership will weaken the movement's ideological and organizational coherence.

The policy of striking at Hamas leaders has revived the debate in the Cabinet and the defense establishment over what to do about Arafat — who, Israeli officials say, is every bit as much a supporter of terrorism as the Hamas leaders, and more of a thorn in the side of Palestinian Authority Prime Minister Mahmoud Abbas.

Foreign Minister Silvan Shalom and Finance Minister Benjamin Netanyahu support expelling Arafat, and the government is preparing an "Arafat file" so that it will be in a position to explain any action it may decide to take against him.

Several months ago, Amos Gilad, a top adviser to Defense Minister Shaul Mofaz and an expert on Arafat, convinced Israeli leaders not to expel Arafat, arguing that

MIDEAST FOCUS

Policeman convicted in lynchings

A former Palestinian policeman was convicted in the October 2000 lynching of two Israeli reserve soldiers.

A military court ruled that Raed Sheikh ordered the two soldiers to get out of their car and enter the police station in Ramallah, where the murders took place. He also participated in the beatings of one of the soldiers.

AIDS case in Israel

A citizen of Ghana living in Israel was charged with knowingly spreading the AIDS virus.

Chris Sarfo was indicted Tuesday for having unprotected sex with four women and not telling them that he had HIV, the virus that causes AIDS.

Mr. Bloomberg goes to Jerusalem

New York's mayor is visiting Jerusalem on a one-day solidarity mission.

"You can see that America is not letting the terrorists win. We are striking back and that's — I think — what Israel has always done and what I would urge you to continue to do," Bloomberg said Tuesday during a visit to Hadassah hospital in Jerusalem, where wounded from an Aug. 19 bus bombing are being treated.

Bloomberg also was scheduled to visit the Western Wall and then ride on bus No. 2, the line that was bombed last week.

Muslims kept from mosque

Two Muslim officials were ordered to stay away from the Temple Mount after they tried to block Jewish tourists there from entering.

An Israeli court made the ruling Tuesday against officials of the Wakf, the Muslim trust that administers the Temple Mount, after a group of Muslims held a prayer demonstration at the site Monday.



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.

Arafat would be more dangerous abroad than confined to his headquarters in Ramallah.

Now, however, Gilad says the option of expelling Arafat should be considered seriously. Gilad argues that international conditions have changed with the road map, and Arafat's disruptive influence has grown since Abbas was appointed.

Some Israeli Cabinet ministers and ex-generals now speak openly of assassinating Arafat. Maj. Gen. Yom-Tov Samya, a former head of the army's southern command, declared on Israel Radio on Monday that after some short-term chaos, the Palestinian people — and some Arab governments — would thank Israel for removing Arafat from the scene.

Barak, however, argues that recent events prove that with or without Arafat, there is no peace partner on the Palestinian side. Therefore, in Barak's view, there is no point to pursuing the road map.

Instead, he says, Israel should complete its security fence along the border with the West Bank as quickly as possible and then withdraw behind it.

At the same time, it should announce a generous peace plan of its own that would show that the fence's route — which cuts into the West Bank at several points to surround major Israeli settlements — is not a land-grab but purely a security arrangement until the Palestinians are ready to talk peace.

Moreover, Barak and others argue, the road map offers the Palestinians statehood before the sides have settled the key issues of borders, Jerusalem and refugees — something that's "very dangerous for Israel," Barak says.

Barak's position is especially significant since he is considering a political comeback in the autumn on a unilateral-withdrawal credo.

But he's not the only one making the argument.

In the Israeli daily Ha'aretz, influential military analyst Ze'ev Schiff recently outlined a nightmare scenario under which the Palestinians achieve statehood at an intermediate stage of the road map, but — because they have refused to dismantle terrorist groups — renegades continue attacking Israel from the safety of the Palestinian state. The renegades' claims would be over issues the whose resolution the road map has deemed for after statehood, not before.

Indyk agrees that the Palestinians are not yet prepared to cut a peace deal with Israel — but his conclusion is that they need considerable American help.

Recent events show that no solution is possible without deep American involvement, says Indyk, who proposes an American trusteeship in Palestine.

In a New York Times Op-Ed piece in late August, Indyk explained what he has in mind: "With United Nations backing, the United States should establish a trusteeship for Palestine, relieving Arafat of all his powers and providing an American-led force to fight terrorists alongside the Palestinian security services. The United States would have to supervise Palestinian reformers in their efforts to build accountable institutions."

If President "Bush really wants to help create a democratic Palestinian state," Indyk wrote, "it should be clear by now that the road map alone won't get him there."

As for the Palestinians, the new situation has led to the first real challenge to Abbas' position as prime minister, as some suggest replacing him with the speaker of the Palestinian Parliament, Ahmad Karia.

Karia is considered closer and more amenable to Arafat, and his challenge is part of a renewed power struggle between Arafat and Abbas that included Abbas' recent attempt to place all security forces under his overall command, which Arafat foiled.

The outcome of this struggle could determine whether Israelis and Palestinians are heading for a new cycle of bloodshed or whether this beleaguered peace process can still be salvaged. □

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

Israel arrests two in hospital raid

JERUSALEM (JTA) — Israel arrested two suspected Palestinian terrorists who were in a hospital in Nablus.

Othman Younis, 27, and Fahid Bani-Odeh, 25, were transferred Tuesday to an Israeli hospital, where they are being treated for moderate injuries.

Israel accuses Younis of helping plan several attacks in which at least 10 people were killed. □

JEWISH WORLD

France may approve Hamas ban

France may reverse its position and back a complete European Union ban on Hamas.

But France has rejected a U.S. request to freeze immediately the funds of a French nongovernmental organization suspected of channeling funds to Palestinian terrorist groups.

Until now, France has backed an E.U. policy of distinguishing between Hamas' political and military branches, arguing that it's not clear whether Hamas is a terrorist group.

ADL: Kofi, don't go

The Anti-Defamation League called on Kofi Annan to refrain from participating in an upcoming U.N. conference on the Palestinians.

In a letter to the U.N. secretary-general, the ADL said this year's U.N. Conference of Civil Society in Support of the Palestinian People would "serve as a forum for anti-Israel propaganda."

Romanian mad at Ha'aretz

Romania's president is accusing Ha'aretz of misquoting him on the Holocaust.

But the Israeli daily newspaper says Ion Iliescu's accusations are baseless. According to the paper, which published the controversial interview in late July, Iliescu said the "Holocaust was not unique to the Jewish population in Europe."

The comments provoked outrage and damaged Israeli-Romanian relations.

Ceremony for anti-Semite canned

A Paris hospital canceled a ceremony honoring a leading diabetes researcher after finding out that he was a known anti-Semite.

The Hotel Dieu hospital in Paris had been scheduled to unveil a plaque and bust honoring Nicolae Paulescu, a former intern at the hospital who became one of the founders of the Romanian fascist organization National Christian Defense League, a precursor to the notorious Iron Guard.

Paulescu is credited as being one of the discoverers of insulin.

Fighting missionaries in Ukraine

Jewish and Christian groups in Ukraine are protesting an upcoming cultural festival aimed at converting Jews.

An organization known as Magen, or Shield, has called a news conference in Kiev for Wednesday to outline its protest of the festival, planned for Lvov, Ukraine, later this week by a group affiliated with the Hear, O Israel ministry. Magen's director, Mark Powers, described Hear, O Israel as "Christian fundamentalists masquerading as Jews."

AROUND THE JEWISH WORLD

Student-initiated trip to Argentina helps depressed local communities

By Florencia Arbiser

BUENOS AIRES (JTA) — Student trips to help needy Jews in Central and South America are nothing new.

But a recent visit came with a twist: It was organized by the students themselves.

"I thought that with the many young Jews who love visiting exotic places," there would be enough candidates, says Shaanan Meyerstein, a 20-year-old student at Columbia University who already had volunteered at a Jewish camp for kids in Belarus and worked as a paramedic in Israel.

Meyerstein was right.

Fifty North American Jewish college students, representing 25 different universities, spent a month in Argentina helping local Jewish communities.

They paid \$1,800 for the trip, including hotels, food and airfare.

The students painted and repaired Jewish buildings, spent time with kids and the elderly and cleaned up Jewish cemeteries. They also visited families struggling economically and those harmed during recent floods.

The trip didn't focus on Buenos Aires, where most American Jews go who are traveling on missions to economically ravaged Argentina. The students spent most of their time in smaller communities.

The seed of the project probably came from the northwestern city of Tucuman — part of a mountainous region and home to 800 Jewish families.

The Tucuman Jewish community center is "twinned" with the MetroWest Jewish Federation of New Jersey. Tucuman's rabbi, Salomon "Salo" Nussbaum, asked the Conservative movement's Rabbinical Assembly to help the Argentine region.

A Baltimore rabbi, Michael Meyerstein, visited Argentina last year and talked about the matter with his son, Shaanan.

Nussbaum and the Meyersteins then contacted Hune Margulies, from Larchmont, N.Y.

Margulies is the owner of a cultural and ecological touring company, and he is an economic development consultant for Latin American towns.

The 50 students — aged 18 to 23, all but three from the United States — met for the first time on July 14 at LaGuardia Airport in New York.

Everyone had a second bag of luggage full of donated clothing and medicine, gathered from relatives and friends.

With only two months of previous organization, they became part of a religiously diverse group, including Orthodox, Conservative, Reform and unaffiliated Jews.

"It was positive chaos," said Meyerstein, who found interested students through the Hillel network.

Early on the morning of Aug. 5, the group filled the lobby and the breakfast room at the Parliament Hotel to begin their work. Some wore yarmulkes; all wore blue jeans.

Parked in an icy winter rain, four orange buses were waiting for them to start a day of work. The youths would be divided into four groups, accompanied by local security employees of the DAIA political umbrella institution.

One group went to Or Israel, a small community center placed in the Caballito neighborhood in the geographic heart of Buenos Aires.

"It is fascinating to be thousands miles away home and feel despite the cultural differences there is such a connection. In a completely different setting, I find people saying the same familiar prayers, using the same mezuzot, the same tallitot," said Dalia Rotter, 21, who was visiting South America for the first time.

Inside Or Israel, the stoves were off to save gas. Every student got spatulas and sandpaper to chip off the old paint and rags to clean the library books.

"I cannot believe they came from so far away to do this. And they are working hard. We are all Jews. This is so emotional," said Jessica Mednik, a 20-year-old Argentine law student whose family is currently unable to pay the less than \$2 monthly synagogue dues. □

FOCUS ON ISSUES

On the eve of a new school year, Hillel preps for renewed activism

By Rachel Pomerance

HONESDALE, PA (JTA) — In an ode to pop culture, one of the world's largest annual gatherings of Jewish student activists began with a video spoof of MTV's "The Real World."

Last week's gathering, organized by Hillel and held at Camp Moshava in Pennsylvania, also featured Jewish hip-hop artist Remedy, who sported a Jewish version of the genre's bling-bling — a monstrous Magen David — and belted an angry anthem about the Holocaust.

And students wore Hillel stickers alluding to college cult favorites like Homer Simpson and John Goodman, who played an over-the-top Jewish convert in the movie "The Big Lebowski."

Indeed, the extent to which Hillel used pop-culture cool to court students at Hillel's Charles Schusterman International Leader's Assembly hints at the key challenge for Jewish activists on college campuses: attracting students.

Heated pro-Palestinian activism on campus has prompted an outpouring of pro-Israel advocacy, but the foremost concern for Jewish organizations on campus remains the basic battle against Jewish apathy and ignorance.

"It's very easy to make Israel the total issue, and we have got to prevent that from happening," said Avraham Infeld, Hillel's interim director.

Apathy, or the possibility to just "drop out of being Jewish" in college, is still the number one challenge for Hillel, he said.

The "first step is to coalesce and get a group of people together," agreed Shoshana Rudnick, 19, who discussed the draw of a possible Hillel sports team with a fellow Ithaca College sophomore, Laura Bauman.

But Israel remains an intense focus.

Many Jewish students are struggling to craft a message on Israel that appeals to the liberal mentality prevalent on campuses — and among many Hillel students.

"It's so hard being a moderate because no one ever agrees with you," said Will Dempster, a sophomore at George Washington University and an intern with Hillel's Grinspoon Israel advocacy program.

Dempster said he hopes to create programs for Jewish students "who don't feel there's a place for them currently" in groups they consider too pro-Israel, as well as a Jewish-Muslim dialogue group on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

This past year, the U.S.-led war on Iraq overshadowed most anti-Israel activity on campus. As that recedes from the headlines, however, some expect to see renewed activism on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict this year.

In fact, the ongoing U.S. presence in Iraq may fuel comparisons between Israel and America as occupiers, said Wayne Firestone, director of the Israel on Campus Coalition, an umbrella of 26 Jewish groups.

"We know that the theme of 'End the occupation at any cost' is going to be used," he said.

Firestone also anticipates that detractors will focus on the security fence Israel is building, using slogans such as "Tear down the wall."

Those messages likely will loom large at Palestinian solidarity conferences to be held at Rutgers University and Ohio State University in October.

Before the conference, the Rutgers Hillel plans to sponsor a week of programs under the banner, "Israel inspires," with visits by young Israelis, elected officials and Israeli drummers.

In general, Hillel and other Jewish organizations such as AIPAC — which this summer held a workshop for activists from 60 high-profile campuses — are trying to boost students' proactive Israel advocacy skills.

For example, the Leaders Assembly provided slick and sophisticated training for its Grinspoon interns, including a workshop led by political consultant Brent Silver.

AIPAC instructs student activists to build coalitions with campus influentials, such as student government leaders, college Democrats and Republicans, and reporters for the campus newspaper, as well as to lobby local members of Congress.

"We will be successful," said Daniel Rubinstein, a sophomore at the University of Texas at Austin who interned for AIPAC this summer. "It's about relationships and politics."

Like many students, Rubinstein said Jewish groups' efforts have given him a base of knowledge to fight anti-Israel activity. He can "pick up the phone and get any resource" he needs, he said.

But even Rubinstein grapples with how to respond to anti-Israel rhetoric, recalling incidents when he wished he had responded with a real zinger.

A lot of Jews on campus "know that Israel is important, but when it comes to real confrontation they don't know how to respond," Rubinstein said.

That was evident when one student at the Leaders Assembly, explaining his inability to confront anti-Israel activists, asked what the intifada was.

Such ignorance is indicative of the state of the American Jewish education system, Infeld said. "We eat the" waste products of that system, he added.

Of course, the issues vary from campus to campus and from activist to activist.

Israel is the central issue for Ben Herman, 19, a member of the MADPAC pro-Israel group at the University of Wisconsin.

Palestinian activists, who outnumber pro-Israel ones, are winning the battle on campus, he said.

Many Jewish students either want to take a sort of vacation from their Jewish life or are "not as well-informed as they should be," he said.

In part, that may be due to religious-secular rifts in the Jewish student community.

The chief challenge is "getting people who haven't set foot in a Hillel to set foot in a Hillel," Princeton University sophomore Nathaniel Fintz said.

Nicole Rubin and Rachel Ganin, sophomores at American University, say they struggle to find a Jewish community on campus. Rubin said she is a "little ashamed" to be associated with the pro-Israel group on campus, which she feels is anti-Palestinian.

Meanwhile, Ashley Winter, 19, treasurer of Rutgers Hillel, is enthusiastic about the upcoming "Israel Inspires" week.

While Jewish students have some nervousness and concern about the planned Palestinian solidarity conference, Winter said, there is "excitement for what we're going to be able to do" to portray Israel as a "source and wellspring of Jewish heritage," culture and life. □