

IN THE NEWS

Israeli killed in West Bank

The Al-Aksa Brigade killed an Israeli merchant in the West Bank. Moshe Yohai, 63, was shot in his truck while delivering sand Tuesday.

The brigade, the militia of Yasser Arafat's mainstream Fatah movement, said it shot Yohai in retaliation for the killings of Palestinians over the weekend.

Israel strikes Hamas in Gaza

Israeli tanks and helicopter gunships hit Hamas targets in the Gaza Strip.

Tanks and armored bulldozers surrounded Beit Hanoun on Tuesday in an attempt to stop the Palestinian town from serving as a base for rocket fire into Israel.

A Hamas salvo fired from the area Monday killed a 4-year-old boy and a man in the nearby Israeli town of Sderot. Earlier Tuesday, Israeli helicopter gunships destroyed a Hamas arms factory in Gaza and a media office used by the terrorist group.

Meanwhile, three Kassam rockets fired from the Gaza Strip hit Sderot on Tuesday. Little damage was caused, but a local man was hospitalized with a shrapnel wound.

Jews join with Sudan protesters

Reform Jewish leaders joined activists outside the Sudanese Embassy in Washington protesting the Sudanese government's alleged funding of atrocities.

Rabbi David Saperstein, director of the Religious Action Center of Reform Judaism, said that Jews bear a special responsibility to oppose genocide.

"When genocidal activity is going on, Jews need to be at the forefront," he told JTA.

Congress has said the Sudanese government abets genocidal acts carried out by Arab militias against black tribes.

The 100 protesters on Tuesday included black congressional leaders.

WORLD REPORT

PUBLISHED WEEKDAYS BY JTA—THE GLOBAL NEWS SERVICE OF THE JEWISH PEOPLE · WWW.JTA.ORG

Army bracing for worst as settlers threaten to resist withdrawal plan

By LESLIE SUSSER

JERUSALEM (JTA) — Prime Minister Ariel Sharon faces a new obstacle to his plan to evacuate settlements in the Gaza Strip and West Bank: Right-wing rabbis who have ruled that dismantling settlements contravenes Jewish law. The rabbis are calling on soldiers to disobey orders and on settlers to forcibly resist evacuation.

Given the potential for confrontation, the army and police are training special forces to carry out the evacuation, and there is even talk of building detention camps for settlers in case of mass resistance.

The Israeli right wing is split on the issue, and left-wing politicians are warning the rabbis against creating conditions like those preceding the 1995 assassination of Yitzhak Rabin, when some settler rabbis made religious rulings that seemed to condone violence against the prime minister.

No evacuation is scheduled to take place until next year, but the mood on both sides already is tense. In its worse-case scenarios, the defense establishment is not ruling out that some settlers will use guns against Israeli troops, and some legislators have warned settler leaders against following a path that could lead to "civil war."

The latest rabbinical ruling came from a former Ashkenazi chief rabbi, Avraham Shapira, now head of the Rabbis' Union for the Complete Land of Israel and one of the National Religious Party's most influential spiritual leaders.

In answer to a question from a follower, Shapira came out unequivocally against any evacuation of Jewish settlers in Gaza. "It is

clear and obvious that, according to the Torah, handing over parts of our holy land to non-Jews, including parts of Gush Katif, is a sin and a crime," Shapira wrote, referring to one bloc of Gaza settlements.

"Therefore, any thought or idea or decision or any semblance of action of any kind to evacuate residents from Gush Katif and hand the land over to non-Jews is opposed to halachah," or Jewish religious law, he wrote. "Therefore, nothing must be done to assist the eviction from their homes and land, and everything done to prevent it."

Shapira's call followed a similar ruling by the Yesha settlers' rabbinical council, which declared that "no man, citizen, police officer or soldier is authorized to help in uprooting settlements."

Not only the rabbis are taking a militant stand.

In a mid-June interview with a national religious publication, Uri Elitzur, editor of the settler journal *Nekuda*, declared that "the uprooting of a settlement is illegal and shocking and therefore justifies refusal to obey orders and violence, excluding the use of firearms."

Elitzur added that he would grant his "complete understanding to people who harm those who come to evacuate them."

Coming from a man who served as former Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's bureau chief and who ran the National Religious Party's last election campaign, sympathy for violent opposition sent shockwaves through the political system.

Peace Now and legislator Avshalom Vilan of the *Yahad-Meretz* Party urged Israel's attorney general to prosecute Elitzur for

Continued on page 2

NEWS ANALYSIS

■ *Army bracing for worst as settlers threaten to resist withdrawal plan*

Continued from page 1

incitement to violence.

Ilan Leibovich of the Shinui Party told Israel Radio that "Uri Elitzur has lost his mind and must be stopped immediately before he starts a civil war."

Even Social Affairs Minister Zevulun Orlev, leader of the National Religious Party's more moderate wing, dissociated himself from Elitzur, insisting that Elitzur doesn't reflect the position of the national religious movement.

On the contrary, Orlev said, "we distance ourselves from any threat of civil war and bloodshed, as from fire."

■

What happens on the ground could depend to some extent on the National Religious Party's leadership. But the party's two senior figures, Orlev and party leader Efi Eitam, are sending out mixed signals.

Eitam resigned from the government over Sharon's plan to evacuate settlements, while Orlev stayed on. Moreover, Eitam is championing legislation to bar the Israel Defense Forces from participating in the evacuation of settlements, while Orlev says the government has the right to use the army as it pleases.

In marked contrast to Eitam, who says soldiers from Orthodox or settler families would face an impossible dilemma if ordered to evacuate other settlers or even their own families, Orlev insists that "the IDF must carry out government orders without reference to the political beliefs of its soldiers. If it starts choosing assignments according to political beliefs, that would constitute an existential threat to

the State of Israel."

The question is to what extent will settlers take their cue from National Religious Party leaders, and whether they will heed the moderates in their own leadership.

Bentzion Lieberman, chairman of the Yesha settlers' council, echoed Orlev when he said that "uprooting settlements and expelling Jews is a historical and moral crime, but refusing to obey an order is an existential threat to the State of Israel."

But will settlers listen to Lieberman or to the radical rabbis? And what about settler extremists who, even if a minority, are bound to oppose evacuation with violence and create considerable mayhem?

Defense Minister Shaul Mofaz estimates that thousands of settlers will resist evacuation forcibly, and the IDF is taking into account the possibility that

settlers will use firearms.

The army and police both are training special forces to deal with expected settler resistance. The plan at present is for the soldiers to cut off the areas being evacuated and for the police to do the actual evacuating. A team planning the evacuation, led by Sharon's national security adviser, Giora Eiland, even is considering building detention centers for settler resisters who break the law.

A decision on the first evacuations is scheduled

for March. As the date approaches, signs are that the clash between government and settlers will go beyond anything seen in Israel until now.

To avert this, voices of reason and conciliation will have to come to the fore. But for the time being, it's the radicals who are getting louder by the day.

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

Will settlers listen to the relatively moderate leaders or the radical rabbis?

Spinning off Middle East news

By NEW YORK JEWISH WEEK

NEW YORK (JTA) — The newest target of pro-Israel advocates is high school students.

Buoyed by the success of e-mail bulletins on Israel for college-age Jews and U.S. Jews in general, the Conference of Presidents of Major American Jewish Organizations is launching its "High (School) Alert" later this month.

"What we realized from the college experience is that it's too late to wait for students to come to campus," said Malcolm Hoenlein, executive vice president of the Presidents Conference. "We need to educate younger people with the basic facts of the Middle East so they will be able to compete with those pushing an anti-Israel agenda."

High Alert, whose primary funder is the Avi Chai Foundation, will emphasize Jewish pride, said Lenny Ben-David, an Israeli consultant who has worked on each of the e-mail news bulletins through the Jerusalem Center for Public Affairs.

In addition to news summaries, High Alert will feature resources and links so that students can learn more about Israel-

related topics in which they are interested.

Hoenlein said the conference's Daily Alert e-mail now reaches more than 300,000 people with Middle East news stories and pro-Israel columns and editorials.

The Israel Campus Beat is a weekly e-mail with "more of a review of the news and an element of debate," Ben-David said, including "the fringes of the consensus" of pro-Israel thinking. It also features reports from a variety of campuses regarding Middle East issues.

The high school edition, which will go weekly in the fall and be distributed to schools, JCCs and individual e-mail addresses, will encourage interactive communication and joint projects.

Among those planned are pen-pal ties between Israeli and American students, care packages for Israeli soldiers and letter-writing campaigns to newspapers. A Web site is being planned as a resource for articles, films and other information about the Middle East.

"We as a community ignored the campus until it was too late," Hoenlein said. "We didn't invest in it. Now we've started to turn things around. It's time we do the same for high school students."

JTA WORLD REPORT

Howard E. Friedman
President

Mark J. Joffe
Executive Editor and Publisher

Lisa Hostein
Editor

Michael S. Arnold
Managing Editor

Lenore A. Silverstein
Finance and Administration Director

Paula Simmonds
Marketing and Development Director

JTA WORLD REPORT is published five days a week, except holidays, by the Jewish Telegraphic Agency Inc., 330 Seventh Ave., New York, N.Y. 10001-5010. For more information about how to subscribe by e-mail, fax or regular mail, call (212) 643-1890, or visit our Web site at www.jta.org.
© JTA. Reproduction only with permission.

Jews praise Danforth appointment to U.N. post

By RACHEL POMERANCE

NEW YORK (JTA) — One of the most pro-Israel U.S. ambassadors to the United Nations might seem like a tough act to follow, at least to supporters of the Jewish state.

But U.S. Jewish officials are lauding John Danforth, an attorney, Episcopal priest and former Republican senator from Missouri, who will be sworn in Thursday to succeed John Negroponte.

Praised as a paragon of integrity, a crusader for human and civil rights, and a friend of Israel, Danforth is expected to stand up for the Jewish state — and the moral calling of the United Nations.

A June 16 cartoon in the St. Louis Jewish Light drives home the point by showing Danforth overlooking a U.N. roundtable entitled “Anti-Israel majority.”

“Let’s get back to the ideals and goals on which the U.N. was founded!” Danforth says in the cartoon. “Uh-oh! Here comes trouble!” one anti-Israel delegate says.

Supporters of Israel hope the cartoon proves prophetic.

“Mr. Danforth as a senator had an impeccable record on Israeli issues,” said Arye Mekel, Israel’s deputy permanent representative to the United Nations. “The fact that he is very close to President Bush is a very good thing.” Mekel called Bush’s level of backing for Israel “unprecedented.”

While agreeing that Negroponte was a bulwark against attacks on Israel, Mekel said the famed “Negroponte doctrine” merely reflected Bush administration policy.

Formulated in 2002 when Israel’s anti-terrorist operations in the West Bank and Gaza Strip were coming under sharp international criticism, the Negroponte doctrine set stiff conditions for U.S. approval of U.N. Security Council resolutions on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

Supporters of Israel saw the doctrine as a landmark step in helping to stave off constant one-sided diplomatic attacks by the Arab bloc against the Jewish state.

Danforth’s appointment comes as the United Nations is making an effort to address anti-Semitism within its corridors and around the world. The international body held its first-ever conference on anti-Jewish prejudice June 21.

“Let us acknowledge that the United

Nations’ record on anti-Semitism has at times fallen short of our ideals,” U.N. Secretary General Kofi Annan told the conference.

Annan called for a General Assembly resolution blasting anti-Semitism and for U.N. human rights advisers to “actively explore ways of combating anti-Semitism more effectively in the future.”

On Monday, a group of some 40 Jewish non-governmental organizations issued a “call to action” urging the adoption of the proposed resolution, U.N. condemnation of “attempts to demonize or delegitimize Israel,” promotion of Holocaust remembrance and education, and the appointment of a special U.N. adviser on anti-Semitism.

Elan Steinberg, executive vice president of the World Jewish Congress, said he hoped Danforth’s appointment would be a “fortuitous” step in the fight against anti-Semitism.

Danforth did not return phone calls seeking comment.

Heir to the Ralston Purina pet food fortune, Danforth, 67, received joint graduate degrees from Yale University’s law and divinity schools.

After practicing law in New York and serving for seven years as Missouri’s attorney general, Danforth represented Missouri from 1976 to 1995 in the U.S. Senate, where he was highly regarded as a moderate and bridge-builder.

Danforth was appointed by President Clinton to lead an inquiry into the 1993 federal siege on Branch Davidians in Waco, Texas. The inquiry cleared the government of blame.

Since 2001, Danforth has served as Bush’s envoy to Sudan.

A partner in a St. Louis law firm, Danforth has participated in a few controversial acts, like voting against sanctions on apartheid South Africa, voting to cut funds for U.N. peacekeeping and limit U.S. support for international planning, according to the Washington Post.

But Danforth clearly has support among Jews.

“It would be hard to imagine a more moderate appointment that could come

out of this White House, so Danforth is as good as it gets in this administration,” Democratic media consultant Steve Rabinowitz said. “It’s a good thing.”

David Goldstein, who directed the Jewish Community Relations Bureau of Kansas City during Danforth’s Senate tenure, used to brief Danforth on Israel issues. Goldstein recalled listing the geopolitical reasons for U.S. support of the Jewish state.

Danforth agreed but added, “the real reason we ought to support Israel is it’s our moral responsibility. They’re our friends,” Goldstein related.

Danforth’s record indicates solid support for foreign and military aid to Israel, solidarity with the Jewish state and support for Israel’s claim to Jerusalem as its undivided capital.

Jewish officials speak of him in glowing terms.

“A staunch advocate of a strong U.S.-Israel relationship,” Danforth has “deep ties” to the local and national Jewish community, said Josh Block, spokesman for the American Israel Public Affairs Committee.

“Throughout his career, when it came to the critical issues affecting the U.S.-Israel relationship, Sen. Danforth was always there in strong support,” Block said.

“On domestic issues and on issues relating to Israel, I just can’t think of any times when we’ve had differences,” said Michael Newmark, past president of the Jewish Federation of St. Louis and one of Danforth’s law partners.

With his eulogy for President Reagan, Danforth, who presided over the June 11 funeral service at Washington’s National Cathedral, seemed to presage his own upcoming challenge at the United Nations.

Reagan envisioned an America that “could not hide its light under a bushel. It could not turn in on itself and hunker down,” he said.

“Isolationism was not an option, neither was protectionism,” Danforth continued. “We must champion freedom everywhere. We must be the beacon for the world.”

‘Danforth is as good as it gets in this administration.’

Steve Rabinowitz

Democratic media consultant

NEWS IN BRIEF

MIDDLE EAST

Barak contradicts Clinton

Ehud Barak denied a claim in President Clinton's autobiography that Syria was ready to make peace with Israel.

In "My Life," Clinton writes that the former Israeli prime minister could have made peace with Syria in early 2000 but balked at the deal. Speaking Tuesday at a conference in Netanya, however, Barak said Syria did not agree to new borders but continued to demand the eastern shore of the Kinneret, Israel's main reservoir and an asset Barak had made clear he could not surrender.

Hezbollah extorting diamond money?

Hezbollah is making millions of dollars from the West African diamond business, U.S. diplomats charged.

Some of the money comes from extortion, The Associated Press reported. Hezbollah allegedly has funneled money to the Palestinians' Al-Aksa Brigade for terrorist attacks during the past few years.

Hezbollah officials declined to comment on the report, and one Lebanese trader quoted by the AP denied the story.

Eyes on the skies

A new terminal at Israel's main airport will have surveillance cameras capable of spotting terrorist or criminal suspects.

Ben-Gurion Airport's second terminal, scheduled to open next year, already has been fitted with the security system designed by the Israeli firm Rafael, Israel's Channel Two television reported Tuesday. In a demonstration, airport officials showed how the cameras, linked to a police database, can scan crowds and spot individuals marked as security risks within seconds.

The surveillance system scans various features of suspects' faces, overcoming disguises such as fake beards or wigs.

Shin Bet arrests cell members

The Shin Bet security service arrested members of a terrorist cell who allegedly planned to kidnap an Israeli.

According to information released Tuesday, the cell planned to kidnap a Jew to use as a bargaining chip for Palestinian security prisoners held in Israel.

One of those arrested, Allah Salah, has been on Israel's most-wanted list since 1994.

WORLD

Mbeki: Free Arafat

Israel must allow Yasser Arafat to freely lead the Palestinians or there will be no peace, South Africa's president said.

"No solution is going to be found without the participation of Yasser Arafat," Thabo Mbeki said Tuesday at a U.N. forum on the Palestinians.

The U.N. Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People was created in 1973.

Israel has refused to negotiate with the Palestinian Authority president because of his ties to terrorist groups and his failure to honor peace agreements.

Extremists rally in Budapest

An extremist group in Hungary rallied against the "unwanted power of Judeo-Bolshevik elements."

A few dozen people attended the recent rally. Authorities ordered posters advertising the rally removed because they featured Ferenc Szalasi, the leader of Hungarian fascists during World War II, who was executed as a war criminal.

Putin honors rabbi

Vladimir Putin awarded Berel Lazar, one of Russia's two chief rabbis, a state order in a ceremony at the Kremlin.

According to the Russian president's decree, the Order of Friendship was awarded to Lazar last Friday "for great achievements in the fields of economic, social, political and cultural development, for accomplishments in improving friendship between nations."

Lazar received the state award June 25 along with a top Russian Orthodox cleric and one of Russia's two Muslim chief muftis.

NORTH AMERICA

Swastikas spray-painted near Toronto

Canadian Jewish officials condemned those who spray-painted swastikas on private residences near Toronto.

The recent attack was the latest in a three-month spate of anti-Semitic incidents to hit the greater Toronto area. Joel Richler, chairman of the Canadian Jewish Congress' Ontario region, called the vandalism "a despicable crime that will not be tolerated."

Kosher law moves along

New York's state Senate passed a new kosher law Monday.

The law was made necessary when the state's previous kosher law was declared unconstitutional after a lawsuit arguing that the state agency involved in kashrut — administered by Chasidic and other Orthodox Jews — had crossed the line from consumer oversight into unconstitutional religious entanglement.

The bill still needs Gov. George Pataki's signature before it becomes law.

D.C.-area pastor to convert Jews

A Washington-area pastor who was born Jewish says he'll use a new church to convert local Jews to Christianity.

The Rev. Lon Solomon, pastor of McLean Bible Church in suburban Virginia, told The Washington Post that he would launch an outreach program for Jews in August, with church members singing hymns and distributing literature at street corners.

He also gave his congregants compact discs of his life story, which notes that he was born a Conservative Jew in Virginia and later converted his parents and brother, to hand out to Jews.

Islamic students study Judaism

The Islamic Leadership Academy is developing an interreligious dialogue program with the Museum of Jewish Heritage in New York City.

The museum's participation in the program, slated to begin this fall, fits the academy's plan to have students explore other religions and cultures.

As part of the program, students from the academy and local Jewish day schools will tour the museum together. Students from the academy recently visited the museum, where they explored links between Judaism and Islam.

Once upon a grant

The Jewish Publication Society recently received \$80,000 from the U.S. National Endowment for the Humanities to publish a book on Jewish folk tales.

"Folktales of the Jews," being edited by Dan Ben-Amos and Dov Noy, documents Jewish culture and folklore in six volumes consisting of 355 tales. Grants from the Maurice Amado Foundation for Sephardic Culture, the Lloyd Cotsen Foundation and the National Foundation for Jewish Culture also sponsored the project.

It is slated to be published in the spring of 2006.