


IN THE NEWS
Arafat demotes relative after riots

Yasser Arafat demoted a relative whose appointment as Palestinian security chief sparked riots in the Gaza Strip.

The Palestinian Authority president had fired Abdel Razek Al-Majadeh as director of general security for the West Bank and Gaza Strip over the weekend and replaced him with Mousa Arafat, a relative, because Majadeh had called for political reform.

But riots forced Yasser Arafat to rehire Majadeh and demote Mousa Arafat on Monday.

Jacques Chirac tells Sharon to stay home

Jacques Chirac said Ariel Sharon is not welcome in France.

In a letter to the Israeli prime minister on Monday, the French president said that "after a number of weeks of contacts concerning your visit, it appears that it is impossible and you will not be welcome following your statements."

On Sunday, Sharon called on French Jews to leave France "immediately" as a result of rising anti-Semitism. [Story, Pg. 3]

Israeli judge involved in terror cases is killed

An Israeli judge involved in lawsuits filed by terrorism victims against the Palestinian Authority was killed.

Adi Azar, a judge with the Tel Aviv District Court, was shot dead by unknown assailants outside his home in Ramat Hasharon on Monday.

Police said they assumed a criminal motive but had not ruled out the possibility that Arabs carried out the attack given that Azar's last case involved imposing a lien on P.A. funds following a petition by terrorism victims.

The Web site of Israel's daily Yediot Achronot said the Fatah movement's terrorist wing, the Al-Aksa Brigade, claimed responsibility for the killing, but Israeli officials said they could not confirm it.

WORLD REPORT

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As Sharon rebuilds coalition and Arafat sweats, is progress ahead?

By LESLIE SUSSER

JERUSALEM (JTA) — Few doubt that Prime Minister Ariel Sharon's disengagement plan has the potential to become a watershed event in Middle Eastern politics, and it already is causing major upheavals in both internal Israeli and Palestinian politics.

Sharon is being forced to widen his coalition to ensure a parliamentary and Cabinet majority for the plan, while on the Palestinian side the impending Israeli pullout from the Gaza Strip has triggered an unprecedented challenge to Palestinian Authority President Yasser Arafat's authority, as well as demands for a new style of governance.

It's not yet clear what kind of coalition Sharon will form, nor how the violence and confusion among the Palestinians will play out.

But if Sharon is able to build a strong coalition and if a new, more pragmatic Palestinian government emerges from the present chaos, the current turmoil could be a prelude to a significant breakthrough in Israeli-Palestinian relations.

Sharon's coalition negotiations, though, are going to be very tricky. Given the widespread opposition in his own Likud Party to the plan for Israeli disengagement from the Palestinians, Sharon needs to bring in the pro-disengagement Labor Party to ensure approval for his plan in the Cabinet and Knesset.

Ideally, Sharon would like to build a secular coalition with the center-right Likud, center-left Labor and centrist Shinui Party, which would command over 70 seats in the

120-member Knesset and see eye-to-eye on a disengagement agenda.

But Sharon's Likud opponents argue that such a coalition would lead to policies too accommodating toward the Palestinians and to a dilution of the Likud's conservative economic policy, which is pulling Israel out of recession.

What's worse, these opponents maintain, if Sharon forms a coalition with only Likud, Labor and Shinui, it will be perceived as too middle-class and Ashkenazi, and the Likud would lose at least half of its working-class, Sephardi constituency in the next elections.

"We would drop from 40 to around 20 Knesset seats," says Foreign Minister Silvan Shalom, who is considered something of a political savant in the Likud.

But Shalom is part of the problem: He's concerned that if Labor joins the government, he might lose the Foreign Ministry to Labor leader Shimon Peres.

So far, Sharon is not making any promises, but he will be very wary of taking on Shalom in the Likud Central Committee. The foreign minister wields tremendous clout in that forum, which he intends to display at a huge rally scheduled for July 25.

Moreover, Shalom is intimating that he's ready to form an alliance with his old enemy, Finance Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, if he feels Sharon isn't treating him right.

Such an alliance could seriously threaten Sharon's hold on power in the party and the government, if the policy and personal differences lead to a showdown.

That's why Sharon has been forced into

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NEWS ANALYSIS

■ *Is progress possible as Sharon rebuilds coalition and Arafat sweats?*

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opening coalition talks with two fervently Orthodox parties, the Ashkenazi United Torah Judaism bloc and the Sephardi Shas Party. Together they have 16 seats in the Knesset and could replace Shinui — which now has 14 seats — to form a stable government with Likud and Labor.

That would allow Sharon to be generous to Labor with Shinui's portfolios, Peres could be given a special peace portfolio rather than the Foreign Ministry, and the Likud would be able to keep its working-class voters.

But that would be less than ideal for Sharon. The fervently Orthodox parties, which tend to the right, could undermine the disengagement plan or threaten to undermine it unless they get concessions on religious issues or bigger budgets for religious institutions.

Sharon would like to see the fervently Orthodox balanced by the staunchly secular Shinui — but each side refuses to sit in a coalition with the other.

Shinui's leader, Justice Minister Yosef "Tommy" Lapid, is livid with Labor for its willingness to serve in a government that includes the fervently Orthodox but not Shinui. He warns that if Labor joins such a government it will be signing its death warrant, because Shinui in opposition will capture most of Labor's traditional support.

"If Labor joins a government with the ultra-Orthodox, we will give it a donkey's burial," Lapid declared.

Some Labor leaders, such as Haim

Ramon, still are trying get Shinui into the coalition as part of a longer-term political vision. Ramon sees a Likud-Labor-Shinui coalition burgeoning into a new centrist party that could dominate Israeli politics for years to come.

To get more support for a coalition with Labor and Shinui, with or without the fervently Orthodox, Sharon is warning Likud rebels that if they don't support him the inevitable result will be new elections, which could cost many of them their Knesset seats.

To solve the Shalom problem, pundits believe Sharon will leave him at the Foreign Ministry and offer Peres, in addition to the special portfolio, a "forum-of-two" mechanism, whereby the two elder statesmen would make key decisions together, regardless of whether Shinui, the Orthodox parties or both wind up in the coalition.

Sharon and Peres, though, take very different views of the current chaos on the Palestinian side. Sharon says the chaos highlights the fact that there is no Palestinian partner and that Israel has no choice but to take unilateral action.

Peres says the chaos shows the danger

of pulling out of the Gaza Strip without talking to Palestinians in a position to maintain law and order about a transition of power.

Israeli intelligence analysts say it's too early to count out Arafat, despite the unprecedentedly overt criticism of him and his regime by Palestinians.

But if the voices of reform are able to enforce law and order by reforming the Palestinians' myriad armed forces, or if they can force Arafat to do so, a new chapter in Israeli-Palestinian relations could open.

The indications on the ground are that Israel has virtually won the intifada war: More and more Palestinians are questioning its rationale and acknowledging its failure to bring any political gains. Indeed, this sense of failure is the main-spring behind the growing criticism of Arafat.

The question now is whether Sharon, by building a new coalition and pushing his disengagement plan through, can turn Israel's advantage on the ground into political coin.

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

Sharon and Peres take very different views of the chaos on the Palestinian side.

Albert Friedlander, 77, dies in London

By RICHARD ALLEN GREENE

LONDON (JTA) — Albert Friedlander was 11 years old during Kristallnacht, the Nazi-inspired rampage in 1938 against synagogues and Jewish institutions.

Friedlander spent the night walking the streets of Berlin with his father only to find when he returned home that the police were looking for his father. The pair went into hiding before fleeing to Cuba.

Three decades later, Friedlander — by then a respected rabbi and teacher — was persuading Jews to go to Germany to rebuild ties.

Friedlander died July 8 in London of a heart attack. He was 77.

"I really feel like I've lost a father," said Rabbi Thomas Salamon, one of the students Friedlander convinced to go to Germany.

German-Jewish reconciliation was one

of many areas where he built bridges.

Friedlander grew up in the United States, where a Jewish foster family in Mississippi took him in during World War II.

He earned degrees from the University of Chicago and Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion. The child of an Orthodox mother and an atheist father, he was ordained as a Reform rabbi in 1952.

He moved to London with his British-born wife, Evelyn, in 1966.

Friedlander eventually became rabbi of the Reform Westminster Synagogue. He joined the Leo Baeck College, Britain's training ground for Progressive rabbis, in 1971 and became dean in 1982.

Friedlander and his wife both were awarded Germany's highest honor, the Cross of Merit, in 1993 for their work on Anglo-Jewish relations.

He is survived by his wife and three daughters, one of them a U.S. rabbi.

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France disinherits Sharon following remarks

By PHILIP CARMEL

PARIS (JTA) — Encouraging immigration to Israel is part of any Israeli prime minister's job, but Ariel Sharon's latest attempt to convince French Jews to make aliyah has angered both French politicians and Jewish community officials in France.

Sharon's call, made in Israel to a visiting delegation of North American Jewish officials, was based on the increase in anti-Semitism that France has experienced in recent years.

In response, French President Jacques Chirac said Sharon is not welcome in France. In a letter to Sharon on Monday, Chirac said that "after a number of weeks of contacts concerning your visit, it appears that it is impossible and you will not be welcome following your statements."

The sharp responses to Sharon's remarks point to fault lines not only between Israel and France, but between Israeli leaders and Diaspora Jews.

The controversy erupted after Sharon told a visiting delegation from the United Jewish Communities federation umbrella group in Jerusalem on Sunday that French Jews should move to Israel immediately in order to flee rising anti-Semitism.

"If I have to advise our brothers in France, I'll tell them one thing — move to Israel, as early as possible. I say that to Jews all around the world, but there, I think it's a must and they have to move immediately," Sharon said.

Sharon also chose to point the finger at what he said was the primary cause for the "wildest anti-Semitism" in France.

"In France today, about 10 percent of the population are Muslims. That gets a different kind of anti-Semitism, based on anti-Israeli feelings and propaganda," he said.

The comments drew immediate criticism from French government officials, and Jacques Revah, Israel's charge d'affaires in Paris, was called in to the ministry to account for the remarks.

The reaction was equally acerbic from senior political figures in France, some of whom — such as the speaker of the National Assembly, Jean-Louis Debre — are generally supportive of the Jewish state.

Sharon's remarks were "a travesty of reality and express hostility toward our country," Debre told the French radio station Europe One. "What Ariel Sharon said shows clearly that he can't keep his mouth shut."

While Sharon's remarks could have been expected to draw flak from politicians, those fighting anti-Semitism in France also expressed dismay.

Patrick Gaubert, president of the International League Against Racism and Anti-Semitism, said that Sharon's remarks "would not bring the calm, peace or serenity which we all need. It would have been better for Mr. Sharon to keep quiet."

Gaubert's views were echoed by Richard Prasquier, chairman of the French section of Israel's Yad Vashem Holocaust Memorial.

Sharon "poured oil on the fire in an unacceptable manner," Prasquier said.

Yves Kamami, an executive member of the CRIF umbrella organization of French Jews, told JTA that he feared Sharon's remarks could have the effect of "cutting ourselves off even more from the general community."

"We are becoming more and more isolated," said Kamami, a former president of B'nai B'rith France.

The national media were no less forgiving. The leading conservative daily *Le Figaro* headlined its Monday edition "Sharon's affront to France," and suggested that Sharon's comments were not motivated only by concern over anti-Semitism.

Sharon wants "to neutralize the influence of France, the country regarded by Israel as the most pro-Palestinian in the European Union," the paper said.

Israeli officials quickly moved to douse the flames. Government spokesman Avi Pazner told French radio that Sharon had been misunderstood.

Pazner pointed out that Sharon also had praised the government in France for its actions against anti-Semitism, and that Sharon's remarks "should be seen in the context of his opinion that the place

for Jews is in Israel."

Similar comments came from an Israeli diplomatic source in Paris, who said in an interview that the remarks "were little different from what Israeli prime ministers usually say," adding that he considers the reaction from France "very exaggerated."

Recorded acts of anti-Semitism in France have spiraled this year, and the Jewish community is still dealing with the fallout of a widely publicized hoax last week that originally was thought to be an anti-Semitic attack on a woman and her baby.

On July 9, Marie-Lionie Leblanc, 23, alleged that six men, believing she was Jewish, attacked her on a suburban train near Paris and drew swastikas on her stomach and overturned her baby carriage.

She later admitted there had been no such attack and that she had drawn the swastikas herself.

But her confession came only after national and Jewish leaders, including the French president, issued stern condemnations of the purported attack.

Moreover, Sharon's remarks also follow recent reports that the Jewish Agency for Israel is set to step up its campaign to persuade French Jews to immigrate to Israel by sending hundreds of representatives into large Jewish communities in the Paris area. The Jewish Agency has denied the reports.

Aliyah from France has doubled over the past three years, with more than 2,000 French Jews now immigrating annually to Israel. But the figures still represent only a small percentage of France's Jewish community — which, at around 600,000, is the largest in Western Europe.

Some commentators drew parallels with other periods in Jewish history, particularly since Sharon's remarks were uttered close to the July 18 commemorations across France marking the infamous 1942 Vel d'Hiver roundup of French Jews by the Nazis.

Writing in the pro-Israel online journal *Proche-orient.info*, Jewish journalist Elisabeth Schemla said that Sharon's choice of date had been "indecent." ■

Sharon's remarks follow reports that the Jewish Agency is set to intensify its campaign to persuade French Jews to emigrate.

NEWS IN BRIEF

WORLD

Fence vote delayed

A U.N. vote on a resolution demanding that Israel dismantle its West Bank security barrier was postponed.

Initially slated for a vote last Friday, the resolution, which follows the International Court of Justice's ruling that the fence is illegal, was again postponed Monday. A vote is likely to occur this week, but Palestinian and European officials still are negotiating the resolution's wording.

Europe wants to balance the resolution and is juggling how to uphold the court's credibility while keeping the Israeli-Palestinian peace process on track.

E.U. man goes to Israel

The European Union's foreign policy chief is visiting Israel and won't meet Palestinian officials. Javier Solana begins a four-day tour of the Middle East on Tuesday. Before visiting Israel, where he is expected to arrive Thursday and meet with Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon, Solana will visit Egypt and Jordan.

Consul: We'll find bombers

An Argentine official pledged to bring those responsible for the 1994 AMIA bombing to justice.

Speaking Monday in Manhattan at a memorial service marking the 10-year anniversary of the AMIA bombing in Buenos Aires, Hector Timerman, Argentina's new consul general in New York, said Argentine President Nestor Kirchner is committed to bringing the perpetrators to justice. The memorial service, organized by the local Jewish Community Relations Council, featured speakers from Jewish organizations and Congress, while an estimated 200 people in attendance held up photographs of the 85 people killed in the attack.

German Reform Jews won't sue

Germany's Reform movement will not sue the German government over funding issues.

Leaders of the Union for Progressive Jews in Germany announced Sunday that the group would not sue after the Central Council of Jews in Germany agreed to integrate Reform congregations, making funding available for certain programs.

JNF ups stature

The Jewish National Fund was accredited as a non-governmental organization at the United Nations. The Jewish environmental group received NGO status last week, allowing it to sponsor workshops at worldwide U.N. conferences and serve on environmental committees.

MIDDLE EAST

Palestinian escapes hit

A Palestinian terrorist leader escaped an Israeli missile strike in the Gaza Strip.

Three people were hurt by the Monday afternoon blast, which tore through a home in a Shathi refugee camp, which witnesses said was caused by missiles fired from Israeli gunboats. According to Israeli security sources, the target was Abu Yussuf, head of the Palestinian Resistance Committee, a breakaway Fatah terrorist group.

Cross-border terrorists killed

Jordanian forces killed three terrorists who fired across the border into Israel.

The terrorist squad, presumed to be Palestinian, was intercepted Monday after the cross-border attack on Moshav Yardena, which wounded an Israeli soldier. Traffic on Israel's Jordan Valley highway

was stopped for several hours as security forces searched for the gunmen until it became clear they hadn't penetrated the border into Israeli territory. A fourth man was captured alive.

West Bank clash

Two Palestinian terrorists were killed and an Israeli commando was wounded in a clash in the West Bank.

Israeli special forces stormed the village of Al-Saida outside Tulkarm on Monday, killing an Al-Aksa Brigade member and another fugitive from Hamas in gunfights. One of the terrorists tried to charge the soldiers and set off a bomb belt but was shot. The bomb went off prematurely, killing him.

Hezbollah hit, Israel blamed

Hezbollah blamed Israel for a blast in Beirut that killed one of its senior militiamen. Ghalib Awali died after an explosion ripped through his car Monday in the Lebanese capital's southern district, a Hezbollah stronghold.

A group identified with the rival Sunni Muslim community, Damascus Troops, claimed responsibility. There was no comment from Jerusalem.

Settler population rising

The number of Israelis living in settlements slated for evacuation is rising, according to government statistics.

The percentage has increased in the Gaza Strip by more than 4 percent since Prime Minister Ariel Sharon announced his Gaza withdrawal plan in January, as opposed to only 1.5 percent in the preceding six months. Rabbis opposing the withdrawal are recruiting new settlers ahead of the September 2005 withdrawal, the Jerusalem Post cited settler leaders as saying Monday.

NORTH AMERICA

Political group wants Jewish debates

The National Jewish Democratic Council wants Jewish Democrats and Republicans to debate across the country.

The Jewish Democratic group has enlisted 20 members of Congress and one retired member to represent the Democratic side in debates in major battleground states and cities with large Jewish populations, and has asked President Bush's re-election campaign to do the same. The group also wants local Jewish federations and community relations councils to sponsor the forums. The Republican Jewish Coalition said it is interested in the plan.

Jews oppose juvenile executions

Several U.S. Jewish groups have come out against capital punishment for juvenile offenders.

The U.S. Supreme Court will hear the case of a Missouri man convicted of committing a murder when he was 17 years old. Jewish groups joined a coalition of religious groups in calling the death penalty for juvenile offenders a violation of the Eighth Amendment and community religious tradition. The American Jewish Committee, American Jewish Congress, Jewish Council for Public Affairs and Religious Action Center for Reform Judaism are among the groups.

Colorado Jewish paper honoring survivors

A Jewish newspaper in Colorado is compiling a list of all Holocaust survivors who have lived in the state.

The Intermountain Jewish News will also publish a bibliography of every interview with a survivor or liberator that has been published in the newspaper since World War II. The project is slated to be published in the paper in the spring of 2005.