



## IN THE NEWS

## Police pen in Gaza marchers

Israeli police penned in thousands of settlement supporters intent on marching into the Gaza Strip.

Police fanned out Tuesday around Kfar Maimon, a southern Israeli village where some 7,000 Israelis opposed to the upcoming Gaza withdrawal had massed on the second day of their march.

Organizers say the march will reach Gush Katif, the main Gaza settlement bloc, by the end of the week, but Israeli authorities banned the move.

## \$1 billion paid in Holocaust restitution

The Claims Conference distributed more than \$1 billion in 2004, the largest single-year payout in its history.

The figure was announced on Tuesday at the annual meeting of the group's board of directors in New York.

Some \$778 million went to Holocaust survivors.

An additional \$121 million went to heirs of property, and \$45 million went to account holders or their heirs through the Swiss banks settlement.

More than 10 percent of the funds went to organizations in 41 countries that care for Jewish Holocaust victims or do Holocaust research and education.

## London mayor equates Likud, Hamas

The mayor of London said Israel's Likud Party and the Hamas terrorist group are "two sides of the same coin."

"Each side emphasizes the extremism of the other in order to attract sympathy," Ken Livingstone, a frequent critic of Israeli policy, told Britain's Sky News, Ha'aretz reported.

But, he added, "I think it is the Israelis who are leading the stubborn line."

# WORLD REPORT

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## As Rice heads to Mideast, she juggles two contradictory views

By RON KAMPEAS

**W**ASHINGTON (JTA) — For the third time this year, Condoleezza Rice heads to the Middle East peddling peace — but this time with two views that may be tough to reconcile.

One is that both Israelis and Palestinians need to take steps to ensure the smoothness of next month's Israeli withdrawal from the Gaza Strip. The other is that it is the Palestinian Authority that principally has failed the "road map" peace process in recent months — and which may not yet be capable of making peace.

The U.S. secretary of state's mission to the region, tacked on at the last minute to an African tour and coming just a month after her previous foray, assumes added urgency this week with an intensification of violence between Israel and terrorist groups; belated attempts by P.A. President Mahmoud Abbas to confront the terrorists; and a determined, last-ditch effort by Israeli right-wingers to scuttle the Gaza Strip evacuation.

One U.S. view was evident in the carefully worded language coming out of the State Department this week.

"Both parties need to make a maximum effort to make this withdrawal successful," Rice's spokesman, Sean McCormack, said Monday, the day before her departure. "We also urge both parties to exercise restraint and to restore calm."

Yet a report drafted by the State Department, which President Bush will soon submit to Congress, suggests quite a different outlook — one that blames the lack of progress on the Palestinian Authority's failures.

"Despite the P.A.'s public condemnations of violence, the P.A. did not deploy its security resources consistently and effectively against terrorism during the reporting period," which dates to January 2005, the report said. "A general atmosphere of impunity persisted, allowing terrorist groups to act without fearing either legal or political consequences."

The contradiction inherent in Rice's mission is embodied in the report itself: Despite its overwhelmingly negative tone, Bush is submitting it to justify his decision to waive congressional restrictions that would bar the direct disbursement of assistance to the Palestinian Authority. The report accompanies Bush's directive to disburse \$50 million directly to the Palestinian Authority.

Unable to document progress on the P.A. side, the report instead argues that U.S. assistance will help bolster Abbas' standing among the Palestinians, which would help him face down the terrorists.

"The United States has a national security interest in helping Israel and the Palestinians move forward toward peace," the report says. "We must send the signal to the Palestinian people and to the broader international community that the United States will do all it can to support the P.A. leadership and help with infrastructure development necessary for Palestinian economic recovery, especially as Israel proceeds with its plan to disengage from Gaza and parts of the northern West Bank.

"Direct assistance at this crucial time provides a tangible sign of U.S. support for the P.A. leadership and the Palestinian people

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ANALYSIS

## ■ U.S. seeks to calm inflamed Mideast tensions

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— particularly important as Palestinian electoral processes continue.”

The administration is concerned that Hamas and other militant Islamic groups will make gains in legislative elections later this year.

JTA obtained the report before it reached congressional appropriators. Staffers at congressional offices declined comment.

“As Israel is undertaking disengagement, a historic sacrifice in pursuit of peace, this report from the White House is the latest indication that the Palestinian Authority continues to fail in its responsibility to fight terrorism,” said Josh Block, a spokesman for the American Israel Public Affairs Committee. “The Palestinian Authority must dismantle the terrorist organizations. That means fighting terrorism for real — taking away the bullets and guns and bombs and rockets — and putting terrorists in jail.”

The value of the assistance lies less in the actual cash than in the symbolism of Bush’s determination to get the money directly to the Palestinian Authority, said Larry Garber, who until last year was the West Bank and Gaza director for the U.S. Agency for International Development, which oversees such assistance.

“It shows the president’s confidence” in Abbas, said Garber, who is now the executive director of the New Israel Fund. “Symbolically, it resonates.”

But Garber said one idea expressed in the report — that the cash will help Abbas in the elections — might be misplaced.

“I have strong doubts about the efficacy of trying to impact elections through this assistance,” he said. “I think people will realize it’s U.S. assistance, but I’m not sure it translates into people voting differently.”

In any case, attached to the money are nine oversight conditions typical of USAID assistance, which could keep it from having an impact before the elections.

The United States — and to a lesser degree, Israel — favor Abbas as a relative moderate. Since Abbas’ election in January, Israel has been frustrated by his unwillingness to fulfill P.A. commitments to confront the terrorists.

Abbas prefers to neutralize militant groups by co-opting them into his government, a strategy Israel says only allows terrorist groups to regroup and rearm.

Abbas complains that Israel won’t allow the Palestinian Authority to arm sufficiently to confront the terrorists, an assertion supported by the top U.S. security envoy to the region, Gen. William Ward.

Israel says it’s reluctant to allow the Palestinian Authority to rearm because of past alliances between terrorists and P.A. security personnel. Under Abbas’ plan to co-opt militant groups, many terrorists simply would be absorbed into the P.A. security forces.

In recent days, U.S. officials have praised Abbas’ decision last week to have P.A. security forces confront militants in the streets of Gaza.

That violence and an intensification of antiwithdrawal activities by Israeli prosettler groups underscore the urgency for Rice to smooth the Gaza evacuation. Her top envoy to the region, David Welch, has spent more time there than in Washington in recent weeks.

With Iraq still mired in violence and the West at odds over how to contain Iran’s nuclear ambitions, the Bush administration

is in need of a Middle East success.

Pro-Israel lobbyists in Washington are focusing on the assistance Israel will require after it leaves Gaza. Israeli negotiators presented a plan last week for development of the Negev and Galilee, the regions likeliest to absorb most of the 10,000 settlers slated for evacuation.

Lobbyists for AIPAC and Americans for Peace Now are busy on the Hill this week setting the stage for Israel’s request, now in the process of negotiation between senior Israeli public servants and their White House counterparts. Some reports have estimated the figure at \$2.2 billion.

In a release Tuesday, APN outlined ways that assistance could help the Gaza withdrawal advance the peace process, including development of the Negev and Galilee; a rail link to the Israeli port Ashdod to ensure the Gaza Strip’s economic viability; and cash for security zones that would facilitate the passage of Palestinians and their goods between Gaza and Israel.

**‘The P.A. did not deploy its security resources consistently and effectively against terrorism during the reporting period.’**

**U.S. State Department report**

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## Jewish Dems warn on nomination

WASHINGTON (JTA) — Alan Dershowitz and other Jewish Democrats warned that President Bush’s choice for the Supreme Court could determine the fate of the constitutional separation of church and state.

In a letter Tuesday to members of the National Jewish Democratic Council, the Harvard law school professor and NJDC National Chairman Arthur Schechter said that outgoing Justice Sandra Day O’Connor “kept the wall of separation between church and state standing” dur-

ing her time on the bench, and warned that a more conservative nominee may jeopardize religious liberty.

“As American Jews, as Americans, we cannot stand idly by while our country is transformed into a place hostile to members of minority faiths,” the letter reads.

“The religious freedom guaranteed to every American by the separation of church and state has helped to make America one of the most religious countries in the world; we must not let one of America’s founding freedoms be irreparably destroyed.”

# Withdrawal foes camp out on Gaza outskirts

By DINA KRAFT

KFAR MAIMON, Israel (JTA) — Under sparse clumps of trees, thousands of antiwithdrawal activists who have gathered for a mass protest march to the Gaza Strip take refuge from the baking sun and vow to continue their struggle, no matter what.

They arrived Monday from across the country — by bus, taxi, car and on foot — despite unprecedented efforts by police to block them, including declaring their planned march illegal.

Tensions ran high as thousands of police, braced for possible confrontations, were placed on the highest state of alert.

Dressed in orange — the color they've adopted for their struggle to prevent the Israeli government from uprooting thousands of settlers from the Gaza Strip and part of the northern West Bank — the protesters are making a last stand.

"How could you not come when Jews living in the Land of Israel are being forced to move out of their homes?" asked Ya'akov Magness, 53, a clinical psychologist who traveled with his wife and daughter from their place of residence in the Golan Heights, far to the north.

The family, which camped out in a tent on Monday night, said they'll stay as long as is necessary to show the government that the activists can't be ignored. Many of the 7,000 or so protesters encamped in Kfar Maimon, a village about 12 miles from the Kissufim crossing into Gush Katif, the main Jewish settlement bloc in Gaza, were preparing to spend a second night there on Tuesday.

"There is the feeling that you must show your support and do something," Magness, a Memphis native who immigrated to Israel in 1982, said as he sat under a black tarpaulin strung between trees on a grassy hill.

Some 20,000 sympathizers gathered Monday night for a mass rally in the nearby town of Netivot. Some then continued on to Kfar Maimon, but they were prevented by Israeli police from setting out for Gush Katif.

Police cordoned off the entire village to prevent the activists from marching on Gaza. About 20 protesters were arrested Tuesday after scuffles with officers. Several people, including police, suffered light injuries.

The government declared the Gaza Strip a closed military zone last week, allowing only residents to travel in and out. Decision makers feared that if they left the area open it would be flooded by antiwithdrawal activists, complicating the evacuation of Jewish settlements and military posts slated to begin in mid-August.

The decision to declare the march illegal was based on concerns that protesters would reach the fence surrounding Gush Katif and try to break through.

Meanwhile, the government's unusually strong-armed approach to the protest drew fire in Israel. Police were ordered to stop buses en route to Monday night's demonstration in Netivot, and they threatened to confiscate bus drivers' licences — a move criticized not just by the right wing but by civil liberties groups and others.

Roadblocks were set up across the region to stop activists from reaching Netivot.

On Tuesday thousands of activists spent the day in Kfar Maimon attending lectures by rabbis at the local synagogue and resting on air mattresses and sleeping bags in whatever shade they could find. Tents were set up across wide swaths of lawn.

A large number of the protesters were teenagers — boys in orange knit kippot, some with their ritual fringes hung over orange Gush Katif T-shirts, and girls in long skirts and sandals with orange ribbons streaming from their wrists.

"We are religious, so we have a strong

connection to the land. We are against giving any part of it away to someone else,"

said Smadar Yechazkel, 16, who hitchhiked here after police halted the bus she and fellow youth-movement members had planned to travel in.

She said she was impressed by the large number of protesters who braved the journey and adapted to police interference in order to stand and be counted against the withdrawal.

"The people are the ones who should be deciding what happens. This gathering is to show the strength of the people," Yechazkel said.

A settler leader, Pinchas Wallerstein, said he was determined to see the march toward the Gaza Strip take place.

"As long as this terrible decision stands, there will be a constant presence to prevent this," Wallerstein told Israel Army Radio, referring to the August withdrawal plan.

Despite the tensions and uncertainty, the mood in Kfar Maimon was relaxed on Tuesday afternoon. Some children rode bikes with orange ribbons billowing from the handlebars. Others ate orange Popsicles and danced to religious music blasting from a van. Teenage boys danced in circles to the strains of "Am Yisrael Chai."

Moshe Abouchatzeira, 56, a carpenter from Elon Shvut, a West Bank settlement, said that despite polls that show significant public support for the withdrawal, he feels most Israelis oppose it.

"We feel most of the people are with us, and no one can pull the wool over our eyes. We are determined to prevent any evacuation of any settlement in Israel," he said. ■

**'We are determined to prevent any evacuation of any settlement in Israel.'**

**Moshe Abouchatzeira**

West Bank settler

**ISRAEL'S  
DISENGAGEMENT  
SUMMER**

## Terrorists 'reunified' with family

JERUSALEM (JTA) — One in nine Palestinians who carried out terrorist attacks during the intifada had received Israeli residency under family-reunification arrangements, a top Israeli security official said.

Yuval Diskin, who heads Israel's Shin Bet security service, testified Monday before a Knesset committee that is considering changes to a law that grants permanent-resident status to some West

Bank Palestinians with relatives in Israel.

Ha'aretz quoted Diskin as telling the closed committee that 99 percent of terrorists are men between the ages of 16 and 35 and women under the age of 25.

Palestinians in those age groups are barred from receiving permanent residence, he said.

Critics say that it's racist to place restrictions on Palestinian family reunification. ■

## NEWS IN BRIEF

## MIDDLE EAST

**Two terrorists slain**

Israeli forces killed two Palestinian terrorists in a West Bank raid. Security sources described the men slain Tuesday in Yamoun village, outside Jenin, as wanted members of Islamic Jihad. Two of their comrades were arrested.

**Abbas vs. Hamas**

Palestinian Authority police clashed with Hamas gunmen in the Gaza Strip.

At least 10 people were wounded in Tuesday's shootouts, the latest internal strife to erupt as a result of Palestinian Authority President Mahmoud Abbas' efforts to curb rocket and mortar fire at Israeli targets.

**Scroll from the sand**

An Israeli archeologist claims to have made the most important biblical find in the Judean Desert in 40 years.

Professor Chanan Eshel of Bar-Ilan University announced this month that he had discovered two fragments of a nearly 2,000-year-old parchment scroll in the Dead Sea area.

If authenticated, it would be the first such find in the area since 1965.

The two small pieces of animal skin, which carried Hebrew verses from Leviticus, have been passed to Israel's Antiquities Authority for authentication.

**Israel tallies attacks**

Palestinian terrorists have carried out 25,000 attacks over the past five years, Israel's security chief said. Since fighting erupted in September 2000, 1,048 Israelis have been killed and more than 5,600 wounded by Palestinian attacks, according to Yuval Diskin, director of the Shin Bet.

**Katsav fights plaque**

Hundreds of Israelis have had their dental work subsidized by President Moshe Katsav.

Officials in Katsav's office said Tuesday that payments were made from a presidential charity fund to some 1,150 needy Israelis last year, and that around half of them used the money to cover dental treatment.

The fund's total annual outlay is estimated to be around \$600,000.

**Road trip for Gaza pullout**

A former Israeli security chief plans to lead a nationwide convoy to drum up support for the Gaza Strip withdrawal.

Ami Ayalon, a retired Shin Bet director who recently joined the Labor Party, announced Tuesday that the pro-pullout convoy will set off from northern Israel next week and arrive in Jerusalem by month's end.

"The objective is to get members of Israel's silent majority, who support getting out of Gaza, out in the streets," Ayalon told JTA.

He said the convoy plans to stop off at two Israeli towns every day, holding musical performances and discussions of national policy.

**No more 'temptation' for troops?**

The Israeli army reportedly has stopped using female trainers for religious conscripts after their rabbis objected.

Yediot Achronot reported Tuesday that new recruits from yeshiva backgrounds would no longer undergo combat and fitness training under woman instructors.

According to the report, the decision was made after religious conscripts complained to their rabbis that the mixing in the ranks distracted them. The army had no immediate comment.

## NORTH AMERICA

**Bush: P.A. anti-terror action ineffective**

The Palestinian Authority failed to "deploy its security resources consistently and effectively against terrorism," according to a report by the White House.

The report was submitted to Congress last week when Bush formally waived congressional restrictions that would ban direct assistance to the Palestinian Authority.

It outlines steps that the Palestinian Authority has taken to arrest terrorists, confiscate arms and dismantle terrorist groups.

It noted P.A. President Mahmoud Abbas' public pronouncements and an improvement in security cooperation between Israel and the Palestinian Authority.

But it said that condemnation of terrorist attacks "were not generally followed up with concrete and sustained actions to prevent further acts of violence."

**Islamic group apologizes to Pipes**

The Canadian Islamic Congress apologized to the scholar Daniel Pipes for saying he wanted to put North American Muslims into concentration camps.

Stan Fisher, an attorney with the Toronto law firm Heenan Blaikie, confirmed that it had sent a libel notice on behalf of Pipes to the Canadian Islamic Congress after its Web site ran an article by Wahida Valiante accusing the Philadelphia-based scholar of wanting to employ "Hitlerian" tactics against Muslims.

"The Canadian Islamic Congress and Ms. Valiante apologize without reservation and retract remarks in the column that suggest that Dr. Daniel Pipes is a follower of Hitler or that he uses the tactics of Hitler or that he wants to ethnically cleanse America of its Muslim presence," the apology read.

The organization also paid Pipes' legal expenses and made a charitable donation in his name.

**Israel Project launches Gaza TV campaign**

The Israel Project launched a television ad campaign spotlighting Israel's "painful sacrifices for peace" ahead of the Gaza withdrawal.

In its release Tuesday, the Israel Project said the commercials "focus on Israel's willingness to give up land to allow 1.3 million Palestinians in Gaza the opportunity to govern themselves and provide the framework for the creation of a Palestinian state."

The 30-second spots will appear on CNN, MSNBC and the Fox News Channel hundreds of times through the end of July.

## WORLD

**Film fest cancels bomb movie**

A British film festival canceled a movie about Palestinian suicide bombers after the recent terror attacks in London.

"Because of the recent tragic events and the sensitivities involved, the Cambridge Film Festival has regretfully decided to cancel the screenings of 'Paradise Now,'" the festival stated, according to a Jerusalem Post report.

The movie, directed by a Palestinian, details the events of one day leading up to a planned suicide bombing, which is thwarted by an Israeli border patrol.

The film, which was financed in part by an Israeli production company, was voted Best European Film at the Berlin Film Festival in February.

Some critics complained that it failed to show the suffering that results from such attacks.