

# **THE ISRAEL ALERT**

*PSALMS 121:4 "Behold, He neither slumbers nor sleeps, the Guardian of Israel."*

Mar/Apr 2008

**OREGON AMERICANS FOR A SAFE ISRAEL**

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## **EIGHT STUDENTS MURDERED BY PALESTINIAN TERRORIST AT JERUSALEM RELIGIOUS SCHOOL!**

**IN GAZA CITY, PALESTINIANS WENT INTO THE STREETS AND FIRED RIFLES IN  
THE AIR IN CELEBRATION OF THE DEATH OF THE YOUNG BOYS!!!**

By Etgar Lefkovits and Jerusalem Post staff

*Police confirmed Friday morning that the Palestinian terrorist who opened fire at central Jerusalem's Mercaz Harav Yeshiva late Thursday night, killing eight students and wounding 11 others, carried a blue Israeli identity card and came from east Jerusalem.*

Speaking to Israel Radio, Police Operations Department commander Asst.-Cmdr. Yoram Ohayon said that the attacker was from the village of Jabil Mukaba, near east Talpiyot. He said police were checking whether the gunman had accomplices and how he made his way to the yeshiva.

Meanwhile, Jerusalem police chief Cmdr. Aharon Franco told the radio station that during overnight searches, police had found a car they believed was used by the terrorist. Franco said that it was the car the attacker worked with on a regular basis, estimating that it was the vehicle he used to travel to central Jerusalem to perpetrate the attack.

The names of the victims of the shooting attack were released Friday morning.

They were identified as: Yohai Lifshitz, 18, from Jerusalem; Yonatan Yitzhak Eldar, 16, from Shilo; Yonadav Haim Hirschfeld, 19, from Kohav Hashahar, Neria Cohen, 15, also from the capital, Segev Peniel Avihail, 15, from Neve Daniel, Avraham David Moses, 16, from Efrat, Roe Roth, 18, from Elkana and Doron Meherete, 26, from Ashdod.

The 8:45 p.m. shooting at the yeshiva in the Kiryat Moshe neighborhood broke a two-year lull in terror in the capital and sent students scurrying for cover from a hail of gunfire - a reported 500-600 bullets - that lasted for several minutes.

"There were horrendous screams of 'Help us! Help us!'" recounted Avrahami Sheinberger of the ZAKA emergency rescue service, one of the first to respond to the scene. **"THERE WERE BODIES STREWN ALL OVER THE FLOOR, AT THE ENTRANCE TO THE YESHIVA, IN VARIOUS ROOMS AND IN THE LIBRARY."**

As security forces raced to the scene, the gunman fired round after round of ammunition into the library at the seminary, religious Zionism's flagship institution. About 80 students had gathered in the library to celebrate the Hebrew month of Adar II, which begins on Friday evening.

It was not immediately clear, late Thursday night, whether there was a security guard at the entrance to the yeshiva.

Initial reports of a second terrorist on the loose proved unfounded.

"We heard shooting and knew that something had happened," recounted Yitzhak Dadon, 40, who studies at the yeshiva. Dadon said he cocked his handgun and went up to the roof of the yeshiva, where he saw the terrorist spraying gunfire indiscriminately at the crowd inside. Dadon said he fired two bullets at the terrorist, who began to stumble.

At the same time, police arrived at the scene and an intense gunfight erupted with the terrorist lasting several minutes, witnesses said. The scent of gunpowder wafted in the air as undercover police stormed the building.

Franco said the terrorist was killed by an IDF officer who lives near the yeshiva and raced to the scene.

Rescue workers recounted a grisly picture of students hiding under desks and locking themselves in classrooms to avoid being caught in the hail of bullets.

Yerach Toker, a paramedic for United Hatzola of Israel, said he saw several dead yeshiva students on the library's floor. "**SOME OF THEM WERE STILL HOLDING SACRED JEWISH BOOKS SMEARED WITH BLOOD FROM WHICH THEY WERE LEARNING BEFORE THEY WERE MURDERED,**" he said.

"I heard an explosion and I quickly understood that this was gunfire," said Nuri Davidov, 21. "We hid in a room and, from a window, we could see the terrorist opening fire at other students."

"We had just finished evening prayers and suddenly we heard a burst of gunfire," said Dr. Yitzhak Lubner, who was attending a class at the yeshiva. "We all immediately ducked on the floor."

Jerusalem police spokesman Shmuel Ben Ruby said the dead gunman was wearing a vest that at first appeared to be an explosives vest but turned out to be a belt holding extra ammunition.

Outside the yeshiva after the attack, crowds of angry onlookers shouted "Death to Arabs!" as rescue workers rushed the wounded to city hospitals.

Franco said that there was no specific intelligence warning about such an impending attack, although there were general alerts for terrorist attacks in the city.

Police were on heightened alert ahead of Friday prayers on the Temple Mount after a major IDF operation in the Gaza Strip earlier in the week.

Hizbullah's Al-Manar satellite television station announced Thursday that a relatively unknown Israeli Arab group called the Martyrs of Imad Mughniyeh and Gaza was responsible for the shooting attack. "Galilee Freedom Battalions - the Martyrs of Imad Mughniyeh and Gaza claimed responsibility for the Jerusalem operation," read the message that flashed across Al-Manar's screen.

Prime Minister Ehud Olmert was informed of the attack after holding security meetings in Tel Aviv. He spoke immediately after the attack with Defense Minister Ehud Barak and Jerusalem Mayor Uri Lupolianski, and held consultations with his advisers and security officials.

Lupolianski told Channel 2, "It's very sad tonight in Jerusalem - many people were killed in the heart of Jerusalem."

The Foreign Ministry said the attack would not stop Israel's peace efforts. "Talks will continue," a spokesman said.

Palestinian Authority President Mahmoud Abbas condemned the attack. "The president condemns all attacks that target civilians, whether they are Palestinian or Israeli," the PA said in a statement.

**IN GAZA CITY, RESIDENTS WENT OUT INTO THE STREETS AND FIRED RIFLES IN THE AIR IN CELEBRATION AFTER HEARING NEWS OF THE ATTACK ON THE YESHIVA.**

At Shaare Zedek Medical Center, which is only a few minutes' drive from the yeshiva, the most seriously wounded student - who had **BULLET HOLES IN MANY PARTS OF HIS BODY** - was rushed to the operating room. Spokeswoman Shoham Ruvio said he looked about 18 years old. Two other wounded students were in moderate condition, while four were lightly wounded. The age of the wounded was estimated at 16 to 28.

At Hadassah Medical Center in Ein Kerem, three wounded were  
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received. Two were in serious condition in the trauma room, while one was lightly wounded.

According to eyewitnesses, the students initially thought that the gunfire was fireworks - part of a party underway to celebrate the beginning of Adar II.

The Mercaz Harav Yeshiva is considered the leading national-religious yeshiva in Israel, with hundreds of elite students. Among its thousands of graduates are leading public figures including senior rabbis and IDF officers. It was founded in 1924 by mandatory Palestine's first chief rabbi, Rabbi Avraham Yitzhak Hacohen Kook. Its longtime head, Rabbi Avraham Shapira, died in September 2007.

Rabbi David Stav, one of many prominent graduates of the yeshiva, which has produced the bulk of the spiritual leadership of religious Zionism in Israel, said that the attack had been directed at the heart of religious Zionism.

"Mercaz Harav is the flagship of the entire religious Zionist movement," said Stav. **"THE TERRORIST TARGETED A PLACE THAT SYMBOLIZES LOVE FOR THE LAND OF ISRAEL, LOVE FOR THE PEOPLE OF ISRAEL AND LOVE FOR THE TORAH.** No Jewish soul can remain indifferent to the horrible thought that a despicable terrorist attacked a group of young men who were busy studying the holy Torah."

**Stav, who has been involved in interfaith dialogue with Israeli Muslim spiritual leaders via an organization called Kedem, said that Thursday night's attack underscores the cruelty and evil of Islamic-inspired terrorism. "FOLLOWERS OF ISLAM CLAIM THEY RESPECT THE PEOPLE OF THE BOOK. BUT THIS HORRIFIC ACT PROVES THE EMPTINESS OF THEIR CLAIMS."**

Rabbi David Simhon, the educational director of the yeshiva, said "the people of Israel will not be broken" by attacks such as this.

*Matthew Wagner, Judy Siegel and Herb Keinon  
contributed to this report.*

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## HIZBALLAH TAUNTS ISRAEL WITH "BODY PARTS"

**H**ASSAN Nasrallah, the Hezbollah chief and one of Israel's most wanted men, appeared in public for a Shi'ite religious event in the Lebanese capital for the first time in more than a year.

In a fiery speech, Mr Nasrallah said that his Lebanese Shi'ite militant group had the heads and body parts of soldiers that the Israeli army had abandoned.

**"WE HAVE THE HEADS, THE HANDS, THE FEET AND EVEN A NEARLY INTACT CADAVER FROM THE HEAD DOWN TO THE PELVIS," HE SAID.**

Mr Nasrallah has been Israel's top public enemy since his Iranian- and Syrian-backed Shi'ite militant group fought a deadly month-long war against the Jewish state in the summer of 2006.

Amid heavy security, he took part in an event for the Shi'ite religious commemoration of Ashura in the southern suburbs of Beirut, a Hezbollah stronghold, heading a procession of tens of thousands of Shi'ite faithful.

"God protect Nasrallah," chanted the crowd, carrying portraits of the Hezbollah chief.

## FROM THE CHAIR

By Inez Weissman

**T**here are moments in history that cause one to recognize the existence of multiple problems that make one wonder if there are accessible solutions. Such is this time. The children of Israel continue to be the victims of such Americans as Condoleeza Rice, of Israeli leaders such as Olmert, of the growing anti-Jewishness of such organizations as the United Methodist Church whose recent "Mission Study" likens Jews to "monsters," and this eleven million member church is expected to take up the issue of divesting from companies that do business with Israel. There is, of course, the ongoing commitment of the Islamists to "destroy" Israel. A most recent victim of this hatred is Sdoret eight year old Osher Twito whose leg had to be amputated, who was hurt seriously by an exploding Kassam rocket along with his nineteen year old brother Rami.

Should we despair and abandon our battle to stand with Israel or is there an answer?

The answer is clear and calls upon us to gain strength and more power as we fight the good and moral fight. We must examine those who would become our leaders, demanding they stand firm in their recognition of our important relationship and that she is, indeed, the canary in the mines, **WHAT HAPPENS TO ISRAEL FORETELLS OUR FUTURE.** **They must be prepared to do whatever must be done to Iran and others in the Mid-east committed to Israel's destruction, to fight terrorism wherever it appears.** Let us become political experts doing whatever must be done, making clear what our votes demand. Let us develop more and more friends in the Evangelical Christian movement and among others who will stand with us. Let us fight those Islamists wherever and whenever they appear. Yes, Osher, and all the Israeli children, we will defend you in whatever way we can, politically, forming community organizations of Christians and Jews who are soldiers fighting for the good and the moral. We will continue our efforts with our radio program, four times a week, our publication (**The ISRAEL ALERT**) distributed to libraries, schools, churches, other public places, our bringing our Israeli speaker friends to our community, to hold our events such as the "Luncheons for Rabbis and Pastors," "Dance if You Love Israel," speaking in churches, and other efforts. **AND WE WILL WIN THE BATTLE, FOR OUR CAUSE IS JUST!**

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## ATTACK WILL BE SEEN IN HASTENING THE OLAM HABA (the world to come)

By Amir Mizrock

**W**hile defense establishment officials sitting in the Kiriya military headquarters in Tel-Aviv ponder the diplomatic-security implications of last night's attack, a totally different analysis will be taking place this weekend around Shabbat dinner tables across Jerusalem and most West Bank settlements.

The people directly affected by the deadly terrorist attack on the Mercaz Harav Yeshiva are not just the students, their relatives and friends, but the much wider larger segment of the religious Zionist public. This segment of the population, already seething with an-

*(continued on page 4)*

ger, which started with the Disengagement in 2005, the Amona pullout, the government promises to America to remove illegal outposts, the continued diplomatic process launched at Annapolis and its emphasis to talk about all topics, including Jerusalem, is going to be extremely unhappy about this attack. Together with the grief and sorrow, there is going to be a lot of angry talk about good and evil, about a religious war over the Holy Land.

This attack was aimed specifically for the religious Zionist and settler population, and the terrorists knew that by speaking in this language, to these people, their message could only be interpreted in one way. This will be seen in terms of Ishmael and Isaac.

The religious Zionists are going to see this attack through the prism of messianic prophecy. Already I am hearing on religious Zionist radio stations people talking about the attack in prophetic terms, such as Isaiah 59 verse 20: And a redeemer will come to Zion, and unto them that turn from transgression in Jacob, saith the Lord.

Settler radio talk-show hosts are interpreting this prophecy by saying that if the Jews don't stop Hamas, the Palestinians, Hizbullah and any other Islamic fundamentalists God will force the Jews to do it. The talk show hosts blame Prime Minister Ehud Olmert, Foreign Minister Tzipi Livni and President Shimon Peres, and several callers into the broadcasts are unanimous in their condemnation of the Israeli government and calling on its removal.

The fact that the Foreign Ministry has already come out with a formal statement saying the attack won't derail the talks with the Palestinian Authority it will only fuel the anger of the settler population this weekend. At the funeral procession speeches Friday at the Yeshiva, Chief Sephardic Rabbi Shlomo Amar began his comments with the Psalm for Assaf: "They have spilled blood like water around Jerusalem."

Many of the top leadership of the religious Zionist movement, speaking at the funerals, spoke of revenge of the blood. **The fact that THE JEWISH STUDENTS WERE KILLED IN A HOUSE OF GOD touched the most basic nerve of many Israelis, and especially of the Religious Zionist public.**

The rabbis called on the students not to carry out acts of revenge, saying that judgment is in God's realm. "God's vengeance will come swiftly," Rabbi Mordechai Eliyahu's secretary cried out in his rabbi's name.

The fact that the attack was carried out in the way it was – live fire, chasing down the students and shooting them at point blank range, as well as confirming the kills – and not by a suicide bombing, will add to the sense of brutality, of the narrative of good.

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