

# JEWISH HARMONY AFTER ROME ATTACK

Once again, any tranquility which existed within the Jewish community of Europe during the high holy days season was shattered by the sounds of grenade explosions and machinegun fire. After the screams of young children and women subsided, a two-year old boy lay dead while 37 others were hospitalized, some seriously injured.

The attack on Rome's main synagogue at noontime during the Simchat Torah holiday turned a joyous and festive Bar Mitzvah celebration into a war zone. Blood spotted the sidewalks while prayer shawls and prayer books littered the streets, along with other personal belongings left from the carnage. Reports from Italy said Italian Jews, after initial outrage, had drawn an invisible curtain around themselves for a short time to isolate their grief and despair.

The terrorists were a well-organized commando team of Palestinians who demonstrated their ability to work in foreign countries with the cooperation of local terrorist forces. It was also another demonstration of the Palestinian terrorists desire to maintain their fight against Israel in the Diaspora. There exists

a disturbing undercurrent felt by many after the attack because of the recent royal treatment granted to the architect of terrorism, Yasir Arafat, when he visited Italy just weeks before the assault. He was greeted with open arms by President Sandro Pertini and then broke bread with Pope John Paul II at the Vatican. Further questions abound as to whether the Italian press coverage of the events in Lebanon provided an environment for incitement against Jews.

Moreover, one of the tragic consequences of the latest assault on the Diaspora is for the Italian Jewish community or any other community for that matter, to pull an invisible

curtain around themselves to isolate their grief. That would make the actions of terrorists successful if they could terrorize a community to a point where it would not stand together but in isolation.

At this crucial juncture when other Jewish communities have also been confronted without bursts of anti-Semitism and overt terrorist assaults, it is imperative that Jewish communities stand united and act in unison in support of one another. Lest we be driven into isolation and disunity.

## ISRAELI MILITARY ATTACHE TO SPEAK HERE NOV. 5



MAJOR GENERAL MENACHEM MERON, THE MILITARY ATTACHE TO THE ISRAEL EMBASSY IN WASHINGTON, WILL BE THE GUEST SPEAKER AT A RECEPTION TO BE SPONSORED BY THE LAS VEGAS CHAPTER OF THE AMERICAN TECHNION SOCIETY ON FRIDAY EVENING, NOVEMBER 5TH AT 8:00 P.M. THE AFFAIR WILL BE HOSTED BY MORTON GALANE, CHAPTER PRESIDENT, AND HIS WIFE, ROSALINDE, AT THEIR HOME, WHICH IS LOCATED AT 2019 BANIES LANE.

## TERRORISTS ATTACK ROME'S MAIN SYNAGOGUE

ROME (WNS) -- Un-identified terrorists killed a two-year-old Jewish boy and wounded 37 people, including several children, during an attack on a crowd of worshippers at Rome's "ancient" synagogue in the city's former ghetto. The terrorists threw hand grenades and opened fire with machine guns on some 500 people who were attending services.

As the wounded lay bleeding, cared for by an army of am-

bulances and first aid men, the angry crowd began shouting, "It is the Pope's fault." Some cursed the Vatican while others booed Italian President Sando Pertini. The Pope and Pertini met with Palestine Liberation Organization leader Yasir Arafat September 14 - 15 during his visit to Rome. People in the synagogue later told Italian Radio, "This is what happens when heads of state receive the terrorist leader." Shortly after the

attack, Pope John Paul II condemned the attack as a "criminal action" and as a "demonstration of hate and blind violence." The pontiff sent a cable of sympathy to the victims and to the Chief Rabbi of Rome, Elio Toaff. In Jerusalem, the Cabinet issued a statement expressing "deep shock over the despicable crime committed by the blood-thirsty terrorists against prayers and babies" at the synagogue. The Cabinet called on all government's to fight against terrorism.

According to eye witnesses, the terrorists, five to seven men of Mediterranean type, struck at 12 noon as the crowd was leaving the old synagogue. In the crowd was a group of 50 children who had attended services. One of them, two-year old Stefano Tache, was killed instantly. His sister is said to be in serious condition in a city hospital. Police set up road blocks throughout the city and according to unconfirmed reports had arrested three suspects, two men and a woman.

Italian Premier Giovanni Spadolini and several Cabinet ministers rushed to the scene of the attack. Both Pertini and Spadolini warned recently after the attack September 30 on the Jewish community center in Milan, against the danger of allowing anger over the Palestinian massacres in west Beirut to

lead to acts of anti-Semitism.

Both Pertini and Spadolini expressed shock and anger over the attack and sent messages of sympathy to the Rome community and Chief Rabbi Toaff. The two said the Italian police will do all it can to track down the culprits. The Italian police has a top-grade record of its fight against left-wing terrorism but police reported that they had no leads as yet on this new type of violence.

The synagogue attacked is located in the middle of narrow twisting alleys which once served as Rome's ghetto and where Jews have lived for hundreds of years. The people in the area appeared deeply shocked and many said that they had never in the past been submitted to anti-Semitic attacks. Even during World War II, the Italian community failed to cooperate with the Nazis and few Italian Jews were deported. The synagogue bears plaques with the names of those Italian Jews who had been executed as hostages by the Nazis in reprisal for Italian resistance acts. There are between 10 - 15,000 Jews living in Italy, most of whom are well integrated in the country's social and economic life.

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