

Israel army on alert as protests increase

TEL AVIV, Israel — Tens of thousands of right-wing demonstrators, including many Jewish settlers from the occupied lands, defied threatened Muslim fundamentalist attacks Tuesday to protest the government's peace policies.

The army was on high alert against the Muslims who threatened suicide attacks if settlers in five areas didn't evacuate by Tuesday. Troops set up roadblocks and clashed with Palestinians in Jerusalem and the Gaza Strip.

One Arab gunman was killed after ambushing a jeep.

The government also broadened its crackdown against anti-Arab Jewish extremists, hauling the founding father of the settlement movement, Rabbi Moshe Levinger, into court on a relatively minor two-year-old charge.

In Tel Aviv, thousands of right-wing supporters gathered to protest the government actions. They waved posters claiming Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin lacks the mandate to make concessions to the Palestinians.

The protesters marched from the city's main square to the nearby defense ministry, pushing baby carriages, waving torches and Israeli flags and shouting slogans against Rabin.

They booed opposition leader Benjamin Netanyahu when he called the Hebron massacre a crime but cheered when he said: "If we don't have the right to live in Hebron, we don't have the right to

live anywhere in this country."

Several demonstrators were reportedly arrested when the crowd spilled over from the Kings of Israel square and blocked one of the city's main thoroughfares. Later, police blocked off area streets as protesters marched to the defense ministry.

Four people carrying anti-Arab Kach group posters were also arrested, reported Israel television. Some demonstrators burned Palestinian flags, the television said.

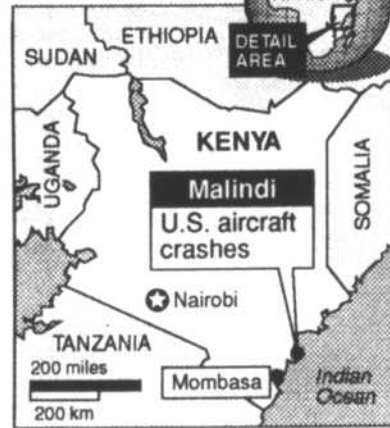
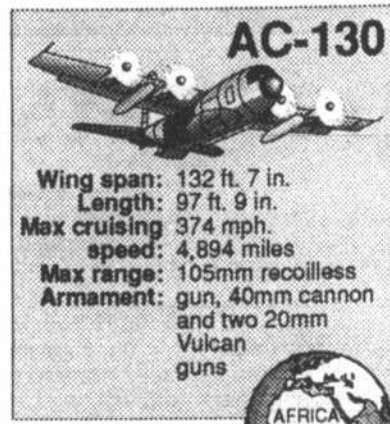
The government officially closed the offices of the extremist Kach and Kahane Lives groups after banning the two and detaining or disarming several of their leaders this week. Jewish settler Baruch Goldstein, a Kach member, killed 30 Muslims Feb. 25 in a Hebron mosque.

The PLO has demanded better protection for Palestinians, rejecting U.S. attempts Monday to restart peace negotiations. It seeks the removal of settlements in Arab towns like Hebron and international protection.

Four Gaza members of PLO leader Yasser Arafat's Fatah faction attended an unprecedented meeting with Israeli Labor Party members at the Parliament to discuss ways of getting the peace talks restarted.

The Islamic Resistance Movement, or Hamas, threatened suicide attacks if Jewish settlers in five settlement areas didn't evacuate by Tuesday.

Six survive gunship crash



AC-130
Wing span: 132 ft. 7 in.
Length: 97 ft. 9 in.
Max cruising speed: 374 mph.
Max range: 4,894 miles
Armament: 105mm recoilless gun, 40mm cannon and two 20mm Vulcan guns

NAIROBI, Kenya — Seven crew members who died when a U.S. gunship crashed off Kenya may have tried to parachute too late. Rescue teams searched the waters offshore Tuesday for a missing crewman who reportedly jumped clear of the aircraft.

Lt. Col. Mike Gannon, speaking from the scene, said six crew survived, including three who stayed in the Spectre gunship when it ditched in the Indian Ocean late Monday 75 miles north of Mombasa and just 200 yards offshore.

Amy Col. Steve Rausch, a U.S. spokesman in Mogadishu, said the AC-130H gunship had taken off minutes earlier from Mombasa's Moi International Airport for an "Eyes Over Mogadishu" surveillance mission.

The parachutes of some of the dead were deployed and floating in the sea. "One parachute hung on the tail of the aircraft," said Gannon, who added investigators believe it floated onto the aircraft afterwards and did not snag during a jump.

Other parachutes were deployed, indicating the dead crewmen might have attempted to jump when the aircraft was too low over the water, he said.

At the Pentagon, spokeswoman Kathleen deLaski said President

Clinton and Defense Secretary William Perry "are aggrieved to find that this has happened at such a late date in the general deployment of a large scale of soldiers."

Ms. deLaski said there are no plans to order the other three AC-130s in the region to halt operations to undergo a safety check.

The names of all 14 crewmembers were withheld pending notification of their families. The plane and its crew were from the Air Force's 16th Special Operations Squadron, based at Hurlburt Field in Florida.

The survivors were in good condition, Gannon said. Three were flown to a hospital on a U.S. Navy ship off Mogadishu, and three were taken to Mombasa.

Rausch said preliminary indications pointed to engine failure as the cause of the crash. He said no distress call was heard from the stricken plane in either Mombasa or Mogadishu.

The pilot attempted to ditch the aircraft in the sea, said Gannon, who added that the plane floated for a short time after it hit the water.

Three crewmen who stayed with the aircraft made their way to shore, walked a short distance to a restaurant and called for help, Gannon said.

Families question police's efforts

CHARLOTTE, N.C. — As the initial shock subsided Tuesday, a troubling question emerged: Why were the serial stranglings of 14 young black women over a period of two years all but unknown to the people of this city?

"These were common, everyday, hard-working individuals," said Dee Sumpter, whose daughter Shawna Hawk was among the victims. "They weren't prominent people with social-economic status. They weren't special."

"And," she added, "they were black."

To many who live and work in the east Charlotte neighborhood where police say Henry Louis Wallace befriended many of his victims, the formula for oversight was a simple one: They don't really count. As the bodies of young women turned up one by one, there were no banner headlines or news trucks. There were no public crusades or outpourings of support.

The mourning of family and friends went unnoticed. Suddenly motherless children were absorbed into other families without a sound. The list of sisters lost quietly grew longer. And all

the while, a killer was free.

"When Shawna was murdered, I begged and pleaded with the police to go talk to her friends and former co-workers at Taco Bell," said Mrs. Sumpter, who found her 20-year-old daughter, an aspiring paralegal, strangled in a full bathtub a year ago.

The result: more silence. Mrs. Sumpter said.

"Are you going to tell me that if they had done a little digging Henry's name would not have come up? Are you going to tell me that this doesn't reek of blatant incompetency and racism?"

Police have apologized for not spotting a link between the murders sooner, but say the cases varied enough to throw them off Wallace's trail. Indeed, until the strangler's pace picked up last week, the deaths were sporadic and not entirely similar. Officials would not comment Tuesday except to say the investigation is under review.

A few months after Wallace moved into town, the first body turned up. As the months wore on, the ranks of victims quietly swelled.

Many had worked at fast-food restaurants clustered around Sharon

Amity and Albemarle roads, like Wallace had. Many lived in nearby apartment complexes, as Wallace did until things began to disintegrate.

In recent weeks, friends reported, the smooth-talking, former radio disc jockey had been going without sleep and wearing the same clothes day after day.

Some wonder how Wallace, who investigators say is addicted to crack cocaine, was out on the streets at all. On Feb. 4, he was arrested for shoplifting at a mall within walking distance of most of the murder sites. A computer check might have revealed his lengthy police record, which included sexual assault charges and burglary convictions in two states.

Instead, he was released. A few weeks later, four more women were dead.

"Let's face it," said Barbara Clarke, a young mother who recently moved to Charlotte from New York City. "They weren't doing their job. They might have missed the first connection, or the second, or even the third. But 10? There's something wrong here."

Mortgage investor to finance homes for 10 million families

WASHINGTON — The nation's largest home mortgage investor plans to help finance homes for 10 million families in "communities in need," reaching out first to minorities and people who are now renting.

The Federal National Mortgage Association, also known as Fannie Mae, said Tuesday it expected to put \$1 trillion into the effort by the close of the decade. Since its inception in 1938, Fannie Mae has provided about \$1.35 trillion to finance more than 20 million homes.

The plan also will serve families with incomes at or below the median for their communities, new immigrants, residents of central cities and other under served areas, and people who have special housing needs.

"We believe there are millions of Americans who are economically qualified to own a home," James A. Johnson, Fannie Mae's chairman and CEO, said. "People don't have enough information, and they don't feel confident about what they need to know to obtain a mortgage."

Fannie Mae is a congressionally chartered, shareholder-owned company that purchases mortgages from lenders. It keeps some of the mortgages for its portfolio and packages others in securities to be sold to investors.

The company has \$217 billion in assets and an additional \$495 billion in outstanding, mortgage-backed securities.

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Live Drafts Local Members

WASHINGTON — Meeting federal drinking water standards is a financial problem for 50,000 small communities that account for 90 percent of the nation's drinking water violations, a congressional report said.

An environmental group said in a separate study that the nation's largest cities were using outdated filtration technology to remove contaminants from drinking water.

"Americans in the 1990s should not be relying on turn-of-the-century (drinking water) technology to protect them from disease," said Linda Greer, a scientist for the Natural Resources Defense Council.

Several Nebraska communities have complained about the costs of meeting the federal requirements.

The NRDC study and a report by the federal General Accounting Office were recently presented to a House hearing on legislation aimed at im-

proving federal drinking water requirements.

The GAO report said thousands of small communities were financially unable to meet federal drinking water requirements.

"We need to find cost-effective ways to provide these areas with safe drinking water without sacrificing public health," said Rep. Mike Synar, D-Okla., chairman of the Government Operations subcommittee on energy and natural resources.

The Environmental Protection Agency estimated that it would cost small communities nearly \$3 billion to comply with current federal drinking water regulations and another \$20 billion to repair, replace and expand their current drinking water infrastructure to meet future needs.

The GAO report urged the EPA to step up its effort to help small commu-

nities use more cost-effective technologies to protect drinking water.

In a report entitled "Victorian Water Treatment Enters the 21st Century," the NRDC accused large-city water utilities of doing "little or nothing" to protect watersheds and groundwater from pollution and of using aging methods to filter drinking water.

"Less than 10 percent of large community water systems are using modern water treatment technologies like granular activated carbon or ozone to reduce the risks of chemical contamination," the environmental group said.

Some municipal water systems rely on technologies invented before the Civil War to remove pathogens and other microbiological contaminants from water that often is distributed through 100-year-old pipes.

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