

## Chicago mourns Israel terror victims at Community Memorial Program

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JUF News

December 5, 2001 -- In what has become a tragically common occurrence over the past 15 months, more than 500 members of the Chicago Jewish community grieved together once again Tuesday at a noontime memorial. This time, community members mourned the loss of 33 Israelis who lost their lives in a weeklong spree of Palestinian terror in Israel, one of the deadliest in Israel's history.

The program was held at the Chicago Loop Synagogue and organized by the Jewish Community Relations Council (JCRC) of the Jewish United Fund of Metropolitan Chicago, in cooperation with the Consulate General of Israel to the Midwest and in concert with the JCRC's 47 participating organizations.

"I'm very thankful to be here totally by accident and to see this presence in the middle of Chicago in the middle of the day so full of support and love and warmth and strength and that I will take back home [to Israel]," said Hirsch Goodman, the founding editor of the JAFFE Center for Strategic Studies at Tel Aviv University.

"Thank G-d, the six million who live in Israel today are different Jews than the six million (killed in the Holocaust) who did not have an army to defend them, who did not have a [democratic government], who were not a nuclear power, who were not a regional superpower," he said. "This is a different Jewish people." The crowd responded to his statement with uproarious applause.

In the 36 years Goodman has lived in Israel, he has fought in many wars, but never one like this. "There were always wars on the border where you were called to reserve duty. where you'd meet another army," he said. "Now the border is in your backyard. The enemy is in front of your home. A four-year-old child is called into reserve to protect the country, a victim of indiscriminate killing."

The violence in Israel culminated last weekend, beginning Saturday night in Jerusalem's

Ben-Yehuda pedestrian mall.

At least 10 people were killed and some 180 wounded when two suicide bombers simultaneously detonated two bombs close to midnight about 40 yards apart, attacking young revelers celebrating the end of the Sabbath. A third bomb detonated approximately 20 minutes later in a nearby car, aimed at emergency workers caring for the wounded, according to Israeli officials. All 10 slain victims were young men, ranging in ages from 14 to 20.

In another attack the next morning-Sunday-another suicide bomber blew up at least 15 Israelis plus himself on a bus in Haifa. At least 37 people were injured, three seriously.

More violence came Sunday when two Palestinian gunmen shot an Israeli driver dead in the Gaza Strip.

The Palestinian terrorist group Hamas has claimed responsibility for the Jerusalem, Haifa, and Gaza attacks.

Goodman noted this statistic: Over the weekend, 26 Israelis were killed in some 30 hours. Israel retaliated by pinpointing sophisticated, accurate weaponry against Palestinian buildings and symbols, but killed no Palestinian in the process. Israel will defend itself, he said, but not through the "injudicious spilling of blood" as Palestinians have done unto Israelis.

"These are acts of terror, plain and simple, against Jews," said Steven B. Nasatir, president of the Jewish Federation/ Jewish United Fund of Metropolitan Chicago. "We expect our Moslem neighbors here in America to tell the truth as well. We call on Moslem clergy and lay leadership to plainly and simply denounce all acts of terror. You can't be against terror on September 11th and be silent on December 1st and 2nd."

Nasatir told the crowd that JUF is reaching out to terror victims and providing direct support. On a subject that JUF has been long engaged, Nasatir announced that-hours earlier-the U.S. government had frozen the assets of the Holy Land Foundation, a large Islamic charity, registered in Illinois whose dollars have flowed to Hamas, according to government officials.

U.S. Rep. Janice Schakowsky (D-Ill.) addressed the crowd, remarking on the sad realization that Americans know now in the wake of September 11th what its like to be an Israeli-what it's like to be terrified every single day.

"Now we know. Now we understand as Americans and as American Jews, we know," she said. "We see people running down the street in panic and it looks all too familiar. Now we know. We hear the sirens and see the dead and injured. We now know the courage and determination it takes to just live your life when just going shopping or out to eat or riding the bus can be life-threatening."

Along with Schakowsky, Ill. State Sen. Ira Silverstein (D-Chicago) attended the memorial. Representatives from the consulates of Israel, Austria, Greece, Poland, and Ukraine also came to the program, while other consulates sent expressions of support and solidarity. Chicago

media in attendance included the following: Chicago Sun-Times, Chicago Tribune, WMAQ-TV (NBC-5), WLS TV 7 (ABC), FOX WFLD Chicago, CLTV Chicagoland's Television, NTV International (Russian TV), and WBBM Newsradio 780.

Ida Crown Jewish Academy students recited the name of and lit a candle for each victim of terror this week.

"As we approach the festival of lights-Chanukah-perhaps we will witness once more miracle, and we will be able to light the candle on our menorah of peace and hope instead of mourning and despair," said Moshe Ram, Consul General of Israel to the Midwest. "My Chanukah wish is for the light of peace to shine on all of us and that we never again meet under this somber circumstance."