

Acquittal in Kahane murder case could be trigger for new terrorism

by Jeffrey Steinberg

On Dec. 21, 1991, a Manhattan jury found El Sayyid Nosair innocent of the charge that he murdered Rabbi Meir Kahane, the founder of the Jewish Defense League (JDL). Kahane was gunned down at point blank range in a crowded hotel conference room in New York City on Nov. 5, 1990 after he finished delivering a lecture urging all American Jews to immediately emigrate to Israel to avert a "new Holocaust." In the chaos that followed the shooting, the assailant escaped. Moments later, Nosair, who had attended Kahane's lecture, was shot by a Post Office security guard as he fled the area. He was arrested at the scene and charged with Kahane's murder.

Although Nosair was acquitted by the jury on the Kahane murder charge and a second charge of attempted murder against the Post Office guard, he was found guilty of assault and illegal weapons possession and could face as much as 36 years in jail.

Despite the convictions on the lesser charges, the acquittal on the Kahane murder has triggered an hysterical reaction among Kahane's followers in the JDL and in the Israeli-based Kach Movement. Kahane's son, Rabbi Binyamin Ze'ev Kahane, who was arrested in New York City for several disruptions before and during the Nosair trial, told a Jerusalem press conference after the acquittal: "We vow that El Sayyid Nosair will not see a day without fear until his very last day." In the aftermath of Rabbi Kahane's murder in November 1990, several Palestinian residents of the West Bank were murdered under mysterious circumstances which Israeli police believed may have been revenge for the Kahane assassination.

U.S. law enforcement sources do not rule out an upsurge in Jewish underground activity in reaction to the jury verdict. In 1985, followers of Kahane were responsible for a string of bombings that left one prominent Palestinian-American, Alex Odeh, and a man falsely accused of Nazi war crimes, Tscherim Soobzokov, dead and several others seriously wounded. At the time, FBI Director William Webster branded the Jewish underground as the most active terrorist network in the U.S.

Adding fuel to those concerns that the Jewish underground could be reactivated now are other statements from

Kahane's son charging that the entire U.S. government and court system are anti-Semitic: "I never expected justice from an American court. I never expected to see justice emanate from the same U.S.A. that displays its hostility to Jewish people and to the state of Israel in a flagrant fashion," he told the Jewish Telegraph Agency after the jury verdict.

In another Jerusalem press statement issued in mid-October Binyamin Kahane had threatened to send a delegation of Kach members to Madrid to "blow up the [Mideast peace] conference. . . . We will use methods my father taught us."

'Victim' of a plot

Nosair's two defense attorneys, Michael Warren and William Kunstler, charged that their client had been framed up for a murder that had actually been carried out by members of Kahane's own organization. Warren furthermore charged Manhattan District Attorney Robert Morgenthau with "scapegoating" Nosair because of personal "bias." Warren charged, in an interview with *Village Voice* writer Robert Friedman published on Nov. 5, 1991, that Morgenthau is a "proponent of the military apparatus in the state of Israel. . . . Morgenthau has gone into this prosecution with a tainted, biased state of mind and with the thirst of a greedy, vengeful wolf . . . in an attempt to vindicate the death of a man of whom he himself is probably a disciple."

In point of fact, Morgenthau is well known as a leading backer of Israeli Housing Minister Ariel Sharon, who advocates the massive expansion of Jewish settlements in the Occupied Territories and the eventual annexation of the West Bank and Gaza Strip by Israel. In the late 1970s, Morgenthau was the founder of an organization called P.E.A.C.E. (Prevent the Establishment of an Arab Country in Eretz Israel). Among the directors of that group was Meir Jalowitz, then the national director of the JDL and a longtime aide to Kahane.

Another founder of P.E.A.C.E., Knesset Member Geula Cohen of the Tehiya Party, had been one of the Mossad controllers of Rabbi Kahane during the formative years of the JDL in the early 1970s. According to an unauthorized biography of Kahane by *Voice* writer Friedman, Cohen, current Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir, and a top official

of the Brooklyn chapter of the Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rith, had provided financing and military training to Kahane's JDL cadres during a period when the group was carrying out bombing attacks and other acts of terrorism against Soviet government officials in the United States in protest over Soviet restrictions against Jewish emigration.

Morgenthau openly acknowledged in interviews at the time that he had founded the group at the personal behest of his close friend Ariel Sharon. Morgenthau is also a long-standing member of the National Commission of the Anti-Defamation League (ADL) of B'nai B'rith.

Some bizarre allegations

Whether or not the claims by defense attorneys that El-Sayyid Nosair was the innocent victim of a "plot" by some of Kahane's own patrons or followers to eliminate the rabbi and blame his death on Arab "extremists" are true or not, the jury apparently was not convinced by the prosecution that Nosair actually pulled the trigger. According to press accounts of the trial, no fewer than 16 witnesses, mostly close associates of Kahane, testified that they were in the room when the shooting occurred. But none of them could decisively say that they saw Nosair pull the trigger.

In the Nov. 5 article, defense attorney William Kunstler told the *Village Voice* that Nosair had previously met with Kahane in New York City to discuss "religion and politics." That earlier meeting, set up by Kahane's own security people, may explain why Nosair was permitted to attend the Kahane lecture. That report, however, flies in the face of other media accounts linking Nosair to the Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood group Al Jihad and to the Abu Nidal terrorist organization.

The Al Jihad group was behind the assassination of Egyptian President Anwar Sadat in November 1981.

Although since the death of Rabbi Kahane, the Jewish Defense League has all but disappeared from sight, and the Kach Movement in Israel has been supplanted by other radical organizations like the Gush Emunim and the Temple Mount Faithful, prospects of a terrorist response to the Nosair acquittal can not be ruled out. During the 1985 wave of Jewish underground violence in the United States, U.S. law enforcement specialists discovered that the JDL was little more than a front for radical elements within the Israeli Defense Forces and Mossad, who deployed trained paramilitary specialists to carry out the actual bomb attacks in the United States. Thus the capability for carrying out sophisticated terrorist acts in the name of the JDL still exists with or without Kahane or his loyal followers.

According to some Middle East specialists, the Sharon wing of the present Israeli government is dead set against any territorial concessions that might lead to the creation of a Palestinian entity on the West Bank of the Jordan River. They are already looking toward another Middle East war and could resort to terrorism as a means of furthering their goals.

Establishment media 'trash' George Bush

Will Bush be the Gorbachov of 1992? President George Bush's popularity is not just slipping in the polls these days. Even the Anglo-American political establishment, concerned about the decreasing viability of a Bush reelection bid, has begun to take pot-shots at his presidency. Bush's response to the (finally admitted!) economic crisis by undertaking a flag-waving Asian tour to bludgeon the Japanese on trade policy, an attempt to "play to the gallery" of a xenophobic electorate, became the object of ridicule in the national and international press. The following are a few examples of the way George Bush has been run through the wringer since November.

In many cases, EIR differs in fundamental or secondary ways with the viewpoint of the attacks printed below; we offer this documentation to invite readers to reflect on the same media's adulatory coverage of a Bush who could "do no wrong" in his allegedly masterful handling of the Gulf war, one year ago. At that time, EIR was one of the very few voices in the press that not only criticized Bush, but also warned of how ephemeral his "success" would prove to be. The Washington Times, New York Post, and most of the London press were most feverish worshipers of the George Bush personality cult one year ago and even more recently. In this sample, we spare you the numerous attempts to "out-Bush" Bush, e.g., various congressional reprimands about his failure to topple Saddam Hussein or to batter our allies sufficiently, some of which lunacy is covered elsewhere in this issue. We also do not report the electronic media, which have been especially fierce. Perhaps the Jay Leno jokes targeting Bush—unheard of one year ago—are the clearest sign of the times.

The Times (London), Nov. 3—A feature by Washington correspondent Joe Klein, argues in a parody of Bush, "There is this *thing* in the air, a mosquito buzz of dissatisfaction . . . a hint of an intimation of vulnerability: that *Bush can be had*. . . . It's Bush: The act is wearing thin. The foreign policy is receding from center stage now." The growing concern Klein correctly notes is the worsening economy, and in that light Bush is losing support as the nation's voters see Bush "always making comments from a golf cart, or up in Maine, riding around in his powerboat—doing country-club things while