

# BULLETS ON BLEECKER



**IRV RUBIN**  
Long-standing feud.

**Bystander shot as Jewish rivals battle**



**DOMINIC SPINELLI**  
Shot in the knee.

By JIM NOLAN, SONIA REYES, ANNE E. MURRAY, KIERAN CROWLEY and MICHAEL SHAIN

A feud between two leaders of militant Jewish defense groups ended in gunfire in the East Village yesterday, police said.

An innocent bystander was wounded when Mordechai Levy, head of the Jewish Defense Organization, opened fire on the leader of the rival Jewish Defense League from a rooftop shortly after noon, they said.

Levy, 29, surrendered to police 2½ hours later. The dispute began when Irv Rubin, 44-year-old head of the JDL, tried to serve court papers on Rubin in a \$1 million slander suit, authorities said.

Levy claimed in a phone call to police that Rubin and private investigator Steve Rombom came to his Bleecker Street apartment house to kill him. He has been charged with three counts of attempted murder.

The two militant groups — which both advocate violent retaliation against anti-Semitism — are offshoots of the original Jewish Defense League founded in 1968 by Brooklyn-born Rabbi Meir Kahane, who now lives in Israel.

The wounded man was identified as Dominic Spinelli, 69, an air conditioner mechanic

from Brooklyn.

Spinelli, who was shot in the knee, was sitting in a truck on Bleecker Street between Lafayette Street and Bowery when the shooting began.

When Rubin and Rombom could not get into Levy's apartment to serve the papers they threw rocks at his second-floor windows and shouted insults from the sidewalk, cops and witnesses said.

"Those process servers were really provoking the guy," Spinelli said from the emergency room at St. Vincent's Hospital.

"So I guess the guy just got mad and started shooting," he said, adding: "Too bad for me I was inside the van at that moment."

Emily Paulson, 26, a resident of the building at 6 Bleecker St., said she heard one of the men shout in a mocking voice: "Mordy, come down here. We've got something for you."

"It was eerie, like a sick joke when a kid makes fun of some other kid," said Paulson.

"The next thing I heard was the shots — two, then five really quick."

Cops said Levy opened fire with a Mini-14 Rugger rifle — one of seven guns he had legal permits to keep in his home.

Rubin said the first shots were aimed at him.

The second burst was meant for the fleeing Rombom, Rubin said.

A bullet from that barrage caught Spinelli in the knee, the air-conditioner man said.

Minutes later cops poured into surrounding streets as sharpshooters took up positions on nearby roofs.

Levy agreed to surrender after two hours of telephone negotiations with Det. Sgt. Wally Zeins.

At the East 5th Street stationhouse, Rubin called the shooting "a purposeful assassination attempt."

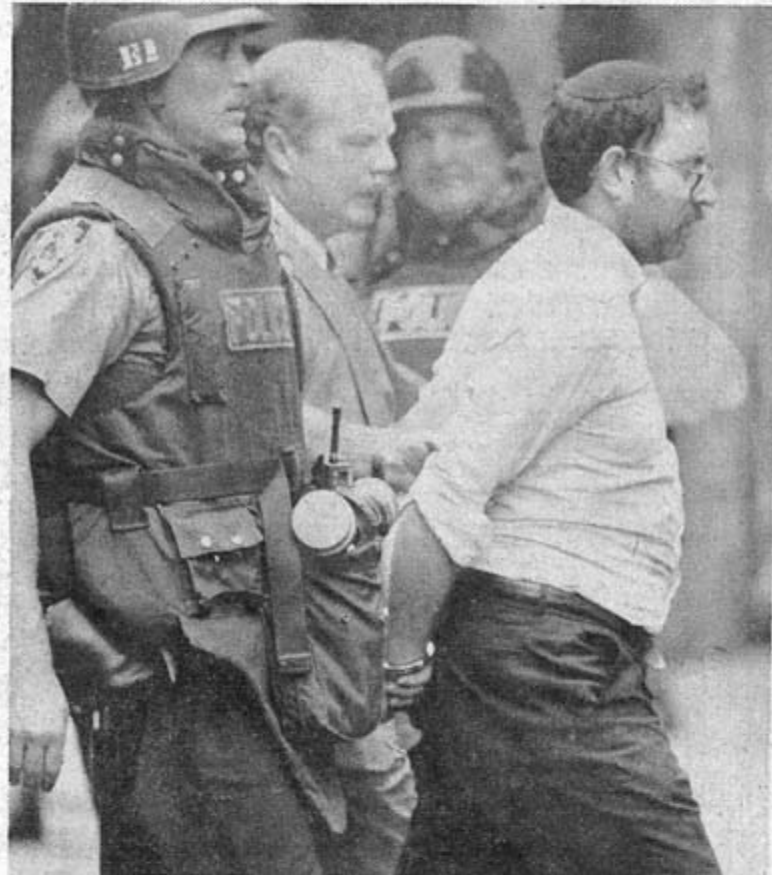
"Thank God he was a poor shot," Rubin told reporters.

The lawsuit that started it all alleges Levy called Rubin and Rubin's wife drug dealers on a Los Angeles radio show two months ago.



Mike Albans

**WAITING GAME:** SWAT cop keeps his sights on Levy's East Village apartment.



New York Post, Michael Nercio

**DRAMA ENDS:** Two-and-a-half hours after the drama began, cops lead the handcuffed Mordechai Levy away to be booked.



Benny Stumbo

**BIG GUN:** The cops' "secret weapon" — an armored personnel carrier — arrives at the scene.

## JDL wasn't militant enough for Levy

By MICHAEL SHAIN

Mordechai Levy has a knack for showing up in the wrong place at the right time.

Seven years ago, Levy, 29, quit the Jewish Defense League, founded by Rabbi Meir Kahane — complaining it was not militant enough.

In its place, Levy founded the rival Jewish Defense Organization.

While Levy claims JDO

has a following of several thousand young people, the B'nai B'rith Anti-Defamation League puts the figure at less than a dozen.

"We're talking about nothing more than a constantly shifting handful of people," said the ADL's David Lowe.

"He picks up vulnerable kids at meetings where he talks tough. The kids join, get disillusioned and leave. That's the pattern," said

Lowe.

"He tries to exploit tension when acts of anti-Semitism occur."

When Ku Klux Klan leader David Duke ran for the Louisiana state legislature — he was elected — Levy was there.

"He tried to throw his weight around and ended up alienating everyone, including the Jewish community there," said Lowe.

Levy has been arrested a

number of times, but has no convictions in New York, according to police.

He was arrested in Los Angeles in 1981 as a suspect in the bombing of a car belonging to the Soviet mission.

He and Irv Rubin, now head of the JDL, scuffled at a press conference in Los Angeles two months ago.

In July of last year, he was arrested in Queens and

charged with trespassing and assault in connection with a protest outside a kosher catering hall where black Muslim leader Louis Farrakhan had spoken.

"This isn't like him at all," said Levy's friend, David Pollack, of the Jewish Community Relations Council after yesterday's shooting.

"He's a big talker, not a dangerous person."