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**SAVAGE MURDER OF ISRAELI RECRUITS  
BADLY TARNISHES REPUTATION OF IDF  
By Hugh Orgel**

TEL AVIV, Feb. 17 (JTA) -- The savage killing of three Israeli army recruits over the weekend by Arab guerrillas has stunned the country and badly tarnished the reputation of the Israel Defense Force, long hailed as one of the best disciplined and effective fighting forces in the world.

The soldiers, two of whom were immigrants from the former Soviet Union, were hacked to death as they slept in their lightly defended training billet at about midnight Saturday.

A fourth soldier suffered moderate wounds and is believed to have injured one of the three assailants, who escaped with stolen IDF weapons.

The IDF, which was still searching for the assailants Monday, is reeling under charges of negligence from the top levels of government.

The incident is the worst blow to the IDF's prestige since a lone terrorist from Lebanon, crossing the border silently by hang-glider, killed six soldiers and wounded seven at an IDF base near Kiryat Shmona in Upper Galilee on the night of Nov. 25, 1987.

The latest killings were part of a weekend of soaring tension and bloodshed barely a week before the bilateral peace talks between Israelis and Arabs were to resume in Washington.

According to radio broadcasts from Lebanon, amplified by loudspeaker in Arab towns and villages of the West Bank, the blow at the IDF was struck by the Black Panther group of Yasir Arafat's Al Fatah branch of the Palestine Liberation Organization.

**Hezbollah Leader Gunned Down**

Israel, convinced it was the work of Fatah even before the Black Panthers boasted of it, sent its air force on a fierce retaliatory strike Sunday against the Palestinian refugee camps at Ain Hilweh and Rashidiya in southern Lebanon. They are considered hotbeds of Fatah activity and have been bombed many times before by the Israelis.

This time, according to local reports, four people were killed, including two children, and nearly a dozen others were wounded.

In an apparently unrelated event Sunday afternoon, Israeli helicopter gunships, under the protective cover of jet fighters, blasted a motorcade in Lebanon carrying Sheik Abbas Musawi, leader of the Shi'ite fundamentalist Hezbollah.

Musawi, his wife, Shihan, and their 5-year-old son, Hussein, were killed, along with seven bodyguards, in a hail of machine gun and missile fire that set their cars aflame.

Hezbollah is held responsible for at least 20 of the 45 armed attacks in southern Lebanon since the Middle East peace conference that opened Oct. 30 in Madrid.

The pro-Iranian group has been trying to sabotage the peace talks by provocations, intimidation and violence.

Observers said it was unlikely that the assassination of Musawi was connected with the attack on the IDF encampment because it was too precise and well-planned an operation to have been organized in a few hours.

The attack on the IDF camp also bore the earmarks of a carefully planned operation. The killers used silent weapons -- axes, knives and a pitchfork -- to slaughter their victims.

The dead were identified as Pvt. Ya'acov Dubinsky, 30, from Carmiel; Pvt. Yuri Preda, 33, of Jaffa; and Cpl. Guy Friedman, 20, of Zichron Ya'acov, who was in charge of the training unit for the weekend. They were buried in their hometowns Sunday.

The wounded recruit is Pvt. Sergei Zatziriyani, 29, of Haifa.

**Immigrated Three Years Ago**

Dubinsky, Preda and Zatziriyani immigrated from the Soviet Union about three years ago but were in the IDF only three weeks.

As with most immigrants, their military service had been deferred, and they were undergoing a condensed basic training course before being posted to reserve units.

The target was an unfenced training camp known as Nahal Training Base 80, at Galed, at the southern end of the Carmel range.

It is adjacent to a base used by Nahal, a branch of the IDF consisting mainly of soldiers who combine military and agricultural duties.

Israeli police say they have not completely ruled out the possibility that Israeli Arabs may have cooperated with West Bank Palestinians in preparing the attack. They base that on the high level of local intelligence that must have been supplied to the assailants.

The IDF chief of staff, Lt. Gen. Ehud Barak, has appointed a senior officer, Maj. Gen. Nehemia Tamari, to investigate the incident and submit a report to General Headquarters, probably before the end of the week.

He will try to establish how the attackers managed to penetrate the unfenced camp inside Israel proper without being discovered, then escape unharmed.

The investigation also will establish whether guards were correctly posted and if all IDF standing orders were obeyed.

Other questions are why the IDF placed raw recruits, with little or no experience handling weapons, in an open, barely defended area under the command of a corporal, instead of a more senior, experienced soldier; why the guard on duty had no ammunition for his rifle; and why the nearby Nahal unit did not immediately go to the aid of the recruits and organize a prompt search for the attackers.

**A 'Shame And A Disgrace'**

The incident is already referred to by the IDF top brass as a "major blunder," indicating a general laxity of army discipline.

Former Chief of Staff Rafael Eitan, until recently minister of agriculture, called the incident a "shame and a disgrace" to the entire defense establishment.

Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir, facing an election in June, told the Cabinet on Sunday that the incident was a "most serious" one "involving negligence."

The attackers struck apparently after careful, systematic reconnaissance.

They approached the training camp from the

east and skirted a row of five empty tents, whose occupants were on weekend leave. They attacked the center two of a row of four tents on the far side of a small square that contained the unit headquarters tent.

The attackers carried axes and knives. Their pitchfork was apparently picked up en route.

They murdered two soldiers in their sleep. A third soldier at the far end of the tent awoke to find himself menaced with a knife. By his account, he struck the intruder with his rifle just as he was being stabbed.

At that moment, the corporal in charge of the unit, awakened by the noise, left the command tent firing his rifle. He was fatally stabbed by one of the attackers.

The sound of shooting aroused the Nahal soldiers in a group of tents more than 300 yards away. But by the time they got organized for action, the assailants were gone.

Meanwhile, the violence of the weekend is having repercussions. On Monday, following the killing of Musawi, Katyusha rockets landed in Galilee and in the southern Lebanon security zone. No one was hurt and no damage was reported.

Later Monday, an Arab worker stabbed his Jewish employer in the back in the fields near Moshav Shuva in the Gaza Strip. The victim, Rafi Shmuel, 34, was taken to Soroka Hospital in Beersheba.

#### **BEHIND THE HEADLINES:**

#### **SHEIK SLAIN BY THE ISRAELIS HEADED GROUP NOTORIOUS FOR BLOODY ATTACKS**

By Gil Sedan

JERUSALEM, Feb. 17 (JTA) -- When Israeli helicopter gunships blasted a motor convoy Sunday afternoon on a road in southern Lebanon, killing Sheik Abbas Musawi, they were settling a bloody score with one of Israel's most implacable foes.

Musawi, 39, was leader of the pro-Iranian Shi'ite fundamentalist Hezbollah, which Israel holds responsible for most of the terrorist attacks aimed at its territory in recent years and scores of killings.

Hezbollah, which means "Party of God," heads the Islamic Resistance Movement dedicated to getting the Israel Defense Force and its allied, mainly Christian South Lebanon Army out of the 450-square-mile buffer on Lebanese soil that Israel calls its security zone.

The group's hit-and-run raids, land mines, Katyusha rocket attacks, infiltration attempts and kidnappings have taken a high toll and kept the IDF and SLA constantly in action.

Musawi was hit traveling from Jibchit village, in southern Lebanon, to Sidon, on the coast, after attending a memorial service for Hussein Rajeb, a Hezbollah leader killed several years ago.

The motorcade was passing through Tafthata village at about 5 p.m. local time when two helicopters descended from the sky, firing a mixture of missiles and machine-gun fire.

The choppers were identified later by personnel of the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon as U.S.-made Apaches of the Israeli air force.

Musawi's Mercedes was set ablaze. According to accounts from Lebanon, the sheik was burned to death with his wife, Shihan, and their 5-year-old son, Hussein.

Seven of Musawi's bodyguards were either

burned in their cars or gunned down as they fled for cover.

After a few hours of silence, Israeli Defense Minister Moshe Arens acknowledged on television that the attack on the convoy was an intentional "hit" to eliminate Musawi.

It was a rare admission for Israel to make. Arens said nothing about the members of Musawi's family or the members of the sheik's party trying to flee for their lives.

#### **A Long Record Of Violence**

But the intended message to the Shi'ite fundamentalists was that no one is safe from Israeli retribution.

Even a partial list of terrorist attacks of which Hezbollah has boasted, against Israel and its Western friends and allies, would seem to justify the action, from Israel's point of view:

**April 18, 1983** -- A booby-trapped car explodes at the U.S. Embassy in Beirut, killing 16 people and injuring 120.

**Oct. 23, 1983** -- A terrorist driving a TNT-laden truck blows himself up and kills 241 U.S. Marines and sailors by crashing into a barracks at Beirut International Airport when most of the men are sleeping.

**Nov. 4, 1983** -- A booby-trapped car explodes at the IDF command headquarters in Tyre, southern Lebanon, killing 30 and wounding 29. Israel was engaged in a phased withdrawal from Lebanon, which it invaded in June 1982.

**Sept. 20, 1984** -- An explosion wrecks the U.S. Embassy annex in Beirut, killing 20 and injuring 16.

**March 1, 1985** -- A booby-trapped car explodes at a border gate near Metulla, killing 12 Israeli soldiers and wounding 20.

**Oct. 19, 1988** -- A booby-trapped car kills eight soldiers and wounds seven.

**Oct. 20, 1991** -- A roadside bomb explodes in southern Lebanon, killing three soldiers.

**Oct. 29, 1991** -- Three more soldiers are killed by a roadside bomb and five are wounded in a separate attack by members of the Islamic Jihad who cooperate with Hezbollah.

#### **Strongly Opposed To Peace Talks**

Sheik Musawi's hatred of Israel was motivated partly by a desire to get Israeli soldiers off Lebanese soil and partly by his religiously inspired opposition to Zionism and the presence of a Jewish state in the Middle East.

In addition to fomenting terrorism, Musawi missed no opportunity to try to halt the peace process with Israel. Hezbollah openly threatened the Lebanese delegates to the bilateral talks.

Hezbollah also is believed responsible for the fate of Ron Arad, an Israeli air force navigator shot down over Lebanon in 1986 and believed to be the only of the missing Israeli soldiers alive.

Musawi was born in Nabi Sheet village in the Bekaa Valley of eastern Lebanon. He got his religious education in Qum, the hometown of the late Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini of Iran.

He became one of the founders of Hezbollah, which was established with Iran's assistance in 1982 as the umbrella of a group of extremist Shi'ite organizations. From the outset, its ideology has been strongly anti-Israel and anti-Western.

Musawi rose rapidly in the Hezbollah hierarchy. He soon became officer in charge of operations against Israel. Nine months ago, after an internal reshuffle, he replaced Sheik Subhi Tuffeili as commander of Hezbollah.

## U.S. WANTS TO BACK LOAN PACKAGE, WHITE HOUSE OFFICIAL TELLS NJCRAC

By Larry Yudelson

PORTLAND, Ore., Feb. 17 (JTA) -- The White House wants to support loan guarantees for immigrant absorption in Israel, a high-level Bush administration official told a national gathering of Jewish community leaders here this week.

But the Israeli government must consider the loans important enough to accede to U.S. conditions, Richard Haass, a senior director on the National Security Council, said in an address Sunday to the annual plenum of the National Jewish Community Relations Advisory Council.

Haass, who also ranks as a special assistant to President Bush, did not spell out what those conditions were.

But the administration is understood to have demanded a phased-in freeze on construction of homes in the Jewish settlements of the administered territories.

The U.S. guarantees are needed to help Israel borrow \$10 billion from private banks over the next five years. The money would be used to help absorb up to 1 million immigrants from the former Soviet Union and Ethiopia.

Without the U.S. guarantees, Israel would be charged a higher interest rate and be subject to less favorable repayment terms.

Israel's ambassador to Washington, Zalman Shoval, told the NJCRAC delegates at the same session that he is confident "a formula can be worked out" with the United States to obtain the guarantees.

He acknowledged that "Israel, being on the receiving end, will have to go more than half way" toward meeting U.S. concerns.

Haass seemed to want to make sure the American Jewish community would place blame on the Likud government in Jerusalem for any failure to reach an agreement on the loans.

### Enough Votes In Congress?

But Sen. Bob Packwood (R-Ore.) said that if the Bush administration and Israel cannot agree on conditions for the guarantees, Congress is prepared to pass a bill introduced last fall that would issue the guarantees without any political strings attached.

"I believe it could be moved," he told the Jewish Telegraphic Agency. "And if vetoed, we could override."

But, he added, "the leaders of the Jewish community, both here and abroad, are trying to weigh if the victory is worth the price." That cost would be the Bush administration's wrath at suffering a first-ever veto override.

"There could be lots of ways to take out their anger" at the Jewish community, said the senator.

Haass, in his remarks, insisted that the U.S.-Israeli relationship "is better than it sounds."

But in a tacit admission that the partnership has long since passed the honeymoon stage, he reminded the NJCRAC delegates that "the mark of a good relationship is not that you agree; it is that you learn how to disagree."

When America recently supported a U.N. Security Council resolution condemning Israel for the planned deportation of 12 Palestinians, that in fact illustrated "agreeing to disagree" in action, he said.

"This is a case where no surprises were sprung. The U.S. and Israel talked about it at

extremely high levels weeks before. Each side was straightforward and very honest about their positions," he said.

Regarding the loan guarantees, Haass said the administration believes that while resettling immigrants is a humanitarian effort, achieving peace "is also a humanitarian goal."

In fact, he said, peace is what the new immigrants need to create "the kind of life they really deserve."

Arguing that there is "a sense of urgency" to the peace process, the NSC official called on "all parties to avoid creating obstacles."

Longstanding American policy describes the Israeli settlements as "obstacles to peace."

### Unanimity On Need For Loans

During a question-and-answer period, Michael Pelavin of Flint, Mich., a past chair of NJCRAC, asked Haass to convey to the administration that "all of us in the room agree on the need for loan guarantees."

Responded Haass: "I hope you hear the message I had. We want to make things happen, but in a way consistent with our goals. We will not be seen as fair if we don't stand up for principles we believe in," he said.

But Shoval argued on the contrary that American demands regarding settlements are not evenhanded and are, in fact, harmful to the peace process. They convince the Arab countries that concessions can be extracted from Israel without having to produce a quid pro quo, he said.

He acknowledged that settlements are a topic of debate among Jews in both Israel and the United States. But he said the debate in Israel is only a matter of where the settlements should be built.

"Some are for settlements only on the Jordan Valley or around Jerusalem, and others are for putting settlements everywhere, or especially on the hilltops," he said.

"Did you ever hear from those opposing settlements whether they differentiate between settlements here or there, including Jerusalem?"

According to reports of Shoval's recent discussions with Secretary of State James Baker, the U.S. proposal on the settlements would allow Israel to complete construction of at least 6,000 housing units in the administered territories. That is roughly the amount built during the last four years of Israel's Labor-Likud unity government, which fell in March 1990.

### Urgency Of Loans Is 'Very Great'

Shoval said Israel could never agree to a ban on Jewish construction in the territories, calling it "a form of apartheid."

He equated it with the "abhorrent" proposal to expel Israeli Arabs from the country. That policy, known as "transfer," is the banner of the Moleket party, which pulled out of the Likud-led government last month.

Shoval said the urgency of the loan guarantees -- and of the aliyah from the republics of the former Soviet Union -- is "very great."

"You will understand why we can't say about the reports we have had," he said, presumably referring to documentation of anti-Semitic threats in the successor states to the Soviet Union.

"We will be very sorry if one day we will say, Jews did not come to Israel when they could because, among other things, Israel did not get the help it needed," the ambassador said.

## WIESENTHAL CENTER DRUBS DENIAL THAT VATICAN HELPED NAZIS FLEE

By Tom Tugend

LOS ANGELES, Feb. 17 (JTA) -- A denial by the Vatican that it helped Nazi war criminals escape to South America after World War II has been labeled by the Simon Wiesenthal Center as "a poor attempt to evade the central issue."

In a statement issued last Friday, a papal spokesman said charges that the Vatican aided top Nazis as part of its fight against communism were "historically false" and denied "Pope Pius XII and the Holy See the merit" for saving Jewish lives during and after the conflict.

Rabbi Abraham Cooper, associate dean of the Wiesenthal Center, charged that the Vatican statement ignores the real issue: whether the Holy See will open its official archives of the post-war period as they bear on the escape of war criminals from Europe.

On Monday, the director of Vatican Radio replied to the Wiesenthal Center, trouncing "the latest attempt to assign to phantom documents the job of proving the presumed leniency" of the Vatican toward the Nazis.

In a letter sent Feb. 6 to Cardinal Angelo Sodano, the Vatican's secretary of state, the Wiesenthal Center requested access to the documents in order "to gain a better understanding" of how people such as Adolf Eichmann, Josef Mengele, Walter Rauff, Walter Kutschmann, Franz Stangl and Andrija Artukovic "made their way from Rome to freedom in South America."

If the Vatican considers its statement as a response to the request, the "reaction is absolutely incredible," Cooper said. The Vatican has not responded directly to the letter.

Cooper pointed to the recent action of Argentine President Carlos Menem in opening Argentina's files on war criminals, as well as to similar actions by French Catholic Church officials and former East bloc countries.

"If the Vatican has nothing to hide, then it should share its archives with responsible researchers and historians," Cooper said.

### Says Nazis Had Vatican 'Protectors'

Nazi-hunter Simon Wiesenthal joined the controversy in an interview with the Italian newspaper La Repubblica. Wiesenthal was quoted as saying that the Vatican was part of a well-known escape route and that "the Nazis had many protectors in the Vatican."

The escape route, known as the "rat line," involved the International Red Cross, which issued passports to millions of legitimate refugees, but also to war criminals, Cooper pointed out.

The Red Cross issued the passports on the recommendation of various humanitarian and religious agencies, including the Vatican.

For instance, Mengele, the infamous "Angel of Death" at the Auschwitz extermination camp, entered Argentina in 1949 on a Red Cross passport. Whether Vatican officials played a part in his escape from Europe "is one of the things we want to find out," said Cooper.

The role of the Vatican was written up in 1947 by Vincent La Vista, a State Department employee and military attache to the U.S. Embassy in Rome at the time.

In the "top secret" report, La Vista described the "rat line," which helped, for example, Klaus Barbie, the "Butcher of Lyon," escape Europe.

The confidential report was obtained by journalists through the Freedom of Information Act and made public in 1983.

It said Barbie's help was provided by the Vatican, the Red Cross and the U.S. Army's Counter Intelligence Corps.

The "rat line," or monastery route, was known to the U.S. Embassy in Rome, which did nothing to stop war criminals from fleeing Europe, the report said.

The escape route was said to begin in Bavaria and the Austrian frontier, through the Italian Alps, to way stations in Italy's south and, ultimately, departure from Genoa or Naples.

Barbie, for example, is believed to have dressed as a priest or monk and allowed to pass from monastery to monastery. He worked for U.S. intelligence after the war.

The International Red Cross has also refused to open its files.

Cooper expressed the hope that the American Red Cross would exert pressure on its parent body to reverse the policy.

Vatican historians have acknowledged that there were probably isolated Nazi sympathizers at the Holy See, such as Bishop Alois Hudal, but have rejected charges that there was an official policy to help war criminal escape.

There has been for years tremendous controversy over the wartime actions, or lack of such, by Pius XII, the wartime pontiff, who largely kept silent against Nazi atrocities.

## BOMB SCARE AT BUDAPEST JEWISH SCHOOL TIED TO DEBATE ON NEO-NAZIS IN PARTY

By Agnes Bohm

BUDAPEST, Feb. 17 (JTA) -- A bomb scare at the Anna Frank Jewish high school here last week has been linked to a parliamentary debate over the emergence of neo-Nazi forces in the Hungarian Democratic Forum, the ruling political party.

The school, which adjoins what is presently the only active rabbinical seminary in Eastern and Central Europe, was evacuated Feb. 12 after two anonymous telephone calls to the principal warned that a bomb would explode in an hour.

Police searched both buildings but found nothing.

The caller referred to a speech made in Parliament the day before by a Jewish member, Gyorgy Gado, who charged that "there are fascists" in the Hungarian Democratic Forum and criticized the government for not repudiating them.

Gado cited the extreme right-wing newspaper Hunnia, which promulgates an openly neo-Nazi ideology and is widely circulated in democratic Hungary.

The Democratic Forum maintained that the extremists were marginal and accused Gado of exaggerating their influence.

But Hungarian writer Gyorgy Konrad, president of PEN, the international writers association, warned that "these extremist nationalistic things should not be dismissed."

Konrad, a Jew, recalled that at the beginning of the 1930s, nobody took Adolf Hitler seriously.

Gusztav Zoltai, secular leader of the Hungarian Jewish community, told the Jewish Telegraphic Agency he agrees with Gado.

He called it sad that Jews have once again become the subjects of a debate in Parliament.