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84th Year

TOP NEWS IN BRIEF

Israeli teen slain in West Bank

The corpse of an Israeli teen-ager with stab and gunshot wounds was found Tuesday near the West Bank city of Ramallah.

Israeli police identified the youth as Yuri Gushtzin, 18, of Jerusalem.

The Al-Aksa Brigades, a militant group that is affiliated with Palestinian Authority President Yasser Arafat's Fatah movement, claimed responsibility for the murder.

Palestinians seek settler arrests

Palestinian officials are presenting Israel with a list of more than 50 people they want Israel to arrest as suspects in attacks on Palestinians.

The officials said the Palestinian Authority will assassinate those on the list if Israel does not arrest them. Israel dismissed the list — which mirrors the lists of wanted Palestinian militants that Israel has submitted to the Palestinian Authority — as a public relations stunt.

"First let them take care of their own," said Ra'anon Gissin, an aide to Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon, "and then they can preach to us."

Israeli defense officials have received warnings that Palestinian militants are planning to attack prominent Israeli activists in the settlements, Israel Radio reported Tuesday.

Some settler leaders say they are taking precautions, including changing their cars and altering travel routes.

Mom told Chandra to visit Hillel

A video released by the parents of missing intern Chandra Levy mentions Hillel: The Foundation for Jewish Campus Life.

In the video, Levy's mother asks Chandra if she's been to the local campus Hillel, telling her, "That's where you go to meet a lot of wealthy people, wealthy Jewish people."

Reacting to the video's release, Jeff Rubin, a spokesman for Hillel, told JTA, "We would welcome Chandra Levy or any Jewish student to Hillel."

Because of Tisha B'Av, the JTA DAILY NEWS BULLETIN will not be published Monday, July 30.

NEWS ANALYSIS

CIA may serve as Mideast monitors, but details haven't been fleshed out

By Matthew E. Berger

WASHINGTON (JTA) — Israel has agreed to the presence of U.S. monitors for a fragile cease-fire with the Palestinian Authority, but much remains unclear about the scope and timing of any international presence in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

Bowing to a growing push for an observer force in the West Bank and Gaza Strip — most strongly articulated at this week's meeting of G-8 leaders in Genoa, Italy — Israel has accepted the idea of CIA officials serving as monitors.

While the CIA has stretched its mission to include facilitating security talks between Israel and the Palestinian Authority, serving as international observers would move the agency into uncharted territory.

A monitoring role would be the latest escalation of Bush administration efforts in the current Mideast conflict.

The administration, which has been hesitant to take broader steps, would be intervening in response to demands from Europe and the Arab world.

After years of intensive American involvement under the Clinton administration, the ground seemed to have shifted after George W. Bush took office in January.

The Bush White House originally said the CIA would not play a role in the Middle East conflict — despite the fact that CIA Director George Tenet was involved in negotiating a final-status security agreement at the failed talks held at Camp David last July.

Within a few months of the Bush administration taking office, however, Tenet was back in the region facilitating security talks.

His meetings produced the "Tenet working plan," a June cease-fire agreement under which Israel and the Palestinian Authority would resume security cooperation and end violence.

The Tenet plan — and recommendations of an international commission led by former Sen. George Mitchell — have formed the major policy guidelines for American and other diplomats struggling to get the negotiation process back on track in recent months.

However, a subsequent trip to the region by Secretary of State Colin Powell in late June failed to curb the violence and rhetoric, and the Bush administration is currently low on options.

The administration had stood by Israel's refusal to admit international monitors. Israel fears monitors merely would provide cover for attacks by Palestinian militants, while documenting and criticizing the Israeli army's response.

On his recent trip, Powell first voiced U.S. support for the monitor idea, then backtracked in the face of Israeli criticism. Since then, Israel and the United States have been negotiating the issue, and have agreed that an augmented CIA role would be acceptable.

Israel says only the Americans will be permitted to serve as monitors, and the United States has made clear that it will set up a monitoring mechanism only if it is approved by both Israel and the Palestinians.

Both Israel and the United States say monitoring would begin during the seven-day cooling-off period outlined in the Mitchell Report.

While the CIA has dipped its feet into the Middle East several times during the past few years, Tenet remains hesitant to involve the agency too heavily, and he may fight White House attempts to use his staff in an observer role, sources told JTA. However,

MIDEAST FOCUS

Anti-Arafat riots erupt in Gaza

Palestinian Authority President Yasser Arafat cut short a visit to the Persian Gulf to deal with rioting that erupted after Palestinian security officials arrested a number of members of Hamas and the Popular Resistance Committee, a group that wants a more violent uprising than the Palestinian Authority is pursuing.

Monday's arrests set off a riot in Gaza City, where hundreds of people, including Hamas gunmen, threw rocks and fired at the home of a Palestinian commander. No one was hurt, but it was one of the strongest shows of Palestinian anger against their leadership since the uprising began last September.

New U.S. envoy takes up duties

The new U.S. ambassador to Israel, Daniel Kurtzer, presented his credentials Tuesday to Israeli President Moshe Katsav. Kurtzer told Katsav that he will work in the coming weeks to get Israel and the Palestinians to agree to allow outside monitors to oversee a U.S.-mediated cease-fire. Kurtzer, who is replacing Martin Indyk, previously served as U.S. ambassador to Egypt.

In a related development, the Orthodox Union said it kashered Kurtzer's official residence in Herzliya. Kurtzer, who is an Orthodox Jew, also arranged to have the Cairo embassy made kosher when he served as U.S. ambassador to Egypt.

Israel says E.U. tarred settlers

Israel complained to the European Union of rushing to judgment when it blamed Israeli settlers for killing three Palestinians, including an infant boy, in a West Bank attack last week.

An Israeli official said there is still no proof the killers came from Jewish settlements. E.U. leaders are "helping to demonize the settlers," the official said.

After the July 19 attack, Israeli police said the gunmen drove toward Israel proper.

Tenet also was reluctant to jump into the Mideast fray under President Clinton — seeing the peace process as outside CIA jurisdiction — but bowed to a personal appeal by Clinton.

A State Department official said the task of monitoring international situations usually falls either to the State or Defense Departments, and would be a new role for the CIA.

Israel sees the observer role as similar to the CIA's current role as "security facilitator." In Israel's eyes, the monitors will not be expected to travel to the scene of each terrorist attack, but will observe from a distance.

"They want to reconfigure the CIA role to make it more appealing to the Europeans and the Arabs, but keep it within the Tenet guidelines," one Israeli official in Washington said.

But the Palestinians would prefer a monitoring force that actually would intercede during violent incidents, and it is unclear whether they will accept the CIA's role as proposed by the Israelis.

A State Department spokesman said details of the monitors' role still must be worked out.

The Palestinian Authority preferred an international force, but is said to have agreed to a team composed only of Americans.

Allowing an observer force, even in name, would signal to the European community that Israel is willing to be held accountable for its actions.

Yet some remain skeptical that monitors will be able to halt the slide toward escalation in the region.

"People would like to see some kind of system that is acceptable to both sides that could actually help the situation, but I'm not sure it's going to work," said Edward Walker, president of the Middle East Institute and a former ambassador to Israel and Egypt.

Israel, for its part, is skeptical about international observers' ability to keep the situation quiet.

The international force in Hebron, for example, has not been effective in quelling violence or holding the Palestinians accountable for their actions.

"It's an illusion to think that international monitors would solve any problems," Israeli Embassy spokesman Mark Regev said. "It only becomes a point of new friction."

And there is concern that Israeli acquiescence to the monitoring force would represent a reward for Palestinian Authority President Yasser Arafat and the Palestinian uprising — giving the Palestinian leader even less of an incentive to rein in Palestinian terrorist attacks.

Malcolm Hoenlein, executive vice chairman of the Conference of Presidents of Major American Jewish Organizations, said the monitors will be more acceptable to Israelis if they do not go to the scene of each terrorist attack.

"They'll never be there when the terrorist attack happens, they'll only be there for the Israeli response," Hoenlein said.

Walker, too, acknowledged that Israel is afraid that its free press and democratic political system will make it easier for observers to view their actions — while the "Palestinians will hide behind the monitors." □

Sharon gives in to religious parties

JERUSALEM (JTA) — Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon has suspended efforts to stop providing increased child allowances to large families after the Shas and United Torah Judaism parties threatened a coalition crisis.

The two parties draw their following from the fervently Orthodox community, which is the prime beneficiary of the allowances. □

'Would you like the Web with that?'

JERUSALEM (JTA) — Diners at a suburban Tel Aviv branch of the McDonald's fast-food chain can now order the World Wide Web to go with their burgers and fries.

The restaurant in Ra'anana is believed to be the first McDonald's outlet to install computer terminals at the tables and offer customers Internet access for a fee. □



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JEWISH WORLD

Holocaust is not on the map for Brazilians, new survey says

By Daniel Fleishman

Chair named for solidarity rally

Marvin Lender, the past national president and chairman of United Jewish Appeal and former president of Lender's Bagel Bakery, was named chairman of the pro-Israel solidarity rally scheduled for Sept. 23.

Organizers say the rally, sponsored primarily by United Jewish Communities and to be held near the Israeli Consulate in New York, is expected to draw tens of thousands of people.

Ex-Swiss bank guard blasts Jews

A former security guard who prevented the shredding of vital Holocaust-era bank records four years ago told a Swiss newspaper that he had been mistreated by Jewish groups.

Claiming that such groups owe him \$1 million, Christoph Meili told the *SonntagsZeitung*, "I am just asking for my money and that they leave me in peace. I have had enough of the sanctimoniousness" of Jewish groups.

Meili became something of a celebrity in Jewish circles after he blew the whistle on the Union Bank of Switzerland, which later contributed to a historic \$1.25 billion settlement under which Swiss banks agreed to pay to settle claims surrounding Switzerland's handling of Holocaust victims' assets.

Reward posted for London arson

London police offered a \$7,000 reward for information leading to the arrest and conviction of a serial arsonist who has targeted a fervently Orthodox neighborhood in London.

Six homes were attacked in June and early July, mostly in the middle of the night. No one has been injured.

Schindler's widow hospitalized

The widow of Oskar Schindler is in critical condition at a hospital near Berlin. The head of internal medicine at the hospital would not confirm reports that Emilie Schindler, 94, had suffered a stroke.

She is credited with helping her husband save hundreds of Jews from the Nazis, the subject of the Oscar-winning epic film "Schindler's List."

Vandals hit Belarus Jewish site

Swastikas and other anti-Semitic graffiti repeatedly have been scrawled on the walls of a building housing a Jewish youth club in a city in Belarus, according to the Union of Councils for Jews in the FSU.

In other developments in the city of Borisov, neo-Nazi teen-agers reportedly set fire to the doorway of the local Chessed welfare center and vandalized the local Jewish cemetery. The local Jewish community is protesting what it calls the authorities' reluctance to investigate the incidents.

NEW YORK (JTA) — Nearly one-third of Brazilians are unaware of the Holocaust, the highest level of Holocaust ignorance in 13 countries surveyed over the last decade by the American Jewish Committee.

Only 5 percent of the 1,000 respondents in Brazil correctly identified Auschwitz, Dachau and Treblinka as concentration camps.

Jews make up less than 1 percent of Brazil's total population of 171 million.

"The level of ignorance in the largest South American country" about the Holocaust is "very troubling," said Shulamit Bahat, acting executive director of the AJCommittee.

But Brazilians seem to value the memory of the Holocaust.

Eighty percent of the respondents polled by IBOPE, a Brazilian-based polling firm, said it is important for everyone to remember the Nazi extermination of the Jews. Only 13 percent disagreed.

That indicates that despite their unfamiliarity with the topic, Brazilians are open to learning about the Holocaust, said Kenneth Bandler, director of public relations and communications at the AJCommittee.

The literacy rate in Brazil is lower than that of surrounding countries — about 83 percent, compared to about 94 percent in neighboring Argentina, according to UNESCO.

Still, these statistics can't account for the results of the poll, said Bandler. A combination of factors may help explain the results, he said.

The survey "shows that certain countries like Brazil are not only geographically removed from Europe, but their history and culture are removed from the events surrounding World War II," he said.

The AJCommittee hopes that increased Holocaust education in Brazil's schools will ameliorate the problem.

UNESCO reports that Brazil has raised the number of years that a child starting school at age 5 will spend studying, from 11.8 years in 1991 to 14.8 years in 1997.

But more schooling doesn't necessarily guarantee better education.

"There's a presumption among Jews that the Holocaust is on the radar screen of every nation worldwide," Bandler said. "What this survey indicated is that this is not so. This is something that pains us that we want to see corrected."

Officials from the group will present the findings to Brazil's Ministry of Education as part of an effort to press the ministry to increase Holocaust awareness in schools.

"Teaching about the Holocaust should be made an integral part of the curriculum in Brazil," Bandler said.

A majority of the poll's respondents — 63 percent — agree with this idea.

Other noteworthy statistics from the survey:

- 11 percent said it seems possible that the Holocaust never happened;
- 37 percent would "prefer not to have" Jewish neighbors, a percentage roughly equal to those who would prefer not to have Asian or Arab neighbors; and
- 45 percent "agree" that "now, as in the past, Jews exert too much influence on world events."

The survey, which was conducted in March, had a margin of error of plus or minus 3 percent. □

Scotland pressed on Nazi case

NEW YORK (JTA) — The Simon Wiesenthal Center has called upon Scotland's justice minister, Jim Wallace, to expedite the extradition to Lithuania of an Edinburgh resident. Anton Gecas, also known as Antanas Gecevicius, is accused of participating in genocide and crimes against humanity during the Holocaust.

"Every day that passes without Gecas being extradited brings this Nazi collaborator a day closer to eluding justice," the center's Israel director, Efraim Zuroff, said in a letter to Wallace. □

AROUND THE JEWISH WORLD

French students fix sights on center for Holocaust denial*By Andrew Diamond*

PARIS (JTA) — French student groups and anti-racist organizations are trying to draw attention to a university long known as a breeding ground for Holocaust denial and other far-right activities.

If they succeed, student leaders say, they will deliver a severe blow to the far-right in France.

The University Jean Moulin is named for a heroic leader of the French Resistance who was tortured and executed during the Nazi occupation.

But in an ironic twist, the school, which is also called Lyon-III, has come to be known among French students as the "fascist university."

That reputation grew out of events dating back to 1981, when a group of scholars with strong ties to far-right elements in France and Italy created the Institute for Indo-European Studies at the university.

From the outset, one of the scholars' main goals was to pursue what is known throughout France as "negationnisme" — Holocaust denial.

For a few years, the products of their labor remained buried in obscure right-wing journals.

In 1985, however, the institute found itself mired in controversy when one of its founding members, Jean-Paul Allard, served on a doctoral committee that granted highest distinction to a thesis denying the existence of gas chambers in Polish concentration camps.

The Ministry of Education nullified the dissertation the following year but Allard, a professor of German at Lyon-III, walked away from the affair unscathed.

Now, as his retirement nears, Allard is again coming under fire.

Over the past several months, a series of protests by a coalition of student groups at Lyon-III have managed to focus public attention on Allard and his colleagues.

Last February, members of the National Union of French Students — Independent and Democratic, the Union of Jewish Students of France and a local student organization called Hippocampe drew national attention to the situation at Lyon-III by occupying a research building there.

Carrying banners juxtaposing Moulin and the French Resistance's Gaullist cross with Allard and the Nazi swastika, the organizers denounced Holocaust denial and demanded sanctions against Allard.

The student groups were supported by anti-racist organizations such as the League of Human Rights and SOS Racism. Their actions prompted the university's president, Gilles Guyot, to take action.

Late last month, following a request from Guyot's office, two professors who in 1990 approved with honors a thesis attempting to disprove the Holocaust changed their evaluation of the work to "unacceptable."

The dissertation, completed under the guidance of a Lyon-III history professor, attempted to validate the theories of Paul Rassinier, the father of French Holocaust revisionism.

Guyot subsequently announced that the matter was closed, but

student groups did not agree.

They have asked France's Ministry of Education to appoint an independent commission to examine right-wing influence at Lyon-III.

The ministry hasn't decided whether to act, but newspaper accounts in *Le Monde* and *Liberation* about the situation in Lyon have created the momentum for change.

Earlier this month, a regional commission on higher education summoned Guyot to explain why he approved a check for some \$4,000 to the Society for Indo-European Studies.

The society was created by Allard in 1999 after the Institute for Indo-European Studies dissolved itself in the midst of a Ministry of Education inquiry.

As a private organization, the society is not eligible for funding from a public university.

With the Socialist Party holding power in France, observers say it is likely that the student organizations will be granted the more far-reaching investigation they seek.

How far such a commission would be willing or able to go in severing the ties between the university and far-right groups is unclear.

Guyot has minimized the involvement of university faculty in right-wing activities, claiming that only three professors have clear affiliations with extreme-right groups.

But organizers of the student protests disagree.

"People who really know the situation can come up with the names of some 20 extreme-right members of the faculty," says Philippe Aim, President of the Lyon chapter of the Union of Jewish Students of France.

Other critics of Lyon-III say the school's importance to far-right parties — particularly the anti-Semitic and xenophobic National Front — cannot be determined by mere head counts.

Its value, they say, lies more in the theoretical and institutional legitimacy the school lends to Holocaust denial, which in the past has served as a key campaign strategy for the National Front.

Since the mid-1980s, National Front leader Jean-Marie Le Pen has used Holocaust denial to focus media attention on his party and mobilize right-wing voters.

Such tactics proved successful in the first round of the 1988 presidential election, when Le Pen's National Front Party gained a shocking 14.4 percent of the vote.

Although Holocaust denial is on the wane in France, Lyon-III nonetheless provides it with the trappings of legitimacy, student leaders warn.

For Jewish students in particular, the struggle involves another dimension.

"For Jews like me born after the war, who have been taught the duty of memory since our early age, it is shocking to see people questioning the existence of concentration camps and diminishing the importance of the Holocaust," Aim says.

"Faced with this situation, one can either feel helpless or fight back." □

Weizmann official admits to theft

JERUSALEM (JTA) — The deputy director general for finance of the Weizmann Institute of Science has admitted to stealing \$5 million from the European Committee for the Weizmann Institute, based in Switzerland.

Israel Radio reported that the official lost the money in gambling and failed stock investments. □