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TOP NEWS IN BRIEF

Bush backs Israeli incursions

President Bush said he supports Israel's incursions into the West Bank.

At a White House news conference Monday, Bush said, "I would hope that everybody got the message that we all have responsibilities to fight off terrorist attacks."

The president also said he would call for Israel to allow for more Palestinian freedom of movement "as security improves."

Peres to meet with P.A. ministers

Israeli Foreign Minister Shimon Peres was expected to meet with two Palestinian Cabinet ministers.

Peres will hold talks with the newly appointed ministers for interior affairs and finance, the Israeli daily Ha'aretz reported.

The paper said Peres would discuss ways to ease living conditions for Palestinians in population centers where the army has assumed control.

He will also discuss resumption of security coordination between the two sides.

Shooter's wife: He didn't do it

The wife of an Egyptian man who killed two Israelis July 4 at Los Angeles International Airport denied he was responsible.

Hesham Mohamed Hadayet "is a victim of injustice," his wife, Hala, told The Associated Press. "In America, they hate Islam and Arabs after Sept. 11."

Cabinet backs Jewish land bill

The Israeli government is backing a bill that could bar Israeli Arabs from owning homes on state-owned land. [Page 4]

Group makes aliyah from JFK

Some 400 people gathered Monday at JFK Airport's El Al terminal to make aliyah.

The flight of 135 families was coordinated by Nefesh B'Nefesh, an organization launched in November to financially assist Jews who want to move to Israel.

Other partners involved in the effort are the International Fellowship of Christians and Jews, the Jewish Agency for Israel and Israel's Absorption Ministry.

FOCUS ON ISSUES

To fight the 'new anti-Semitism,' Jewish groups seek global strategy

By Michael J. Jordan

NEW YORK (JTA) — The new strain of anti-Semitism that has broken out around the world, couching itself in anti-Israel rhetoric, requires a global strategy in response, Jewish and Israeli leaders agree.

Yet six months after the strategy's creation, the most high profile of several different initiatives launched to combat this "new anti-Semitism" is still in the organizing stage.

That raises several questions for those leading the effort to beat back the new anti-Semitism: How will Jewish groups translate their tough talk into action? Will such action be unified and synchronized, or will different groups duplicate efforts? And should Israel direct such efforts, or be just one among several actors?

In January, Israel's deputy foreign minister, Rabbi Michael Melchior, announced the creation of the "International Commission for Combating Anti-Semitism."

It would differ from other Jewish efforts because it would be comprised primarily of prominent non-Jews and would be global in scope, while angling to establish local commissions in as many countries as possible, Melchior said.

The "demonization" of Israel had crossed the line of fair criticism, Melchior said, and the test for the commission would be "how successfully we can get the right people involved and turn this organization into an international movement."

The commission would raise public awareness of anti-Semitism and take an active role in lobbying, advocacy and education, Melchior said.

Then, the Anti-Defamation League, which for 90 years has dedicated itself to fighting anti-Semitism, announced it would team up with the World Jewish Congress in a new global effort.

Utilizing the WJC's access to nearly every Jewish community in the Diaspora, the groups would create a task force aimed at keeping anti-Semitism "latent, dormant, immoral and unacceptable," Abraham Foxman, ADL's national director, told JTA.

At the same time, the WJC, through its European affiliate, the European Jewish Congress, has established a separate "European Coordination Center" to shape public opinion and lobby European governments and parliaments on issues of anti-Semitism, said Avi Beker, WJC's secretary-general.

The European Center's first action was a rally that brought Jews from across Europe to Brussels on May 29.

As for potential overlap between Melchior's International Commission and the joint ADL-WJC task force, Beker said, "We have quite good lines of communication and consultation" with the commission.

Besides, Beker said, "the more you do, the more people you can reach out to, and the more you can achieve."

As for the Melchior commission, it so far has little to show beyond its lofty vision statement — and the headlines its creation garnered.

Melchior set an Oct. 1 target date to have the commission up and running. But his spokesman, Moni Mordechai, said no full-time employee has yet been hired, and Melchior and his staff are only working part time on the commission.

Moreover, Mordechai said, they have raised only a few hundred thousand dollars — partly from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs budget, the rest from Jewish philanthropists — of the several million he said is needed to jump-start the commission.

"The raison d'être is already there, but the capacity to do it is in the organizational

MIDEAST FOCUS

'Quartet' meeting planned

Officials representing the United Nations, European Union and Russia plan to meet with Secretary of State Colin Powell next week in New York.

The July 15 meeting of the "Quartet" may be followed a day later by meetings with leaders of Arab states, including Egypt, Jordan and Saudi Arabia.

Palestinian leader fired?

Reports that the West Bank intelligence chief was fired are incorrect, according to a spokesman for Yasser Arafat. Nabil Abu Irdeineh issued the denial following reports that Arafat had fired Tawfik Tirawi.

Israel to privatize El Al

An Israeli ministerial committee decided to privatize El Al. As a result of the committee's decision, shares in the national airline will be sold off gradually.

Secret talks held in Rome

Israeli and Palestinian officials held secret talks last year in Italy, the two sides confirmed Monday. During the talks, the two sides came up with a proposal that foundered amid the ongoing violence.

The proposal, which Israeli Foreign Minister Shimon Peres discussed publicly in February, called for an immediate cease-fire, followed by the recognition of a Palestinian state on land then under Palestinian control. This was to be followed by negotiations on a final border for a Palestinian state.

Israeli minister speaks for MIAs

An Israeli Cabinet minister called on Jewish leaders to help seek the freedom of three Israeli soldiers kidnapped by Hezbollah in October 2000.

Addressing the Conference of Presidents of Major American Jewish Organizations in New York on Monday, Dan Naveh also praised President Bush's recent policy speech on the Middle East.



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stage," said Irwin Cotler, a Canadian lawmaker and human rights expert who co-founded the commission with Melchior and Swedish official Per Ahlmark.

Nobel laureate Elie Wiesel also is expected to play a prominent role.

"We haven't had a sustained involvement in a manner that would allow this to be established in a quicker manner," Cotler said.

That *raison d'être* actually snuck up on many Jewish leaders and activists, revealing itself in its full ferocity only during the past year.

Israel long has been isolated within the United Nations, the U.N. Commission for Human Rights and other international bodies. Indeed, the U.N.'s notorious 1975 "Zionism is Racism" resolution completely dismissed Israel's guiding ideology.

Meanwhile, Holocaust denial long has pervaded the Arab world, as have medieval blood libels and wild conspiracy theories about Jews.

But it was only with the eruption of the Palestinian intifada in September 2000 that all these forces converged, opening a crucial second front: the battle for world opinion.

Things came to a head late last summer in Durban, South Africa, at the U.N. World Conference Against Racism.

While Arab and Muslim activists and diplomats attacked Israel as an "apartheid state" guilty of war crimes and genocide, thousands of nongovernmental activists from around the world, as well as local black South Africans, climbed aboard the anti-Israel bandwagon with wildly racist attacks on Jews and Israel. Aside from Israel, Jewish groups and the United States, which reacted with indignation, only a small clutch of non-Jewish activists and diplomats protested the onslaught.

Cotler said his experience at Durban enabled him to connect the dots.

His description of "the new anti-Jewishness" likely will provide much of the ideological underpinning for Melchior's International Commission.

"What we are witnessing today — and which has been developing incrementally, almost imperceptibly, for some 30 years now — is a new, virulent, globalizing and even lethal anti-Jewishness without parallel or precedent since the end of the Second World War," Cotler, a law professor at McGill University in Montreal, wrote recently.

"This new anti-Jewishness is grounded in classical anti-Semitism but distinguishable from it.

"In a word, classical anti-Semitism is the discrimination against, or denial of, the right of Jews to live as equal members of a free society; the new anti-Semitism — sometimes characterized as 'anti-Zionism' — involves the discrimination against, denial of, or assault upon, the right of the Jewish people to live as an equal member of the family of nations," he wrote. "What is intrinsic to each form of anti-Semitism — and common to both — is discrimination."

Whereas classical anti-Semitism had tangible indices — discrimination in education, housing or employment, for example, or attacks on synagogues, cemeteries, or Jews themselves — this "new anti-Jewishness" requires entirely new markers, Cotler said. Cotler has proposed 13 indices to identify the new anti-Semitism, from "existential or genocidal anti-Semitism" — that is, public calls for the destruction of Israel or killing of Jews — to "Substantive Anti-Jewishness in the International Arena: The Denial to Israel of Equality Before the Law."

The latter category includes political, ideological, theological, cultural, European, "legalized," economic and state-sanctioned anti-Semitism, he wrote.

These various forms of anti-Semitism now are manifest worldwide, including in some nations with no Jewish populations.

They also permeate the Internet, which means a strategy to combat anti-Semitism country-by-country is insufficient, Jewish leaders say.

"With the globalization of economics has also come the globalization of politics, and we see how the 'Big Lie' can be spread quickly and effectively through new technology," said Malcolm Hoenlein, executive vice chairman of the Conference of Presidents of Major American Jewish Organizations.

"We see that virtually no country is untouched by this new anti-Semitism, so an international approach is certainly warranted for dealing with it," he said.

The key to enlightening what Jewish activists call "decent people of conscience everywhere" to the burgeoning anti-Semitism — and how it fuels violence in the Middle East and against Jewish communities in Western Europe — is to utilize non-Jewish spokespeople, activists say. □

JEWISH WORLD

Retirement of pro-Israel lawmaker greeted with sadness by activists

By Sharon Samber

WASHINGTON (JTA) — In the fall of 1997, a pro-Israel U.S. congressman heard about the threat Israel faced from Iran, which was close to refining a missile capable of hitting the Jewish state.

He introduced legislation that would sanction countries and companies that provide Iran with the technology to build up its missile program.

That legislation became the basis for a presidential executive order, which eventually led to a U.S. law that punishes entities that aid Iran in its quest for weapons of mass destruction.

That legislator was Rep. Benjamin Gilman (R-N.Y.), who announced his retirement last week.

It's no small wonder, say Jewish observers, that Jews will miss that voice in the U.S. House of Representatives.

For more than 30 years, Gilman was known for his strong understanding of foreign policy and tireless advocacy for Israel.

The 79-year-old lawmaker announced that he would not seek re-election in November, saying he was leaving his seat "with great remorse."

Gilman is leaving Congress as a result of the state's redistricting plan, which eliminates two seats from New York's congressional delegation.

Gilman, who has represented a district just north of New York City since 1972, would lose part of that area, prompting speculation that he would not win in his new district.

He reportedly flirted with becoming a Democrat, but instead decided to resign.

Often the lone Republican Jewish member in the House, he has been a leader on foreign policy issues, especially given his powerful role as from 1995 to 2001 as chairman of the House of Representatives' International Relations Committee.

He currently serves as chairman of the subcommittee on the Middle East and South Asia. His strongly pro-Israel positions earned him the praise of a number of Jewish groups.

"Throughout his 30 years in Congress, Ben Gilman has been a leader on virtually every issue important to the pro-Israel community," said Howard Kohr, executive director of the American Israel Public Affairs Committee, the pro-Israel lobby.

"He brought passion to the issues, integrity to Congress, a spirit of bipartisanship to all his work, and he will be sorely missed."

Gilman voted to increase aid to Israel over the years. He also worked on behalf of Israeli MIAs, in support of Jerusalem, or as many put it, on every area of Jewish interest.

Gilman has always had a hard-line approach toward the Palestinians, sometimes putting him at odds with advocates of the Oslo peace process, including the Clinton administration.

He has been a vocal critic of Palestinian Authority President Yasser Arafat and he spearheaded legislation in 2000 that would have cut off aid to the Palestinian Authority if it unilaterally declared a Palestinian state.

It is unclear who might be the next chairman of the Middle East subcommittee, but many Jewish activists say it's hard to imagine any successor who will have close to the breadth of knowledge and understanding of the situation in one of the most volatile areas of the world. "He has more experience than anyone," a congressional staffer said. "He also brought personal caring to the issues."

Gilman also was at the forefront of the Soviet Jewry movement in the 1970s. He worked on behalf of refuseniks, met with Soviet officials, participated in vigils and heard individual cases and helped out whenever he could.

"He was one of the giants," said Mark Levin, executive director of NCSJ: Advocates on Behalf of Jews in Russia, Ukraine, the Baltic States and Eurasia. "If we need something, he's one of the first members we call."

When Soviet officials censored mail to refuseniks and activists in the mid-1980s, Gilman took the lead and got the mail delivered, Levin said. □

Booby-trapped sign in Russia

Another booby-trapped anti-Semitic sign exploded in Russia. Monday's incident in the Siberian city of Tomsk, which lightly wounded the man who tried to remove the sign, was the latest such sign to appear in the past two months.

Authorities in Tomsk were quick to declare the incident an act of hooliganism, a relatively minor crime in Russia. But Berel Lazar, one of Russia's two chief rabbis, said authorities need to take acts of anti-Semitism more seriously. This act shows the need to turn a proposed hate crimes bill into law, Lazar said.

French crackdown applauded

The Simon Wiesenthal Center applauded French officials for cracking down on anti-Semitic attacks.

Because of France's efforts to halt the series of attacks that occurred earlier this year, the center downgraded its advisory for Jews visiting France from "extreme caution" to "caution," Shimon Samuels, head of the center's Paris office, told Reuters on Sunday.

Reward offered for war criminals

The Simon Wiesenthal Center is offering rewards for information leading to the prosecution of Nazi war criminals in Lithuania.

The \$10,000 rewards are part of "Operation Last Chance," a program the center launched Monday to facilitate such prosecutions. The program is a joint project of the center and the Miami-based Targum Shlishi Foundation.

Alleged guard may be deported

A U.S. immigration judge ordered the deportation of a Missouri man who served as a guard at the Sachsenhausen concentration camp.

Michael Negele, 81, was ordered deported to Romania after the U.S. Justice Department's Nazi-hunting unit, the Office of Special Investigations, proved that he had participated in acts of persecution.

Conference eyes Nazi lawyers

A conference on the role Nazi lawyers played during the Holocaust opened in Berlin. The three-day conference, called "Tyranny, Justice & the Law," is a joint project of the Touro Law Center in New York, the Free University of Berlin and Touro's Institute on the Holocaust and the Law.

Terror victims go to camp

Some Israeli children from families hurt by terror attacks are going to summer camp in Greece.

About a dozen children are flying this week at the invitation of the World Sephardi Foundation and the Jewish community of Salonika, Greece.

Israeli Cabinet backs bill barring Arabs from state land

By Naomi Segal

JERUSALEM (JTA) — Israel's Cabinet stirred up a hornets' nest this week by backing a bill that could bar Israeli Arabs from owning homes on state-owned land.

Cabinet minister Dan Meridor, who was one of two ministers to vote against the bill, called the decision a "grave error" that was "flagrantly discriminatory."

Attorney General Elyakim Rubinstein said in a statement that he had urged ministers not to support the bill, which he warned would deepen the rift between Israel's Jewish and Arab communities.

The bill was proposed by National Religious Party legislator Haim Druckman to circumvent a March 2000 decision by the High Court of Justice that the state cannot allocate land in a way that discriminates against any Israeli citizens.

The court said the government broke the law when it allocated state-owned land to the Jewish Agency for Israel to build a community that barred Israeli Arabs from having homes there.

The court issued its ruling after the northern community of Katzir refused to permit an Israeli Arab couple to move there.

At Sunday's weekly Cabinet meeting, 17 ministers voted in favor of the bill, while two opposed and one abstained.

The text of Druckman's bill says that state land, which is administered by the Israel Lands Authority, can be allocated to the Jewish Agency for the purpose of achieving the agency's goals of promoting Jewish settlement in Israel.

The bill states that the establishment of Jewish-only communities is contingent upon approval from the defense minister or ministers responsible for the law's enforcement that such a move is required because of "security reasons" — or to ensure the character of a community that is built upon certain ideals that all its residents must share.

The Jewish Agency's chairman, Sallai Meridor, issued a statement Monday saying the Druckman bill "does not contradict the High Court of Justice's position."

The court had "determined that there may be circumstances which would justify maintaining" a Jewish-only settlement policy, he said.

Just as the Israel Lands Authority "allocates land to Bedouins and Druse and the matter is understood and accepted," he said, "it is likewise important that land be allocated to Jewish settlements."

Before it can become law, the bill must pass three votes in the Knesset.

It could also face challenges in the High Court.

The issue was brought before the Cabinet by Education Minister Limor Livnat, after the Ministerial Legislative Committee, which determines the government position regarding proposed legislation, decided against supporting the bill.

Livnat said the Cabinet had voted to fulfill the Zionist ideal of Jewish settlement in all the land of Israel.

She was also quoted as calling the government decision a victory for advocates of a Jewish, Zionist and democratic state.

Meridor, the sole minister to speak out against the bill at Sunday's Cabinet meeting, blasted the decision.

"It is not permissible to allow an Israeli law to state that a non-Jew may be prevented from living in a particular place for

security reasons," Meridor said. "This is not a security matter at all. There is no need for flagrant discrimination," Meridor said.

Opposition legislators denounced the government decision as racist.

Legislator Nehama Ronen of the leftist Meretz Party said the proposed law should be disqualified because it is "racist."

"The government decisions means that racism has become the official ideology of the State of Israel," said Israeli Arab legislator Azmi Beshara.

In its March 2000 decision, the High Court ruled 4-1 that the state cannot discriminate between Arabs and Jews in land allocation, even if the allotment is conducted by the Jewish Agency and not directly through the Israel Lands Authority.

The one dissenting judge, Ya'acov Kedmi, agreed that the state has no right to discriminate against Arabs on state lands. But he added that the Jewish Agency, which was formed to promote Jewish settlement in Israel, has the right to decide who can benefit from its resources.

The court issued its ruling after a petition was brought by Adel and Iman Ka'adan, an Israeli Arab couple that wanted to build a house in Katzir.

Following its ruling, the High Court ordered the Katzir membership committee to consider the couple's candidacy "with an open heart" and not base its decision on religion or nationality.

Last year, the community's membership committee informed the couple that their candidacy had been rejected because they were deemed socially unsuitable. □

Yeehaw! Los Angeles museum celebrates history of Western Jews

By Tom Tugend

LOS ANGELES (JTA) — Contrary to popular notion, not all Jewish immigrants to the United States came through Ellis Island and settled in New York or other cities along the Eastern Seaboard.

Many of the more adventurous sought their fortunes along the ever-shifting frontier of the American West, which stretched from the Mississippi River to the Pacific Ocean.

The lives and deeds of these pioneers are traced in an ambitious and richly documented exhibit, "Jewish Life in the American West," which runs through Jan. 20, 2003, at the Autry Museum of Western Heritage in Los Angeles.

Official poster boys for the exhibit are Adolph and Sam Frankel, posing self-consciously for the camera in Cushing, Okla., around 1915.

Sam Frankel is dressed in a three-piece suit, stiff collared shirt, necktie and fedora. Adolph Frankel, by contrast, is the complete cowboy, sporting a rakishly tilted Stetson, kerchief, wooly chaps, pistol and lasso.

The single picture captures the transformation of the European Jew from shtetl greenhorn or urban Easterner to proud Westerner and American.

While the first Jews arrived in the West with the early Spanish expeditions of the 16th century, perhaps the true prototype of the Jewish pioneer of the 19th century was Solomon Nunes Carvalho.

He served as the official artist and photographer in the Fremont expeditions that explored vast tracts of the West, and then became one of the founding fathers of the Los Angeles Jewish community. □