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85th Year

TOP NEWS IN BRIEF

Israel: Troops killed U.N. worker

Israeli soldiers killed a U.N. official in the Jenin refugee camp last Friday after Palestinian gunmen fired at the soldiers from an UNRWA compound in the camp, army investigators said. Iain Hook was killed during an exchange of gunfire between Israeli troops and Palestinian gunmen.

In another development, Israeli troops cordoned off the square around Bethlehem's Church of the Nativity, preventing worshippers from attending Sunday services. [Page 3]

Muslim lawyers blast Dershowitz

A group of Muslim lawyers asked the Massachusetts Board of Bar Overseers to punish Harvard law professor Alan Dershowitz. The Washington-based Muslim Legal Defense and Education Fund cited Dershowitz's recent proposal to raze Palestinian villages in response to terror attacks on Israelis.

The group claims Dershowitz broke the rules of his profession by advocating a policy that would violate international law.

In March, Dershowitz proposed that Israel declare a short moratorium on reprisals for terror attacks, and then circulate a list of locations that would be demolished if Palestinians carried out further attacks.

Dershowitz called the complaint a publicity stunt and a "despicable attempt" to silence him.

Far-right party down, but not out

A far-right Austrian party took a beating in Sunday's national elections, according to projected results. Jörg Haider's xenophobic Freedom Party got only 10 percent of the vote — a drop of almost 17 points from its record result in 1999.

Just the same, the conservative People's Party, which emerged victorious in the vote, may form a coalition with the Freedom Party.

The left-of-center Social Democrats, traditionally Austria's biggest party, took second place with 37 percent.

Early elections were called after Haider triggered a coalition crisis by trying to retake control of the party he led for 15 years.

Several years ago, Haider praised Hitler's "decent employment policies" and described Nazi SS troops as "men of character." He later apologized for these remarks.

BEHIND THE HEADLINES

Hezbollah still operating in Canada, despite some bans on group's actions

By Bill Gladstone

TORONTO (JTA) — Canadian Jewish officials are increasingly frustrated that the Canadian government refuses to ban all of Hezbollah's activities in Canada.

The frustration comes amid allegations that a Hezbollah operative from Canada helped plan the Nov. 15 terror attack in Hebron that killed 12 Israelis.

The Canadian government's inaction allows the Lebanese fundamentalist group's social services wing to raise funds in Canada for use in the Middle East.

After Hezbollah appeared on a U.N. list of terrorist groups last year, Canada banned the organization's militant wing from raising funds here and declared that all of its assets in Canada would be frozen.

But the radical Shi'ite group, which is responsible for the deaths of hundreds of Americans and Israelis, was not included on a list of seven terrorist organizations released by the Solicitor General's Office last July.

Critics argue that the government has hampered the group's financial powers but not its ability to propagandize, acquire military equipment or recruit and train new agents in Canada.

Grilled repeatedly in Parliament in recent weeks, Foreign Affairs Minister Bill Graham has defended the right of Hezbollah's social or humanitarian wing to raise funds in Canada.

Graham has argued that an outright ban on all Hezbollah activities would hinder the work of many innocent doctors, lawyers and social workers in Lebanon and hamper Canada's role as a neutral broker in the international political arena.

"We're not going to take that step" of an outright ban "as it would interfere with our ability to conduct peace negotiations in the Middle East," Graham said in the House of Commons.

Stockwell Day, a leader of the opposition Alliance Party, has lambasted the government for treating Hezbollah "as if it were an international aid agency" and for perpetuating the myth that the organization "kills thousands of people with its left hand and makes peace with its right."

Day also pointed out that Hezbollah leader Sheik Hassan Nasrallah has declared that all wings of the organization are united in a single purpose — the destruction of Israel.

The Canadian Jewish Congress has written the government several times, urging the government to abandon the "specious distinction" it makes between the military and social-political wings of Hezbollah.

To the consternation of many Canadians, Prime Minister Jean Chretien came face to face with Nasrallah at a summit of leaders of French-speaking countries in Beirut last month. An accredited delegate at the summit, Nasrallah was sitting in the front row as Chretien addressed the gathering. The Canadian prime minister also came under fire for shrugging off the summit's many anti-Israel diatribes.

Jewish communal officials are particularly disconcerted to learn that Ayub Fawzi, a senior Hezbollah militant from Canada who has been in Israeli custody since his arrest in Hebron last June, has been accused of being the strategic "mastermind" of the terrorist attack in Hebron on Nov. 15.

Also known as Fauzi Abu Abbas, the 38-year-old man is a Canadian citizen of Lebanese origin, who allegedly flew from Canada to Athens on a genuine Canadian passport, then flew from Athens to Tel Aviv on a forged U.S. passport. Although the

MIDEAST FOCUS

U.S. promises Israel aid

The United States agreed to give Israel \$2.16 billion in military aid next year.

This represents an increase of \$60 million over this year's allocation and is in keeping with a 1998 plan to minimize Israel's economic aid while boosting its annual military aid.

The State Department reported Nov. 21 that the two countries exchanged letters confirming the allocation during a meeting earlier this month.

The 2003 foreign aid allocation has not been passed by Congress and is expected to be taken up early next year, along with \$200 million in emergency aid to fight terrorism.

Israel to request loan guarantees

Israel is expected to seek up to \$10 billion in loan guarantees from the United States to boost its economy. According to The Associated Press, Israel's Defense and Finance ministries are preparing the requests, which will be submitted to the United States soon.

Arabs targeted after bombing

There have been several apparent revenge attacks carried out near the site of last week's suicide bus bombing in Jerusalem.

In one incident, an Arab pharmacology student was stabbed in the lower back Saturday night. In a similar attack on the night of Nov. 21, three female Arabs were the target of an attempted stabbing.

P.A. building explosives plant?

The Palestinian Authority is reportedly trying to build a factory to produce chemicals used in making explosives. The plan was revealed in a secret document seized in an army raid last week of the Palestinian Preventative Security Service headquarters in the Gaza Strip, the Israeli daily Ha'aretz reported Sunday.

Israeli security service Shin Bet had been following him, he disappeared in the West Bank soon after his arrival.

Fawzi's mission to Israel represents "a new stage in the efforts which Hezbollah has invested in perpetrating terror attacks inside Israel," according to a statement released by the office of the Israeli prime minister.

"We'll be watching the Ayub case very closely," said Keith Landy, national president of the Canadian Jewish Congress. "At the moment, all we have are allegations" that he planned the Hebron attack.

Compounding the Jewish community's anger is a series of investigative reports in the Toronto-based National Post that document the extent to which Hezbollah operatives used Canada as a base for raising funds and purchasing military supplies throughout the 1990s.

As recently as two years ago, agents in Vancouver, Montreal and Toronto had been moving hundreds of thousands of dollars through various Canadian banks and had purchased a range of military supplies that were then shipped to Lebanon, the newspaper reported.

The letters of complaint from the Canadian Jewish Congress have had little apparent effect. "We've hit a brick wall with this government," Landy said.

"They've taken the position that until we can show that funds are flowing from the so-called social-humanitarian wing of Hezbollah to the militant wing, they are not pressed to do anything."

A spokesperson for the Foreign Affairs Ministry, Rodney Moore, described Hezbollah as "an important political party in Lebanon." It has 12 members of Parliament and "runs clinics and schools and provides support for farmers in Lebanon. Our intention has been not to label MPs, teachers and doctors as terrorists.

"I can add that we disagree in important ways with Hezbollah, but dialogue to us is more important than labeling."

Like Canada — and unlike the United States — Britain permits Hezbollah's social wing to raise funds. But observers point out that Britain has outlawed all activities of the military wing, not just curtailed its fund-raising abilities as Canada has done. □

Latvian Jews, local government spar over inscription on a Shoah memorial

By Adam B. Ellick

NEW YORK (JTA) — Latvian Jewish leaders and officials in the capital of Riga are tangled in a dispute over the inscription on a Holocaust memorial.

The Latvian Jewish community plans to erect the memorial at Rumbula, where the local Latvian Nazi police and collaborators murdered some 30,000 Riga Jews in 1941. The monument is scheduled to be dedicated at the end of the month.

The Jewish community insists that the inscription include the fact that Latvian volunteers — including the notorious Arajs Kommando unit, which served as a Nazi death squad — participated in the slaughter.

But a commission appointed by the Riga municipality to coordinate the ceremony has refused to approve the proposed inscription.

The conflict has led to a deadlock and the possibility of postponing the dedication.

Last week, the Simon Wiesenthal Center urged Latvian President Vaira Vike Freiburga to use her influence to help resolve the issue.

In a letter, Efraim Zuroff, director of the center's Jerusalem office, asked the president to be historically accurate and to note the truth clearly.

"Given the active participation of the Arajs Kommando and other Latvian units in this mass murder operation against the Jews of Riga, such an omission practically borders on denial, and I therefore call upon you to help influence the members of the commission to change their decision and allow the truth — as bitter as it is — to be told in an unequivocal manner."

Since they gained independence in 1991, the Baltic states of Latvia, Lithuania and Estonia have been encouraged by Western governments to confront their Holocaust histories. □



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JEWISH WORLD

Neulander spared death sentence

A New Jersey jury spared Rabbi Fred Neulander the death penalty for hiring two men to kill his wife. At a hearing last Friday, Neulander cited the Book of Genesis in acknowledging that his actions were "reprehensible and disgraceful." He also said he would promote literacy in prison.

Neulander was convicted Nov. 24 of murder and conspiracy to commit murder in the death of his wife, Carol. His formal sentencing, at which the judge will give him a jail term of 30 years to life in prison without the possibility of parole, is scheduled for Jan. 16.

Jews debate Anti-Semitism

Jews should not overreact to the rise of anti-Semitism worldwide, a prominent Jewish social critic told the annual conference of the North American Jewish federation system.

Jews shouldn't think each act of anti-Semitism is reminiscent of the one before it, Leon Wieseltier, literary editor of *The New Republic*, said at the closing session of the United Jewish Communities' General Assembly last Friday.

Parallels between anti-Semitic acts today and the Holocaust are inappropriate, he said. Israel is strong, and the collapse of the Soviet Union — which "represented the single most powerful threat to Jewish well-being and Jewish interests everywhere" — has constituted a major advance, Wieseltier said.

Speaking at the same session, however, Canadian legislator Irwin Cotler described a "sanitizing of anti-Semitism under the twin banners of human rights and anti-globalization." Palestinian suicide bombers should be renamed "genocidal bombers," since they call for the destruction of Jews everywhere, Cotler said.

ADL blasts football player's slur

The Anti-Defamation League condemned recent anti-gay comments by San Francisco 49ers running back Garrison Hearst.

The ADL issued its criticism after Hearst was quoted by the Fresno Bee newspaper as saying he "didn't want any faggots on my team."

Camp memorial vandalized

Vandals destroyed a memorial to victims of the Sachsenhausen concentration camp. Police said they had no information about who carried out the attack in the former eastern German town of Leegebruch, located north of Berlin.

The Foundation of Brandenburg Memorials reported the incident on Nov. 21. There have been several similar acts of vandalism in 2002, including an arson attack in September in which a museum and memorial to Nazi death march victims near the town of Wittstock was severely damaged.

Israel's war on Palestinian terror leads to conflict with U.N. officials

By Naomi Segal

JERUSALEM (JTA) — This has been a bad week for Israel in the court of world opinion.

After Israeli soldiers mistakenly killed a British man serving with the U.N. Relief and Works Agency in the Jenin refugee camp, U.N. and British officials criticized Israel.

And as the Israeli military continued its war on terrorism, this time in the West Bank city of Bethlehem, the Jewish state risked the ire of its closest ally, the United States.

Israeli officials admitted Sunday that UNRWA official Iain Hook had been killed last Friday by Israeli fire.

Hook, who ran a U.N. project to rebuild homes in the Jenin refugee camp, was killed during an exchange of gunfire between Israeli troops and Palestinian gunmen, the army said, adding that soldiers mistakenly thought he was holding for a weapon.

Issuing a preliminary investigation of the incident, the army said Palestinian gunmen had fired at Israeli soldiers from an UNRWA compound in the refugee camp.

The army also said the gunmen had used civilians as human shields during the clash, which erupted after soldiers surrounded the hideout of a local leader of Islamic Jihad.

Three army jeeps and a soldier wearing a bulletproof vest were hit by Palestinian fire coming from the vicinity of the UNRWA compound, the army added.

An UNRWA official disputed the Israeli account.

"Preliminary findings from our inquiry indicate that this is not true," Paul McCann, a spokesman for UNRWA said Sunday. Israel's "claim is incredibly incorrect."

McCann said an investigator would soon arrive from U.N. headquarters in New York to launch a full investigation into Hook's death.

UNRWA was created after Israel's 1948 War of Independence to help Palestinian refugees. Israel came under attack earlier this year after Palestinian officials accused the army of carrying out a massacre in the Jenin refugee camp.

In August, U.N. officials issued a report refuting the massacre allegations.

For their part, Israel and U.S. Jewish groups have accused UNRWA of allowing terrorism to flourish in the refugee camps it services, particularly in Jenin.

Following the killing of Hook last Friday, the army expressed regret over the incident. British officials criticized the Israeli actions and are demanding a full Israeli investigation of what happened.

In addition to dealing with what is shaping up to be a public relations disaster, Israeli officials are also pressing ahead with the war on Palestinian terror.

Bethlehem is the latest West Bank city to come under Israeli control.

The army took over the city last Friday — a day after a Palestinian suicide bomber killed 11 people aboard a Jerusalem bus.

The Palestinian bomber came from Bethlehem.

Since taking over the city, Israeli soldiers have arrested some 30 suspected Palestinian terrorists, including three who were planning suicide bombings.

On Sunday, Israeli troops cordoned off the square around Bethlehem's Church of the Nativity, preventing worshipers from attending services.

The army sealed off all access to the church to prevent a repeat of the standoff last spring, when more than 100 Palestinian gunmen took refuge in the holy site, which Christian tradition considers the spot where Jesus was born.

Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon announced last Friday that the "Bethlehem First" plan — under which Israeli troops left the city several months ago so the Palestinian Authority could demonstrate its ability to fight terrorism — had been called off as a result of the Nov. 21 suicide bombing in Jerusalem.

Meanwhile, the United States is urging Israel to end its operation in Bethlehem as soon as possible.

Last Friday, State Department spokesman Philip Reeker urged Israel to remember the consequences of military actions and to take steps to avoid civilian casualties.

U.S. officials have been repeatedly urging Israel not to take actions that would escalate tensions in the Arab world as the United States prepares for a possible attack on Iraq. □

AROUND THE JEWISH WORLD

Few Jews in Spain, yet supposed 'Jewish lobby' still draws readers

By Jerome Socolovsky

MADRID (JTA) — A new book published in Spain seeks to put to rest the notion that a "Jewish lobby" is influencing government and business in a country that has one of the smallest Jewish communities in Europe.

But the book plays into some of the very stereotypes it seeks to dispel.

In "The Jewish Lobby: Power and Myths of Contemporary Spanish Jews," Alfonso Torres, a Colombian-born journalist who has lived in Spain since 1977, calls on Spaniards to dispense with "old clichés and historical prejudices" about Jews.

Spaniards should know better, he says, because their country was "the cradle of Sephardic Judaism."

The book comes at a time when anti-Jewish tendencies in Spain are being questioned. An Anti-Defamation League survey recently found that 34 percent of Spanish respondents held anti-Semitic views, one of the highest percentages in Europe.

Another new book, "Anti-Semitism in Spain: The Image of the Jew (1812-2002)" reveals how prejudiced images of Jews lived on for hundreds of years after King Ferdinand and Queen Isabella's expulsion decree in 1492.

The author, Gonzalo Alvarez Chillida, a history professor at the National Distance University of Spain, calls it "an anti-Semitism without Jews."

Jews began moving back to Spain after the Inquisition was abolished in the 19th century.

Today an estimated 15,000 to 20,000 Jews live in Spain, out of a total population of roughly 40 million.

While meant for a scholarly audience, "Anti-Semitism in Spain" has some fascinating anecdotes, such as how anti-Semitic stereotypes resurfaced when Spain invaded North Africa in the 19th century and came into contact with the descendants of Jews who had fled the Inquisition.

The Jews were once again seen as "avaricious, fawning, servile, cowardly, traitorous, and repugnant physically" — though the invaders "almost unanimously perceived Jewish women as beautiful," according to Alvarez Chillida.

Ironically, Torres' book employs some of the very Jewish caricatures he condemns, especially in publicizing the work.

The jacket copy lures the reader with enticing questions about the power Jews wield in Spain.

"It's worth asking how much power contemporary Spanish Jews wield," the blurb reads. "Who are the wealthiest and most influential magnates? How have they amassed their fortunes? Which political and financial operations have they been involved in, and through which non-Jewish personalities move the invisible strings that connect them to the highest echelons of the state?"

The author says the idea of a "Jewish lobby" in Spain is "one of the great lies" bandied about by the Spanish media, though he doesn't give concrete examples.

Much of the recent focus on the topic has been tied to the publication of the book.

Along with an article on the book, the newspaper El Mundo published an "ABC of Jewish Spain." The list of famous Spanish Jews included movie star Cecilia Roth, who starred in Pedro

Almodovar's Oscar-winning "All About My Mother," and fur designer Elena Benarroch.

Indeed, "The Jewish Lobby" dwells on the wealthiest and scandal-ridden Spanish Jews, including Jews from abroad who have taken up residence in Spain, despite the author's caveat that they are not representative of the Jewish community.

The author goes into detail about financier Marc Rich, who received a controversial pardon from President Clinton for racketeering, illegal trading and tax evasion; and real estate magnate Jacques Hacheul, an associate of Mario Conde, a convict from the Banesto bank scandal.

Torres notes Spain's refusal to extradite Russian media tycoon Vladimir Goussinsky to Moscow following appeals from American Jewish leaders to King Juan Carlos and Queen Sofia, who are said to be personally sympathetic both toward Jews and toward the State of Israel.

Spanish Jews did not react kindly to the book.

"We Jews in Spain deserve better than this book," said Victorino Cortes of Guesher, a watchdog group for anti-Jewish bias that has its hands full with the Spanish media. "If this journalist is our 'friend,' imagine our enemies."

There "isn't a single interview with the many other Jews he refers to when he says the great majority of Jews in Spain live anonymously" and modestly, Cortes said.

In the chapter on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, Torres "dedicates pages and pages about what Israel is doing wrong, but there's hardly any criticism of Arafat and the terrorist groups," Cortes said.

The chapter does criticize the reflexive pro-Palestinian attitudes among Spanish politicians and journalists. It also condemns those who "distort history" by comparing the casualties from the Palestinian intifada to the murder of 6 million Jewish "civilians" in the Holocaust.

While it might seem elementary, that distinction appears lost on other intellectuals in Spain and also in Portugal, whose Nobel laureate Jose Saramago compared Israel's blockade of Ramallah earlier this year to the Auschwitz death camp.

Torres adds an appendix with more than 5,000 common Spanish surnames believed to derive from family names taken by conversos, Jews who chose to stay in Spain and convert to Christianity rather than be killed for their faith.

"By casting about anti-Semitic dispersions, we are throwing stones at our own glass houses," he writes. □

Prof. makes controversial remarks

NEW YORK (JTA) — A Jewish group asked Georgetown University to condemn remarks made by one of its professors.

The Lebanon Daily Star reported last week that Georgetown history professor Hisham Sharabi told students at a Lebanese university that "Jews are getting ready to take control of us and the Americans have entered the region to possess the oil resources and redraw the geopolitical map of the Arab world."

The American Jewish Committee wrote to Georgetown's president, asking that the comments be condemned because the "Georgetown University community, and especially its Jewish population, must clearly understand that the university does not subscribe to such views."

Georgetown officials said Sharabi was not representing the university when he made the comments. □