



Daily News Bulletin

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TOP NEWS IN BRIEF

Saudi: Jews behind Sept. 11

The Saudi police minister recently reiterated the libel that Jews were behind the Sept. 11 attacks.

Interior Minister Prince Nayef said the charge could be proven by the fact that Jews have benefited from subsequent criticism of Islam and Arabs.

Interior Minister Prince Nayef made the remarks last month in a Kuwaiti newspaper, The Associated Press reported Thursday.

Canadian university boots Hillel

The student union of Montreal's Concordia University banned any activity by Hillel: The Foundation for Jewish Campus Life.

This week's 8-1 vote by the university's student government came in response to Hillel fliers promoting Mahal, a volunteer program for the Israeli army.

The student union, which comes under Canada's Ministry of Education, called the act a violation of Canadian law, a rationale national Hillel officials called "outrageous."

The organization is planning "major legal action" and is staging a menorah lighting ceremony on campus Thursday night to protest the ruling, the officials said.

Three months ago, former Israeli prime minister Benjamin Netanyahu was forced to cancel a speech at Concordia because of anti-Israel rioting.

After the riots, the campus administration placed a moratorium on Mideast-related activity on campus. [Page 3]

Sharon warns of Al-Qaida attack

Members of Al-Qaida have infiltrated the Gaza Strip and Lebanon and are planning to attack Israel, Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon said.

"We know they are in the region," Sharon told journalists in Tel Aviv on Thursday.

"There's no doubt that Israel is a target for an attack."

At the news conference, Sharon also welcomed recent statements by senior Palestinian officials that the intifada was a mistake and should stop immediately.

"We see today cracks in Palestinian society," he said. "There are people who understand that Arafat brought upon them a terrible catastrophe. Will it develop in a certain direction? I hope so."

ISRAEL'S ARAB MINORITY

As Arab legislators grow radical, public feels its needs are ignored

By Gil Sedan

JERUSALEM (JTA) — Despite growing criticism of their legislators within the Israeli Arab public, Arab political parties are presenting the same faces for the Knesset in Israel's upcoming elections.

Given the legislators' radical stances — which many say are widening the rifts between Arabs and Jews in Israel — President Moshe Katsav warned leaders of the Arab community on Sunday that they are losing their grip on their own population.

"There is growing radicalization within the Arab sector in Israel," Katsav told a gathering of public leaders at a meal marking the end of a day of Ramadan fasting. "In a year or two they may not listen to you; they will lose all restraint."

Most Israeli Arab voters are not concerned with the radicalization of their leaders, but rather with the fact that they simply do not deliver the goods: They do too little to improve the poor living standards of their people, critics say, while devoting most of their time to supporting the Palestinian cause.

"Of course, we are concerned over the Palestinian plight," said Mustafa Asfur of Haifa's Technion — Israel Institute of Technology, "but there should be a ladder of priorities, and they should first take care of our problems."

"Had I been a Knesset member, I would first have taken care of my own population," said Farhan Shleibi, a Bedouin tourism operator in the Negev. "Only then would I deal with the others."

Despite such voices, however, the Arab Knesset representation is likely to change little after the Jan. 28 elections.

In internal party elections recently, Mohammed Barakah was re-elected as chairman of the Communist Hadash Party.

Azmi Beshara will head his own Democratic National Alliance Party — known by its acronym, Balad — and Islamic Movement lawyer Abdel Malek Dahamshe will head the United Arab List. Among their constituents, however, frustration with the Arab legislators spans the political spectrum.

Speakers at a rally in the Galilee village of Deir al-Assad last month openly accused the Arab Knesset members of contributing to the deterioration of Arab-Jewish relations in Israel.

The legislators' "incitement" after Israeli Arabs rioted in sympathy with the Palestinian intifada in October 2000 "has seriously damaged the interests and reputation of the Arab community," poet Rifat Assadi said.

Some of the speakers criticized the Arab legislators for identifying with Israel's antagonists — Syria, the Palestinian Authority, Hamas, Osama bin Laden and Hezbollah — instead of looking after the interests of their constituents.

They referred, for example, to Beshara's frequent visits to Damascus and declarations of support for Hezbollah; Dr. Ahmed Tibi's close ties to the Palestinian Authority and its president, Yasser Arafat; Muhammad Kana'an's public endorsement of bin Laden; and the support offered by Barakah and Taleb a-San'a for attacks on Israeli soldiers and settlers.

"The Arab public is politically heterogeneous," said As'ad Ghanem of Haifa University's political science department. "The rally probably reflects a third of the Arab voters who have traditionally voted for the Zionist parties, and are likely to do so even more with Labor under the leadership of" dovish Haifa Mayor Amram Mitzna. Echoing

MIDEAST FOCUS

Sharon again endorses plan

Prime Minister Ariel Sharon pledged support for the creation of an interim Palestinian state.

Addressing a national security conference in Herzliya on Wednesday night, Sharon said that if re-elected next month, he would try to form a unity government that would pursue the vision for Mideast peace that President Bush outlined in June.

In that speech, Bush said a Palestinian state could be created alongside Israel within three years if the Palestinians met certain conditions.

The Israeli prime minister also reiterated his insistence, shared by Bush, that Palestinian Authority President Yasser Arafat has to be removed and that violence against Israeli targets has to end before progress can be made.

U.N. workers protest IDF

U.N. workers in the West Bank and Gaza Strip are condemning the Israeli army for allegedly impairing their relief work.

A petition signed by dozens of UNRWA workers denounces "continuing, violent acts against U.N. workers by IDF soldiers," according to the Israeli daily Ha'aretz.

Israeli managed Arafat money?

A former senior Israeli security official reportedly managed a Swiss bank account for Yasser Arafat, according to an Israeli newspaper.

Even after the outbreak of the intifada, Yossi Ginossar and his former business partner transferred some \$300 million from funds in the bank to unknown sources, the Israeli daily Ma'ariv reported.

Ginossar, who had acted as a go-between with the Palestinian Authority president for former Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Barak as well as current Prime Minister Ariel Sharon, called the report baseless and said he has served Israel faithfully.

the concerns of those at the Galilee rally, a group called the New Arab Party hopes to run in the January elections. The party hit an obstacle this week, however, when its small factions could not agree on a leader.

Mohammed Awad, one aspirant to lead the party, said it would work only on domestic issues.

"We are focusing solely on internal changes regarding the status of Arab citizens," Awad told the Israeli daily Ha'aretz. "Foreign and security affairs are of less interest to us."

Ghanem said he agreed in principle with the criticism of Arab legislators, but argued that Israel's political system does not allow them to express themselves effectively on issues other than the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

At the other end of the political spectrum, members of the nongovernmental organization Abna al-Balad met last month in a coffee house in Nazareth and called on Israel's 580,000 eligible Arab voters to boycott the elections.

"The Arab public is disappointed with its present leadership and has no longer any trust in the Zionist parties," said movement leader Mohammad As'ad Kananeh, a former security prisoner.

Abna al-Balad, a small, radical leftist movement, intends to launch an anti-election campaign of newspaper ads and radio jingles. Its main criticism is directed at the Arab legislators who, the group says, "lack authority and influence."

Arab Knesset members are concerned that the call to boycott the elections will resonate. It has the support of the powerful northern branch of the Islamic Movement, which already refuses to grant Israel the legitimacy implied by voting.

It also has a precedent: Most Arab voters agreed to boycott the 2001 prime ministerial elections to protest the response of the Labor-led government to the October 2000 riots.

Former legislator Abdel Wahab Darawshe told JTA recently that surveys indicate that only 55 percent of Arab voters will vote in January.

Ghanem called the figure "misleading."

The figure ignores the approximately 20 percent of eligible voters who have not yet decided whether to vote, he said. Eventually, he predicted, some 65 percent to 70 percent of Arab voters will go to the polls — slightly lower than their historical numbers.

Ghanem himself is unlikely to be among them. Had the Arab parties made an effort to unite on one Knesset list, he probably would have voted, he said.

However, with legislators insisting on maintaining four separate Arab lists, Ghanem said he sees no reason to vote and will probably stay home.

A low Arab turnout "may weaken the leftist camp," he acknowledged, "but since the left has not really proven itself vis-a-vis the Arab population, so be it."

Abna al-Balad wants the Arab population to set up its own, separate Parliament, but all Arab legislators reject the idea, fearing a separatist trend.

"Such a Parliament will only be good for speeches," Barakah said. "It will be ineffective, because political influence can be achieved only in the Knesset." □

Katsav's visit to Berlin sparks protest

BERLIN (JTA) — Pro-Israel groups are gearing up to counter a neo-Nazi protest planned when Israel's president visits Berlin next week.

Moshe Katsav is slated to arrive Sunday for a two-day visit at the invitation of German President Johannes Rau. Along with meetings with German officials, Katsav is scheduled to visit the Sachsenhausen concentration camp memorial.

Some 200 neo-Nazis have applied for permission to protest Monday.

Jewish students and other pro-Israel groups have issued an emergency call for a counter-demonstration.

"We want to stop the neo-Nazis from expressing their anti-Semitism on the street," said Christian Jellinek of Talking Tachlis, a group that is organizing the counter-demonstration with the Federal Union of Jewish Students in Germany and the Association Against Anti-Semitism and Anti-Zionism.

"Two hundred neo-Nazis is 400 too many," said Jellinek, adding that extreme left-wing and pro-Palestinian groups also plan to demonstrate against Katsav. □



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JEWISH WORLD

Family suffers second tragedy

An American Israeli family that lost a daughter in an airport shooting rampage is mourning again for a son who died Nov. 26 after a car accident.

Nimrod Hen, the 18-year old accident victim, was the brother of Victoria Hen, 25. She was one of two people shot and killed by an Egyptian-born gunman at the El Al ticket counter July 4 at the Los Angeles International Airport. Avinoam and Rachel Hen, the parents of Vicky and Nimrod and a surviving third child, Udi, were reported in deep mourning after the accident and were unwilling to speak publicly.

Skinheads mar Hungary Chanukah

Several hundred skinheads disrupted a Chanukah celebration in Budapest.

The skinheads chanted "Hungary is ours!" as members of the city's Jewish community were lighting candles Wednesday night, according to The Associated Press. The country's police chief publicly apologized to the Jewish community, saying a police official had mistakenly allowed both groups to use a Budapest square at the same time.

French shul vandalized

Vandals broke into a synagogue in southwestern France.

The attack on the synagogue of Perigueux took place before dawn Wednesday, according to The Associated Press. A synagogue official said the vandals ripped apart paintings and holy books and stole money hidden inside an office.

Lawmakers to vote on poet's fate

New Jersey lawmakers are considering two bills to remove the state's poet laureate for writing a poem insinuating that Jews were behind the Sept. 11 attacks.

Current law does not allow Amiri Baraka to be fired. Legislators invited Barak to come before them before they vote, but he says he does not believe they will give him a fair hearing.

The governor of New Jersey, the Anti-Defamation League and other groups have called for Baraka's resignation over the poem.

Baraka has refused to quit and maintains that he is not anti-Semitic.

Presidential hopeful visits Israel

Vermont governor and Democratic presidential hopeful Howard Dean called on the Bush administration to honor Israel's request for \$10 billion in loan guarantees.

During a visit to Israel this week, Dean also said that as president, he would play a larger negotiating role than the current administration in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

Pro-Arab body at Montreal school shuts campus Hillel over Israel flier

By Bram Eisenthal

MONTREAL (JTA) — Add one more anti-Israel incident to the growing list at Montreal's Concordia University.

Less than two weeks after a moratorium was lifted on Mideast-related events on campus, the Concordia Student Union effectively shut down the university's Hillel.

The action was taken Monday night at a hastily convened meeting of the student union's executive. The group said it acted because Hillel was displaying fliers for Mahal 2000, a program where volunteers can help out on Israeli army bases.

In response, the campus Hillel said it would sue the student union to have its status reinstated.

The strongly pro-Palestinian CSU objected to Hillel's promotion of the Israeli military, even though Mahal does not advocate a military role for students. Palestinian activist Samir Elatrash, founder of the Society for Palestinian Human Rights, claimed the material supported "a military brigade set specifically to guard settlements."

Hillel Montreal's president, Ariela Cotler, said the materials were placed on the group's informational table inside a university building by a former Hillel member and student activist.

But no matter who placed it there, she said, "the point is that Mahal is a voluntary organization, not a military one. Nothing illegal was done by displaying the fliers."

The incident comes three months after anti-Israel rioters forced the cancellation of a speech on campus by former Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu. The moratorium on Mideast events was instituted after the riot.

Jewish students on campus have reported being verbally and physically intimidated, and one was beaten up a week after the cancelled Netanyahu speech.

Those incidents followed pro-Palestinian rallies when the intifada began in fall 2000 that featured placards proclaiming "Death to the Jews" and marchers chanting anti-Zionist slogans. The CSU also got into hot water over its handbook for the 2001/2002 academic year, which was titled "Uprising" and featured the image of what appears to be a Muslim woman and the word "revolution."

Cotler said she was very disturbed by the CSU action against Hillel.

"We cannot let this go on, and Concordia cannot let this go on, either," she said. "I have no doubt this is an attempt to shut down Israel's voice in this community, starting with Hillel and expanding from there."

Cotler also questioned the circumstances surrounding the meeting of the CSU executive, where the 8-1 vote was taken. "The CSU's bylaws state that the board must be advised" of a vote "at least five days in advance. They also have an obligation to have a quorum on hand for a vote," she said.

Yet neither procedure was followed, she claimed, adding that the vote was held at the end of the meeting, close to midnight, when many people had left.

Some say the meeting was called for Monday because the university's rector, Frederick Lowy, is abroad.

"There was an obvious agenda to disrupt the activities of Hillel on campus," Cotler said. "Their only concept of freedom of expression here is when the Society for Palestinian Human Rights is involved, with the support of the CSU."

The CSU ruling revokes Hillel's "funding and tabling privileges," preventing the organization from holding events on campus or setting up informational tables and displays. If it wishes to have its rights reinstated, Hillel must apologize in writing and permit an investigation by the university administration.

Cotler said Hillel would submit a legal notice Thursday evening of its intention to sue the CSU. Hillel is "demanding they rescind this decision," she said. "Hillel also has no intention to abide by this decree."

In protest, Hillel members were to demonstrate on campus Thursday afternoon, culminating with the lighting of a Chanukah menorah.

The international headquarters of Hillel asked Hillels around the world to light a Chanukah candle Thursday night in solidarity. Repeated attempts by JTA to reach the CSU's main office and the CSU president were unsuccessful. □

AROUND THE JEWISH WORLD

**As desire for challah rises,
kosher bakery opens in Berlin***By Toby Axelrod*

BERLIN (JTA) — The Chanukah candles were burning low, the meal was over and the challah nearly gone when the jelly doughnuts came out.

It was a quiet Sabbath in Berlin, the first night of the Festival of Lights, and five friends prepared to do their final taste test of the evening.

The challah was a big hit.

The Chanukah doughnuts, or sufganiyot, were, they found, a bit low on the prune filling.

Still, no one was complaining. After all, these were kosher baked goods.

In Berlin, that's quite unique. But word is spreading about Kaedtler's on Danziger Street.

"I am very happy," said Rabbi Yitzchak Ehrenberg, who gave the bakery his seal of approval just in time for Chanukah. "I searched for a long time."

It appears to be part of a mini-trend. Three months ago, a bakery in western Berlin started producing kosher challah for Chabad Rabbi Yehudah Teichtal.

In Frankfurt, a new kosher food emporium has opened that "is amazing," said Rabbi Josh Spinner, head of the Ronald S. Lauder Jewish School in Berlin.

"There won't be a better indicator of the development of active Jewish life than the proliferation of kosher food in Germany," Spinner said.

What makes Kaedtler's unusual is that it is owned and operated by a Protestant family.

"I am very proud of it," said master baker Stefan Kaedtler, 33, in a recent interview with JTA. "It means traditional food according to Jewish belief is possible again" in Germany. "It is not the easiest way, but it is the best."

Now, in addition to his dairy cakes and cheese rolls, which are not kosher, Kaedtler sells pareve breads, rolls, croissants and challah, baked in a separate oven.

One recent Friday, Kaedtler delivered some 140 freshly baked challah, shiny brown and covered with poppy seeds, to the Israeli Embassy and two Jewish schools. By 10 a.m., he was back in the bakery, already having worked eight hours.

Kaedtler comes from a long line of bakers.

His maternal grandfather and then his father operated this bakery before him.

The small shop, located between a pharmacy and a newly renovated storefront on eastern Berlin's Danziger Street, has survived decades of communism, unification with the West and the proliferation of pre-mixed baked goods.

"Today you can get bread at the gas station or the supermarket and it's cheap and simple," Kaedtler said. "Business has dropped a lot. Of the 550 bakeries in East Berlin before reunification, only 20 percent have survived. And the numbers are sinking."

Kaedtler wanted to stand out from other bakeries.

So he stuck to the old-fashioned way of baking that he learned from his grandfather.

His insistence on pure ingredients and handmade products served him well, he said.

This year he won a first prize in a consumer taste test.

But why challah? In Berlin, though the Jewish population has tripled to 12,000 since the fall of communism, there is not a huge demand for kosher food. The community is still nothing like it was in 1933, when the Jewish population was about 175,000 in Berlin, and 500,000 in all Germany.

Ironically, nonkosher bagels and "Jewish-style" restaurants are ubiquitous here.

On the other hand, there is only one restaurant — Arche Noah — under rabbinic supervision, and another, Beth Café, approved by the Berlin independent congregation Adass Jisroel.

In addition, there are a few kosher food stores that carry everything from Sabbath candles to imported frozen meat.

Kaedtler saw a niche several years ago, when a local Jewish school reopened for the first time since World War II.

He got a contract baking challah for the school. He matched the recipe to their taste, and even made breads "round like the earth" for Rosh Hashanah, he said.

Word spread, but the challah still did not have a kosher stamp. As more observant Jews attended the school, the need for strictly kosher food increased, Spinner said.

Then the Israeli Embassy opened here in May 2001. The embassy staff often needed large quantities of kosher bread for events. A client base was building.

After he heard about Kaedtler, Ehrenberg inspected the bakery several times, sometimes accompanied by Spinner.

"Rabbi Ehrenberg came to us every 14 days for about four months," Kaedtler said. "He asked questions about the ingredients, how we work, made tests of the goods."

Finally, about a week before Chanukah, Ehrenberg walked into the bakery with a kashrut certificate in his hand. He was followed by kosher slaughterer Yaacovov Reuven and Berlin kosher deli owner Morris El Maleh.

Kaedtler seemed uncharacteristically shy. His hands clasped behind his back, he watched as the three men in yarmulkes gave the mixing machines and ovens another once-over, peered under shelves and behind racks. Their faces were serious. They occasionally huddled and whispered.

Finally the moment of truth arrived. Standing in the room where the kosher goods are prepared, Ehrenberg took out the contract and read aloud.

"I confirm that this bakery is under my supervision. All the following breads," he intoned a long list, "are absolutely kosher, without a doubt, and pareve."

As a non-Jew, Kaedtler will not have to close down or divest himself of bread on Passover; he will not have to "take challah," or remove a portion of the dough as a symbolic sacrifice. But he must call Ehrenberg if the pilot light on his oven goes out, because a Jew must light the oven.

Last but not least, Kaedtler is not paying for the kosher certificate. "In big communities, they take a fee," Ehrenberg said. "But we don't want to make the prices rise."

With his wife, Kerstin, watching from the hall, Kaedtler solemnly signed the document, leaning on the pastry table. Looking up, he finally broke into a grin.

Then, as a toast, Ehrenberg offered everyone a taste of the croissants he had ordered.

A few days later, the certificate was framed in a prominent place on the bakery wall. Kerstin sold the last of the sufganiyot just before evening set in. □