



Daily News Bulletin

Vol. 81, No. 148

Monday, August 11, 2003

86th Year

TOP NEWS IN BRIEF

Hezbollah shell kills Israeli

An Israeli was killed when anti-aircraft shells fired by Hezbollah struck a town in northern Israel.

Haviv Dadon, 16, was killed in Sunday's incident. Israel retaliated for the shelling, in which four other Israelis in the town of Shlomi were lightly wounded, by firing at suspected Hezbollah positions in southern Lebanon.

The fundamentalist Islamic group said it had been shooting at Israeli fighter jets flying over southern Lebanon, but Israeli officials denied that its planes were in the area.

Tensions between Israel and Hezbollah have been high since a Hezbollah official was killed in a car bombing in Beirut earlier this month — an attack that Hezbollah blames on Israel.

Israeli officials have not commented on that incident. [Page 3]

West Bank violence kills 5

Four Palestinians and one Israeli soldier were killed in a clash over the weekend in the West Bank.

Ro'i Oren, 20, died in a battle at the Askar refugee camp in Nablus as his Israeli commando unit raided the camp while searching for a senior Hamas terrorist, Khamis Abu-Salem.

As the soldiers closed in on Abu-Salem's hideout, shots were fired from the building, killing Oren.

The soldiers fired back, killing four Palestinians, including Abu-Salem. [Page 3]

German book withdrawn

A German publishing house will withdraw the translation of a controversial book following criticism from a prominent Jewish academic.

The Frankfurt-based Suhrkamp publishing house announced Aug. 7 that it would return the rights of "After the Terror" to British-Canadian author Ted Honderich because he had expressed radical positions on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict on the Internet. The book deals with the fallout from the Sept. 11 attacks.

The withdrawal came one day after Micha Brumlik, head of the Fritz-Bauer Institute in Frankfurt, a research institute on Holocaust and xenophobia issues, wrote a letter to the Frankfurter Rundschau newspaper calling on Suhrkamp to drop the book. Brumlik said he "barely could believe his eyes" when he saw the "incredible nonsense" in the book.

AROUND THE JEWISH WORLD

Northern Ireland's Jews walk a fine line in sectarian conflict

By Andrew Morris

BELFAST, Northern Ireland (JTA) — There's an old joke told in Northern Ireland about a guy in Belfast who is stopped by a ruffian and asked his religion.

Wanting to avoid trouble all around, he responds, "I'm Jewish."

Without missing a beat, the ruffian says, "Fine. A Catholic Jew or a Protestant Jew?"

Rarely do punch lines highlight such truths. Northern Ireland is a deeply religious country, a rarity in Western Europe. In this nation your church defines you, even if your church happens to be a synagogue, mosque or Buddhist temple.

With much of the coverage of Ulster, as Northern Ireland traditionally is called, focused on the sectarian conflict between the largely pro-London Protestants and the mainly pro-Dublin Catholics, few consider the conflict's effects on members of the other religions and ethnic groups who live here.

For Ulster's Jews, good relations with the majority Protestant and minority Catholic communities are a high priority.

"They both think we're more like them than the other side," says Shoshana Appleton, an Israeli-born community member and interfaith activist who is married to the president of Northern Ireland's Jewish community.

"The Catholics say you are an old religion like us, and the Protestants say you've got rid of all that Catholic confessional dogma and are similar to us," she says.

But when, as in Northern Ireland, you're "either with us or against us," the Jewish community can find itself in an awkward predicament.

"We have always taken the position that we have no position," explains Ronnie Appleton, who, along with his presidential post, is vice president of the local branch of the Council of Christians and Jews.

Recently retired as Northern Ireland's chief grand prosecutor, Appleton knows the importance of maintaining an air of impartiality.

In the Jewish community, he says, "Individuals can say what they like about who they support, but certainly not on behalf of the community."

As the province's oldest non-Christian religious group, the Jews have been waiting a long time for the sectarian conflict to end.

Jews have been in Ulster since the 17th century. Mainly concentrated in North Belfast, they built their first synagogue here in the 1860s.

Despite its modest size, the Jewish community here is held in high regard. Among its members have been such illustrious figures as the ex-Lord Mayor of Belfast, Sir Otto Jaffe, and the sixth president of Israel, Chaim Herzog.

At its height, in the 1960s, the Jewish community was 16,000 strong. Since then, most Jews have emigrated to mainland Britain, America or Israel, largely due to the "troubles" — the euphemism here for Irish sectarian strife.

Today an estimated 600 Jews live in Ulster, 160 of whom are members of the community's only synagogue.

"The funny thing is, people think there are more like 3,000 of us in Belfast," Shoshana Appleton says. "Maybe it's because we make such a noise."

The community's official position on the long-running conflict is neutral, but the Appletons and other Northern Irish Jews admit that the members of the community feel most secure with the pro-London, or Unionist, status quo. In Ulster, the two sides are

MIDEAST FOCUS

Sharon son balks on documents

The son of Israel's prime minister refused to give documents to police investigating a possible illegal loan. Despite a court order demanding that Gilad Sharon hand over the documents, he again asked the state prosecution to delay the process.

The prosecution refused. Sharon is suspected of having taken loans from South African businessman Cyril Kern, a family friend, in exchange for services.

During his police interrogation, Sharon reserved the right to remain silent, a move that elicited strong public criticism.

Prime Minister Ariel Sharon has been criticized for not forcing his son to speak. Gilad Sharon lives with his father at their Negev farm.

Because of the prime minister's Knesset immunity, police are unable to search the premises.

No burial place for terrorists

Efforts by Israeli authorities to find burial places for Palestinian terrorists are proving unsuccessful. As a result, the bodies of seven Palestinian terrorists remain at a Tel Aviv morgue.

Terrorists used to be buried at a cemetery in the Negev.

However, following objections from Jewish families, the burials there stopped.

Asteroids named for astronauts

Seven asteroids are being named after the astronauts killed on the space shuttle Columbia.

The asteroids, which circle the sun between the orbits of Mars and Jupiter, are being named for the six Americans and one Israeli, Col. Ilan Ramon, who died Feb. 1 when the Columbia exploded on its return to earth from a 16-day mission.

Proposed by NASA's Jet Propulsion Laboratory, the plan was announced Wednesday by the Smithsonian Astrophysical Observatory's Minor Planet Center.



Daily News Bulletin

Norman H. Lipoff, *President*

Mark J. Joffe, *Executive Editor and Publisher*

Lisa Hostein, *Editor*

Michael S. Arnold, *Managing Editor*

Lenore A. Silverstein, *Finance and Administration Director*

Paula Simmonds, *Marketing and Development Director*

JTA DAILY NEWS BULLETIN is published five days a week, except holidays, by the Jewish Telegraphic Agency Inc., 330 Seventh Ave., New York, N.Y. 10001-5010. For information about how to subscribe by e-mail, fax or regular mail, call (212) 643-1890, or visit our Web site at www.jta.org.
© JTA Reproduction only by previous arrangement.

identified by their colors: Blue represents Protestant, pro-London Unionists and green stands for pro-Dublin, Catholic Republicans.

A local businessman, Cyril Rosenberg, says, "I'm a true blue Ulsterman. I don't think it's because we have a problem with the Republicans. It's just that Jews tend to go along with the establishment."

Norman Richardson, secretary of the Northern Ireland Inter-Faith Forum, agreed.

"Jewish communities want to be identified with the mainstream society to prove that once they were immigrants but today are no more," he says. "This being the case, there is a general perception that the Jews are closer to the majority Protestant community."

For some Protestants, the alliance with Jews has more to do with religious ideology than political expedience. They view their ties to the Jews in the context of religion and history.

"There is a movement in Protestantism that sees the Jewish people as an integral part of the Christian salvation. They believe the second coming is impossible without first the ingathering of the Jews to Israel," Richardson says.

Many Protestants are Christian Zionists who are members of pro-Israel Christian groups.

"These people are more pro-Israel than we are," Appleton quips.

Like many, she is somewhat wary of the Christian fundamentalist brand of Zionism, which often is connected to a messianic vision that includes conversion of the Jews.

But many religious Protestants deny they have an evangelical mission eventually to convert Jews.

Billy Logan, a well-known Unionist with moderate views, is head of a Protestant group called the Royal Black Institution, which adheres to a literal interpretation of the Bible.

He says, "I believe from ancient times the Jewish people have a right to a homeland. I fervently support Israel and we consider ourselves true friends of our Jewish neighbors."

By contrast, the Catholics, as a minority struggling for reunification with the mostly Catholic Republic of Ireland, often draw parallels between their struggle and that of the Palestinians.

In a country where colors have the kind of significance usually associated with gang warfare, both Unionists and Republicans have adopted the corresponding banners of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. In Belfast, each side has flown the flag of its respective Middle East proxy.

The incongruity of the blue-and-white Israeli flag flying alongside the Union Jack and other Loyalist banners — and the green of the Palestinian flag flying alongside the Irish Tricolor — has some Belfast Jews somewhat bemused.

Rabbi Avraham Citron, a U.S. native who recently came to Belfast, says he has mixed feelings about seeing the Israeli flag in town.

"My initial feeling was pride to see the flag, but then logic kicked in and I thought, 'Why the extra headache of another struggle?'"

Regina O'Callaghan, chairwoman of the Inter-Faith Forum, says, "I doubt many of those people who put up the flags even know where Israel or Palestine actually is."

Lately, the flags mostly have disappeared, some by order of the paramilitaries' leadership and some by the wind and rain that batter this city by the Irish Sea.

But they could return with the approach of the so-called "Marching Season," when both Protestants and Catholics take to the streets in a show of pride — or, many would say, force. Then Belfast's Jews, as usual, will have to continue trying to stay out of the way. □

Arabs held in cemetery desecration

JERUSALEM (JTA) — Jerusalem police detained 10 Arabs suspected of desecrating the ancient Jewish cemetery on Jerusalem's Mount of Olives.

Police suspect that the youths, aged 13 to 17, in the past year have smashed several tombstones, smeared them with excrement and stolen copper letters and candle cradles from the graves, with the intention of selling them.

The Mount of Olives cemetery is the oldest Jewish cemetery in Jerusalem. □

JEWISH WORLD

Jewish Agency cuts budget

About 850 workers at the Jewish Agency for Israel and World Zionist Organization agreed to pay cuts, and 50 staffers will be laid off.

Overseas emissaries also will be reduced by about 10 percent, according to Israel's daily Ha'aretz. The wage cuts range from 1.75 percent to 17 percent, and will last for at least two years.

Bias incident in Ukraine?

An Israeli born in Ukraine was reportedly beaten by a group of skinheads in Kiev. The attack on Anton Miromanov occurred on July 30, according to RUJEN, a news service affiliated with the World Congress of Russian-Speaking Jewry.

Donor busted over fish

A major donor to Israel's Ben-Gurion University was arrested for smuggling fish into the United States

A front-page report in South Africa's Cape Times newspaper on Arnold Bengis, arrested Wednesday in New York on charges including smuggling South African lobster and toothfish into the United States, highlighted Bengis' ties to Israel.

Bengis, who has received an honorary doctorate from the university, reportedly has given several million dollars to Ben-Gurion through his support of the Bengis Center for Desert Aquaculture and the Bengis Center for Entrepreneurship and High-Tech Management.

Move over, Ralph Lauren?

A Hong Kong fashion firm is launching a line of clothing featuring swastikas.

Israeli and German officials are criticizing the company for the clothing, which was launched over the weekend in 14 stores in Hong Kong.

One of the store's branches projected Nazi propaganda films on a wall as it began selling the clothing, according to The Associated Press.

Zuckerman sexiest mogul

The past chairman of the Conference of Presidents of Major American Jewish Organizations was chosen as New York's "sexiest media mogul."

Mortimer Zuckerman, publisher of U.S. News & World Report and the New York Daily News, is one of the "50 Sexiest New Yorkers," according to New York magazine.

"Mort's got game as an Upper East side bachelor — tan and buff from playing hours of tennis every day," the magazine fawns.

Other sexy Jews in the current issue include Paul Rudd, Jon Stewart, Rabbi Balfour Brickner and New York Attorney General Eliot Spitzer.

Violence erupts in West Bank, and along Lebanon border as well

By Gil Sedan

JERUSALEM (JTA) — The violence that occurred over the weekend is the deadliest involving Israel since the Palestinians declared a cease-fire nearly six weeks ago.

And, most troubling to many Israeli officials, the violence occurred not only in the West Bank, but along Israel's northern border with Lebanon as well.

The violence raised the specter of the collapse of the cease-fire — and the possibility that the Israel-Lebanon border could constitute a second front in Israel's war against terrorism.

Haviv Dadon, 16, was killed when anti-aircraft shells fired by Hezbollah struck a town in northern Israel.

Israel retaliated for the shelling, in which four other Israelis in the town of Shlomi were lightly wounded, by firing at suspected Hezbollah positions in southern Lebanon.

The incident followed a clash in the West Bank in which four Palestinians and one Israeli soldier were killed in a clash over the weekend in the West Bank. Staff-Sgt. Ro'i Oren, 20, died in a battle at a refugee camp in Nablus last Friday as his Israeli commando unit raided the camp while searching for a senior Hamas terrorist.

But while Israelis have become painfully accustomed to hearing about violence in the West Bank during the nearly three years of the Palestinian intifada, the incident that killed Dadon was surprising. Fatalities from Hezbollah attacks have become rare since Israel withdrew its forces from southern Lebanon in May 2000.

The death, and Israel's retaliation, sparked a flurry of diplomatic activity.

Israel's ambassador to the United Nations, Dan Gillerman, sent a letter to U.N. Secretary-General Kofi Annan holding the Syrian and Lebanese governments responsible.

The letter accused Hezbollah of "seeking to escalate tensions" along the border "by purposefully and systematically carrying out numerous unprovoked cross-border attacks endangering both Israeli and Lebanese citizens."

But Israeli officials said they would make only a "moderate" retaliation, in an effort to keep tensions along the border from escalating further.

For its part, a Lebanese government spokesperson said his country would file a complaint with the U.N. Security Council over what it calls Israeli provocations, including violations of Lebanese airspace.

Tensions between Israel and Hezbollah have been high since a Hezbollah official was killed in a car bombing in Beirut earlier this month — an attack that Hezbollah blames on Israel. Israeli officials have not commented on that incident.

The fundamentalist Islamic group said it had been shooting at Israeli fighter jets flying over southern Lebanon, but Israeli officials denied that Israeli planes were in the area.

Sunday's attack that killed Dadon was just one of several Hezbollah shellings to hit northern Israel over the weekend, but it was the only one that caused any serious injuries.

A 10th-grade student on summer vacation, Dadon was killed just as he ended his day's work as a gardener for the local municipality.

He was sitting with friends in Shlomi's commercial center when a shell hit him and killed him immediately.

As a result of the shelling, the 6,000 inhabitants of the town were asked to spend part of Sunday evening in shelters for the first time since Israel's withdrawal from Lebanon.

In the Nablus incident, Oren was killed during an Israeli operation in the Askar refugee camp.

Israeli soldiers were searching for a Hamas terrorist, Khamis Abu-Salem. As the soldiers closed in on Abu-Salem's hideout, shots were fired from the building, killing Oren.

The soldiers fired back, killing four Palestinians, including Abu-Salem. □

Peru's small Jewish community is shaken by scandal, corruption

By Larry Luxner

LIMA, Peru (JTA) — The first lady of Peru, Eliane Karp, is Jewish. So is the country's second vice president, David Waisman. And under former President Alberto Fujimori, the Peruvian economy was supervised by a Jewish finance minister, Efrain Goldenberg.

The Jews of Latin America Part of a Series

Yet the nation's 3,000-member Jewish community — an island of wealth in the midst of 25 million poor people — has been shaken by various scandals that have resulted in the imprisonment of some of its most prominent members.

Combined with general economic and political uncertainty in Peru, the scandals have led to the decline of the community in recent years. The most serious scandal involves the loss of more than \$40 million by 100 to 200 Jews who had invested their life savings in the Panama-based offshore holding company of Banco Nuevo Mundo, or BNM.

The company's six directors, all of whom were Jewish, sold millions of dollars in promissory notes to Jews and various Jewish organizations — including a retirement home — advertising annual interest rates of 10 percent or higher. Yet these notes became worthless when the Peruvian government, investigating allegations of impropriety, closed BNM.

"It was a big blow for the community," said Herman Blank, vice-president of Union Israelita del Peru, an Ashkenazi congregation that represents around 50 percent of Peru's Jews. "Some people say they were completely wiped out, that they lost all their savings. We are really worried about what's happened, and we hope that some money can be recovered."

Rabbi Guillermo Bronstein of Sociedad Israelita de 1870 said BNM's directors were warned three times by Peru's superintendent of banking that the company needed to increase its capital.

"The bank was closed in December 2000," Bronstein told JTA. "Since then, not one cent has been reimbursed to the investors," even though "the bank's shareholders have paid hundreds of thousands of dollars to their lawyers."

In June 2001, Bronstein said, he and two other Lima rabbis issued a psak din, or decree, excommunicating all six directors for failing to accept responsibility and return the money.

"According to Torah law and halacha, the shareholders were responsible and must give back their savings to those who lost money," he said. "We also established that, as the shareholders did not do their part, they were not to participate in any ceremony or minyan. Should any of them die, they can be buried in the Jewish cemetery, but in a separate section."

Meanwhile, Fujimori, who fled the country amid allegations of corruption, lives in exile in Japan, while Goldenberg is the subject of a government probe investigating the alleged mismanagement of \$140 million in state funds.

Goldenberg, who resides in Lima, declined to be interviewed about the allegations, which remain unproven.

In an unrelated scandal, former TV station owners Samuel and Mendel Winter are in prison while they await trial, while brothers

Alex and Moises Wolfenson are under house arrest, accused of receiving state funds in exchange for allowing their newspapers to become mouthpieces of the Fujimori government.

The current president, Alejandro Toledo, is among the most unpopular heads of state in Latin America — polls show his approval rating at around 11 percent — though he's struggling to reduce poverty and clean up corruption in his administration.

In the midst of this chaos, Peru's Jewish population — which in the 1970s numbered 6,000 — continues to shrink.

"The community grows smaller every day because of the economic and political situation," said Eric Topf, a prominent Lima architect and past president of B'nai B'rith Peru. "People don't encourage their sons and daughters who were sent to college in the U.S. and Israel to come back."

Jews have lived in Peru since the earliest days of the Spanish Inquisition, though the first Jewish wave of immigration in modern times peaked around 1875. Following a war between Chile and Peru from 1879-1883 that devastated the Peruvian economy, Jews fled to other countries, and the community nearly disappeared.

The second wave of immigration began in the 1920s, when Jews from Europe and North Africa came to Peru in search of economic opportunity. That lasted until the onset of the Holocaust, when immigration was closed to Jews.

Except for the former finance minister, Jews generally have stayed out of politics, though Peru does have many prominent Jewish businessmen. They include Isaac Galsky, owner of Sindicato Pesquero S.A., a fish-meal processing plant, and Jacques Levy, the former head of BNM and current owner of Lima's five-star Hotel Los Delfines.

Of Peru's 3,000 Jews, Topf said with some exaggeration, "2,999 of them live in Lima," where the Union Israelita del Peru has approximately 500 member families.

Most of the remaining Jews are split between the Sociedad de Beneficiencia Israelita Sefaradi and the Sociedad Israelita de 1870, with about 200 families each.

In addition, Lima has a small Beit Chabad. Lately, the Lubavitchers have begun sending matzah and other kosher food from New York and organizing annual seders in Cuzco, the ancient Inca capital that has become a magnet for Israeli backpackers hiking the Inca Trail and visiting the "lost city" of Machu Picchu.

There also are two small groups outside Lima that have strong ties to Judaism. One, the B'nai Moshe, consists of converts from Christianity. Several hundred of these "Inca Jews" have made aliyah, most of them to the West Bank.

The second group is made up of about 170 descendants of Moroccan Jewish immigrants who live in the Amazon jungle port of Iquitos, and who are seeking recognition by Lima's Jewish establishment.

Because of economic difficulties, Blank said, Jewish institutions have been forced to cut back on various services that the community once took for granted. But despite the recent scandals that have placed the Jewish community in a negative light, Blank said he's seen no real increase in anti-Semitism.

"It's true that some newspapers and TV stations have identified the people involved as Jews," he said. "But I wouldn't say the scandals generated more anti-Semitism than before. Jews are emigrating to the United States or Israel because of the political and economic situation here. It doesn't have anything to do with anti-Semitism." □