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86th Year

TOP NEWS IN BRIEF

Abbas says he won't crack down

Mahmoud Abbas said he would not crack down on Palestinian terrorists.

At Thursday's meeting of Palestinian legislators, the Palestinian Authority prime minister also blamed Israel for the recent collapse of the Palestinian cease-fire, which was called off after Israel responded with a missile strike to a Jerusalem bus bombing that killed 21.

Abbas hinted at resigning but did not call for a vote of confidence. Abbas has been engaged in an ongoing power struggle with Palestinian Authority President Yasser Arafat.

Israeli jets fly over Auschwitz

Israeli fighter jets flew over the site of the Auschwitz death camp.

Despite protests from officials affiliated with the camp's museum, three American-built, Israeli-modified F-15s flew over the camp Thursday.

The crews in the Israeli planes carried the names of those killed in Auschwitz on Sept. 4, 1943, and included descendants of Holocaust survivors. The Israeli jets, which had been invited by the Polish government to help celebrate the 85th anniversary of the Polish Air Force, were supposed to do the flyover with two Polish fighter jets, but the Poles dropped out due to poor weather conditions.

One of the Israeli pilots, Avi Levevich, said the flyover was particularly poignant for him because his father survived Auschwitz. "I had been invited to come visit the death camps before, but I didn't want to, Levevich said. "But when they suggested I come in an F-15, I decided to come this way."

'Food insecurity' plagues Israel

Nearly one in four Israeli households suffers from inadequate food and nutrition, a report found.

"Unprecedented numbers" of people in Israel are unable to buy the food necessary for a healthy diet, according to Laurie Heller, co-chairwoman of the coalition of groups in Israel and the United States that helped fund the study after noticing increased funding requests from Israeli nonprofits that provide for food.

The American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee's Brookdale Institute conducted the study along with Israel's Ministry of Health and the Israeli Center for Disease Control.

FOCUS ON ISSUES

Hitler made eugenics famous, but he took it from United States

By Edwin Black

WASHINGTON (JTA) — Hitler victimized an entire continent and exterminated millions in his quest for a so-called "Master Race."

The world thought Hitler was mad and barely understood his rationales. But the concept of a white, blond-haired, blue-eyed master Nordic race was not Hitler's: The idea was created in the United States two to three decades earlier, the product of the American eugenics movement.

Eugenics was the racist American pseudoscience determined to wipe away all human beings except those who conformed to a Nordic stereotype. The philosophy was enshrined into national policy by forced sterilization and segregation laws, as well as marriage restrictions, enacted in 27 states.

Ultimately, eugenics coercively sterilized some 60,000 Americans, barred the marriage of thousands, forcibly segregated thousands in "colonies" and persecuted untold numbers in ways we are just learning.

Hitler studied American eugenic laws and rationales and sought to legitimize his innate race hatred and anti-Semitism by medicalizing it, wrapping it in a pseudoscientific facade.

Eugenics would have been little more than bizarre parlor talk had it not been for massive financing by corporate philanthropies, specifically the Carnegie Institution, the Rockefeller Foundation and the Harriman railroad fortune.

They were in league with America's scientists from universities such as Harvard, Yale and Princeton, who faked and twisted data to serve eugenics' racist aims.

The Carnegie Institution literally invented the American movement when it established a laboratory complex at Cold Spring Harbor on Long Island. This complex stockpiled millions of index cards on ordinary Americans as the movement carefully plotted the removal of families, bloodlines and whole peoples.

From Cold Spring Harbor, eugenics advocates agitated in the legislatures of America, as well as the nation's social service agencies and associations.

The Harriman railroad fortune paid local charities, such as the New York Bureau of Industries and Immigration, to seek out Jewish and other immigrants and subject them to deportation, confinement or forced sterilization.

The Rockefeller Foundation helped found and fund the German eugenics program, and even funded the program that ultimately sent Josef Mengele into Auschwitz.

The Rockefeller Foundation, the Carnegie Institution, Cold Spring Harbor Laboratory, and the Max Planck Institute — the successor to the Kaiser Wilhelm Institute — all gave unlimited access and unstinting assistance in the course of this investigation. These organizations all have worked hard to help the world discover their pasts and have set an example of philanthropic openness.

Long before the advent of America's leading philanthropies, eugenics was born as a scientific curiosity in the Victorian age.

In 1863, Sir Francis Galton theorized that if talented people married only other talented people, the result would be measurably better offspring.

Galton's ideas were imported into the United States just as Gregor Mendel's principles of heredity were rediscovered. American eugenic advocates believed that Mendelian concepts explaining the color and size of peas, corn and cattle also governed

MIDEAST FOCUS

Palestinians kill Israeli soldier

An Israeli soldier was killed in clashes with Palestinians in the West Bank.

Sgt. Gabriel Uziel, 20, died Thursday after Palestinian gunmen opened fire near the West Bank city of Jenin.

The Al-Aksa Brigade, a militia linked to Palestinian Authority President Yasser Arafat, claimed responsibility for the killing, which took place hours before Palestinian Authority Prime Minister Mahmoud Abbas addressed Palestinian legislators.

Conference bucks Israel boycotts

A scientific conference organized in part to protest academic boycotts of Israel will take place next month in the Jewish state.

Medical researchers will gather for the Oct. 23-26 "Frontiers in Cardiovascular Science" conference in Eilat, sponsored by Columbia University.

A similar conference held last year drew 120 participants.

New Israeli envoy in Jordan

Israel has a new ambassador to Jordan.

Yacov Hadas, who has served as head of Israel's trade mission to Qatar, will soon present his credentials to Jordanian King Abdullah.

Hadas replaces David Dadonn, who has been appointed Israel's ambassador to Mexico.

Blind Israeli wins golf tournament

An Israeli won this week's World Blind Golf Championship.

Zohar Sharon defeated 50 other golfers who are blind or have severely impaired vision in the 36-hole tournament in Scotland.

The tournament ended Wednesday.

Sharon, 50, lost his sight during his army service, according to Israel's daily Ha'aretz.



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the social and intellectual character of man.

In the early twentieth century, America was reeling from the upheaval of massive immigration and torn by post-Reconstruction chaos, and race conflict was everywhere.

Elitists, utopians and so-called "progressives" fused their smoldering race fears and class bias with their desire to make a better world, reinventing Galton's eugenics as a repressive and racist ideology. Their intent was to populate the earth with blond, blue-eyed Nordic types who were tall, strong and talented.

In the process, the movement intended to subtract Blacks, Indians, Hispanics, East Europeans, Jews, dark-haired hill folk, poor people and the infirm.

How would they do it? By identifying so-called "defective" family trees and subjecting them to lifelong segregation and sterilization programs to kill their bloodlines. The grand plan was literally to wipe away the reproductive capability of the "unfit."

During the 1920s, Carnegie Institution eugenic scientists cultivated deep personal and professional relationships with Germany's fascist eugenicists.

In 1924, when Hitler wrote *Mein Kampf*, he frequently quoted American eugenic ideology and openly displayed a thorough knowledge of American eugenics and its phraseology.

Hitler proudly told his comrades just how closely he followed American eugenic legislation, and his struggle for a superior race became a mad crusade for a Master Race, exchanging the American term "Nordic" for "Germanic" or "Aryan."

Race science and racial purity became the driving forces behind Hitler's Nazism.

Nazi doctors would become the unseen generals in Hitler's war against the Jews and other Europeans deemed inferior. Doctors would create the science, devise the eugenic formulas, and even hand-select the victims for sterilization, euthanasia and mass extermination.

During the Reich's first decade, eugenicists across America welcomed Hitler's plans as the logical fulfillment of their own decades of research and effort. America also used its money to fund and help found Germany's eugenic institutions.

By 1926, Rockefeller had donated some \$410,000 — almost \$4 million in today's dollars — to hundreds of German researchers.

In May 1926, for example, Rockefeller awarded \$250,000 to the German Psychiatric Institute of the Kaiser Wilhelm Institute, which became the Kaiser Wilhelm Institute for Psychiatry.

Among its leading psychiatrists was Ernst Rudin, who became director and eventually an architect of Hitler's systematic medical repression.

Another in the Kaiser Wilhelm Institute's complex of eugenic institutions was the Institute for Brain Research, which received grants from the Rockefeller Foundation.

The institute — also led by Rudin — became a prime director and recipient of murderous experimentation and research conducted on Jews, Gypsies and others.

Beginning in 1940, thousands of Germans taken from old age homes, mental institutions and other custodial facilities were systematically gassed. In all, between 50,000 and 100,000 were killed.

A special recipient of Rockefeller funding was the Kaiser Wilhelm Institute for Anthropology, Human Heredity and Eugenics in Berlin, which was headed by Otmar Freiherr von Verschuer, a hero in American eugenics circles. The Institute specialized in research on twins.

In 1935, Verschuer left the Institute to form a rival eugenic facility in Frankfurt. Research on twins in the Third Reich exploded. At about that time, Verschuer wrote in *Der Erbarzt*, a eugenic doctors' journal he edited, that Germany's war would yield a "total solution to the Jewish problem."

On May 30, 1943, Verschuer's long-time assistant, Josef Mengele, arrived at Auschwitz. Mengele began taking twins from the boxcars arriving at the camp and performing beastly experiments, writing up the reports and sending the paperwork back to Verschuer's institute for evaluation.

Rockefeller executives never knew of Mengele. With few exceptions, the foundation had ceased all eugenic studies in Nazi-occupied Europe before World War II erupted in 1939.

But by that time the die already had been cast. □

Edwin Black is the author of the just released "War Against the Weak" ("Four Walls Eight Windows"), from which this article is adapted.

JEWISH WORLD

Annan: Terror must be stopped

In a message to a pro-Palestinian conference, the U.N. secretary-general called terrorism "unjustifiable." Kofi Annan delivered the message via an aide Thursday, the first of a two-day U.N. International Conference of Civil Society in Support of the Palestinian People.

"Palestinian civil society must speak loudly and clearly to point out that terrorism is not only unjustifiable, but harmful to the Palestinian cause," Annan said. Anti-Israel maps were on display at the conference, whose theme was "End the Occupation."

Last week, the Anti-Defamation League asked that Annan not participate because of the potential for anti-Israel vitriol.

Claims deadline extended

The deadline for Holocaust-era insurance claims was extended until the end of the year.

The International Commission on Holocaust Era Insurance Claims will announce Friday that they have extended the deadline from the end of September to the end of December to give more time to publish policyholder names and allow for individuals to file claims.

More than 450,000 Holocaust victims and survivors who had unpaid life, education and dowry policies have been published thus far, with 12,000 more names expected within the next two months.

O.U. backs marriage act

The Orthodox Union is backing congressional action to define marriage as between a man and a woman. In a letter sent Wednesday to Sen. John Cornyn (R-Texas), chairman of the Senate subcommittee on the Constitution, O.U. leaders urged Congress to "venerate the values held by most Americans on the issue of marriage."

Ukrainian rabbi attacked

Rabbi Uri Feinstein was attacked outside Kiev's Brodsky Synagogue.

Rabbi Moshe-Reuven Azman told JTA that Feinstein was first verbally abused and then physically beaten to unconsciousness on Aug. 28 by two men, just a block away from the synagogue.

Feinstein was taken to a hospital, treated and released.

Jewish publicist dies at 56

Julie Osler, a publicist for Jewish organizations, died Wednesday in Chicago at the age of 56. Osler, a longtime public-relations director for the American Committee for the Weizmann Institute of Science, suffered a severe stroke five years ago.

BEHIND THE HEADLINES

Sharon goes to the subcontinent to boost growing Israel-India alliance

By Dan Baron

JERUSALEM (JTA) — Following in the footsteps of the 20,000 Israeli backpackers who flock to India every year, Prime Minister Ariel Sharon will fly to New Delhi and Bombay next week for the first prime-ministerial visit there since the two countries first established full ties 11 years ago.

Israel and India share a common enemy in the war on terrorism: Both face ongoing attacks from Islamic extremists, and both seek American support for their anti-terror campaigns.

Behind Sharon's photo opportunities with top Indian officials, diplomats and negotiators will spend the three-day visit hammering out the details of several new defense deals. One, for an Israeli-made airborne radar system, would give India a strategic edge over its nuclear neighbor, Pakistan, and the regional superpower, China.

The deal for the three plane-mounted Phalcon radars, manufactured by Israel's state-owned Israel Aircraft Industries, is valued at \$1.2 billion to \$1.3 billion. The sale would bolster already hefty exports to India of Israeli ordnance and technology.

"India is one of Israel's most important markets for defense exports," said Moti Amihai, head of the Asia desk at the Foreign Ministry in Jerusalem. "We have identical interests in several areas and hold contact on various levels of security and counterterrorism."

The United States is watching the deal with interest. Sources in Washington said the Bush administration, which holds sway over Israel's major defense deals, approved the Phalcon sale in May after ascertaining that India and Pakistan had backed down from the nuclear standoff they reached last summer.

That contrasts with the U.S. response to Israel's last major deal in Asia in 2000, when the United States nixed Israel's planned Phalcon sale to China, citing fears the radar would be used against Taiwan, a U.S. ally.

"India and Israel are valued friends," said the source in Washington. "We did not feel the Phalcon would complicate the regional balance."

America's interests in Asia have shifted since the Cold War, when Pakistan was supported as a bulwark against Communist China. Now, Islamabad suffers from the weight of Islamist extremism while Pakistan's foes in India, the world's largest democracy, have embraced unambiguously the Bush administration's war on terrorism.

After the United States approved Israel's Phalcon deal with India in May, Pakistani President Pervez Musharraf assailed the United States, but by summer he was calling for a national debate on recognizing the Jewish state.

Analysts attributed Musharraf's reversed course to Islamabad's jitters at the prospect of being bested by India in a future air war. "I guess counterbalancing Israel's relations with India is the main reason for that," observed Yiftah Shapir, an analyst at the Jaffee Center for Strategic Studies at Tel Aviv University.

For Israel, however, the Pakistani shift was too little, too late.

India recognized Israel in 1950 but full diplomatic relations between the two countries were not established until 1992. Non-military trade volume — from diamonds to textiles — has ballooned to \$1.6 billion this year from \$200 million in 1992.

India's few Jews enjoy freedom from anti-Semitism, and there is a small but vibrant immigrant community of Indian Jews in Israel.

During Sharon's visit next week, the two countries are expected to sign several cooperative agreements in the areas of economics, health and the war on drugs.

The two democracies are building a reciprocal dynamic that defies their demographic imbalance; Israel's population of 6.7 million is minuscule compared with India's almost 1 billion citizens.

The highest priority between the two countries are defense ties, mostly with Israel providing the technology and India providing the rupees. India already has bought 3,400 of Israel's new Tavor assault rifles, and the Asian nation uses Israeli-made surveillance drones and other frontier monitoring systems. □

As their children go off to Israel, parents wrestle with fear of terror

By Rachel Pomerance

NEW YORK (JTA) — In a dramatic act revealing the extent of parental concern over sending children to Israel, a New York father filed a restraining order to keep his daughter from studying in the Jewish state this fall.

One of five Americans who were slated to depart Tuesday for Israel's three-year Elite Academy high school, Bianca Brichkov, 15, instead has returned to her all-girls Catholic school in the Bronx, where she is one of the few Jews in her class.

"I don't want my daughter to go to a place where constant war is going on," Vladimir Brichkov told JTA by phone.

"Would you send your kids to Israel right now?" he asked. "I wouldn't."

Bianca's mother, Florina Shein, who contends her ex-husband filed the claim just "to spite me," hopes to revisit the issue in family court later this month, when she will dispute visitation rights and child support.

In the meantime, Bianca, who had joined her peers in New York who were taking off for the program, said, "I'm very, very upset about it."

"I really wanted to go and I was upset that my own father wouldn't be able to let me go," she said.

The episode was the most extreme among the families assembled for a bittersweet farewell party Tuesday in the New York headquarters of the Jewish Agency for Israel, which coordinates the program along with Israel's Ministry of Education.

But many relatives in the room were riddled with ambivalence as they wrestled with potentially placing their child in terrorism's path.

For the past 12 years, the Elite Academy has drawn 9,000 students from Latin America and the former Soviet Union to Israel's top high schools.

This year, the free program, which provides students with a stipend and health insurance, expanded to 32 countries — including the United States and Canada — after a request from Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon.

Between 40 and 50 North Americans applied for the spots, and five Americans were accepted after psychological and academic screening, said Michael Landsberg, executive director of the Jewish Agency for Israel's aliyah department for North America.

"For each of you, this is the most important step of your life," Landsberg told the group. To ease their concerns, he added, "We understand, for you parents, this is the most important treasure that you have."

Still, amid the pride of joining the exclusive program, most of the families seemed torn about the decision to send a child to Israel.

Security concerns and trepidation over letting his young daughter go framed the face of Yaacov Allouche of Miami, though he nonetheless supports 15-year-old Regina's participation.

It's a "hard decision to take," he said, "my daughter being away from us, first of all."

Allouche said he fears for her safety in Israel but added, "There's not much you can do about that, I guess."

Regina — with tousled hair tacked atop her head, orange high tops and a denim bag bedecked with buttons boasting youthful emblems like "Dork!" — is not worried.

"I just think that if it's my time to die, then it's my time to die," the teenager said.

She said she just loves Israel, having spent the summer with a 21-year old cousin there. "I love being around my own people."

For Regina, the Jewishness of life in Israel makes her feel less awkward. When she goes grocery shopping with her mother at the local Publix supermarket, it's "all weird" to check for kosher items for their modern Orthodox family, she said.

In Israel, "you can just ask, 'Is this kosher?' and you don't have to feel stupid," she said.

Parent Aaron Tokar was drawn to the Elite program, which he discovered at a Brooklyn fair for new immigrants, because of troubles with his teenaged son, David.

"I don't know whose influence it was, but he wasn't studying hard enough," said Tokar, who emigrated from Odessa in 1976, when Ukraine was still part of the Soviet Union. "I thought maybe being self-reliant will keep him studying."

In addition, he said, the program will give David, 15, a Jewish education not available in his Brooklyn public school.

Being "independent and stuff" is "what made me want to go," said David, a pale thin redhead in hip-hop gear: low-slung jeans, Nikes and a heavy chain necklace.

"Only the good students make it" at his high school, said David, who admits that he cuts class sometimes. He says he hopes for a fresh start in Israel — but making friends is his chief concern.

"That's the hardest part," he said.

Meanwhile, his grandmother Elizabeth Kapilevich, bemoaned the move. "My heart is broken," she said. "What can I do?"

She worries for David's safety amid the threat of terrorism — and she will miss him. Of her seven grandchildren in America, Kapilevich said, David "is the best for me." She said he visits each Saturday — "like a son."

But for the modern Orthodox Piha family of New Rochelle, the Elite program is a unifier: It will bring Eitan to Israel as his parents prepare for aliyah.

Eitan, 15, has visited Israel only once — for a monthlong vacation with his family six summers ago — but said he "always wanted to go to Israel."

Asked if he has any concerns about the program, he shrugs the question off.

"I mean it's just like camp, but longer," he said. Besides, he added, "I'll probably stay there." □

Charles Liebman dies

NEW YORK (JTA) — Jewish political scientist Charles Liebman died this week in Israel.

Liebman won the 2003 Israel Prize in political science and retired this year from his post as the Yehuda Avner Professor of Religion and Politics at Bar-Ilan University.

Born in New York in 1934, Liebman moved to Israel in 1969 with his wife Carol and their three children.

Devoted to organizations that promote religious and secular renewal, Liebman published 14 books and numerous papers on Israel-Diaspora relations, political Zionism, civil religion in Israel, Orthodox Jewry and Jewish identity.

A winner of the Abraham Cahan Prize for Jewish Journalism, Liebman was regarded as one of the world's leading experts on Jewish continuity and assimilation.

He will be buried on Friday in Petach Tikva. □