

IN THE NEWS

Israeli official: Rafah reminds of Holocaust

Israel's raid on Rafah was reminiscent of the Holocaust, Justice Minister Yosef "Tommy" Lapid said.

"On television I saw an old woman rummaging through the ruins of her home in Rafah, searching for her medication, and she reminded me of my grandmother who was expelled from her home during the Holocaust," the Hungarian-born Lapid told fellow ministers at Sunday's Cabinet meeting.

After being rebuked by Prime Minister Ariel Sharon, Lapid issued a public clarification. "To remove any doubt, I do not mean to liken us to the Germans or the Holocaust," he told Israel Radio. "But we must remember that we are a humane people, we are Jews and we have commitment beyond just our security needs."

Kerry blasts Hollings' remarks

Sen. John Kerry said comments by Sen. Ernest "Fritz" Hollings (D-S.C.), in which Hollings said the United States went to war in Iraq because of Israel, were "absurd." [Story, Pg. 3]

Israeli author jolts Europe's Jewish forum

An Israeli author shook up a conference of European Jews with an appeal for them to take the lead in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

A.B. Yehoshua called on European Jews to help draw the new border between Israel and a Palestinian state at the third General Assembly of European Jewry, which took place May 20-23 in Budapest.

Also, the conference elected Britain's Jonathan Joseph as the new president of the European Council of Jewish Communities.

JTA World Report will not be published on Thursday, May 26, and Friday, May 27, due to the Shavuot holiday.

WORLD REPORT

PUBLISHED WEEKDAYS BY JTA—THE GLOBAL NEWS SERVICE OF THE JEWISH PEOPLE · WWW.JTA.ORG

Report: Faculty hold the keys to improving Israel's campus image

By RACHEL POMERANCE

NEW YORK (JTA) — The belief that students are the main instigators of anti-Israel activity on college campuses is wrong — it's actually the faculty.

At least, that's the premise of a soon-to-be released report by the Israel on Campus Coalition, a group of 27 Jewish organizations that aid pro-Israel activists at U.S. colleges, and the American-Israeli Cooperative Enterprise, a group that aims to bolster the U.S.-Israel relationship.

A few high-profile anti-Israel or anti-Semitic acts on some campuses have created the misconception that anti-Israel activity is widespread and directed by students, said the American-Israeli Cooperative Enterprise's executive director, Mitchell Bard, who prepared the report.

But such flashpoints are rare, Bard says.

"The real problem is more insidious because it's not as visible, and that is the absence of scholars who can teach about Israel in a way that is factual and even remotely sympathetic to Israel," said Bard, whose report suggests ways to increase pro-Israel scholarship about Israel at U.S. universities.

Befuddled by the implacability of Arab governments, Middle East scholars sought to blame the conflict on Israel, said Martin Kramer, whose "Ivory Towers on Sand: The Failure of Middle Eastern Studies in America" is quoted in Bard's report.

That alleged bias has been compounded by Arab funding of many Middle Eastern Studies departments, and the landmark publication in 1978 of Columbia Univer-

sity professor Edward Said's "Orientalism," which argued that Westerners who studied Palestinians viewed them through a racist or imperialist lens.

That hugely influential book spurred a trend of academic inquiry that largely was anti-Western and sympathetic to Arab causes.

Bard's report, which was to be released over the weekend at Hillel's International Lay Leadership Conference in Washington, comes as the question of anti-Israel bias among faculty has gained prominence.

The Columbia University administration recently created a faculty committee to examine the extent of permissible free speech by academics.

Heated debate on the U.S.-led war in Iraq, particularly after a professor speaking at a university teach-in wished "a million Mogadishus" on American soldiers, prompted the creation of the committee, the university provost's Alan Brinkley, told JTA.

Columbia President Lee Bollinger said he didn't believe free speech could excuse intimidation in the classroom, and he asked the committee to examine the issue. But the committee found no evidence of "systematic bias in teaching on the campus," Brinkley said.

Many Jews, however, maintain that there is a systematic bias against Israel throughout the academy — and no quick fix.

"Students come and go," but "faculty can be there for generations, so they really have a huge impact on what happens on that campus," said Rachel Fish, New York regional director of the David Project, which teaches

Continued on page 2

**FOCUS
ON
ISSUES**

■ Report: Faculty hold the key to improving Israel's image on campus

Continued from page 1

about the Israeli-Palestinian conflict in high schools, colleges and communities. "How the administration deals with that needs to become an item on the agenda."

Fish should know. As a graduate student at Harvard Divinity School last spring, she informed the administration that one of the school's donors, United Arab Emirates President Sheikh Zayed, also funded an anti-American and anti-Semitic think tank.

But the problem goes beyond the issue of anti-Israel faculty who turn the classroom into a bully pulpit, Fish said.

"Jewish faculty are absolutely reluctant to speak up" for Israel, she said. "If they don't have tenure, they fear that if they speak up it's committing career suicide," she explained. "Those who do have tenure don't speak up because they feel they won't be viewed as legitimate scholars anymore."

Faculty behavior will change only if the impetus comes from within the university, Fish and others said.

■
"Somebody coming in from the outside and challenging a faculty member means nothing. Somebody coming in from the inside, a peer, someone who can challenge your tenure, your next promotion," carries meaning and pressure, said Ed Beck, who teaches psychology at Alvernia College in Pennsylvania.

He also is president of Scholars for Peace in the Middle East, an international faculty network that tries to counter anti-Israel and anti-Semitic teaching at

U.S. universities.

But some say that pushing for pro-Israel faculty members could undermine the integrity of the academy.

The topic has created a stir among Jewish faculty on Internet discussion groups and was the topic of a panel discussion at the last meeting of the Association for Jewish Studies, said Norman Stillman, who teaches Judaic history at the University of Oklahoma.

"On the one hand, we all have our private views, loyalties and political affiliations. On the other hand, many of us are old-fashioned enough to believe that our job at the university is not to propagandize but to discuss issues with academic dispassion," Stillman said.

Still, the Israel on Campus Coalition would be within its bounds to seek a "more rounded presentation" about Israel on campus, Stillman said.

For his part, Bard doesn't just provide case studies of responses on various campuses and examples of faculty-driven initiatives, but offers a range of recommendations for "reclaiming Middle East scholarship."

Bard stressed that the purpose of his report isn't to oust or criticize professors that rail against Israel, but to foster more accurate scholarship on Israel.

■
For example, Bard's group has created a scholarship fund that would give matching funds to universities that hire American and Israeli academics as visiting professors and offer scholarships to students who want to become scholars on Israel.

He also proposes that pro-Israel scholars mentor faculty, train faculty from non-Middle East studies departments to teach courses on Israel, and endow university chairs and departments in Israel studies.

Bard said American Jewish philanthropy helped invigorate Jewish studies and Holocaust studies, which now boast dozens of chairs and departments.

"The creation of chairs and Israel studies centers have the greatest poten-

tial for long-term influence on the course of scholarship, the development of new talent, and support for pro-Israel students," Bard wrote.

Stillman — who affiliated himself with Jewish studies primarily because of the anti-Israel hostility and "at times barely veiled anti-Semitism" prevalent in university Middle East studies departments — agreed.

"No discipline or subdiscipline has any firm anchorage within a university unless it is either a recognized program or full-fledged department," he said.

But not everyone agrees with Bard's approach.

"It sounds to me like a very clear attempt to politicize academic depart-

ments," said Hasdai Westbrook, editor of New Voices magazine, written by and for Jewish students.

Political activism has its place on campus, but not in academia, said Westbrook, who stressed that he had not yet seen the report.

■
But Bard says his proposal may just be a stopgap solution — and not the only one. Those involved say the report is simply a start toward showcasing the issues and taking a stab at solutions.

Bypassing Middle East studies departments to find professors who can teach fairly about Israel will create a cadre of Israel scholars who eventually can affect hiring and teaching patterns in Middle East studies, he said.

Alvernia College's Beck says the Israel on Campus Coalition should offer faculty the resources and training it currently invests in students.

Wayne Firestone, director of the Israel on Campus Coalition and Hillel's Center for Israel Affairs, agrees that faculty need to be seriously involved for change to take place.

But he acknowledges that most professors feel that becoming members and advocates of Jewish groups would compromise their work.

In trying to shift the behavior of faculty on Israel, "there is no silver bullet," Firestone said. ■

'The creation of chairs and Israel studies centers have the greatest potential for long-term influence.'

Mitchell Bard

American-Israeli Cooperative Enterprise

JTA WORLD REPORT

Howard E. Friedman
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 WORLD REPORT is published five days a week, except holidays, by the Jewish Telegraphic Agency Inc., 330 Seventh Ave., New York, N.Y. 10001-5010. For more 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 with permission.

S. Carolina senator blasts sway of Israel lobby

By MATTHEW E. BERGER

WASHINGTON (JTA) — Never known as genteel or soft-spoken, Ernest “Fritz” Hollings is ending his 38 years in the Senate with a typical bang — one that a number of Jewish groups could do without.

In a speech May 20 on the Senate floor, the South Carolina Democrat blasted the pro-Israel lobby for the second time this month and suggested that presidents and lawmakers for years have followed policy prescribed by the American Israel Public Affairs Committee.

THIS WEEK

MONDAY

■ The Jewish Theological Seminary of America pays tribute to its chancellor, Ismar Schorsch, marking his 18 years at the helm of the leading Conservative seminary. Schorsch will speak at the New York seminary, and a book of his writings, called “Polarities in Balance,” is due to be released.

■ The Anti-Defamation League holds a tribute in New York for Nobel Prize-winner Elie Wiesel’s 75th birthday. NBC news anchor Tom Brokaw will be master of ceremonies for the event at the Waldorf-Astoria Hotel.

■ Hillel’s international board of governors holds its semiannual meeting. Headed by Edgar Bronfman, the group of lay leaders will talk about how to reach unaffiliated Jewish students. Hillel’s board of directors, the group’s decision-making body, also will hold its semiannual meeting.

■ The American Zionist Movement holds its biannual meeting. The group will get an update from Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon’s spokesman, Ra’anan Gissin, via teleconference.

■ The Conference of Presidents of Major American Jewish Organizations holds one of several annual general meetings. David Makovsky, senior fellow at the Washington Institute for Near East Policy, will address the group on Israel’s West Bank security barrier. The Presidents Conference has made defense of Israel’s security fence a key issue. The group is closely following the International Court of Justice’s assessment of the fence’s legality.

TUESDAY

■ The holiday of Shavuot, marking the giving of the Torah to the Jews on Mount Sinai, begins at sundown. Jews all over the world will hold all-night Torah study sessions through Wednesday morning. The holiday continues through Thursday evening.

“You can’t have an Israel policy other than what AIPAC gives you around here,” Hollings said. “I have followed them mostly in the main, but I have also resisted signing certain letters from time to time, to give the poor president a chance.”

Hollings, who is retiring this year at 82, took to the floor to defend a column he wrote in a newspaper in his home state earlier this month, suggesting that the Bush administration went to war in Iraq on Israel’s behalf.

The comments come as Democrats are fighting to retain 3-1 support among Jewish voters and campaign donors.

Several American Jewish organizations reacted strongly to Hollings’ column, suggesting he was scapegoating the Jewish community and providing ammunition for anti-Semitic attacks.

“I don’t apologize for this column,” Hollings said. “I want them to apologize to me for talking about anti-Semitism.” And he reiterated his view that the Iraq war was fought for Israel.

“That is not a conspiracy. That is the policy,” he said. “Everybody knows it because we want to secure our friend, Israel.”

In his newspaper column, Hollings cited Israeli experts as saying that prewar Iraq posed little danger to the Jewish state.

Some pro-Israel lobbyists say Hollings has a poor voting record on Israel. He also is known for putting his foot in his mouth, and in the past has apologized for remarks that offended blacks and Japanese.

But no one was prepared for his May 6 column in the Charleston Post and Courier, suggesting that a Jewish columnist and two Jewish advisers to President Bush beat the war drums, and that the war’s aim was to enhance Israel’s security.

Hollings named columnist Charles Krauthammer; Richard Perle, the former chair of the Pentagon’s Defense Policy Board; and Paul Wolfowitz, a deputy secretary of defense, as leaders of a “domino school of thought that the way to guarantee Israel’s security is to spread democracy in the area.”

In his Senate speech last week, Hollings said he did not single out the three because they are Jewish, but because their

writings help prove his point that Bush was misled by mistaken advice.

Hollings also suggested that Bush agreed to the war plan to secure Jewish votes for his re-election campaign.

Several American Jewish organizations rebuked Hollings for his column.

“Regardless of whether one feels that America’s war on Iraq was justified, the charge that it is being fought by the U.S. on behalf of Israel grossly misrepresents the legitimate U.S. interests that are involved in the debate,” Abraham Foxman, national director of the Anti-Defamation League, wrote in a letter to Hollings.

The Republican Jewish Coalition called on Democratic leaders to repudiate Hollings’ statements.

Sen. John Kerry (D-Mass.), the presumptive Democratic nominee for president, called Hollings’ comments “absurd.” He said, “Comments such as these lend credence to unacceptable and baseless anti-Semitic stereotypes that have no place in America or anywhere else.”

The National Jewish Democratic Council did not speak out against Hollings until two weeks after the column appeared. Ira Forman, the council’s executive director, said his group had not spoken out because publicizing Hollings’ original comment might have fueled anti-Jewish sentiment.

Hollings spokeswoman Ilene Zeldin told JTA that the senator stood by his floor comments.

In his speech, Hollings specifically attacked AIPAC, suggesting that the organization manipulates American politics.

AIPAC spokesman Josh Block would not comment on Hollings’ statements.

But some Democrats on Capitol Hill said Hollings was on the mark about AIPAC.

“Sen. Hollings eloquently stated what many members of Congress believe but are too afraid to say,” said one senior Democratic Hill staffer, who spoke on condition of anonymity.

Hollings’ bluntness may come from the freedom that beckons with retirement.

At one point, when asked to yield for a vote, he responded, “Time is running out on me.”

‘Sen. Hollings eloquently stated what many members of Congress believe but are too afraid to say.’

Anonymous Democratic staff member

NEWS IN BRIEF

MIDDLE EAST

Rafah homeowners may get compensation

Israel may compensate Palestinians who lost their homes in Israeli army operations in Rafah.

Israeli sources said Sunday that residents of the refugee camp, in southern Gaza, could be eligible for reparations if they prove ownership of property that was damaged during Israel's weeklong counterterrorist operation there.

Dozens of homes were demolished or damaged during the Israeli operation that began May 17, which has drawn widespread international censure.

On Saturday, Israeli forces discovered a tunnel in Rafah used by Palestinians to smuggle arms in from Egypt.

Also Saturday, Palestinians accused Israeli troops of killing a 4-year-old girl in Rafah.

The army denied knowledge of the incident but said it is investigating.

West Bank blast

Two West Bank Palestinians were killed when explosives they were handling went off prematurely.

Palestinians initially blamed the blast in the city of Nablus on an Israeli helicopter strike, but it quickly became clear that the men apparently had detonated explosives they were loading onto a cart.

Bomber hits checkpoint

Israeli troops foiled a West Bank suicide bombing. Military sources said soldiers at a checkpoint outside a settlement in the Jordan Valley fired warning shots in the air Saturday after their suspicions were raised by a Palestinian who approached them clutching a box. The Palestinian then set off a hidden bomb, killing himself and lightly wounding a soldier and four Palestinians at the checkpoint.

The Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine claimed responsibility for the attack.

Israeli youths look abroad

One in four Israeli teenagers wants to leave the country, a poll found.

According to an Israel Democracy Institute survey published over the weekend, 27 percent of Israeli teenagers do not think they will remain in the Jewish state, compared with 13 percent of adults. Asked if they back conscientious objectors in the Israeli military, 43 percent of the 585 teenagers polled said yes.

Their support was roughly the same for soldiers who oppose the evacuation of Jewish settlements in the West Bank and Gaza Strip.

General's promotion challenged

Dovish Israelis challenged the appointment of the former Israel Air Force commander as deputy chief of staff.

A group of conscientious objectors and intellectuals petitioned the High Court of Justice on Sunday against the promotion of Maj. Gen. Dan Halutz, who oversaw a 2002 airstrike on a Gaza residential building in which Hamas military chief Salah Shehada and 13 other Palestinians were killed.

Halutz "gave an illegal order that should outrage any human being," the petition said. Halutz is to be made deputy chief of staff this summer.

Military spokesmen did not immediately comment on the petition.

Peres denies coalition report

Israeli Labor Party leader Shimon Peres denied a report saying he is considering joining the Sharon government.

On Sunday, Peres rebutted the Channel One report, which said he had held secret talks with an adviser to Prime Minister Ariel Sharon on forming a unity coalition government between the Labor and Likud parties.

WORLD

Gadhafi walks out of Arab League

Libyan leader Muammar Gadhafi walked out of an Arab League summit that ended Sunday.

Gadhafi walked out in part because the 22-member summit refused to consider a proposal he made a few years ago that the Israelis and Palestinians form a joint state called Israteen, The New York Times reported.

Before ending the meeting, the league did approve a vaguely worded proposal calling for a revival of Middle East peace initiatives.

Group wants IOC to press Greece

The Simon Wiesenthal Center called on the International Olympic Committee to press Greece on anti-Semitism.

The center made its call in a letter to the president of the IOC, Jacques Rogge, two and a half months before the 2004 Olympic games are scheduled to get under way in Athens.

Unless Greece takes action against anti-Semitism and racism, the center said its travel boycott against Greece will remain in place.

Israeli film scores at Cannes

An Israeli movie won an award at the Cannes film festival. Keren Yedaya, director of "My Treasure," took the Camera D'Or prize on Saturday — awarded to the best full-length movie by a debut director. The film is about the lives of an Israeli prostitute and her 17-year-old daughter, who wants her mother to quit the street.

Argentina gets Wallenberg school

A lifelong learning school named after World War II hero Raoul Wallenberg was dedicated in Buenos Aires.

Following the May 14 dedication, there are now Raoul Wallenberg Schools in four Latin American countries, including Brazil, Uruguay and Ecuador.

Wallenberg, who is believed to have died in a Soviet prison after being captured in 1945, saved tens of thousands of Hungarian Jews during the war by issuing them Swedish passports.

NORTH AMERICA

AJCommittee goes on the air

The American Jewish Committee launched an Internet radio station. The station, available at www.ajc.org, features interviews with world and Jewish leaders about anti-Semitism, terrorism and other issues facing Jews around the world.

Israeli wants Canadian refugee status

An Israeli man living in Canada applied for refugee status for his family because of the danger they face at home from suicide bombers. Yossef Makias, whose aunt was killed in a bus explosion and whose nephews were paralyzed in a drive-by shooting, is appealing a recent decision of the Immigration and Refugee Board not to accept the family as refugees on the grounds that all Israelis face the same terrorist threat and a more specific danger is required in order to qualify as refugees.

The board also noted that Israel takes reasonable security measures to protect its public. "The State of Israel cannot protect each of its citizens at all times," the board said in its written decision.