

IN THE NEWS
Rice open to Hezbollah role

Condoleezza Rice said the U.S. position on Hezbollah has not changed, but officials said the government could consider a political role for the group in Lebanon if it disarmed.

The U.S. secretary of state did not explicitly label Hezbollah a terrorist organization in comments to the media Thursday.

But she said American perception of the organization — labeled as a foreign terrorist organization on the State Department's list — has not changed in recent days.

Annan outlines anti-terror strategy

The U.N. secretary-general outlined a comprehensive U.N. counterterrorism strategy.

Kofi Annan issued a five-pronged approach to fighting terrorism in a keynote address to the International Summit on Democracy, Terrorism and Security in Madrid on Thursday.

The plan aims to dissuade disaffected groups from resorting to terrorism, deny terrorists the means to carry out attacks, deter states from supporting terrorists, develop state capacity to thwart terrorists and defend human rights.

U.N. official seeks balance

The United Nations' human rights chief called for Israel to be treated more fairly by the international forum.

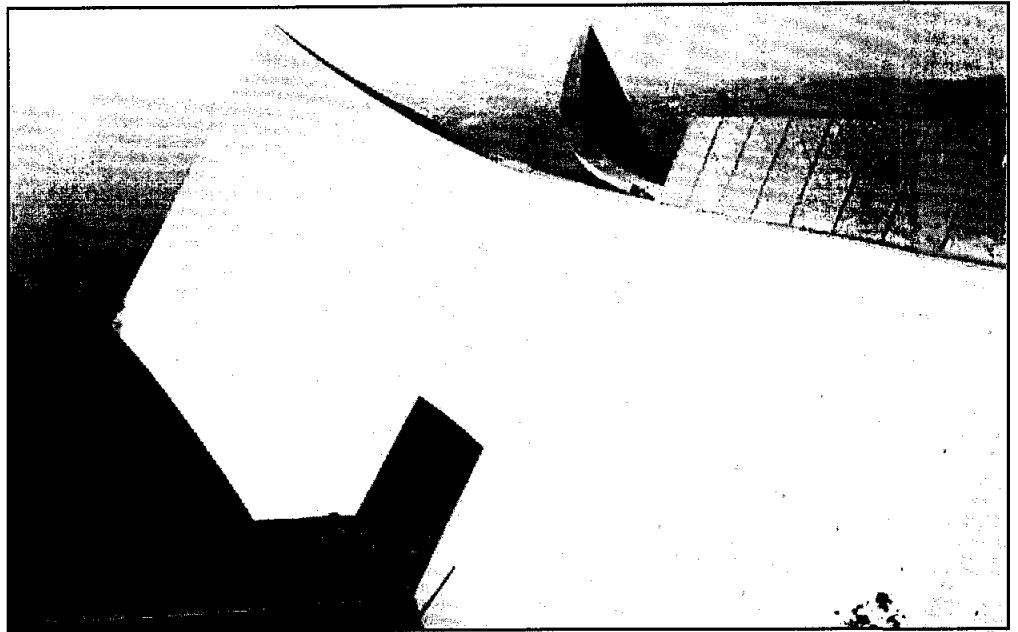
"I hope Israel would receive a more balanced treatment in the framework of the changes slated to take place in United Nations institutions, especially in those dealing with human rights," Louise Arbour, high commissioner of the U.N. Human Rights Commission, said Thursday during a Geneva meeting with Israel's minister for Diaspora affairs, Natan Sharansky.

The annual six-week session of the commission, which has become a forum for anti-Israel rhetoric and resolutions, is set to open in Geneva on Monday.

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WORLD REPORT

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Brian Hendler

SPEAK, MEMORY

Yad Vashem's new Holocaust History Museum's entrance slices through the Mount of Remembrance; the exit, shown here, open onto Jerusalem's hilltops. [Stories below and pg. 5]

Holocaust museum is woven into the fabric of Israeli society

By DINA KRAFT

JERUSALEM (JTA) — Schoolchildren, heads of state, soldiers and tourists all pass through its gates into a hush of religious solemnity.

It is the Yad Vashem Holocaust Memorial, whose stone buildings, razor-wire sculptures and even trees are soaked with meaning and the memory of those murdered in the Holocaust.

Yad Vashem, set in the hills of a Jerusalem pine forest, has become the physical symbol of remembering the Holocaust in

Israel. It has also become part of the national landscape and a central site of collective Israeli identity.

As Israel makes its way in the new century,

Yad Vashem is about to open a new \$56 million museum aimed at giving voice to the personal stories of the 6 million Jews killed in the Nazi genocide. The ceremonial opening is slated for Tuesday and Wednesday; it will open to the public at the end of March.

Since it opened in 1973, Yad Vashem has been the first stop on visiting dignitaries' of

Continued on page 4

A NEW
YAD VASHEM

Africans want their story told at Columbia

By RACHEL POMERANCE

NEW YORK (JTA) — Daoud Salih, a Sudanese refugee, does not seem a likely advocate for revamping the Middle East studies department at Columbia University. But he says he shares the concerns of many Jewish students there.

His story, and the story of other Africans expelled from or enslaved in Arab countries, is a narrative largely excluded from a college education in Middle Eastern studies, Salih and others said.

In making their case at a daylong conference sponsored by pro-Israel groups and benefactors at Columbia University on Sunday, their views became a new dimension to an ongoing controversy engulfing the university's Middle East and Asian Languages and Cultures Department.

Ever since the public screening last fall of "Columbia Unbecoming," a film that documented the concerns of pro-Israel students who feel intimidated by faculty with anti-Israel views, the issue has embroiled the university and captured national headlines.

Charles Jacobs, president of the David Project, which produced "Columbia Unbecoming," introduced the African speakers as an example of alternative viewpoints that could be integrated into the Middle East studies department — and at the same time increase the numbers who support change in the department.

The strident focus on the Palestinian cause — what he calls "Palestinianism" — to the detriment of other issues, Jacobs said, is a "highly cultivated weapon of mass distraction."

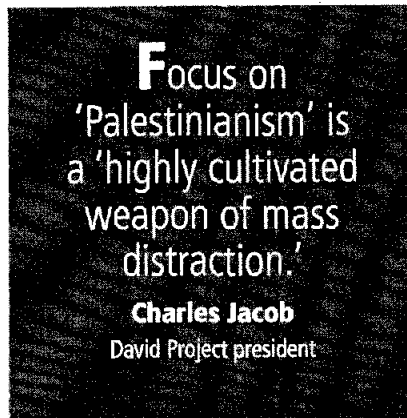
The conference, which drew more than 300 people, came shortly after the Columbia committee investigating student charges of intimidation was expected to have handed down a report on the matter. But in a Feb. 28 letter to university President Lee Bollinger, the committee said it required more time to finish its report to the vice president for Arts and Sciences and a public summary of its findings by March 25.

The program was not timed to coincide

with the report, however, said Edward Beck, president of Scholars for Peace in the Middle East, a group of 600 professors that fights anti-Semitism and anti-Zionism on campus, and was a sponsor of the conference. The plenum, he said, was a "call for academic integrity" to "raise the level of scholarship when it comes to Middle Eastern studies."

However, the pro-Israel side appeared to be the only one in attendance.

Other speakers at the conference included Israel's minister for Diaspora affairs, Natan Sharansky, and Martin Kramer, a professor of Middle Eastern studies at Tel Aviv University, who addressed the group by video. ■



Survey: U.S. Jews' Israel ties down

By RACHEL POMERANCE

NEW YORK (JTA) — Palestinian terror during the intifada led to an increase in U.S. Jews' attachment to Israel, but now that the violence is subsiding, that attachment appears to be decreasing as well.

That's according to a new survey conducted by one of the leading demographers of Jewish life.

"We know that 2002 was an unusual year of concern for Israel," as evidenced by the high participation of American Jews in pro-Israel rallies, said Steven M. Cohen.

Cohen conducted a survey in December and January that follows up on one he did in 2002. Both were sponsored by the Jewish Agency for Israel.

Results of the recent survey, conducted among nearly 1,500 American Jewish households, were first published in the Forward.

The recent decline in Israel attachment continues a 40-year decline in the collective Jewish identity of American Jews, including attachment to Israel, Cohen said.

At the same time, American Jewish travel to Israel has risen sharply during the last two years.

Such travel appears to be the key to fueling Jewish identity, Cohen said. While older Jews may be attached to Israel without having setting foot there, younger Jews require the benefit of travel to make the connection.

The study comes as the Jewish Agency puts into action a new strategic plan that aims to focus on strengthening the Jewish identity in the Diaspora by connecting with Israel. A key element of the vision is funding Israel programs for Diaspora youth.

Among other findings of Cohen's 2004 study:

- About 15 percent of American Jews said they planned to visit Israel in the next three years, compared with 12 percent of American Jews in 2002. Some 24 percent said they encouraged someone to visit Israel in the past year, compared with 19 percent previously.

- About 26 percent of American Jews were very emotionally attached to Israel in 2004, compared with 31 percent in 2002. When asked how much being Jewish has to do with caring about Israel, 48 percent said a lot in 2004, compared with 58 percent in the earlier survey. ■



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Jewish groups oppose stricter asylum controls

By MATTHEW E. BERGER

WASHINGTON (JTA) — Several American Jewish groups are lobbying against proposed immigration reforms that passed the U.S. House of Representatives last month.

At the same time, organizations are pressing for a provision to extend benefits to elderly and disabled refugees, including many immigrant Jews.

Immigration reform has grown increasingly important in Washington, as lawmakers seek measures that will protect the country from an influx of potential terrorists.

But the Hebrew Immigrant Aid Society and other Jewish groups fear that in an effort to fight terrorism, the United States will deny asylum to people facing religious and other types of persecution.

"We think the provisions will have a very detrimental effect on refugees, and it's very inappropriate to say asylum is the preferred route for terrorists," said Gideon Aronoff, HIAS' vice president for government relations and public policy.

Jewish groups are particularly concerned about the REAL ID Act, which passed the House last month. The bill, provisions of which were originally proposed as part of intelligence reform that passed Congress last year, raises the bar for granting asylum to potential refugees. The legislation applies only to people seeking asylum once they are in this country.

In 2003, 26,000 people were granted asylum; 3,050 of them were from the former Soviet Union and Iran, Aronoff said.

He said it was impossible to say how many of them were Jewish.

"It certainly could and will effect some Jewish asylum seekers," he added. "But the principal reason the Jewish community is engaged in this is because of the broader Jewish values of refugee protection" and the value of "welcoming the stranger."

The bill says that bias would have to be the main reason for seeking asylum, rather than one reason among many.

Aronoff said it can sometimes be difficult to establish bias as the central reason for persecution. If someone living in the former Soviet Union is attacked, told to "go to Israel" and then robbed, he said, it would be difficult to tell if the motive were bias or robbery.

The law also requires corroborating evidence of abuse or bias, which officials say could be close to impossible to provide.

Judges could dismiss cases based on in-

consistency with previous statements or because of a person's demeanor, and asylum seekers could be returned to their home country while their cases are appealed.

"People fleeing persecution should go through rigorous security checks and make a substantial case, which they do," said Stacey Burdett, assistant director of government and national affairs at the Anti-Defamation League.

Proponents of the legislation say the asylum system has been abused by terrorists.

"Irresponsible judges have made the asylum laws vulnerable to fraud and abuse," U.S. Rep. James Sensenbrenner (R-Wis.), the bill's sponsor, said last month.

The bill is not expected to pass the Senate by itself, but the Senate could be forced to take on the issue if, as expected, lawmakers in the House add the provision to its version of the supplemental spending bill. That bill appropriates funds for military efforts in Iraq and Afghanistan, as well as to the Palestinians. The House was expected to

take up the supplemental appropriations bill this week.

Jewish groups have been vocal in their opposition. A letter to senators, sent late last month, asked them to reject the REAL ID Act, calling the bill "hasty" and "egregious." It was signed by leaders of 18 Jewish organizations.

This week, the same coalition members and are pressing Congress to extend the Supplemental Security Income, or SSI, benefit for refugees.

The aid, which provides a basic monthly income to people 65 or over, the disabled and the blind, is supposed

to be cut off to refugees if they have not become naturalized citizens within seven years. But many elderly and disabled refugees have been unable to meet the language requirement, and others have been unable

to manipulate the bureaucracy to gain citizenship in time. "I think there are people who misunderstand the fact that seven years is not enough time for these refugees," Aronoff said.

HIAS estimates that 20,000 people will lose their benefits by 2010, and 8,000 of those are refugees from the former Soviet Union. Many of them are Jews.

President Bush proposed a one-year extension of benefits as part of his budget request last month. He made a similar request last year, but the initiative did not pass Congress.

The language authorizing the extension was expected to be proposed in the Senate Finance Committee this week. Aronoff said he hoped a two-year extension would be broached.

HIAS was circulating a letter to Jewish groups this week, pressing the need for SSI as "life-sustaining assistance to the elderly and disabled." Already 40 Jewish groups have signed the letter, which will be sent to lawmakers in both the House and the Senate.

'We think the provisions will have a very detrimental effect on refugees, and it's very inappropriate to say asylum is the preferred route for terrorists.'

Gideon Aronoff
HIAS vice president

BEHIND THE HEADLINES



Steven Bibb/HIAS

Polina Khutoryan, originally from Ukraine, leaves a Brighton Beach, Brooklyn, polling place in 2004 after voting for the first time.

■ Holocaust museum provides Israelis with history, memory and identity

Continued from page 1

ficial tours. It is where Israeli schoolchildren — Arab and Jewish — often get their first real sense of what it means to be part of a country founded in the aftermath of the most wide-scale genocide in history.

During her recent visit here, U.S. Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice emerged from the section memorializing the more than 1 million children who were murdered — symbolized by a single candle reflected a million times by a maze of mirrors — and wrote in Yad Vashem's guest book:

"This is a place that causes all to remember those who perished and to accept that it must never happen again; that good men and women do not act."

■
The importance of memorializing the Holocaust is one of the few issues still uniting Israelis.

On Holocaust Memorial Day, they turn on their television sets to watch the somber state ceremony of remembrance. On tours of Jerusalem, Yad Vashem is a regular stop for Israelis from all walks of life, from the most left wing and secular to the most politically conservative and religious.

"Yad Vashem today has become a holy site in a way, like the Western Wall, a site that places the memory of the Holocaust as a central part of Israeli history," said historian Roni Stauber, who has written on the origins of Holocaust commemoration in Israel and the beginnings of Yad Vashem.

"Because of this, Yad Vashem has become one of the main institutions of the country," said Stauber, who is affiliated with Tel Aviv University.

In Jerusalem, the author and historian Tom Segev says there are three sites that are central to Israel's identity: Yad Vashem, the military cemetery on neighboring Mount Herzl and the Western Wall.

"These three places symbolize most the worth and the ethos of what it means to be Israelis and Jews," said Segev, who wrote the groundbreaking "Seventh Million," which explored attitudes toward the Holocaust and its survivors during the early years of the state.

The sprawling Yad Vashem complex is more than the museum of the history of the Holocaust, which opened in 1973. It is also home to a vast archive, a research

center, an international school and a library. Yad Vashem officials also recently launched a vast online database of victims' names.

Today Yad Vashem sees vast numbers of visitors each year. Its peak year was 2000, when 2 million visitors came. Last year, the number was 850,000, according to officials.

Among the visitors are 100,000 school-age students and 50,000 soldiers.

Both Israeli and foreign teachers come to Yad Vashem for courses on how to teach the Holocaust.

■
The first voices calling for a memorial for the Jewish victims of the Nazis were raised as early as 1942, while the war still was being fought.

In 1953, following the passage of a special law in the Knesset, Yad Vashem was established to commemorate the victims and document the events of the Holocaust in order to educate future generations about its meaning and legacy.

In the early years of the state, there was great ambivalence about how to handle the memory of the Holocaust, historians say.

As a young country focused on building a future, a place where people had an ideological preference for heroism over victimhood, the Holocaust was thorny territory.

The 1961 trial of Nazi Adolf Eichmann in Jerusalem marked the beginnings of a sea change in Israelis' attitude toward the Holocaust.

As Israelis came to terms with what happened to their people under Nazi rule, the standing of Yad Vashem, in turn, took on greater importance to the Israeli public.

"As the issue of Holocaust memory became more central in Israel and Israeli identity, the institution became more and more sacred," Stauber said, referring to Yad Vashem. "It's a development that took place with the passing of years. It did not happen all at once."

James Young, a professor of English

and Judaic studies at the University of Massachusetts at Amherst, is a leading expert on memorials, particularly Holocaust memorials.

He recently sat on the jury to select the memorial for the World Trade Center and also was on the jury that selected the Berlin memorial to Jews killed in the Holocaust.

Young said that with its new

museum, Yad Vashem is poised to speak to a new generation of Israelis, who are more interested in the Diaspora experience than the founding generations had been. Those earlier Israelis preferred to cut themselves off from their pasts in Europe and so focused on a highly nationalist and Zionist interpretation of the Holocaust.

In a telephone interview from Amherst, Young said the Yad Vashem Memorial Authority is recognizing that the new generation of Israelis, including many Jews from the former Soviet Union, are "validating the Galut experience in ways the older generation did not." Galut, the Hebrew word for exile, is used to refer to the Diaspora.

"Life in the Galut led only to holocaust," according to the Zionist narrative, he said. "The new generation does not see things that way."

"They are willing to look at their former lives in the Galut" as what they bring as people, "as immigrants with whole immigrant experiences," he said.

Yad Vashem, according to Young, is "an essential part of Israel's national story itself," a story that tells Israelis why they are here.

Shulamit Imber, pedagogical director at Yad Vashem's International School for Holocaust Studies, said more Israeli schoolchildren have been coming to Yad Vashem in recent years, and therefore the experience is woven into their understanding of the Holocaust.

Built on Har Hazikaron, Hebrew for Memorial Mountain, Yad Vashem gives people a feeling, she said, that "they are coming to a place with meaning." ■

'As the issue of Holocaust memory became more central in Israel and Israeli identity, the institution became more and more sacred.'

Roni Stauber

Historian

New museum puts human faces on Shoah dead

By DINA KRAFT

JERUSALEM (JTA) — Sunlight spills onto the bare concrete floors and smooth slanted walls of the new Yad Vashem museum, a skylight-topped triangle of a building that slices through a mountain-side and tries to put human faces on the 6 million Jews killed in the Holocaust.

A visitor descends deep into the earth and takes a zigzag path through cavernous exhibition rooms documenting the fate of the Jewish victims of the Nazi genocide. A visitor walks past letters, paintings, poems, diaries, photographs, film and personal artifacts: a doll taken into a ghetto by a little girl, a postcard written from Auschwitz in a mother's pleading hand.

"We want to bring a very personal encounter between the story and the storytellers," said Avner Shalev, chairman of the Yad Vashem directorate and the museum's chief curator. "We want to build empathy."

Ten years in the making, the new \$56 million Yad Vashem Holocaust History Museum opens with ceremonies on March 15 and March 16 and will be open to the public at the end of the month. It is vastly different from its predecessor, a smaller museum, built in 1973, with dimly lit displays that are heavy on text and symbolism and now feel dated.

The new museum, with its video art installations, films and survivor testimony, aims at telling the plight of the Holocaust victims in a modern, more accessible way.

Although museum officials play down any sense of competition, the museum also seems to be an Israeli answer to the success of the Holocaust Memorial Museum in Washington, and the Jewish Museum in Berlin.

Beyond the noise of drilling as the museum hurries to meet its deadline for opening stands the stark structure of the building itself. Designed by the internationally renowned Israeli-born architect Moshe Safdie, Shalev likens its cutting through the hillside to "a rupture, a cut into the continuity of Jewish life and Europe and the historical flow."

Safdie says the building evokes the feeling of an architectural remnant, something that has long been there and now is waiting to be revealed.

In an interview with JTA, Safdie said

he decided not to cover the concrete with any other material, "because it smacked of the superfluous."

He said he preferred "the minimalism of the place, given the material of the museum and given the outside as well."

The outside world peeks into the museum through a ridge of skylights. In the depths of retelling the darkest of histories, there is the reminder of sunlight and blue sky.

Inside the exhibition rooms, the challenge was to highlight the Jewish voice within the earthquake of the Nazi genocide.

Curator Yehudit Inbar, Shalev and a handful of other Yad Vashem officials were the first to start planning the new museum. They consulted with historians, psychologists, teachers, survivors and others as they brainstormed their vision of a new museum that would put

a human face on the story of the Holocaust. Among their supporters were Jews from around the world; Holocaust survivors and their descendants were particularly generous.

Philanthropist and survivor Joseph Wilf and his family are among the largest donors to Yad Vashem and the new museum. Mark Wilf, one of his sons, who is a member of the executive committee of the American Society for Yad Vashem, national campaign chairman of the United Jewish Communities, a JTA vice president and a leading member of the group called Second Generation, spoke as his family's representative at a news conference in New York last month.

The new museum, Wilf said, "through the stories it tells, through the architecture we see, through the soul-searching it provokes, will have a critical role for my generation, and for future generations, in energizing our identity as Jews and as human beings."

"We want to give back the

faces," Shalev said.

An effort was made to put names to faces and to artifacts whenever it was possible.

One of the exhibits shows a typical 1930s German Jewish living room, recreated from the actual belongings of various families, including a heavy wooden desk, books and a Kiddush cup.

Excerpts from poems and diaries line the exhibit's walls. Words from a poem by Abramek Koplowicz, a 14-year-old in the Lodz Ghetto who was later killed in Auschwitz, read, "When I grow up and get to be twenty, I'll travel the world of plenty ... to space, into the sky."

"One of the unique things about Yad Vashem that sets it apart from other Holocaust museums is that you emerge to views of Jerusalem and forest," Safdie said. "The forest and the renewal it represents is a statement that light prevails in spite of it all."

'We want to bring a very personal encounter between the story and the storytellers.'

Avner Shalev
Yad Vashem

A NEW
YAD VASHEM

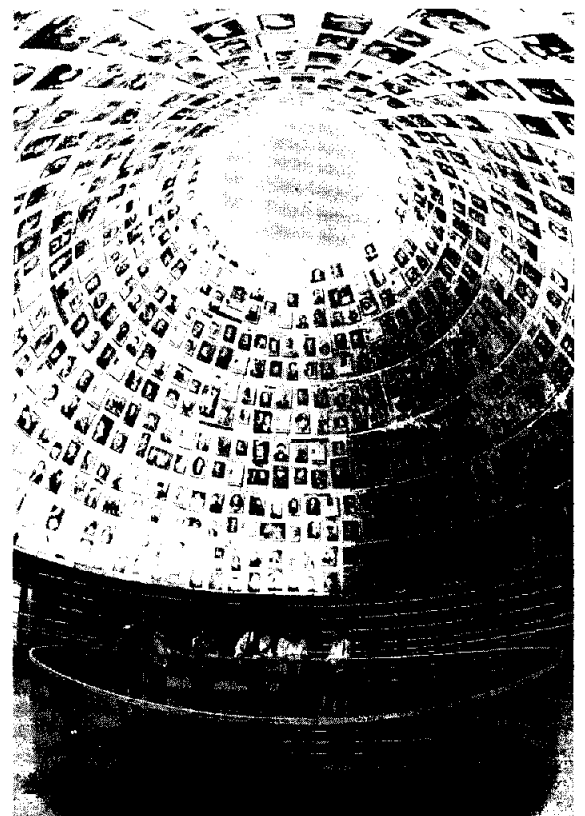


Photo courtesy of Yad Vashem

Yad Vashem's new Holocaust History Museum will open Tuesday in Jerusalem.

Jews pleased with Uruguay's new president

By LARRY LUXNER

SAO PAULO, Brazil (JTA) — When Dr. Tabare Ramon Vazquez was sworn in this week as the first leftist president in Uruguayan history, the country's 23,000-strong Jewish minority pondered the age-old question: Is this good for the Jews?

The short answer, according to community leaders interviewed by phone from Sao Paulo, is yes.

They say Uruguay's Jewish community has nothing to fear from Vazquez — despite his admiration for Cuba's Fidel Castro, Venezuela's Hugo Chavez and other left-leaning, pro-Arab heads of state.

"We're waiting to see what will happen," said Marcelo Cynovich, director of Hillel Uruguay and an activist in Zionist causes.

"It seems like everyone is betting on this change. So far, it has not been like Venezuela, where right away Chavez cut off all contact with the Jewish community."

Further, said Israel Buszkaniec, president of the Comitè Central Israelita del Uruguay, an umbrella group of Uruguayan

Jewish organizations, "We have very good relations with many people in the new government, including ministers, deputies and senators.

"In Venezuela, the Jewish community was against Chavez even before he took office, and they also supported the attempted coup against him" in 2002, he said. "Vazquez is nothing like Chavez."

Indeed, Vazquez, a 64-year-old oncologist and former mayor of Montevideo, has named at least half a dozen

Jews to government posts.

Last month, leaders of the Comitè Central held a conference with three top incoming officials of the Ministry of Social Development.

At the meeting, they delivered a presentation put together by the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee on alleviating poverty in Uruguay — a nation once known as the "Switzerland of Latin America" for its prosperity and political stability.

According to the state-run National Institute of Statistics, nearly a third of Uruguay's 3.4 million people live below the poverty line, including 100,000 citizens classified as destitute. In addition, Health Ministry figures show that 19 percent of Uruguayan children are severely malnourished.

Hard times have affected Uruguay's Jews deeply as well. Thousands of middle-class shopkeepers, merchants and other Jews found themselves jobless after Uruguay's economic crisis in 2001, a direct consequence of the peso devaluation in neighboring Argentina.

Though Uruguay's economy has grown over the last two years and its gross domestic product likely will rebound by at least 6 percent this year, there's no question that Vazquez begins his five-year term of office amid continuing economic uncertainty.

"By all means, 2004 was much better than the two previous years, but we're going from minus 100 to minus 80," said Cynovich, the Hillel director.

"Things have improved and people are a little more optimistic now, but there's still a lot to do. The new government's main

challenge is to reduce the level of poverty in Uruguay."

Vazquez, who was elected in October and sworn in Tuesday, has said he will place greater emphasis on social issues while distancing himself from the United States on a range of economic, trade and foreign policy issues.

This follows a recent trend in which Latin American countries have replaced their conservative pro-Washington governments with leftist ones.

The pattern began with the 1998 election of the populist Chavez in Venezuela and has continued with the victories of Luiz Inacio "Lula" da Silva in Brazil, Nestor Kirchner in Argentina, Ricardo Lagos in Chile and Lucio Gutierrez in Ecuador.

"Our original concern has always been the left-wing position with respect to Israel. But there is no material proof that the position of the new government will be different than the last government," said Miguel Brechner, who has been named by Vazquez to head Laboratorio Tecnológico del Uruguay, a state-owned scientific institute.

"Its policy in general will probably focus more on human rights and respect for minorities."

Until last month, Brechner was the Comitè's general secretary, but he was required to step down from that post upon taking a government position.

He said Uruguay historically has enjoyed close relations with Israel, and there is no reason to think those relations would be endangered by a leftist like Vazquez.

However, he said, "that doesn't mean Uruguay will support Israel all the time" at the U.N. General Assembly. "We have had 20 years of democracy, and many times in the past, the Uruguayan government voted against Israel."

In addition to Brechner, other Jews in the administration include Eduardo Zaydenstatt, head of Uruguay's internal revenue service, and Daniel Olesker, who will reorganize the Ministry of Health.

In addition, Ricardo Ehrlich is heavily favored to become mayor of Montevideo following municipal elections in May. ■

'It seems like everyone is betting on this change.'

Marcelo Cynovich
Director of Hillel Uruguay

BEHIND THE HEADLINES



Courtesy of Uruguayan Government

Uruguayan President Tabare Ramon Vazquez.

ARTS & CULTURE

Costa Rican bagel entrepreneurs open new market

By BRIAN HARRIS

SAN JOSE, Costa Rica (JTA) — It used to be that Costa Ricans didn't have many choices for breakfast: They would almost always start the day with gallo pinto, a hearty combination of leftover black beans and rice, with fresh cilantro thrown in for flavor.

Now the Central American country has another option — bagels.

About 4,000 bagels are made here each day — in a country of about four million — and three companies are competing for the morning nosh market. Two other bagel companies have closed.

It's not an outright bagel war, exactly, but Costa Rica still is an unlikely venue for the occasional bagel battle.

The two biggest bagel bakeries are owned by Americans who suffered bagel deprivation when they moved here. Boston Bagel, which opened in 1997, is owned by sesame-bagel aficionado David Feingold.

Bagelman's, which opened in 2001, is owned by a husband-and-wife team, Malcolm and Isabel Mathison. He likes his bagel topped with poppyseeds; her favorite is whole wheat.

Feingold said he "sort of missed bagels" when his wife's job with the World Bank brought them to Costa Rica from Washington in 1996.

He knew that some 3,000 Jews and 15,000 expatriate U.S. citizens live in Costa Rica, creating a potential market.

A former official at the U.S. Agency for International Development, Feingold heads a local Reform synagogue, B'Nai Israel, which has about 250 members. He learned bagel-baking at a store in his native Boston.

Isabel Mathison is Costa Rican and her husband is English; neither is Jewish. They learned to make bagels at a Chicago-based chain also called Bagelman's, though they tweaked the formula for the Costa Rican market. ■

Jewish groups to press Sudan

By MATTHEW E. BERGER

WASHINGTON (JTA) — The Jewish community is facing resistance as it attempts to intensify pressure on the Sudanese government to ease the violence that has killed tens of thousands.

Several Jewish community activists said they were not finding much interest in the issue when they tried to partner with African-American or church groups.

Instead, U.S. Jewish groups have turned to international organizations such as the United Nations, European Union and African Union to halt the killings and help those who have fled the fighting in the African nation and flocked to refugee camps.

Rabbi David Saperstein, director of the Religious Action Center for Reform Judaism, said he led a coalition that met with ambassadors of African Union countries, asking them to increase the number of troops in Sudan and to protect innocents as well as humanitarian workers.

Saperstein said some progress has been made in expanding the African Union's mission to include protecting innocents.

John Prendergast, special adviser to the president of the International Crisis Group, a nonprofit agency, said there have been no U.N. or other international punitive measure levied against Sudan in 23 months.

"The message is as clear as it can come," he told JCPA and Hillel delegates Feb. 27. "You can kill as many people as you want. There will be no repercussions."

The government has exploited ethnic tensions, sponsoring Arab militias that have killed tens of thousands of Africans in Sudan. Experts estimate that more than 1 million people have fled the violence and most are now in refugee camps in neighboring Chad.

But Saperstein told JTA it has become more difficult to press for sanctions for Sudan, because of concerns that this might disrupt a separate shaky peace

deal that has emerged in and ended violence between Muslims in the north and Christians and animists in the south.

"How do you balance compromises made to end the war without tying your hands to difficulties in other parts of the country?" he asked.

The issue played a large role in the Jewish Council for Public Affairs' plenum last week in Washington, capturing the support of Jewish community relations councils. It was also discussed by students who were attending the Charlotte B. and Jack J. Spitzer B'nai B'rith Hillel Forum on Public Policy at the same time.

"This is genocide," said Martin Raffel, JCPA associate executive director for international concerns. "If there's a genocide happening, how can this not be at the top of our agenda?"

JCPA passed a resolution denouncing the genocide, questioned

Sens. Hillary Rodham Clinton (D-N.Y.) and Mitch McConnell (R-Ky.) who both appeared at the plenum and pressed the United Nations to condemn the genocide.

"I wouldn't yet give up on the United Nations," Clinton said March 1. "I would like to argue and shame them into taking action in Darfur."

Scores of convention-goers sported green bracelets to acknowledge the genocide. One was even presented to McConnell.

Felice Gaer, director of the American Jewish Committee's Jacob Blaustein Institute for the Advancement of Human Rights, said the Jewish community has a unique role to play in advocating for more action.

"There is a certain moral force the Jewish community has addressing issues of genocide," she said. "It shouldn't be allowed not to speak from the heart just because this has become an issue for the European Union or African Union."

The JCPA's resolution calls for targeted sanctions to be imposed on the Sudanese government and its business interests as a means of pressuring the government to end the genocide. ■

'If there's a genocide happening, how can this not be at the top of our agenda?'

Martin Raffel

Jewish Council for Public Affairs

NEWS IN BRIEF

WORLD

European legislators label Hezbollah 'terrorist'

The European Parliament labeled Hezbollah a terrorist group. The Parliament, which is the legislative arm of the European Union, voted 473-8, with 33 abstentions, on Thursday to pass the resolution on the Lebanon-based Shi'ite fundamentalist group, Reuters reported.

In a nonbinding resolution, the Parliament also called on the European Union to label Hezbollah terrorist, which would compel its members to seize the group's assets, among other things.

Cameraman's case closed

Israel decided not to prosecute a soldier accused of deliberately killing a British film maker in the Gaza Strip.

James Miller was shot dead in Rafah in May 2003 while making "Death in Gaza," a documentary about the effect of the conflict with Israel on Palestinian children.

Witnesses said an officer in an Israeli armored vehicle killed him at close range, after he had identified himself as a journalist. But Israel's judge advocate general Avichai Mandelblith, the military's top legal authority, told Miller's relatives Wednesday that there was insufficient evidence to prosecute the officer, who will be reprimanded for illegally discharging his weapon.

The Millers vowed to sue the army through Israeli civil courts.

Anti-Semitism surveillance unit founded in France

A French city is establishing a special unit for the surveillance of anti-Semitic crimes in the region.

The unit in Lyon, to be made up of local attorneys, public officials and community representatives, will meet at least three times a year, the public attorney of the Lyon court of appeals said.

Lyon, home to the third-largest Jewish community in France, recently has seen an increase in anti-Semitic incidents.

Thirty-two attacks were reported in 2004, nearly twice as many as in 2003.

A similar surveillance unit for more general hate crimes will be founded in the coming weeks.

MIDDLE EAST

Gaza security talks progress made

Israel made progress on a plan to pull troops out of a contentious zone between the Gaza Strip and Egypt.

After meeting Thursday with Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak, Israel's defense minister, Shaul Mofaz, said the two countries had reached a basic agreement on an Israeli pullout from that zone, called the Philadelphia corridor, the Jerusalem Post reported.

Mofaz, though, later said that one more meeting was required to iron out "some disagreement we faced about Philadelphia."

Egypt wants Israel to leave the zone when it pulls out of Gaza. Israel has previously said it would leave the area at some point, though said arms smuggling there made an immediate withdrawal impossible.

Egypt has said it will deploy 750 troops along its border with Gaza, but the offer is contingent upon Israel's removing troops from the Philadelphia route.

Bomb fugitive slain

Israeli forces killed a Palestinian wanted for last month's Tel Aviv suicide bombing.

Authorities said the Islamic Jihad terrorist died in an armed stand-off with troops Thursday in the West Bank city of Tulkarm, home to the

bomber who carried out the Feb. 25 attack, which killed five Israelis.

After the alleged terrorist refused to surrender and opened fire at Israeli forces, they leveled his hideout with a bulldozer.

Israeli security sources said he was one of the planners of the attack on Tel Aviv's Stage nightclub.

Missile defense drill

U.S. troops arrived in Israel for a joint missile-defense exercise.

The war game involving Israel's Arrow II and U.S. Patriot missile-killer systems was launched Thursday and expected to last into November.

Hebrew U. defends professor

The Hebrew University of Jerusalem defended the rights of a professor to make remarks outside the classroom that may be seen as anti-Israel.

In a statement, the university's president, Menachem Magidor, said Thursday that the remarks made by the head of the university's German studies department, professor Moshe Zimmerman, in which he compared Israeli troops to the Nazis, were offensive, but they were made by Zimmerman as a private citizen and did not relate to his academic work.

The statement followed a letter from the national president of the Anti-Defamation League, Abraham Foxman, that reportedly criticized an unnamed professor for "expressing views that are beyond the pale and harmful to the institution and the Jewish people."

NORTH AMERICA

Court to hear Pollard appeal

A U.S. federal appeals court will hear oral arguments on motions to overturn Jonathan Pollard's imprisonment.

The U.S. Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia Circuit will hear Pollard's case Tuesday.

Attorney Jacques Semmelman said Pollard is seeking access to classified information that was used to determine his sentencing.

He is also asking that the statute of limitations be set aside, to allow Pollard to argue a claim of ineffective counsel.

Pollard will not attend the hearing, Semmelman said.

The former U.S. Navy analyst has been serving a life sentence in a North Carolina prison since 1986, after confessing to passing military secrets to Israel.

Bloomberg to Yad Vashem

New York City's mayor will head a U.S. delegation to Jerusalem's new Holocaust museum.

President Bush appointed Michael Bloomberg to lead a group to attend next week's opening of the new museum at Yad Vashem, which will be dedicated Tuesday and Wednesday.

Nobel Prize laureate Elie Wiesel and Fred Zeidman, chairman of the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Council, are among the delegation's members, and U.N. Secretary-General Kofi Annan and leaders from some 53 countries are also slated to attend.

EBay ends paintings' auction

EBay Canada stopped a Toronto gallery from selling paintings inspired by Jerusalem because of the artist's assertion that they were painted in part with human blood.

The "101 Views of Jerusalem" paintings were created by Montreal artist John David Margo, who said he used donated blood as a medium on the canvases.

Blood supply officials have disputed that the artist obtained blood from one of their drives. The artist is reportedly duplicating the paintings without using blood.