

IN THE NEWS

Pope's remarks outrage Israelis

Israel was outraged by a sermon by Pope Benedict that did not list it among countries that have suffered from Islamic terrorism.

The Foreign Ministry in Jerusalem summoned the Vatican ambassador to express outrage at a sermon Sunday in which the pontiff deplored suicide bombings in Egypt, Turkey, Iraq and Britain but did not mention a recent Palestinian attack that killed five Israelis in Netanya.

"The pope's omission of this incident cries out to the heavens," the ministry said in a statement.

Jones named ambassador to Israel

The White House named Richard Jones as U.S. ambassador to Israel.

Jones, a former ambassador to Kuwait and Lebanon, was named to the post Monday.

He most recently served as a senior adviser and policy coordinator on Iraq at the State Department, and has not been involved in U.S.-Israeli relations as a member of the U.S. Senior Foreign Service.

Jones replaces Daniel Kurtzer, who served in the post for four years.

Rebel rabbi in the ranks

An Israeli army rabbi may face criminal charges for urging fellow soldiers not to take part in the upcoming Gaza Strip withdrawal.

"We did not enlist for this, to deport Jews from their homes," Lt. Amital Barali of the Chaplaincy Corps said Sunday at a Gaza army checkpoint, in full view of television cameras. "It is an explicitly illegal order."

Military sources said Monday that the rabbi would undergo a disciplinary hearing, and may even face criminal charges.

WORLD REPORT

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After Sharm bombings, Israelis see Al-Qaida getting a bit closer

By GIL SEDAN

JERUSALEM (JTA) — Many Israelis sighed with relief at the news that only one citizen of the Jewish state had been slightly wounded in Saturday's Sharm el-Sheik terror attack, but the triple bombing at the scenic Red Sea resort reminded Israelis that Al-Qaida is getting closer.

How close? Israeli intelligence experts aren't sure.

Some suggest it's only a matter of time until Al-Qaida hits targets in Israel, while others believe that global Islamic terror groups have other priorities — at least for the time being.

Islamic radicals long have set their sites on Jewish targets — such as the synagogue in Djerba, Tunisia, that was hit by a truck bomb in April 2002; Jewish institutions in Morocco bombed in May 2003; and two synagogues in Istanbul that were hit in November 2003.

But they haven't ignored Israeli targets either. In June 2000, Israel arrested Nabil Okal, a Palestinian from the Gaza Strip who had studied in Pakistan and later trained in an Al-Qaida camp in Afghanistan. Upon returning home, Okal tried to set up his own cell in Gaza.

A year later, another cell purportedly linked to Al-Qaida sent the so-called shoe-bomber, Richard Reid, to Israel to scout out targets.

Prior to the decision to launch the Sept. 11, 2001, mega-attacks in the United States, an Al-Qaida branch was working on a plan to strike Eilat, according to local intelligence sources.

Three years ago, an explosion at a hotel

in Kenya killed three Israeli tourists and 10 Kenyans.

At the same time, a missile fired at an Israeli charter plane barely missed the aircraft, which was carrying some 260 passengers.

A statement issued in Qatar in the name of Al-Qaida said the Kenya attacks aimed to "destroy the dreams of the Judeo-Crusader alliance, which wants to preserve their strategic interests in the region."

Shortly before the Kenya attacks, Osama bin Laden purportedly released a statement titled "Letter to the American People," in which he wrote "The creation and continuation of Israel is one of the greatest crimes, and you are the leaders of its criminals."

Israel's security services thus historically have regarded Al-Qaida as a potential threat and have spoken of the terror network's infiltration into Lebanon and the ranks of Hezbollah. The Israeli military's former chief of staff, Lt. Gen. Moshe Ya'alon, mentioned that Israel had foiled Al-Qaida attacks inside Israel and that bin Laden had recruits among the Palestinians.

The July 23 attacks in Sharm el-Sheik — which killed 64 people, according to the Egyptian Health Ministry and as many as 88, according to local hospitals — have increased Israel's nervousness, as the threat is seen to be getting closer. The working supposition is that for the time being Al-Qaida is preoccupied with Western regimes and allegedly "treacherous" Arab countries such as Egypt rather than with Israel.

Analysts cite several reasons for those Al-

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BEHIND
THE
HEADLINES

■ Israelis are wary of Al-Qaida terrorists attacks after the bombings in Egypt

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Qaida priorities:

- It's easier to plant bombs in London or Madrid than in Tel Aviv or Jerusalem, given the quality of Israeli security.

- Ideologically, Al-Qaida has launched a "holy war" against Western civilization in general, not just Israel.

- Since the days of its late leader, Sheik Ahmad Yassin, Hamas has been hesitant to cooperate with foreign terrorist elements because it doesn't want to allow foreign players on its territory, while Al-Qaida has seen no reason to step on Hamas' toes. There are plenty of targets for world terrorism as it is.

"Their approach is, let Hamas deal with the small devil, Israel, we will deal with the big devil, America," suggested Shalom Harari, senior researcher at the Interdisciplinary Center in Herzliya. "Compare the worldwide effect of the attacks in London to the almost daily terrorist attacks in Israel and you will understand why Al-Qaida terrorists don't rush here."

Analysts here have little doubt that Al-Qaida will strike in Israel if the opportunity arises, given the network's ideology of spreading Islamic rule around the world.

Still, Israel's intelligence community is preparing itself for a change. One immediate result of the Sharm el-Sheik attacks is likely to be greater cooperation between Israel and Egypt on the intelligence front.

■

In recent weeks Egypt has improved the quality of cooperation in reducing arms smuggling from Sinai into the Gaza Strip, but it has been foolishly complacent

regarding the growth of terrorism inside the Sinai peninsula — despite repeated Israeli intelligence warnings and terror attacks in Taba and Ras-a-Satan last October that killed more than 30 people, including 12 Israelis. More than 160 were wounded.

The Israel Defense Forces' intelligence division recently prepared an operational blueprint for greater involvement in worldwide intelligence efforts against radical Islamists. Surprisingly, the long-range forecast is rather optimistic.

The Israeli military intelligence chief, Maj. Gen. Aharon Ze'evi Farkash, said recently that he was convinced Israel's intelligence vis-a-vis Al-Qaida could reach "similar standards to those reached in preventing Palestinian terrorism." With this intelligence, Ze'evi was quoted as saying that 70 percent of international terrorist attacks could be prevented within three years.

This might sound too good to be true, but Ze'evi adds two stipulations: Such success can be achieved only through the cooperation of all the major intelligence agencies in the international community, including those from Egypt, Russia and other countries that to this point have remained hesitant to join the counteroffensive against terrorism.

Second, in Ze'evi's view, only the symptoms of terrorism — that is, the attacks — will

be curbed, while the real challenge is to eradicate the grass roots of world Islamic terrorism: the religious schools where radical Islamist ideology is taught, the hotbeds of missionary activity that recruit youngsters into the religious system and the political organizations that nurture the next generation of terrorists. ■

Some Israeli intelligence experts suggest it's only a matter of time until Al-Qaida hits targets in Israel.

Hippie-to-Zionist author Margolis dies

By TOM TUGEND

LOS ANGELES (JTA) — David Margolis, who lived and chronicled the transformation of a 1960s-era American hippie into a deeply spiritual resident of a West Bank settlement, died July 17 at the age of 62.

A Brooklyn native, the widely published journalist, novelist and editor died of cancer and was buried near his home at Bait Yatir in the Hebron Hills.

Most recently, Margolis served as the Jewish World editor of the Jerusalem Report magazine.

Margolis described his hippie commune experiences in his first novel, "Change of Partners," which was followed by "The Stepman" and a collection of short stories, "The Time of Wandering."

"I consider David the foremost chronicler of that slice of the Jewish 1960s that went from rootless, hedonistic hippiedom into, somehow, a deeply spiritual engagement with Jewish life and the challenge of Zionism," said Martin Jaffee, a professor of Jewish and international studies at the University of Washington.

The screenwriter and novelist Robert

Avrech described Margolis as "a major American Jewish writer who never received the attention he deserved," and called him a "master storyteller with a wicked sense of humor."

The producer and writer David Brandes recalled Margolis as "a true mensch and one of the sweetest people I ever met." Brandes cited the author's "wry sense of humor and perceptive insights."

From 1990 to 1993, Margolis served as a senior writer, investigative reporter and award-winning feature columnist for the Jewish Journal of Greater Los Angeles.

After moving with his family to Israel in 1994, Margolis established himself as a successful freelance journalist for general and Jewish newspapers and magazines, created marketing materials for major Israeli universities and high-tech companies, and co-wrote the prize-winning CD-ROM "At-rageous! The Amazing World of Art."

His writings were honored by the BBC, the American Jewish Press Association and the Israeli government, among others.

Margolis is survived by his wife, Judith, three children, grandchildren, his mother and two brothers. ■

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British Jews feel squeezed by terror threat

By DANIELLA PELED

LONDON (JTA) — Amid tightened security following the latest wave of attempted suicide bombings in London, British Jews are troubled both by the threat of terror and the ambivalent reaction of the United Kingdom's Muslim leadership.

The capital was still burying its dead from four coordinated suicide attacks July 7 that killed more than 50 people — including Jewish victims Miriam Hyman, 31; Susan Levy, 53; and Anat Rosenberg, 37 — when it was hit by further attempts to bring murder and mayhem to London on July 21.

This time the bombs failed to detonate fully, and there was only one reported injury. With the four suspects still at large, however, fear and suspicion have swept a city still reeling from the July 7 atrocities.

The Community Security Trust, the body that monitors threats to the U.K. Jewish community, is ensuring that staff and volunteers maintain a high level of visibility around synagogues, schools and other community buildings.

Having stepped up its state of alert after the July 7 attacks, the trust continues to urge Anglo Jewry to remain “extremely vigilant” in the wake of the latest incidents, fearing both terrorism and a spike in anti-Semitism.

The alarm has yet to reach its highest level, the trust spokesman Mike Whine said, because of the lack of any specific intelligence of a direct threat to the Jewish community.

But the government is taking the possibility very seriously. Community leaders report almost daily meetings among religious figures; the Home Office, the government body responsible for domestic security policy; and the police, with briefings on the security situation issued several times a day.

It's too early to tell whether the bombings already have caused an upsurge of attacks against Jews, Whine noted.

“We were anyway suffering high levels of anti-Semitism, so it's difficult to say whether it has increased as a consequence,” he said. “We've certainly seen some very inflammatory language on

extremist Web sites blaming the bombing on Jews or on Israel.”

The British Jewish community has been disturbed not only by the latest round of bombings but also by the response of the U.K.'s Muslim leadership to the growing threat of fanaticism in its midst.

The extent of the radicalization was highlighted by the news that nearly a quarter of U.K. Muslims have some sympathy with the feelings and motives of those who carried out the July 7 bombings, according to a poll sponsored by Britain's Daily Telegraph newspaper.

The survey also revealed that 18 percent of British Muslims feel little loyalty towards Britain, and 32 percent believe that “Western society is decadent and immoral and that Muslims should seek to bring it to an end.”

Jewish leaders are concerned that U.K. Muslim leaders are failing to face up to this phenomenon and are instead sending out a dangerous message by consistently drawing a distinction between suicide bombings in the United Kingdom, which they condemn, and terrorist attacks in Israel, which they excuse.

“They see no inconsistency in that, and it's troubling,” Whine said.

The Muslim Council of Britain, an umbrella group, emphatically condemned the London bombings, but it has always been circumspect when it comes to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

“It is very important to remember the context,” the council spokesman Inayat Bunglawala said. “Three thousand British Muslims haven't been killed by occupying troops. We are not routinely invaded. Our leadership is not being assassinated. What the Palestinian people are going through leads them to desperation.”

Another prominent Muslim figure, Azzam Tamimi of the Muslim Association of Britain, also argued that

Palestinian suicide bombings are essentially different from terror attacks in Europe.

“The bombings were wrong in London, were wrong in Madrid, but it is a completely different situation in Palestine,” said Tamimi, speaking on the BBC. “Thousands of ordinary Palestinians are rotting in refugee camps and reacting to oppression.”

Rabbi Barry Marcus of the Central Synagogue on

Great Portland Street, who was an eyewitness to the July 7 double-decker bus bombing that killed 14 people, describes a sense of “anger and dismay” among his congregation at such public statements.

“You can't condemn suicide bombing in London and condone it in Israel,” he said. “They are trying to divert people from the real issues. Trying to find excuses for murder is abhorrent. The pity is that the Muslim community now has an opportunity to say, ‘We have a problem and we need to deal with it.’”

Rabbi Alex Chapper, of Ilford Federation Synagogue in Essex, himself the victim of an anti-Semitic attack by Pakistani youths two weeks ago, says that while he believes moderate Muslims genuinely want calm, their leadership is failing to take on the task of rooting out extremism.

When Chapper was physically and verbally abused along with other congregants on their way back from shul, local Muslims — themselves the victims of rising hate crime after July 7 — visited him in solidarity.

But on a wider level, Muslim leaders have not addressed the problem of a younger generation increasingly alienated from what some claim are Islam's true, moderate values and who are ready to cause trouble, Chapper charges.

“I don't think they're doing enough,” Chapper said. “They have to take responsibility. If you don't stamp out extremist talk, there is only a small step between talk and action.”

'You can't condemn suicide bombing in London and condone it in Israel. They are trying to divert people from the real issues.'

Rabbi Barry Marcus

Central Synagogue on Great Portland Street

**AROUND
THE
JEWISH WORLD**

NEWS IN BRIEF

NORTH AMERICA

Gaza withdrawal opponents rally in L.A.

Some 500 opponents of Israel's Gaza withdrawal plan rallied outside the Israeli Consulate in Los Angeles.

In a sea of orange, the color adopted by the anti-withdrawal movement, the overwhelmingly Orthodox protesters of all ages maintained a festive atmosphere Sunday that featured emotional appeals by speakers under a broiling noonday sun and amid tight security.

One participant was Vivi Mintz, 18, of Toronto, who said she was taking time off from a vacation to Los Angeles to express her convictions. What the Israeli government is doing "is unacceptable," she said.

Episcopal diocese condemns divestment

The Episcopal Diocese of New York condemned recent calls by the Anglican Communion to divest from Israel.

At a news conference July 20 in Manhattan, Episcopal Bishop Mark Sisk joined Rabbi Joseph Potasnik, executive vice president of the New York Board of Rabbis, in calling "to invest, not divest." "Now is the time to invest both in Israel and Palestine, not only our capital, but also programmatic funding to end the familiar and deeply embedded pattern of violence," Sisk said.

The Anglican Consultative Council recently called for members of the Anglican Communion, which includes the Episcopal Diocese of New York and the Episcopal Church USA, "to take appropriate action where it finds that its corporate investments support the occupation of Palestinian lands or violence against innocent Israelis, and commends such a process to other provinces having such investments, to be considered in line with their adopted ethical investment strategies."

MIDDLE EAST

Jerusalem in July

Israel received hundreds of French immigrants.

Two El Al planes bearing 300 Jews from Paris and Marseille landed at Ben-Gurion Airport on Monday as part of a Jewish Agency for Israel operation to encourage French immigration.

The director general of the agency's Immigration and Absorption Department, Mike Rosenberg, said that in the first half of 2005 there was a 30 percent rise in immigration from France, compared to the same period last year.

Analysts blame Israel for attack

Some Egyptian analysts blamed Israel for Saturday's terrorist bombings at an Egyptian resort.

The analysts appeared on such outlets as Egypt's state-run television and Al-Jazeera, the Jerusalem Post reported.

"All the available details indicate that only the Israelis could have done this," Dia Rashwan said over Al-Arabiya TV.

Israelis triumph at Maccabiah

Israeli athletes won the largest number of medals at the 17th Maccabiah Games.

Athletes representing the Jewish state won 381 medals, including 146 golds, in the open competition at the games, which ended July 21. The U.S. team finished with 156 medals.

Russia finished third with 48 medals, and Canada fourth with 28.

Israeli drugmaker growing

An Israeli pharmaceutical firm announced a deal that would unite two of the world's largest manufacturers of generic drugs.

Teva said it would buy the Miami-based Ivax for \$26 a share.

Teva had sales of \$4.8 billion last year, most of that in the United States and Europe.

Intel plant coming to Israel?

Intel is planning to build a plant in Israel.

Reuters reported Monday that Prime Minister Ariel Sharon told Cabinet ministers on Sunday that the computer company's chairman, Craig Barrett, said the company would build the plant in Kiryat Gat, in southern Israel, for some \$4 billion.

Sharon also said the government would provide Intel with a grant of some \$525 million to support the facility's construction.

WORLD

Shalom to Britain

Israel's foreign minister visited Britain.

Silvan Shalom arrived Monday in London and, in talks with his British counterpart, Jack Straw, and Prime Minister Tony Blair, was expected to voice Israel's opposition to a Palestinian Authority plan to include Hamas in parliamentary elections in the West Bank and Gaza Strip.

Shalom also planned to lay a wreath at the site of this month's suicide bombings in the British capital.

British intern fired for Islamist ties

An intern at a British newspaper was fired for refusing to give up his membership in a radical Islamic group.

Dilpazier Aslam, 27, was asked to leave the Guardian newspaper this month after he insisted on retaining his membership in Hizb ut-Tahrir, an extremist Muslim body legal in Britain but banned in several European and Arab countries.

The newspaper said it considered Hizb ut-Tahrir to have promoted violence and anti-Semitism, and issued a statement that said it considered Aslam's "continuing membership of the organization to be incompatible with his continued employment by the company."

Aslam is considering legal action.

Britain exempts survivors from some taxes

The British government will exempt Holocaust survivors from paying taxes on compensation payments from foreign banks.

The move, which follows months of lobbying by the Association of Jewish Refugees, will apply to awards such as those made for dormant Swiss bank accounts under a \$1.25 billion settlement reached in 1998.

Qualifying recipients who already have paid taxes will be entitled to a rebate under the new legislation, due to be introduced in the next Finance Bill.

Chabad founder's son converted out?

Recently discovered documents in Belarus appear to confirm rumors that the son of Chabad's founder converted to Catholicism.

According to a recent Ha'aretz report, Hebrew University Professor Shaul Stemper discovered documents in the national historical archives in Minsk that chronicle the conversion of Moshe Zalmanovitch, the youngest son of Rabbi Shneur Zalman of Liadi, about 180 years ago.

The files, which once belonged to the Catholic Church, contain a letter written by Moshe in 1820 in which he professes his Roman Catholic faith.

According to the documents, Moshe was mentally unstable, and after a stint as advisor to the czar, ended his life in a mental hospital in St. Petersburg.

Chabad historian Yosef Kaminetzky responded to the Ha'aretz story by saying the Minsk documents are forgeries, and Catholic authorities in Minsk tried to convert Zalmanovitch against his will.