



IN THE NEWS

Israeli wins Nobel Prize

An Israeli professor was named co-winner of this year's Nobel Prize for Economics.

Robert Aumann of the Hebrew University of Jerusalem was awarded the 2005 prize along with Thomas Schelling of the University of Maryland in recognition of their work on game theory, the science of strategy, the Royal Swedish Academy of Sciences announced Monday. [Story, Pg. 3]

Mideast summit postponed again

A summit between Ariel Sharon and Mahmoud Abbas was delayed again.

The Israeli prime minister and Palestinian Authority president had been expected to meet Tuesday, but officials said the talks were put off until late October or early November.

Abbas is to visit Washington for talks with President Bush on Oct. 20, when Israel hopes the United States will up pressure on the Palestinian Authority to crack down on terrorist groups in the West Bank and Gaza Strip.

Sharon and Abbas previously had agreed to meet in early October to build on momentum gained from Israel's recent Gaza Strip withdrawal, but that summit was postponed due to a surge in violence.

Israel kills three along Gaza border

Israeli soldiers killed three Palestinians on the border with the Gaza Strip.

Security sources said the three men were shot Monday after they were spotted approaching the Kissufim border crossing with what appeared to be a bomb.

It was the first time Israeli troops have killed Palestinians in Gaza since Israel's withdrawal from the area was completed last month.

The Palestinian Authority called the incident an attempted infiltration by laborers seeking work in Israel.

WORLD REPORT

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Summit with Abbas may offer Bush a chance to regain some momentum

By RON KAMPEAS

WASHINGTON (JTA) — It's one of Washington's many unwritten rules: A return call from the White House is urgent. A cold call from the White House stops clocks.

The Palestinian Authority got two unsolicited calls from President Bush and his staff in two weeks, and the message was unambiguous: Clear your schedule, you need to make progress in peace with Israel.

Reeling from a series of political crises at home and abroad, Bush needs to show results, and his best bet might be in the area that has bedeviled a string of former presidents: the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

In addition to Israel's smooth withdrawal from the Gaza Strip, there are other small signs of rapprochement in the region.

The Palestinian Authority is showing a new, albeit hesitant, willingness to confront terrorists, and Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon is willing to discuss sensitive issues that have been shelved for months, including prisoner release.

Bush's hand is behind much of the nudging.

In the final days of September, P.A. President Mahmoud Abbas, on a visit to Egypt, got a surprise call inviting him to a Washington summit with Bush on Oct. 20. Abbas aides said he was caught off guard by the invitation, not expecting movement before Palestinian legislative elections on Jan. 25.

Instead, Bush promised a busy agenda at their meeting.

"The president looks forward to discussing with President Abbas Palestinian efforts

to improve governance, revive their economy, institute security reform, and fight terror," Bush's office said in a statement. "The two leaders will also discuss a range of other bilateral and regional issues."

Last week, Abbas' chief of staff, Rafiq Hussein, who was in Washington to meet lower-level bureaucrats in preparation for the Oct. 20 meeting, got his own surprise call from the president.

Bush was having lunch with Karen Hughes, a longtime adviser now running U.S. public diplomacy efforts in the Islamic world, he told a stunned Hussein, who was in meetings at the State Department. Why don't you drop by?

"It's just up Pennsylvania Avenue," Bush joked, according to someone familiar with the conversation.

"We had a very pleasant meeting,"

Hussein told a gathering of Arab Americans a few hours later at the Palestine Center think tank. Bush discussed his "commitment to the Palestinian cause in terms of establishing a viable and contiguous Palestinian state. He said he does not want a state that looks like Swiss cheese."

That was a signal that Bush is getting ready to re-emphasize his opposition to Israeli settlement expansion in the West Bank, contrary to assurances that other White House officials reportedly gave to Jewish leaders in recent weeks.

Bush was hardly letting Abbas off the hook: The mention in the White House statement of the fight on terrorism was a sign that the Palestinian leader should not get too comfortable. The Bush administration, like Israel, is holding Abbas to P.A. commit-

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■ *With Bush's popularity down, will he look for a Mideast dividend?*

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ments to dismantle terrorist groups like Hamas and Islamic Jihad.

Even in that area, however, there are slight differences between the American and Israeli administrations. Israel wants Hamas barred from the legislative elections, but U.S. officials are more ambivalent.

"We've been very clear that Hamas is a terrorist group and it has to be disbanded, both for peace and security in the Middle East and for the proper functioning of the Palestinian Authority," Condoleezza Rice, the U.S. secretary of state, said in a Sept. 30 address at Princeton University.

But then she added, "There are periods of time of transition in which one has to give some space to the participants, in this case the Palestinians, to begin to come to a new national compact."

She went on to cite the Good Friday Agreement in Northern Ireland — although in that case the Irish Republican Army waited a decade to disarm after its political affiliate joined the process.

"And so it is absolutely the case that you cannot have armed groups ultimately participating in politics with no expectation that they're going to disarm," Rice said.

That underscored a crucial difference with Israel: Israel wants actual disarmament, not some vague future expectation of it.

Still, the tough talk from the United States and Israel appeared to have some affect on Abbas. A series of recent raids in Gaza and the West Bank show some new P.A. willingness to confront Hamas.

Abbas would wait to disarm Hamas until after the elections, Hussein told Jewish leaders in Washington, because he feels he needs the political capital that a sound victory for moderates would bring. But Abbas would disarm militants affiliated with his own Fatah Party before the elections, Hussein said.

Palestinian officials say they need to show voters dividends from moderation. That view has attracted Bush's sympathy, with the mention in the White House statement of reviving the economy.

More crucial, the Palestinians say, is easing movement inside the West Bank and between the Gaza Strip and the rest of the world. Three Palestinian negotiators made the rounds of the Capitol and the Bush administration last week with a PowerPoint presentation that emphasized little else.

Three of the presentations' final four points had to do with movement, saying the Gaza withdrawal had delivered "minimal results." Israel has hesitated on opening up Gaza completely, concerned that the Palestinians and the Egyptians are not preventing arms smuggling to

terrorist groups that have continued to intermittently fire on Israel since the pullout.

Palestinians need more than economic dividends, Hussein told the Jewish leaders.

"There has to be some actions taken on the ground," he said. If not, he said, "this will only weaken the moderates."

Sharon, who postponed his own meeting with Abbas this week until after the Abbas-

Bush summit, might be forthcoming, especially if the P.A.'s moves against terrorists prove to be serious.

On Monday, Sharon handed Abbas a tentative bouquet, in a joint statement after the two leaders' top aides met to discuss the next phase of the peace process.

In addition to promising discussions soon on opening up Gaza, Sharon pledged to resume talks on handing over additional Palestinian cities to P.A. rule, and to discuss additional prisoner releases.

"Israel specified its intention to initiate steps to ease the humanitarian and economic conditions of the Palestinian population," the statement said. ■

Palestinians need more than economic dividends, Abbas' chief of staff told U.S. Jewish leaders.

TV show focuses on Nazi scientists

By TOM TUGEND

LOS ANGELES (JTA) — "If Hitler had the bomb, we'd all be speaking German," observes a former British agent in describing the intense search for the top German nuclear and rocket scientists in the closing months of World War II.

Driven by the fear that the Nazis might come up with a last-minute super weapon, and foreshadowing the beginning of the Cold War, competing Anglo-American and Soviet intelligence teams scoured underground tunnels and mountain hideaways for the best brains in Germany.

As documented in "Secrets of the Dead: The Hunt for Nazi Scientists," a television program airing Oct. 19 on PBS stations in the United States, the search also found that 10,000 slave laborers had died while digging and building

the underground factories for Germany's advanced rockets and pioneer jet fighter planes.

Andrew Herskovits was 14 when he started working at one of these facilities — Mittelwerk, where the V-2, the world's first ballistic missile, was constructed.

"In the tunnel, just being there was a terrible punishment because we were cold and hungry and tired all the time," he testifies. "There were beatings for any minor infringement of discipline. The punishment for sabotage was death by hanging — of course, almost anything could be classified as sabotage."

In charge of Mittelwerk was rocket pioneer Wernher von Braun. Conveniently ignoring that von Braun was a major in the SS who used slave labor, the United States claimed him as a top prize and put him in charge of the American rocket program. ■



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Russian Jewish group wracked by turmoil

By LEV KRICHEVSKY

MOSCOW (JTA) — A leading Russian Jewish organization has been rocked by unrest in its leadership.

Several top members of the Russian Jewish Congress voted Oct. 6 to oust the group's head, Vladimir Slutsker.

Slutsker, a banker and member of the Federation Council, Russia's upper house of Parliament, refused to step down, saying that only the group's presidium could vote him out.

The standoff is just the latest example of unrest in recent years surrounding the group, once the leading voice of Russian Jewry — and it calls into question who will speak for secular Russian Jews, who represent a majority of Russia's Jewish community of at least 500,000 people.

Some leading RJC donors accused Slutsker of helping the Russian government recently deny Moscow's chief rabbi, Pinchas Goldschmidt, entry to the country, a charge Slutsker denies.

A meeting of the RJC presidium to address the matter is scheduled for Nov. 10.

Mikhail Fridman, a business tycoon and the main donor to the RJC, suggested that Vyacheslav Kantor, a chemical mag-

nate, should replace Slutsker. Kantor, who divides his time between Switzerland and Russia, is chairman of the European Jewish Congress' board of governors.

Slutsker was preparing to circulate a letter to prominent members of the Jewish community this week, accusing those who are trying to remove him of usurping his power. He also is calling on members of the community to rally around him and form a new organization.

Some RJC lay leaders who attended the Oct. 6 meeting claimed Slutsker has provoked a controversy with the Moscow Jewish Religious Community, known by its Russian acronym MERO, over a piece of prized Moscow real estate.

Since the founding of the RJC in 1996, MERO and its leaders, including one of Russia's two chief rabbis, Adolf Shayevich, forged a close partnership with the RJC, and their alliance grew stronger after 2000 when the two organizations allied in a struggle against a rival group, the Chabad-led Federation of Jewish Communities, which elected its own chief rabbi.

The federation essentially has won the fight, emerging as the strongest and most active Russian Jewish group, particularly after the RJC's founder, Vladimir Goussinsky, was expelled from Russia in 2000 on charges of tax evasion spearheaded by the Kremlin.

Meanwhile, Goldschmidt was denied entry back from Israel into Russia, which is an issue that has galvanized

U.S.-based watchdogs of Jewish life in the region.

"We're continuing our efforts to help Rabbi Goldschmidt to secure a visa to return to his family and community before Yom Kippur," said Mark Levin, executive director of NCSJ: Advocates on Behalf of Jews in Russia, Ukraine, the Baltic States and Eurasia. "We have appealed to the Russian government to resolve the technical questions as to why the visa was revoked in the first place, but have yet to receive a response to our appeal."

Russia's Foreign Ministry has promised to look into the matter. ■

(JTA Foreign Editor Peter Ephross in New York contributed to this report.)

AROUND THE JEWISH WORLD

Israeli professor takes Nobel for his studies of game theory

By DAN BARON

JERUSALEM (JTA) — It may sound uncanny, but an Israeli has educated the world on conflict resolution.

Such was the praise heaped on Robert Aumann, the Hebrew University professor named Monday as co-winner of the 2005 Nobel Prize in economics.

Aumann, 75, and American scientist Thomas Schelling "enhanced our understanding of conflict and cooperation through game-theory analysis," the Royal Swedish Academy of Sciences said in a statement.

The two will share the \$1.3 million prize.

Game theory is the science of strategy, the study of how various rival groups — whether business colleagues or warring parties — can interact to secure an ideal outcome.

"I am very moved by this honor," he told reporters outside his office at the Hebrew University's Center for Rationality. "I think credit should also go to members of the school of thought who have helped to make Israel perhaps the world's No. 1 superpower when it comes to game theory."

Aumann, who is religiously observant, was born in Frankfurt but moved to the United States with his family in 1938. He took degrees from the City College of New York and the Massachu-

setts Institute of Technology, emigrating to Israel in 1956.

Aumann is the second Israeli to win the Nobel for economics. Two Israeli biochemists shared the Nobel Prize for chemistry last year, and former Prime Ministers Yitzhak Rabin, Shimon Peres and Menachem Begin have won the Nobel Peace Prize.

"His work is important and a major contribution to the world of economics and to theory," Hebrew University President Menachem Megidor told Israel Radio about Aumann.

Schelling, 84, is a University of Maryland lecturer recognized for his application of game theory to issues of global security.

Aumann's work has focused on the more abstract principle of "repeated games," or conflict that lasts over extended period.

In a telephone conversation with the academy, he suggested that this could give insight into Israel's struggle for survival in the Middle East.

"I do hope that perhaps some game theory can be used and be part of this solution," he said.

But Aumann, who lost a son during Israel's invasion of Lebanon in 1982, said an end to the conflict with the Palestinians was far off.

"It's been going on for at least 80 years and as far as I can see it is going to go on for at least another 80 years. I don't see any end to this one, I'm sorry to say," he told reporters. ■

NEWS IN BRIEF

NORTH AMERICA

Groups collect for earthquake relief

U.S. Jewish groups are collecting donations for victims of the earthquake that struck Pakistan, India and Afghanistan.

Donations through the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee should be made payable to JDC: Pakistan Earthquake Relief and can be made to the group at Box 321, 847A Second Ave., New York, N.Y., 10017.

Donations through the American Jewish World Service can be made by sending checks to the group at 45 W. 36 St., New York, N.Y., 10018, or online at www.ajws.org.

At least 30,000 people died as a result of Saturday's earthquake.

Specter to hold hearings on Saudis and hate

Sen. Arlen Specter will convene hearings on the distribution of Saudi-published hate literature in U.S. mosques.

Specter, a Jewish Republican from Pennsylvania who initiated the Saudi Accountability Act this summer, will start the hearings Oct. 25, the New York Sun reported.

The hearings will determine whether the Saudi government has taken steps to stop distribution of anti-Christian and anti-Jewish materials to U.S. mosques.

The State Department also has discussed the distribution of hate literature with the Saudis, reported by a conservative think tank earlier this year.

House commemorates Wiesenthal

The U.S. House of Representatives overwhelmingly passed a resolution commemorating the life of Simon Wiesenthal.

The resolution passed last Friday was initiated by Rep. Henry Waxman (D-Calif.). It also reaffirmed Congress' commitment to fighting anti-Semitism and urged the world to prosecute Nazi war criminals.

A similar resolution sponsored by Sen. Charles Schumer (D-N.Y.) passed unanimously in the Senate on Sept. 21, the day after Wiesenthal died in Vienna.

Delta to fly Atlanta-Tel Aviv

Delta Air Lines will begin direct flights between Atlanta and Tel Aviv. The service, to be launched next March, will be the only non-stop connection between the southeast United States and Israel.

Georgia Gov. Sonny Perdue will promote the service when he leads a trade mission to Israel next month.

WORLD

Romania marks Holocaust

Romania marked its second Holocaust Remembrance Day.

During a ceremony held Sunday in the city of Iasi, the country's foreign minister, Mihai Razvan Ungureanu, said the country must take responsibility for its role in the deaths of Romanian Jews during World War II and educate young people about Jewish contributions to Romanian culture.

On Monday, the Elie Wiesel Institute for Holocaust Studies was slated to open in the country's capital of Bucharest.

Romania has made strides during the past few years toward acknowledging its complicity in the Holocaust, since a Romanian government statement denying that the Holocaust took place on Romanian territory sparked an uproar.

Israel blasts E.U. over Hezbollah

Israel scolded the European Union for allowing diplomats to meet with a Hezbollah official.

Ambassadors from the European Union, France and Italy met recently in Lebanon with Muhammad Fanish, the Hezbollah representative in the Lebanese government. Ron Prosdor, director general of

Israel's Foreign Ministry, called E.U. representatives Oct. 6 to protest the meeting.

"We think the Hezbollah dual activity is illegitimate and dangerous and can serve as an example for Hamas to follow," The Associated Press quoted a Foreign Ministry spokesman as saying. "This is the wrong message to send at this sensitive time."

Hezbollah won government representation in elections called recently after its main sponsor, Syria, was forced to end its occupation of Lebanon.

U.S. officials have said they will not meet with Fanish. Hezbollah continues attacks on Israel despite Israel's U.N.-certified withdrawal from Lebanon in 2000, and refuses to cooperate with investigations into terrorist attacks on Jewish and Israeli targets in Argentina in the 1990s.

Moscow gets Jewish school

A new Jewish educational complex was dedicated Sunday in Moscow.

The 6,000-square-foot building will house a Jewish day school for 300 children and is believed to be the first Jewish school building constructed in Russia since the 1917 Russian Revolution.

The multimillion-dollar complex is a project of the Federation of Jewish Communities, a Chabad-led group and Russia's largest Jewish organization.

The building is adjacent to the Marina Roscha JCC, the federation's prime facility in Moscow.

In addition to the Ohr Avner Chabad Day School, the building will house after-school programs for Moscow Jewish youth who aren't enrolled in Jewish schools.

MIDDLE EAST

Hamas cells cracked

Israel cracked three West Bank terror cells.

The Shin Bet security service announced Monday that it had arrested members of three Hamas cells based around Ramallah and Hebron.

They are suspected of the recent kidnapping and killing of an Israeli from Jerusalem, and attacks that claimed four other lives.

The Shin Bet said interrogation revealed that Hamas apparently is capitalizing on the relative calm in Israeli-Palestinian fighting by attempting to build up its infrastructure in the West Bank.

Israel won't admit pro-Palestinian activist

A pro-Palestinian activist from the Netherlands was denied entry to Israel.

Gretta Duisenberg was part of a delegation of artists, journalists and writers that went to visit the West Bank on Sunday.

Duisenberg had said she wanted to visit Palestinian Authority President Mahmoud Abbas and Palestinian politician Mustafa Barghouti.

The widow of former European Central Bank head Willem Duisenberg, who died in July, Gretta Duisenberg has received much media attention for her activism.

A few years ago, she angered neighbors by flying a Palestinian flag from her Amsterdam home.

The rest of the group was allowed into Israel.

Helping Israel online

Israel has launched an e-learning program for those who want to help its global image.

"Stating the Case," a monthlong course sponsored by the Jewish Agency and Foreign Ministry, will begin Nov. 7 and feature sessions on Middle East history and major diplomatic challenges faced by Israel.

The time commitment is two to four hours a week, and registration — at <http://www.jacontact.org/courses/is-sc/index.phtml> — costs \$60.