

## IN THE NEWS

**Olmert lays out plans for withdrawal**

Ehud Olmert said Israel would have to unilaterally withdraw from much of the West Bank.

In the clearest indication of his plans since taking over as Israeli prime minister after Ariel Sharon went into a coma last month, Olmert told Israel's Channel 2 on Tuesday that Israel should hold onto three major settlement blocs — Ariel, Gush Etzion and Ma'aleh Adumim — and the Jordan Valley.

About 185,000 of Israel's 244,000 settlers live in those blocs, the Jerusalem Post reported, citing Peace Now. Olmert also denied that Israel's disengagement from the Gaza Strip had boosted Hamas, saying that the Palestinian terrorist group was strong before Israel carried out the disengagement plan last summer.

Olmert is the head of the Sharon-founded Kadima Party, which is favored to win Israel's March 28 elections.

**Israel kills three terrorists**

Israel killed a senior Palestinian terrorist in the West Bank and two others in the Gaza Strip.

The Islamic Jihad commander died in a shootout Tuesday with troops who surrounded his hideout in Nablus. Two Israeli soldiers were wounded.

Later in the day, two Palestinian terrorists were killed in an Israeli airstrike on the Gaza Strip.

**Muslim cleric sentenced in Britain**

A Muslim cleric in Britain who fomented hate and incited murder was sentenced to seven years in jail.

Abu Hamza al-Masri was convicted on 11 counts Tuesday in a London court. Al-Masri had been charged with soliciting murder against "non-believers," including against Jews.

He also was convicted of possessing video and audio recordings that he intended to distribute to foment hate.

# WORLD REPORT

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

## Violence over Danish cartoon could affect Europe-Mideast ties

By DINAH A. SPRITZER

**P**RAGUE (JTA) — A Danish employee of the European Union in Brussels confides that she is so fearful of Muslim anger over the now infamous cartoons of the prophet Mohammed in a Danish newspaper that she is afraid to go home.

Unnerved Danish members of the European Parliament refuse to comment on the violent protests against the cartoons in the Arab world and even normally chatty European analysts tell JTA they are withholding speculation for fear of fanning the flames.

"This is the first time there is a profound argument between modern Europe and the Islamic world," said Emanuele Ottolenghi, a fellow at the Oxford Centre for Hebrew and Jewish Studies and at the Middle East Centre of St. Antony's College at Oxford University.

"Now Europe is getting a taste of what Israel and the U.S. have long had to contend with."

Some Europeans are wondering what Europe's grappling with Islamic anger might mean to the delicate balance of E.U.-Middle East relations.

Some analysts hypothesized that the protests were part of a wider Islamic conspiracy to pressure the European Union into a softer approach on Islam, and in particular Iran.

Shock and fear have gripped the 25-member European bloc following several days of anti-Danish and anti-European demonstrations during which Muslims vented their rage — in several cases setting fire to embassies — over 12 cartoons that appeared in Jyllands-Posten last fall.

The cartoons satirized the relationship between Islam and terrorism, in one case showing the prophet telling terrorists that there were no more virgins left to reward them for their acts. Numerous other newspapers across Europe have reprinted the cartoons in recent days to show solidarity with the Danes and to support freedom of speech.

After the protests grew more severe over the weekend, with angry mobs in London and the Middle East calling for the beheading of the Danish newspaper's editor and the cartoonist, Danish leaders and the newspaper apologized for having offended Islam.

But their words have done nothing to quell the anger in some quarters. In Iran, the supreme leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei claimed that a Zionist conspiracy was behind the cartoons, while stones and fire bombs were tossed at the Danish and Austrian embassies. Austria holds the E.U. presidency.

Elsewhere, Norwegian peacekeeping troops were fired on in Afghanistan, gunmen threatened to attack a French learning center in Nablus, and for the Danes, the most shocking incident was the police failure to halt the burning of their embassy in Damascus.

These developments come at a precarious time for European-Middle East relations, with Europeans grappling how to deal with Iran's nuclear threat and future funding of the Palestinians now that Hamas has come to power.

Ottolenghi noted that the Muslim demonstrations were occurring several months after the cartoons appeared.

"So why now? There is nothing spontaneous."

*Continued on page 2*

### NEWS ANALYSIS

## ■ An awareness of Islamic violence could increase sympathy for Jewish issues

*Continued from page 1*

ous about what is happening. Denmark is going to be the chair of the U.N. Security Council when the decision about Iran's nuclear activities is made and these protests are intended to make the Danes feel the heat," he said.

Ottolenghi said he suspects the riots are also intended as a message to those E.U. leaders hoping to maintain a hard line with Hamas.

"This violence is clearly intended to intimidate Denmark in particular and Europe in general and to push them to have a more accommodating attitude toward Hamas," he said.

Such forecasts do not sit well with Jans Peter Bonde, a Danish member of the European Parliament.

"The Danish apology should be accepted and we can all have normal relations again. I think these violent elements are not the view of the majority in the Arab world. There is only one way forward: dialogue and peace. It will all be settled and then things will be back to normal," he said.

Ottolenghi scorned the Dane's "wishful thinking" that he said typified the European "whitewashing" of political Islam.

"They want to see it as kosher because

they have no idea how to respond to the threat of Islamic violence," he said.

If the European elite appeases the masses of angry protesters with continued apologies and promises of greater press respect for Islam, Ottolenghi says some Muslims will feel that violence pays off.

The question of how to handle political Islam looms large within E.U. borders following the Al-Qaida attack on a Madrid train in 2004, the London train and bus bombings last sum-

mer attributed to Islamists and the 2004 murder of a Dutch filmmaker who criticized Islam's treatment of women.

"It is clear now the European governments do not have a common position on what to do when they are haunted by political Islam," said Richard Whitman, head of the European program for Chatham House, the Royal Institute of International Affairs in London.

While the French Interior Minister Nicholas Sarkozy decried the firing of a French newspaper editor who ran the Mohammed cartoon, Britain's foreign secretary, Jack Straw, announced that the reprinting of the cartoons was "disrespectful."

Whitman said he did not think that the number of Muslims in each country influenced the individual responses to the outcry over the cartoons.

"It's not like in the United States where lobbying groups help determine foreign and domestic agenda," he said.

There are approximately 14 million Muslims in Europe and the number is growing rapidly as they have a much higher birthrate than non-Muslim Europeans.

France has the largest Muslim and Jewish population in the European Union, with 5 million Muslims and 600,000 Jews. Germany, Britain, Austria and the Netherlands also have sizeable Muslim populations.

Most analysts agreed that leaders in E.U. countries such as France were more concerned about the impact of the cartoon controversy on relations with Muslims within their borders than with relations with the Palestinians. But some said

they agreed that an awareness of Islamic violence might create greater sympathy for Jewish issues.

"When Europeans see E.U. flags being burned in Palestine, people are asking themselves if this is the reward for spending all that money there," said Marc Hecker of the French Institute of International Relations.

Ottolenghi was harsher on what he perceived as European hypocrisy.

"The Europeans have for years been deriding Israel for the way it behaves, saying how much more sensitive they are to the Muslims, but now that it's Norwegian soldiers being stoned in Afghanistan last night, not Israeli soldiers in the West Bank, they might view things a bit differently."

## Security chief blasts Jewish terror as 'cancer' in Israel

By DAN BARON

JERUSALEM (JTA) — Jewish terrorism is a "cancer" that Israel is lenient in tackling, Israel's Shin Bet chief said.

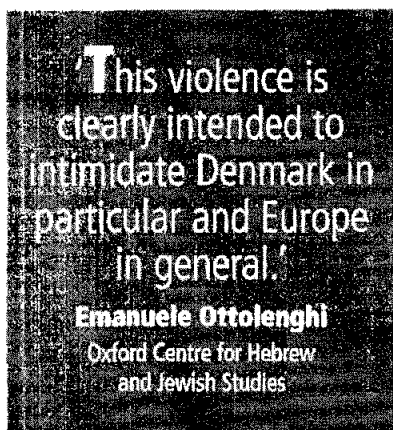
"Understand that a Jew who carries out terrorism is ultimately much more of a cancer in the nation than an Arab who carries out terrorism," Yuval Diskin said in a recent closed-door briefing to army cadets, a recording of which was aired this week by Israel's Channel 10 television.

Asked by his audience, which included West Bank settlers, whether the Shin Bet hunts suspected Jewish radicals, Diskin said they receive better treatment than Palestinians or Israeli Arabs held in similar cases.

"I do not see an equality in the way the system handles them, even when they are accused of the same kind of crime," Diskin said.

Diskin's remarks were aired amid growing right-wing anger at the prospect of Israel ceding more West Bank land to the Palestinians after the March 28 general elections.

The Prime Minister's Office, which oversees the Shin Bet, confirmed that the recording was authentic but declined further comment.



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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](http://www.jta.org).  
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# Skinhead violence on the rise, group says

By CHANAN TIGAY

NEW YORK (JTA) — Jacob Robida allegedly entered Puzzles Lounge in New Bedford, Mass., last week, asked a bartender if it was a gay bar, and then went on a rampage with a hatchet and a handgun that left three people injured.

During the next several days, Robida, 18, would kill the woman with whom he was traveling along with a police officer, and lead law enforcement officials on a 16-mile chase that ended with Robida's being shot to death by pursuing police.

Later, investigators searching Robida's home reportedly found neo-Nazi literature among his possessions, along with anti-Jewish, anti-gay and anti-black posters.

Hate espoused by people like Robida is on the rise, according to the Anti-Defamation League.

"It continues to be part of a virus that we have not eliminated and it affects our society and therefore we need to keep tabs," said Abraham Foxman, national director of the ADL.

The ADL's Racist Skinhead Project — [www.adl.org/racist\\_skinheads](http://www.adl.org/racist_skinheads) — launched this week, highlights the group's ongoing monitoring of racist skinhead activity and reports a "significant and troubling" resurgence in such behavior in the United States.

The project, which tracks racist skinhead activity by state and region, finds that the number of these groups in

America is on the rise, as is the number of violent hate crimes carried out by skinheads against Jews, blacks, Hispanics, gays, lesbians and immigrants.

Neo-Nazis are not necessarily skinheads, but many skinheads are members of neo-Nazi groups. Indeed, experts say, skinheads no longer necessarily have shaved heads or wear military-style boots. But this does not mean that they've moderated their message.

"The movement is becoming much more violent and much more organized," said Paul Goldenberg, special adviser to the Organization of Security and Cooperation in Europe on extremism and hate crimes and national director of SCN, a Jewish security network.

The ADL report identifies 110 racist skinhead groups in America, most of which, it says, came into being during the past five years. It also notes that these groups often have short half-lives, forming, dividing and changing frequently.

Overall, racist skinheads have been involved in 83 criminal incidents over the last few years, ranging from minor crimes to 17 incidents that led to charges of murder, attempted murder or manslaughter.

In 2005, for example, a skinhead was convicted for plotting to firebomb a syna-

gogue in Oklahoma City.

The report says the growth is due to several factors.

- The Internet offers disaffected white youth a plethora of information on skinheads and neo-Nazis and allows them to connect easily with some of these groups on prevalent social networking sites.

- Using the Internet, some of the larger U.S. groups have expanded to other countries.

- Some of the groups that had traditionally been among the largest and most

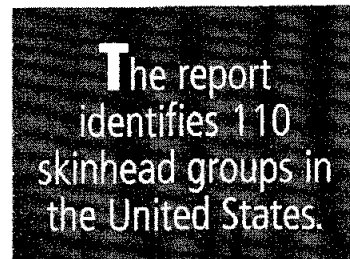
powerful have been hard hit by the arrests or death of leaders, opening the door to new groups.

- The white power music industry, a centerpiece of racist skinhead subculture, has been growing.

Kenneth Stern, a specialist in anti-Semitism and extremism at the American Jewish Committee, agrees that racist skinheads continue to pose a problem in the United States.

Nevertheless, he said, the increase in the number of groups "is not necessarily a trouble sign." If a big group splits into several smaller ones, he said, there has been no net gain for the movement.

Stern said: "Compared to what we're seeing in Europe, the skinhead problem here is very, very mild to say the least." ■



## Ad depicting greedy Jew airs in Slovakia despite protest

By DINAH A. SPRITZER

PRAGUE (JTA) — A controversial television advertisement that depicts a Jew in traditional Orthodox garb trying to ratchet down the price of a chainsaw is being broadcast in Slovakia, a year after it elicited protests from Jews in the Czech Republic.

The ad's portrayal of a Jew as a stereotypical wheeler-dealer driving a hard bargain shouldn't be an issue in Slovakia "because it is a Catholic country," explained Ladislav Segin, the Slovak director of Mountfield, the firm that is running the ad.

The Mountfield garden equipment company, which has Czech and Slovak headquarters, gained worldwide attention last year after Israel's ambassador to the Czech Republic, Arthur Avnon, asked the Czech branch to stop running the ads, which he said "describes Jewish people in a way that the worst anti-Semites would describe them: As greedy."

A series of radio, television and newspaper interviews with

Czech Jewish leaders followed, but as the ad was only slotted for a short run, the protests did not have an impact on its airing.

The Mountfield ad features a well-known Czech comedian, Zdenek Izer, dressed as a religious Jew with a long fake beard, large black hat and flowing black robes. He rubs his hands together with apparent cunning as he asks the Mountfield cartoon mascot, "What's all this trumf stuff about?" referring to a slot on the firm's carnival-like wheel of fortune that provides discounts to shoppers.

As the Jewish character repeatedly wins discounts from the wheel, he tells the dejected mascot, "Don't give me that," in language that is stereotypical of 1930s Jewish slang. Leaving the store with a greatly discounted chainsaw, the Jewish bargain shopper pretends to the mascot that his cheap booty is "no big deal," but then shows the audience that he knows better, grotesquely sticking his tongue out, revealing that he has duped Mountfield with his haggling skills. ■

## NEWS IN BRIEF

### NORTH AMERICA

#### Northwestern professor denies Holocaust

The president of Northwestern University blasted one of his professors for denying the Holocaust.

The president, Henry Bienen, said Monday that Arthur Butz's comments are a "contemptible insult to all decent and feeling people."

Butz, an engineering professor, e-mailed comments denying the Holocaust to an Iranian news agency, backing remarks by Iran's president, Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, that denied the Holocaust.

In comments that were also posted on his Web site, Butz called the Holocaust a "deliberately contrived falsehood" and congratulated Ahmadinejad.

The Hillel at Northwestern, which has a substantial Jewish population, published an advertisement protesting Butz's comments in the school's newspaper and called for a community meeting Tuesday night to address the Holocaust.

#### Jewish official mourns King

A Jewish official was among those who paid tribute to Coretta Scott King at her funeral.

Speaking Tuesday, Sherry Frank, the executive director of the Atlanta chapter of the American Jewish Committee, emphasized that King signed autographed copies of her books to give to Soviet Jews, as well as the gratitude the Jewish community felt when King joined members of the Atlanta Black-Jewish Coalition in denouncing anti-Semitism and honoring Holocaust memory.

"Her timeless dedication to the cause of equality inspired generations," Frank said.

King, the widow of the Rev. Martin Luther King Jr., died Jan. 30.

### MIDDLE EAST

#### Gaza farmers to get retraining

The Hebrew University of Jerusalem plans to retrain evacuated Gaza Strip settlement farmers.

The university announced this week that around 100 farmers evacuated from Gaza would receive advanced training at its Faculty of Agricultural, Food and Environmental Quality Sciences.

The government-funded studies begin March 5 and will last between six and 24 months.

The project is intended to give the evacuees high-level professional training and help them return to work and re-establish farms.

#### Hamas seeks to lead P.A.

Hamas' top politician said the radical Islamic group will likely form the next Palestinian Authority government.

Ismail Haniyeh said Tuesday it is "highly expected" that Hamas, having won last month's parliamentary elections in the Palestinian Authority, would head the new Cabinet.

Israel, with foreign backing, has ruled out peace talks with a Hamas-led Palestinian Authority unless the group renounces terrorism and recognizes the Jewish state's right to exist.

Palestinian Authority President Mahmoud Abbas has tried to mollify Israeli concerns by proposing that he continue to handle diplomatic contacts. Talks on forming the new Palestinian Authority government are expected after its Parliament reconvenes next week.

#### Johnson & Johnson helps Hebrew U.

Johnson & Johnson is helping fund a scientific research initiative at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem.

The Johnson & Johnson Corporate Office of Science and Technology and Yissum, the technology transfer company of the Hebrew

University, have joined forces to encourage innovative research ideas by students at the institution, it was announced Tuesday.

The focus will be on ideas that have the greatest potential for becoming major scientific breakthroughs, or to be of great commercial possibility.

### WORLD

#### Breakthrough in looted art issue

Heirs of a Dutch Jewish art dealer whose paintings were looted by the Nazis will get most of them back.

The Dutch Culture Ministry announced this week that 202 of 267 paintings claimed by the survivors of Jacques Goudstikker would be handed over, while the rest would remain with their current owners because it could not be proven that they belonged to the art dealer when he fled the German invasion of the Netherlands in 1940.

Goudstikker's daughter-in-law, Marei von Saher, hailed the decision as a breakthrough in a decades-old reclamation battle.

Many of the paintings mentioned in the suit now hang in 17 museums throughout the Netherlands.

#### Denmark may cancel Israel soccer match

Denmark may cancel a soccer match against Israel because of fear of Muslim reprisals, according to Israel Army Radio.

The report came Tuesday amid ongoing Muslim protests following the printing of an editorial cartoon by a Danish newspaper that many Muslims find offensive.

A final decision on the soccer game is expected at the end of February.

#### Czech politician wants Holocaust museum

A regional Czech official wants to establish a Holocaust museum.

Jiri Sulc said he would like to establish a major European Holocaust museum in Terezin, the Nazi ghetto and transit camp during World War II.

Terezin, also known by its German name of Theresienstadt, is now home to a memorial and research center.

Sulc would like to cooperate with the United States, the European Union and the Czech government in order to gain funding for the project, intended to help improve the economic condition of the town as well as pay tribute to Europe's Jewish heritage.

The Nazis concentrated 155,000 European Jews in the Terezin ghetto before sending them to extermination camps, mainly to Auschwitz.

Some 35,000 Jews died in the ghetto because of hunger, disease and torture.

#### Costa Rican Jewish legislators elected

Two members of Costa Rica's small Jewish community won seats in the country's Legislative Assembly.

Clara Zomer and Masha Ofelia Taitelbaum, both of the National Liberation Party, will begin serving four-year terms when the new legislature takes office in May.

Their party will have the largest bloc in the legislature and both are expected to have leadership roles within the bloc.

The winner of the presidential race remains undecided with Oscar Arias, the National Liberation candidate and 1987 Nobel Peace Prize laureate, leading Citizen's Action Party rival Otton Solis.

Arias comes from a party that traditionally enjoys support from the country's Jewish community, but has said in the past that if elected he would move Costa Rica's embassy out of Jerusalem.

Only Costa Rica and El Salvador have embassies in the city Israel claims as its capital.