



## IN THE NEWS

## Israel kills suspected terrorist

Israel killed a member of a Palestinian terrorist group in an airstrike in the Gaza Strip.

Another member of the Al-Aksa Brigade was wounded in Wednesday's airstrike. The death marks the 10th Palestinian killed by Israeli attacks this week. The strikes began after three Israelis were wounded in a Palestinian rocket attack last Friday.

Earlier Wednesday, U.N. Secretary-General Kofi Annan warned Israel about its "targeted killings" of suspected Palestinian terrorists.

## Livni: P.A. to become terror state

The Palestinian Authority will become a "terror state" if Hamas controls the Palestinian Parliament without renouncing violence or recognizing Israel, Israel's foreign minister said.

Tzipi Livni spoke Wednesday in Washington in a news conference after meeting with U.S. Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice. Rice said the United States would continue to review its aid programs to the West Bank and Gaza in light of the Hamas victory.

Rice said the two also discussed Iran's nuclear plans, as well as regional security issues.

## Boycotts conference still on despite outcry

An upcoming conference on academic boycotts will go on despite an outcry over its validity.

Concern about the conference intensified after an article by a Holocaust denier was distributed in a pre-conference packet.

The American Association of University Professors, which is convening next week's conference in Italy, was also criticized for inviting a number of professors who have supported Israel boycotts in the past. In addition to Jewish groups, three organizations funding the conference have expressed distress about the upcoming meeting.

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# WORLD REPORT

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

## European Jews express anger, frustration amid furor over cartoon

By JTA STAFF

**P**ARIS (JTA) — European Jews expressed a mixture of anger and frustration this week as the furor over a Muslim cartoon erupted into violence in Europe and the Middle East.

As frequent targets of anti-Semitic cartoons — many of them in the Arab press — Jews on one hand sympathized with the Muslim outrage over depictions of the Islamic prophet Mohammed, which are considered by Muslims to be blasphemous.

But Jews joined many others in expressing shock at the level of violence the controversy sparked.

"Of course, we condemn all forms of propaganda that carry prejudice toward any faith. But people in glass houses shouldn't throw stones," said Serge Cwajgenbaum, the secretary-general of the European Jewish Congress.

In Denmark, Jews felt solidarity with their country as it came under attack after a Danish newspaper printed the controversial cartoons, including one that depicted the Islamic prophet Mohammed as wearing a turban shaped as a bomb.

"Usually the Jews are always in the center of things, but here we feel we are part of the Danish population," said Rabbi Bent Lexner, Denmark's chief rabbi.

Other newspapers across the world — in France, in Australia and in the United States — printed one or more of the cartoons. In France, the editorial director of France Soir, was fired after running at least one of the cartoons. At least one Israeli paper, the Jerusalem Post, also reprinted the cartoons.

A German Jewish Web site, haGalil, got hacked after it posted some of the Danish cartoons.

The controversy took on specific Jewish overtones as the Muslim reaction intensified. As Muslims rioted across the Middle East, the Web site of the Arab European League printed anti-Semitic cartoons and Iran's largest newspaper requested cartoon submissions that question the Holocaust.

"The cartoon was made by a Danish newspaper, not a Jewish one. But once again, someone does something and we as Jews are guilty," said the head of Poland's Union of Religious Jewish Communities, Petr Kadlcek.

### BEHIND THE HEADLINES

Most European Jews, led by France's chief rabbi, Joseph Sitruk, saw the original cartoons as a needless provocation.

Following a meeting with French Prime Minister Dominique de Villepin, Sitruk said, "We win nothing by disparaging religions, humiliating them by making caricatures of them."

Freedom of expression is not an unlimited right, Sitruk said. The right to satire "stops as soon as there is incitement to or hatred of the other."

Jews are no strangers to racism dressed up as humor, said David Ruzie, a French university professor and specialist in international law.

"There is humor, and there is humor," Ruzie said. "It was through derision that Germany, and in France as well, before World War II, began to attack Jews."

But there was widespread condemnation of the Muslim reaction, which in addition to the anti-Semitic cartoons, included Muslim

*Continued on page 2*

## ■ Europe's Jews are angry and frustrated over the cartoon controversy

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violence, throwing rocks at Danish and other European institutions abroad and, in some cases, setting buildings ablaze.

"I don't believe in absolute freedom of expression," said journalist Jean-Claude Baboulin, writing in Guysen Israel News, a news service, "but I certainly don't defend the Muslims who believe they have a right to forbid others what their religion forbids them," he wrote, referring to the Muslim prohibition on depicting Mohammed.

Said Danielle Brami, who owns a pharmacy in Paris, "To go burn embassies and cultural centers is a scandal, pure and simple, and is totally unwarranted."

This is not the first example of religious slander in the European media, but the reactions are exaggerated, said Jean-Michel Rosenfeld, a Paris official. "There is something to be angry over, just like when Catholics were furious over caricatures of the Holy Trinity in the French press," he said, "but the Catholics did not go out and burn buildings."

Others reacted with more equanimity.

People of all faiths must work to defuse the situation, said Paul Spiegel, head of the Central Council of Jews in Germany, complementing German Chancellor Angela Merkel in her call "for prudence and de-escalation."

"A clash of cultures is avoidable," he said.

For some elderly Danish Jews, the violence brought back some historical nightmares, said Lexner, the Danish chief rabbi.

"I think that there are some kinds of

fear, especially of those people who have seen this burning of flags and violence in the many countries, and they compare" that to the 1940s, fretting that "things are repeating themselves," he said.

In Great Britain, both lawmakers and Muslim leaders condemned a demonstration last Friday in front of the country's largest mosque during which some Muslims threatened beheadings, terrorism and another "7/7," referring to the multiple subway and bus bombings that left 56 dead last July.

Most Muslim protests in Europe were peaceful, however.

Many European and American Jewish observers noted the irony of Muslims and Arabs objecting to an offensive characterization of Mohammed when anti-Jewish characterizations are rampant in the Arab world.

Jon Benjamin, director general of the Board of Deputies of British Jews, the country's main Jewish umbrella organization, emphasized the frequent references in the Arab world to "The Protocols of Zion," a forgery that purports to be a plan outlining how Jews want to rule the world.

It shows "how bizarre and insidious this all is. If they understand that it's hurtful, why didn't they pay attention to it ever before?" said Abraham Foxman, the national director of the Anti-Defamation League who has often pressed the issue of anti-Semitism in the Arab media.

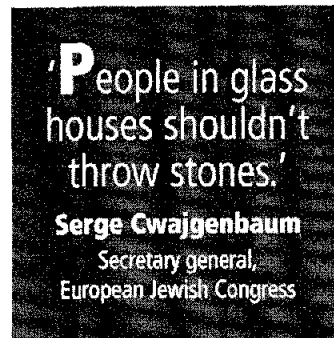
Some in the secular French Jewish community revealed bitterness at the anger expressed against France, particularly concerning demonstrations that took place in the Gaza Strip.

Ruzie wrote on the Web site desinfos.com: "The traditionally welcoming attitude of France toward the Palestinians" has not exactly "paid off."

Underlying much of the reaction was an anger that efforts at tolerance and dialogue could now be jeopardized.

"Some people have worked for trying to integrate the Muslim community in the Danish society, and I think that, in that way, many years of work were destroyed," Lexner said.

*(JTA staff writer Chanan Tigay in New York and correspondents Dinah A. Spritzer in Prague, Lauren Elkin and Brett Kline in Paris, and Toby Axelrod in Berlin contributed to this report.)*



## Boycotts conference still on

By CHANAN TIGAY

NEW YORK (JTA) — An upcoming conference on academic boycotts will go on despite an outcry over its validity.

Concern about the conference intensified after an article by a Holocaust denier was distributed in a pre-conference packet.

The American Association of University Professors, which is convening next week's conference in Italy, was also criticized for inviting a number of professors who have supported Israel boycotts in the past.

"The AAUP has opposed and will continue to oppose academic boycotts," the organization's general-secretary, Roger Bowen, said Wednesday in a statement. He said including the article was an "egregious error."

Bowen said "only by engaging our critics in conversation and debate," can we attempt to persuade them to consider another perspective.

In addition to Jewish groups, three organizations funding the conference — the Ford, Nathan Cummings and Rockefeller foundations — have expressed distress about the upcoming meeting.

The Ford and Nathan Cummings foundations said they disagreed with the decision to go ahead with the conference.

"We believe this error has diminished the chance that the constructive dialogue that was originally intended will in fact occur, and has undercut the chance that the meeting will be taken seriously," the presidents of the organizations said in a statement.

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WORLD  
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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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# Toronto project helps displaced settlers

By ADAM MICHAEL SEGAL

TORONTO (JTA) — Eran Sternberg used to live a prosperous life in the picturesque bloc of Gaza settlements called Gush Katif.

Today, more than five months after the settlements were evacuated, he is unemployed and residing in a crammed mobile home that is prone to water leaks.

"It's not a good feeling to be in this mobile house," he said. "It's depressing."

Their situation has prompted Jewish philanthropists in Toronto to lend a hand.

Spearheaded by Kurt Rothschild, the Toronto group has established the Netzarim Development Fund, which aims to raise more than \$1 million to assist former Netzarim settlers.

Like many of the other 9,000 or so former residents of Gush Katif, Sternberg hasn't yet benefited from compensation packages promised to the settlers by the Israeli government.

"I get an unemployment payment, but I didn't even get one shekel" in compensation, he said. "I don't know the exact numbers, but the impression I get is that there are thousands like me."

According to a report compiled by a committee of former Gush Katif residents, about 50 percent of the evacuees haven't received any down payments. Close to 90 percent haven't received "full compensation," which is based on lost land, lost wages, family size and other factors. About 2,100 people lost their jobs.

Some 815 people have received full compensation, said Haim Altmann, a spokesman for the Disengagement Authority, known in Hebrew as Sela. While Altmann would not give a range of numbers, he told JTA that the payments to these people totaled the equivalent of about \$225 million. In addition, 233 people have received 75 percent of their money, while others have received smaller amounts, Altmann said. Other payments to former settlers are in the works, while some families have only recently applied for compensation, he added.

The bulk of the settlers are living in clusters of caravans, mobile homes, hotels, dormitories and tents across Israel.

Many of the settlers "still have very inadequate accommodations, many are

unemployed, so here are people in trouble and we want to help," says Rothschild, who has visited the settlers several times since the evacuation.

"The second reason for doing this is the project of starting new settlements in the Negev, which is vital for Israel."

Recently, a series of meetings were held at homes and synagogues in Toronto to help attract donations. United Jewish Appeal is monitoring the Toronto fund-raising.

About half of the necessary funds have been raised so far, said Udi Zinar, project coordinator for the new settlements. The funds are "being used for our school system, our day care system, the medical system, youth needs and welfare issues."

Zale Newman, one of the Toronto contributors, views the mission in humanitarian terms, similar to when Diaspora communities helped new Israeli immigrants shortly after the country's establishment in 1948.

"It's good, old-fashioned Zionism to build a frontier town in a part of Israel that needs to be populated," he said. "The difference now is that these aren't rookie immigrants — they're skilled business people."

Prior to the Gaza withdrawal, the organic vegetables and other produce from Gush Katif's technologically advanced hothouses led to a flourishing economy, which accounted for 15 percent of Israel's agricultural exports.

The plan is for this agricultural know-how to be harnessed in new towns in Israel's south.

"They saved their hothouses and they'll have to learn to adapt to the new soil, which is desert sand, not like beach sand in Gaza," Newman said.

While other communities are without resettlement strategies, the group from Netzarim has certain benchmarks. Zinar hopes they will achieve some financial stability by the middle of the year.

"If we raise enough money by July

2006, we'll reach our goal and start the new year in a positive manner," he said, referring to Rosh Hashanah.

But "it will take a couple of years to get them fully settled," said Rothschild.

The Toronto endeavor is being touted as an example for other evacuated settlements; organizers said they have their eye on Washington, Montreal and New York for further projects.

In the meantime, financial uncertainty and unstable living

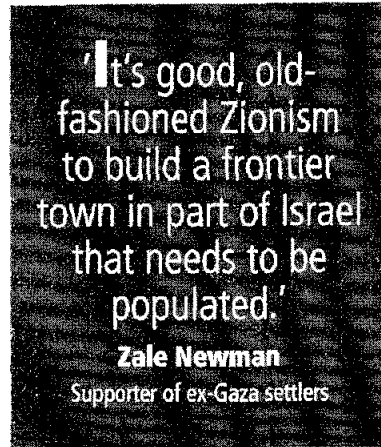
conditions have created social and emotional problems in children, such as bed-wetting and school dropouts.

"When a father doesn't have a job and the kids are a year behind in school, the family gets really destitute," said Rachele Bronfman, who recently hosted an event for the Netzarim fund in her Toronto home.

"I met one girl whose family lived a very prosperous life" before the evacuation, Bronfman said. "And now she shares one bedroom with seven brothers and sisters."

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

BEHIND  
THE  
HEADLINES



## Cartoon contest fights Iranian hate

NEW YORK (JTA) — A Jewish student group is sponsoring a cartoon contest to counter an anti-Semitic comics competition in Iran. The World Union of Jewish Students this week announced its international editorial cartoon contest, Fight Hate with Humor, an effort to "stand the Iranians on their heads."

The Hamshahri daily launched a worldwide contest for cartoons that question the Holocaust in response to the publication by European newspapers of cartoons satirizing Islam's prophet, Mohammed.

"The whole thing about the Iranian contest would be hilarious if it weren't so terrifying," said cartoonist Edward Margolis. Submissions can be made at <http://www.wujs.org.il/home/cartoon.php>.

# NEWS IN BRIEF

## WORLD

### Editor willing to publish Holocaust cartoons

The Danish editor who ignited the Mohammed cartoon controversy said he would publish Holocaust cartoons as well.

Flemming Rose told CNN on Wednesday that he was trying to publish cartoons received by an Iranian newspaper that had solicited cartoons on the Holocaust to test the principle of freedom of speech.

Muslims across the Middle East have resorted to violence after the Danish newspaper, *Jyllands-Posten*, published the cartoons, which were also published by other newspapers in the West.

### Center matches war criminal reward

The Simon Wiesenthal Center offered a matching reward for the capture of a suspected Nazi war criminal.

The center's \$156,000 matched the amount offered by the German government for the capture of Dr. Aribert Heim.

Heim is believed to have killed hundreds of inmates at Mauthausen during World War II.

The search for Heim, who would be 91 years old, was reactivated after the center launched Project Last Chance, a last-ditch effort to track down Nazi war criminals.

Heim was arrested by American forces after the war and released from prison in 1949, reportedly because evidence of his service at Mauthausen had been removed from his files. He then went into hiding.

### Israeli leader to visit Greece

Moshe Katsav will visit Greece in what is believed to be the first state visit by an Israeli president to Athens.

During the Feb. 14-16 visit, Katsav will hold meetings with his Greek counterpart, Karolos Papoulias, Prime Minister Costas Karamanlis, as well as Greek Jewish leaders.

The presidents of Greece and Israel will also travel to Thessaloniki together where they will visit the Jewish Museum and the Holocaust Memorial as a tribute to the victims of the Jewish community of the city, which was decimated during the Holocaust.

### Synagogue in Zambia rededicated

A delegation of the African Jewish Congress recently made a two-day trip to Zambia to rededicate the 65-year-old Lusaka Synagogue.

The Jewish community of Zambia numbers around 120 people, with 90 of them based in the capital city of Lusaka. Its presence dates to the closing years of the 19th century. An upsurge in the economy has sparked Jewish business interest in Zambia.

The national railroads have been taken over on a 99-year contract basis by an Israeli company, resulting in an influx of Israelis. There are also several American Jews in the country who are connected to the U.S. Agency for International Development, as well as members of the diplomatic community.

The congress, an affiliate of the South African Jewish Board of Deputies and the World Jewish Congress, looks after the interests of the small and far-flung Jewish communities of sub-Saharan Africa.

## NORTH AMERICA

### Presbyterians delay divestment move

A Presbyterian committee investigating the church's possible divestment from Israel said it would not recommend divestment to the church's General Assembly in June.

The church's Mission Responsibility Through Investment committee said it needs more time before it makes its decision, Religion News Service reported.

The Presbyterian Church voted in 2004 to pursue selective divestment from Caterpillar, Motorola, ITT Industries and United Technologies if the companies refuse to stop doing business with Israel.

The Presbyterians also voted in 2004 to look into divesting from Citigroup because of its alleged connection to an Arab bank believed to have ties to suicide bombers.

### WTC museum taps Holocaust museum staffer

A staffer at the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum was named to head the memorial museum planned for the site of the World Trade Center.

Alice Greenwald, who has been the associate museum director for museum programs at the Washington museum, will be responsible for creating the World Trade Center Museum, which will tell the stories of the Feb. 26, 1993, and Sept. 11, 2001, terrorist attacks on the center.

Greenwald has extensive experience in the Jewish museum world.

### Jewish jobs site launched

A new Jewish jobs Web site was launched. The site, [www.JewishCareers.com](http://www.JewishCareers.com), is a project of Andrew Buerger, whose company owns the Baltimore Jewish Times and other publications. The Philadelphia Jewish Exponent and the Washington Jewish Week are working with the Baltimore Jewish Times on the project.

The site, which already has more than 150 listings, posts positions in a variety of fields nationwide.

The Association for Jewish Outreach Professionals is also a partner in the project.

## MIDDLE EAST

### Hamas members on Israel's payroll?

Hamas activists in Jerusalem reportedly enjoy Israeli state benefits.

Citing sources in the National Insurance Institute, Yediot Achronot reported Wednesday that hundreds of Palestinians who live in eastern Jerusalem and are entitled to government unemployment and health subsidies are members of Hamas, an Islamic terrorist group sworn to the Jewish state's destruction.

These include Mohammed Abu-Tir, one of the senior Hamas politicians who ran in last month's Palestinian Authority parliamentary election.

A National Insurance source was quoted as saying that the payouts would not stop unless there was new Knesset legislation depriving Jerusalem Palestinians with Hamas links of the mandatory rights accorded to Israeli residents.

### Parade stabber jailed

An Israeli man was jailed for stabbing three people at last year's Jerusalem gay pride parade.

Jerusalem District Court sentenced Yishai Schlissel, a 30-year-old West Bank settler, to 12 years in prison Wednesday after convicting him of the June attack.

He was also fined \$65,000. The court said it handed down a stiff sentence to deter future violence of an ideological nature. Schlissel said God ordered him to carry out the attack in defense of Jerusalem's sanctity.

### Russian Jewish leader questioned in Israel

The president of the Russian Jewish Congress was detained for questioning in Israel.

Vyacheslav "Moshe" Kantor was questioned regarding suspicions of international money laundering on Wednesday when he arrived at Israel's Ben-Gurion Airport.