

IN THE NEWS
Iran responds to incentives package

Iran reportedly rejected a Western incentives package on its uranium enrichment program, but said it's willing to enter "serious negotiations" on the issue.

On Tuesday, Iran's top nuclear negotiator, Ali Larijani, hand-delivered the Islamic Republic's response to an incentives package on its nuclear program to ambassadors from Britain, China, Russia, France, Germany and Switzerland.

On Monday, Iran prevented International Atomic Energy Agency inspectors from gaining access to an underground site that houses its uranium enrichment program.

Italy wavers on peacekeeping force

Italy said it would take part in a U.N. peacekeeping force in southern Lebanon only if Israel does not violate the cease-fire.

Foreign Minister Massimo D'Alema told La Repubblica newspaper that Italy, which is expected to lead the U.N. force, would not send troops if fighting continues. "We expect a renewed effort, this time truly binding, to respect the cease-fire," D'Alema said in an interview published Tuesday.

"It's fair to expect that Hezbollah put down their weapons, but we cannot send our troops to Lebanon" if the Israeli army keeps shooting, he said. Israel said a raid it carried out over the weekend in eastern Lebanon was necessary to prevent new weapons from reaching Hezbollah.

Israelis die in bus crash

Several Israeli Arabs died in a bus crash in Egypt. Tuesday's crash occurred when a tourist bus overturned in the Sinai Desert. Some 39 people were injured in the accident.

Reports said Egyptian officials refused Israeli offers to transport some of the wounded to hospitals in Israel.

WORLD REPORT

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After violence in northern Israel, students reconsider study abroad

By JENNIFER JACOBSON

WASHINGTON (JTA) — When the first rocket hit Haifa, David was sitting at his desk studying. Four days later, the medical student in the American program at the Technion — Israel Institute of Technology was back home in Baltimore.

The university canceled final exams after the Israel-Hezbollah war erupted in mid-July — and David, who asked that his real name not be used, saw no point in sticking around.

Now that a fragile cease-fire has taken hold in the region, the Technion, located in Israel's third-largest city, has resumed normal operations.

But David isn't sure if he'll return to campus in October, the start of the fall semester.

"If the situation stays peaceful, I may go back," he says. "If it's not, I have no idea."

American students have had to make tough choices this summer about whether to study abroad in Israel. With tensions in the Middle East running high, they worry about their safety — and so do their universities.

Some U.S. colleges have suspended study-abroad programs in northern Israel and have asked students not to attend universities in Jerusalem or Tel Aviv, even though those cities didn't come under Hezbollah rocket fire.

Other colleges haven't sent students to Israel since the Palestinian intifada began in September 2000. Those institutions base their decisions on State Department travel warnings; the one for Israel has been in effect since December 2001.

Universities cannot forbid students from

studying in Israel, but they can refuse to give students credit for study abroad there. Most U.S. universities require that students who want to study in Israel take a leave of absence to do so.

Leaders of American Jewish organizations say universities shouldn't suspend their study-abroad programs in Israel in light of the recent fighting. They note the inherent risks of studying abroad in any country, and don't want college officials to overreact.

"We sympathize with schools trying to walk this line between what they saw on TV screens from July and

August and student delegations heading to Israel," says David Harris, executive director of the Israel on Campus Coalition, a group of national organizations that promote Israel advocacy on campus. "The fact is, Israel is a safe place to study."

But study-abroad officials say some parts of the country are safer than others, at least for now.

This is "the first time rockets have fallen in Haifa and people have had to spend considerable amounts of time in bomb shelters," says Joe Finkhouse, director of institutional relations in Boston University's division of international programs. "That changes everything considerably."

For roughly a dozen years, the university has run a study-abroad program at the University of Haifa. B.U. officials have never canceled the program, Finkhouse says, nor did they cancel it this semester — but the four students who had enrolled dropped out three weeks ago because of security concerns.

"We're looking forward to re-enrolling

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**FOCUS
ON
ISSUES**

■ *With tensions in the Middle East running high, foreign students worry about their safety*

Continued from page 1

students spring semester," he says.

One University of Pennsylvania student was slated to study at the University of Haifa this semester, says Shannon Connelly, an overseas program manager at Penn. But the student is currently studying at Tel Aviv University, based on Penn's decision.

Some colleges, like New York University and the University of California system, have said "no" for years. Both schools do not send students to countries with travel warnings.

"The State Department has thousands of people who have been trained to evaluate the safety of these places to Americans," says Bruce Hanna, director of communications for the University of California system's Education Abroad Program. "For us to come up with our own staff to duplicate that effort would be extremely costly."

Emory University in Atlanta also had stopped sending students to Israel since spring 2001 because of the intifada. But last semester, university officials decided to reinstate the program this fall.

"The security situation had been stable for long enough that we felt comfortable we could send students back and they would be safe," says Philip Wainwright, director of Emory's Center for International Programs Abroad. "The level of State Department warning reflected that. It had said U.S. citizens should defer travel to Israel," but the warning was revised and no longer says that.

Wainwright says five students had registered to attend Hebrew University in Jerusalem this fall, but two dropped out because of safety concerns.

Given Israel's conflict with Hezbollah, Emory officials had their own concerns, but rather than cancel the program they decided to consult with students.

Wainwright says university officials asked them to abide by the safety and security regulations outlined in the State Department travel warning, which the students agreed to do. Emory officials

also gave students taxi stipends so they wouldn't have to take public buses, a common target for suicide bombers.

John Fisher, director of enrollment management at Yeshiva University, says there has been no change in the number of students the New York-based school sends to Israel.

"We're looking forward to a strong and robust year," he says of the program.

Yeshiva, which serves a mainly Orthodox Jewish population, has about 600 students going to Israel this year, the same number it sends every year.

Brandeis University has never told students they couldn't study abroad, even in countries with travel warnings, such as Israel, Kenya and Nepal, says Scott Van Der Meid, the university's director of study abroad.

"We have a peace-and-conflict studies major," he says. "How can the university say, 'We're not going to send you into

areas we consider unsafe?'"

This fall, Brandeis will send two students to the University of Haifa, two to Tel Aviv University, one to Hebrew University and one to Ben-Gurion University of the Negev.

Another student, Van Der Meid says, had planned to study at Hebrew University but decided to stay at Brandeis this semester because of safety concerns. That student will reconsider studying in Israel for the spring semester, he says.

Despite the risks, Rebecca Gottlieb and her parents decided

she would go. A student at Brandeis, where she is an international and global studies major, Gottlieb will spend her junior year at Hebrew University. She leaves for Israel in October when the semester begins.

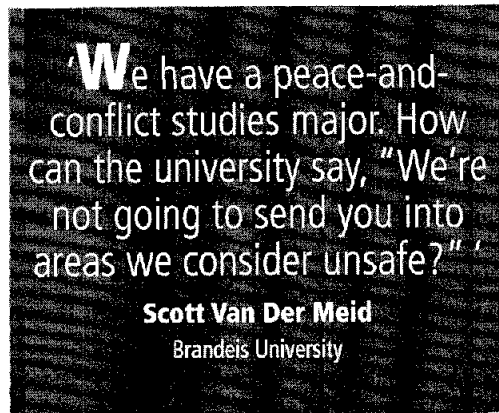
"My parents are definitely concerned about the security," says the Teaneck, N.J., resident. "They understand this means a lot to me."

Gottlieb recently returned from a two-month summer fellowship in Jerusalem where, except for bomb scares, "you didn't really feel the war," she says.

But for David, the fighting was a little too close for comfort. He remembers the swoosh of a Hezbollah rocket as it flew over his apartment, then a huge explosion as it landed less than a mile away.

He also recalls the sadness he experienced at leaving the country in turmoil.

"I felt very bad for people in Israel," he says, and "very guilty that I got to go home." ■



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Lawmakers ask Red Cross for help

TORONTO (JTA) — A Canadian and an American lawmaker teamed up to press the International Red Cross to ensure the safety of three kidnapped Israeli soldiers.

Canadian Sen. Jerry Grafstein, who is Jewish, and U.S. Rep. Alcee Hastings (D-Fla.) each wrote to their respective countries' branch of the Red Cross asking for pressure to be applied on the International Red Cross to inquire about and

ensure the safety of Ehud Goldwasser and Eldad Regev, captured by Hezbollah, and Gilad Shalit, captured by Hamas.

"As an organization of enormous credibility and status, the ICRC can use their moral authority to verify the health and safety of the Israeli soldiers," Hastings wrote in a July 28 letter to Jack McGuire, the American Red Cross chief executive. ■

Hope, anger fill Arab street

By URIEL HEILMAN

AMMAN, Jordan (JTA) — In the wake of Israel's war with Hezbollah, there is both great anger and hope in the Arab world.

There is anger at Israel for laying waste to Lebanon and bombarding its civilians. There is anger at the United States for giving Israel a green light and providing it with weapons used to devastate Lebanon. And there is anger at Arab governments for standing by while Lebanon was being destroyed.

But there also is renewed hope in cities like Amman, and among Arabs all over the Middle East — hope that Israel, which they see as a colonialist, Western imposition that is the cancer of the Arab world, can be defeated.

"I believe this confrontation is just as important as the Six-Day War," Hani Hourani, director general of the Al-Urdun Al-Jadid research center, told JTA in Amman.

"The 1967 war created the myth of Israeli superiority," he said. "This July-August war is telling us it is a myth, it is not a reality. Israel can be defeated.

"We had given up on the military option. We believed this belonged to history," Hourani continued. "By taking the initiative, Hezbollah created a new way of thinking about the whole conflict in the region: Israel is not that invincible. It could be beaten. It could be harmed. Hezbollah, even if we don't agree with its ideology, was suggesting a different option to the Arab people."

That option is confronting Israel by force, rather than negotiating from a position of weakness, Hourani said.

If Hourani is right, then the Middle East indeed may be entering a new era, one in which Arabs may forego grudging acceptance of Israel as an unwanted reality and in which growing numbers of Arabs will once again try to resolve the issue by force of arms — perhaps seeking to eliminate the Jewish state entirely.

Even if flawed — and many Israeli analysts say it is — this new way of thinking is troublesome not only for Israel, but for Arab regimes aligned with U.S. policy in the Middle East.

Israel's wartime actions and its inability to silence Hezbollah rockets have put Arab leaders on the defensive both for standing idly by while Lebanon was under fire and for their close ties with

the United States, widely viewed here as Israel's ideological and military sponsor.

Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak last week backpedaled from his earlier criticism of Hezbollah for provoking the conflict with Israel, declaring instead that Hezbollah is "part of the Lebanese national fabric."

Similarly, Jordan's King Abdullah II, who also initially blamed Hezbollah for sparking the conflict, told Jordanian media earlier this month that Israel's "aggression has exceeded

all limits."

"Arab rulers are afraid more for their rule than they care about Palestine," said Abdel Mahdi Al-Soudi, a professor of sociology at the University of Jordan. "Nobody's convinced that 300 million people cannot defeat Israel. This is ridiculous."

Israeli military strategists and political scientists note that Hezbollah's successes in Lebanon would be difficult to replicate in other conflict zones. In the event of an attack by Syria, Israel could hit the Syrian army directly, an option it didn't have in Lebanon, where the state seeks to evade responsibility for Hezbollah's actions.

As for rocket fire from Palestinian areas in Gaza or the West Bank, Israeli forces can operate much more freely and effectively there than on the foreign turf of southern Lebanon.

"Without a doubt, the Arab world realized Israel is vulnerable to a certain type of war. I am less certain this battle strategy can be brought to other areas," said Shlomo Avineri, a political scientist at Hebrew University in Jerusalem and former director general of Israel's Foreign Ministry.

Predictions that Arab states will revert to their old strategy of confronting Israel with arms look "like part of the lack of realism from Arabs," Avineri said,

But Arabs across the region say their rulers should at the very least leverage Israel's failures in Lebanon to extract con-

cessions from Israel and the United States.

"I believe the moderate governments will face very difficult days," Hourani said. "The Arab regimes will face this question, especially Saudi Arabia, Egypt and Jordan: If Hezbollah can do this while they are a few hundred fighters, why are you doing nothing and just taking orders from the White House?"

Aside from exposing Arab regimes as ineffectual and passive, the war in Lebanon has strengthened hard-line positions in the Arab world and embarrassed moderates who support reconciliation with Israel.

Support for peace with Israel was always paper-thin in Jordan, backed by the regime but opposed by the country's powerful professional societies and religious organizations. The perceived barbarity of Israel's attacks in Lebanon — reinforced by images of Lebanese civilian casualties broadcast endlessly on Arab TV stations from Syria to Qatar

— has enraged the Arab street and even has some relative moderates describing Israel in the harshest of terms.

"Since 1994 we are speaking about peace, and then Israel destroys buildings on top of civilians," said Faisal Al-Rfouh, a vice dean at the University of Jordan and the country's former minister of culture. Now, he said, "How can I stand in front of my students and talk about peace? They say, 'This is your peace!'"

If Israel can be beaten, however, then the equation changes.

Perhaps Arab countries will seek not only to turn the clock back to 1967 — before Israel controlled the Golan Heights, West Bank and Gaza Strip — but to 1948, when Israel did not exist.

"The Arabs want the 1967 border for the moment. Listen to me: for the moment," Soudi said. "This will change."

The Arabs may sign peace treaties, he said, but "nobody will sign on to end the conflict. Nobody will sign something saying Israel will be Israel forever." ■

BEHIND THE HEADLINES

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Hani Hourani

Al-Urdun Al-Jadid research center

NEWS IN BRIEF

WORLD

Annans office chides Iran on Holocaust cartoons

Kofi Annan's office chided Iranian officials for an exhibit of cartoons questioning the Holocaust.

Commenting on the Holocaust exhibit, Annan's spokesman, Stephane Dujarric, told JTA that the U.N. secretary-general has made clear in past conversations with Iranian officials that while he supports free speech, "people need to exercise that right responsibly and not use it as a pretext for incitement, hatred or for insulting beliefs of any community."

A museum in Tehran opened the exhibit last week, in response to the publication in Denmark last year of cartoons that targeted Mohammed, the Muslim prophet. Exhibit organizers say they took their cue from Iran's president, Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, who has called the Holocaust a "myth." Annan is to visit Iran in coming weeks as part of a tour to follow up on the Lebanon-Israel cease-fire.

Polish Jewish museum gets grant

The proposed Museum of the History of Polish Jews received a grant from the Claims Conference. The museum, scheduled to open in 2008 in Warsaw, will use the \$299,000 grant for research for its Holocaust Gallery.

The 6,458-square-foot gallery, one of the museum's permanent exhibitions, will focus on Jewish life in Nazi-era ghettos and explore the sensitive issue of Polish-Jewish relations during the war.

MIDDLE EAST

Report: Ex-Israeli army chief to join Likud

A former Israeli army chief of staff may join the Likud Party. Lt. Gen. Moshe Ya'alon would become a leading defense figure in the Likud, according to Israel Radio.

Katsav might face sexual-harassment charges

Israel's president faces possible sexual harassment charges.

On Monday, the police seized computers and documents from the President's Residence in Jerusalem, seeking possible evidence in the case. A former employee has claimed that Moshe Katsav coerced her into sexual relations. Katsav has denied any wrongdoing.

Special forces make Gaza arrests

Israeli special forces raided the Gaza Strip and arrested five suspects believed to have planned attacks against Israel. A team surrounded a Gaza City home where the suspects were believed to be hiding, reports said Tuesday. After a gunfight in which one suspect was injured, all five were captured and brought to Israel.

At least two of the men were identified as Hamas members. Such operations have been carried out only rarely since Israel withdrew from Gaza a year ago. Overnight Monday, soldiers shot and killed three Palestinians carrying large bags near the security fence that soldiers suspected might be filled with equipment for terrorist attacks.

Israeli minister warns on Iranian attack

Israel should prepare for a possible missile attack by Iran, an Israeli government minister warned. Iranian officials have vowed to attack Israel if Iran itself comes under attack, said former spymaster Rafi Eitan, and Israel therefore "must prepare the entire country for a missile attack."

Eitan, who made the comments Tuesday on Israel Radio, alluded to the international dispute with Iran over its refusal to stop enriching uranium.

Report: Abbas won't halt Palestinian rockets

Mahmoud Abbas reportedly canceled plans to send security forces to halt rocket attacks into Israel from the Gaza Strip.

The Palestinian Authority president called off the plan after armed groups, including those from his own Fatah movement, threatened to attack P.A. policemen and security officers if they're sent in to stop the rocket attacks, the Jerusalem Post reported Tuesday.

Israel reforestation efforts launched

A tree was planted this week outside Kiryat Shmona, symbolizing reforestation efforts after the war with Hezbollah.

The tree launches a Jewish National Fund effort to repair the ecological impact of the war, which is believed to have damaged more than 20 percent of the forests in northern Israel.

NORTH AMERICA

Who leaked the leak case?

The judge in the classified information case against two former pro-Israel lobbyists ordered an investigation into the leak of the investigation two years ago.

Judge T.S. Ellis III last week ordered the Justice Department "to conduct an investigation into the identity of any government employee responsible for the August 2004 disclosure to CBS News of information related to the investigation of the defendants/whether the investigation relied on information collected pursuant to FISA," the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act.

FISA is the highly secretive process through which the government obtains wiretaps.

Television cameras were positioned outside the headquarters of the American Israel Public Affairs Committee prior to the Aug. 27, 2004, FBI raid on the offices of Steve Rosen, AIPAC's former foreign policy boss, and Keith Weissman, its former Iran analyst.

CBS News reported at the time that the case involved wiretaps. Rosen and Weissman have been charged with obtaining classified information from government leakers.

Lawsuit filed in JCC shooting

Families of the victims of the 1999 JCC shooting in Los Angeles are suing the state of Washington for allegedly failing to supervise the man who committed the crime.

The \$15 million lawsuit filed last Friday says the state's Department of Corrections failed to adequately monitor Buford Furrow Jr., an ex-convict on probation from a Washington state jail.

On Aug. 10, 1999, Furrow burst into the North Valley Jewish Community Center and opened fire.

He wounded two small boys, a teenager and an adult receptionist, and later killed a Filipino-American letter carrier nearby.

Furrow is serving a life sentence without possibility of parole.

Connecticut's Lamont dines with Peres

Ned Lamont, Connecticut's Democratic candidate for U.S. Senate, dined with Shimon Peres.

Lamont, who narrowly defeated Sen. Joe Lieberman in an Aug. 8 primary, attended a small, private dinner with the Israeli deputy prime minister hosted last Friday in New York City by a mutual friend.

The two talked about the situation in the Middle East and options for moving forward, Tom Swan, Lamont's campaign manager, told The Associated Press.

"I know that Ned was trying to get Peres' perception on the current state of affairs in the Middle East and the appropriate role for a senator to play," Swan said.