

IN THE NEWS
Kofi Annan: Israel violating cease-fire

Kofi Annan said Israel is responsible for most violations of the cease-fire that ended the Israel-Hezbollah war.

The U.N. secretary-general made his comments Tuesday in Israel after meeting with Defense Minister Amir Peretz.

After the meeting, Peretz said he hoped Israel would soon be able to lift its blockade of Lebanon.

Annan, who is on a tour of the Mideast, also met with the families of Israeli soldiers kidnapped by Hezbollah.

Israel kills two West Bank gunmen

Israeli troops killed two Palestinian terrorists in the West Bank.

The two Al-Aksha Brigade members were slain during a shootout Tuesday in Balata, near the city of Nablus.

Two members of Israel's paramilitary police were wounded in the clash.

The Palestinians were long wanted by Israel for planning suicide bombings. In the Gaza Strip, an Israeli airstrike wounded eight Palestinians.

Group sanctioned for alleged terror support

The U.S. Treasury Department froze the assets of an organization that allegedly funnels money to Hezbollah.

As a result of this week's action against the Islamic Resistance Support Organization, any of the group's assets found in the United States must be frozen and Americans are prohibited from giving money to the group.

The Treasury Department said Tuesday that the group solicits money to equip Hezbollah fighters and purchase rockets.

Reminder:

Because of Labor Day, the JTA World Report will not be published Monday, Sept. 4.

WORLD REPORT

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Authors of 'Israel Lobby' paper only add to skepticism in DC talk

By RON KAMPEAS

WASHINGTON (JTA)—The "Israel Lobby, The Sequel," is officially on the road, and it's forcing the Jewish community to reassess the two professors peddling its story of Washington in the grip of nefarious pro-Israel lobbyists.

In an address Monday in Washington hosted by the Council on American-Islamic Relations, Stephen Walt and John Mearsheimer expanded their original thesis of an excessively influential Israel lobby by addressing the reaction to their March paper, "The Israel Lobby," and assessing its theories in the wake of the Lebanon war.

The result was clarity: There no longer is any doubt about what drove the two academics, critics of the original paper say.

"It'll be much easier now to deal with them and their arguments," said Abraham Foxman, national director of the Anti-Defamation League. "They're not academics, they're handmaidens of the Arab propaganda machine."

CAIR and Mearsheimer did not return requests for comment.

The most damning criticism of the original paper was that it made assertions unbacked by evidence. Yet instead of retreating from their critique, Mearsheimer and Walt seemed to revel in it.

Not only had Israel long planned its war this summer against Hezbollah in Lebanon, Mearsheimer claimed, but it did so with the connivance of the Bush administration.

"It now seems clear that Israel had been planning to strike at Hezbollah for months before the July 12 kidnapping" of two Israeli

soldiers "and that key Israelis had briefed the administration about their intentions," Mearsheimer said. "The available evidence indicates that the Bush administration enthusiastically endorsed Israel's plans for war in Lebanon."

No serious researcher has made this claim. New Yorker investigative journalist Seymour Hersh and others have reported on

Israeli contingency plans and how senior Israeli officials believed a confrontation was inevitable because of Hezbollah's missile buildup in southern Lebanon, but the argument that Israel was seeking a pretext to

attack — and that the U.S. "enthusiastically" endorsed it — seems to be Mearsheimer's alone.

Asked to present evidence, Mearsheimer cited articles quoting Israel's "understandable" fears of a missile buildup, but failed to cite evidence of a search for a pretext with U.S. collusion.

Mearsheimer also said the American Israel Public Affairs Committee was the "driving force" behind efforts in Congress to remove language from pro-Israel war resolutions that called on all sides to preserve civilian life.

In fact, JTA has established that the initiative was purely Republican and had nothing to do with AIPAC. Some pro-Israel lobbyists told JTA they found the partisan dustup on the issue distasteful.

The appearance at an event hosted by CAIR, a group that calls for cuts in U.S. funding to Israel and in the past has been accused of excusing Arab terrorism, was enough for some to underscore the lack of

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**FOCUS
ON
ISSUES**

■ *The authors of the controversial "Israel lobby" paper are taking their show on the road*

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seriousness of men once better known as leading advocates of "realist" foreign policy — the school that argues that nations pursue power, not ideals, in their foreign dealings.

"They've crossed the line from the academy to advocacy by adopting the Arab-Muslim narrative," said Eric Rozenman, Washington director for the Committee for Accuracy in Middle East Reporting in America, the first group to deconstruct the "Israel Lobby" paper. "This shows how far from academic moorings they've drifted."

But that doesn't mean they should be ignored, said Foxman, who noted that the professors had speaking engagements planned on the topic.

Others worried that confronting the duo reinforced their false assertion that the pro-Israel lobby is a monolith.

"They talk as if there is no IPF, no organizations that support Israel by supporting peace and negotiations," said M.J. Rosenberg, policy director of the Israel Policy Forum, a group that advocates for aggressive U.S. promotion of peace negotiations. "So when there is a monolithic response to them, it confirms a cabal when there is no cabal."

Instead of addressing accusations of sloppiness advanced by New York Review of Books critic Michael Massing and others, Walt said the duo's credentials should speak for themselves. Mearsheimer teaches at the University of Chicago, Walt at Harvard's Kennedy School of Government.

"John and I have between us written six books and countless articles," Walt said. "No one has ever said before that our work was sloppy. Is it credible to think that the two of us would tackle a third-rail issue like this one and suddenly decide to be careless and cavalier in what we did?"

Walt repeated, without qualification, the paper's most controversial thesis: that the Israel lobby was critical in leading the United States into the Iraq war.

"If the lobby were less influential, the United States would have been much less likely to have invaded Iraq in 2003," he said. "This war was conceived by neoconservatives — many of them connected in the lobby — encouraged by many Israeli leaders and endorsed openly by groups like AIPAC."

In fact, AIPAC never openly endorsed the war. It was reported at the time that its Hill lobbyists were friendly to the invasion, but only as an inevitable quid pro quo to a Bush administration that was unprecedentedly friendly to Israel and in return expected its friends to back a war it was determined to undertake.

The vast majority of Jewish groups refrained from endorsing the war, fearing precisely the backlash manifested in the Walt-Mearsheimer argument that American treasure and blood were spent for Israel. Subsequently, polls showed U.S. Jews outpaced non-Jews in opposing the war, and in the past year major U.S. Jewish groups have joined calls for a phased ending to the occupation of Iraq.

That would seem to at least raise questions about why the two professors were

determined to attach the war to Jews. They deflect claims of anti-Semitism by saying their definition of the lobby is "loose" and excludes some Jewish groups, while including many non-Jews, neo-conservatives and evangelical Christians.

Yet that looseness means their definition of "the lobby" shifts when it's convenient. So, in arguing for the lobby's role in Iraq, Walt ignored Jewish groups' refusal to endorse the war and instead cited Paul Wolfowitz and Douglas Feith,

both former undersecretaries of defense who advocated for war — and who are Jewish.

"I think they were critical members in driving the case for war, more so than Secretary of Defense Rumsfeld," Walt said when asked why he mentioned Wolfowitz and Feith but ignored their non-Jewish boss, Donald Rumsfeld. He did not cite evidence to support the suggestion that Rumsfeld was less enthusiastic than his Jewish deputies.

Earlier, Walt alluded to another reason for the assertion: There's nothing wrong, he said, "for others to point out these individuals do have attachments that shape how they think about the Middle East and how they think about American policy in that region."

The word "attachments" raised red flags for Dana Milbank, a Washington Post political columnist who excoriated the two on Tuesday.

"Attachments" sounds better than "dual loyalties," Milbank wrote, adding: "This line of argument could be considered a precarious one for two blue-eyed men with Germanic surnames."

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Groups praise FDA on contraception

WASHINGTON (JTA) — Two Jewish groups praised the U.S. Food and Drug Administration for approving emergency contraception.

The National Council of Jewish Women and the Religious Action Center of Reform Judaism both praised last week's

move by the FDA, which makes Plan B contraception available over-the-counter to women 18 years and older. But the Reform movement said the delay in approval showed "the dangerous consequences of the politicization of science." NCJW criticized the decision's age requirement.

Jewish, Israeli leaders talk security

By DINA KRAFT

JERUSALEM (JTA) — From Caracas to Stockholm, Jewish communities around the world fear they increasingly are becoming targets of anti-Israel and anti-Semitic hostility in the wake of Israel's war this summer with Hezbollah.

"Jewish communities are now feeling more insecure," said Rabbi Israel Singer, chairman of the World Jewish Congress' Policy Council. "The situation in the Middle East is not just Israel's problem."

The congress brought its leadership to Jerusalem this week to confer with top Israeli officials about protecting vulnerable Jewish communities abroad. The smaller and more isolated communities feel most vulnerable, including those in Latin America and parts of Europe.

Much of the world media portrayed Israel as the aggressor in the recent war, although Hezbollah launched the violence with a deadly and unprovoked crossborder raid. Anger over the destruction produced by Israeli airstrikes in some cases is being channeled into anti-Semitic rhetoric and violence, Jewish leaders said.

"It's hardly a new problem that Jewish communities have found themselves being criticized, attacked or even under threat as a result of wars in the Middle East involving Israel," but it's much worse today than in the past, said Robert Wistrich, director of the Vidal Sassoon International Center for the Study of Anti-Semitism at Hebrew University.

"Today there is a much more widespread antipathy and even revulsion in many mainstream public opinion circles, in Western countries as well, toward Israel that is more intense than it was 25 years ago," said Wistrich, a professor of European history.

The WJC delegation met with senior Israeli officials, including Prime Minister Ehud Olmert; Defense Minister Amir Peretz; Maj.-Gen. Benny Gantz, the head of Israel's ground forces; and members of the Mossad and Israel's intelligence community.

Together they tried to strategize on how best to protect Diaspora communities and how Israel might improve its image abroad.

The July 28 shooting attack at the Jewish Federation of Greater Seattle by a Muslim American gunman, in which one person was killed and five others wounded,

is cited as the most violent attack abroad that may have been connected to the war.

"People feel they have a legitimate platform, that it's okay to act out," said Abe Foxman, national director of the Anti-Defamation League, who was also in Jerusalem this week.

He said some of the anti-war demonstrations around the world had "heavy elements of anti-Semitism," where it was deemed "legitimate to carry placards that were crudely anti-Semitic."

Foxman said ADL offices had received an upsurge of requests from Jewish communities seeking guidance on how to boost security.

Jack Terpins, president of the Latin American Jewish Congress, said he has been in close touch with the Arab community in his home country of Brazil to quiet tensions. Much of that community is of Lebanese descent.

In a small town outside Sao Paulo, a Molotov cocktail recently was thrown outside a synagogue and graffiti with the words "Jews Go Home" was scrawled on the wall, he said.

Turpin said there also have been various anti-war demonstrations in Brazil that excoriated not just Israel but Jews.

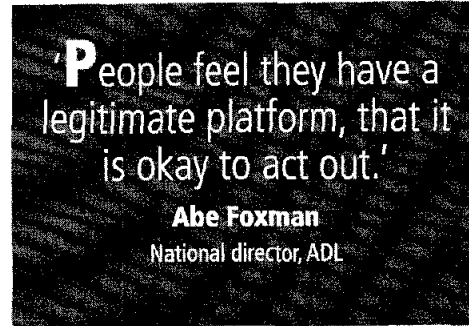
Compounding fears in Latin America were recent comments by Venezuelan President Hugo Chavez calling Israel's attacks in Lebanon "genocide" and comparing Israeli actions to those of Hitler.

Chavez's comments came after he assured Singer at a meeting last month that

he would help protect Venezuela's Jewish community.

Alexander Mashkevich, president of the Euro-Asian Jewish Congress, blamed the media for fomenting anti-Israel and anti-Jewish sentiment.

"Anti-Semitism is growing and we have felt it grow especially now, during the last war, and the main reason is the media. All the television channels gave information about Lebanon and the killing of civilians there," he said, while very little attention



was paid to Israelis suffering Hezbollah rocket attacks.

"Thank God in our region there have been no attacks and no concrete aggression," he said. "It's more a feeling and a general atmosphere" of hostility.

In Europe, there have been scattered anti-Semitic incidents since the war began, said Serge Cwajgenbaum, secretary-general of the European Jewish Congress.

But Wistrich suggested that anti-Semitic incidents were on the rise in Europe, pointing to a study that showed a dramatic increase in anti-Semitic incidents in Britain following the outbreak of the war July 12.

Wistrich was critical of European Jewish leaders, saying many weren't vocal enough in their defense of Israel during the war. He also criticized European Jews who tried to distance themselves from Israel by taking out newspaper ads condemning the Jewish state.

Neither approach works in the long term to stem anti-Jewish sentiment, he said.

Russian Jews help Russian Israelis

MOSCOW (JTA) — A Russian Jewish group is distributing donations among Russian-speaking families in Israel affected by the recent war against Hezbollah. The money was raised by members of the Jewish community in Russia.

Some 27 families of Russian Israelis in Carmiel, Haifa, Nahariya and other towns in northern Israel will share the \$7,000, the Moscow office of the World Congress

of Russian Jewry said. Among those who received their check are foster parents of Alex Asaf, 23, a staff sergeant of the Israel Defense Forces and a survivor of the Chernobyl nuclear disaster in Ukraine who was killed in Lebanon on Aug. 23.

The group says much of the money came from readers of a Russian Jewish weekly newspaper in small donations equivalent to a few dollars each.

NEWS IN BRIEF

WORLD

Israelis beaten in Serbia

Two Israelis were beaten by a group of skinheads at a Belgrade rock festival.

Jariv Avram, 27, and Bojana Petkovic, 23, were attacked Sunday in a downtown park by several men wearing Nazi symbols, police said. Avram suffered serious head injuries and had to go to the hospital, while Petkovic was bruised, the two Israelis told Belgrade media.

"They were chanting 'Auschwitz, Auschwitz' and 'Go to Germany' as they attacked us," Avram was reported as saying. Local media reported that the two Israelis complained that the police were not helpful toward them.

The Serbian Jewish community issued a statement calling for the arrest of the attackers and noted that anti-Semitic incidents are increasing.

Poland marks ghetto liquidation

Poland marked the 62nd anniversary of the liquidation of the Lodz Ghetto.

More than 150 people took part in a commemorative march Tuesday in Lodz, according to the PAP Polish news agency. Israel's ambassador to Poland, David Peleg, Lodz Mayor Jerzy Kropiwnicki and the leader of the Jewish community in Lodz, Sycha Keller, participated in the ceremonies and prayer service marking the anniversary.

A plaque commemorating Jews from Berlin deported by Germans to the ghetto was unveiled.

Chabad dedicates new center in China

Chabad dedicated a new community center in China.

The Rohr Chabad Community Centre in Beijing, dedicated Sunday, includes a grade school, nursery school, kosher kitchen and mikvah.

MIDDLE EAST

Sharon's condition improves

Doctors reported improvement in the condition of the comatose Ariel Sharon after he was treated for pneumonia.

Israel's former prime minister was moved back to the rehabilitation unit of Tel Aviv's Sheba Medical Center on Tuesday after two weeks in intensive care.

Doctors reported a "noticeable improvement in his kidney function and the pneumonia in his lungs." Sharon suffered a major stroke Jan. 4 and is not expected to recover.

Police want gay march rescheduled

Israeli police will not allow a rescheduled gay pride march to take place Sept. 21, just before Rosh Hashanah.

Police officials said they would allow the march to take place on another date, the Jerusalem Post reported.

The march was rescheduled for Sept. 21 after the Aug. 10 parade was canceled because of the Israeli-Hezbollah war.

NORTH AMERICA

Report: Iranian schools teach hate

Iranian schools teach hatred of Christians, Jews and the West, according to a new study.

The analysis by researchers with the Center for Monitoring Peace in the Middle East found examples of anti-Western hatred and anti-Semitism in many of 115 textbooks used in grades 1 to 12.

In one third-grade textbook, inhabitants of a clean town chase

away a repugnant figure wearing a Star of David.

Full results of the analysis, conducted by the center and the American Jewish Committee, are scheduled to be released later this year.

Survey: 'Divine birthright' believers favor Israel

Americans who believe God gave Israel to the Jewish people are much likelier to sympathize with the Jewish state, a survey found.

Of respondents who said they believe Israel was a divine birthright for the Jews, 63 percent said they sympathize more with Israel than the Palestinians, and just 4 percent sympathize more with the Palestinians, a Pew Forum survey found.

Those who rejected that belief favored Israel by 36 percent, to 18 percent for the Palestinians.

The survey found that 42 percent of Americans see Israel as the Jewish birthright. Overall sympathy for Israel increased from July to August, the period of Israel's war against Hezbollah in Lebanon.

The July survey registered 44 percent sympathy for Israel, against 9 percent for the Palestinians; a month later, sympathy for Israel was at 52 percent, against 11 percent for the Palestinians.

The survey of 2,003 adults was taken in July and has a margin of error of between 2.5 and 3.5 percentage points.

Jewish leader meets Pakistani leader

The president of the American Jewish Congress met recently with Pakistan's president.

The meeting between Jack Rosen and Pervez Musharraf was their fifth in the past year and a half.

The ongoing meetings are a sign that moderate Muslims will continue to reach out to Israel and Jews, though the recent Israel-Hezbollah war harmed that process, Rosen told The Associated Press. Pakistan has no diplomatic relations with Israel.

Israeli Muslims' fertility down

Israel's fertility rate fell by 4 percent last year, largely due to a decline in the country's Muslim community.

The number of children an Israeli woman is expected to bear fell to 2.84 in 2005 from 2.95 in 2003, Globes reported, citing Israel's Central Bureau of Statistics. The Muslim fertility rate dropped by 5.6 percent last year.

In 2005, 143,913 children were born, 70 percent of them to Jewish women.

Palestinians buoyed by Hezbollah

Palestinian terrorists have been buoyed by Hezbollah's fight against Israel, the head of Israel's Shin Bet security service said.

Yuval Diskin told the Knesset's Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee on Tuesday that Israel has detected increased efforts on the part of armed factions in the Gaza Strip to adopt tactics used by Hezbollah during the recent Lebanon war.

Sinai advisory reissued

Israel reissued a warning to its citizens not to travel to the Sinai Peninsula.

The government's Counter-Terrorism Unit, which has had a top-priority alert in place for months over possible attacks in Egypt's Sinai and Red Sea resorts, put out statements Tuesday that the threat level was considered higher than ever. No further details were given.

Addressing the Knesset Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee, Shin Bet chief Yuval Diskin said the area was fast becoming a nerve-center of arms smuggling and terrorism, and predicted that if the problem is not addressed, the desert peninsula would be a "strategic threat" to Israel within three to five years.