

## Press Review N° 142 - By Gilberte Jacaret

April 29 - Sirens wail for two minutes at 11 a.m. Tuesday morning, as Remembrance Day ceremonies open throughout the country.

Haaretz, March 27 - Memorial Day / 24,293 fallen soldiers, terror victims since Israel was born, By Anshel Pfeffer and Dana Weiler-Polak - Memorial Day events begin this afternoon with a ceremony at the Ammunition Hill battlefield in Jerusalem in the presence of Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu. Later in the day, President Shimon Peres will light a memorial flame at the Western Wall plaza.

According to the Defense Ministry, 133 soldiers and civilians died during the past year either in the course of military service or as civilian casualties of hostile activity.

These deaths include the 10 soldiers who were killed during Operation Cast Lead in the Gaza Strip, two members of a helicopter crew who crashed in the Jezreel Valley and a Bedouin tracker who was killed two months ago by a Palestinian explosive charge along the Gaza border fence.

Most of the 133 whose names are being added to the memorial rolls this year died in traffic or work accidents, while some of the others were disabled veterans whose disabilities contributed to their deaths.

The total number of those who have been remembered by this Memorial Day is 22,570. The dead who are counted date from 1860, when Jews first settled outside the walls of the Old City of Jerusalem.

Aside from members of the Israel Defense Forces, the memorial rolls include members of the Shin Bet security service, the Mossad intelligence service, the Israel Police and the Israel Prisons Service, the pre-state Jewish underground and the Jewish Brigade, which served alongside British forces in World War II. Last month two traffic policemen were killed in the line of duty in a terrorist attack in Jordan Valley.

According to the National Insurance Institute, 17 civilians were killed in the past year in terrorist attacks, bringing to 1,723 the number of civilians killed in hostile acts since the founding of the state. Three civilians lost their lives in rocket attacks in the course of Operation Cast Lead.

most optimistic believe that Israel will quickly become an exporter of gas, which ensure a comfortable income in foreign currencies - Two successive gas discoveries have given Israel the prospect of becoming a major producer gas exporter. A regional deposit "Tamar", off Haifa, is estimated at 140 billion cubic meters, and "Dalit" also in the open sea, has, approximately, 15 billion cubic meters. These new submarines sources are three times larger than the one already in operation off the coast of Ashdod.

The economic potential of these deposits exceeds 30 billion dollars. In total, this would be an annual production of 4 billion cubic meters of gas per year for several decades. It will satisfy domestic consumption and production of electricity, and perhaps also, it will be exported.

European Jewish Press, April 22 - Jewish human rights group condemns 'flawed' Durban II declaration - Geneva (EJP)---Human rights Jewish organization B'nai B'rith International (BBI) is 'highly disappointed but not surprised,' that more than 100 nations attending the Durban II Racism Conference in Geneva overwhelmingly voted to approve a final declaration 'that is flawed and offensive.'

Jerusalem Post, April 29 - PA court: Death to man who sold land to Jews - In the first case of its kind, a Palestinian Authority "military court" on Tuesday sentenced a Palestinian man to death by hanging after finding him guilty of selling land to Jews.

The verdict came shortly after the PA's chief Islamic judge, Sheikh Tayseer Tamimi, issued yet another fatwa (religious decree) banning Muslims from selling land or houses to Jews.

The death sentence is seen as an attempt by the PA leadership in Ramallah to deter Palestinians from conducting real estate transactions with Jews. It follows reports according to which Jewish individuals and organizations recently bought land and houses from Arabs in Jerusalem and some areas in the West Bank.

Tel Aviv - (EJP) - Anti-Semitism rose in major Western countries throughout 2008, particularly in Germany, Switzerland and Canada, and spiked dramatically in early 2009, according to a survey - The new survey findings regarding the state of anti-Semitism worldwide were released this week jointly by the European Jewish Congress and the Stephen Roth Institute for the Study of Contemporary Anti-Semitism and Racism at Tel Aviv University, while the Durban II anti-racism conference convened in Geneva and Jews around the world commemorated Holocaust Memorial Day.

The survey also found that without any outside triggers, anti-Semitism remained at high levels even before the onset of the economic crisis or the Israel operation in Gaza.

“What’s more, despite efforts at Holocaust education around the world, anti-Semitic perceptions prevailed and the exploitation of Holocaust metaphors and symbols of the Nazi era rose steadily,” the European Jewish Congress said. .

The survey also found that synagogues, cemeteries and Holocaust memorials were desecrated in 2008 on a weekly, sometimes even daily basis in many European countries.

After dozens of violent incidents, Jewish children increasingly fear being attacked on their way to school or synagogue and need special protection in most European capitals, the survey shows.

The survey's authors estimate that there were close to 1,000 manifestations of all types of anti-Semitism throughout the world in January 2009. The start of the Israeli operation in Gaza on December brought into 2009 a wave of anti-Semitic manifestations throughout the world, the report said.

The economic crisis that began in the summer also triggered anti-Jewish reactions, most notably in Eastern Europe and the Arab world.

“The survey results underscore the dangers of rising global anti-Semitism and the cynical use of Jews and the Jewish State as convenient scapegoats for the world’s ills,” commented Moshe Kantor, president of the European Jewish Congress, an umbrella organization for Jewish communities in Europe.

He added: “The Durban II conference is a snapshot of the world at large. It is taking place against the backdrop of a global rise in anti-Semitism fueled by the economic crisis. The hate expressed towards Israel and the Jewish people is stoking the embers of long-simmering anti-Semitic canards and Jewish blood libel.”

New York Herald Tribune, April 27, 2009 - U.S. Declares Public Health Emergency Over Swine Flu - Responding to what some health officials feared could be the leading edge of a global pandemic emerging from Mexico, American health officials declared a public health emergency on Sunday as 20 cases of swine flu were confirmed in this country, including eight in New York City.

Other nations imposed travel bans or made plans to quarantine air travelers as confirmed cases also appeared in Mexico and Canada and suspect cases emerged elsewhere.

Top global flu experts struggled to predict how dangerous the new A (H1N1) swine flu strain would be as it became clear that they had too little information about Mexico's outbreak — in particular how many cases had occurred in what is thought to be a month before the outbreak was detected, and whether the virus was mutating to be more lethal, or less.

Euronews, April 26 - A deadly new flu virus is spreading beyond Mexico, sparking fears of a global flu pandemic - A quarter of the 81 people who have died here have been confirmed as victims of the outbreak, with more than 1300 others infected.

21 cases have now been confirmed across the United States.

Canada has also now confirmed four cases.

Britain, France, Spain and New Zealand have also reported possible cases among people who have recently visited Mexico.

The new flu strain, a mixture of various swine, bird and human viruses, poses the biggest risk of a large-scale pandemic since avian flu surfaced in 1997, killing several hundred people

#### ITALIAN CRUISE SHIP FIGHTS OFF PIRATES.

Euronews, April 26 - An Italian cruise ship has fought off an attack by pirates off the east African coast - The crew used pistols and a firehose against pirates who tried to board the MSC Melody, which can carry up to 1500 passengers and crew.

The ship was slightly damaged in the exchange of fire.

The incident happened 320 kilometres north of the Seychelles, and about 960 kilometres off the Somalia coast.

Meanwhile, pirates have freed a Yemeni-owned tanker and its 15 crew seized in early January. It is reported a ransom was paid.

Another ship was released on Saturday after a ransom reportedly worth 1.4 million euros was paid.

#### IRAN AND THE MIDDLE EAST

On April 8, Egypt announced it had uncovered a Hezbollah cell operating inside its borders., by Abdel Monem Said Aly - This startling pronouncement offers a rare insight into the way Iran and its proxies are manipulating Middle East politics.

According to Egyptian authorities, the cell was tasked with planning attacks against tourist sites in Sinai, conducting surveillance on strategic targets including the Suez Canal, and funneling arms and money to Hamas. Hezbollah's leader, Hassan Nasrallah, has admitted that the ringleader of the cell was indeed a member of his organization to provide "logistical support to help the Palestinian brothers in transporting ammunition and individuals."

These latest actions by an emboldened Hezbollah have been spurred on by Iran, which is seeking to further its quest for power in the Arab Middle East. In the past six months, there have been irrefutable signs of Iran's determined effort to sabotage Egypt's attempts at regional stability. At Tehran's instigation, Hamas rejected the renewal of the six-month, Egypt-brokered cease-fire last summer between it and Israel. This rejection led to the Gaza war in December. At the height of that war, Mr. Nasrallah called on the people of Egypt and its army to march on the city of Rafah to open the border to Gaza by force, a highly inflammatory appeal aimed at causing insurrection.

After the war ended, Egypt resumed its efforts to reach a long-term cease-fire. Iran pressured the Hamas leadership to resist. Cairo's ongoing effort to build a Palestinian unity government, by bringing together Fatah and Hamas, has also been undermined by intense Iranian pressure on Hamas.

Tehran sees Egypt as its greatest rival in the region, and the most formidable Arab bulwark opposing its influence. It is in this context that Hezbollah actions in Egypt should be assessed. Acting as a front for Iranian objectives, Hezbollah is tasked with distracting Egypt from the diplomatic process that will hopefully lead one day to a two-state solution in the Palestine-Israel conflict....

Mr. Aly is director of the Al Ahram Center for Political and Strategic Studies in Cairo.

## PAKISTAN

Euronews, March 30 - Pakistani security forces have orders to "shoot on sight" after violent clashes between ethnic groups in Karachi left at least 24 people dead - The army says the situation in the country's financial capital is now under control but that the city remains very tense.

The unrest erupted after tensions between Mohajirs and Pashtuns came to a head.

Analysts say the disturbances are linked to the wider conflict in the country between Islamists and the government.

Mohajirs, who dominate the city's administration, are said to be suspicious of Pashtuns who, they believe, have strong Islamist sympathies.

24 people are known to have been killed in the violence but local media say the death toll may be higher than 30.

Dozens of people were injured in the clashes.

The bloodshed is likely to heighten concerns in the international community that Pakistan is slipping deeper into instability.

Haaretz, March 29 - Could the Taliban get the bomb before Iran does? - Just when you thought you knew the unthinkable - now there's this:

"If the worst, the unthinkable, were to happen, and this advancing Taliban encouraged and supported by Al Qaeda and other extremists were to essentially topple the government for failure to beat them back," Hillary Clinton said at the weekend, "then they would have the keys to the nuclear arsenal of Pakistan."

The Sunni organization's stunning momentum of late in taking over key territory in Pakistan raises the question, could the Taliban have a bomb before Tehran does?

The nightmare scenario of a nuclear Taliban was much in evidence in a Sunday editorial in The New York Times regarding the Pakistani military.

"And - most frightening of all - if the army cannot or will not defend its own territory against the militants, how can anyone be sure it will protect Pakistan's 60 or so nuclear weapons?" the Times asked.

Clinton was right, the Times continued, when she warned last week that Pakistan was 'abdicating to the Taliban.'"

Here in Israel - in the eerie interregnum between air raid sirens last week marking the memorial day for victims of the Holocaust and air raid sirens this week marking the memorial day for fallen soldiers and victims of terrorism - the specter of a atom-packing Taliban lends an unaccustomed measure of uncharted territory to the all-too-familiar domain of the unthinkable.

In fact, as heavily as the prospect of catastrophe weighs during this period, Israelis may take a measure of cold comfort in the extent to which the Taliban relates to the Jewish state.

It doesn't.

Perhaps alone of all radical Islamic movements, the Taliban has taken no interest in Israel. It makes no pronouncements, threatens no annihilation, it has launched no campaigns to organize in the West Bank and Gaza.

Were they to take over Pakistan, they would lack delivery systems capable of reaching Israel, even if for some reason they decided on such a course.

Nonetheless, for some reason that goes beyond reason, I've decided to clean out our bomb shelter anyway. Perhaps because a Taliban bomb might convince Tehran to redouble its own long-delayed efforts at achieving a nuclear capability. Or because a bomb in Pakistan could be moved to a neighboring country with delivery capabilities.

Or because a hard-line coalition legislator has suggested that the Taliban threat is one of the best reasons yet to unilaterally and pre-emptively bomb Iran. "If we take this action," Yaakov Katz of the far-right National Union party was quoted as saying on Sunday, "the U.S. is likely to act the same way against the rising terror threat in Islamabad, Pakistan."

Or maybe it's because, at a time of serial unthinkabilities, a prepared shelter is just one less thing to have to think about.