

World Beat

Israel Introduces New Drone

TEL AVIV (JTA) — Israel Aircraft Industries has delivered to the Israeli air force the first of its new series of unmanned pilotless aircraft, or drones.

The state-of-the-art drone, named "Searcher," is about 13 feet long and has a 23-foot wingspan. It is an updated version of a series of highly successful Israeli-designed pilotless aircraft in use with the Israeli air force and other nations' militaries.

The Searcher can stay aloft for far longer periods than its predecessors and fly greater distances. It can also carry a larger payload than other drones.

Zimbabwe Jews Upset Over Remark

NEW YORK (JTA) — Leaders of the Jewish community of Zimbabwe wrote to President Robert Mugabe, protesting a "derogatory statement about Jews" he is reported to have made.

Muriel Rosin, president of the Central African Jewish Board of Deputies, the World Jewish Congress national affiliate in Zimbabwe, said the letter asked for clarification from Mugabe and requested a meeting with him.

According to published reports, Mugabe's remarks were made during a visit to peasant

farming regions in western Zimbabwe. The peasants apparently complained that white ranchers were refusing to allow their livestock to graze on private lands, despite drought conditions in the area.

"Commercial farmers are hard-hearted people—you would think they were Jews," local newspapers quoted Mugabe as saying.

Rosin told the WJC that the Jewish community, estimated at under 1,200, was "horrified and distressed" by the reported remark.

Abridged Version of 'Mein Kampf' Published in Hebrew for Students

TEL AVIV (JTA) — An abridged version of Adolf Hitler's "Mein Kampf" has been translated into Hebrew and published by Akademon, Hebrew University's student press, over the protests of right-wing and nationalistic circles.

According to Moshe Zimmermann, who teaches German history at the university and was involved in the project, the 130-page annotated booklet containing selected chapters from the original 700-page book is largely aimed at students of German history.

Hitler wrote "Mein Kampf," which spells out his anti-Semitic philosophy and strategy for world control, while serving an

11-month term in a Bavarian prison in 1924-25 for an attempted coup.

"Anybody studying history has to know the facts. As long as not everybody in Israel can study German in secondary schools, we have to provide translations," Zimmerman said.

Four hundred copies of the booklet have been published. "We don't expect this to be a best seller," he added.

Translator Dan Yaron has been working on the project for several years, but had not been able to get it published until now.

Reports of the publication were denounced by right-wing and nationalist leaders, claiming that Hitler's standard textbook should never have been translated and published in Israel.

But academics replied that, however hateful the work may be, not all history students know German and they should not be deprived of major source material or be forced to depend on translations in other languages.

Dwarfs with Laron Ailment Can Now be Cured with Drug

TEL AVIV (JTA) — Hundreds of dwarfs suffering from an ailment named after Tel Aviv University professor Zvi Laron, can be cured now with a hormone produced in Japan and tested by Laron in Israel.

Laron, Marsh Professor of Endocrinology at Tel Aviv, reported his findings following two years of tests. He said the drug, IGF-1, enabled children suffering from Laron type dwarfism, or LTD, to grow by 3 to 5 inches. All the children who received IGF-1 grew and Laron has concluded that the disease is finally curable. Some 250 people are known to be suffering from Laron type dwarfism, and 41 of them are in Israel.

LTD was first diagnosed among Jews of Middle Eastern origin and later among Jews and non-Jews in other Middle Eastern and Mediterranean countries, as well as descendants of migrants from those countries. The disease is characterized by dwarfism, obesity, small hands, feet and faces. The liver fails to produce the hormone that causes growth and people with LTD reach a height of 3 to 4 feet.

German Neo-Nazis Number 40,000

BONN (JTA) — A report prepared by the German government puts the number of individuals organized in neo-Nazi groups in Germany at 40,000 and warns against an increased tendency by right-wing extremists to resort to violence.

The report, written in answer to a parliamentary question of the opposition Social Democratic Party, concludes that the frequent targets of right-wing violence are asylum-seekers, foreigners from Eastern European countries, blacks, left-wing activists, gays, prostitutes and Soviet soldiers.

No mention was made of Jews as a target.

Based on data gathered by the internal security service affiliated with the German Interior Ministry, the report stated that neo-Nazis in this country are organized into 76 groups. Some 4,200 militant skinheads have been counted.

The German government has meanwhile made available 20 million marks—some \$13.5 million—for a special campaign to explain the dangers of right-wing extremism and to warn against aggression and violence, the report said.

Vandals Desecrate Trier Cemetery

BONN (JTA) — Vandals desecrated the old Jewish cemetery of Trier, a city in western Germany near the Luxembourg border.

As many as 40 gravestones were overturned, more than half of them destroyed.

Police believe several adults must have been among the vandals, who climbed a 6-foot-6-inch wall surrounding the cemetery.

The Trier cemetery, which is well-known for its beauty and historical value, dates to 1620

and was in use until 1922. Among those buried there is Mordechai Halevi, who was a rabbi in Trier and the grandfather of Karl Marx.

David Levy Touted as Possible Candidate for Israeli Presidency

JERUSALEM (JTA) — Senior Likud activists have launched a campaign to nominate former Foreign Minister David Levy as the party's candidate for the presidency, once President Chaim Herzog concludes his term of office next year.

In an interesting twist, the group backing Levy is headed by Yisrael Katz, a former aide of Ariel Sharon, a political rival of Levy's. The group sent letters proposing the idea to members of Likud's central committee.

Levy himself has not officially reacted to the proposal, but the fact that heads of his camp, such as Yavneh Mayor Yehuda Brus, described Levy as the right candidate for the job, was interpreted as an indication that he would not say no.

According to the Levy lobby, he was the right person for the job because he symbolized a national consensus, as the man who can bridge communal gaps. Levy is Sephardi in a leadership circle dominated by Ashkenazim and is considered a member of Likud's more dovish camp.

Levy's supporters argue that their candidate could enjoy the support of Labor, the religious parties and even the Arab parties and Meretz. They recalled that Herzog, a member of Labor's more hawkish camp, was elected to office in 1983 thanks to the support of the right.

Another surprising candidacy that is reportedly being considered is that of Brig. Gen. (Res.) Nahman Shai, who is being proposed as Labor's candidate for mayor of Jerusalem, once Teddy Kollek retires. Shai won fame serving as army spokesman during the Persian Gulf War.

Kollek himself is not too happy with the idea. He said that although he held Shai in esteem, he believed that his candidacy should be considered only after Shai acquired several years of municipal experience. Kolleck's own candidate is Amos Mar-Haim, the present deputy mayor.

The Likud is considering running former Health Minister Ehud Olmert as its candidate for the mayoralty.

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