



# Anti-Semitic Incidents and Discourse in Europe During the Israel-Hezbollah War

Prepared by Ilan Moss

## Table of Contents

Preface.....	3
Introduction.....	4
<i>Conclusions and Definitions</i> .....	5
<i>“New Anti-Semitism”</i> .....	6
<i>“Anti-Semitic Political Discourse”</i> ...	7
<i>Treatment of the Conflict</i> .....	7
<i>Hezbollah and the EU Terror List</i> ....	8
<i>Contributors</i> .....	8
Austria.....	9
Belarus.....	11
Belgium.....	13
Bulgaria.....	15
Czech Republic.....	16
Denmark.....	18
Finland.....	19
France.....	20
Germany.....	23
Greece.....	26
Hungary.....	28
Ireland.....	29
Italy.....	30
Latvia, Lithuania, Netherlands.....	32
Norway.....	34
Poland.....	37
Portugal, Romania.....	39
Russia.....	40
Serbia.....	41
Slovakia, Spain.....	42
Sweden.....	44
Switzerland.....	45
Turkey.....	47
Ukraine.....	49
United Kingdom.....	50
International Organizations.....	53

Written, Compiled and Edited by Ilan Moss, European Jewish Congress  
 Additional Editing by Michael Whine, Community Security Trust and European Jewish Congress  
 Assistance by Myriam Glikerman, European Jewish Congress

© 2006 by European Jewish Congress, Paris

All rights reserved.

No part of the publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted in any form or by any means without prior written permission of the publisher.

Printed in Paris, France.

European Jewish Congress/Congrès Juif Européen

78, Avenue des Champs-Élysées

Paris F- 75008

Website : <http://www.eurojewcong.org>

Contact : [contact@eurojewcong.org](mailto:contact@eurojewcong.org)

## **Preface**

This report covers the months of July, August and a part of September 2006. It reflects a snapshot of the atmosphere that prevailed in Europe while Israel carried out a war against Hezbollah in Lebanon.

It appears that the number of anti-Semitic incidents rose during this period.

Many of our affiliated communities have voiced their concern with the attitude of the media during the conflict, which through its biased reporting presented strong images that did not distinguish between Lebanese civilian victims and militants of the terrorist group Hezbollah.

Subsequently newspaper articles, cartoons and some Islamic extremists in Europe compared Hezbollah with a resistance movement, and the Israeli army as “Nazis.”

Would it be too shocking to claim that the official statements of European political leaders calling on Israel to use restraint and qualifying its right to self-defence as “disproportionate” might have had an impact on the media and public opinion?

Serge Cwajgenbaum

Secretary General  
European Jewish Congress

## Introduction

The summer was a tense time for Europe's Jewish communities, as they struggled to digest the worrying news coming from the Middle East, yet remain vigilant against what many worried would be a marked upsurge in anti-Semitic attacks. At the same time, Jewish community organizations mobilized on a large scale to show their solidarity with Israel, conducting very public campaigns, including rallies, demonstrations, newspaper advertisements and appearances on print and televised media.

Memories were fresh from the second Palestine Intifada from 2000-2005, and many observers in and outside of Europe readily assumed that increased tensions in the Middle East would result in a "resurgence" of anti-Semitic attacks in Europe. As the abductions of Israel soldiers spiralled into eventual full conflict, reports began to leak from Jewish communities around the world of insults, attacks and aggressive public rhetoric against Israel and Jews.

On 28<sup>th</sup> July, Naveed Afzal Haq, an American man of Pakistani descent, forced himself past security at the Jewish Federation of Greater Seattle, and opened fire on staff members with two automatic handguns, killing one and wounding five. Security alerts had already been issued by Jewish communities world-wide before the murder, following reports that Hezbollah sleeper agents living abroad could have been activated, or might have escaped hidden in the exodus of Western citizens from Lebanon. Security was increased for Jewish institutions around the world.

As the war progressed into August, and finally terminated with the United Nations Security Council Resolution 1701 and August 14<sup>th</sup> ceasefire many Jewish organizations voiced their concern with what they found was an aggressively negative attitude vis-à-vis not only Israel, but Jews in general.

The Stephen Roth Institute of Contemporary Anti-Semitism and Racism at Tel-Aviv University announced in the middle of August that there had been a "significant rise in anti-Semitic incidents worldwide the past month."<sup>1</sup> Furthermore, Jewish community leaders, community protection services and watchdog organizations from some European countries – including Belgium, Germany, the Netherlands, Norway and the United Kingdom, made public announcements that the months of July and August had witnessed a worrying increase in anti-Semitic acts and general discourse.

In the 29 European countries analysed, this report shows that there was a general increase in anti-Semitism. Among those countries that reported no ascertainable rise in incidents and acts a general increase of anti-Semitism could be ascertained, either from neo-Nazi extremist groups or from Islamic elements. This report also highlights the real and present danger presented both by extremist groups, and the continuing presence of anti-Semitic discourse in Europe

---

<sup>1</sup> *Iran Update* – World Jewish Congress, August 2006

## Conclusions and Definitions

*This report provides a country-by-country accounting, received directly from Jewish community representative organizations. The study groups together the varied observations noted by Jewish communities over a short time period.*

Among the trends observed in this report:

1. Overall, the number of anti-Semitic incidents increased in the European Union.<sup>2</sup> See Austria, Belgium, France, Germany, Greece, Netherlands, Norway, Sweden Switzerland, Turkey, Ukraine, United Kingdom.
2. Some communities reported no increase during the war, yet many of these pointed to growing anti-Semitic or an anti-Israel discourse that occasionally veers towards anti-Semitism. See Belarus, Denmark, Finland, Italy and Poland.
3. Except for a few notable exceptions such as the Czech Republic and Denmark, most Jewish communities found that the media was generally one-sided in respect of the conflict, concentrating only on Lebanese casualties, and not showing the effects of the war in northern Israel. Most Jewish communities reported an “anti-Israeli” atmosphere, encouraged by biased media reporting, that featured discourse against local and international Jews.
4. “Political discourse” (see below) at times implicated Judaism in the war, and often compared Israel to Nazi Germany. See Greece, Netherlands, Norway, Sweden, Switzerland. Synagogues were targeted by graffiti or direct attacks in France, Germany, Ireland, Italy, Norway and Ukraine, sometimes after anti-Israel marches.
5. Extreme-right parties in Central and Eastern Europe were almost uniformly and conspicuously silent during the war, preferring neither to comment nor to organize any large actions. This holds for extreme-right parties that are in coalition governments in Slovakia and Poland. However, this does not mean these parties do not hold a political platform that is anti-Semitic, revisionist or racist.
6. Most extreme-right and far-left parties in Western Europe took an “anti-Israeli” stance, particularly in Austria, France, Greece, Germany, Italy and Sweden.
7. Jewish community representative organizations carried out public campaigns of support for Israel – in certain countries, this resulted in anti-Semitic backlash. See Austria, Germany, Finland, France, Netherlands, Norway and Switzerland.
8. “Anti-Israel” marches throughout Europe often featured outright support for Hezbollah, an anti-Semitic terror group.
9. The Internet provided a perfect medium for anti-Semitism, and Jewish communities tracked an increase in cyberhate on forums and chatrooms, including those belonging to mainstream newspapers.

---

<sup>2</sup> That is compared to statistics from previous months and the same time period in 2005.

10. In 2006, extreme-right populist and xenophobic parties continue to grow following elections in Austria, Belgium and Germany, adding to other recent electoral successes by extreme-rightists in Bulgaria, Poland and Slovakia.
11. **Importantly, the Lebanon war highlighted the increasing danger that European extremist elements – be they neo-Nazi, extreme-left or Islamic – pose to Europe’s democratic values, as well as to European Jews and other minorities. Even more worrisome, in many countries examined, extremist groups openly sided with Hezbollah, a terrorist organization that openly espouses virulently anti-Semitic views.**

**In the aftermath of the war, extremist plots to attack local Jews have apparently been uncovered in the Czech Republic and Norway.**

**The extremist threat documented in this report, and the massive increase in anti-Semitic discourse directed against Jewish representative organizations for their solidarity campaigns, shows the pressing need for increased European commitment to providing adequate security for their Jewish communities, as well as a need by the communities themselves to remain vigilant.**

The European Monitoring Centre on Racism and Xenophobia (EUMC) was established by the European Union to provide Member States and European institutions with data on racism, xenophobia and anti-Semitism in Europe. In its most recent report on anti-Semitism, covering the period 2001-2005, the EUMC notes that the data gleaned from its local focal points (which are tasked with providing information to the EUMC) points to “some linkage” between reported anti-Semitic incidents and the political situation in the Middle East.<sup>3</sup>

In this report, in many of the countries analysed, such a correlation is evident, notably in the UK, where the Jewish community tracked anti-Semitic incidents vis-à-vis the unfolding of events in the Middle East. This was also the case in Austria, Belgium, Germany, Greece, Netherlands and Norway, to name a few. The case of Turkey shows that the war created an outpouring of violent rhetoric from the growing “Islamist” movement.

#### *“New Anti-Semitism”*

International observers have recognized a “new anti-Semitism”, that has been primarily responsible for attacks on European Jews, at times replacing extreme-right violence. This “new form” is “characterized primarily by the vilification of Israel and perpetrated primarily by members of Europe’s Muslim population.”<sup>4</sup> Although it is not the goal of this report to draw such conclusions, it seems that Europeans of North African and Arab origin did carry out a large number of these acts in countries where there is such a population. Many of the demonstrations that featured Hezbollah symbols or propaganda or anti-Semitic discourse were attended primarily by Arab and Muslim protestors. On the other hand, neo-Nazis were responsible for such attacks in Central and Eastern Europe, where Muslim populations are much smaller.

---

<sup>3</sup> “Antisemitism – Summary overview of the situation in the European Union 2001-2005,” May 2006, European Monitoring Centre on Racism and Xenophobia, Vienna.

<sup>4</sup> Memorandum submitted by the European Monitoring Centre on Racism and Xenophobia, the All-Party Parliamentary Inquiry into Antisemitism, All-Party Group Against Antisemitism, September 2006.

### *“Anti-Semitic Political Discourse”*

This report also briefly examines the state of political and media discourse regarding Israel during the months of July and August, as the war was without doubt the event that received the most media coverage. The EUMC has promulgated a “Working Definition of Anti-Semitism” in order to support the collection of more specific and relevant data. For analysing the discourse observed in various European countries, this Working Definition is quite useful, in that it states that anti-Semitism can manifest itself in regards to the state of Israel if it includes “drawing comparisons of contemporary Israeli policy to that of the Nazis,” and “holding Jews collectively responsible for the actions of the state of Israel.”<sup>5</sup>

In the report of the *All-Party Parliamentary Inquiry into Antisemitism* released this fall, considerable attention was devoted to the phenomenon of what they termed as “anti-Semitic discourse.” The report concludes:

*Anti-Semitic discourse is not normally targeted at an identifiable victim, but at Jews as a group. It may be found in the media or in more private social interaction and often reflects some of the features of historical stereotypes..... Anti-Semitic discourse is, by its nature, harder to identify and define than a physical attack on a person or a place....Many witnesses felt that anti-Semitism in public and private discourse has become commonplace.*<sup>6</sup>

This report found that such discourse was plentiful throughout Europe, and the equating of Israel’s actions with those of the Nazis was a theme used at times by demonstrators, media, and both mainstream and extremist political parties.

Although Jewish communities could not provide quantifiable statistics on anti-Semitic discourse, this report includes excerpts from the media and from politicians that fall under this realm, as defined by the *All-Party Parliamentary Inquiry into Antisemitism*.

### *European Government/Media Treatment of the Conflict*

During data-gathering, all Jewish community organizations interviewed felt it important to state the general governmental and societal reaction to the events in the Middle East, and the “atmosphere” regarding Israel in both the media and by political leaders. For some Jewish communities such as in Germany, a distinctly anti-Israeli media coverage and heavily critical tone from civil society and government contributed to a forbidding atmosphere for Jews, while in other countries such as the Czech Republic, an overwhelmingly “pro-Israeli” government and media comforted Czech Jews despite increasing threats from neo-Nazis.

For this reason, we also record the governmental and media reaction to Israel’s war against Hezbollah. Although there were exceptions, European governments tended to utilize the term “disproportionate use of force” to describe Israel’s action in the beginning of the conflict, although many countries toned down their criticism as the war progressed, following a

---

<sup>5</sup> EUMC Working Definition of Antisemitism,” <http://eumc.europa.eu/eumc/material/pub/AS/AS-WorkingDefinition-draft.pdf>

<sup>6</sup> “Report of the All-Party Parliamentary Inquiry into Antisemitism” All-Party Group Against Antisemitism, lines 72, 73, Page 16, September 2006.

meeting of EU Foreign ministers on July 17<sup>th</sup>, where a milder position was reached, possibly at the insistence of Germany and the United Kingdom.<sup>7</sup>

### *Hezbollah and the EU's List of Terrorist Organizations*

Also important to take into consideration is the reluctance of the European Union to put Hezbollah on its list of terrorist organizations. According to Manfred Gerstenfeld of the Jerusalem Center for Public Affairs, 22 of the 25 EU members have in fact agreed to put Hezbollah on the list, with the three holdouts being France, Spain, and Ireland. Unanimity would be need to carry this out, according to EU decision-making rules. Hamas has been placed on this list.<sup>8</sup>

### **Contributors:**

**Austria** – Forum Gegen Antisemitismus, Jewish Community of Vienna  
**Belarus** – Union of Belarussian Jewish Organizations and Communities  
**Belgium** – Centre pour l'égalité des chances et la lutte contre le racisme and the Coordinating Committee of Belgian Jewish Organizations  
**Bulgaria** – M. Benvenisti of Organization of Jews in Bulgaria-Shalom  
**Czech Republic** - Fórum proti antisemitismu and Federation of Jewish Communities  
**Denmark** – Jewish Community of Copenhagen  
**Finland** – Central Council of Jewish Communities  
**France** – Elisabeth Cohen-Tannoudji, Representative Council of French Jewry and Marc Knobel, Representative Council of French Jewry  
**Germany** – Central Council of German Jews  
**Greece** – Central Board of Jewish Communities  
**Hungary** – MAZSIHISZ  
**Italy** – Adriana Goldstaub, Stefano Gatti and Chiara Ferrarotti, Center for Contemporary Jewish Documentation Foundation  
**Lativa** - Riga Jewish Community  
**Lithuania** – Jewish Community of Lithuania  
**Netherlands** – Organisation of Jewish Communities in the Netherlands  
**Norway** – Det Mosaiske Trossamfund  
**Poland** – Anna Zielinska, Warsaw Jewish Community  
**Portugal** – Jewish Community of Lisbon  
**Romania** – FEDROM  
**Russia** – Galina Kozhevnikova and Alexander Verkhovsky of the SOVA Center  
**Spain** – Federation of Jewish Communities in Spain  
**Slovakia** – Central Union of Jewish Religious Communities  
**Sweden** – Richard Slätt, Jewish Community of Stockholm  
**Switzerland** – CICAD  
**Turkey** - Jewish Community in Turkey  
**United Kingdom** – Community Security Trust

---

<sup>7</sup> While recognizing Israel's legitimate right to self-defense, it urged Israel to exercise the utmost restraint, and not to resort to disproportionate action, Council of the European Union, 2744<sup>th</sup> Council Meeting, July 17-18, 2006, [http://www.consilium.europa.eu/ueDocs/cms\\_Data/docs/pressdata/en/gena/90565.pdf](http://www.consilium.europa.eu/ueDocs/cms_Data/docs/pressdata/en/gena/90565.pdf)

<sup>8</sup> Manfred Gerstenfeld, "Europe's Mindset Toward Israel as Accentuated by the Lebanon War," *Jerusalem Center for Public Affairs*, October 1, 2006

## Austria

Anti-Semitic acts in Austria increased during the July-August period; mostly letters and mails sent to the Jewish Community of Vienna. In addition, a disturbing trend emerged with the far-right's manipulation of the conflict in the summer parliamentary election campaign.

According to the FGA (*Forum Gegen Antisemitismus*), the monitoring body of the Austrian Jewish Community, 83 anti-Semitic acts were recorded from April 2006 to August 2006. In the same period in the previous year, 50 acts were recorded. The Forum notes however that there were fewer incidents involving desecration and graffiti recorded in the same period in 2006 than in 2005.

Regardless, the Forum notes that the number of defamatory and anti-Semitic letters addressed directly to the IKG (Jewish Community of Vienna) "drastically increased" during the war. A number of the letters openly linked Austria's Jewish leaders with Nazi leaders.

### Government Reaction and Anti-Semitic Discourse from Far-Right Parties

Israeli operations received harsh criticism from political parties across the ideological spectrum. According to Ariel Muzicant, president of the IKG, the general debate on the war was "one-sided."<sup>9</sup>

Reactions from the Austrian governing party were strong, and followed the general tone adopted by most Western European governments. After the bombing of Qana on July 30th, Austria's foreign minister Ursula Plassnik condemned the use of "blind force" during the conflict, calling the attack "an inexpressible sorrow inflicted on defenseless people."<sup>10</sup>

Yet the harshest criticism came from Austria's two well-known far right parties, with much of the venom reserved for Austria's Jews and their leaders, part of their heavily populist campaign that was overtly anti-immigrant. In July, Muzicant accused far-right leaders of using anti-Semitic rhetoric in Austria to gain votes – running in the elections were the infamous far-right demagogue Jörg Haider's break-off faction the "Alliance for the Future of Austria" (BZÖ), as well as his former Freedom Party (FPÖ).<sup>11</sup>

Haider and Muzicant engaged in a running battle of words in the Austrian press, with Haider accusing the Jewish leader of being a "Zionist provocateur," in response to his accusations of anti-Semitism. However, the watershed incident that unleashed verbal attacks on the Austrian Jewish Community was the death of an Austrian peacekeeper in Lebanon. On July 25<sup>th</sup>, four United Nations peacekeepers from Austria, China, Finland and Canada were killed in an Israeli air strike on a UN observation post in southern Lebanon.

The leader of the BZÖ in the Austrian state of Styria, Gerald Grosz, demanded that the Jewish communities of Vienna and Graz publicly issue a condemnation of the "cruel and cowardly

---

<sup>9</sup> "IKG-Präsident Ariel Muzicant: Nahost-Tragödie nicht für Wahlkampf missbrauchen," <http://www.networld.at/index.html?articles/0631/16/147478.shtml> July, 2006

<sup>10</sup> "Austrian Foreign Min: End Lebanon-Israel Conflict Now," <http://www.easybourse.com/Website/dynamic/News.php?NewsID=33317&lang=fra&NewsRubrique=2> July 31st, 2006

<sup>11</sup> *The vote took place on October 1<sup>st</sup>, 2006. The FPÖ scored 11.2 percent of the vote and the BZÖ barely scratched the 4 percent threshold.*

murder.”<sup>12</sup> Haider announced after the attack on UN peacekeepers that the Israeli Ambassador in Austria should be sent “back home” after being tried for war crimes.

Meanwhile an FPÖ local councilor from Neunkirchen, Dietmar Gerhartl, wrote an open letter to the “Palestinian Platform Austria,” stating that an Austrian had now become a victim of Austrian terrorism, and that “the mass murderers with the Jewish star shall always remain unpunished.”<sup>13</sup> The FPÖ at the time was a member of the coalition government.

The extreme left was also implicated in demonstrations and protests that were vehemently anti-Israel, and openly in support of the anti-Semitic terrorist group Hezbollah. An anti-Israeli demonstration organized by far-left organizations in early August in Vienna featured pleas – screamed into a megaphone – for Nasrallah to bombard Tel Aviv.<sup>14</sup>

The “Anti-Imperialist Camp,” an extreme-left organization active in Austria that openly supports Hezbollah and its leader Nasrallah, was active in organizing demonstrations, including one in July that gathered around 500 people.<sup>15</sup>

### Internet Hate

The *Forum* believes that the war offered a perfect pretext for many internet surfers to freely state their anti-Semitic beliefs on various forums and newsgroups. As an “ideal medium” for openly professing anti-Semitic resentment, the amount of internet hate actively tracked by the Forum increased during the summer.

The death of the Austrian peacekeeper resulted in a wave of hate postings on Austrian internet forums. Many postings followed the logic offered by far-right parties – the Austrian Jewish community and its leaders should publicly apologize for the death.

Many of the postings were tracked on forums belonging to Austria’s most respected daily, *Der Standard*. Often they attacked Muzicant – a widely known figure in both Vienna and Austria, while others pointed accusatory fingers at other well-known international Jewish figures such as Edgar Bronfman and Israel Singer.



Letter received by the IKG. Source:  
*Forum Gegen Antisemitismus*

*Reporting assisted by the Forum Gegen Antisemitismus*

<sup>12</sup> *Forum Gegen Antisemitismus Newsletter September 2006*. The Austrian soldier killed in Lebanon was from the southern Austrian region of Styria, of which Graz is the capital

<sup>13</sup> “Der Terrorstaat Israel hat nun auch einen Österreicher feig ermordet”, <http://www.palaestinensische-gemeinde.at/lgerhartl.shtml>

<sup>14</sup> <http://www.viennablog.at/?itemid=5787>

<sup>15</sup> See <http://www.antiimperialista.org>

## Belarus

*Although they noted no increase in anti-Semitic incidents during the Lebanon war, the Jewish Community of Belarus provided this analysis of anti-Semitism in Belarus:*

There was no increase of anti-Semitism manifestations during the Lebanon crisis this summer.

Belarus is a multi-ethnic and multi-confessional state, and relations between the confessions here remain tolerant. And even when certain xenophobic aspirations get manifested, they are in no case the consequences of any natural processes underway in the society, but a result of the activity of certain forces that exacerbate tensions in the country.

After the collapse of the Soviet Union, there was no need to speak anymore about official state anti-Semitism. The Jewish population is no longer facing any of the restrictions on movement and work that they faced in Soviet times, nor is the contribution played by Jews denied, as it was during the Soviet regime. However, among today's realities there are still manifestations of frank anti-Semitism on the part of some state officials.

At the present time, the reduction of a "Jewish presence" in public life has clearly revealed itself. Is this an official policy?

1. There is an attempt to diminish the role of Jews in Belarusian history. For example, the article "Jews" in the multi-volume Belarusian Encyclopedia (Volume 18/1, page 316) dedicates only 0.5 pages to Jews, which have been living in the territory of Belarus for 700 years and have contributed hugely into the economy, state and culture.<sup>16</sup>
2. *Practically in all state-published literature, including history textbooks, the Holocaust is either not mentioned at all, or mentioned cursorily.* Additionally, the role played by Belarussian Jews in the resistance against Nazi Germany is played down. In the majority of publications, the Jewish Resistance in the occupied territories is either completely denied or radically diminished.

Recently, conflicts have appeared again with the authorities in relation to commemoration of Holocaust victims. Jews are denied the right to indicate on monuments the number of the massacred Jewish population under the alleged pretext that not only Jewish victims are buried there (Minsk, Gorodeya, Mozyr, Brest).

3. One of the purveyors of anti-Semitic discourse among the public today is the Orthodox Church. Among the official events of the Orthodox Eparchy of Belarus is the Memorial Day of the "Jewish murder" in 1690 of the "baby-martyr Gabriel of Bialystok" – a typical case of blood libel. The "Belarusian Orthodox Calendar," published every year by the Minsk St. Peter and St. Paul Cathedral, has a prayer for St. Gabriel with defamatory words towards Jews, who are called "beasts." Despite the protests of the Jewish community, the whole text was reprinted in Calendars for 2005 and 2006.

For six years in a row, the publisher, "Orthodox Initiative," has been publishing anti-Semitic books, and only recently the leaders of the Minsk Orthodox Eparchy have

---

<sup>16</sup> This biased approach of the Encyclopaedia's editorial board is nicely illustrated by the following 10-page article "Japan" with plenty of illustrations, diagrams, etc. on a rather distant country from Belarus.

publicly condemned this activity. At the same time, the Office of the Public Prosecutor of the Republic continues to reject the applications of Jewish organizations to initiate a criminal case. Anti-Semitic materials can be found in the pages of the *Respublika* and *Communist of Belarus* newspapers and the *Neman* literature magazine.

4. Recently, neo-Nazi propaganda on the Internet has also touched Belarus. For two years already, a fake web-site exists, created allegedly on behalf of the radical Jewish youth movement – the so-called “Jewish Orthodox Skinheads.” The contents of the web-site has frankly provocative character, since it calls to "set synagogues and buildings of Jewish organizations on fire," organize "acts of vandalism in Jewish cemeteries and other memorial places," and to send "to mass media fake anti-Semitic letters," etc.

In certain regions, mass media and state bodies are involved in “nationalism-motivated” conflicts. Thus, in Mogilyov, newspapers gave a detailed coverage of the history of baking kosher bread by quoting Hitlerite sources.

The main issue regarding the combat against modern forms of xenophobia, racism and anti-Semitism is counteracting growing neo-Nazi movements. There has been inadequate attention of the authorities to recognize the existence of this problem as such, although the facts speak for themselves.

*Reporting provided by the Jewish Community in Belarus*

## Belgium

On August 18<sup>th</sup>, the Belgian monitoring body, *Centre pour l'égalité des chances et la lutte contre le racisme* (Center for the Equality of Chances and the Fight Against Racism) announced that the Lebanon war resulted in increased complaints of anti-Semitic acts and incidents.

Before the war the organization received one or two complaints of anti-Semitism per week – after hostilities commenced one complaint a day, on average, was received. The complaints generally involved internet hate, anti-Semitic letters and articles in the press, and were forwarded to the center by Belgian citizens. Additionally, anti-Semitic graffiti on Jewish – owned homes and insults against Jews on the street were reported.<sup>17</sup> In total the center reported 30 complaints during the period of the war, including acts of vandalism and insults.

Furthermore, the Jewish community in Belgium suffered from what observers agree was the first large-scale anti-Semitic attack recorded after the breakout of major hostilities.

The Brussels Jewish Memorial for Holocaust victims (*Mémorial d'Anderlecht*) was vandalized sometime during the night of July 24<sup>th</sup>. The gate of the memorial's crypt was pulled out, documents were destroyed, windows broken and an urn containing ashes from Auschwitz victims was emptied on the floor. Police also traced human excrement.



*Vandalized Memorial. Source: BELGA*

According to Philippe Markiewicz, President of the Coordinating Committee of Belgian Jewish Organizations (CCOJB), the desecration of this memorial – the worst the community has known – was absolutely devastating, and eclipsed all other anti-Semitic acts during the course of the war. The Jewish community concluded that the attack was linked to the war in Lebanon.<sup>18</sup>

Despite this increase, the CCOJB in fact had expected a much larger wave of anti-Semitism, and feared the worse following the attack on the *Anderlecht* memorial.

### Government and Media Coverage

In an interview for this report, Philippe Markiewicz stated that the Belgian media was essentially biased during the war, and focused significantly on “Lebanese suffering”, while paying little attention to the victims in northern Israel.

The Belgian Minister of Foreign Affairs Karel de Gucht and Prime Minister Guy Verhofstadt both accepted Israel’s right to defend itself, but criticized what they called “excessive

---

<sup>17</sup> A listing of anti-Semitic incidents in Belgium can be found on [www.antisemitisme.be](http://www.antisemitisme.be)

<sup>18</sup> Interview with Philippe Markiewicz, President of the CCOJB, September 29<sup>th</sup>, 2006

violence”. On the 13th of July, Minister de Gucht called Israel’s response “disproportionate”.<sup>19</sup>

The Flemish far-right party *Vlaams Belang* was discrete during the conflict, and did not openly comment, as they were preoccupied with campaigning during the summer for the 8<sup>th</sup> October municipal elections.

### **Public Demonstrations and the Arab-European League**

Well-attended anti-Israel demonstrations took place, with one march on the 6<sup>th</sup> August containing up to 18,000 people, the majority of whom appeared to be of Arab/North African origin. Hezbollah flags were featured prominently in the demonstration.

One “anti-Zionist” march in late June was organized by the so-called Arab European League, a pan-Arabist organization based in Belgium and the Netherlands. Its founder, Dyab Abou Jahjah, a Lebanese born Shiite domiciled in Belgium, left to join the fight against Israel in Lebanon in the beginning of July, an event which concerned watchdog groups in Belgium.

Upon his return to Belgium, Dyab Abou Jahjah announced that he would be going back to Lebanon permanently in 2007 and declared his goal to mobilize European Muslims to lead a battle against the “Zionists.”

The extremely anti-Israeli “Workers’ Party of Belgium,” a Maoist party which now boasts 15 municipal councilors following the October 8<sup>th</sup> municipal and provincial elections, was also active during the war.

On the other hand, the CCOJB was very present in the public debate about the war, organizing events and demonstrations, such as one that attracted around 1,500 people to the Israel embassy in Brussels to express solidarity and support with Israel.

*Reporting assisted by the Centre pour l'égalité des chances et la lutte contre le racisme, CCOJB and [www.antisemitisme.be](http://www.antisemitisme.be)*

---

<sup>19</sup> “Betoging in Brussel tegen Israëlisch militair optreden”, *Het Laatste Nieuws*, [http://www.hln.be/hlns/cache/det/art\\_229542.html](http://www.hln.be/hlns/cache/det/art_229542.html) July 6, 2006

## Bulgaria

“*Shalom*,” the Organization of Jews in Bulgaria, reported no anti-Semitic incidents during the period of the Lebanon war.<sup>20</sup>

The nationalist and extreme-right wing party “Ataka”, which won almost 9 percent of the vote in June 2005 parliamentary elections, did not engage in open anti-Semitic discourse during the war, according to *Shalom*. The Chairman of “*Shalom*” M. Benvenisti pointed out that Since 2005, Atak has refrained from anti-Semitic discourse, concentrating its xenophobic campaign against the country’s ethnic Turkish and Roma minorities.<sup>21</sup>

Nevertheless, the television channel SKAT T.V., which is widely recognized as the party’s official channel, was biased and vehemently anti-Israel during the conflict.

Several anti-war demonstrations were organized around the country by Arab immigrant communities – and although anti-Israel slogans were used, nothing of an anti-Semitic character was observed.

The Coordination Forum for Countering Antisemitism reports that anti-Semitic epithets were shouted during a Bulgarian football match involving the Hapoel Tel-Aviv youth soccer team and a youth club from Vietnam. During the game, spectators began shouting "Heil Hitler", "Holocaust for the Jews" and "Free Palestine".

### Government Reaction and Media

The “Shalom” organization closely monitored the reaction of Bulgarian government and civil society during the unfolding of the Lebanese war. Except for the SKAT T.V. channel mentioned above, mainstream television networks were found to be impartial and balanced, including both public and private stations. On the other hand, newspaper reporting was disproportionately focused on civilian damage in Lebanon, and carried few reports about deaths and damage in Israel.

“Indirectly, Israel was represented in an unfavorable light” admitted Mr. Benvenisti in an interview. He did however point out two exceptions; the daily newspapers *Dnevnik* and *24 Hours*, which were unique in that they issued reports from inside Israel. The Bulgarian Jewish community and the Israeli Embassy in Sofia had in fact taken journalists from these papers to northern Israel during the Hezbollah attacks.

*Reporting assisted by the **Organization of Jews in Bulgaria-Shalom***

---

<sup>20</sup> Report of M. Benvenisti, Chairman of the Jewish Community in Sofia, September 21, 2006

<sup>21</sup> Some members of *Ataka* have been seen wearing Nazi symbols during public demonstrations, and the party’s firebrand leader, Volen Siderov published anti-Semitic books before *Ataka*’s electoral victory.

## Czech Republic

Although relatively few anti-Semitic incidents and discourse in the Czech Republic were recorded during the war in Lebanon, a small but noticeable increase was noted by the *Forum Proti Antisemitismu*, the anti-Semitism monitoring body. Almost all were linked to an active neo-Nazi movement in the country.

However, the Jewish Community leadership also points out what it considered to be the “pro-Israel” attitude readily evident among the Czech populace, government and media. Such an attitude contributed to a general feeling of well-being amongst many Czech Jews, despite what amounted to increased neo-Nazi activity in certain areas. Nevertheless, the number of anti-Semitic incidents did increase, especially compared to the same period in 2005, and included a doubling of anti-Semitic mail sent to Jewish organizations.

At the beginning of October, a leading Czech newspaper, *Mladá fronta Dnes*, reported that “unidentified sources close to intelligence agencies” were alerted to the threat that an Islamic extremist group would “kidnap Jews and hold them hostage” in a synagogue during Rosh Hashanah.

It is not clear if there was a link between Islamist and neo-Nazi elements in this plot, but alliances between the two movements cannot be ruled out. It has been reported that the potential threat was uncovered following the arrests of four men in Oslo recently in connection with an alleged plot against the life of the Israel Ambassador to Norway (see below).

### Neo-Nazi Activity

During August, several Jewish organizations in Prague, as well as the Israel Embassy received a letter from the most active neo-Nazi group, *Narodni Odpor* (National Resistance). The letter was a copy of a request sent to President Vaclav Klaus, signed by fifteen “National Resistance” members, asking permission to serve in the “Iranian Islamic Army” in the upcoming war against “Zionists” and Israelis. They also announced that if they did not get permission to serve in the Iranian Islamic Army, they would fight in Prague.



*Weapons discovered during anti-Israel protest. Source: CTK*

Members of *Narodni Odpor* tried to demonstrate in front of the Israel Embassy in Prague on 27<sup>th</sup> August, but police broke up the protest, arresting 26 people, on whom they found three guns, knives as well as other assorted weapons.

## Government and Media Attitude's Towards Israel

Tomas Kraus, Executive Director of the Federation of Jewish Communities in the Czech Republic stated that unlike other Central European countries, the media was quite “balanced,” and that the Israeli side of the conflict was presented alongside the Lebanese side.<sup>22</sup> This stems from what many in the country’s Jewish community believe is an exceptional and unique pro-Israel sentiment in the Czech Republic.<sup>23</sup>

As mentioned above, Jewish community members found that Czech media coverage was fair and balanced, with reporting from both sides of the border. The Jewish community closely followed public reaction to the sensitive news reports – an article in a leading Czech daily that was extremely critical of Israel’s actions prompted harsh reactions from the readership, while a television interview of a Czech convert to Islam calling Israel a “Nazi State” was received very poorly.

Anti-Semitic articles did appear in the press, including in *Mladá fronta Dnes*. In an article on 1<sup>st</sup> August, the author Michal Semín, spoke of Israeli “terrorists,” in a tone described by the Forum as “traditional Catholic anti-Semitism”.

Yet the same newspaper published an editorial on the 16th of July entitled “A Manual On How to Understand Israel” by Milan Vodicka, defending Israel and attacking international criticism of its actions against Hezbollah.

The Czech government was almost unilaterally supportive of Israel’s campaign – the Ministry for Foreign Affairs released a statement on 13<sup>th</sup> July stating that it fully respects Israel’s right of self-defence, yet cautioned Israel to be respectful of Lebanon’s civilian population.

Two large demonstrations and numerous small demonstrations in support of Israel were organized by the Jewish community, while groups of Arab students in the Czech Republic held smaller demonstrations protesting Israel’s action.

*Reporting assisted by the Fórum proti antisemitismu and Federation of Jewish Communities in the Czech Republic*

---

<sup>22</sup> Interview with Tomas Kraus, Executive Director of the Federation of Jewish Communities in the Czech Republic, September 29<sup>th</sup>, 2006

<sup>23</sup> Dinah Spritzer, “In former Eastern Bloc, Czechs stand out for pro-Israel feeling”, [http://www.jta.org/page\\_view\\_story.asp?intarticleid=16911&intcategoryid=2](http://www.jta.org/page_view_story.asp?intarticleid=16911&intcategoryid=2) August 4, 2006

## Denmark

There was no marked increase in anti-Semitic acts during the Lebanon war in Denmark according to Stefan Isaak, President of the *Mosaiske Troessamfund i Kobenhav*, the Jewish Community of Copenhagen.<sup>24</sup> Nevertheless, the Jewish community points to a general increase in anti-Semitism among Muslims in Denmark.

The *Kristeligt Dagblad* newspaper reported at the end of September that there were as many attacks on Danish Jews in the first half of 2006 as in the entire year of 2005. Most attacks have been aimed at people going to synagogue or at children on their way to school, and some of been of a grave nature, according to the newspaper.<sup>25</sup>

### Government/Public Reaction

Isaak found the official Danish reaction to the war “balanced and neutral,” and the Danish government issued no particularly strong criticisms of Israel. In fact, Israel’s ambassador noted to the Jewish community that his job was “considerably easier” during the period of the Lebanon war.

Furthermore, the Jewish community felt that the majority of the Danish supportive was fully supportive of Israel’s right to self-defence. A Gallup poll taken on August 5<sup>th</sup> showed that 48% of those polled supported Israel’s action, while 7% supported Hezbollah.<sup>26</sup>

There were many demonstrations that could be termed “anti-Israeli” in Denmark during the summer, primarily organized by left-wing groups in cooperation with Muslim groups. Such marches and events were sparsely attended, and barely received any media attention.

*Reporting assisted by the Jewish Community of Copenhagen*

---

<sup>24</sup> Interview with Stefan Isaak, President of the *Mosaiske Troessamfund i Kobenhav*, October 26, 2006

<sup>25</sup> “Denmark: Strong rise in anti-Semitic incidents reported”, *JTA*, September 29, 2006

<sup>26</sup> “Gallup: Massiv dansk opbakning til Israel,” *DR Nyheder*, August 6, 2006  
<http://www.dr.dk/Nyheder/Indland/2006/08/05/202208.htm?rss=true>

## Finland

Finland currently holds the Presidency of the Council of the European Union (which rotates every six months) and its role and comments gave its government additional coverage, following a well-publicized remark in the beginning stages of the conflict about a “disproportionate” response to attacks by Hezbollah and the kidnapping of Israeli soldiers. (*see below*)

Yet Dan Kantor, Executive Secretary of the Central Council of Jewish Communities in Finland, believes that the atmosphere was not necessarily aggressive for Finnish Jews, and an “anti-Israel” attitude ascertainable amongst parts of the Finnish population was “nothing new.” Kantor also points out that most of the rhetoric and discourse observed was distinctly “anti-Israel”, but not “anti-Semitic.”<sup>27</sup>

Nevertheless, the community did track isolated anti-Semitic events and acts, mostly in the form of hate mails and phone calls directed to the Central Council itself. A major newspaper published a reader’s letter stating that Hitler should have finished his work – the Central Council of Jewish Communities immediately took legal action against the individual.

The community reports that the main problem highlighted during the war, and mirrored throughout the Scandinavian region, lies in an immediate connection between local Jews and Israel. In essence, Jews play a “stand-in” in the absence of any Israeli representation.

The Israel embassy received a number of letters, some of them anti-Semitic, attacking Jews directly for the death of children in Lebanon.

### Government and Media Reaction

At the beginning of the conflict, the Finnish presidency of the European Union heavily criticized Israel’s actions, stating “the European Union is greatly concerned about the disproportionate use of force by Israel in Lebanon in response to attacks by Hezbollah on Israel”. Yet only days after this statement the European Union as a whole softened its tone following a meeting of EU foreign ministers on 17<sup>th</sup> July, where they urged Israel “not to resort to disproportionate action”.

Kantor notes that a march in support of Israel in Helsinki gathered thousands, while marches in support of Lebanon were no larger than 400. Marginal extreme-left groups, often in co-operation with Islamic groups in a so-called “Peace Movement” held weekly small marches, where signs were observed equating the Star of David with Nazi symbols. Such groups make little distinction between Israel and local Finnish Jews, Kantor stated, although this also is “nothing new”.

*Reporting assisted by the Central Council of Jewish Communities*

---

<sup>27</sup> Interview with Dan Kantor, Executive Secretary of the Central Council of Jewish Communities, September 12<sup>th</sup>, 2006

## France

*For this report, the Representative Council of French Jewry (CRIF – Conseil représentatif des institutions juives de France) provided a specific analysis of July-August 2006*

What impact did the war between Israel and Hezbollah in July and August 2006 have on anti-Semitic acts in France?

Statistical Elaboration: Statistics on anti-Semitic acts committed in France that are published by the CRIF are provided by the Protection Service of the Jewish Community (SPCJ – *Service de Protection de la Communauté Juive*). These statistics consist of a combination of the figures given by both the Ministry of the Interior and acts recorded on a SPCJ database of telephone calls to their hotline. Acts from the SPCJ database are included in the CRIF statistics when they are not reported by the Ministry of the Interior.

Background of the Statistical Context Since January 2006: January 2006 followed the general decline of acts witnessed in 2005. Yet the months of February and March saw a net increase, namely violent anti-Semitic threats and acts likely linked to the aftermath of the murder of Ilan Halimi<sup>28</sup>. Beginning in April, statistics fluctuated with no ascertainable frequency, but with a tendency towards fewer acts. With 275 acts recorded from January to September 2006, against 236 during the same period in 2005, there was an increase of 16%. But this is certainly a marked decrease of 32%, from the 483 acts recorded in 2004 until the end of September.

Statistics from July/August 2006 : During these two months acts reached a total of 61. During this same period in 2005, there were 34 acts recorded – an increase of 79%. In 2004 – the worst year of anti-Semitic acts – 67 acts were recorded during these two summer months.

Details of the Statistics: For acts we recorded 9 physical aggressions, 5 objects thrown (including incendiaries), 8 desecrations or vandalisms. For threats, we recorded 17 insults, 8 threats, 2 bomb alerts, 8 inscriptions and 4 letters.

A little less than half of the reported acts had a reference to the Lebanese/Israel conflict.

*In September 2006, 21 acts and 13 threats were recorded, a total of 34, opposed to 17 during the month of September 2005.*

Analysis and Description of the Acts : Among the worse recorded acts was a physical aggression committed in Lille, during a protest in support of Lebanon. A young man was taking photos of placards held by the demonstrators equating a star of David with a swastika – he was insulted by protestors, who shouted “dirty Jew, you have no place here – you are doing exactly what the Germans did to you.”

*Demonstrations in support of Lebanon took place in different cities throughout France, with anti-Semitic placards visible reading “Death to the Jews – Death to Israel”, stars of David emblazoned with swastikas, the distribution of Hezbollah publications and slogans such as “Is Rats El – Criminal State! No to the Israeli Army Aggression and Yes to Lebanese Resistance.”*

---

<sup>28</sup> For information on the murder of Ilan Halimi, see [http://www.eurojewcong.org/ejc/news.php?id\\_article=367](http://www.eurojewcong.org/ejc/news.php?id_article=367)

*An analysis of the acts committed during July and August shows that authors of such acts made use of a classic anti-Semitic characterization of “Murderous Jews.”*<sup>29</sup> A political tract sent to a synagogue in Paris “eloquently” describes this utilization:

“Wake up France, and join us in refusing that ‘Jewry’ massacres the Palestinians in their own homeland...In France, your duty as well is to combat the Jew. The enemy is the Jew, and they need to be chased from the media, finance, institutions. *Messieurs les juifs*, the hour of your atonement approaches once more, and this time we will not let one of you escape. We will burn your infected books, reduce your pseudo-temples to ruins and throw your rotten bodies to the wind. You merit only the butcher, for hygienic reasons.

Hate discourse regarding Israel remains ever present, and the Palestinian issue provides a reference for anti-Semitic expression, even if the news was concentrated elsewhere this summer. An example:

A Jewish family was insulted and threatened by approximately twelve telephone calls coming from the same person. Among the threats “Ah! Its you, you dirty Jews. Its you who are murdering Palestinians in Lebanon. We will exterminate all of you.”



*Hezbollah flags at anti-Israel demo in Paris, August 12<sup>th</sup>*

Anti-Semitic acts during this period consisted primarily of verbal insults. An example: One Jewish organization received varied letters and telephone calls along the lines of: “Shame on you, may you be damned for fifty generations..... Hitler saw the real face of the Jewish people... You are signing your death warrant... You are a shame on humanity.... You are a group of fuckers..... I saw the massacre at Cana, you bastards....You will all croak, one after the other.”

## **Media Coverage**

It appears to us that the French press was moderate in its coverage – both in articles and editorials devoted to the conflict. Examining the complaints received of anti-Semitism, it seems that the coverage of the Lebanon war did provide a pretext for some individuals in justifying their attacks on Jews, despite the media’s comparatively balanced approach.

---

<sup>29</sup> “*les Juifs assassins*.” The sections in italics are extracts from complaints recorded

## Government Reaction

[The CRIF also carried out an analysis of political declarations from various political leaders in France concerning the conflict.

See [http://www.crif.org/uploads/articles/fichiers/declarations\\_politiques.pdf](http://www.crif.org/uploads/articles/fichiers/declarations_politiques.pdf) ]

President Jacques Chirac's initial characterization of the Israeli offensive as "disproportionate" was widely reported in the international press,<sup>30</sup> but the CRIF shows that comments from other sectors of the French political spectrum were varied. As France is in the middle of a heated and highly contested electoral campaign for the 2007 presidential elections, the CRIF analyzed the comments of the various candidates. Below are some excerpts from the CRIF report:

**Nicolas Sarkozy:** The leading candidate for the conservative UMP party and the current Minister of the Interior was outright about his views, which are widely considered to be the most "pro-Israeli" out of the current French leadership. On July 16<sup>th</sup> he declared: "there is an aggressor in this situation. We can not put everyone on the same level, and this aggressor is Hezbollah.....Israel must and has the right to defend itself, but if we are a friend of Israel – and I am – we must advise Israel to keep its *sang-froid* .....and to keep its reaction proportionate." (July 16, 2006)

**Ségolène Royal :** The likely candidate for the Socialist Party notably called on Europe to pressure the USA to change its Middle East policy, in an interview from July 31<sup>st</sup>. She linked the present conflict to such a policy. Like most French mainstream leaders she called for the demilitarization of Hezbollah and the application of UN Resolution 1559. In her interview on July 31<sup>st</sup> she stated, "I would like to express, like all of the French people, my solidarity with the Lebanese people." (July 31<sup>st</sup>, 2006)

**Jean-Marie Le Pen:** The CRIF reports very harsh and critical discourse from the President of the far-right party the National Front, and a presidential candidate. In his various statements, Le Pen accused Israel of being the sole aggressor in the conflict, even going so far as to claim that the soldiers were captured on Lebanese territory (July 13, 2006)

*Reporting provided by the **Representative Council of French Jewry** – Report on Anti-Semitism by Elisabeth Cohen-Tannoudji, Report on Political Discourse by Marc Knobel,*

---

<sup>30</sup> "Je trouve, honnêtement, comme l'ensemble des Européens, que les réactions actuelles sont tout à fait disproportionnées." Remarks by President Chirac for "Bastille" Day, July 14, 2006  
[http://www.elysee.fr/elysee/elysee.fr/francais/interventions/interviews\\_articles\\_de\\_presse\\_et\\_interventions\\_televisees/2006/juillet/interview\\_televisee\\_du\\_president\\_de\\_la\\_republique\\_a\\_l\\_occasion\\_de\\_la\\_fete\\_nationale.55914.html](http://www.elysee.fr/elysee/elysee.fr/francais/interventions/interviews_articles_de_presse_et_interventions_televisees/2006/juillet/interview_televisee_du_president_de_la_republique_a_l_occasion_de_la_fete_nationale.55914.html)

## Germany

The German Jewish community reports a marked increase in anti-Semitic acts, and an extremely difficult atmosphere for the country's Jews over the summer. Jewish organizations received substantial increases in hate mail and vehemently anti-Israel marches were held, some organized by a growing neo-Nazi party that holds seats in local parliaments.

Like many Jewish communities throughout Europe, the official representative body of German Jews, the *Zentralrat der Juden in Deutschland* and its newly-elected and high-profile president, Charlotte Knoblauch, participated in a public solidarity campaign with Israel during the full course of the war. The Central Council received a quite large amount of publicity for its actions, and Knoblauch's statements on the reactions of some German politicians received wide domestic and international coverage.

According to Stephan Kramer, the Executive Director of the *Zentralrat*, the Jewish community in Germany found itself on the "frontline" of the Lebanon war. German Jewish leaders report now that the war in Lebanon created, or simply uncovered, a lingering hostility not only to Israel, but also to German Jews. Following the Israel-Hezbollah ceasefire, Knoblauch summed up what she thought to be an "absolutely hostile attitude towards Jews and Israel" in Germany, telling *Der Spiegel* that the war worsened anti-Semitism in Germany:

*"We are currently organizing a fundraising concert, for example, and even there we get negative, anti-Semitic mail. No distinctions are made. We're sucked into the current Middle East conflict one hundred percent, as Jewish citizens in Germany. And those politicians who latch onto this hostile mood with carefully prepared statements are of course doing better than ever."*<sup>31</sup>

Over 300 letters were received by the *Zentralrat*, directly attacking both the organization and German Jews for both blindly supporting Israel and spending state money to support a "fascist state" in the Middle East. Kramer called the amount of anti-Semitic letters received "mind-boggling."<sup>32</sup> Complaints from Jewish students of harassment by Muslim and non-Muslim schoolmates were received by the Berlin Jewish Community.<sup>33</sup>

Graffiti incidents were recorded, such as a late July desecration of the Holocaust memorial in Berlin, but the memorial has been vandalized numerous times since its inauguration in 2005. The anti-racist group *Gesicht Zeigen* counted more than 1,000 anti-Semitic acts in June and July, mostly related to Germany's hosting of the World Cup.<sup>34</sup>

Since the war in Lebanon security has been considerably increased around Jewish institutions and synagogues in Germany.

---

<sup>31</sup> Sebastian Fischer and Claus Christian Malzahn, "I See an Absolutely Hostile Mood Towards Jews," *Spiegel Online* <http://www.spiegel.de/international/1,1518,434508,00.html> August 31, 2006

<sup>32</sup> Oliver Bradley, "German Council Received Many Threats," *European Jewish Press* <http://www.ejpress.org/article/news/germany/10742> September 11, 2006

<sup>33</sup> Stephen Roth Institute for the Study of Contemporary Antisemitism and Racism <http://www.tau.ac.il/Anti-Semitism/updates.htm#178>

<sup>34</sup> Among the worst was the public burning of the diary of Anne Frank by far-rightists in the eastern state of Saxony-Anhalt, in early July. "Germany on pace for racist record," MSNBC, October 24, 2006 <http://www.msnbc.msn.com/id/15402600/>

## Government Reaction

German government reaction to the war was mixed. The German Chancellor Angela Merkel made it clear from the beginning of the conflict that she saw the kidnapping of the Israeli soldiers as the starting point. On July 13<sup>th</sup> she called on the Lebanese government to re-affirm its sovereignty in the south, noting that “the attacks did not start from the Israeli side, but from Hezbollah's side.”<sup>35</sup>

Yet the *Zentralrat* heavily criticized responses by other government members. German Development Minister Heidemarie Wieczorek-Zeul was quoted by *Der Tagesspiegel* on 16<sup>th</sup> of July as saying that Israel's attacks were “completely unacceptable.” Wieczorek-Zeul said Israel should “do everything possible to protect the civilian population,” noting that “the fact that civilian targets and civilians in another state are being bombarded is against international law and completely unacceptable.”<sup>36</sup> She also heavily attacked Israel for its usage of cluster bombs.

Knoblauch noted in interviews that criticisms such as those of Wieczorek-Zeul, and similar ones from Oskar Lafontaine, the leader of the Left Party, increased the hostile feeling evident in the country against Jews.<sup>37</sup>

## Protests

Numerous anti-Israel protests were also held by diverse groups throughout the country, with observers noting that anti-Semitic slogans were shouted. At a Berlin protest on 29<sup>th</sup> July, portraits of Nasrallah were held by young children with the inscriptions, “We are proud of you,” and “We thank you.”<sup>38</sup> The *Zentralrat* reports that placards were common at many demonstrations stating “Israel – Child Murderer.”

Neo-Nazi groups also staged protests against Israel in Berlin and in the Eastern region of Mecklenburg. Youth groups related to the neo-Nazi National Democratic Party of Germany (NPD) also staged protests. The NPD won 7.3 percent of the vote on 17<sup>th</sup> of September in a struggling eastern German region Mecklenburg-Western Pomerania, adding to previous 2004 election gains in another eastern region, Saxony.



*Photo from anti-Israel demonstration, Berlin – Protestor with sign declaring solidarity against the “Jewish, Zionist Enemy.”*

<sup>35</sup> “In Quotes: Lebanon Reaction,” *BBC* [http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/middle\\_east/5175886.stm](http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/middle_east/5175886.stm) July 13, 2006

<sup>36</sup> “Europe Looks To Mediate In Raging Middle East Conflict,” *Deutsche Welle* <http://www.dw-world.de/dw/article/0,2144,2097655,00.html>, July 16, 2006

<sup>37</sup> “Wieczorek-Zeul wehrt sich gegen Vorwürfe des Zentralrats,” *Der Spiegel*, August 31, 2006 <http://www.spiegel.de/politik/deutschland/0,1518,434521,00.html>

<sup>38</sup> “Berlin interdit la promotion publique du Hezbollah”, [http://www.judeoscope.ca/auteur.php3?id\\_auteur=95](http://www.judeoscope.ca/auteur.php3?id_auteur=95) August 3, 2006. The Berlin Minister of Interior opened an inquiry into possible incitation to hate following this protest.

## **Media Coverage**

According to the Stephen Roth Institute for the Study of Contemporary Antisemitism and Racism, “Jews in Germany have been experiencing increasing manifestations of anti-Semitism.” The Institute cites an analysis by Media Tenor International, published on 11th August 2006, which found that a distinctly anti-Israeli perspective dominated news coverage, and rarely showed Israeli victims of Hezbollah attacks, concentrating almost solely on Lebanese casualties.<sup>39</sup>

Kramer also cited the media coverage in Germany as a possible instigator for the anti-Semitic backlash in Germany – he called some sectors of the media “pro-Hezbollah,” and accused the press of withholding important information from the public.

*Reporting assisted by the Central Council of German Jews*

---

<sup>39</sup> Stephen Roth Institute for the Study of Contemporary Antisemitism and Racism <http://www.tau.ac.il/Anti-Semitism/updates.htm#178>

## Greece

*The Central Board of Jewish Communities in Greece describes a revival of the “anti-Israeli” feeling in Greek society which escalated since the outbreak of the war. Among the incidents that took place, they report that a Communist party affiliated group attempted to place photos of Lebanese casualties on a Holocaust memorial, that various mainstream politicians made anti-Semitic remarks and newspaper coverage was both anti-Israel and at times anti-Jewish.*

*Despite this harsh political atmosphere no serious anti-Semitic incidents were reported against Greek Jewish targets.*

### **Submission of Central Board of Jewish Communities in Greece:**

An “anti-Israeli feeling” in Greek society reared its head again during the war in Lebanon, escalating during the conflict between Israel and Hezbollah. This atmosphere had increased between 2002 and 2003, but gradually faded in the following years, only to re-emerge again.

Politicians from all parties, political analysts and popular Greek figures made anti-Israeli statements, often with anti-Semitic references. Nevertheless, it is important to note that no serious anti-Semitic incidents against Greek Jewish targets occurred.

### **Anti-Semitic Discourse and Protests**

An attempt was made to desecrate the Holocaust memorial in Thessaloniki, during a protest demonstration organized by the Workers Fighting Front (PAME), affiliated to the Greek Communist Party. Demonstrators attempted to place photos of war damage in Lebanon on the monument, but were prevented by police. This attempt was harshly criticized by the Jewish community of Thessaloniki. Many other anti-Israeli demonstrations, organized mainly by the parties of the left and leftist worker’s unions, took place in Athens, Thessaloniki and other Greek cities.

Anti-Semitic political statements were made by several politicians, with public comparisons of Israel’s military actions with the Holocaust made by Member of the European Parliament Nikolaos Sifounakis (Party of European Socialists), the Greek MP Kimon Koulouris (PASOK – see below) and the ex Vice-President of the Parliament P. Kritikos.

### **Reactions from Political Groups**

The Greek President K. Papoulias, in a public statement made during an official commemoration of the 1974 fall of the Greek military Junta, announced “Greek public opinion is shocked by the undeclared war against Lebanon. After the Second World War, the world believed that the logic of collective punishment would have never returned”.

Yet the Central Board reports that government representatives were more moderate and balanced than the Head of State. Prime Minister K. Karamanlis and Foreign Minister D. Bakoyannis were publicly more balanced, aligning themselves with E.U. and U.N. policy.

The main opposition party PASOK was less balanced in its approach to Israel during the war, placing the onus of the responsibility on Israel. PASOK also supported the idea of a prisoner

exchange during the war, unlike the Greek Government and the International community which called for the unconditional release of the Israeli soldiers.

The Greek Communist Party in its announcement condemned Israel's "imperialistic and gangster-like attack against the Palestinians and Lebanon". The Party of "Synaspismos" also condemned Israel – Manolis Glezos, a member of Synaspismos and a very popular Greek figure, due to his role in the Resistance during German Occupation, made statements in the media along the lines of "Israel adopts and applies Hitler's methods".

MEP G. Karatzaferis, leader of the far-right Party of LAOS, did not make any public statements. Yet, the Party's weekly paper "A1" published strongly anti-Semitic and anti-Israel articles, accusing the Israelis of the genocide of the Lebanese people. The editorial article of "A1", dated July 15, 2006, includes the following reference: "If the Jews continue this way they will beat Hitler's number of victims".

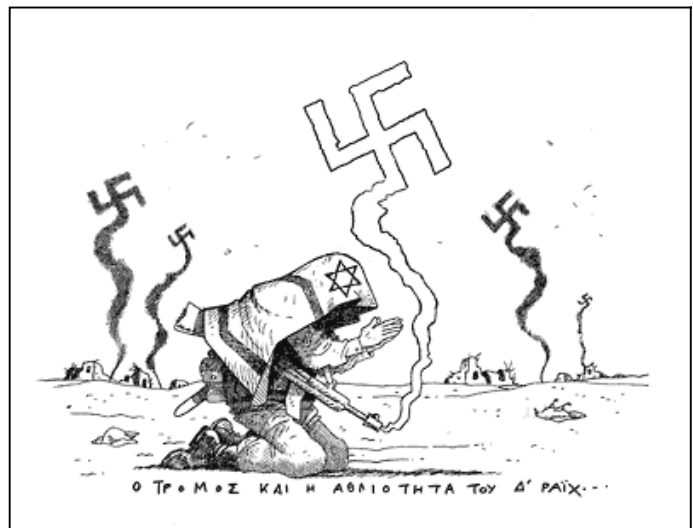
The Archbishop of Athens and all Greece Christodoulos, issued a statement on July 23th, which, inter alia, mentioned: "Israel's right to self-defense has crossed the line of any logic. Our Christian conscience is protesting. Do not provoke our conscience. Do not feed world's condemnation against you. It's not in your best interest. Do not play with God. There exists a just God, retributive. Fear his wrath".

### Media Reaction

The Central Board reports that the mass media was strong in its un-balanced condemnation of Israel, with Greek Jews often feeling that an image of Israel as a "Nazi State" was promoted, one that attacks the helpless and unarmed people in South Lebanon.

Anti-Semitic references, as well as comparisons with the Holocaust, were common in the press during the summer. The Central Board does point out that there were a few well-known columnists who openly defended Israel's rights in their articles and political analyses.

The Press and TV media have strongly condemned Israel. Some of the major media promoted the image of Israel as the "Nazi-State." On the other hand the Hezbollah fighters were often seen as "freedom fighters" and "resistance groups".



*Cartoon published on August 16th, in Eleftherotypia, Greece's second largest daily.*

*The caption reads "Fear and Misery in the Fourth Reich"*

*The Central Board reports that other cartoons of this type were observed in the Greek press.*

*Source: UN Watch*

*Reporting provided by the **Central Board of Jewish Communities***

## Hungary

There was no increase in anti-Semitic acts during the July-August period, according to the Hungarian Jewish representative organization, MAZSIHISZ. Anti-government protests that overtook Budapest in mid-September were marked by manifestations of anti-Semitism from members of the far-right, but it did not seem to be linked to the war in Lebanon, according to Peter Feldmayer, president of MAZSIHISZ.<sup>40</sup>

Some of the September protests were led by football hooligans and far-right groups – Nazi symbols and chants were observed among the demonstrators, and widely reported in the international press. Some demonstrators erected a “wall of shame” in Budapest, displaying a list of those thought to be responsible for the current Hungarian government crisis. The list stressed Jewish personalities.

However, during the Lebanon war such far-right movements were largely silent. There were about three sizable protests against Israel’s actions in Budapest between July and August, and Feldmayer states that some of the demonstrators could be considered Hezbollah supporters, but no overtly anti-Semitic discourse was observed.

Members of the “Left-Wing Front-Communist Youth” were seen carrying Israeli flags defaced with the Swastika, according to the Anti-Defamation League.<sup>41</sup>

The Hungarian Jewish community feels that the atmosphere in Hungary was quite balanced towards the conflict, if not indifferent.

*Reporting assisted by MAZSIHISZ*

---

<sup>40</sup> Report from Peter Feldmayer, president of the Hungarian Jewish Community

<sup>41</sup> [http://www.adl.org/Anti\\_semitism/anti-semitism\\_global\\_incidents\\_2006.asp#Hungary](http://www.adl.org/Anti_semitism/anti-semitism_global_incidents_2006.asp#Hungary)

## **Ireland**

Although anti-Semitic attacks have always been rare against the small Irish Jewish community, the war in Lebanon saw a deeply disturbing event after an anti-war protest organized in Cork.

Following “anti-war” protests in the city of Cork, the local synagogue's caretaker discovered a pair of children's shoes on the morning of Friday, the 11<sup>th</sup> August. The word "Qana" was written on the shoes in red marker.

Fred Rosehill, chairman of the board of trustees for the Cork Hebrew Congregation said the tiny orthodox Jewish community in the city was greatly dismayed by the incident. "Jewish people have lived in Cork for 120 years and we've never experienced anything like this before."

According to the Coordination Forum for Countering Anti-Semitism, the Israeli embassy in Dublin received hundreds of telephone calls protesting Israeli actions – several messages compared Israel to Nazi Germany, and some calls terminated with the caller declaring that “it was a pity Hitler did not finish his job.” The Chief Rabbi of Ireland also received an anti-Semitic phone call in mid-July.

A gravestone in a synagogue in Dublin was also desecrated in mid-July.

### **Government Reaction**

On the 13<sup>th</sup> of July, the Irish Minister of Foreign Affairs urged the Israeli government to ensure that military operations are undertaken only in accordance with international law, while acknowledging the Israel's duty to protect its citizens. “I condemn the deaths of large numbers of civilians in Israeli attacks on Lebanon and in Gaza,” stated the minister. “They are being caused by harshly disproportionate military action.”

## Italy

*The Fondazione centro di documentazione ebraica contemporanea (CDEC - Center for Contemporary Jewish Documentation Foundation) provided an analysis of the Lebanese war in Italy. The CDEC did not track an overall increase in anti-Semitic acts, but demonstrated how the neo-Nazi fringe, far-left and Islamic groups are united in their anti-Israel stance. CDEC is an independent Institute, under the aegis of Unione delle Comunità Ebraiche Italiane, the Union of Italian Jewish Communities.*

### **Introduction**

During the July-August 2006 Israel-Lebanon conflict the CDEC didn't observe any remarkable quantitative or qualitative increase in expressions of prejudice against Jews.

In line with the low level of violence which characterizes Italian anti-Semitism, prejudice against Jews during the war period was expressed mainly in written and verbal forms, with a preponderance of graffiti painted on Jewish community buildings. For example, around the middle of July, the walls of Siena synagogue were smeared with the following graffiti : "No Bombs On Kids" and "Israel Is A Killer".

However, offensive messages (letters and emails) and abusive graffiti do not appear to be the outcome of any propaganda engineered by political parties or political or religious organizations.

Also anti-Zionist polemic stayed within the "usual" Italian bounds and did not show any special virulence. However, on August 19<sup>th</sup>, the "Union of Islamic Communities and Organizations in Italy," published a full page advertisement comparing Israel's actions to those of the Nazis in the newspapers of the Monrif Group (*Il Giorno, La Nazione, Il Resto del Carlino*).<sup>42</sup>

### **Political parties and extremist organizations**

Parliamentary political parties which expressed arbitrary opposition to Israel's actions, together with an equally biased philo-islamism, are the Italian Communists Party (PdCI), the Communist Refoundation Party (PRC) and the Green Federation.

Italian Communists distinguished themselves by being particularly active against the state of Israel. However, at lack of sensibility towards Israel is a characteristic feature of the far left in Italy; it did not start just during the Israel-Lebanon conflict. Moreover, maybe because the three parties listed above are part of the current government coalition, their anti-Israeli approach was far from the invective tones they had used before.

Also the far right organizations didn't deviate from their usual anti-Zionism.

---

<sup>42</sup> The "Union of Islamic Communities and Organizations in Italy," the main Islamic organization in Italy, of an Islamist orientation. It is strongly influenced by the Muslim Brotherhood and is member of FIOE, a structure grouping together all European organizations referring to themselves as Muslim Brotherhood.

## Media Coverage

During the Israel-Lebanon conflict all the main national newspapers showed a substantially balanced attitude, with the exception of some ambiguous and malevolent editorials. Some newspapers expressed their usual anti-Israel, anti-Zionist and pro-Palestinian opinions, namely the *Liberazione* (the official newspaper of the Communist Refoundation Party) and above all the Communist newspaper *Il Manifesto*.

As far as television is concerned, it must be pointed out that one of the public channels provided information in a pro-Palestinian/Lebanese manner, along with a strong criticism of Israel.

## The Far Right

During the Israel-Lebanon conflict the far right kept its usual anti-Zionist attitude. A clear example of this was a demonstration promoted by the Forza Nuova movement in front of the Israeli embassy in Rome last July – during the demonstration a dozen of activists with pro-Palestinian banners threw tomato sauce to symbolize the blood poured by Israelis in the Middle East and handed out pro-Palestinian leaflets.

In the beginning of July, Rome's World Cup victory celebration ended ugly, as swastikas and other neo-Nazi insignia were daubed in Roma's historical Jewish neighborhood, after soccer fans spent the night celebrating their team's win over France. These anti-Semitic graffiti seem to be attributable to the far right but it doesn't seem to be any clear political design behind them.

## Conclusions

Probably the most significant element emerged from the the Israel-Lebanon conflict in July-August 2006 was the substantial acceptance of Hezbollah as a legitimate political movement by a good part of the government coalition and by the media. Hezbollah was mainly described as a "resistance" organization; its anti-Jewish, fundamentalist and terrorist components were omitted.

**Submission written by Adriana Goldstaub and Stefano Gatti, and Translated by Chiara Ferrarotti**



Cover of an August 8<sup>th</sup> Tuscan Satirical magazine. Caption states: "Israel isn't stingy with its bombs in Lebanon.... What kind of Jews are they?" Source: Coordinating Forum for Countering Anti-Semitism

## Latvia

Alex Rutman, Vice-President of the Riga Jewish Community saw no increase in anti-Semitic activity in his country, except for a noticeable increase in internet hate. The community tracked a rise in instances of anti-Semitism appearing on Latvian chatrooms and forums during July and August. Rutman believes this sector of the population, although small, rests firmly anti-Semitic, and the war did not change anything in this respect.

There were no incidents or acts against the Jewish community, and Rutman found both the government and media to be balanced in its approach to the conflict.

*Reporting provided by **Riga Jewish Community***

## Lithuania

Dr. Simonas Alperavicius, the Chairman of the Jewish Community of Lithuania, interviewed for this report, stated that there was no escalation in anti-Semitic acts in Lithuania during July and August. Yet he added that the Jewish community tracked a notable slant in the media towards Lebanese casualties.

There were acts of vandalism against Jewish targets, but it is not clear if they were linked to tensions in the Middle East. The Jewish cemetery *Sudervės Kelias*, still used by the community, was attacked by vandals twice, the first time demolishing 20 gravestones, and the second time destroying 18 of them.

The monuments were restored by the Vilnius city hall.

The Jewish community also noted one graffiti incident in a district of Vilnius.

*Reporting provided by **Jewish Community of Lithuania***

## Netherlands

The *NIK*, the Organisation of Jewish Communities in the Netherlands, report a considerable increase in anti-Semitic incidents and acts, with 105 recorded during the exact duration of the Lebanon war. This compares with 159 such incidents recorded during all of 2005 by the *NIK*. This included threatening phonecalls and emails sent to Jewish organizations, graffiti incidents and the damaging of a Holocaust memorial plaque to a synagogue.

The *NIK* carried out a large pro-Israel campaign, taking out newspaper advertisements, and organizing well-attended demonstrations in support of Israel, throughout the country.

In an August 3rd press statement, the Center for Information and Documentation about Israel (CIDI) announced that they had noticed an increase in anti-Semitic acts in the Netherlands

since the beginning of the fighting in Lebanon.<sup>43</sup> The CIDI conducts research on anti-Semitic activity and distributes information about Israel.

### A Disturbing Comparison

One troubling reaction to the conflict from a Dutch political leader was widely reported in the American press. In an interview with *Penthouse* magazine in July 2006, the chairman and leader in the parliament for the Socialist Party Jan Marijnissen compared Islamic terrorist in the Middle East to the actions of the Dutch resistance against the Nazi German occupiers in World War Two.



*Demonstration in Amsterdam*

In the interview he stated:

*In the Second World War the Dutch blew up municipal buildings to throw sand in the destruction machine of Nazi Germany – in these registers were documents relating to the births, deaths and marriages of Jewish residents. In the Middle East it is not much different.*

*Islamic fundamentalists, including their terrorist branch, are a response to the occupation of Palestine by Israel, the American presence in the Middle East and to the support of the west to undemocratic regimes in the Middle East. Look, I am against violence.....*<sup>44</sup>

Marijnissen eventually apologized after his comments were widely reported, and condemned both Hamas and Hezbollah, yet reiterated that the Islamic terrorist groups exist because of Israel's occupation of Palestine, the American presence in the Middle East and the West's support to undemocratic regimes.

### Government Reaction

The Dutch Foreign Minister Bernard Bot did express his "understanding for Israel's reaction" but said "it would be hard to support Israel in case there will be many civilian casualties". He insisted that Israel should try everything it can to minimize civilian casualties.<sup>45</sup>

There were large anti-Israel protests in the Netherlands, one reaching 5,000 people.

*Reporting assisted by NIK*

<sup>43</sup> "Antisemitisme neemt toe," <http://www.cidi.nl/index.html>

<sup>44</sup> "Marijnissen vergelijkt verzet met terreur Midden-Oosten" [http://www.telegraaf.nl/binnenland/46959011/Marijnissen\\_vergelijkt\\_verzet\\_met\\_terreur.html](http://www.telegraaf.nl/binnenland/46959011/Marijnissen_vergelijkt_verzet_met_terreur.html) July 22, 2006

<sup>45</sup> "Bot: Israël moet burgers ontzien" <http://www.nos.nl/nos/artikelen/2006/07/art000001C6A8ADC0404F1F.html> July 16, 2006

## Norway

The Norwegian Jewish community reports a shooting attack in mid-September on an Oslo synagogue, after a summer which saw an undeniable increase in anti-Semitic acts and discourse, and the discovery of a terrorist plot in late September.

For Anne Sender, President of *Det Mosaiske Trossamfund*, the Jewish community's representative organization, the shooting was the culmination of a series of incidents which created a considerable atmosphere of intimidation and fear for the country's Jews. Coinciding with the outbreak of hostilities in the Middle East an outbreak of desecrations, verbal attacks and insults as well as physical attacks and threats forced the community to take additional security measures and to heavily reinforce the police presence around Jewish buildings.

Furthermore, an article by a well known intellectual and writer provoked an acrimonious debate involving the Jewish community and Israel. (see below)

### Anti-Semitic Acts and the Oslo Synagogue Attack

Early in the morning on Sunday the 17<sup>th</sup> of September, several rounds from an automatic military rifle were fired at a synagogue owned by the Jewish community. Luckily no one was injured. Norwegian police have charged four men in the attack on the synagogue – they said that one suspect was Norwegian, and the others had different backgrounds. They have since been charged by police with plotting to kill the Israel and American ambassadors. (see below)



*Damage to the synagogue*

Yet this particular synagogue was targeted numerous times during the course of the Lebanon war, turning the place of worship almost into a focal point for protests against Israel.

On 22nd July graffiti was daubed on the wall opposite the synagogue, stating “Free Lebanon – Free Palestine”. Then, on 29<sup>th</sup> July, a person, apparently of Norwegian origin stopped by the synagogue and defecated on the stairs near the front gate of the building. He then brought stones from the neighbouring courtyard and started to throw them at both the synagogue and the community building. Two windows in the synagogue were broken and some damage was caused to the building.

Press reports state that the individual could have been present at an anti-Israel demonstration that was held in front of the Israel embassy earlier in the day.

The first noticeable outbreak of incidents was recorded in June, starting with graffiti incidents and threatening phone calls, just as Israel began operations in the Gaza Strip following the kidnapping of an IDF soldier. Then on 15<sup>th</sup> July, the Oslo community's cantor was physically attacked by three men of Arab origin, who had followed him in a car shouting abuse. Further threatening phone calls and anti-Semitic emails were reported by the Community.

## Plot to Kill Israeli Ambassador

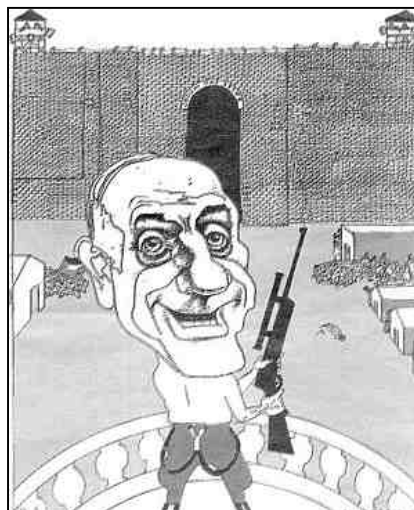
Adding to the general woes of the Jewish community, the Norwegian government announced at the end of September that it had cracked an alleged plot to decapitate the Israel ambassador to Norway and blow up the Israel and American embassies in the city, following the arrest of four suspects in the shooting against the Oslo synagogue. According to the Israel press, the four suspects – who are also facing charges of terrorism for the synagogue attack – hold “radical Islamic views”.<sup>46</sup>

## The Gaarder Affair

On August 5th, Jostein Gaarder, a famous Norwegian intellectual and author of several novels, short stories and children's books, including the novel “Sophie's World,” published an article in Norway's most respected newspaper, *Aftenposten*, entitled “God's chosen People.”<sup>47</sup>

The article was written as an almost whimsical biblical prophecy, imagining in essence what would become of Israel and its Jewish citizens should it not change its current course of action. It began with the author stating “We do no longer recognize the state of Israel.” It continues:

*We do not believe in the notion of God's chosen people. We laugh at this people's fancies and weep over its misdeeds. To act as God's chosen people is not only stupid and arrogant, but a crime against humanity. We call it racism.*



*Cartoon that appeared in a July issue of "Dagbladet" showing Israeli PM Olmert as a Nazi concentration camp commander*

The article continues to criticize the fundamentals of the State of Israel, accuse Jews of celebrating the death of Arab citizens just as they fete the plagues rained on ancient Egypt and quote biblical values of humanism, almost as lessons to be learned by Israel and the Jewish people. It ends ominously:

*If the entire Israeli nation should fall to its own devices and parts of the population have to flee the occupied areas into another diaspora, then we say: May the surroundings stay calm and show them mercy. It is forever a crime without mitigation to lay hand on refugees and stateless people.*

The article caused international controversy and created a public debate that Anne Sender judged difficult, yet ultimately healthy for Norwegian society. Many public personalities, politicians and intellectuals denounced the tone of the article, and linked it with ancient Christian anti-Semitism. “By giving the impression that Israeli politics are governed by Jewish religious ideas, Gaarder's column can fuel old prejudices and create new hatred of Jews,” religious scholar Bente Groth wrote in *Aftenposten*.<sup>48</sup>

<sup>46</sup> Assaf Uni, “Four in custody for plot to kill Israeli ambassador in Norway” *Haaretz* <http://www.haaretz.com/hasen/spages/766295.html> September 22, 2006

<sup>47</sup> Translation taken from <http://sirocco.blogsome.com/>

<sup>48</sup> “Norwegian writer under fire for questioning Israel's legitimacy”, JTA, August 9<sup>th</sup>, 2006

## **Government and Public Reaction**

The Norwegian government was critical of Israel during the Lebanon war, judging its attack “disproportionate”, although it generally approved of Israel’s right to self-defence, according to Sender.

The far right “Party of Progress,” the *Fremskrittspartiet*, which gained 22% of the vote in 2005 legislative elections, held a balanced debate during the war, reports Sender, who added that the Jewish community in fact found that the party held a “principled stance” regarding the Israeli debate.

*Reporting assisted by **Det Mosaiske Trossamfund***

## Poland

### *Submission by Anna Zielinska of the Warsaw Jewish Community:*

Poland is considered “pro-Israeli”, one of the few in the European Union to often side with Israel and the USA, and the war in Lebanon did not change this general attitude, which tends to view a separation between Israeli and local Jewish issues.

There were no incidents involving attacks on Jews or the Israeli Embassy. However, there was a visible general anti-Jewish atmosphere that has deeper roots in the Polish political situation. Although anti-Semitism can be seen to be growing amongst segments of the populace, this is not linked to the Lebanon war. (see below)

Concurrently, the war in Lebanon did not change the strong support shown by the Polish government in support of Israel, and the public attitude stays quite pro-Israeli.

### **Media Coverage**

There was some radicalization noticeable in the internet media’s reporting of the war and images of destruction in Beirut had a considerable effect on Polish citizens overall. Besides this, Polish media was quite objective in its coverage of the war.

A *National TV* reporter who was sent to Lebanon was called back due to his strong pro-Lebanese coverage of the conflict. Channel 1 on Polish national television made a documentary on the post-war situation in Israel, including Israeli Embassy Spokesman Michael Sobelman as part of the crew.

Three main Polish dailies *Gazeta Wyborcza*, *Rzeczpospolita* and *Dziennik* presented interviews with Israeli politicians and writers, like Amos Oz and David Grossman, and offered many articles written by Israeli commentators. The presentation of the subject matter gave plenty of voice to the Israeli side of the conflict and the press made many connections between this conflict and Iran and its connections with Hezbollah.

Only “*Nasz Dziennik*” (Our Journal), a traditionally anti-Semitic daily, held an anti-Israeli position.

Finally the Israel Embassy Spokesperson Michael Sobelman, the Israeli Ambassador David Peleg and the Political Attaché Yossi Levi were all interviewed by the Polish radio and press and the Embassy also managed to publicize a substantial number of articles.

### **Government Reaction**

Since the Presidential and Parliamentary elections held last autumn, the public political discourse has focused heavily on national and religious issues, with politicians referring to “historical and traditional values,” offering support to right wing media and institutions. The showcase for this new ideology may be the Church-owned *Radio Maryja*, which is now infamous after one of its commentators Stanislaw Michalkiewicz aired a virulent broadcast on “Radio Maryja” on 27<sup>th</sup> March, attacking the so-called “Judeans,” whom he accused of

“sneaking up from the back, trying to force our government to pay protection money, concealing that fact by calling it a compensation.”<sup>49</sup>

Additionally, on 5<sup>th</sup> May, the ruling Polish government brought into its coalition two small populist extreme-right parties, whose leaders have been accused of anti-Semitism and racism. Nevertheless, the government coalition continues to support Israel and defend Jewish causes, despite the fact that their nationalistic, xenophobic and traditionally Catholic attitude creates a climate for racism and anti-Semitism.

### **Public Demonstrations**

Demonstrations supporting the Lebanese were marginal, often organized by Muslim student groups in conjunction with left-wing organizations, often under the slogan *Rece precz od Libanu* (Hands off Lebanon)<sup>50</sup>. Two such protests were held in front of the Israel Embassy in Warsaw, gathering no more than 100 people.

On the other hand one pro-Israel demonstration was organized with the cooperation of the Warsaw Jewish Community and the Protestant Foundation “Hope for the Future.” It gathered about 300 people, receiving considerable press coverage (six national and foreign TV stations were present).

---

<sup>49</sup> For the full text of the speech, [http://www.eurojewcong.org/ejc/news.php?id\\_article=538](http://www.eurojewcong.org/ejc/news.php?id_article=538)

<sup>50</sup> See [www.arabia.pl](http://www.arabia.pl) and [www.vivapalestyna.pl](http://www.vivapalestyna.pl)

## Portugal

No major anti-Semitic incidents were reported during the Lebanon war, and the atmosphere was quite favourable for the country's small Jewish community, according to Jose Oulmam Carp, President of the Jewish Community of Lisbon.<sup>51</sup>

Carp pointed out that during the war media coverage of the conflict was quite balanced, and that the government is widely considered to be "pro-American" and "pro-Israeli".

*Reporting provided by Jewish Community of Lisbon*

## Romania

According to the Federation of Jewish Communities of Romania (FEDROM) the atmosphere in Romania was extremely positive for the country's Jewish community, and the general "pro-Israeli" tone of both the media and the president was a strong factor in comforting the country's Jews. Very few anti-Semitic acts and incidents were recorded by the community, and no extraordinary increase was noted.

FEDROM was quite forthright and open about its solidarity with Israel during the war, organizing rallies in the center of Bucharest during the months of July and August. The community's president, Dr. Aurel Vainer appeared often in the press arguing openly for disarming Hezbollah, and protecting Israel's security.

In an interview, President Vainer said that both the Romanian press and public figures maintained a definite "pro-Israel" and "pro-American" stance. He stated his belief that Romanian Jews feel quite comfortable expressing their views.<sup>52</sup>

Solidarity events were also organized in Bucharest, with large participation. Small anti-Israeli demonstrations were also held in the city by the country's small population of Arab origin.

Dr. Vainer considered the Romanian position to be balanced and fair. On 19<sup>th</sup> July, the Romanian President Traian Basescu, announced "we recognize Israel's right to security but a humanitarian crisis is generated".<sup>53</sup> FEDROM maintained an open dialogue with its government during the crisis, informing leaders of the solidarity actions of the Jewish community.

FEDROM also reports that far-right movements did not openly comment on the war – this includes both the "Legionnaires", a revisionist and racist group, and the far-right party *Romania Mare* (Greater Romania), which holds counts 31 members of parliament following the 2004 elections.

*Reporting assisted by FEDROM*

---

<sup>51</sup> Interview with Jose Oulman Carp, President of the Jewish Community of Lisbon, September 11<sup>th</sup>, 2006

<sup>52</sup> Interview with Dr. Aurel Vainer, President of the Federation of Jewish Communities of Romania, September 7, 2006

<sup>53</sup> "Romanian President: 'Humanitarian crisis is generated' in Lebanon", [http://english.hotnews.ro/Israel-generated-humanitarian-crisis-Romanian-president-said-articol\\_43214.htm](http://english.hotnews.ro/Israel-generated-humanitarian-crisis-Romanian-president-said-articol_43214.htm) July 19, 2006

## Russia

*The SOVA center released a report on anti-Semitism in Russia in 2006. Below you will find excerpts from the report. To access the full report please visit <http://xeno.sova-center.ru/6BA2468/6BB4254/8187A06>*

### **Anti-Semitism in Russia. January – September 2006**

The Lebanon war was widely covered in Russian media. Although the coverage was not entirely objective, for our heavily-regulated mass media, especially the television, the level of objectivity was high.

We could probably explain the coverage by the specific Russian perception of Arab-Israeli conflict in general – the media perception of Israel is very ambivalent, but the perception of the Arab side is predominantly negative, following the Chechen war and terrorism inside Russia. Even many anti-Semites have respect for the State of Israel.

Most people that could be called xenophobic – a majority of Russians since the second Chechen war – have negative feelings against Arabs, because they are associated with terrorism, and they are “southerners,” who are the main targets of xenophobia in Russia. In general in 2006, all main trends observed in Russia before continued and evolved, but similar to other forms of radical nationalism, anti-Semitism became more intense and aggressive.

### ***General Trends***

In general in 2006, all main trends observed in Russia before<sup>54</sup> continued and evolved, but similar to other forms of radical nationalism, anti-Semitism became more intense and aggressive.

The biggest incident in 2006 continues to be the attack against a Hassid synagogue in Moscow by Alexander Koptsev, a 21-year-old Moscovite. On 11 January, he walked into the synagogue armed with a knife during the evening prayer and wounded 9 people before being apprehended.

Physical attacks targeting Jews (or perceived Jews) and driven by explicitly racist motives and ideas are fairly rare in the context of rapidly growing racist violence in Russia. We usually document less than a dozen such attacks each year. Over the nine months of 2006, in addition to the mentioned attacks against the synagogues, SOVA Center documented two other anti-Semitic incidents.

Vandalism targeting Jewish religious and cultural facilities is very common, often combined with threats to life and health of the attending people. In 2006, yet another attempted arson targeting a synagogue was reported in Astrakhan, while in four other cities vandals broke glass windows in synagogues and Jewish cultural centers. Anti-Semitic graffiti and leaflets appear frequently in virtually all Russian regions.

---

<sup>54</sup> Verkhovsky Alexander. Anti-Semitism in Russia: 2005. Key Developments and New Trends // SOVA-Center (<http://xeno.sova-center.ru/6BA2468/6BB4208/706B4D8>).

However, the main manifestation of anti-Semitism is propaganda in mass media. Anti-Semitic articles are published even by respectable mainstream press, let alone small-circulation, left radical outlets. The most outrageous publication of this type was an attempt to resuscitate the myth that ten missing children in Krasnoyarsk were victims of ritual killing by Jews – it appeared in *Krasnoyarsky Komsomolets*, one of the top circulation newspapers in *Krasnoyarsk Kray*. *Moscovsky Komsomolets* in Ryazan published a classic anti-Semitic article about the former mayor – known, incidentally, for his anti-Semitism.

There has been positive progress in counteracting anti-Semitic manifestations since previous years. Following Koptsev's attack against the synagogue, the law enforcement authorities widely declared an intention to inspect the Web for radical right-wing content. This declaration alone, combined with arrests of two known right-wing radicals (for nationalist, rather than anti-Semitic propaganda) caused panic among Russian neo-Nazi, so that a number of right-wing radical websites were either closed or revised between February and March.

*By Galina Kozhevnikova and Alexander Verkhovsky of the SOVA Center*

## Serbia

The Commission for Monitoring of Anti-Semitism, a division of the Federation of Jewish Communities in Serbia, notes that although graffiti incidents were recorded, the level of anti-Semitic activity throughout Serbia maintained its “normal” levels during July and August.<sup>55</sup>

The most publicized event was the beating of two Israeli tourists during a rock music festival at the end of August. The couple, in their mid-twenties, were apparently provoked by a group of skinheads late at night in a central Belgrade park, then beaten after an exchange of insults. One of the Israelis, who received severe head injuries, reported that the group was chanting “Auschwitz, Auschwitz.”<sup>56</sup>

According to the Jewish community, the incident could not be directly linked to the Lebanon conflict, although was a sign that skinhead-related acts are on the rise in Serbia.

Serbian Nationalist parties did not issue any anti-Semitic statements – they are rarely anti-Jewish, seeming to reserve their venom for the other ethnic minorities of the former Yugoslavia.

The police have not yet begun to record anti-Semitic statistics by month, so it was difficult for the Federation to provide exact numbers.

*Reporting assisted by the Federation of Jewish Communities in*

---

<sup>55</sup> Interview with A. Lebl, President of the Commission for Monitoring Anti-Semitism

<sup>56</sup> “Skinheads beat 2 Israelis in Belgrade”, *Jerusalem Post*, August 29, 2006

## Slovakia

Except for a Jewish cemetery desecration that the Jewish community believed was the work of drunken teenagers, Slovakian Jews experienced almost no anti-Semitic acts nor felt any worrying discourse from their government, despite the inclusion of a far-right party in the governing coalition.<sup>57</sup>

After winning parliamentary elections, a leftist Slovak party invited a far-right party known for its xenophobic and ultra-nationalistic views to join a new coalition government this July. The Slovak National Party (SNS), lead by Jan Slota, became the third-largest party in the country with 11,7% of the vote, and was subsequently asked to join a new coalition with the winning leftist party, *Smer*, led by Robert Fico. The SNS is openly hostile to minorities and has targeted Roma and ethnic Hungarians.

Yet Fero Alexander, Executive Chairman of the Central Union of Jewish Religious Communities in Slovakia reports that Slota and his party remained silent during the war in Lebanon.

The SNS is openly racist against the country's large Roma population, and quite confrontational with the Hungarian minority, but has a limited history of openly anti-Semitic discourse. However, the party has actively fought for the public rehabilitation of Jozef Tiso, the anti-Semitic priest and politician who ruled Nazi-aligned Slovakia from 1939-1945, and under whose rule over 70,000 Jews were deported to Nazi death and concentration camps.

The Jewish community found that the media was still quite one-sided, and rarely showed Israeli casualties, while focusing singly on the Lebanese side of the war.

*Reporting assisted by the Central Union of Jewish Religious Communities*

## Spain

Spain received international coverage for its Prime Minister during the Lebanon war, who is considered by many observers to be one of the more “anti-Israel” heads of government in Europe.

At a July 19th Socialist rally, President of the Government José Luis Rodríguez Zapatero was photographed wearing a kaffiyeh, the Palestinian headdress that for many in Europe symbolizes the radical anti-Israeli left. The Prime Minister did not actually put the scarf on – it was placed on his



*Photo taken at the Socialist Rally*

---

<sup>57</sup> Interview with Fero Alexander, Executive Chairman, Central Union of Jewish Religious Communities in Slovakia, September 14<sup>th</sup>, 2006

neck by a member of an al-Fatah youth group.

This took place at the international Socialist youth festival in Alicante, which was attended by more than 3,000 people including Palestinians and Israelis.

The center-right opposition, led by the Popular Party, which is widely considered pro-Israel, was extremely critical of Zapatero after the headscarf fiasco. Zapatero had been criticized before by the opposition for his anti-Israel stance, even to the point of being called an anti-Semite.<sup>58</sup> After the event, Gustavo de Aristegui, spokesperson for the PP, called the photo "unfortunate" in the context of the situation in the Middle East, and accused the government of anti-Semitism.<sup>59</sup>

During the war, Prime Minister declared "From my point of view, Israel is wrong. One thing is self-defense, and the other is to launch a counter-offensive consisting of a general attack in Lebanon and Gaza that is just going to further escalate violence in the area."<sup>60</sup>

A publication by the Federation of Jewish Communities in Spain on the media coverage of the war found a slanted and biased perspective towards the Lebanese side during the conflict.

Some articles that appeared in the mainstream press particularly distressed the Spanish Jewish community. Notably one article that appeared in *El Mundo*, entitled *Cauchemar Estival*, made a link between Nazi Germany and Israel, accusing Israel of using the same arguments made by the Nazi leaders to justify "its aggression." The article continues, "Now the victims of this period (the 1930s) have become the executioners..... The victims of today are systematically taken hostage, reduced to live in ghettos, and closed in by a horrible wall."

On 25th July 2006, about a dozen swastikas were sprayed on the building housing the "Jewish Information Center" in Toledo.<sup>61</sup>

Reporting assisted by the Federation of Jewish Communities in Spain

---

<sup>58</sup> Ignacio Russell Cano, "In Spain, anti-Semitism is new leftist trend," *Yediot Ahronot* July 20, 2006 <http://www.ynetnews.com/articles/0,7340,L-3278919,00.html>

<sup>59</sup> "Spanish PM in scarf scandal," *News 24*, July 7, 2006 [http://www.news24.com/News24/World/News/0,,2-10-1462\\_1970868,00.html](http://www.news24.com/News24/World/News/0,,2-10-1462_1970868,00.html)

<sup>60</sup> Manfred Gerstenfeld, "Europe's Mindset Toward Israel as Accentuated by the Lebanon War," *Jerusalem Center for Public Affairs*, October 1, 2006.

<sup>61</sup> The Coordination Forum for Countering Antisemitism <http://www.antisemitism.org.il/frontend/english/viewarticle.asp?id=18246&itemtype=1>

## Sweden

*Below find the contribution from the Judiska Församlingen i Stockholm (Jewish Community of Stockholm) written by Richard Slätt. Anti-Semitic demonstrations and rhetoric were the primary manifestation of anti-Semitism during the war, and included members of the extreme-left, extreme-right wing and Islamic movements.*

As the war between Israel and Hezbollah started on the 12<sup>th</sup> of July, it did not take long before the magazine *Arbetaren* declared that they stood on Hezbollah's side in the conflict. In an editorial article they stated that Hezbollah "wears the honour with them throughout history".<sup>62</sup>

After that the demonstrations took over. The first gathered around 2000 people. One of the speakers had a t-shirt with the Hezbollah logo. In Stockholm, Gothenburg and Malmö Hizbollah flags were present.

The demonstrations against Israel did not include just left-wing activists. In Gothenburg, neo-Nazis demonstrated against Israel on the 22<sup>nd</sup> of July. Yet *Arbetaren* took some heavy blows from former employee Rasmus Fleischer, who that stated that "Hezbollah must be defeated." Other left-wing activists also attacked *Arbetaren* for having the wrong focus on the conflict.

On the 24<sup>th</sup> of July a large demonstration was held in Malmö where calls were heard along the lines of:

*Allemhom Alrashhash: Teach them to use automatic weapons. Allemhom Qatl Al Yahud: Teach them to kill jews. Shabon Wahed Lan Yamout: A united people that won't die. Qattel, Qattel Tel Abib: Take the war, take the war to Tel Aviv*

Present at the demonstration were members from the *Vänsterpartiet*, (the "Left Party," a member of the Nordic Green Left Alliance) who did nothing to stop the shouts, nor to stop the use of the Hezbollah flags.

At another demonstration in Stockholm arranged by the Green Party (*Miljöpartiet*), the *Vänsterpartiet*, the socialist youth organization (*Socialdemokratiska Ungdomsförbundet*) and activists from the ISM (International Solidarity Movement), participants stated their desire that Jan Eliasson, Foreign Minister, "breath fire against Israel." At the same meeting the leader of the Left Party, Lars Ohly, declared that he thought the war was a genocide. Also at the meeting, Ehud Olmert and Israel were declared synonymous with Hitler and Nazi-Germany, and the star of David synonymous with the Swastika. Among the chants heard at this march "Dear, dear Nasrallah – bomb Tel Aviv".

In the liberal *Expressen*, Rasmus Fleischer, a former employee at *Arbetaren*, debated with Andreas Malm, the man behind the editorials during the war. Fleischer attacked the view of Hezbollah as a "social movement" and argued that left must address the anti-Semitism within the organization.

On the 22<sup>nd</sup> of August a demonstration was held at the square of Raoul Wallenberg in Stockholm. 500 people gathered for a demonstration under the theme, "Yes to peace – No to terror". Leftwing-activists tried to attack the meeting but were stopped by the police. The activists shouted "Intifada shows the way".

---

<sup>62</sup> Swedish weekly newspaper, published by the anarcho-syndicalist union SAC.

## Conclusion

Even if the rhetorical situation was clearly anti-Semitic it did not spill over into attacks against the synagogues in Sweden, this time. Many editorials, left and right, took issue with those Swedes that declared support for Hezbollah and Nasrallah. Foreign Minister Jan Eliasson, stated in a number of articles that he was afraid that the actions taken by Israel would lead to a radicalization of the counterpart.

No government officials officially supported Israel's action.

## Switzerland

With its considerable Lebanese population, Switzerland saw some of the most disturbing “pro-Lebanon” marches in Europe, some replete with Hezbollah flags, photographs of its leader Hassan Nasrallah and calls of “Death to Israel”. Starting in late July, “anti-Israeli” marches took place in Geneva and in Bern, often supported by the Socialist and/or Green parties.

On July 24<sup>th</sup>, the watchdog body of the Jewish Community, the CICAD (*Coordination communautaire contre l'antisémitisme*) issued a press release to this effect, stating that such a troubling trend could be observed during the “anti-Israeli” protest movement.



*Demonstration in Bern, July 21. Source: CICAD*

The CICAD issued its particular concern about a demonstration that took place in Bern on the 21<sup>st</sup> of July, where portraits of Nasrallah and Israeli flags festooned with swastikas were quite evident. Speaking at the event was a Member of the National Council of Switzerland in Bern and Green party member Daniel Vischer.

On the 31<sup>st</sup> of July a similar demonstration took place in Geneva with the participation of around 500 people – yellow Hezbollah flags and Israeli flags marked with a swastika were abundant, according to observers.

The Swiss Federation of Jewish Communities was open in supporting Israel in its war against Hezbollah, pointing out that Israel itself was not solely responsible for sparking the conflict. Community leaders were active in writing articles and preparing briefings for the Swiss public on what they considered was Israel's legitimate right to self-defense.

As with other European communities, such public mobilization provoked sometime vehement rebukes from the Swiss public at large, in the form of extremely questionable letters and emails. One particular letter received by the Swiss Jewish community mentioned that a worldwide increase in anti-Semitism would be “logical” following Israel's actions.

## Government and Media Reaction

The CICAD followed closely the coverage of the war and attitude towards Israel, in all sectors of the Swiss media. Although without doubt heavily critical of Israel, many opinion pieces and reader's letters published in the full gamut of Swiss newspapers skimmed a fine line between criticism of the state of Israel and of the Jewish people. After quite thorough monitoring, the CICAD discovered numerous examples of troubling discourse in the "letters from our readers" section, many coming from members of the Lebanese community resident in Switzerland.

These letters, although obviously not expressing the newspaper's views, were allowed to be published in a variety of widely circulated Swiss Francophone papers. A small selection of the anti-Semitic and vehemently anti-Israel articles:

"And what for? So that the chosen people prove to what point they are powerful and above those of this region? The God of the Jews, Moses, who was chosen long ago is a God of war....." **Letter of the Day**, in the *Nouvelliste*, July 22<sup>nd</sup>.

"After the Holocaust...a Jewish network was established everywhere, in every country, in every institutions to track what is said, in order to prevent future actions against the Jewish people...Now I address the Jewish people, the Holocaust is 60 years behind us, will you continue to justify the unjustifiable and until when?" *Nouvelliste*, August 2<sup>nd</sup>.

"The leaders, Hitlerian, Chilean, Argentine, Serbian etc. have been accused of genocide. However, these leaders were not worse than this "tiny" American President and his Israeli vassals...If I were Muslim, I would volunteer to assure that Israel and the United States pay a price for their actions...Don't speak to us of our Federal authorities, they would be too much to say, because they are acting like Pontius Pilate." *24 Heures*, August 7<sup>th</sup>.

The CICAD also tracked an increase in anti-Semitic cyberhate on various Swiss forums, including chat rooms of major Swiss newspapers.

*Reporting assisted by CICAD*

## Turkey

The Jewish Community in Turkey reports that many Jews in Turkey felt daily anti-Semitic pressure, for the “first time in their lives”.<sup>63</sup>

Ever since the worldwide increase in anti-Semitic violence and discourse that began in 2000, Turkish Jews have described a warm relationship with the overwhelming Muslim majority, with Turkey’s strategic relationship with Israel comforting for many Turkish Jews. The Turkish Jewish Community however now feels that the Lebanese war contributed to deterioration in the image of not only Israel, but of Jews, a trend which it notes is not just limited to Turkey.

Although statistics on anti-Semitic acts cannot be provided, the Jewish community describes a number of seemingly highly evocative incidents that point to an increase in hatred against Turkey’s well-integrated Jewish community:

- A Jewish student in the “Yidliz Teknik University” was verbally attacked by his professor during a class over Israel’s actions in Lebanon
- Mehmet Pamak, the president of ILKAV, a scientific and cultural research foundation, criticized the Turkish Jewish community for their “shameful silence” during the war
- Businessmen reported to the Jewish community that clients and associates were for the first time questioning their Jewish origins, with some customers refusing to deal with Jews for the first time ever
- An Englishman with a knit cap similar to a kippa was almost beaten when he approached an anti-Israel protest march in Istanbul – when he stated he was not Jewish he received apologies from his would-be attackers.

The Jewish community’s weekly newspaper “*Shalom*” reported a marked increase in anti-Semitic mails – in only one week during the conflict the journal received approximately 150 anti-Semitic mails.

After the August ceasefire, anti-Semitic incidents and defamatory newspaper articles declined to pre-war levels, reports the Jewish community.

The Turkish Jewish community cites a recent Pew Global Attitudes Survey made during the summer which shows that only 15 percent of Turks “look kindly upon Jews”.

### Government/Media Reaction and the “Islamist Press”

Openly anti-Semitic vitriol, similar to that which has been documented recently in some media in the Arab world, was expressed openly and daily in what was described by the Jewish community as the “Islamist Press.” According to the Jewish community, there were “thousands” of such comments that directly attacked world Jewry. Newspapers close to Islamist movements published daily sensational attacks on Israel, often carrying photos of dead Lebanese children with titles such as “Bloody Murderers.”

The Islamist Press was also responsible during the war of accusing Israeli tourists of spreading a blood-sucking tick, the so-called “Crimean-Congo hemorrhagic fever” in order to

---

<sup>63</sup> Submission of the Jewish Community in Turkey, October 2006

poison the Turkish people! The Coordinating Forum for Countering Anti-Semitism also reports that some Israeli tourists complained of harassment in the southern part of the country.<sup>64</sup>

Among some of the particularly jarring quotes that appeared in the press:

“Their people are thirsty for blood. They can only survive by drinking blood because they have the soul of Frankenstein.” Yusuf Kaplan (*Teni Shafak*, 7<sup>th</sup> July).

“We say that we saved Jewish lives that we brought from Spain..... Their leaders always have behaved nicely to us and behind our backs they do every kind of evil like they have done for five hundred years..... I say now that they have to go. Also my antipathy for Hitler started to change too.” Abdullah Kihc (*Once Vatan*, 26<sup>th</sup> July).

Yet it is important to point out that many mainstream columnists were also quite open in their support of Israel and criticism of Hezbollah and its supporters. Quite a few articles appeared in mainstream newspapers such as *Günes*, *Aksam* and *Hürriyet* attacking the Iranian regime and its support of terror groups such as Hezbollah.

Despite some positive articles in the press, the overwhelming volume of negative reaction presented a view to Turks of the Lebanon war as a battle between Judaism and Islam.

Besides the Islamic media, the leftist press was also critical of Israel, and accused the Turkish state of supporting Israel. The leftist press included Israel under its general crusade, which could be characterized as anti-American, “anti-capitalist” and “anti-imperialist,” according to the Jewish Community in Turkey.

*Reporting provided by the Jewish Community in Turkey*

---

<sup>64</sup> According to the Coordinating Forum for Countering Anti-Semitism, two Israeli families were attacked in Lebanon. See: <http://www.antisemitism.org.il/frontend/english/viewarticle.asp?id=18263&itemtype=1>

## Ukraine

Information is scarce on the Ukraine, as authorities have not begun adequately classifying, tracking and monitoring the increasing anti-Semitic and hate crime in the country. Yet a rise in anti-Semitism has been readily noticeable in the country, a trend that goes much deeper than any correlation with events in the Middle East. It is not the purpose of this paper to examine the worrying growth of anti-Semitism in Ukraine – literature is available on this subject though.<sup>65</sup>

For the past few years, a seemingly unending spate of attacks have continued to rattle the Jewish community of Ukraine, with synagogue vandalism, personal assaults and particularly virulent anti-Semitic public discourse seen from public personalities. Leading and providing much of the material for Jew hatred in Ukraine is the infamous Interregional Academy of Personnel Management, known as the MAUP, and its Rector Grigory Shchyokin. Rector Shchyokin recently declared his solidarity with the Iranian President Ahmadinejad's statement that Israel should be "wiped of the map."

The MAUP is the largest university in the Ukraine, and is the *bête noire* of international and Ukrainian Jewish organizations, as it is without doubt the country's largest instigator of anti-Semitic hate. International organizations have been pushing the Ukrainian government to crack down on the MAUP, which regularly holds anti-Semitic conferences, hosts well known international racists and supplies up to 80 percent of the country's anti-Semitic pamphlets, publication and other literature. In June 2006 the government began to make its first steps in tackling the university, shutting down seven regional campuses.<sup>66</sup>

Among the incidents reported in Ukraine during the Lebanon war: (Source: Union of Councils of Jews in the Former Soviet Union and the Coordination Forum for Countering Antisemitism)<sup>67</sup>

- Vandals threw stones at a Jewish orphanage in Zhitomir, Ukraine on July 23<sup>rd</sup>. Just days earlier, the director's house was also attacked. A synagogue in Zhitomir was also vandalized.
- The Babi Yar memorial in Kiev was vandalized, not for the first time, only weeks before the commemoration of the Babi Yar massacre took place
- The city of Dnepropetrovsk saw new anti-Semitic graffiti appearing in the city center during the Lebanon war, reading "Palestine for Arabs; Babi Yar for Yids."
- Instructors and teachers from a Reform movement were beaten up in Kiev in mid-August after singing Israeli songs in a cafe .

---

<sup>65</sup> For an excellent report on the current increase of anti-Semitism in Ukraine, see the Euro-Asian Jewish Congress report on anti-Semitism by Vyacheslav Likhachev, June 2006, at: [http://www.eajc.org/program\\_art\\_e.php?id=29](http://www.eajc.org/program_art_e.php?id=29)

<sup>66</sup> For a recent report on the MAUP, see American Jewish Committee, "An Incubator of Hatred, Pervasive Anti-Semitism at MAUP, a Leading Ukrainian University," July 2006 <http://www.ajc.org/atf/cf/%7B42D75369-D582-4380-8395-D25925B85EAF%7D/MAUP.PDF>

<sup>67</sup> [www.antisemitism.org.il](http://www.antisemitism.org.il) and [www.fsmonitor.com](http://www.fsmonitor.com)

## UK

The United Kingdom witnessed a remarkable increase in anti-Semitic acts and incidents during the period of the Lebanon war. July 2006 was the third worst month on record in the United Kingdom, according to the Community Security Trust (CST), the Jewish community's security organization and the only body in the country dedicated to collecting, analyzing, responding to and publishing statistics relating to anti-Semitism.

Among the CST's figures are an unprecedented 132 incidents in 33 days between July and August, with a diverse geographical spread across the United Kingdom. The majority of incidents involved hate mail, e-mails, verbal abuse and graffiti on Jewish property. In October 2000, the worst calendar month on record, 105 incidents were recorded by the CST.

The British Jewish community was among the first in Europe to publicly announce their findings on anti-Semitic indicators and statistics following the Lebanon conflict. The CST went public in early September, stating that anti-Semitic incidents in the UK had doubled for the period. The release of these statistics had added relevance, as the Report of the All-Party Parliamentary Inquiry into anti-Semitism was also published on the 7<sup>th</sup> of September. The investigation noted an increase in anti-Semitism in Britain since 2000 and requested additional security measures to ensure the safety of U.K. Jews and Jewish institutions.<sup>68</sup>

In releasing their statistics, the CST also recommended that British Jewish communities and organizations follow additional security measures, at the same time noting the threat of terrorist attacks by UK based pro-Al-Qaida groups. Synagogue congregants were urged to disperse immediately after services, among other steps recommended by the CST.

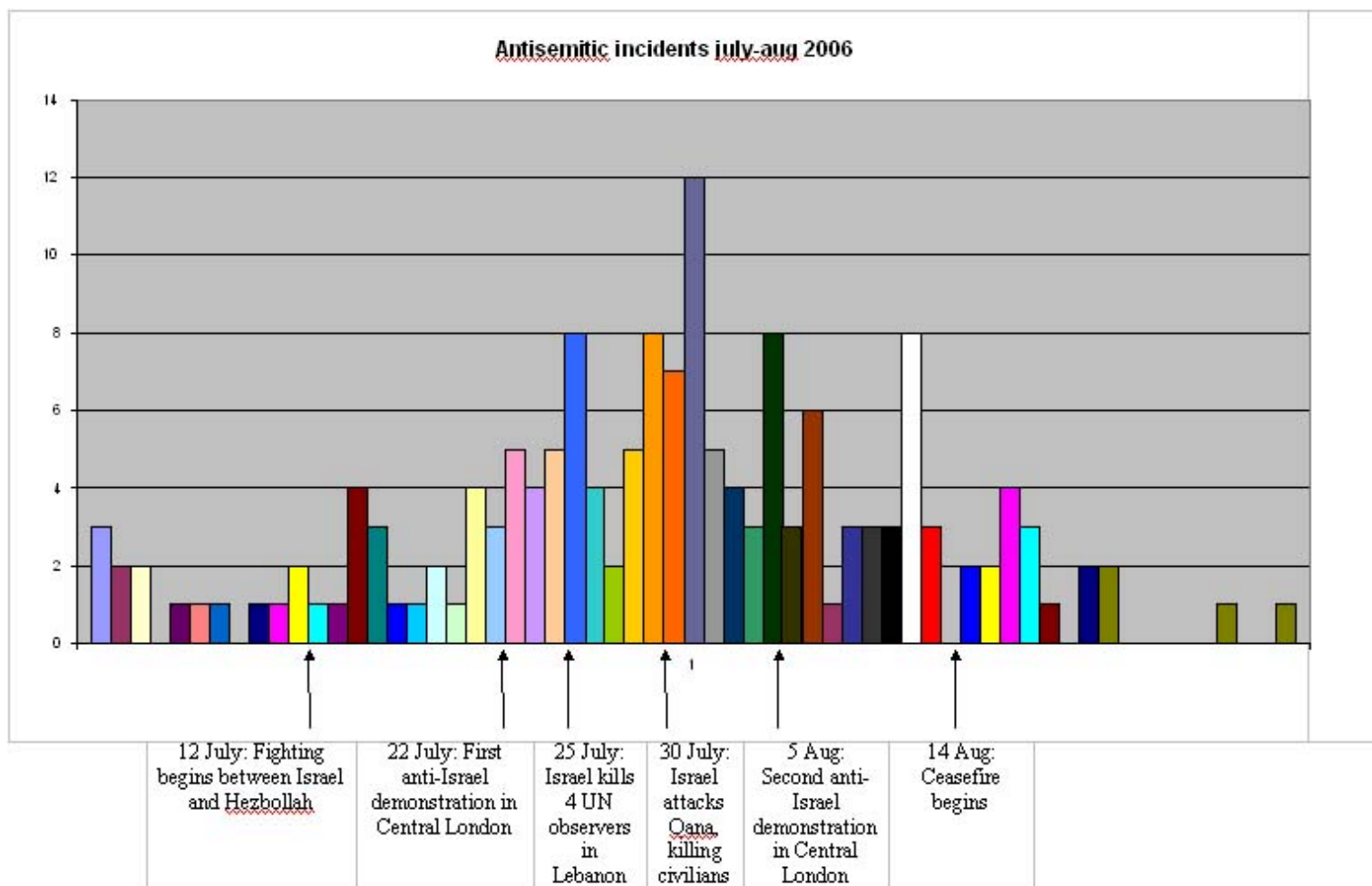
In the aftermath of the war in Lebanon, the UK Jewish community and its security agency continue to pressure for an increase in government-provided security, and investigation of anti-Semitic crimes.

### Acts and Incidents

In the chart below, the CST documents a striking rise and fall of anti-Semitic incidents that appears directly related to events in the Middle East. What was equally noteworthy was how quickly incidents dropped to pre-war levels after the cessation of hostilities between Hezbollah and Israel. As mentioned above, the community witnessed a wide range of attacks, including attacks on Jewish-owned stores, hate mail sent to representatives of the Jewish community and verbal and physical attacks on Jews in public. There were also instances of pro-Hezbollah graffiti.

---

<sup>68</sup> The "All Party Parliamentary Inquiry Into Anti-Semitism," was established to compile written and oral evidence from government authorities and NGOs on the state of contemporary anti-Semitism and measures taken to confront it, then recommend further steps to combat its resurgence. <http://www.thepcaa.org/>



*Source : Community Security Trust*

Luckily, very few violent acts occurred, and the few that were recorded could not be directly linked by the CST to the war in Lebanon. They could have simply been examples of anti-Jewish street crime and gang violence.

The most shocking example was that of a 12-year-old Jewish girl who was traveling on a single-decker public bus and who was set upon by a gang of youth led by couple of teenage girls. She was beaten unconscious after one of the group asked her if she was Jewish. The assailants only stopped when one of them pulled the emergency cord and the bus stopped. It is noteworthy that nobody in the bus came to the girl's aid, although arrests were subsequently made and six suspects charged.

### **Government/Media Reaction**

There was a heated and intense debate on Israel's action in the UK during the war, possibly a consequence of the popular perception of Prime Minister Tony Blair as being quite close to the U.S. administration, and his open support for Israel. Unlike other European governments, Prime Minister Blair was very hesitant in calling for an "immediate" end to fighting between Israel and Hezbollah.<sup>69</sup>

<sup>69</sup> "Britons warned on Lebanon crisis", [http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/uk\\_politics/5180116.stm](http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/uk_politics/5180116.stm) July 14, 2006

Israel was widely criticized from all sides of the political spectrum, and a poll published in the *Guardian* stated that only 22% of Britons believed Israel's response to the Hezbollah incursion was proportionate. Further opinion polls have shown that a majority of Britons were against Blair's backing of Israel's military campaign, and heavily critical of what many felt were Blair's overly close ties to the White House.<sup>70</sup>

Conservative MP Sir Peter Tapsell was widely criticized at home and abroad when he compared Israel's campaign in Lebanon to "a war crime grimly reminiscent of the Nazi atrocity on the Jewish quarter of Warsaw".<sup>71</sup>

Those parts of the media that are normally critical of Israel intensified their condemnation during this period. A cartoon by Martin Rowson published in the *Guardian* showed a mailed fist with metallic Stars of David dripping with blood, having punched the face of a small child.<sup>72</sup>

### **Public Demonstrations**

Many demonstrations, supporting both sides, took place. A wide range of Jewish and pro-Israel organizations organized Israel solidarity demonstrations around the country, including one attended by around 5000 people at the end of July in London, which was addressed by the Israel Ambassador and communal leaders, and with a live television link to residents in northern Israel. Anti-Israel demonstrations were organized by the "Stop The War Coalition" and a range of Islamist and far-left groups. These were dominated by overt expressions of support for Hezbollah, rather than being mere calls for a ceasefire or demonstrations of solidarity with Lebanese civilians. Some banners on the anti-Israel marches displayed the slogan "We Are All Hezbollah".<sup>73</sup>

There were also attempts to prevent the transfer of American weapons to Israel via Scottish airports. These included direct action by anti-war groups, and legal action by the Islamic Human Rights Commission. This legal action failed and the presiding judge said at the start of his judgment that the IHRC had failed to establish "an arguable case by a very long way".<sup>74</sup>

*Reporting provided by CST*

---

<sup>70</sup> "Stand up to US, voters tell Blair" <http://politics.guardian.co.uk/foreignaffairs/story/0,,1828225,00.html> July 25, 2006

<sup>71</sup> "British MP slammed for Nazi comparisons", [http://ejpress.org/article/in\\_depth/10011](http://ejpress.org/article/in_depth/10011) August 1, 2006

<sup>72</sup> <http://www.guardian.co.uk/cartoons/martinrowson/0,,1823933,00.html>

<sup>73</sup> "'We are all Hizbullah now'. Really?", [http://commentisfree.guardian.co.uk/harold\\_evans/2006/08/we\\_are\\_all\\_hizbullah\\_now\\_reall.html](http://commentisfree.guardian.co.uk/harold_evans/2006/08/we_are_all_hizbullah_now_reall.html) August 8, 2006

<sup>74</sup> "UK cleared of aiding bomb flights", <http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/uk/5277684.stm> August 23, 2006

## International Organizations

On August 10th, the Brussels-based European Union of Jewish Students' (EUJS) discovered that its website had been severely hacked and infected with a malicious virus, by a group identifying itself as "Team-Evil Arab Hackerz"

The Chair of EUJS, Olga Israel, linked her organization's participation in Israel solidarity events with the attack.

"It is fitting that this occurred as our team in Brussels attended a pro-Israel demonstration organized by the Belgian Jewish community" she announced after the discovery.

Israel further told the JTA that after the hacking attack, she had contacted the local Brussels police, asking for extra security at the organization's headquarters, and were denied.



*Screenshot taken after the attack*