

IDF Destroys Nablus Terrorist Gang Credited With Spate Of Executions

JERUSALEM (JTA) — The Israel Defense Force believes it has delivered a powerful blow against the intifada by destroying a Palestinian terrorist gang it says specialized in the brutal executions of fellow Arabs suspected of collaborating with the Israeli authorities.

NEW YORK (JTA) — David Duke, the charismatic white supremacist who dismayed Jews and civil rights leaders earlier this year with his successful run for the Louisiana state legislature, has announced he is throwing his hat into the ring for the U.S. Senate.

Duke, 39, a former imperial wizard of the Imperial Knights of the Ku Klux Klan, announced recently in New Orleans that he will run next year as a Republican candidate for the Senate seat now held by Sen. J. Bennett Johnston, a Democrat.

He said he would seek the Republican Party's endorsement, but would run without it if necessary. The party is holding open caucuses throughout the state and is expected to endorse a candidate on Jan. 13.

Four gang members, including its three top leaders, were killed, two were wounded and three captured in a shootout with the IDF in the Nablus casbah recently.

So far, 70 suspects have been detained. Nablus was placed under curfew and house-to-house searches launched recently yielded axes, bayonets and clubs. A curfew also was clamped on a neighboring refugee camp.

The gang, which called itself the Black Panthers, is alleged to have murdered 15 suspected collaborators. They also allegedly solicited money, interrogated suspects and held paramilitary parades in the casbah.

Intelligence efforts

put the IDF on the trail of the gang leaders, who were cornered in a barbershop in the Yasmina quarter of the casbah.

Gen. Yitzhak Mordechai, commander of the central region, which includes the West Bank, denied a BBC report that the Israeli soldiers were disguised as Arabs.

According to Mordechai, the gang leader, Imad Nasser, 26, pulled

out a loaded pistol when he spotted the soldiers, but was shot dead before he could fire.

Also shot to death was his deputy, Hani Tayem, 22. Mordechai said Tayem was about to fire an M-16 rifle recently stolen from a border policeman injured by stones.

According to the general, the third terrorist leader shot to death

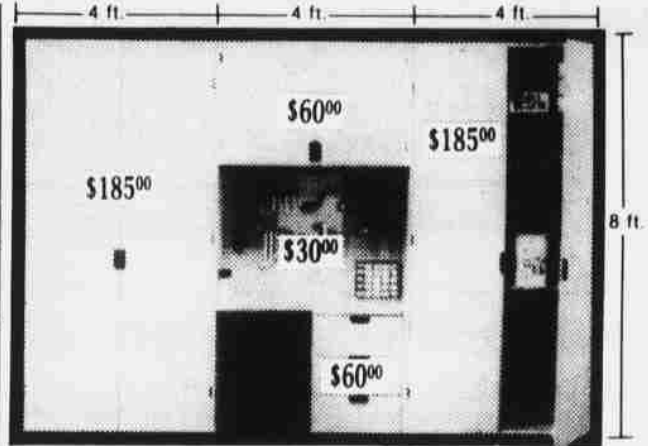
was Omar Arafat, 26, who was also armed with a pistol.

The recent wave of murders in the Nablus casbah made the gang's dissolution a top priority.

The IDF had to destroy it to demonstrate its control of Nablus, the largest Arab city in the West Bank and the center of the intifada.

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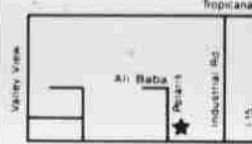
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