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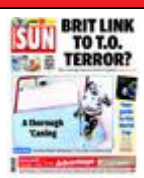
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Wed, June 7, 2006

Sex slaves sold to Canada? Israeli cops bust ring that allegedly shipped unwilling prostitutes here

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By AP



JERUSALEM -- Israeli police have uncovered an Israeli-Canadian prostitution ring that may have included trafficking Israeli women to Canada, police said yesterday.

Three Israelis were arrested this week in connection with the case, spokesman Micky Rosenfeld said. The ring worked over the past few months to recruit dozens of young Israeli women who were sent to Canada, where they were promised large salaries, Rosenfeld said.

The women answered ads for "escort services" and were subjected to degrading interviews that involved photographing them nude before they were sent to Canada, he said. Although some knew they were going to work in prostitution, others may have been sent against their will, he said.

Canadian authorities have not yet made any arrests in the case, Rosenfeld said.

The discovery of the ring on Monday came the same day a U.S. state department report on human trafficking blamed Israel for not doing enough to stop it. The report placed Israel in the same category as Cambodia, China and Kuwait.

Although Israel is making serious efforts to stop the crime, "the government of Israel does not fully comply with the minimum standards for the elimination of trafficking," the state department website said. "Israel ... has failed to provide evidence of increasing efforts to address trafficking."

Israeli prosecution efforts against those who deal in trafficking "were uneven and inadequate over the last year," the report said.

Rosenfeld said Israel has stepped up efforts in the past two years to stop the movement of people across borders against their will.

"There is a decline (in Israel) in the numbers of those who are involved and dealing

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today with the buying and selling of women," he said.

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