

VOL. 71 - 76th YEAR

FRIDAY, MARCH 26, 1993

NO. 58

**NETANYAHU, ELECTED LIKUD LEADER,
LAUNCHES DRIVE TO BRING DOWN LABOR**
By Cynthia Mann

JERUSALEM, March 25 (JTA) -- Benjamin Netanyahu, the charismatic politician who won the Likud party primary this week, has lost no time in going on the offensive, telling cheering supporters Thursday he hopes to bring down the Labor-led government as soon as possible.

"We would like to bring early elections," Netanyahu said after results of Wednesday's election for chairman of the opposition party were announced.

Netanyahu, 43, received 52.5 percent of the vote, double the number garnered by his arch-rival, former Foreign Minister David Levy. Levy refused to congratulate Netanyahu after the results were announced Thursday afternoon.

Since just 40 percent of the vote was needed to win the primary outright, a runoff vote was unnecessary.

Knesset member Ze'ev "Benny" Begin received 15 percent of the vote, and Moshe Katsav, a former Cabinet minister, came a distant fourth, with 6.5 percent.

More than 150,000 of the party's registered members cast ballots Wednesday, amounting to a turnout of 68 percent. That is considered high, since this was the first time the party has held a nationwide primary.

The triumph for Netanyahu, who has served as Israeli ambassador to the United Nations as well as deputy foreign minister, followed a campaign full of mudslinging between the top two contenders.

Netanyahu, who was educated in the United States, ran an American-style campaign and appeared at times to be emulating the down-to-earth, people-to-people campaign style of U.S. President Bill Clinton.

Like Clinton, Netanyahu had to grapple with public scrutiny of his private life. But Netanyahu went a step further than Clinton, confessing on national television that he had been conducting an extramarital affair.

'Real Questions' For The People

Netanyahu said Thursday evening that as Likud's leader, he would try to prevent an Israeli withdrawal from the Golan Heights, improve the security situation and bring down the Labor-led government.

"The function of an opposition in a democracy is to make sure the government assumes that (opposition) role as soon as possible," he said.

"We think there are real questions to put before the people: the questions of security, the questions of the future borders of the State of Israel, the questions of the way we run the economy. All these questions should be brought to the voters as soon as possible and that will be my goal," said Netanyahu.

Police Inspector General Ya'acov Terner, meanwhile, defended himself against charges he deliberately delayed the results of a police investigation into the "Bibigate" scandal until after the primaries because he felt intimidated by Netanyahu.

The police had pledged to publicize the

outcome of a probe into Netanyahu's allegation he was blackmailed over an extramarital affair by a "Likud higher-up." Netanyahu never named the blackmailer but implied Levy was behind the plot.

Levy insisted that results of the police investigation would show Netanyahu had lied and would fatally damage his credibility. Levy's allies said Terner's delay in releasing the results was a deliberate effort to protect Netanyahu.

But the police chief said the inquiry had been prolonged because new information had surfaced.

Netanyahu refused comment on Levy's pledge before and after the primary that he would not work with Netanyahu after the "slander" that he had perpetrated.

The newly elected party chairman avoided questions about whether he would apologize to Levy for the innuendo directed against him.

"I think the important thing is to put the divisions of the past behind us," he said. "We have great challenges ahead, and I hope that all my colleagues will join me."

**RECORD FINES LEVIED AGAINST FIRM
ACCUSED OF COMPLYING WITH BOYCOTT**
By Deborah Kalb
States News Service

WASHINGTON, March 25 (JTA) -- In a demonstration that the Clinton administration will actively crack down on those who comply with the Arab boycott against Israel, the government this week assessed a record fine against an Illinois-based medical supply company accused of violating federal anti-boycott laws.

The company, Baxter International Inc. of Deerfield, Ill., two of its subsidiaries and a top Baxter executive have agreed to pay a total of \$6,060,600 in civil penalties and another \$500,000 in criminal penalties.

Baxter had been under federal government investigation for three years and was accused, among other charges, of providing illegal business information to Arab boycott officials.

Commerce Secretary Ron Brown said in a statement Thursday that the administration places "a high priority on vigorous enforcement of the Export Administration Act, and on seeking an end to the Arab boycott of Israel."

Jewish groups hailed the announcement of the fine.

Will Maslow, editor of the American Jewish Congress newsletter Boycott Report, said that the largest boycott-related fine imposed before Thursday's announcement was \$950,000.

"It's a lesson to corporate America," said Maslow, who has been actively involved in the Baxter case. "The government is saying, 'Here's what may happen if you violate the anti-boycott laws,'" he added.

In addition to agreeing to pay the fine, Baxter has pledged to the Commerce Department that it will not develop new export contracts with Syria or Saudi Arabia for the next two years.

Maslow said the company, which he said had a net income of \$591 million in 1991, would lose approximately \$3 million a year in sales to Saudi Arabia.

While Maslow noted that efforts to investi-

gate Baxter were "in the works" before Clinton took office, he praised the Clinton administration and Commerce Secretary Brown for approving the record fine.

Earlier this month, the Commerce Department assessed a fine of \$83,000 against a New York-based company for alleged boycott-related activities.

A Message From The Administration

The Anti-Defamation League, in a statement, commended the U.S. Justice and Commerce departments for their enforcement of anti-boycott laws.

Abraham Foxman, the organization's national director, also said in a statement that he welcomed Baxter's commitment to "explore business opportunities in Israel" and said that the company "is already demonstrating that commitment by meaningful action."

Anthony Rucci, Baxter senior vice president, said his company "fully supports the Export Administration Act and opposes boycotts of any kind against Israel."

"We respect the government's conclusions in this investigation," Rucci added, "and we are pleased that the issue is now resolved."

Rucci also pointed out that his company has been "conducting business in Israel continuously for more than 20 years," and that Israel is its largest trading partner in the Middle East.

Rep. Charles Schumer (D-N.Y.), the chairman of a congressional task force on the Arab boycott, said in a statement that "the Clinton administration has sent a message loud and clear: that American companies have no business aiding the Arabs in their economic warfare against Israel."

WOMAN SURVIVES ARAB'S ATTACK, HITTING HIM WITH GARBAGE BIN By Hugh Orgel

TEL AVIV, March 25 (JTA) -- A 36-year-old woman who ward off an attack by a Palestinian who tried to strangle her said from her hospital room that she survived by hitting her assailant with a metal garbage bin.

Sophie Porat, a mother of four children, said she was attacked by a masked man Wednesday as she took out the garbage from her quiet north Tel Aviv home.

Porat described what happened when she went down to put her trash in the ground-floor disposal bins.

"Suddenly I heard a scream, 'Allahu Akbar' (God is Great), and felt a man's hands around by neck, choking me," she said.

"I was born in Lebanon and speak fluent Arabic. I have often thought about what I would do if attacked by a terrorist and instinctively I managed to say in Arabic 'What are you doing? I am an Arab, not a Jew.'"

"But that had no effect, and I grabbed a metal garbage can and jabbed it at my assailant," she said.

"He released his grip, and I rushed through a back door and knocked on my neighbor's door. She took me in and phoned the police and called an ambulance," she said.

Porat could give little identification other than that his face had been covered by a mask, that he was of "medium height, had worn khaki trousers and a green shirt and had black eyes I could see through his head and face covering, filled with intense hatred."

PALESTINIAN VISITING A JAIL STABS SOLDIER, IS SHOT DEAD By Cynthia Mann

JERUSALEM, March 25 (JTA) -- A Palestinian youth who came to a Gaza City prison to visit a family member was shot dead by soldiers Thursday, after he stabbed and lightly wounded one of them.

Two other Arab residents were wounded by shots fired during the incident.

The clash was just the latest in a wave of violence that has shaken this country in recent weeks, leaving 10 Israelis dead from Palestinian attacks this month.

Jewish settlers protested the continuing security problem by blocking roads Thursday night in the West Bank and throwing stones at Arab vehicles.

Israeli soldiers were sent to disperse the demonstrators, some of whom scuffled with the soldiers and reportedly were arrested.

Meanwhile, a Jerusalem court ordered Yoram Shkolnik, the settler who shot and killed an Arab whose hands and feet were bound, to be detained for 10 days while police decide whether to press murder charges against him.

The 30-year-old Shkolnik repeatedly shot Musa Abu Sabha, 20, who had stabbed another settler and was already subdued and bound when Shkolnik arrived on the scene.

Shkolnik reportedly told police he did it because he believed Arabs should be taught a lesson.

On his way out of court, Shkolnik was cheered by supporters, who shouted anti-Arab slogans.

Police Inspector General Ya'acov Terner said Shkolnik would be held accountable for his action. He also denied there was any connection between the type of shooting that occurred and his recent call for Israeli civilians to carry their licensed weapons in light of the stepped-up violence.

A day earlier, a Tel Aviv District Court judge sentenced four settlers for damage they caused when they went on a rampage in an Arab village near Nablus in 1991.

"Israel is a nation of law, and only by observing the law and protecting human rights can we preserve our difference from our neighbors, who perpetrate horrors without fear of man or God," said Judge Natan Amit.

He fined the settlers and sentenced them to a period of probation ranging from six months to a year, plus fines.

SAVIR TO DIRECT FOREIGN MINISTRY

JERUSALEM, March 24 (JTA) -- Foreign Minister Shimon Peres has appointed Uriel Savir, former Israeli consul general in New York, to be director-general of the Foreign Ministry, the Ha'aretz newspaper reported Wednesday.

Savir, 40, is to replace Yosef Hadass, who in turn is to head the Israeli delegation to the Middle East multilateral peace talks on refugees.

Savir, scheduled to take office on May 1, served as consul general in New York from 1988 to 1992. Most recently, he was the ministry's assistant director-general for European affairs.

The Cabinet will be asked to confirm Savir's appointment during its Sunday meeting.

Eitan Ben-Tsur, the ministry's deputy director-general, was also competing for the post, but was asked by Peres to remain in his position.

NEWS ANALYSIS:**AIPAC POLICY CONFERENCE HIGHLIGHTS
TURNABOUT IN U.S.-ISRAELI RELATIONS**
By Mark Joffe

WASHINGTON, March 25 (JTA) -- Relations between Israel and the Clinton administration have gotten off to such a positive start that Jewish organizational leaders were actually voicing concern here this week that pro-Israel activists would relax their guard and not be mobilized for battles looming ahead.

Moments after Secretary of State Warren Christopher gave an effusively pro-Israel speech to the American Israel Public Affairs Committee's policy conference here, the chairman of the Conference of Presidents of Major American Jewish Organizations was warning the 2,000 or so delegates that there is "a danger in becoming complacent" about the "challenges in front of us."

Those challenges include a possible fight over aid to Israel in an atmosphere on Capitol Hill of cost-cutting in foreign affairs.

What a change from last year's policy conference, when speakers angrily recalled President Bush's September 1991 remarks about pro-Israel lobbyists, and AIPAC delegates actually booed when Vice President Dan Quayle attempted to explain the administration's tough stance on loan guarantees requested by Israel.

This year, delegates heard the secretary of state rhapsodizing about Israel being "a very special place" and were reminded of Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin's remark last week that Israel now has "a friend" in the White House.

While some have suggested that the turnabout in U.S.-Israeli relations is more "atmospheric" than substantive, there is no doubt that this administration feels very differently about the Jewish state than its predecessor.

U.S.-Israeli relations "have not been this good for a long time," a senior official at the Israeli Embassy here said this week. "There is an openness to things Israeli."

There are a number of explanations for the change of climate.

First, this administration clearly has a deep appreciation for the American Jewish community's strong support for Bill Clinton at the voting booth last November -- upwards of 80 percent, by most counts.

The fact that the Jewish community's mass defection from the Republican Party was motivated largely by Bush's tough policy toward Israel is not lost on the Clinton people.

A Deep Concern For Israel

Second, top administration officials appear to have a more pro-Israel predisposition than their predecessors -- their concern for Israel is deeply felt, "in their kishkes," so to speak.

While James Baker 3rd was perceived as a stereotypical patrician WASP who could summon little emotional sympathy for Israel, Christopher is already being viewed as a secretary of state in the mold of George Shultz -- the kind of guy who may look funny standing with a yarmulka at Yad Vashem but emerges from the Holocaust memorial "choked up," as he admitted this week.

But the appreciation of Israel goes deeper than the superficial emotional level. Christopher told the AIPAC delegates that one reason the Clinton administration is committed to strengthening U.S.-Israeli relations is the recognition that the two countries have so much in common.

"Shared values give our relationship a special character that has linked us over the years," he said.

Perhaps the most significant reason that the new administration gets along with the current Israeli government is that the two countries' policies are in sync -- they see eye to eye on many issues, including a basic approach to the Middle East peace process.

That may have more to do with the change in Israeli governments last summer than the change in American ones this winter. There is no doubt that this administration, like its predecessor, feels more comfortable with the policies of Yitzhak Rabin than with those of Yitzhak Shamir.

While the Bush administration was always suspicious about the Likud's level of commitment to the peace process, the Clinton administration trusts the Israeli Labor government's seriousness about reaching a settlement with the Arabs.

In his AIPAC speech Tuesday, Christopher said he believed on the basis of his meetings with Rabin here and in Jerusalem that the Israeli prime minister is "prepared to make the hard choices that are needed to see this process through."

A State Department official directly involved in the peace process said this week that the administration was "very satisfied" with what it had heard during Rabin's visit last week.

"We had very good discussions across the board," the official said, indicating that Rabin had floated a number of "creative ideas."

Understanding Of Security Concerns

There also seems to be a real appreciation of Israel's security concerns. Christopher told the AIPAC delegates that his visit to Israel, which included a helicopter tour of the Golan Heights, "impressed upon me the narrow margin of security on which Israel exists."

To be sure, the administration does not approve of some of the security measures that Israel takes in the administered territories, including its expulsion of 415 Moslem fundamentalists in December.

On the other hand, there seems to be a recognition on the part of the United States that Israel cannot let repeated attacks on its citizens go unanswered.

As the State Department official put it this week, while the administration is "very sympathetic" to Palestinian human rights concerns, it is "equally sympathetic to the security concerns that Israel faces."

Finally, the Clinton administration appears to share at least some of Israel's impatience with the Palestinian delegates to the peace talks. The State Department official at one point referred to "continued Palestinian harping" about certain issues.

Asked what the administration could do to persuade the Palestinians to return to the talks, the official said, "We've tried very hard to help" the Palestinians feel comfortable about coming back to Washington on April 20.

The official said there is little point in pressing Israel to make further concessions on such issues as the return of the Palestinian deportees without a guarantee the Palestinians are going to come back to the peace table.

And then, in a remark seldom heard in Washington in the last few years, the official added: "We've asked a great deal of Israel" already, and "we're satisfied Israel has done what we've asked."

LUBAVITCH BAKE MATZAH IN MOSCOW WHILE POLITICAL CRISIS HEATS UP

By Alexander Lesser

MOSCOW (JTA) -- As Russia was embroiled in political crisis with President Boris Yeltsin's March 20 declaration of "special rule," the Lubavitcher rabbis in Moscow were busy baking matzah in preparation for Pesach.

"A revolution?" asked Rabbi Berel Lazar, who had not seen the television news here with Yeltsin's announcement. "We have our own revolution here."

Several hundred Moscow Jews preferred to make the journey to the Lubavitchers' model matzah bakery at the Russian capital's vast VDNH park, rather than get involved in the small pro- and anti-Yeltsin demonstrations that took place Sunday following the president's announcement.

Yeltsin declared emergency rule and called for a national referendum to resolve the dispute between him and the Russian Parliament. The Parliament, in turn, declared Yeltsin's move unconstitutional.

Hundreds of non-Jewish Russians similarly opted for the park, where they gaped at new Western products displayed in exhibition halls that once showed off the accomplishments of the Soviet economy.

In the center of Moscow, crowds strolled on the city's main street, window-shopping and eating ice cream, while the McDonald's on Pushkin Square was packed.

At the model matzah bakery, there was a special treat. Children got to make their own matzah, kneading, shaping and baking the unleavened bread with their own hands.

"The hands-on experience will teach them more than any lecture," said one Lubavitcher.

Children were not the only ones trying their hands at baking matzah.

One grandmother, Faina Kogan, came forward with tears in her eyes and asked permission to prepare her own matzah.

"The government denied me a formal Jewish education," Kogan said, "but they were never able to take away the pride I felt in helping my mother bake matzahs."

Said Rabbi Baruch Cunin, "We don't know what will happen in Russia now; in the meantime, we're getting ready for Pesach."

ISRAEL'S NON-JEWISH POPULATION GAINS

By Hugh Orgel

TEL AVIV, March 25 (JTA) -- In a reversal from 1991, Israel's non-Jewish population grew faster than the Jewish population last year, according to figures released this week by the Central Bureau of Statistics.

The reversal was attributed to a 56 percent decline in Jewish immigration to Israel last year.

Israel's non-Jewish population traditionally grows faster than the Jewish population, largely because of the higher Arab birthrate. In 1991, this trend was offset by the large wave of Jewish immigration.

But when only 77,032 immigrants arrived in Israel last year, compared to 176,100 in 1991, the traditional pattern resumed. The Jewish population increased by only 2.5 percent last year, compared to a 3.7 percent rise in the gentile population.

By contrast, the Jewish population grew by 5 percent in 1991, compared to a 4.5 percent growth rate for the non-Jewish population.

ISRAEL GROWING SPECIAL POTATOES TO QUALIFY FOR MCDONALD'S FRIES

By Hugh Orgel

TEL AVIV, March 25 (JTA) -- Preparations to grow a special strain of potatoes required by McDonald's to make french fries for its planned Israeli restaurants are under way, Agriculture Minister Ya'acov Tsur said Wednesday.

The work is being coordinated by the ministry at experimental fields in the Negev desert.

Tsur disclosed that "by the time December comes, we will have produced some 60 tons of the proper strain of potato required by McDonald's."

"This is twice the amount they told us they expect to use in the beginning months," he said.

McDonald's has said the type of potatoes currently grown in Israel are not up to the standards it needs for its french fries.

The ministry's director-general, Yonatan Basi, confirmed that intense pressure had been brought to bear on Israel to change its position and allow the importation of processed potatoes for the fast-food chain's french fries.

A personal letter from U.S. Ambassador William Harrop to this effect was delivered to Tsur while the minister was at a meeting with senior officers of the agriculture and industry and trade ministries, discussing the hot potato issue.

But the agriculture minister stood firm in his opposition to potato imports, stressing that the ministry would only support the importation of food products to satisfy market needs in the event of a shortage.

He is due to meet with Industry and Trade Minister Micha Harish to reach a decision on whether or not to allow potato imports.

Harish supports importation of McDonald's strain of potatoes because postponement of McDonald's plans for entry into Israel, as threatened by the American chain's headquarters, would disrupt plans for the hiring of more than 600 people to work in the five restaurants the chain plans to open in its first year of licensed operations.

POSTAL SERVICE OFFERS CARD HONORING HOLOCAUST MUSEUM

By Deborah Kalb

States News Service

WASHINGTON, March 25 (JTA) -- Starting this week, collectors and letter-writers can buy a 19-cent postcard featuring the soon-to-be-opened U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum.

The U.S. Postal Service issued the card Tuesday, at a ceremony at the museum.

A museum spokesperson said that it is "very rare for a brand-new institution" to be so honored before it opens. Most postcards, he said, display "well-established" institutions.

Two images of the museum appear on the card, one on each side.

The museum spokesperson said that 7.5 million copies of the postcard were to go on sale at post offices across the country Wednesday.

This week's ceremony was part of a series of events leading up to the museum's opening April 26.

Last month, soil from 39 Holocaust sites was interred in the museum's Hall of Remembrance, where it will rest beneath an eternal flame.

The museum, located on the Mall in Washington, is designed to teach about the Nazi Holocaust.