

**NEWS AT A GLANCE**

■ Gov. Pete Wilson of California expressed "genuine concern about the proposal to station U.S. troops in the Golan" as part of an Israeli-Syrian peace deal. Speaking to the Conference of Presidents of Major American Jewish Organizations, Wilson, who is scheduled to announce his candidacy for the Republican presidential nomination this month, also said he does not believe that the Palestine Liberation Organization has fully complied with its accord with Israel.

■ The Jewish community of Zagreb, Croatia, is not planning to evacuate any of its members in the wake of a new barrage of attacks by rebel Serbs. The secretary-general of the community said no Jewish casualties were reported. [Page 2]

■ The American Zionist Movement is feeling squeezed in the wake of the World Zionist Organization's decision to impose massive cuts on its budget. [Page 3]

■ Israeli troops killed four gunmen from the Islamic fundamentalist Hezbollah and wounded several others in the eastern sector of the southern Lebanon security zone.

■ An Israeli working in Nigeria for the Solel Boneh construction company was fatally shot by thieves in the northern city of Katsina. His wife, who was also shot, was taken to the hospital in Lagos, where a bullet was removed from her chest, Israel Radio reported.

■ Israel has rejected a series of business offers from Iraq. Foreign Minister Shimon Peres told the American ambassador to the United Nations, Madeleine Albright, who was visiting Israel. Israeli officials in the past leaked word that Baghdad sought to create business ties with the Jewish state. Iraq has repeatedly denied the reports.

■ Israel's Ofek-3 satellite completed 340 revolutions around the Earth. Launched last month, the satellite reportedly is sending back high quality images and operating without any problems. Ofek-3, officially designated for scientific and technological research, is widely believed to be operating as a spy satellite. [Page 3]

**NEWS ANALYSIS****As Israel celebrates 47, peace struggles forward**

By David Landau

JERUSALEM, May 3 (JTA) — Although it sometimes seems hard to believe, the Israeli-Palestinian peace process is still struggling forward, intent on meeting a July 1 deadline for an agreement on the next phase of Palestinian autonomy.

Despite even the latest obstacles, negotiations continued as Israel's 47th Independence Day celebrations converged Thursday with the one-year anniversary of the Cairo Accord, which set the stage for the start of Palestinian self-rule in the Gaza Strip and the Jericho enclave in the West Bank.

Despite the latest dispute over Israeli plans to confiscate Arab land in eastern Jerusalem, despite the recurrent suicide-bomb attacks by fanatical Palestinian radicals against Israelis, despite the publicized rocky relations between the leaders of the two sides and despite their various political weaknesses, Israeli sources advise against a too-pessimistic assessment of the setbacks, which, to outside observers, seem likely to bury the Israeli-Palestinian peace process.

With a little bit of good luck, for a change, these sources say, the government of Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin and Yasser Arafat's Palestinian Authority will yet achieve agreement on the next phase of Palestinian self-rule.

Negotiators are pressing ahead on the details for the next phase, which includes the redeployment of Israel Defense Force troops from many, though not all, of the main Palestinian cities in the West Bank, and the holding of Palestinian elections, which have been deferred repeatedly since last fall.

Largely because of the problems with the Palestinians, the Israeli government's celebration of the Jewish state's 47th anniversary seemed almost deliberately designed to block out the deal with the Palestinians.

Instead, the focus was placed squarely on a peace front far more popular with the Israeli public — the historic peace treaty signed last October with Jordan.

In an effort to play up this part of the peace process, Rabin, his wife, Leah, and their children and grandchildren played starring roles in an epic production for Israel Television in which they spent Monday touring Jordan.

The Rabin family visited Petra, the Nabatean "red city in the desert" that has attracted countless Israeli tourists since the treaty signing.

The Rabins later lunched with King Hussein and his extended family, and the day ended with a joint interview by the two leaders on the peace process.

**Palestinian elections viewed as a watershed**

Rabin said during the interview that the peace with Jordan was the "cornerstone" of an eventual comprehensive peace in the region.

But he knows, as did his host, Hussein, that that cornerstone stands on another cornerstone — the Israeli-Palestinian self-rule accord.

Without the famous Rabin-Arafat handshake in September 1993 on the White House lawn, King Hussein, as he has often stated himself, would not have made his formal and public peace with the Jewish state.

With much less fanfare, but perhaps no less significance, Israeli and Palestinian negotiators reported this week that they have agreed that a voters register will be drawn up throughout the West Bank and Gaza as soon as the next-phase agreement is reached.

Thus it appears that tangible preparations for the Palestinian elections will get under way in the territories even before the IDF begins its redeployment.

This will enable the elections themselves to take place within a short time after the redeployment is completed.

Both sides believe that the elections will be a watershed, denoting a point-of-no-return on the road to final peace.

Some Israeli ministers, such as Environment Minister Yossi Sarid of the dovish Meretz bloc, now say outright that the so-called "permanent

status" talks between Israel and the Palestinians will lead to Palestinian statehood.

Indeed, Sarid suggested recently that the extension of autonomy throughout the West Bank and the holding of elections there would mark, de facto, the beginning of a Palestinian sovereign state.

Under the terms of the self-rule accord, Israel and the Palestinians are to start negotiating the permanent status of their relationship no later than May 1996.

Rabin, for his part, pleased his Cabinet doves by announcing last week that three large IDF training camps located in the West Bank will be redeployed to within Israel.

Officials explained that these facilities would later be used to house the operational IDF troops that would be withdrawn from the major Palestinian cities when the negotiations reach a successful conclusion.

Among Jewish settlers, there have been angry pledges to take over any camp or position relinquished by the IDF.

And there is little doubt that once embarked upon, the redeployment will encounter traumatic scenes of protest and violent dissent.

In the Rabin government's present perilous state, domestic political weakness could yet confound Rabin's best laid plans and topple him and his government.

On the Palestinian side, too, internal strife is a realistic threat to the stability of Arafat's rule.

#### **Israeli writers send warning to Arafat**

Talks between the Palestinian Authority and the militant Hamas and Islamic Jihad fundamentalist movements in Gaza are reportedly stalemated, and some Israeli observers predict the imminent outbreak of armed conflict between the pro-peace forces and the rejectionists.

But the gravest threat to the prospects of completing the next phase is the threat of further terror attacks on Israelis.

Each such attack sends the Rabin government's popularity plummeting. A subsequent period of relative quiet brings it bouncing back — but never quite to the previous level. In recent months, Rabin has consistently trailed Likud leader Benjamin Netanyahu in the opinion polls.

This week, a group of leading Israeli writers, including Amos Oz and A.B. Yehoshua, addressed a public manifesto to Arafat.

The manifesto warned him bluntly that if there is more terror, there would be no peace process.

As Israel prepared to celebrate Independence Day, the Palestinians remained hemmed into their territories by a military closure of the areas.

The closure results in palpable economic hardship to the Palestinians, who are unable to work as day laborers inside Israel until the closure is lifted.

This in turn exacerbates social unrest, leading to further political radicalization among Arafat's fundamentalist opposition.

Adding to Palestinian resentments, and further alienating the two sides, was the news this week that the Israeli government approved the confiscation of some 120 acres of prime land in eastern Jerusalem, much of it Arab-owned, mainly for Jewish residential building.

The news elicited a barrage of protests: Arafat sought redress from the U.N. Security Council; the Arab League was scheduled to convene Saturday for an emergency session; and a number of countries, including Britain, France, Syria, Egypt and Jordan, all condemned the land confiscations.

In Washington, Nicholas Burns, a State Department spokesman, said, "It's difficult to see how this type of

action, this land confiscation, can be helpful at this time in the negotiations."

In addition, Faisal Hussein, the Palestinian Authority's top official in Jerusalem, accused Israel of wantonly flouting the self-rule accord, which specifically left Jerusalem to be dealt with in the permanent status talks.

Hussein and other Palestinian leaders warned that the entire peace process was in jeopardy.

Despite these ominous warnings, diehard optimists in Israel maintain that Rabin's insistence on proceeding with the land appropriations at this time might be a hopeful sign.

They argue that his decision signals his determination to proceed with the controversial decisions as well as the concessions that are necessary to bring the crucial next phase of the peace process to fruition. □

#### **Despite shelling and rumors, Zagreb Jews are staying put**

*By Gil Sedan*

BONN, May 3 (JTA) — The Jewish community of Zagreb is not planning to evacuate any of its members, despite rumors that have sprouted due to this week's attacks by rebel Serbs on Croatia's capital, said Dunja Sprajc, secretary-general of the Zagreb Jewish community.

Sprajc's comments on Wednesday came shortly after a new barrage of Serb missile attacks landed in the heart of the city.

On Tuesday, shells fell in downtown Zagreb, close to the Jewish community center and the U.S. Embassy. At least five people were killed and more than 100 were injured in the attacks.

The Serb attacks came in response to an offensive by the government of Croatia earlier in the week, which broke the "permanent cease-fire" signed last year by both groups.

In the Jewish community, no casualties as a result of the shelling were reported. About 1,400 Jews live in Zagreb. A total of 2,000 Jews live in Croatia.

Sprajc denied news reports in Israel that the Zagreb community was preparing for the evacuation of Jewish children from the city.

The Jewish Agency for Israel has offered help and suggested that the community prepare lists of children in the event of an evacuation, Sprajc said. But so far, the lists have not been made.

"We are now in Zagreb under the same situation as all others and we share the fate of the rest of the population," Sprajc said.

She said there are no immediate plans for evacuation, despite a general air of pessimism in the city and anticipation that the situation may escalate.

When asked where the latest series of events might lead, Sprajc replied, "You in the outside world should know better than us. Nobody knows here." □

#### **Foreign currency reserves surge**

*By Naomi Segal*

JERUSALEM, May 3 (JTA) — Israel's foreign currency reserves grew by \$566 million last month to a record \$9.51 billion, the Bank of Israel said.

The increase was attributed to the continuing purchase of Israeli shekels in recent months, which resulted from high domestic interest rates enacted by the central bank as part of its policy to suppress inflation.

Inflation was 14.5 percent in 1994, but has sunk to less than 1 percent in the first three months of this year. However, the lending rate, currently at an annual 14 percent, has been kept high. □

## WZO budget cuts squeeze American Zionist Movement

By Larry Yudelson

NEW YORK, May 3 (JTA) — The American Zionist Movement is feeling squeezed in the wake of the World Zionist Organization's decision to impose massive cuts on its budget.

Seymour Reich, chairman of AZM, an umbrella for Zionist organizations, has charged that the cut "was aimed to cripple us because of our position supporting the government's peace process."

Under Reich's leadership, the organization has been outspoken in its support of the Israeli government's peace policies.

Other American Zionists have speculated that the cuts were targeted at them not because of their politics, but because they believe that a planned restructuring of the World Zionist Organization and the Jewish Agency for Israel may reduce the role of Zionists in the Diaspora.

But top WZO officials say the cuts announced last month reflect fiscal necessity.

These cuts slash AZM's budget by \$250,000, or half of the AZM's annual allocation from Jerusalem.

The cuts were part of a total package of \$1.7 million in cuts instituted to balance the WZO's budget.

The Jewish Agency for Israel is implementing \$30 million in cuts of its own, largely in response to fewer dollars coming from American Jewish federations, according to Agency officials.

The Jewish Agency is the principal recipient of money raised for Israel by the United Jewish Appeal. The WZO, whose members are elected on party lines by members of Zionist organizations, is the Jewish Agency's sister organization.

The WZO, with a total budget of only \$30 million, has also moved to eliminate a planned "Zionist fulfillment" program, designed to promote aliyah from the United States and other Western countries.

All other WZO programs received across the board cuts of between 7 percent and 10 percent.

Supporting his charge that the cuts were politically motivated, Reich said Hanan Ben-Yehuda, treasurer of the WZO and a Likud representative to the organization, had protested AZM's political stands.

### More than just 'Zionist song contests'

"We think Zionist federations should not just involve themselves in Yom Ha'atzmaut celebrations and Zionist song contests," said Reich.

Some American Zionist groups affiliated with the Israeli opposition parties have withdrawn from the umbrella Zionist group to protest its political role.

But Ben-Yehuda denied that the budget cuts were politically motivated. "The reduction in the budget that the World Zionist Organization can provide to the American Zionist Movement resulted wholly from the serious financial constraints of the Jewish Agency and WZO," he said in Jerusalem.

Ben-Yehuda said the cuts to AZM were one of many painful decisions in the budgetary process.

WZO Acting Chairman Avraham Burg also responded to Reich's charges.

"As one fully committed to depoliticizing the national institutions in order to preserve and enhance the unity of the Jewish people, I will never lend a hand to politicizing the organization by providing or reducing financial support.

"The cuts were painful in the past and will continue in the future," he said, adding, "But they are the only way to foster a rebirth of the Zionist idea."

After protests from the American Zionists, Burg told the AZM that they could appeal the cuts to the committee that makes the final decision, according to officials involved.

But sources close to the WZO said they expect few changes to be made in the announced cuts.

Ben-Yehuda said AZM's initial grant was given with the understanding that the organization would eventually develop other sources of additional funding, but it failed to do so.

But AZM's executive director, Karen Rubinstein, said, "There are a lot of American dollars that are driving our activities."

AZM officials would not disclose the group's overall budget, but said it collects dues from its 21 constituent Zionist organizations and has begun a fund-raising campaign.

"We see ourselves moving into a situation where we are much more financially independent," she said.

But to have "a four-year plan, a five-year plan and to be suddenly told it's over — the timing of that is off. We didn't expect this to happen at this time," she said.

In the midst of the budget cuts, some American Jews affiliated with the Zionist movement speculated that the cuts could be part of a general move to restructure the WZO. Burg has said he favors merging the WZO into the Jewish Agency.

Some fear that the proposals on the table for such a move would drastically take away power from Diaspora Zionists, who currently make up a majority of the WZO representation and more than a quarter of the Jewish Agency governing bodies.

Not surprisingly, the AZM has opposed the thrust of this restructuring, calling instead for the WZO to shift power to the Diaspora Zionist bodies.

"The WZO has written off American Zionism and Zionism in the Diaspora," said Reich.

"It does make sense," said another American Zionist, speaking on condition of anonymity, "that if the American Zionists are causing problems in the quest for radical reform that the WZO would be saying, 'don't lose sight of who has the power.'"

But Burg denied any such motives behind the cuts. "If there is one thing I won't do, it is to base any of my arguments on money," Burg said. "Money does not buy power; the lack of money does not render weakness."

Although he would not go into details about his restructuring plans for the Agency and WZO, Burg said he supports the creation of a "fully democratic" body that is "50 percent Israeli and 50 percent Diaspora Jewry." □

(JTA correspondent Uriel Masad in Jerusalem contributed to this story.)

### Ofek-3 orbits Earth without a hitch

By Naomi Segal

JERUSALEM, May 3 (JTA) — Israel's Ofek-3 satellite, launched last month, has so far completed 340 revolutions around the Earth.

The satellite reportedly is sending back high quality images and operating without any problems.

Ofek-3, officially designated for scientific and technological research, was widely described by reports abroad as a spy satellite.

Senior officials at Israel Aircraft Industries said the satellite's success has generated international interest in cooperating with Israel in the area of space technology. Hungary and Israel have just embarked on such a project.

Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin is expected to raise the issue of Ofek's continued development with President Clinton in Washington next week. □

**FIFTY YEARS AFTER THE HORROR (Part 3)****Women survivors recall indignities unique to them**

By Rochelle G. Saidel

RAVENSBRUCK, Germany, May 3 (JTA) — Both men and women suffered unimaginable horrors in Nazi concentration camps, but female Holocaust survivors often recount experiences that were specific to women — from the loss of menstruation to forced abortions.

Because Ravensbruck was the largest Nazi concentration camp for women, the recent gathering of 1,300 survivors here to commemorate the 50th anniversary of their liberation provided a rare opportunity to learn about both universal and uniquely female experiences.

The gathering included 200 women from Israel, as well as other Jewish women from such countries as the United States, Sweden, Germany, Hungary and Russia.

Now a national monument and memorial, Ravensbruck is located outside the village of Furstenberg, about 850 miles northeast of Berlin.

Originally planned as a work camp for political prisoners, the site opened when the first transport of 867 women arrived in May 1939.

These women were, for the most part, German anti-fascists, either Social Democrats or Communists. Some happened to be Jewish.

At its inception, the camp was intended to provide harsh labor as "rehabilitation," but after the war began, murder and torture were routine.

At least 132,000 women were incarcerated there, and only some 15,000 survived, according to camp statistics, which are incomplete and may be low.

Perhaps 20 percent of these women were Jewish, though this estimate may also be low.

As in other camps, the first terrifying indignities occurred upon arrival. The women had their hair cut off and gave up whatever they had brought with them. They were then forced to submit to humiliating "medical" examinations.

Their own clothes were replaced with ill-fitting striped uniforms, and their names with numbers.

**Horrendous daily occurrences**

Torture, beatings and murder by shooting, gassing and lethal injection were daily occurrences.

Many women also succumbed to illnesses such as typhoid, tuberculosis and starvation.

Many of the differences in the experiences of men and women at concentration camps were the result of biological differences.

The fact that adolescents and women in concentration camps stopped menstruating has been well-documented, and survivors confirmed this at the Ravensbruck ceremonies. But some of them also remembered that there was always a final menstrual period before the cycle ceased.

Women recalled feeling embarrassed and unkempt, with no way to obtain any sanitary supplies. Other women spoke about pregnancy, forced abortions, childbirth and sterilization.

An 87-year-old German Jewish survivor from Dresden, Joanna Krause, said that prior to her arrival at Ravensbruck, she had been arrested as a political prisoner and a Jew when she was seven months pregnant.

Placed in a Nazi prison, she was forced to have an abortion, and was then sterilized.

Ilana Lehner, an Israeli survivor who had been brought to Ravensbruck from Hungary, said her pregnant sister arrived at the camp with her. The baby died soon after birth.

Other inmates described how they sometimes helped pregnant women to abort fetuses secretly or murder newborn children in order to keep the mother alive, because pregnancy could be punishable by death.

Brutal "medical" experiments at Ravensbruck included sterilization and surgery that deformed the legs of female prisoners, who were called "rabbits" in camp parlance.

In addition to the suffering related to their reproductive systems, women were also responsible for any babies or small children who were too young to be useful as workers.

Although mothers at Auschwitz-Birkenau often were selected immediately for the gas chamber, mothers at Ravensbruck were, under certain circumstances, sometimes allowed to care for their children.

Nomi Friedmann and Chaya Dana, two sisters from Netanya, spoke of their arrival at the camp from Amsterdam when they were 16 months and 7 years, respectively.

They came to Ravensbruck after being interned in the Dutch camp at Westerbork, along with their mother and brother, who was 11. Their father was sent to Buchenwald.

They said female prisoners took turns providing child care, with one mother watching all of the children while the other mothers worked.

Some children's mothers died of disease or were murdered, and a rotating group of women took responsibility for the orphans' care.

A Jewish woman living in St. Petersburg, Stella Kugelman Nikofarova, was a prisoner in Ravensbruck from the age of 4 to 6.

**Solidarity among women, some say**

She said she arrived with her mother from Antwerp in 1943, but her mother died of disease within three months.

After that, she said, she was always cared for by other female prisoners.

Some feminist writers and scholars make the case that solidarity among women was much stronger than among men in concentration camps.

Although the idea can neither be proved nor disproved, the collective child care provided by the women is an example of such solidarity.

Another example was political resistance, which was highly organized in the camp, especially among the Communist prisoners.

Two Jewish women who were gassed in the winter of 1942, Olga Benario Prestes, a German Communist, and Kathe Leichter, an Austrian Social Democrat, collaborated on a clandestine newspaper for the inmates.

However, some survivors remember instances when this sisterly support and solidarity was not displayed.

Several of the Jewish survivors remembered, for instance, that they were treated poorly by non-Jewish political prisoners, especially by some of the Ukrainians incarcerated there.

In the case of Stella Nikofarova, who should have been returned to Antwerp after the camp's liberation, the selfish act of one female prisoner subjected her to many years of suffering after the war.

A Soviet prisoner-of-war from the camp kidnapped the 6-year-old Nikofarova, just as Soviet troops were arriving in the area.

Using the child to prove that she was not a traitor but a rescuer of the orphan, the woman then took her back to the Soviet Union, where she placed her in an isolated orphanage outside Moscow.

Not until Nikofarova was released at age 18 did she learn that her father, in fact, had survived incarceration in Buchenwald. □