



## NEWS AT A GLANCE

■ **Palestinians in the West Bank are close to attaining more extensive self-rule after the Israeli Cabinet's approval on Sunday of the preliminary agreement worked out last week by Israel and the Palestinian Authority.** Both sides are continuing to negotiate unresolved issues and are hopeful that an agreement will be signed at a ceremony in Washington in September. [Page 1]

■ **The Senate voted on Friday to extend the Middle East Peace Facilitation Act for 45 days.** The House of Representatives took similar action earlier this month on the measure, which waives previous laws preventing U.S. contact with the Palestine Liberation Organization.

■ **New York's three airports went on high alert on Sunday after receiving word from law enforcement officials of a possible terror attack by Islamic fundamentalists.** The most noticeable new security measures will affect parking and unattended cars left at arrival and departure terminals, according to a Federal Aviation Administration spokeswoman.

■ **Former Israeli Foreign Minister David Levy will form a new political party in December to compete in the Israel's 1996 elections.** Levy's announcement comes after years of feuding with Likud Chairman Benjamin Netanyahu. [Page 4]

■ **A 22-year-old Arab died of gunshot wounds after Israelis and Palestinians clashed at a hillside near the West Bank settlement of Beit El.** Israeli police arrested two residents of Beit El in connection with the shooting. [Page 4]

■ **A Paris Court of Justice criticized historian Bernard Lewis for saying in a newspaper interview that he would not label the massacres of Armenians by Turks in 1915 "genocide."** The court ordered him to pay compensation for his lack of prudence. [Page 2]

■ **Supreme Court Justice Aharon Barak was appointed chief justice of the high court.** Barak, 59, succeeded outgoing Chief Justice Meir Shamgar, who retired at the mandatory age of 70 after serving 12 years in the post.

## Partial accord reached to extend Palestinian self-rule in West Bank

By Naomi Segal

JERUSALEM (JTA) — After months of delays in the peace process, the Palestinians are now close to attaining more extensive self-rule in the West Bank.

The Israeli Cabinet at its weekly meeting Sunday approved the preliminary agreement worked out by Foreign Minister Shimon Peres and Palestine Liberation Organization leader Yasser Arafat after four days of intensive talks last week at the Red Sea resort of Taba, Egypt.

Early last Friday, Peres and Arafat announced that they had agreed on new guidelines for their respective negotiating teams to hammer into a final accord.

"With this agreement, we didn't complete the work," Peres said last Friday. "But without this agreement, the committees wouldn't be able to continue to work."

With the preliminary agreement in hand, the Israeli and Palestinian negotiators returned to Eilat on Sunday to resume their talks.

After the two negotiating committees finalize the agreement, a signing ceremony will be held in Washington.

The ceremony is expected to take place in early September.

The preliminary agreement worked out by Peres and Arafat covered in a broad outline a multiphase plan for Israeli troop redeployments in the West Bank.

Among other provisions, the Palestinians committed again to revoke those paragraphs in the Palestinian Covenant that call for the destruction of Israel.

Arafat made a similar promise to Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin in a letter dated Sept. 9, 1993 — a move demanded by Rabin before the two sides signed the Declaration of Principles on the White House lawn several days later.

Fifteen ministers in Rabin's Cabinet voted their approval of the Peres-Arafat agreement.

Energy Minister Gonen Segev of the Yi'ud Party was alone in voting against it.

Interior Minister Ehud Barak and Economics Minister Shimon Shetreet abstained.

Segev later said that he feared that the new agreement would lead to an Israeli withdrawal to its pre-1967 borders.

Barak, who retired in January as the Israel Defense Force chief of staff, also had reservations about the agreement, which he said could weaken Israel's bargaining position in the final-status negotiations that are slated to begin next year.

### Special Knesset session called

Absorption Minister Yair Tsaban said Rabin had warned his ministers not to speak out against the agreement, telling them "they should resign" before issuing public criticisms.

The main opposition Likud Party collected enough signatures last Friday to call the Knesset back from its summer recess for a special debate later this week on the Peres-Arafat agreement, which Likud branded "an accord of surrender."

The preliminary agreement worked out last week in Taba includes the following provisions:

- Israel agreed to withdraw troops from six of the seven main Arab population centers in the West Bank during the next several months.

PLO negotiators complained that Palestinians would control only 18 percent of territory in the West Bank as a result of this first-stage Israeli pullout.

- Israel agreed to three more withdrawals, one every six months, from rural areas in the West Bank after Palestinian elections are held.

This second-phase redeployment would be completed by July 1997.

- Palestinian forces would assume control for local policing of the rural sectors after the Israeli withdrawal and would be allowed to establish up to 25 police stations in the area, which comprises some 400 Palestinian

villages. But Israel would continue to have responsibility for overall security in the area.

- Israel agreed to release Palestinians held in Israeli jails in three stages: when the agreement is signed in Washington; on the eve of Palestinian elections; and when the final-status talks begin.

Israel continued to refuse to release those prisoners who have Israeli blood on their hands.

- With the signing of the interim-phase agreement, Israel will transfer to the Palestinians the authority to levy and collect taxes in the West Bank. In addition, Israel will hand over tax revenues from Palestinian workers.

- The Palestinians agreed to delete all clauses in the Palestinian Covenant calling for the destruction of the Jewish state two months after a Palestinian Council is elected.

The two keys issues left unresolved in the Taba talks were arrangements for the West Bank town of Hebron, where 400 Jewish settlers live among 80,000 Palestinians, and who will have control over water sources in the West Bank.

Israel proposed that Palestinian police be allowed to deploy in certain areas of Hebron, but that Israel would remain responsible for those areas in which the Jewish residents of the city live and travel.

Peres said last Friday that the Palestinian Authority is "putting up its strongest political battle for Hebron."

Arafat spokesman Marwan Kanafani, underscoring the importance the Palestinian side attaches to the area, said, "Hebron is the issue which will make or break this deal."

Hebron Mayor Mustafa Natshe suggested that the Hebron settlers move to the nearby settlement of Kiryat Arba, but the settlers vowed that they would never leave.

The two sides agreed to postpone the discussions about water.

They also agreed to the formation of a three-way U.S.-Israeli-Palestinian committee to address issues of economic development in the territories. □

## Paris court reproves historian for interview with newspaper

By Michel Di Paz

PARIS (JTA) — A Paris Court of Justice has criticized statements made by historian Bernard Lewis about Armenians in an interview with the French daily *Le Monde*.

In the November 1993 interview, Lewis said he would not label the massacres of Armenians by the Turks in 1915 "genocide."

His comments led to an outcry in the Armenian community here — as well as to a legal controversy.

The court recently ordered Lewis to pay for his lack of prudence.

Lewis, whose area of study is the Islamic Near East, refused to comment.

A Princeton University professor, Lewis' scholarly work has dealt with Arab and Turkish history, and he has written numerous books, including "The Emergence of Modern Turkey" and "Istanbul and the Civilization of the Ottoman Empire." In 1986, he wrote "Semites and Anti-Semites."

Lewis' comments came after he was asked by *Le Monde* why the Turks still refuse to recognize an Armenian genocide.

Part of the historian's lengthy answer included, "There is no doubt that terrible things did take place, that numerous Armenians — and Turks — did perish. But one will perhaps never know the exact circumstances and the number of victims."

"During their deportation to Syria, hundreds of thousands of Armenians died of hunger and of cold. But if one speaks of genocide, this implies that there was a deliberate policy, a decision to systematically annihilate the Armenian nation. This is very doubtful. Turkish documents prove a will to deport, not to exterminate."

Ten days later, *Le Monde* published an appeal signed by some 30 French intellectuals, mostly on the political left and Jewish, accusing Lewis of "betraying the truth and offending the victims."

In a response to the appeal in the newspaper, the historian said there was no serious proof of an organized Ottoman plan to eradicate the Armenian nation.

This statement infuriated several Armenian associations in France, which, together with the International League Against Racism and Anti-Semitism, decided to sue Lewis on various counts.

An extreme right-wing French association, Against Racism and for the Respect of the French and Christian Identity, an offshoot of Jean-Marie Le Pen's National Front, sued Lewis for "anti-Christian racism."

That suit was thrown out of court.

Apparently, a total of four lawsuits were filed against Lewis.

The case brought by the Armenian groups and the international league was heard.

In their decision, three Paris judges said it was not the court's role to say whether the massacres of Armenians were genocide.

"The courts haven't got a mission to arbitrate and to decide about polemics or controversies triggered by events of history," the court said, adding, "A historian enjoys, by principle, a total freedom to expose, according to his personal views, the facts, the acts and the attitudes of the men or groups of men having taken part in the events he chooses to research."

But the judges also ruled that "the historian cannot escape the common law linking a certain freedom to a necessary responsibility."

With that in mind, they ruled that Lewis erred when he said that the Armenian genocide was only a matter of Armenian imagination.

"His declarations, likely to unjustly reactivate the pain of the Armenian community, are faulty and justify a compensation," the court said.

The court ordered Lewis to pay one symbolic franc, which is about one-fifth of a dollar, as damages.

Lewis also has to compensate the groups that brought the suit against him, the court ruled, adding that the judgment has to be printed in *Le Monde*.

Lewis will not appeal the case, his French lawyer said. □

(JTA staff writer Alissa Kaplan in New York contributed to this report.)

## Yugoslavia turns to Israel for aid

By Naomi Segal

JERUSALEM (JTA) — Yugoslavia has appealed to Israel for humanitarian aid for the thousands of Serb refugees who fled last week's Croatian onslaught on the Krajina region.

The region previously was held by rebel Serbs, who took control of the area in 1991.

The request comes only weeks after Israel sent aid to Bosnian Muslims in a joint airlift with Jordan.

Ori Orr, head of the Knesset Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee, said he supported the effort.

"I think we should give them the same attention we gave the Bosnian refugees," he told Israel Radio. "Israel must realize that all refugees are equal." □

## AROUND THE JEWISH WORLD

### New school building in Vilnius sign of vibrant Jewish revival

By Deborah Kazis

VILNIUS, Lithuania (JTA) — On the outskirts of Vilnius, tucked in a courtyard behind rows of gray Stalinist buildings, dozens of workers in paint-splattered overalls frantically hammer away so that the only Jewish day school here will be ready to open in its new home Sept. 1.

"Last year there were 170 children. This year there will be 200," says Misha Jakobas, the school's director.

Vilnius' first Jewish school in decades opened in 1989.

"We began with the first grade and added a grade every year. Now we have up to the seventh," Jakobas says, beaming with pride as he shows off the new library and music room. "In five years we will be a complete high school."

Because the institution is a Lithuanian state school, it accepts a range of students. A quarter of the children will not be Jewish.

But all the students — Jews and non-Jews alike — will study Jewish subjects, including Torah and the history of the Jewish people and Israel, for 10 hours each week. They will learn in Russian, Lithuanian, English, Hebrew and soon, Yiddish.

"This school has a great popularity in the city," says Jakobas. "Everyone wants to come here because the quality is very high."

"We prepare our pupils for life in Lithuania or in Israel," he adds. "There is freedom now. The young people go where they want."

An international effort has been under way to help the school.

Israel's Ministry of Education is helping train the teachers and sending a Hebrew teacher from Israel. The American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee is assisting with the renovation and has donated a library.

#### Furniture and a minibus

ORT, the Organization for Rehabilitation and Training, sent a roomful of computers, and the Jewish community of Sweden contributed furniture and a minibus.

Although signs of Jewish revival in Vilnius such as this new school are glimmers of new Jewish life, they are also painful reminders of the past.

Before the Holocaust, 230,000 Jews lived in communities across Lithuania, 100,000 of them in Vilna, now called by the Lithuanian name Vilnius. Close to half of Vilna's population was Jewish.

Today, some 7,000 Jews live throughout Lithuania, 4,500 of them in Vilnius. About half are elderly.

"More than 93 percent of the Jews in Lithuania were killed in the Holocaust," says Simon Alperovich, president of the Jewish community of Lithuania.

"After the German genocide came the Soviet spiritual genocide. All of our institutions, schools and newspapers were closed."

Where 111 synagogues and houses of prayer once attested to the Jewishness of the fabled city of Vilna and where more than 3,000 people gathered to pray inside the Great Synagogue alone, only one synagogue remains today.

The place where YIVO was created in 1925 as an academic institute devoted to Yiddish culture and literature is now the site of a few run-down shops.

The cobblestone roads of the old city that now again bear names such as Gaono Street and Zydu, or Jewish, Street bring to mind the Jewish life that flourished in this city once known as the Jerusalem of Lithuania.

"You can see that these homes were Jewish

homes," says Michel Montreuil, the JDC's representative in Lithuania.

"See the inner courtyard. Jews often lived in buildings like these so that they could lock the outside doors when there were pogroms."

He adds, "The courtyard has entrances at either end so the Jews could escape out the back."

Even the dead were not free from the destruction of Jewish life.

Today, a public swimming pool is on the site of a 15th century Jewish cemetery.

Shabbat in Vilnius can be disturbing. There is no rabbi to conduct the service because Lithuania's chief rabbi, Shmuel Kahn, lives in London and visits only occasionally.

The handful of people who came to pray on a recent Shabbat morning included two tourists who appeared to be lost.

There are, however, signs of revival.

An hour's drive west of Vilnius, past deep green fields, grazing cows and picturesque wooden cottages, lies the resort town of Trakai.

Amid the rolling hills and deep blue lakes, in buildings meant to house vacationing factory workers, there is now a Lubavitch Jewish summer camp called Gan Israel, or Garden of Israel.

At the girls' and boys' camps, which run for three weeks, 120 children swim, hike, play sports and learn about what it means to be Jewish.

As Shabbat approaches, the young boys — some in yarmulkes, some in baseball caps — sing, sway and link arms.

The counselors, who have come to Lithuania from France, Israel and the United States, enthusiastically teach the children songs.

Together they welcome in Shabbat, many for the very first time.

Rabbi Sholom Krinsky, 27, who came to live in Lithuania from Brooklyn a year ago, organized the camp.

He is the nephew of Rabbi Yehuda Krinsky, a senior aide to the late Lubavitcher Rebbe Menachem Schneerson.

"The camp brought in a lot of new children who were never involved with the Jewish school or the Sunday school — kids who didn't know there was any Jewish activity here," Krinsky says.

Krinsky has also started a yeshiva, where 25 men and women study every weekday for a few hours, and a Sunday school for 80 children.

#### 'Young are leaving, old are staying'

"There's a lot of work to be done here," Krinsky says.

"Our goal is to find every Jew that exists here and let them know that being Jewish is something to be proud of."

Montreuil says the number of young families who came to family-oriented activities was surprising.

"Everyone said there were hardly any people between the ages of 25 and 50, but when we have Jewish family events — such as an evening of klezmer music — close to 100 people come."

But the future for this small Jewish community is uncertain.

"Four hundred or 500 Jews each year are leaving Lithuania for Israel or the United States or Germany," says Alperovich, head of the Jewish community.

"The young are leaving and the old are staying. But now, after independence, we have the possibility to establish a Jewish community here — to create new Jewish organizations." □

## Palestinians, settlers clash; man dies later of gunshot wound

By Naomi Segal

JERUSALEM (JTA) — A Palestinian died of a gunshot wound after clashes Sunday between Jewish settlers and Palestinians at a hillside near the West Bank settlement of Beit El.

The incident occurred when some 100 Palestinian residents of the nearby Arab village of Deir al-Kara went to the hill, where settlers set up a tent campsite last week as part of their protest against extending Palestinian self-rule in the West Bank.

When the group of Palestinians arrived at the hill, they found a woman and several children, who soon fled the site.

The Palestinians then tore down a tent and set fire to an Israeli flag. They replaced it with a Palestinian flag, according to local news reports.

A short time later, a security officer from Beit El and several settlers came to the site and fired shots into the air to disperse the crowd.

Palestinian witnesses claimed that 22-year-old Khairy Mohammed Abdel-Hafeez was hit by the gunfire. He later died in a hospital in Ramallah.

But a representative of the settlers denied that the gunfire had killed the Palestinian.

"As far as I know, there might have been some shots in the air to disperse the crowd," Moshe Meir of Beit El told Israel Radio. "The Palestinians all left running. Someone shot cannot run. It might have been some internal clash in the village, and they connected the two events."

Israeli police arrested two residents of Beit El later in the day.

More than 150 settlers later scuffled with police outside a police station in Jerusalem where the two were thought to be held.

Meanwhile, settlers continued their protests at other sites throughout the West Bank.

Among their demands, the settlers are calling for a national referendum before Israel turns over any additional portions of the West Bank to the Palestinians. □

## David Levy will establish new party for 1996 election

By Naomi Segal

JERUSALEM (JTA) — Former Foreign Minister David Levy completed his split from the Likud Party by announcing that he will form a new political party in December and will run for prime minister in Israel's 1996 elections.

Levy's announcement, made on Israel Television over the weekend, comes after years of feuding with Likud Chairman Benjamin Netanyahu.

The conflict reached a climax earlier this year, when Levy bolted from Likud, charging that its mechanism for holding internal party elections deprived his followers of their fair share of representation within the party.

Many who support Levy, a Moroccan-born immigrant, are from Israel's Sephardi population.

Levy said his new, as-yet-unnamed party would be centrist, drawing support from members of the Likud, Labor and Meretz parties.

Sources close to Levy said the new party would support the evolving peace agreement with the Palestinians, with the condition that no Israeli settlements are dismantled and that the security of Jewish settlers is ensured.

Senior Likud sources said the driving force behind Levy's decision to form a new party was to thwart Netanyahu's bid for the premiership. □

## Peres urges European leaders to fight Islamic fundamentalism

By Joseph Kopel

BRUSSELS (JTA) — Officials at the upcoming Euro-Mediterranean Conference will have to find a strategy to combat the spread of Islamic fundamentalism, Israeli Foreign Minister Shimon Peres has said.

The foreign minister recently made the remarks about the November conference in Barcelona, Spain, in an interview in the weekly *The European*. Fifteen foreign ministers from the European Union are to meet their counterparts from 12 Mediterranean countries.

Peres warned that Islamic fundamentalists "could acquire nuclear weapons in four or five years."

He said of the future: "The fundamentalists could take over the oil wells. They could play with the European economy like a toy."

Tourism can not exist with terrorism, he added.

However, Peres said Europe lacks unity when it came to foreign policy.

"Europe has an economic character without having a diplomatic soul," the foreign minister said. "It has the wealth to become maybe the most important leader in world diplomacy, but it is incapable of maintaining a constant position."

He also said, "I hope a way can be found to overcome these difficulties because it's unhealthy for the world to depend on a single parent — the U.S. You need two." □

## No great surprise: List of Jews kept by police

NEW YORK (JTA) — Some Czech Jewish leaders have been disturbed about reports that the Communist-era secret police here compiled a list of about 10,000 members of the Jewish community, according to a report in the *London Jewish Chronicle*.

The secret police, known as the StB, created the list under the guise of "Operation Spider," which started in the 1970s and grew in the 1980s.

But for others, the new reports came as no surprise.

"The StB had a special department to deal with Zionism and the Jewish community," Jiri Danicek of the Federation of Jewish Communities in Prague was quoted as saying by the *Jewish Chronicle*.

"Every Jew was under suspicion, at the very least because he belonged to an international community and his natural interests were deemed not to correspond with those of the socialist state," he added.

Tomas Hornof, a spokesman for the Czech Office for the Documentation and Investigation of Communist Crimes, said his organization would be launching an investigation to learn why the files were kept.

"One theory is that anti-Zionist organizations could have consulted the files. At the time they were compiled, [the people on file] would have been in a certain amount of danger," Hornof said. □

## Man arrested in arms smuggling

By Naomi Segal

JERUSALEM (JTA) — Security forces this weekend arrested a man who apparently had smuggled arms across the Jordanian border.

He was apprehended near Argaman, a moshav in the Jordan Valley that is close to the Jordanian border.

A cache of weapons, including some 30 revolvers, two rifles and a submachine gun, were discovered near the border fence. □