



## NEWS AT A GLANCE

■ The 15-member European Union announced that it would boycott the upcoming Jerusalem 3000 festivities. An E.U. delegation said support of the event could be interpreted as taking a position on the permanent status of Jerusalem. [Page 1]

■ Israel extended its closure of the Gaza Strip until Wednesday morning. The closure was imposed last week to prevent any terror attack that might be aimed at thwarting the agreement for extending Palestinian autonomy in the West Bank.

■ Israeli police arrested a fourth suspect in connection with the fatal shooting of a Palestinian in the West Bank. Ze'ev Lipskind of the West Bank settlement of Beit El was arrested after being identified in a newspaper photograph directly pointing a rifle into the crowd of Palestinian protesters.

■ Israeli air force jets and helicopters blasted targets north of the southern Lebanon security zone. The Israeli air strikes were aimed at weapons caches belonging to Ahmed Jibril's Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine-General Command. [Page 2]

■ Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin granted permission for Jerusalem City officials to take legal action against Orient House, the Palestine Liberation Organization's headquarters in eastern Jerusalem. [Page 2]

■ The head of the European Jewish Congress backed French leader Jacques Chirac's decision to resume nuclear testing in the South Pacific. EJC President Jean Kahn wrote in the French daily *Le Monde* that nuclear weapons are needed by France for protection against the possible spread of Islamic fundamentalism. [Page 4]

■ Argentine Jewish officials hosted a party to mark the start of reconstruction of the Buenos Aires Jewish headquarters destroyed last year by a terrorist bomb. Former Argentine President Raul Alfonsin was among the 200 guests attending the party.

## Jerusalem 3000 plows ahead despite E.U. plan to boycott

By Uriel Masad

TEL AVIV (JTA) — Despite a recent barrage of criticism, organizers of the upcoming Jerusalem 3000 festivities plan to proceed full steam ahead with the celebration marking three millennia since King David made Jerusalem his capital.

The possibility that politics would creep into a celebration of Jerusalem seemed somehow inevitable, even though ardent attempts were made to keep politics out.

Last week, a delegation from the 15-member European Union informed officials of the Israeli Foreign Ministry that the E.U. member states had decided to boycott the festivities.

Among their reasons: The celebrations fail to represent adequately the multiethnic makeup of Jerusalem, particularly its Christian and Muslim communities.

The celebration has also been the subject of criticism by two fervently Orthodox members of the Jerusalem city council.

Their dissatisfaction: Some of the events planned for the celebration, they say, offend Jewish sensibilities and border on the sacrilegious.

The festivities — scheduled to start on Sept. 4 and last through January 1997 — will include cultural, scientific and religious events and will involve the participation of many international bodies.

The municipality of Jerusalem and several government agencies — including the Foreign Ministry, the Education Ministry, the Tourism Ministry and the Prime Minister's Office — are involved with the project, which is expected to draw thousands of visitors from around the world.

The E.U. delegation threw something of a pall over the plans by announcing their boycott of the festivities last week.

In a statement presented by the Spanish, French and Italian ambassadors to Israel, the E.U. nations said their support of the events could be interpreted as taking a position on the question of the permanent status of Jerusalem — a subject not scheduled to be discussed by Israeli and Palestinian negotiators until next year.

In addition, the European Union has decided to withdraw all its support of regular annual events in the city — such as the prestigious Israel Festival and the Jerusalem Film Festival. It has also withdrawn its backing of special conferences, such as the annual conference of the World Health Organization, which is scheduled to convene in Jerusalem next year.

The E.U. nations said they were upset that these annual and special events have been incorporated into the Jerusalem 3000 festivities.

### Planners remain undeterred

The delegation also voiced its dissatisfaction with the celebration's emphasis on Jerusalem as the capital of Israel — a viewpoint, they said, that slights the city's Christian and Muslim communities.

Yigal Palmor, deputy spokesman for the Foreign Ministry, said the event's planners would not be deterred by the E.U. criticisms.

"We intend to go with the program as planned," he said in an interview. "We see no reason to change anything, because the celebrations are a framework dedicated to cultural, scientific and tourist-oriented activities.

"It has nothing to do with politics, and should not be politicized," Palmor added.

Tourism Minister Uzi Baram had a similar reaction. He said the fact that most Israelis view Jerusalem as a united city under Israeli rule should not harm the special link that other faiths have to the city.

Jerusalem Mayor Ehud Olmert criticized the E.U.'s decision, calling it hypocritical.

"These are historical and cultural celebrations. Only the European Union wants to bring politics into it," he said.

Olmert, who criticized the European officials for lacking the courage or the decency to recognize the Jewish people's historical links to the city, also pointed out that the E.U. financial contribution to the celebrations was insignificant.

Yossi Tal-Gan, director general of the Jerusalem 3000 celebrations,

said that despite the E.U.'s decision, many cities around the world will be participating in and supporting a host of events.

On the home front, meanwhile, the celebrations drew strong criticism from two fervently Orthodox members of the Jerusalem city council, Chaim Miller and Meir Porush.

Their ire was raised in part by plans for a performance of the Beethoven oratorio, "Jesus on the Mountain of Olives."

The concert, one of the opening events of the Jerusalem 3000 festivities, is being sponsored by the city of Berlin.

The concert features Israeli-born Daniel Barenboim conducting the Deutsche Staatsoper.

The two council members are demanding the cancellation of the concert, which they said was sacrilegious.

Tal-Gan dismissed the objections.

"We've been trying to create a delicate balance between Judaism and Christianity," Tal-Gan said in an interview.

"As far as Islam is concerned, it's difficult to make programs without partners.

"Still, we open the celebrations with an exhibition dedicated to the Muslim contribution to the history of the city," Tal-Gan added.

Orthodox members of the Jerusalem city council recently won one victory as the Jerusalem 3000 celebrations approach.

They forced Olmert to decline a loan from Florence of an exact replica of Michelangelo's sculpture of David.

The Jerusalem officials found the nude statue to be in bad taste and offensive to the sensibilities of the city's fervently Orthodox community. □

## Rabin lets Jerusalem take action against Orient House

By Naomi Segal

JERUSALEM (JTA) — In a move signaling a readiness to take a tougher stand on Palestinian activity in Jerusalem, Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin has allowed city officials to take legal action against Orient House, the Palestine Liberation Organization's headquarters in eastern Jerusalem.

Jerusalem Mayor Ehud Olmert has threatened to shut down Orient House, saying it is illegally used for offices, though it is zoned as a hotel.

After a ministerial meeting Monday, Rabin gave Olmert support to move against Orient House if Palestinian officials continued to ignore demands that they apply for rezoning.

In a related development, Police Minister Moshe Shahal vowed to close down the offices at Orient House because their presence threatens the city's status as Israel's united capital.

In a statement issued after the ministerial meeting, Shahal said he would try to limit foreign dignitaries visiting Orient House from discussing issues related to sovereignty.

Shahal called for adoption of a firm policy against the Palestinian trend "to establish facts in eastern Jerusalem."

The Knesset last year passed legislation barring the Palestinian Authority from operating outside the self-rule areas of Gaza and the Jericho enclave.

Final-status talks between Israel and the Palestinians are slated for 1996.

The talks will include the issue of Jerusalem. □

## Aharon Barak, liberal justice, appointed Supreme Court chief

By Naomi Segal

JERUSALEM (JTA) — Supreme Court Justice Aharon Barak has been appointed the high court's president.

Barak, 59, a former attorney general, will now have the guiding hand over the high court and over the Israeli legal system in general.

The president, also known as the chief justice, of the 14-member court determines the composition of panels that hear legal cases and sits on the committee that appoints and promotes judges.

Barak, who was sworn in Sunday, succeeds outgoing Chief Justice Meir Shamgar, who retired at the mandatory age of 70 after serving 12 years in the post.

Justice Shlomo Levine was appointed deputy president of the court, the position Barak held for the past two years.

Born in Lithuania, Barak immigrated to Israel with his parents in 1947.

He completed his law degree at The Hebrew University in 1958 and later continued his studies at Harvard University.

Barak was named dean of the law faculty at The Hebrew University in 1974. A year later, he received the prestigious Israel Prize for law.

He served as legal adviser during the negotiations at Camp David leading up to the signing of the 1979 Israeli-Egyptian peace treaty.

Barak's reputation as a scrupulous public figure developed during his tenure as attorney general from 1975 to 1978.

It was during this period that Barak decided to press charges against Leah Rabin, then-Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin's wife, after it was revealed that she had a bank account in the United States, in violation of Israeli law. The incident played a large part in Yitzhak Rabin's decision not to run for the premiership in 1977.

Since his appointment to the Supreme Court in 1978, Barak has been noted for his liberalism and judicial activism. In 1986, Barak was the dissenting voice when the high court upheld the presidential pardon of two Shin Bet agents involved in covering up the murder of two captured terrorists.

His liberal stances have often led to confrontations with Israel's Orthodox establishment.

Barak was part of a judicial panel that ruled that Israel's national airline, El Al, must grant the same benefits to the partner of a homosexual employee as that of a heterosexual one.

He also sat on a panel that overruled a government ban on importing non-kosher meat, terming it a violation of an importer's right to earn a living.

Barak also joined with a recent ruling that Reform and Conservative Jews should be allowed to sit on local government boards that oversee religious affairs. □

## Israel blasts PFLP bases

By Naomi Segal

JERUSALEM (JTA) — Israeli air force jets and helicopters blasted targets north of southern Lebanon security zone on Monday.

The airstrikes were aimed at bases of Ahmed Jibril's Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine-General Command, Israel Television reported.

The target had been underground tunnels holding weapons and equipment, sources said.

Four terrorists were wounded, it was reported. □

## AROUND THE JEWISH WORLD

### Summer camp in Hungary acquaints youths with Judaism

By Ruth E. Gruber

SZARVAS, Hungary (JTA) — Clad in T-shirts, two dozen 13-year-olds from former Communist countries were called to the Torah one day this month in a collective Bar Mitzvah celebrated at their summer camp.

The boys — from Hungary, Ukraine, Russia and Slovakia — were among some 2,000 Jewish youths from Eastern Europe who attended the camp this summer near the town of Szarvas, which is situated in the south of Hungary.

Camp counselors taught the Bar Mitzvah boys how to lay tefillin, put on a tallit and say the Torah blessings. They learned about the meaning of the ceremony in Jewish tradition.

For many of the boys, it was their first encounter with these tenets of Judaism.

After the informal ceremony, which took place in a synagogue set up in what used to be a dining hall, dozens of other campers pelted them with candy and all danced around the Torah to lively Israeli music. Each boy received a certificate.

"We have a collective Bar Mitzvah like this at every two-week camp session during the summer," said Itzhak Roth, an Israeli who comes to Szarvas each summer as camp director.

The camp, which is run under the auspices of the Ronald S. Lauder Foundation and the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee, is in its sixth year of operation.

It opened in 1990 at a former commercial campsite purchased by the Lauder Foundation in 1989 and renovated to fulfill Jewish needs.

Jewish summer camps have opened in increasing numbers in formerly Communist countries.

All the camps provide an introduction to Judaism and Jewish education for children who otherwise may have little Jewish awareness or sense of Jewish identity.

Many youths' experiences at a Jewish camp are their first intensive contact with Jewish tradition — and possibly their only Jewish educational experience during the year.

#### A Jewish flavor

The Szarvas daily program is a mix of normal summer camp recreational activities and Jewish education.

The children sing camp songs around campfires, but they are Hebrew songs.

Arts and crafts projects employ methods and materials common to summer camps around the world, but have a Jewish flavor: Children are encouraged to draw and model Jewish symbols.

They learn Israeli dances, study basic Hebrew and learn about Jewish holidays and history, including the Holocaust.

Skits, pageants and other participatory events revolve around Jewish themes.

"We can't really do too much in two weeks," said Hanna Roth, who works with her husband as part of the Szarvas camp staff.

"We want to get them curious, get them to be interested and maybe then go home and look more into Judaism, into Jewish self-awareness, Jewish identity," she said.

Szarvas draws an international group of campers. More than half of the 2,000 campers who come each summer are Hungarian.

The rest come from the Czech Republic, Slovakia,

Bulgaria, Romania, Poland, Croatia, Yugoslavia and the former Soviet republics.

The camp session in early August also included children from Albania for the first time. Fewer than 20 Jewish families live in Albania, and the 15 Albanian children at camp represented almost all Albanian Jewish youth.

In addition to the children's camp sessions, a weeklong family camp session at the end of the summer provides a learning and relaxation experience for parents and their children.

"The children from the various countries come from scattered villages in which they really are a minority," Roth said.

"Here they see that they are part of a nation," she said.

"They meet with children from different countries and see that their problems are the same."

She added, "Many say they have never had an experience with so many Jews. It gives them the experience that they are part of a nation, [it] gives them a sense of pride."

A survey carried out among campers last year showed that nearly 90 percent of the children felt that the Szarvas experience strengthened their sense of Jewish identity to some extent.

Fully 50 percent of the campers said it strengthened it greatly.

"We make friends here that we keep in touch with after the camp session," said a Hungarian girl who attended Szarvas as a camper and now is a counselor.

She described the phenomenon of children going home from camp to their assimilated families and introducing Jewish practice into the home.

"Sometimes the parents don't know what to do — they don't know Jewish tradition, so they cannot give anything," she said.

#### Cheerleader-type Hebrew chants

In Russia, according to the JDC, Jewish Sunday schools were opened in at least three cities at the request of campers returning from Szarvas who wanted to continue their Jewish education.

In addition, the camp is strictly kosher.

Mealtimes at Szarvas are a multilingual cacophony. More than 400 youngsters eat together in a cavernous dining hall decorated with murals and other artwork depicting Jewish themes.

The words for blessings and Hebrew songs — transliterated into both Latin and Cyrillic letters — hang on huge wall placards.

The conversation is punctuated by loud choruses of Jewish songs and cheerleader-type Hebrew chants led by camp director Roth, who roams among the tables with a microphone in hand.

The children wave their arms, embrace each other and sway together — as if at a rock concert — as they sing well-known songs such as "Tum Balalaika" and "Am Yisrael Chai."

"It is a dream that came true," said Ilona Seifert, wiping away tears.

Seifert served as president of the Hungarian Jewish community organization during the Communist regime and now works with the JDC.

"We, the Holocaust survivors, see that it is a new Jewish future," she said.

"You can't believe what is our feeling. Fifty years after Auschwitz, when the children were killed, we have a new Jewish life.

"They learn what it means to be a Jew — Am Yisrael Chai. It is a most beautiful feeling for us." □

## Accused war criminal refuses role in Italian trial against him

By Sergio Kiernan

BUENOS AIRES (JTA) — Former Nazi SS Capt. Erich Priebke has refused to talk to an Italian prosecutor seeking to question him here in connection with a war-crimes case Italy is launching against him.

Priebke, 82, dismissed the questionnaire presented to him by the Italian prosecutor as "childish" and bemoaned his inability to bring forward witnesses to defend his wartime past.

Priebke said in an interview with the Argentine official news agency TELAM that he felt like "the last of the Mohicans."

"There are no witnesses to defend me," he said.

"Back then you did not ask questions, you obeyed orders," he added. "For instance, I didn't know about Jews being shot. I am innocent."

Despite his protestations of innocence, Priebke has in the past admitted to taking part in what has been described as the worst war crime to have taken place on Italian soil.

In addition to serving as a captain in the Nazi SS, Priebke was the wartime deputy to Herbert Kappler, the Gestapo chief during the Nazi occupation of Rome.

After a partisan bomb attack in Rome on March 23, 1944, killed 33 SS stormtroopers, Kappler ordered 10 Italian civilians to be executed for every dead German. There was an immediate mass roundup and the hostages were massacred in the Ardeatine Caves on the southern outskirts of Rome.

A total of 335 people were killed, including 77 Jewish civilians. Priebke's primary responsibility during the massacre included crossing off the names of those people killed, but he admitted after the war to personally shooting two prisoners in the neck.

"I went in with the second or third party and killed a man with an Italian machine pistol," read a statement signed by Priebke while under Allied custody after the war.

"Towards the end I killed another man with the same machine pistol," read the confession, which was taken in August 1946 and has been circulated by the Argentine chapter of the Simon Wiesenthal Center.

Priebke was also reportedly involved in the deportation of thousands of Italian Jews to concentration camps.

### Symbol of Nazi brutality

The Ardeatine Caves massacre has become the country's chief symbol of Nazi brutality in the eyes of Italians and particularly of Italian Jews.

Kappler was arrested and sentenced to life imprisonment in connection with the massacre. Priebke spent 20 months in custody after the war, but he escaped in 1946 from a prisoner-of-war camp run by the British.

In an interview published last year in the Rome daily *La Repubblica*, Priebke said he, his wife and children lived for two years in northeastern Italy after securing the help of a Franciscan friar. He also said he got help from the Vatican when he and his family decided to flee Italy in 1948. He has been living in Argentina without concealing his identity ever since.

Then last year, after nearly 50 years of quiet life in Bariloche, a picturesque ski resort in southern Argentina with a sizable German colony, Priebke was tracked down by ABC Television, which located him with the help of the Simon Wiesenthal Center.

Italian authorities requested Priebke's extradition from Argentina after a broadcast of ABC's "PrimeTime Live" in May 1994, in which Priebke admitted to partak-

ing in the killings at the Ardeatine Caves. Argentina granted the extradition request, but it has been under appeal ever since.

After waiting for Priebke's extradition for more than a year, Italian authorities decided to try Priebke in absentia for crimes against humanity.

Last week, in what was the first step in the in-absentia proceedings, Italian prosecutor Antonio Intelesano presented Priebke with a list of 12 questions, asking the former SS officer about his responsibilities in Rome during 1944, the number of prisons and prisoners under his command and his part in rounding up Jews in the occupied city.

But on the advice of his attorney, Pedro Bianchi, Priebke remained silent throughout the two-hour session, which was presided over by Argentine Judge Leonidas Moldes.

Priebke addressed the court only once to say, "I will only answer questions in Rome, and only if and when I am extradited." His lawyer — who specializes in defending serial killers and right-wing extremists — later called the proceedings "a travesty."

Moldes, who signed the original extradition order against Priebke, dismissed as "unimportant" Priebke's refusal to sign a statement summarizing the proceedings. "The statement is valid, even if unsigned by the accused, because there were witnesses present," Moldes said.

Meanwhile, the extradition ordered by Moldes last year is expected to be upheld by a provincial court. The case is expected to move to Argentina's Supreme Court later this year.

Although much attention has been focused on Priebke, he is not the only Nazi war criminal still living in that country. Leaders of the Argentine Jewish community last year compiled a list of several other suspected former Nazis living in the country. □

## EJC head backs Chirac decision to resume Pacific nuclear tests

By Michel Di Paz

PARIS (JTA) — The president of the European Jewish Congress has backed French President Jacques Chirac's decision to resume nuclear testing in the South Pacific.

EJC head Jean Kahn, also the president of the Consistoire Central, which oversees the religious needs of the French Jewish community, recently wrote an opinion piece in the daily *Le Monde* explaining why he thought that France should have nuclear weapons.

The weapons serve as a deterrent, Kahn wrote.

Citing the situation in the fractured former Yugoslavia, where no Western power has wanted to intervene, Kahn concluded that when a country has to defend itself, it can only count on its own strength. He also argued that France needed nuclear weapons at a time when countries such as Iran are trying to acquire a nuclear capacity.

If Iran has its way, he wrote, it would be equipped with nuclear weapons and would be able to spread its fundamentalist revolution throughout the Middle East and North Africa. France would be heavily involved in such a scenario and would need nuclear weapons for protection, he said in his piece.

Some 62 percent of the general French population said it opposed nuclear testing, according to polls conducted last week.

The French Socialist opposition has said it is against the resumption of nuclear tests.

During his two terms, former French President Francois Mitterrand, a Socialist, allowed more than 80 tests. He stopped the tests in 1992. □