



## NEWS AT A GLANCE

■ Congress voted to move the U.S. Embassy from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem by 1999. The move came after lawmakers worked out a compromise with the Clinton administration to include a presidential waiver in the legislation. [Page 1]

■ Palestine Liberation Organization leader Yasser Arafat met with a second group of American Jewish leaders in a private gathering that included the past and current chairmen of the Conference of Presidents of Major American Jewish Organizations.

■ Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin addressed the U.N. General Assembly, recalling the mixed relationship Israel has enjoyed with the world organization. He also paid solemn tribute to Holocaust victims. [Page 3]

■ Most Jewish organizations are awaiting the outcome of next week's Bosnia peace talks before deciding whether to support the dispatch of U.S. peacekeeping troops to help enforce a settlement. The Clinton administration is seeking congressional and public support for an American role in a peacekeeping mission. [Page 4]

■ Members of Congress are urging the Turkish government to intercede on behalf of Aliza Marcus, a Reuters journalist in Istanbul who is being prosecuted for writing an article about the country's Kurdish minority.

■ The Knesset was scheduled to hold a special debate regarding the mounting number of road accidents in Israel, after a fatal traffic collision north of Jerusalem left at least 10 people dead and two others injured. Police officials described the accident as one of the worst in Israel's history.

■ Iran blamed Israel and an Iraqi-based group for the shooting of Iran's top diplomat in Argentina. Charge d'affaires Hassanali Rajabi Yazdi was driving with his family in Buenos Aires on Saturday when he was shot by a passing motorcyclist. Yazdi, who was shot in the abdomen, is reportedly expected to remain in intensive care another day.

## Vote on U.S. Embassy signals official backing of united Jerusalem

By Matthew Dorf

WASHINGTON (JTA) — This week's congressional vote to move the U.S. Embassy in Israel from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem marks the first time the United States has moved to recognize with the force of law a united Jerusalem as Israel's capital.

The legislation, which declares that Jerusalem "should remain an undivided city in which the rights of every ethnic and religious group are protected," came on the eve of official festivities here to celebrate Jerusalem 3000.

The bill's passage was greeted with cheers by Israel and most American Jewish groups, and with condemnation by the Palestinians.

Despite Israeli sovereignty over its capital, the Palestinians seek eastern Jerusalem as the capital of a hoped-for future state.

With overwhelming bipartisan support, the Senate passed a bill Tuesday by a vote of 93-5 that requires the State Department to move the embassy by May 31, 1999. Hours later, the House of Representatives also passed the measure, by a 374-37 vote, with five abstentions.

The Senate and House votes came in time for Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin's visit to the Capitol on Wednesday to celebrate Jerusalem 3000.

Aiming to win the support of the administration and lawmakers who were concerned that the move could disrupt the peace process at an especially critical time, sponsors of the measure agreed to allow the president to postpone the move by renewable six-month intervals if it is deemed necessary to protect national security interests.

President Clinton is expected to sign the legislation, although his administration was clearly not happy with the congressional act.

Robert Pelletreau, assistant secretary of state for Near East Affairs, accused Congress of trying to "undercut" the Declaration of Principles signed by Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organization two years ago.

"This is not the appropriate time to be considering this legislation when we are making such dramatic progress in the peace process," he told reporters here Wednesday. "The focus should be on the peace process, and we should not be engaging in any action which would harm the peace process."

El Salvador and Costa Rica are the only countries that maintain embassies in Jerusalem.

Israeli Foreign Minister Shimon Peres welcomed the move.

"We appreciate very much the act that was taken by the American Congress," Peres said. "If there is one issue that Israel is united around it is united Jerusalem, as the capital of Israel."

Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin concurred.

"Jerusalem is our eternal capital," he told reporters during his visit to New York, adding that he welcomed the Senate move.

But Faisal Husseini, the PLO's top official in Jerusalem, condemned the move, saying that it could harm Israeli-Arab peace efforts. He reportedly said the United States had promised the Palestinians it would not take any steps that could affect the final status of Jerusalem.

In fact, the final version of the measure, sponsored by Senate Majority Leader Bob Dole (R-Kan.), dropped a controversial provision that would have required groundbreaking on a Jerusalem embassy site in 1996.

### Ending a decade-long battle

Palestinian and Israel negotiators are scheduled to complete talks on the final status of Jerusalem in 1999.

The congressional votes end a decade-long battle spearheaded by Sen. Daniel Patrick Moynihan (D-N.Y.) to recognize a united Jerusalem as Israel's capital. The Senate corrected "an absurdity which has endured for nearly half a century," Moynihan said on the floor of the Senate during debate of the bill. Anticipating charges that the bill would interfere with the peace process, Moynihan said, "It is inconceivable that Israel would agree to any proposal in which Jerusalem did not remain the capital of Israel."

The vote came after hours of Senate debate on the measure. Although

there was no significant opposition to the move in principle, several lawmakers sought additional changes before they endorsed the legislation.

At the same time, many senators sought to speak in favor of the measure. "This legislation is not about the peace process, it is about recognizing Israel's capital," Dole said on the Senate floor moments before the historic vote.

"Israel's capital is not on the table in the peace process and moving the U.S. Embassy to Jerusalem does nothing to prejudge the outcome of any future negotiations," said Dole, who first unveiled the measure at the American Israel Public Affairs Committee's annual meeting in May.

AIPAC, which aggressively lobbied members to support the measure, hailed its passage.

"It brings U.S. policy in line with its long-held belief that Jerusalem should be recognized as Israel's capital and that our embassy should be moved there," said Neal Sher, executive director of AIPAC.

As the vote was being taken shortly before noon on Tuesday, Sen. Dianne Feinstein (D-Calif.), who had negotiated with Dole on behalf of the administration, huddled with Sen. Joseph Lieberman (D-Conn.).

Both Jewish senators smiled broadly as the results were coming in, but there was no other show of emotion on the Senate floor after the results were read.

Declaring that "Jerusalem should be recognized as the capital of the State of Israel," the measure directs the State Department to set aside \$25 million in 1996 and \$75 million in 1997 for the construction and other costs associated with moving the embassy.

Within 30 days of the measure becoming law, Secretary of State Warren Christopher must submit a report to Congress that includes a timetable for construction and an estimate of the necessary funds.

### **Most Jewish groups back the vote**

Many American Jewish groups supported the goal of the legislation but withheld endorsement of the original bill that required groundbreaking to begin in 1996, fearing it would impact the peace process and insert partisanship into the status of Jerusalem.

After the vote, however, virtually all Jewish organizations expressed support for the bill.

"This is an historic occasion. Something we have sought for many years is now a reality," said Malcolm Hoenlein, executive vice chairman of the Conference of Presidents of Major American Jewish Organizations.

At least one Jewish group, however, expressed disappointment. The Zionist Organization of America criticized Congress for dropping the provisions that required construction to start next year.

"We are deeply disappointed that President Clinton has pressured congressional leaders to virtually cripple the Jerusalem embassy bill by adding presidential waiver language, thereby reneging on his 1992 campaign promise to recognize all of Jerusalem and the sovereign undivided capital of Israel," said ZOA President Morton Klein.

Arab American groups also criticized the measure. They had urged members to vote against the bill in a full page ad in the Capitol Hill newspaper Roll Call.

The legislation "is inappropriate and can only have a negative effect on future peace negotiations," wrote Khalil Jahshan, executive director of the National Association of Arab Americans.

"No single religion has a greater claim to Jerusalem than any other."

Sens. Robert Byrd (D-W.Va.), Mark Hatfield (R-Ore.), John Chafee (R-R.I.) and James Jeffords (R-Vt.) voted against the measure, citing concerns that it would

impact the peace process. Sen. Spencer Abraham (R-Mich.), the only Arab American in the Senate, also voted against the measure, saying that it prejudices the outcome of the peace talks.

Sen. Bill Bradley (D-N.J.), a co-sponsor of the measure, was not present for the vote.

The other missing vote was because of the empty seat of Sen. Bob Packwood (R-Ore.), who resigned from the Senate earlier this month. His seat has not yet been filled. □

### **Peres rejects referendum as Knesset resumes debate**

*By Naomi Segal*

JERUSALEM (JTA) — The Knesset's winter session opened Monday with an address by Foreign Minister Shimon Peres, who rejected the idea of holding a national referendum on the recently signed agreement with the Palestinians for extending West Bank autonomy.

In his address, Peres expressed optimism that support for the government among the Israeli public would grow with the implementation of the accord, which was signed in Washington on Sept. 28.

But the opposition lashed out at the government's peace policies, with Likud leader Benjamin Netanyahu charging Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin and Peres with giving away Israel's security assets.

The winter session of the Knesset, which has witnessed many a tumultuous debate, may prove to be one of the stormiest yet because it will be the Parliament's final session before the 1996 national elections.

The opposition, bolstered by discontent with the peace process among large segments of the Israeli public, is reportedly planning to present legislation to dissolve the government and call for early elections.

A number of bills regarding Jerusalem are also expected to be submitted by Likud members during the Knesset session. These included a bill to extend Jerusalem's municipal borders to include the satellite communities of Ma'aleh Adumim, Betar and Givat Ze'ev, and one to close down Orient House, the Palestine Liberation Organization's de facto headquarters in eastern Jerusalem.

Meanwhile, preparations were under way this week for the transfer to the Palestinians of the West Bank town of Jenin, the first of six West Bank towns to be transferred before the end of the year under the terms of the Interim Agreement.

The transfer in Jenin was scheduled to begin Wednesday with the opening of a joint Israeli-Palestinian district coordinating office, and with the entry into Jenin of the first contingent of Palestinian police.

However, the arrival of the police remained unclear as Israeli and Palestinians disagreed over whether the officers would arrive in uniform and armed, or in civilian clothing, as Israel prefers.

Uri Savir, the director-general of the Foreign Ministry, said the actual redeployment of Israeli troops from Jenin would not begin for at least another week.

At a briefing in Jerusalem on Monday, Savir described the Israeli pullback from each West Bank town slated for redeployment as a three-week process.

Savir estimated that the transfer of civilian authorities in Jenin would take place about Nov. 5 and that the Israel Defense Force withdrawal from the town would be completed by Nov. 19.

Savir added that the IDF withdrawal from all six West Bank towns — Jenin, Tulkarm, Kalkilya, Nablus, Bethlehem and Ramallah — would be completed in time for Palestinian elections, which have been scheduled for Jan. 20. □

**BEHIND THE HEADLINES**

**Israel's enhanced status at U.N. reflected at 50th year festivities**

By Cynthia Mann

NEW YORK (JTA) — This week's celebration of the United Nations' 50th anniversary saw a flurry of diplomatic activity by Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin and American Jewish groups involved with international affairs.

Some insiders said the countless meetings at or nearby the U.N. headquarters along Manhattan's East River were more or less routine because the volume of dignitaries forced everyone to run a "diplomatic treadmill."

But, at least for Rabin, the unprecedented convergence of more than 140 heads of state or governments provided a singular opportunity to advance Israel's enhanced stature in the international community. "Today one feels in the U.N.'s hallways a changed relationship to Israel on the part of many new and old members," he said.

Rabin held meetings with leaders of Jordan, Qatar, China, Argentina, Brazil, Spain, Belarus, Austria, Hungary, Azerbaijan, Costa Rica and Turkey, among others.

"The list of countries reflects global representation, signifying we are definitely in the mainstream of the world community, which is where we should be," said Avner Tavori, press secretary for Israel's Permanent Mission to the United Nations. "We are no longer an outcast."

In each of the meetings, Rabin focused on explaining the importance of the peace process to the Middle East and to the world and the need for nations to lend their active support to it, Tavori said. "He explained regional economic development is key to the success of the peace process," said Tavori, adding that Rabin encouraged the wealthier countries to participate in next week's Middle East economic development conference in Amman, Jordan.

**'Costa Rica will not bow to pressure'**

In his meeting with Chinese President Jiang Ze Min, Rabin was told negotiations between Iran and Beijing over nuclear reactors have been halted, said Israeli sources.

In another meeting, Costa Rica's President Jose Figueres assured Rabin that his country would not bow to pressure to move its embassy from Jerusalem, sources said.

The anniversary celebration also offered Palestine Liberation Organization Chairman Yasser Arafat the chance to return to the United Nations after a 21-year absence to trumpet and consolidate his political gains after signing the 1993 Palestinian self-rule accord with Israel.

Whereas in 1974 he boasted of bearing both an olive branch and a freedom fighter's gun, this time he spoke only of the olive branch. "I come to you with a heart filled with love and peace, with the olive branch hoisted over the peace of the brave," he said. Arafat also called for economic aid to the Palestinians.

American Jewish leaders met publicly with Arafat at a meeting of the National Jewish Community Relations Advisory Council on Monday afternoon. But that evening the Palestinian leader was ousted from a city-sponsored New York Philharmonic concert at Lincoln Center at the request of Mayor Rudolph Giuliani, sources reported.

For some Jews, the U.N. celebration was marred by the failure to include a specific reference to the Holocaust in a special resolution passed by the General Assembly last week marking the 50th anniversary of the end of World War II. But the omission did not seem to surprise anyone.

Indeed, in his address before the assembly on Tuesday, Rabin recalled the mixed relationship Israel has enjoyed with the world body, from its 1947 partition resolution endorsing the creation of the Jewish state, to the 1975 resolution equating Zionism with racism and its

recision in 1991. He also appeared to take pains to redress the General Assembly's omission by paying solemn tribute to Holocaust victims. "I come here today in the name of the 6 million whose lives were turned into ashes, whose souls ascended to heaven in burning flames. We will never let them be forgotten," he said.

In his address, Rabin also thanked the international community for its support for the peace process and pledged to pursue it "until we have brought peace to the region. For our children and our children's children. That is our mission. We will fulfill it."

Rabin also urged the United Nations to resist complacency and fight terrorism, which he called "the world's cancer." He said, "Don't fool yourselves. Even if you ignore terror it can enter any of your homes. Terror must be defeated." The prime minister also asked for help locating Israeli MIAs and POWs. Rabin voiced the same concerns in a private meeting last Friday with U.N. Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali.

Meanwhile, Jewish organizations active in international affairs used the U.N. anniversary as an opportunity to step up their work.

Officials of the American Jewish Committee, for instance, held 27 private diplomatic meetings in the three weeks since the opening of the General Assembly session. Although the number of dignitaries in one place at one time is unprecedented, the meetings reflect "our extensive ongoing relations with dozens of countries on every continent" rather than anything new or groundbreaking, said David Harris, AJCommittee executive director.

The discussions focused on the AJCommittee's ongoing priorities, including the peace process, Israel's international diplomatic standing, anti-Semitism and human rights, Harris said.

Harris said the AJCommittee met in recent days, for instance, with the foreign ministers of Germany, France, Italy, China and other nations to discuss weapons development in Iran and Iran's support for international terrorism as well as the need for stepped up international pressure to "stem this ominous trend."

**Reform of U.N. Security Council**

For its part, the World Jewish Congress has held more than two dozen meetings in recent weeks with international officials to advance Jewish interests, such as matters of restitution with Eastern European leaders.

The WJC also scheduled a meeting Tuesday night with Cuban leader Fidel Castro to discuss human rights.

And the agency has been "working to strengthen the Jewish institutional presence in the nongovernmental community" at the United Nations, said Elan Steinberg, WJC executive director.

For Harris Schoenberg, director of U.N. affairs for B'nai B'rith International, the celebration was an ideal time to talk to diplomats about one of his most urgent concerns — reform of the Security Council, the U.N.'s strategic center and site of decisions about peacekeeping, sanctions and international security.

Talk of reforming the Security Council was on nearly everyone's lips during the anniversary, but Schoenberg was concerned that the focus was almost exclusively on proposals to expand its membership beyond its five permanent seats and the 10 nonpermanent ones rotated among countries based on regional groupings.

Schoenberg wants to see the discussion broadened to include finding new ways to decide membership in the council that would enhance its credibility and effectiveness.

He has also joined others in pressing for Israel to have the opportunity to vie for a nonpermanent seat on the council, which it is denied as a result of its exclusion for political reasons from any U.N. regional grouping. □

## **Jewish groups uncertain about U.S. troops in Bosnia**

By Daniel Kurtzman

WASHINGTON (JTA) — Jewish groups are awaiting the outcome of Bosnia peace talks before deciding whether to support the dispatch of U.S. peacekeeping troops to help enforce a settlement.

"If it is a carefully defined peacekeeping role, it's one we would support," said Jason Isaacson, Washington director of the American Jewish Committee.

With U.S.-brokered peace talks set to begin between Bosnia's warring parties in Dayton, Ohio, on Oct. 31, a consensus has formed among Jewish activists that the administration's leadership is generally on target, though long overdue.

"It's very clear that after many years, the United States has taken a very significant role in trying to bring an end, using the military card and the diplomatic card," Isaacson said.

"I think finally Washington is getting it right," he added.

Last week, the Clinton administration began seeking congressional and public support for sending 20,000 U.S. ground troops to police a Bosnia peace accord, if one is achieved.

The peacekeeping operation could last one year and cost up to \$1.5 billion.

Although the president has the authority to send troops abroad, Congress can deny funds for any military operation.

Without a clearly defined U.S. role in enforcing a peace agreement, congressional approval of a troop deployment remains uncertain.

In a letter sent last week to Sen. Robert Byrd (D-W.Va.), Clinton said he would seek a congressional resolution of support before sending ground forces to Bosnia.

He said, however, that he reserves "the constitutional authorities of the presidency" — a reference to the War Powers Act, which permits the president to deploy troops without congressional consent, but for not more than 90 days unless Congress passes a joint resolution approving such action.

### **Vocal in decrying atrocities**

Jewish groups have long been vocal in decrying the atrocities in Bosnia-Herzegovina, advocating a lifting of the arms embargo and calling for air strikes.

George Specter, associate director of B'nai B'rith's public policy center, said he is encouraged by the breakthroughs but has a "sense of regret and sadness that NATO air power" was not used "much earlier, because thousands of lives could have been spared."

Most major Jewish organizations have consistently supported an assertive U.S. posture toward settling the conflict, but they have not yet taken a position on a potential U.S. peacekeeping force.

"We continue to be strongly supportive of the U.S. peace initiative and of the combined use of carrot and stick approaches in bringing about a cease-fire and ending ethnic cleansing," said David Saperstein, director of the Religious Action Center of Reform Judaism.

However, at least one organization — the Jewish War Veterans — has declared outright opposition to the deployment of U.S. ground forces as part of a peacekeeping mission, saying that U.N. peacekeepers already have become "tragic pawns" in the civil war.

"There is no vital national security interest in the former Yugoslavia," the Jewish War Veterans said in a statement.

"American entrance into this quagmire can lead to a protracted engagement involving U.S. troops," the organization also said.

Jewish groups have indicated that they will continue to meet with and send letters to members of Congress and the administration, lobbying in support of the involvement of the United States in bringing an end to the four-year conflict.

One longtime Jewish activist who has been outspoken about the United States' moral imperative to intervene in Bosnia stressed the importance of congressional backing of a peacekeeping venture.

"I find it very disheartening, and I'm almost embarrassed when I hear important people saying things like, 'Some of our soldiers might be killed,'" said Hyman Bookbinder, former director of AJCommittee's Washington office.

"When this country made a decision to have an army, we made a decision to put our men in harm's way."

Jewish support for a U.S. peacekeeping role remains equally critical, Bookbinder added.

"I'll be very disappointed if Jewish institutions and Jewish leaders don't express positive support for what our government is trying to do," he said.

"Those of us who remember the Holocaust and talk about the genocide and say 'Never again,' we've got to show a willingness to take risks" to bring an end to the conflict. □

## **U.S. establishes free trade with Palestinian Authority**

By David Landau and Naomi Segal

JERUSALEM (JTA) — The United States has extended its free-trade agreement with Israel and has adopted a similar agreement with the Palestinian Authority.

The U.S.-Israel agreement, signed last week by Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin and U.S. Trade Representative Mickey Kantor, extends for five years the original 1985 pact that allows for duty-free imports of most goods produced by the two countries.

During his three-day stay in Israel, Kantor also exchanged letters of understanding with Israel and the Palestinian Authority that authorize a new free-trade status between the United States and the Palestinian self-rule areas.

Kantor said he hoped that the American agreement with the self-rule government for the Gaza Strip and portions of the West Bank would "raise the standard of living in the areas by creating jobs and security."

He said the agreement was possible because "the Palestinian Authority has committed itself to working toward the elimination of the Arab trade boycott of Israel."

During an interview in Jerusalem, Kantor discussed American Jewish reaction to the peace policies of the Rabin government.

He denied that American Jews are more divided than ever over Israel's policies.

"There has always been very intensive discussion" within the American Jewish community, Kantor said.

But in a swipe at Republican leaders, he said that using the divisions among American Jews "for partisan political purposes is unfortunate and unhelpful."

Kantor stressed the Clinton administration's "very supportive" policies regarding Israel's peace and security interests.

The Clinton administration "worked closely" with Rabin, Palestine Liberation Organization leader Yasser Arafat, Jordan's King Hussein and Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak and has "made great strides," Kantor also said. □