

NEWS AT A GLANCE

■ The United Jewish Appeal placed fourth among the top 400 American charities in total donations last year, receiving \$382 million in donations, according to an annual survey by the Chronicle of Philanthropy. Overall, donations to the largest U.S. charities increased by 6.3 percent, but donations to Jewish organizations lagged behind inflation at a 0.3 percent increase.

■ Israeli authorities stepped up security at Israeli institutions in the wake of the killing of Islamic Jihad leader Dr. Fathi Shakaki in Malta. Palestinian travel to and from the West Bank and Gaza Strip was restricted after Israel received information of a planned suicide bombing to avenge Shakaki's death. [Page 2]

■ Secretary of State Warren Christopher confirmed that there are still "solid differences" between Israel and Syria. He made his remarks after more than two hours of talks in Damascus with Syrian President Hafez Assad. [Page 2]

■ The foreign minister of Qatar announced that his country was considering allowing an Israeli commercial interest office to open in the Persian Gulf state. The minister spoke at the regional economic conference in Amman, where Qatar was expected to announce a natural gas sale to Israel.

■ Israeli troops killed three members of the Islamic fundamentalist Hezbollah movement after a band of Shi'ite gunmen was spotted planting roadside bombs in southern Lebanon. Fighting escalated throughout the day, with the two sides exchanging an estimated 350 mortar shells and rockets.

■ Israel and the European Union postponed the signing of an association accord that was to be formally signed this week in Luxembourg. [Page 3]

■ Former Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir called for the replacement of the current Israeli government with a "Zionist government" and saluted right-wing Zionists for their campaign to influence U.S. policy toward the Middle East peace process. [Page 4]

BEHIND THE HEADLINES**One year after peace treaty, skepticism runs deep in Jordan**

By Michele Chabin

AMMAN, Jordan (JTA) — One year after Israel and Jordan signed their historic peace treaty, many Jordanian citizens say the peace is not quite living up to their expectations.

Unlike their Israeli counterparts, who, opinion polls show, believe that peaceful relations with their eastern neighbor were long overdue, a large number of Jordanians remain wary.

And their wariness and skepticism persists despite concerted efforts by Jordan's King Hussein to convince his people that the peace treaty with Israel, signed Oct. 26, 1994, is in their best interests.

Ask a typical Jordanian whether peace with Israel has resulted in a better life, and the answer is often negative.

"I was born in Ramallah, and I can only visit there if I have a visa," said grocery owner Khalid Barghouti. "My mother was born in Haifa, but she can't live there.

"What gives Jews born in Bucharest or Lyon the right to live in Safed or Haifa?"

But, Barghouti said, "We're not prejudiced against Jews. We're not against peace, but against what happened to us historically. This treaty changes nothing."

With the exception of its tourism industry, which is already benefiting from the accord, Jordan's economy continues to be sluggish.

And even though Jordan has officially terminated its participation in the Arab boycott, local professional organizations routinely urge their members not to attend workshops and conferences where large numbers of Israelis are expected to attend.

But this is not to say that Israeli-Jordanian relations have come to a standstill.

New freedom of movement

Thanks to the treaty, Jordanians and Israelis can cross the border, enabling not only freedom of movement but real, if somewhat limited, interaction between the two peoples.

Tens of thousands of Israelis have realized their dream of visiting the rose-colored Nabatean city of Petra.

And thousands of Jordanians, many of Palestinian heritage, have been able to pray at Jerusalem's al-Aksa Mosque.

They have also been able to revisit long-abandoned homes in Jaffa, the West Bank and the Gaza Strip.

An estimated 50 percent to 60 percent of Jordan's population is made up of Palestinians.

Many of them either fled to Jordan after the 1948 War of Independence or the 1967 Six-Day War, or are descendants of refugees.

In addition to the advances in tourism, representatives of both governments have discussed dozens of joint ventures, most notably in agriculture, medicine and technology — all of which, officials maintain, should improve the quality of life for the people on both sides of the Jordan River.

Rami Khouri, a leading Jordanian political analyst, attempted to spell out the reasons for the Jordanian people's lack of faith in the peace with Israel.

"First, there is the way the peace treaty was done, without much consultation with the people," said Khouri. "Second, the economic benefits have yet to materialize.

"Third, there is a strong feeling that while we have become lovey-dovey with Israel, Israel is still occupying Arab lands — in some cases still killing and blowing up houses.

"Fourth, people feel that the peace treaty has slightly isolated us from our natural hinterland in the Arab world. There has been a lot of focus on relations between us and Israel at the detriment of our relations with Arab countries."

An additional and highly fundamental problem, Khouri added, is that

“at least two-thirds of the Jordanian people have personal links with Palestine.”

“Many Palestinians here have personal claims against the government of Israel,” he said, referring to property claims. Still, Jordanians feel only “a mild form of skepticism,” he added, with most accepting making peace with Israel “as a good thing to do.”

“They trust the king. If you were to stop people on the street, six to seven out of 10 would say, ‘I’m not sure it’s the best treaty, but it’s worth a try,’ ” he said.

Among those willing to give peace a chance is Mohammed Hasan, a furniture and carpet salesman.

“The peace has been very good for both peoples,” he said.

Noting that he had recently returned to Amman after a three-month stay with relatives in Israel, he added, “Before the treaty, I couldn’t enter Israel to visit my relatives. Now, I can go any time I want.

“Not long ago, I was in Netanya on a Friday afternoon. I was waiting for a bus, not realizing that there are no buses before the Jewish Sabbath. A Jewish man stopped his car and asked if he could help me. Being in Israel was exciting.”

Ahmed Ziad, a taxi driver, agreed.

“Since the treaty, there are more tourists, more jobs for taxi drivers,” he said.

“Because of the wars, and what I read in the newspapers, I used to think that Israelis were hateful people. I hated them all.”

But personal contact with Israelis has made all the difference.

“I changed my mind after meeting them,” he added.

“I don’t speak Hebrew or English, so it’s difficult to communicate. But all in all, I’ve found Israelis to be very friendly.” □

Christopher: ‘Differences’ dash hopes of Israeli-Syrian progress

By Naomi Segal

JERUSALEM (JTA) — After more than two hours of talks with Syrian President Hafez Assad in Damascus, U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher has dashed any hopes of any short-term breakthrough in negotiations between Israel and Syria.

Christopher said after his meeting Monday that there are still “solid differences” between the Israeli and Syrian negotiating positions.

Christopher, who was in the region to attend the Middle East and North African Economic Conference in the Jordanian capital of Amman, said he had met with Assad to get the latest Syrian position in its deadlocked peace talks with Israel.

But even before meeting with Assad, Christopher had not planned to engage in a round of shuttle diplomacy that would take him from Damascus to Jerusalem — an indication of his pessimism at this time about bringing the two sides back to the negotiating table.

Talks between Israeli and Syrian military experts broke off in late June over differences on security arrangements for the Golan Heights once an agreement was reached.

Israel maintained earlier this year that it would agree to a phased withdrawal on the Golan in exchange for a full peace with Syria.

But Assad called for a full Israeli withdrawal from the Golan as a precondition for restarting negotiations between the two sides.

Syria also opposed a proposal for Israel to maintain an early-warning ground station on the Golan in the wake

of a withdrawal, saying that it was an affront to Syrian sovereignty over the area.

Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin, speaking to reporters at the Knesset on Monday, said the talks with Syria were not only deadlocked over technical issues — including at what diplomatic level to resume the negotiations — but also involved disagreements over substance.

“It became clear that Syria’s demand [was] that Israel will change its position on certain issues in the security arrangements as a precondition for negotiations,” Rabin told Israel Radio.

“This was not acceptable,” he added.

Meanwhile, hours before Christopher met with Assad, Israeli troops killed three members of the Islamic fundamentalist Hezbollah movement after a band of the Shi’ite gunmen was spotted planting roadside bombs in southern Lebanon.

Fighting escalated throughout the day, with the two sides exchanging an estimated 350 mortar shells and rockets.

Violence often flares up in southern Lebanon — where Syria backs Hezbollah efforts to drive Israel out of its security zone — when Christopher attempts to mediate between the Israeli and Syrian positions.

Syria maintains an estimated 30,000 troops in Lebanon.

It has repeatedly used Hezbollah attacks against Israel as a bargaining chip in an effort to force Israel back to the negotiating table. □

Israel restricts Palestinians after killing of militant leader

By Naomi Segal

JERUSALEM (JTA) — Israeli security officials have placed restrictions on Palestinian travel to and from the Gaza Strip on Monday after they received reports of a planned suicide attack against Israel to retaliate for last week’s assassination of the leader of the militant Islamic Jihad movement.

The age of Palestinian workers allowed to enter Israel from Gaza was raised to 35.

In addition, all Palestinian vehicles were barred entry to the Jewish state.

Students from Gaza were not allowed to enter Israel, and Palestinian residents of the West Bank and eastern Jerusalem were not permitted to enter Gaza.

Israel stopped short of imposing a full closure on the West Bank and Gaza.

Palestinian officials have frequently complained that the closures increase economic hardship and create unrest and instability among the Palestinians, many of whom depend on their jobs in Israel in order to earn a livelihood.

Islamic Jihad officials have threatened to launch terror attacks on Jewish sites here and abroad to retaliate for the Oct. 26 killing of their leader, Dr. Fathi Shakaki, in Malta.

Islamic Jihad maintains that agents of Mossad, Israel’s intelligence service, were responsible for the shooting of Shakaki.

Israeli officials refused to confirm their involvement.

Shakaki’s death touched off disturbances in the West Bank and Gaza on Monday.

Israeli soldiers fired tear gas to disperse crowds of Palestinians in the West Bank towns of Hebron and Nablus.

Some 1,000 students demonstrated Monday at Bir Zeit University in the West Bank, holding placards denouncing Israel. □

Chechen Jewish refugees harassed by Moscow police*By Lev Krichevsky*

MOSCOW (JTA) — Jewish refugees from strife-ridden areas in the Caucasus have been harassed by local police at an outdoor market here where many of them work as vendors.

Forty Jews from the Caucasus who work as vendors were beaten two weeks ago by police and dragged off on foot across Moscow to a police station.

Although the refugees were later released without being charged, the incident highlighted both the existence of the market and the general vulnerability of refugees from the Caucasus. People whose appearance testifies to their Azerbaijani, Chechen or Georgian roots are stopped and searched by police officers on the street.

Hundreds of Jews from the Caucasus have found a refuge in the Russian capital, where they earn their living as vendors.

The outdoor market in the Moscow district of Izmaylovo is run by a group of these Jews, most of whom came from the former Soviet republic of Azerbaijan or from the Russian region of Chechnya, where Russian troops were dispatched some 10 months ago to prevent local forces from creating a breakaway republic.

Commonly known as Mountain Jews, these refugees have been fleeing from the Caucasus since the late 1980s, when ethnic conflicts in the region broke out after the collapse of the Soviet Union.

"After the clashes in the Caucasus evolved into the armed conflicts, no room was left for us in the region. Naturally, the Jews were not willing to give preference to any of the parties in these conflicts," says Yomtov Shamailov, head of the Moscow Sephardi congregation.

The market became known to Moscow's Jews only after it was closed on Yom Kippur.

The police raid on the market was organized under the pretext of a routine passport check.

The vendors said besides being beaten, they were searched and robbed at the police station. They also said police had no grounds to take them in when they could have easily checked their papers at the market.

The Moscow police chief refused to comment on the incident, saying that his subordinates "occasionally have to be engaged in dirty work."

Displays the word 'Jew'

The situation of the Mountain Jews here has worsened this year because of the war in Chechnya. Authorities here are afraid of possible outbreaks of Chechen terrorism in Moscow.

At the same time, being Jewish may be more advantageous than not.

Semyon, a 39-year-old Jewish refugee from the Chechen capital of Grozny who did not want his last name to be used, said that whenever he is stopped by police he makes a point of displaying as quickly as possible the word "Jew," which is marked in his passport.

Old Soviet passports that indicate the bearer's ethnic origin are still valid in Russia.

"Police here are convinced that the Jews from the Caucasus have no links to the Chechen Mafia and terrorists, so when I show I'm Jewish I won't be searched or harassed," he said. "They believe we have lots of money, so a few dollars will always help."

"It distresses me to think that my three young sons will never see the graves of four generations of our family that lie in the Jewish cemetery in Grozny," he said.

"After the war broke out, the cemetery was sown with mines." □

Jewish summer camp reopens in Croatia after 4-year closure*By Ruth E. Gruber*

PRAGUE (JTA) — A Jewish summer camp at Pirovac, on the Adriatic coast of Croatia, reopened with a three-day program of learning and fun after it was forced to close down four years ago because of the war in Bosnia.

More than 60 young Jews from across Croatia gathered earlier this month for a special weekend program sponsored by the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee and the Israeli Habonim Dror movement.

"It's a new beginning," said Yechiel Bar Chaim, the JDC country director for the nations of the former Yugoslavia as well as for the Czech Republic. "After all the pain and separation imposed by the war, it is indeed a new beginning."

Bar Chaim said about 50 young Jews from Zagreb as well as four from Split, six from Osijek and four from Rijeka took part in the weekend session, which included workshops, lectures, Shabbat and Havdalah ceremonies, and social events.

Before the war in Bosnia, Pirovac drew Jewish youth from across Yugoslavia for summer camp and other programs.

During the summer of 1992, the camp was used to house refugees from Bosnia-Herzegovina. □

Israel, E.U. delay formalization of technology, trade agreement*By Joseph Kopel*

BRUSSELS (JTA) — Israel and the European Union have postponed to Nov. 20 the signing of an association accord that was to be formally signed this week in Luxembourg, according to an Israeli diplomatic source.

The new accord, which replaces a 1975 trade and cooperation accord between Israel and what was then known as the Common Market, was initialed in September and was to have been signed Monday by Israeli Foreign Minister Shimon Peres at a meeting with the 15 E.U. foreign ministers.

But the signing ceremony was postponed because Peres is participating this week in a three-day Middle East and North African Economic Conference in the Jordanian capital of Amman.

The agreement will grant Israel special status to participate in the European Union's scientific and technological research and development projects.

The accord will also provide for expanded free trade between Israel and the 15 nations comprising the European economic bloc.

Israel hopes that the new accord will help lessen Israel's growing trade imbalance with the European Union.

The European Union is Israel's main trading partner.

The new agreement — which will need to be approved by the Knesset and the parliaments of the E.U. member states before it becomes effective — would allow 90 percent of Israeli agricultural products to be exempt from E.U. tariffs, compared with the current 70 percent.

The accord was reached in July after several E.U. member states received assurances that Israeli imports would not adversely affect their domestic markets.

The accord is aimed at strengthening the links between the two parties in the framework of an E.U. strategy to create a vast Mediterranean free-trade area.

If approved, the Israel-E.U. accord would be the second association agreement between the European body and a Mediterranean country. The first was reached with Tunisia in July. □

'Roster of bigots' gathered before NOI march, reports ADL

NEW YORK (JTA) — A "roster of bigots" spewed racism and anti-Semitism at a two-day conference in Washington prior to the Million Man March, according to a report from the Anti-Defamation League released last week.

The report, "The Other Face of Farrakhan: A Hate-Filled Prelude to the Million Man March," documents the Black Holocaust Nationhood Conference, which took place the same weekend as Nation of Islam leader Louis Farrakhan's Oct. 16 march.

The conference's speakers included some of the most virulent and outspoken anti-Semites and conspiracy theorists in the black community, including several NOI officials.

"For two days, the conference halls rang with raw bigotry," said Abraham Foxman, ADL national director. "The rhetoric of violence and hate boomed from reinstated Nation of Islam minister Khalid Muhammad, NOI's National Youth Minister Quanell X and other well-known extremists."

The 2,000 black men and women in attendance, who regarded themselves as the militant contingent of the Million Man March, met in two Washington, D.C., high schools, the report said.

In introducing keynote speaker Muhammad, conference organizer Malik Zulu Shabazz said, "We want to bring on a man who makes the Jews pee in their pants at night," the report said. Shabazz, a former Howard University student, gained notoriety in the pro-Farrakhan community for leading anti-Semitic chants at Howard University student rallies last year.

According to the ADL report, Muhammad said at the gathering: "We have lost over 600 million at the hands of the white man in the last 6,000 years. That is 100 times worse than the so-called Holocaust of the so-called Jew, the imposter Jew."

Other speakers — who, according to the report, often were pro-Farrakhan black figures known for their anti-white, anti-Asian, anti-Semitic, anti-Catholic and homophobic views — included Professor Leonard Jeffries of the City College of New York and Professor Tony Martin of Wellesley College.

According to the ADL, Quanell X, whose original name is Quanell Evans, reportedly said to the conference, "Are 6 million lives worth more than 150 million black lives? All those Jews can go straight to hell."

Foxman said, "Clearly, the extremism of the Black Holocaust Nationhood Conference contrasted sharply with the broad-based Million Man March, where the overwhelming majority of men on the Mall came together to embrace the themes of atonement, responsibility and solidarity."

Hundreds of thousands of black men took part in the march, which was also sponsored by Benjamin Chavis, the ousted executive director of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People. □

Shamir salutes American Jews who oppose Rabin peace policy

By Cynthia Mann

NEW YORK (JTA) — Former Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir has called for the replacement of the current Israeli government with a "Zionist government" and saluted right-wing Zionists for their campaign to influence U.S. policy toward the Middle East peace process.

Speaking before about 700 enthusiastic guests at the national annual gala dinner of the Zionist Organization

of America on Sunday, Shamir pointedly referred to the recent slap by Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin at U.S. Jews who are lobbying Congress against his government's policy.

Shamir, now a Knesset member, urged the guests to ignore Rabin and continue their work to "fight against the creation of a Palestinian state, which will take as its central goal the destruction of the Jewish state."

"The majority of the Israeli public wholeheartedly supports the activities of ZOA led by Mort Klein" to oppose financial support for the "terrorist organization" that is the Palestine Liberation Organization, the former prime minister said.

ZOA President Morton Klein has been waging a high-profile Capitol Hill campaign to expose the failure of the PLO to comply with the autonomy accords it signed with Israel.

"I have no desire to attack the Israeli government while abroad," Shamir said.

However, he quickly added that suspending such restraint is required when "vital principles are endangered."

"I feel in every fiber of my being that this is not the time for silence," said Shamir, who served as prime minister from 1983 to 1984 and from 1986 to 1992.

Shamir then assailed what he called the "deviations from the essence of Zionism" by the current government in the principles that historically have guided all Israeli leaders, regardless of their party.

He cited the government's willingness to discuss the status of Jerusalem, its willingness to give up land on the Golan Heights, its transfer of some security responsibilities to the Palestinian Authority and its failure not to rule out the prospect of an independent Palestinian state.

"This will greatly weaken the claim of exclusivity of the Jewish people to the land and presents military dangers to the State of Israel," he said. □

Jerusalem economic meeting draws firms from 44 nations

By Naomi Segal

JERUSALEM (JTA) — While much media attention was focused on the regional economic conference taking place in the Jordanian capital of Amman this week, another economic conference was taking place in Jerusalem.

Some Israeli officials said the scheduling conflict took the steam out of the Jerusalem Business Conference, which drew businesspeople and representatives from investment firms in 44 countries.

The officials called for better coordination in the future to prevent the overlap of meetings.

Other officials refuted this view.

Joseph Vardi, Israel's coordinator for regional development, told Israel Radio that investment deals totaling hundreds of millions of dollars were in the making by Sunday's first working session in Jerusalem.

The proximity between the Israeli and Jordanian capitals — less than an hour's flight separates them — enabled many delegates and officials to attend both meetings.

This included Foreign Minister Shimon Peres, who addressed the Jerusalem conference's first working session Sunday morning and later attended the opening session of the Amman conference.

Among the development projects initialed within the framework of the Jerusalem business meeting was a draft agreement for a \$150 million project between Israel and the United States to build an electricity plant in the Negev. □