



## NEWS AT A GLANCE

■ Jewish organizations in Louisiana are saying little about David Duke's campaign for the U.S. Senate. An inter-faith coalition that actively opposed the former Ku Klux Klan leader's unsuccessful 1990 Senate bid is defunct, and current opposition is largely being carried out by one Reform rabbi. [Page 3]

■ A House Judiciary subcommittee is scheduled to hold hearings next week on a religious equality constitutional amendment that explicitly allows prayer in America's schools. Despite divisions among the amendment's supporters, advocates hope to have Congress vote on it before the body recesses in October.

■ Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat refused to meet with the prime minister's diplomatic adviser, Dore Gold, Palestinian sources said. Arafat would not meet with Gold because it became clear that there were no new messages from the Israeli leader, the sources said.

■ The Jewish state said it would ease the 19-week closure on the West Bank and Gaza Strip, but did not release any specific details.

■ The Bank of Israel and the treasury announced that they would intervene to head off the crisis in the capital markets. The announcement came after consultations with Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu about the continuing downward trend in the Tel Aviv Stock Exchange.

■ The House International Relations subcommittee postponed a hearing on Palestinian human rights and Palestine Liberation Organization compliance with the peace accords. The hearing, which was rescheduled for next week, will also focus on Israeli violations of Palestinian rights.

■ Israel's then-Prime Minister Golda Meir rejected a proposal for the release of Israeli athletes taken hostage by Palestinian terrorists during the 1972 Munich Olympics, German Television reported. Eleven Israeli athletes were murdered during the Munich Games, after Palestinians from the Black September group raided their rooms.

## Netanyahu's welcome in U.S. belies concerns about policies

By Cynthia Mann

NEW YORK (JTA) — The first U.S. visit of Benjamin Netanyahu as prime minister of Israel was widely viewed as a triumph when measured by his reception in the media, the Congress, the financial world and the official Jewish community.

From the stock exchange to the hotel pep rally of thousands sponsored by New York's Jewish Community Relations Council, he was welcomed with an exuberance and affection reserved for a well-loved son returning home.

But after six days of fielding questions with his already-signature American-style flair and political aplomb, it remained unclear to many whether the new Israeli premier is an ideologue or a pragmatist and what course he will pursue in the peace process.

Some wonder whether Netanyahu's hard-line public declarations on Palestinian nationalism were negotiating gambits or portend a return to an era of U.S.-Israel tensions, which reached a height during Yitzhak Shamir's tenure as prime minister.

Centrist Jewish organizations that openly backed the path to peace pursued by Prime Ministers Yitzhak Rabin and Shimon Peres say it is simply too soon to determine whether U.S.-Israel tensions will materialize because of Jewish settlements, the fate of Jerusalem and other hot-button issues.

Others long uncomfortable with the course of the Rabin-Peres peace policy were delighted to have Netanyahu unapologetically holding the Palestinian Authority accountable at every opportunity.

"This is a central difference between this and the previous government," said Morton Klein, president of the Zionist Organization of America, who said Netanyahu "absolutely won over the hearts and minds of American Jewry" as well as the U.S. Congress.

"Rather than not paying attention to [Yasser] Arafat's violations of the peace accords, his administration will make it a central theme for achieving a real and durable peace."

He said the U.S. administration "will move in the direction of understanding [that] the positions of the present government are reasonable, rational and appropriate."

Netanyahu's watchword on his visit was "reciprocity" when it came to discussing the Palestinians.

His government would honor Israel's commitments in the self-rule accords to the degree that the Palestinians honored theirs, he said.

He stressed that the Palestinians systematically have failed to comply with the agreements, especially in curbing terrorism and conducting political activity in Jerusalem, and that these failures no longer will be tolerated.

It was left to President Clinton to assuage the alarm Netanyahu's visit sowed in Arab quarters, perhaps most dramatically reflected in Qatar's decision to cancel its plans to open a trade office in Israel.

Clinton penned letters to Palestinian Authority President Arafat and other Arab leaders, reassuring them that Washington remains committed to the principles on which the Middle East peace process was founded, including that of land for peace.

### 'A promising start'

When asked to cite the high points of his meeting with Clinton, Netanyahu said they had reached an understanding that decisions affecting Israeli security "must be made by the State of Israel and by no one else" and that "no one will drive a wedge between Israel and the United States."

Without gleaning new insight into what specific policies Netanyahu would pursue, centrist Jewish organizations strove to put the most positive spin on the visit, while girding for rough spots that may lie ahead.

"It is too early to make firm predictions about what the future will bring, but the new Israeli prime minister appears off to a promising start," Phil Baum, American Jewish Congress executive director, said in a statement. "Everything now depends on how he implements these policies when he goes back home."

"Doubtless there will be differences between the United States and

Israel, just as has occurred in the past," Baum said. "One can only hope they will be dealt with in an atmosphere of conciliation and mutual understanding, just as occurred in the past."

For David Harris, executive director of the American Jewish Committee, a key challenge for Netanyahu will be to "ignite" the passion and allegiance of the "broad swath" of centrist American Jewry for the occasional tense moments he is certain will erupt.

The prime minister made "a very good start" in building this support on the visit, said Harris, due in part to the "package of his youthful vigor and communication skills."

The effort "remains a work in progress," he added.

Martin Raffel, associate executive vice chairman of the National Jewish Community Relations Advisory Council, said that even after the visit "it is premature to draw conclusions" about where the prime minister is headed in the peace process, but that the Jewish community remains predisposed to support him.

American Jews hope for a "strong close partnership between the Netanyahu government and the administration," he said.

After all, "times of tension on a governmental level are times of discomfort within the Jewish community," he said.

"Most American Jews thirst for an articulate exponent of Israel and her positions, anxieties and fears," said Abraham Foxman, national director of the Anti-Defamation League.

Netanyahu "speaks American English, knows American values and all this makes American Jews feel proud of him.

"They are with him even if they are not supportive of details of his program, which he hasn't spelled out yet," said Foxman.

Still, ideological strains among American Jews that have emerged in recent years surfaced again at some of the prime minister's appearances before Jewish audiences.

Loud hissing greeted Gary Rubin, the executive director of Americans for Peace Now, when he identified himself before asking a question at a large gathering sponsored by the Conference of Presidents of Major American Jewish Organizations.

Even louder applause greeted Netanyahu when he responded to Rubin's question by saying that his challenge was to deal with "the national aspirations of the Jews, not [of] the Palestinians."

### **'The genie has left the bottle'**

Netanyahu sought to put his opposition to Palestinian statehood into a broader context.

He called the concept of "unlimited self-determination" a "fragmentation bomb in the international system" whose realization might lead to the establishment of 200 additional nation-states.

Instead, he said he would tell the Palestinians, "You can run every aspect of your lives," but Israel will not yield key powers of sovereignty.

These powers include the control of borders and the formation of armies, he said.

"I'm looking for a solution for them to run their affairs but one that will enable us to stay alive," Netanyahu said.

"While this is a cogent position," said one centrist Jewish insider who asked not to be named, "the problem is the genie has left the bottle."

"Having had their expectations whetted, the Palestinians are not prepared to return to status quo ante," he said.

Meanwhile, Netanyahu may finally have clarified his course on another issue of intense concern to many American Jews — the status of non-Orthodox religious streams in Israel.

In several venues, Netanyahu publicly pledged not to change the religious "status quo," apparently implying that legal gains made in recent years by the Reform and Conservative movements would be protected by his government.

But at a briefing with Jewish media, the prime minister acknowledged that his government's approach would be a "disappointment to some who would like to see Israel adopt the norms and patterns of the American community."

To do otherwise would inflame tensions that Israel could not afford, he said, referring to the intense pressures he faces from his Orthodox coalition partners.

At the same time, he used the briefing and other occasions to underscore his commitment to a strong and enduring relationship with Jews in the Diaspora.

And, Netanyahu said, despite Israel's vibrant economy and his vigorous pursuit of broad-based investment, Jewish philanthropy to Israeli entities remains "indispensable" in preserving the "network of Jewish identity and solidarity." □

### **Suicide-bomber supplier sentenced**

JERUSALEM (JTA) — Nearly a year after suicide bombers struck in Tel Aviv and Jerusalem, an Israeli military court has sentenced a Palestinian man to two consecutive life sentences for making the bombs used in the attacks.

Abdel Atallah, 23, a resident of the Balata refugee camp near the West Bank town of Nablus, was sentenced Tuesday for supplying the explosives used by a Hamas suicide bomber in the July 24, 1995, attack on a bus outside the 40-story Diamond Exchange in the Tel Aviv suburb of Ramat Gan.

He was also convicted in connection with the August 21, 1995, explosion on the No. 26 bus in Jerusalem's northern neighborhood of Ramat Eshkol.

The Tel Aviv bombing claimed the lives of six victims and wounded 32 others. Four victims were killed and more than 100 wounded in the Jerusalem blast. □

### **Single Israeli women claim bias**

*By Naomi Segal*

JERUSALEM (JTA) — Israel's High Court of Justice this week heard a petition from women's and civil rights groups over alleged discrimination against single women seeking to become pregnant through artificial means.

The petitions presented Monday stemmed from claims by single women that, unlike their married counterparts, they were required to undergo psychiatric examinations if they wished to be artificially impregnated.

The representative for the state at the court hearing said that even though the exams were part of Health Ministry regulations, during the past three months, all single women wishing to undergo impregnation procedures were granted approval on a case-by-case basis.

"We don't want to have a situation where special permission is necessary for each case," said attorney Rachel Benziman of the Israel Women's Network.

"We want the policy to be universal," she told Israel Television.

The justices delayed discussion of the petition for three months in order to give the Health Ministry time to formulate and clarify its position in the matter. □

## Duke's anti-Semitism alive as he again runs for Senate

By Debra Nussbaum Cohen

NEW YORK (JTA) — David Duke is back on the political scene and making it clear that time has not moderated his views of Jews, blacks or immigrants.

So far, there has been little response from politicians or the organized Jewish community, nationally or in Louisiana, where the former Ku Klux Klan leader is making another bid for the U.S. Senate.

The race is wide open for the seat of Sen. J. Bennett Johnston, a moderate Democrat who is retiring. Duke is running against four others in the state's Republican primary in September.

Six years ago, Johnston defeated Duke in a campaign that gained national attention.

In an appearance on the nationally televised Jerry Springer talk show that aired July 9, Duke said there are "different points of view" about whether the Holocaust occurred. He said the number of Jews said to have perished at the hands of the Nazis — 6 million — is "an exaggerated figure."

"I wonder why, every day in our media, we constantly hear about the Jewish victims of that Holocaust but we don't hear about the Christian victims of the Holocaust, of even greater numbers in Eastern Europe," he said. "Sometimes I think there are political reasons for that."

When Springer, who is Jewish and the child of Holocaust survivors, asked him to explain what he meant, Duke pointed to "the support of the State of Israel. I mean, as a United States senator, I want a foreign policy that's in the interests of this country."

Duke explained his view of the Holocaust by citing well-known Holocaust denier David Irving.

### Seems to have an ally

"There was not a planned program of extermination. There were atrocities that took place, but it wasn't a plan to exterminate the Jewish people from the face of the earth," Duke said.

"There's no way to know the truth unless you allow every point of view to be presented. And there's a real effort in this society that we don't allow Holocaust revisions to be presented."

"And it's like anything else — I mean the French Huguenots were very much oppressed, all right? But now we've learned that a lot of those Huguenots actually exaggerated some of that," Duke said during the show.

Duke was elected to the Louisiana state Legislature and in 1990, ran as a Republican candidate for one of Louisiana's Senate seats.

He garnered a surprisingly high 44 percent of the vote against the incumbent Johnston.

The Republican establishment at that time — at the national and local levels — rejected Duke.

But in this year's contest, Duke seems to have found an ally in the Statehouse.

In late June, the Republican governor of Louisiana, Mike Foster, said he would back the winner of the Republican primary, even if it is Duke, in November's election for the Senate seat.

A few days later, after a great deal of negative publicity, Foster released a statement addressing the matter without specifically referring to Duke.

"I have not, do not and will not condone racism, anti-Semitism in any form, and I will not support anyone for any public office who promotes such," Foster said. "I will make no further statement on this matter."

National and local Jewish leaders for the most part

have been quiet on Duke's renewed effort to get elected to the U.S. Senate.

The Jewish Federation of Greater Baton Rouge, the state's capital, has not taken a position.

The New Orleans Jewish Community Relations Council has not taken any action opposing Duke, either, said Jill Goldwater, the CRC director.

There seems to be a single Jewish voice working against Duke from Louisiana's Jewish community, that of Reform Rabbi Barry Weinstein, of Baton Rouge's B'nai Israel Synagogue.

"A lot of the Jewish people here can remember when the Klan was very active," he said. "So now there's a reluctance to stir the waters."

The coalition of rabbis, priests and ministers who opposed Duke in his 1990 bid is now defunct and Weinstein said his efforts to mobilize fellow clergy had been met with apathy. "I would like there to have been a mass uprising but there has not been. There has been silence even from the black ministers," he said.

"I'm just one little old rabbi in Baton Rouge, and I find us to be in a precarious time. What's happening here is a barometer for where the nation is," he said.

Weinstein is also concerned about the "close relationship" Foster has with Duke. "When a sitting governor can flirt with a Nazi sympathizer then I say something's wrong," said Weinstein.

The governor's press secretary, Marsanne Golsby, said Foster is not close with the racist candidate. "David Duke wishes they were close," she said. "Duke calls the governor, the governor does not call Duke."

When asked whether Foster takes Duke's calls, she said he does "on very rare occasions."

Their connection goes back to last year, when during Foster's gubernatorial campaign, Duke gave him "a warm, quasi-official endorsement," Weinstein said.

Weinstein and about 10 Jewish leaders met with Foster at that time. The candidate told them that he could not afford to alienate Duke's supporters by distancing himself from the white supremacist but promised to do so once he was elected.

He has "violated his personal promise" by not doing so, Weinstein said.

The governor's press secretary said that "it is not Gov. Foster's style to attack anyone, period. The governor has chosen to let this issue rest and that's about all I can say," she said. "The governor's style is misunderstood by some people," she added. □

### Cuban business may cost Israeli firm

By Matthew Dorf

WASHINGTON (JTA) — Top executives and major shareholders in the Israeli agribusiness company BM may be barred from entering the United States.

The firm is slated to be formally notified that it is in violation of the Helms-Burton Act, which imposes sanctions on foreign firms profiting from assets seized from U.S. citizens and companies after the 1959 Cuban revolution. U.S. officials said BM is financing sugar crops on land formerly owned by Americans.

Once notified, the firm and the State Department will discuss the charges. If BM is found to be "trafficking" in confiscated property, the U.S. will impose sanctions.

The travel ban extends to the immediate families of the company officials.

Last week, the United States imposed such sanctions on Sherritt International, a Canadian company.

BM is one of six firms to receive such warnings since Congress approved the measure in March. □

## Brian Lurie chosen to head San Francisco's Jewish museum

By Natalie Weinstein

Jewish Bulletin of Northern California

SAN FRANCISCO (JTA) — Seeking to become a leading cultural force, the Jewish Museum San Francisco has recruited a new chief who lacks an arts background but offers renowned fund-raising skills and an international reputation.

Rabbi Brian Lurie, a familiar face who left the San Francisco area five years ago to run the New York-based United Jewish Appeal, was hired last week to help develop the museum's new site and expand its mission.

"Brian's ideas and the program we're developing will be on the leading edge of reaching and tying together the American Jewish community," said Fred Levinson, museum board president.

Lurie's vision for the new museum, set to open in 1999, goes beyond bolstering its art exhibits or presenting lectures, classes, theater, music and dance — though all these programs are in the works.

He also hopes to regularly broadcast live, interactive events to 25 San Francisco area Jewish institutions and to reach local homes via cable television, CD-ROM and the Internet. "You've got to go to the people," Lurie said.

He believes that focusing on cultural Judaism may be one of the keys to capturing the attention of the area, which he calls "one of the most assimilated Jewish communities in the world."

"The visual arts and the education that comes with it can be one of the cornerstones of the Jewish community in America in the 21st century. It's not a small thing," Lurie said.

Long described as an innovator and credited with raising hundreds of millions of dollars during the past two decades, Lurie starts work as the museum's chief executive officer Sept. 1 — the same day his current job as the UJA's executive vice president ends.

### 'Time to move on'

The Cleveland native's ties to San Francisco reach back to 1969, when Lurie became an assistant rabbi at the city's Reform Congregation Emanu-El.

In 1972, he left to work as executive assistant with the UJA of Greater New York. He returned here in 1974 to become executive director of the Jewish Community Federation of San Francisco, a job he held for 17 years.

Levinson called Lurie "one of the key figures" in the museum's founding 12 years ago. When the federation decided to stop renting space in San Francisco and build its own headquarters, Lurie insisted that a museum be included on the first floor as a way of welcoming the public to the city's central Jewish address.

Five years ago, Lurie became head of one of the nation's largest Jewish fund-raising institutions. Last year, the UJA campaign raised more than \$615 million for Israel and international Jewish needs.

Lurie joined the UJA with the stipulation that he would stay only five years. So the 53-year-old's departure and his return to San Francisco are not a surprise.

"It was driven by personal reasons," he said. "I gave it my best shot. It was time to move on."

In 1993, his wife and children left the East Coast and moved back to their home in the Marin County town of Ross. Lurie began commuting back and forth across the country. "Last year, I flew 300,000 miles. I have two small children and a wife I love," he said. "This is where my heart is."

Lurie turned over the UJA's day-to-day operations to another administrator in February, though he has

continued to work out of his home and to travel across the country and to Israel.

His decision to accept the job as the Jewish Museum's chief executive officer comes as somewhat of a shock — even to him. "Am I a curator? Absolutely not," he said. Nor does he plan to become one.

But Lurie said he would work to expand his knowledge of the arts and would surround himself with qualified staff. "My love has been Diaspora-Israel relations as long as anyone can remember," he said. "But it had a focus for me, as strengthening Judaism. I see this as another way of strengthening Judaism." □

## Stamp photo reunites survivor with prewar Berlin schoolmate

By Bill Gladstone

TORONTO (JTA) — Because of a postage stamp, Robert Engel, a 73-year-old Holocaust survivor, was recently reunited with a former schoolmate from prewar Berlin.

The reunion came after Engel's wartime identity card was reproduced on a Holocaust stamp issued last year by Canada Post.

When the stamp appeared, Engel inadvertently became the only known living Canadian to be depicted on a Canadian postage stamp.

John Prince, an avid philatelist in Sarasota, Fla., saw Canada's Holocaust stamp in Linn's Stamp News, recognized Engel and felt certain that he had found a former high school classmate from the Wilhelms Ave. Oberrealschule.

After finding Engel's address in Toronto, Prince wrote him a letter that read, in part: "I hope that I am addressing the right Robert Engel, a fellow who used to go to the same school I did 60 years ago while my dad was posted to Berlin for his company."

He wrote, "I used to chum around with a Robert Engel who was one class ahead of me, but because he was Jewish, he disappeared one fine day and I never saw him again. Nobody at the time could explain to me what had happened to him. I do remember very vividly that I had asked various teachers of his whereabouts but never got a satisfactory answer."

Prince recalled in his letter that the events took place "in 1937, when all of a sudden, various Jewish classmates of mine also suddenly disappeared. Only much later did we as a class realize what had happened."

Transported to Holland with other Jewish youths in 1938, Engel subsequently spent several years in Westerbork and other concentration camps. Although he did not remember Prince, he said he was ready to meet him, even while suspecting that Prince might have "fought for the wrong side" in the German army during World War II.

Last month, Engel and Prince met when the latter attended CAPEX '96, an international stamp conference in Toronto. It was only then that Engel learned that Prince, a 72-year-old retired communications specialist who was born in Holland, had lived in Berlin only a few years when his father had been stationed there, and later battled the Nazis as an Royal Air Force pilot in England.

Issued in mid-1995, Canada's Holocaust stamp bears a montage of lean, desperate faces with a yellow Jewish star, part of a blue-and-white-striped prisoner's uniform and a Jewish identity card with a photo of Engel when he was 17.

Engel, a retired fashion buyer and immediate past chairman of the Holocaust Remembrance Center of Toronto, had donated the identity card to the center, which in turn had lent it to the design firm commissioned to create the stamp. □