

NEWS AT A GLANCE

■ **The House International Relations Committee is seeking to turn up the heat on the Clinton administration's policy toward Syria.** The panel convened a hearing to explore Syrian sponsorship of terrorist groups, including Hamas and Hezbollah. [Page 2]

■ **Israel's High Court of Justice rejected an appeal to prevent the release of two female Palestinian prisoners sentenced for murdering Israelis.** The court action clears the way for the release of the Palestinians who were pardoned by President Ezer Weizman.

■ **The ex-chairman of the Federal Reserve Board, Paul Volcker, is expected to be named early next week as the head of a panel looking at the assets of Holocaust victims that remain in Swiss banks.** The Swiss Bankers Association and the World Jewish Congress agreed in May to create the commission.

■ **Palestinian Authority leader Yasser Arafat sent a letter to Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu to ease Israel's doubts about the sincerity of the Palestinians' vote to revoke calls for the destruction of the Jewish state,** according to a news report. Arafat sent the letter after meeting with Israeli Foreign Minister David Levy.

■ **Relatives and sympathizers of Paul Touvier, the only Frenchman convicted of World War II crimes against humanity, celebrated a funeral Mass at which the priest said Touvier would get better justice in heaven.** Touvier, 81, died of cancer in a prison hospital outside Paris.

■ **Seven West Bank municipalities split from the Yesha Settlers Council, accusing the settlers group of becoming too political.** Representatives from the municipalities said the council was more involved in political activism than in securing support for infrastructure development.

■ **An Israeli Arab woman was held on suspicion of involvement in the 1994 bombings in London of the Israeli Embassy and the Joint Israel Appeal.** The woman, whose identity has not been revealed, denied the charges. [Page 3]

Jewish athletes recall ordeal of Nazi-hosted 1936 Olympics

By Daniel Kurtzman

WASHINGTON (JTA) — To Germany's Jews, Gretel Bergmann was a symbol of flickering hope against a rapidly darkening landscape.

To the Nazis, she was a propaganda tool.

Intent on avoiding an international boycott of the 1936 Berlin Olympics, Germany coerced Bergmann onto its track and field team and held her up to the world as evidence that it was open to having Jews compete.

But the 22-year-old Jewish high jumper, who had set a German record shortly before the Olympics, was denied a spot on the team at the last minute.

Sixty years after the Games' Nazi hosts flew swastikas alongside the Olympic rings, Bergmann, whose name is now Margaret Lambert, says, "I believe that this is one of the more shameful episodes in the history of sports."

Lambert and other athletes involved in those controversial Games recalled their experiences last week at the opening of the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum's exhibition on the 1936 Berlin Olympics.

Timed to coincide with the opening of the centennial Olympic Games in Atlanta, the exhibit depicts the Berlin Games as poised between Nazi propaganda imagery and the reality of a dictatorship rearming for war.

It examines, among other things, the International Olympic Committee's decision to leave the Games in Berlin; the controversy within the United States over whether to boycott the Olympics; Germany's efforts to camouflage its racist, militaristic character while projecting an image of a peaceful, tolerant nation; and the events culminating in World War II and the Holocaust, which claimed the lives of 12 athletes from the 1936 Games.

The exhibit offers, in the words of museum Director Walter Reich, a "sober counterpoint" to the celebration of the Olympic ideal now taking place in Atlanta.

Among the U.S. athletes who traveled to Berlin were 18 blacks and seven Jews, and the exhibit weaves many of their experiences through the narrative.

There is, for example, the story of American Jewish athletes Marty Glickman and Sam Stoller.

'Save Hitler the humiliation'

Hours before they were to compete in the trials for the 4 x 100-meter relay, Glickman and Stoller were pulled off the heavily favored U.S. team.

There were strong rumors, U.S. coach Dean Cromwell told the Jewish athletes, that the Germans were hiding their best sprinters and saving them to upset the American team in the relay.

Therefore, Glickman and Stoller would have to be replaced by Jesse Owens and Ralph Metcalfe, both of whom had never trained in the relay.

The move left Glickman baffled, but he now says he has a clearer picture of what happened. He points a finger squarely at Avery Brundage, president of the Amateur American Olympic Committee, who is widely believed to have been a Nazi sympathizer.

"He wanted to save Hitler the humiliation of seeing Jews standing on the winning podium," Glickman said of Brundage, who later became a member of the America First Committee, a group that supported the Nazis.

The U.S. 4 x 100-meter relay team won the race by 15 yards — a distance "from today until tomorrow" in track terms, Glickman said.

The German team finished fourth.

The exhibit also depicts the stunning successes of the 10 black American athletes who took home 14 medals, forcing Hitler and his entourage to leave the stadium each time they stood on the winning platform. Owens led the U.S. team, winning four gold medals, an Olympic record.

John Woodruff, who also attended the exhibit's opening, recalls doing his part to destroy the Nazi myth of racial superiority by winning gold in the 800-meter race.

The black athlete returned home a hero, only to find himself confronted by the reality of persistent racism in the United States.

At a track meet at the U.S. Naval Academy in Annapolis shortly after

the Olympics, Woodruff was excluded from competition because of the color of his skin.

Lambert, Germany's Jewish high jumper, never had her chance to show up Hitler on the Olympic stage. Still, she recalled the "secret weapon" she employed against the Nazis, who she said "blackmailed" her into joining the German team.

"I was mad as hell," she said. "And the madder I got, the higher I jumped.

"When I equaled the German record, I thought that was the best thing that a Jewish girl could ever do against Adolf Hitler."

The day after the U.S. Olympic team set sail for Germany — eliminating any chance of an American boycott — German sports officials told Lambert that she would not be competing because she had not been performing well.

Lambert, in establishing the German record, had already jumped to the same height that would win a gold medal in the 1936 Games for Iboly Csak, a Hungarian Jew.

"Even though I didn't win a medal, I think I achieved a lot," said Lambert, who moved to the United States in 1937 and went on to win two national track and field championships.

After vowing years ago that she would never set foot in Germany again, Lambert, 82, is now attending the Atlanta Games as a guest of the German government.

"You can't hate forever," she said, "and I feel this is some kind of a closure."

The exhibit will remain at the Holocaust Museum for a year before traveling across the nation. □

U.S. lawmakers to Syrian leader: Change or sanctions will persist

By Matthew Dorf

WASHINGTON (JTA) — If Syria's President Hafez Assad plans to make peace with the United States through his negotiations with Israel, he has a long way to go.

Members of Congress, in rare bipartisan unison, sent a clear message to Damascus this week: U.S. sanctions will continue until Syria ends its sponsorship of terrorist groups and ends its support for narcotics trafficking.

The United States "has tended to downplay" Syria's "dominance of Lebanon, its support for terrorist groups opposed to the peace process, the role of Syrian officers in drug trafficking through Lebanon and Syria's reported efforts to acquire weapons of mass destruction," said Rep. Benjamin Gilman (R-N.Y.) at the opening of a House International Relations Committee hearing Thursday.

The hearing, which was held despite the objections of the State Department, came less than three weeks after Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu called on the United States to step up its pressure on Syria.

The sparsely attended hearing marked an anti-climactic end to a four-year quest by opponents of U.S. policy toward Syria to get an airing on Capitol Hill.

Almost four years ago to the day, a Senate committee abruptly canceled hearings on Syrian sponsorship of terrorism.

At the time, a clandestine mission was under way to bring Syrian Jews to Israel. But because all the Syrian Jews who had wanted to leave now live safely in Israel or the United States, no objections were raised on their behalf to postpone the hearing.

About 200 Jews remain in Syria.

The Clinton administration feared that the hearings would antagonize Assad as State Department officials are working feverishly to find a way to jump-start talks between Israel and Syria.

The House convened the session one day after the U.S. special Middle East coordinator, Dennis Ross, met with Assad.

The criticism of U.S. policy hinges on one central question: Has the United States been tough enough in its dealings with Assad?

Since 1979, the State Department has branded Syria a terrorist state.

But in recent years, the United States has drawn the distinction between direct Syrian involvement in terrorism and support for terrorist groups.

While the government of Syria has not launched a terrorist attack since 1986, according to the State Department, Damascus continues to provide a safe haven for at least 10 Middle East terrorist groups, including Hamas, Islamic Jihad and breakaway factions of the Palestine Liberation Organization opposed to the peace process.

As a nation on the U.S. lists of countries sponsoring terrorism and narcotics trafficking, Syria is banned from receiving economic assistance, weapons systems and sensitive technology.

However, U.S. diplomats continue to engage the Syrian government in peace negotiations.

"The State Department should go back to the drawing board and come up with a different policy of dealing with" Assad, Rep. Dan Burton (R-Ind.) told the State Department coordinator for counterterrorism, Philip Wilcox, at the hearing.

In the face of sharp criticism from Republicans and Democrats, Wilcox defended the U.S. policy of diplomatic engagement with Syria, including Secretary of State Warren Christopher's 25 trips to Damascus during the last three years and President Clinton's two meetings with Assad.

"It is in the interest of the United States to do everything within our power to engage with Syria to persuade it to change its policies with respect to terrorism and to promote the expansion of the peace process," Wilcox said.

'Not always a pleasant business'

"Diplomacy is not always a pleasant business, and you do not always deal with people of perfect virtue. But the United States has interests and responsibilities in the world.

"And we are willing to engage with many different kinds of states to protect our own interests, and the interests of our friends."

In challenging Wilcox, members of Congress cited reports that at the height of the April conflict between Israel and Hezbollah, Syria allowed an Iranian military jet to unload weapons at Damascus International Airport.

Christopher's plane was at a different section of the airport while he met with Syrian officials.

The missiles that are used to shell Israel's northern towns were carted on Syrian military trucks to Hezbollah gunmen in Lebanon.

Rep. Eliot Engel (D-N.Y.) went as far as calling for economic sanctions on U.S. and overseas corporations that trade with Syria. While this approach has garnered no support on the committee, Engel has sponsored a resolution that roundly condemns Syria.

The measure, with about 60 co-sponsors, calls on Syria to "curb terrorism" and signifies Congress' intention to "hold the government of Syria responsible for all terrorist acts planned, trained for, financed or initiated in Syria or Lebanese territories under its occupation."

Sen. Jesse Helms (R-N.C.) also flirted with the idea of proposing broad sanctions on Syria but has dropped the effort after the Clinton administration voiced considerable opposition. □

Jewish adviser to Yeltsin sees economic challenges

By Lev Krichevsky

MOSCOW (JTA) — Russia has some formidable hurdles to overcome in the months ahead in its pursuit of economic stability, according to a Jewish businessman who serves on President Boris Yeltsin's council on economic issues.

Mark Masarsky, head of the Moscow-based Russian Gold mining company, said Yeltsin's recent electoral victory over Communist Party candidate Gennady Zyuganov had done much to instill confidence that the government would continue to pursue economic reforms.

But that confidence, in and of itself, will not be able to solve a series of nagging troubles that threaten the country's economic foundations, Masarsky said in an interview with *Evreyskaya Gazeta*, Moscow's Jewish biweekly newspaper.

Among those troubles, he said, were continued inflation, high numbers of tax dodgers, cutbacks in production and a steadily growing bank crisis.

The new Russian Cabinet, which is due to be announced in early August, will have as its main task the overcoming of these economic problems.

Those expected to take on the task include Alexander Livshitz, a Jew who now serves as Yeltsin's top economic adviser and who is deemed the likely nominee for first vice premier responsible for economic policy.

Masarsky said one of the main factors contributing to the banking crisis is an unwillingness on the part of many Russians to keep their savings in bank accounts.

In the months before the presidential elections, Russians withdrew some \$16 billion to ensure that their savings would not be lost if the Communists won, he said.

Among them were many Russian Jews planning to leave the country in the event of a Communist victory.

Russian citizens do not trust the nation's bank system, said Masarsky, who added that they keep an estimated \$60 billion in Western bank accounts.

While this situation is contributing to the worsening banking crisis, the massive liquidation of bank accounts is also preventing people's savings from being invested in production, which in turn puts a damper on growth, said the 54-year-old Masarsky.

As a solution, he suggested that the government seek to attract savings and foreign investment by creating a more favorable investment climate for investors.

Despite these daunting problems, Masarsky said that "the worst was left behind" after Zyuganov lost the July 3 presidential runoff. His victory may well have led to the introduction of "a totalitarian mechanism" into the Russian economy that would have dashed all hopes of economic reform, Masarsky said. □

Survey: St. Petersburg Jews report rampant anti-Semitism

By Leslie Katz

Jewish Bulletin of Northern California

SAN FRANCISCO (JTA) — They have been called "Christ Killer" and "Yid."

They have seen their neighborhoods marred by anti-Semitic graffiti and their family gravestones desecrated.

In addition to discrimination, some have suffered physical abuse.

Fifty-four percent of Jews responding to a survey in St. Petersburg, Russia, experienced anti-Semitic name-calling, while 40 percent witnessed other forms of anti-Semitism last year.

But because authorities often fail to respond to such incidents, few victims reported them.

"The police are also anti-Semites, after all," one respondent said.

A total of 612 St. Petersburg Jews completed the survey, conducted late last year by San Francisco's Bay Area Council of Jewish Rescue and Renewal in conjunction with the Harold Light Jewish Center for Human Rights.

The results were recently compiled and analyzed by the council, St. Petersburg Jewish University and Brandeis University's Perlmutter Institute for Jewish Advocacy.

This survey is believed to be the first focusing on the anti-Semitic experiences of Jews still living in the former Soviet Union.

However, others have been conducted on non-Jewish perceptions of Jews in the former Soviet Union and on the experiences of Jews who have left the area.

According to Simon Klarfeld, executive director of the council, the survey results underscore a certain resignation among Russia's Jews toward anti-Semitism.

Of those who admitted to having experienced anti-Semitism, only 32, or 10 percent, reported the incident to authorities.

"These results reveal that anti-Semitism in Russia is so pervasive that Jews living there do not think of these harsh incidents as anything other than the norm," Klarfeld said. "That is what's so depressing."

Part of the reason for that attitude, Klarfeld said, is that Russian Jews' vision of anti-Semitism may be so rooted in the last 70 years of government-sanctioned anti-Semitism that the newer brand of anti-Jewish sentiment may seem less threatening.

When compared with being denied admission to a university because of one's Jewishness, an anti-Semitic symbol on a wall might seem trivial.

Even so, some of those surveyed were profoundly affected by the hostility they experienced.

"I've gone underground, hidden myself," one respondent said. "I try to appear less often in public places, try not to stand out in a crowd."

Another called for a massive, community response to anti-Semitism: "We should unite, keep together and be ready for the worst." □

Israeli Arab detained in bombing

By Gil Sedan

JERUSALEM (JTA) — An Israeli court has ordered the 10-day detention of a woman suspected of being involved in two 1994 bombings of Jewish targets in London.

When the Acre Magistrates Court first issued details Wednesday about the case, it banned any identification of the suspect.

Israeli media described her as an Israeli Arab, 30, and a former resident of Acre who now holds foreign citizenship.

The woman denied any connection to the July 26, 1994, bombing of the Israeli Embassy in London that left 14 people injured. She also said she had no part in the next day's bombing of the London offices of the Joint Israel Appeal. Five people were injured in that attack.

At the time, Israel blamed Islamic extremists for the attacks.

After the attacks, an international investigative effort was launched to find those responsible. Israeli police apprehended her when she visited her family in Acre. Her alleged role in the bombings is not yet clear, but in their detention application, officials said she had committed a "serious felony against the security of the state." □

Egypt's snub of Jewish leaders vexes Simon Wiesenthal Center*By Tom Tugend*

LOS ANGELES (JTA) — The Simon Wiesenthal Center has condemned the failure of Egyptian authorities to invite Jewish spiritual leaders to a major conference in Cairo that was billed as an interfaith gathering.

The three-day conference, titled "Islam and the Future of Dialogue Between Civilizations" and organized by a council that is part of the Egyptian Religious Endowments Ministry, began Wednesday.

Hindus and Buddhists reportedly were excluded from the conference as well, and Christians were marginalized.

Representatives from 71 nations and international personalities, including former German Chancellor Helmut Schmidt, were scheduled to attend. The Vatican representative was apparently absent from the plenary session.

"The decision by Mahmoud Zazouk, Egypt's minister of religious endowment, to exclude Jewish leaders from the conference flies in the face of its stated goal to promote tolerance and a moderate image of Islam," said Rabbi Abraham Cooper, associate dean of the Wiesenthal Center.

Cooper said he perceived the snub as "a chilling political statement," adding that "peace in the Middle East means more than sterile documents and treaties; it means people talking with each other in open and frank dialogue."

"Dialogue is very important. We want dialogue," Sheik Mohammed Gouzou, a high-ranking Muslim clergyman from Lebanon, reportedly said.

"But Israel is cunning incarnate. We cannot dialogue with those Jewish hard-liners and as for the small attendance of Christians, we'll just say what we have to say and whoever wants to listen can do so."

Cooper added that he was particularly puzzled at the exclusion of the Jews in light of a "warm and open" three-hour meeting he held last year with then-Grand Mufti Sheik Tantawi.

"We hope that this outrageous decision doesn't signal a further chilling in Egypt's relations with Israel and the Jewish world," Cooper said.

In addition, representatives from Iraq and Iran were not at the gathering. □

Jews in London neighborhood still wait for creation of 'eruv'*By Eve Rosenzweig-Kugler*

LONDON (JTA) — Erecting 82 wooden posts and stringing some 1,000 yards of nylon line around them may take longer than you think.

If the materials are being used for an "eruv" in London, the process may take more than six years.

Orthodox Jews are not permitted to carry anything — even a key — outside their private property on Shabbat. The artificial boundary known as an eruv turns otherwise public space into an extension of private space, making the act of carrying possible.

Most of the time, eruvim are created without great fuss and difficulty. They exist in more than 130 cities worldwide and in every major town in Israel.

But six years after the first formal application to create an eruv in the northwestern part of London, Orthodox Jews continue to wait. The area is home to some 50,000 Jews, 10,000 of whom observe Shabbat.

Most of the 11-mile boundary consists of existing structures, highways and subway lines. But at 38 locations, there are gaps, which need to be connected using the posts

and string. That process should take about two to three months, according to one rabbi here.

But now, redevelopment along the boundary and construction in the area will cause additional delays.

From the start, the eruv generated opposition, a good part of it from non-Orthodox Jewish residents of the 6.5-square-mile area that the eruv will encompass. These residents objected to living in what they called a ghetto. One man, who was to have a pole in front of his house, said, "To me, it is the equivalent of a Nazi symbol."

Proponents countered that those who opposed the eruv were ashamed to be Jewish.

The eruv is sponsored by the United Synagogue, the main organizational body of Orthodox Jewry in England. Four major United Synagogue congregations, in addition to several independent Orthodox synagogues, are within the eruv area. □

Archaeological find shines light on Shabbat innovation*By Debra Nussbaum Cohen*

NEW YORK (JTA) — It seems that it's not only since the advent of electricity that Sabbath-observant Jews have been trying to make their lives easier while observing Jewish law.

A clay vessel with an odd protuberance has been found at an archeological site just north of Haifa, and according to an article in the August issue of *Moment* magazine, it turns out to be a Shabbat lamp.

Some savvy businesspeople in Palestine during the Talmudic period, the fourth century to the seventh century, found a clever way to extend the time an oil lamp would burn Friday nights without violating the prohibition against adding oil on the Sabbath, according to the article by Israeli archaeologists Hanan Eshel and Dina Avshalom-Gorni.

The oil lamps of the era were usually small and held only enough oil to provide about 45 minutes of light, the archaeologists wrote.

That amount of time is fine six days of the week, but what about on the Sabbath, when adding more oil to a burning lamp would constitute one of the 39 classes of work prohibited on the day of rest?

The quandary was discussed by rabbis in the Talmud. They consider various attachments to the lamp that would permit more oil to be slowly added, and therefore burn longer.

The Israeli archaeologists made the discovery as they were excavating a site known as the ruins of Uza, just five miles from the Mediterranean, which was a center of the pottery industry during the Talmudic period.

They found fragments they dated to between the years 350 to 450 and reconstructed them into vessels resembling a bundt pan with three handles on the sides.

Etched into the side of one of the vessels was the word "Shabbat" in Aramaic, which sent the archaeologists looking to the Talmud for a connection.

From the rabbis' discussion, they realized that they had uncovered a very early Shabbat lamp. An ordinary lamp with a very long wick would be placed on top of the Shabbat lamp, resting on the pillar sticking up in its center, and, in effect, feed the Shabbat lamp with more oil than any single lamp could hold on its own.

"Like so much of ancient archaeology, this illuminates the mindset of people," said Hershel Shanks, editor of *Moment* and the *Biblical Archaeology Review*. "When there is something we can touch like this, it somehow makes things more real."

"Our ancestors," he said, "were people like us, questioning like us." □