

**NEWS AT A GLANCE**

■ Members of the executive of the Jewish Agency for Israel spent a day in Moscow, but did not meet with Russian officials as originally planned. Chairman Avraham Burg said the agency had made a decision not to take any political steps until the question of its registration in the Russian Federation is solved. He said the agency's new organization, the Jewish Agency of the Russian Federation, might be registered soon.

■ Relatives of the Israeli athletes killed by Palestinian terrorists at the 1972 Olympic Games in Munich mourned that tragedy as a memorial to the victims was unveiled in Atlanta. The service also included a moment of silence for the victims of the weekend bombing at the Atlanta Games that resulted in two deaths and more than 100 injured. [Page 4]

■ A House of Representatives committee unanimously passed a bill that would clear the way for U.S. agencies to release information on the Nazi war criminals. [Page 3]

■ A small explosive device went off in front of a synagogue in the Queens borough of New York City. No one was hurt in the blast, which tore a hole in the doors of Queensboro Hill Jewish Center.

■ Jewish settlement leaders said after meeting with Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu that they expected the new government to lift the four-year freeze on the construction of Jewish settlements in the West Bank and Gaza Strip. The prime minister made no commitments.

■ Israel eased restrictions on Palestinian workers entering Israel after last week's drive-by shooting that killed three Israelis. Meanwhile, doctors transplanted the organs of Ze'ev Munk, one of the victims, into different patients.

■ Jewish officials were upbeat about Hosni Mubarak's commitment to peace after a meeting with the Egyptian president. The meeting, convened by the American Jewish Committee, came during Mubarak's official visit to Washington.

**FOCUS ON ISSUES****New head of UJA envisions a 'new era' in fund raising**

By Cynthia Mann

NEW YORK (JTA) — Richard Wexler has come to the helm of the United Jewish Appeal with his work cut out for him — and he seems to relish the challenge.

The tall, imposing 54-year-old Chicago lawyer was installed in the spring as the national chairman — the top lay leadership role — at a time when change is the watchword at the UJA and throughout the Jewish organizational landscape.

Wexler believes that the UJA must reposition itself to remain relevant and competitive with other Jewish and non-Jewish philanthropies that are capturing ever-greater shares of Jewish dollars.

The UJA is in transition, with its leaders poised to “create a new fund-raising era” that will reflect a post-crisis climate in the Jewish world, Wexler said in an interview.

“This is not to say we're beyond crisis,” Wexler said. Although Israel is more secure militarily and economically, he said, “the volatility” of the former Soviet Union continues as does the emigration each year of about 65,000 Jews from there to Israel.

The expense for their resettlement is shared by the Israeli government and the Jewish Agency for Israel, the principal recipient in Israel of the annual campaign run jointly by the UJA and local federations.

The UJA will continue to “sell the centrality of Israel to American Jewry, Wexler said. But if “we are coming to the end of an era of needing to rescue Jews, we're entering an era when we have to rescue Judaism” and “build communities in new ways.”

Wexler waxes passionately when he speaks of what drives the campaign, repeatedly invoking the “love of the house of Israel,” spirituality and the impulse to repair the world. He also talks about the importance of providing Jewish learning within the UJA rubric to help build lasting commitments to the community.

For Wexler, the key to the new era is a closer partnership with local federations and a fund-raising campaign that integrates overseas needs with local needs in a new way.

The UJA historically has been responsible for the overseas pitch. It also distributes the overseas funds to the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee and to the Jewish Agency via the United Israel Appeal.

Wexler appears to garner universal admiration and respect that should serve him well as he navigates the highly politicized waters of his new job as ambassador, spokesman and top solicitor for one of the biggest non-profit organizations in the United States.

The UJA, in concert with local federations, runs an annual fund-raising campaign ranked fourth in the nation by The Chronicle of Philanthropy. The campaign has raised about \$725 million annually for the past few years.

**'He's going to be a dynamo'**

Those who have worked closely with Wexler repeatedly describe him with the same litany of accolades: smart, articulate, tough, hands-on, passionate and dedicated.

“He's going to be a dynamo,” said Gary Tobin, an expert on Jewish philanthropy with the Brandeis University Cohen Center for Modern Jewish Studies.

“Richard Wexler believes to the core in what he is doing and is prepared to act on his convictions,” said Art Sandler of Norfolk, Va., a UJA national vice chairman and chairman of the major gifts division.

Mark Levin, executive director of the National Conference of Soviet Jewry, offered, “He is one of the best lay leaders the Jewish community has had.”

Wexler was president of the National Conference from 1992 to 1995. Much of that time he also served as chairman of the UJA's special Exodus campaign for the rescue and resettlement in Israel of Jews from the former Soviet Union.

The joint UJA-federation annual campaigns have been flat in recent

years and the national organizational leadership has been scrambling to stem the trend with efforts to restructure the enterprise and hone its message so it speaks more to a donor base that is changing dramatically.

The money raised in the annual campaigns is divided by each federation between Jewish needs at home and Jewish needs overseas. But the federations' overseas allocation has been steadily dropping in recent years, from about 51 percent of the gross campaign about 12 years ago to less than 42 percent today.

This has fueled a long-standing tension between the UJA and the federations, represented by the Council of Jewish Federations.

The UJA loyalists charge that the bulk of the campaign always has been raised for an Israel at risk, for Jews in need of rescue and for refugees in need of resettlement. A local nursing home, they say, simply does not have the same "sex appeal" to donors.

Indeed, the appeal of the overseas pitch was dramatically proven in the special Exodus campaign, which raised a stunning \$901 million between 1990 and 1994.

Some say that success masked problems that were developing in the regular campaign and delayed efforts to correct them. For their part, federations attribute their drop in overseas allocations to Israel's rising economic and military strength, to their need to fight assimilation at home through Jewish education and their effort to compensate for government cuts that have hurt their human service agencies.

#### **Frustration in some federation quarters**

But the drop also parallels increasing frustration in some federation quarters over what they describe as the UJA's lack of organizational focus, vision, discipline and accountability in recent years.

Such frustration was part of what led big-city federation executives to begin to push about two years ago for a merger of the UJA, the CJF and the UIA.

UJA leaders are also self-critical, but say the problems are being rectified.

"We have had problems," acknowledged Richard Pearlstone, the UJA's president and former national chairman. "We have had some poor management, we got distracted by the national study" on restructuring and experienced "changing economics and demographics. But these are things every organization suffers from."

UJA now boasts new campaign plans, marketing strategies and a reorganization of its professional staff designed to "help our system raise more money," according to the UJA announcement of the reform.

The top professional is currently Bernie Moscovitz, UJA's vice president and chief operating officer.

A search headed by Pearlstone is now under way for a new chief executive officer to replace Rabbi Brian Lurie, whose contract expires in September after five years in the post.

Meanwhile, the comprehensive merger plan has been shelved in favor of a new proposal calling for a "working partnership" between the CJF and the UJA.

This calls for the two entities to maintain separate chief executives, staffs and boards but have a joint "super-board" and executive committee.

Enter Wexler, who sits on the national restructuring committee, and who also serves on the CJF executive committee.

He opposed the original merger plan, in part because he feared that there were no workable assurances that overseas programs would get their fair share in the system and because he feared that the influence, talent and energy of the UJA fund-raisers for Israel would be lost in the shuffle.

Ultimately, Wexler's objective is to harmonize the enterprise and to increase the annual campaign by sharpening the message and the marketing, especially to key, untapped constituencies, including women and baby boomers.

While there is "some misgiving" in some UJA quarters that the overseas message will get diluted in a consolidated system or campaign, Wexler said, "My own view is the only way we're going to get more money to the Jewish Agency and the Joint is if we raise more money.

"And the only way we're going to raise more money is in partnership with federation."

Meanwhile, the new campaigns will reflect lessons learned from mistakes made in the past, said Wexler.

The Exodus campaign, he said, "sapped a good deal of energy" and "when it was over we breathed a sigh of relief."

But, he said, "we had gotten away from the kind of campaign we used to do," including an aggressive face-to-face solicitation process based on personal cultivation of donors.

A return to this approach in cooperation with federations began in February. It has already proved fruitful — increasing donations from major givers by an average of about 25 percent — and will continue on a broader basis, said Wexler.

For Wexler, one of the biggest challenges is telling in a compelling way the story of what the campaign money does on the ground, especially overseas.

The campaign now is poised to send into communities for the first time teams of representatives from the Jewish Agency and the JDC to tell that story.

At the same time, the UJA's signature overseas missions remain a linchpin in the campaign, telling the story, leaders say, better than any pitch can.

"Many people's experiences with missions is that it lights something in their bellies," said Wexler, who remembers his first trip to Israel in 1975 as a "true epiphany." □

#### **Commission flays officials who dumped Ethiopian blood**

*By Naomi Segal*

JERUSALEM (JTA) — The Israeli commission looking into the dumping of Ethiopian Jewish blood donations has flayed the health officials who decided to toss the blood.

But the panel, which presented its findings Sunday to Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, did not recommend that disciplinary steps be taken against the officials involved in the secret disposal of the blood.

The commission, headed by former President Yitzhak Navon, was created in January after the Israeli daily Ma'ariv reported that blood banks had been routinely destroying donations from Ethiopian Jews because of what health officials thought was a high incidence of HIV, the virus that causes AIDS, in the community.

The report prompted an angry reaction in the Ethiopian community, which has long felt discriminated against by the rest of Israeli society.

In January, some in the Ethiopian Jewish community had rioted in Jerusalem, calling the dumping of blood "racist."

According to the report, the commission found serious flaws in how policy had been set regarding blood donations from Ethiopians.

The report said that of the 1,400 known cases of AIDS in Israel, 550 of them came from the Ethiopian community. It recommended that new criteria be set so that blood donations are accepted on a case-by-case basis. □

## Menem to give Argentine Jews \$12 million for bombing of AMIA

By Sergio Kiernan

BUENOS AIRES (JTA) — In a discreet ceremony, President Carlos Menem presented Argentine Jewish officials with a copy of a decree that calls for the payment of \$12 million in reparations for the bombing two years ago of the Jewish community's headquarters here.

The decree issued this week orders the federal government to pay the Argentine Jewish Mutual Aid Association, also known as AMIA, the reparations in 12 monthly installments starting in January.

The July 18, 1994, bombing, which left 86 dead and more than 300 wounded, remains unsolved.

Of the total to be paid to the community, \$1 million is for the opening of a Holocaust museum at a building the government donated last year to the Argentine Jewish community.

AMIA President Oscar Hansman, Chief Rabbi Ben Hamu, Menem, members of his Cabinet and other Argentine Jewish officials attended the ceremony. Conspicuously absent, however, was Ruben Beraja, president of the Argentine Jewish umbrella organization DAIA. Beraja has said Argentine Jews should not accept reparations.

This week, DAIA said in a terse statement, "The institution did not attend the ceremony, nor named a representative to attend to it officially."

Hansman said after the ceremony that the money "was granted to cover the extraordinary material cost of upgrading security and giving special care to victims of the bombing." He added that the funds would not be used to reconstruct the building leveled by the bombing because "our institution already has funds to do that."

Meanwhile, the Argentine Chamber of Deputies has established a commission to investigate the bombing of AMIA. The five-member parliamentary commission has a mandate "to closely follow the investigation being carried out by the police and other security forces." The long delay in the formation of the commission has been harshly criticized by the local media and the Jewish community.

### Dismiss part of the force

The 1992 bombing of the Israeli Embassy in Buenos Aires also remains unsolved.

In another development, the governor of the Buenos Aires province has submitted to the local legislature a bill that would in effect enable the government to summarily transfer, demote or dismiss any member of the provincial police force. The province, the largest in Argentina, has a force of 47,000 police.

If the measure is passed, Gov. Eduardo Duhalde reportedly plans to dismiss a sizable part of the police force and hire replacements. Duhalde decided on the move after 18 Buenos Aires police officers were arrested July 12 in connection with the AMIA blast.

Jewish officials here and abroad have cited incompetence, corruption and anti-Semitism among security and government officials as causes for the Argentine government's inability to solve the case.

Duhalde said this week, "Every policeman suspected of corruption or involvement in crime will be summarily dismissed."

Recently, a rash of violent incidents involving police have resulted in dozens of indictments. A number of police were arrested on murder charges and on charges of opening fire on unarmed civilians. Last week, 500 police were suspended after flunking a drug test.

The investigation of the AMIA case exposed an extensive ring of police officials allegedly involved in the sale of stolen cars, explosives and weapons.

Last Friday, attorneys for the victims of the AMIA bombing filed charges against three high-ranking police officers under arrest. The lawyers charged the police with knowingly selling the van used in the AMIA car-bombing and with preparing it for that purpose. □

## Legislation on war criminals clears first hurdle in the House

By Anne Miller

WASHINGTON (JTA) — Classified files detailing Kurt Waldheim's Nazi past could see the light of day as early as this fall.

The House Committee on Government Reform and Oversight unanimously passed a bill last week that would clear the way for U.S. agencies to release information on the former U.N. secretary-general and Austrian president.

Waldheim, who served as a German intelligence officer in the Balkans during World War II, has been implicated in deportations as well as reprisal killings of partisans. Waldheim denies that he had any knowledge of Nazi slaughter during the war.

The War Crimes Disclosure Act, sponsored by Rep. Carolyn Maloney (D-N.Y.), would amend the Freedom of Information Act to require the government to release restricted files on Nazi war criminals. Maloney said the committee's action "represents a victory in the fight against the revisionism of Mr. Waldheim."

The Justice Department investigated Waldheim in the late 1980s and placed him on the U.S. "Watch List," which prohibits him from entering the United States. But the CIA files on him were never released. Such files fell through Cold War-era loopholes that exempt certain information from public release due to intelligence issues.

If the measure passes, the CIA and other government agencies would be forced to make files on former Nazis available to the public, providing that the information does not endanger investigations or national security.

Congressional supporters of the bill hope that the Intelligence and Judiciary committees will bypass their right to vote on the measure.

This would clear the way for a vote by the House as early as September. □

## Council: More than 20,000 get Article 2 money from Germany

By Alissa Kaplan

NEW YORK (JTA) — More than 20,000 Holocaust survivors worldwide now receive compensation payments from Germany under a program set up in 1992, said Saul Kagan, executive vice president of the Conference on Jewish Material Claims Against Germany.

The conference, a non-profit group representing more than two dozen Jewish organizations, officially administers Holocaust survivors' compensation from the German government.

The group, whose board of directors met here earlier this month, was involved in the creation of the German fund in 1992, known as the Article 2 program.

Immediately after the meeting, Israel Miller, president of the Claims Conference, made the announcement about the 20,000 people receiving compensation.

Because of the Article 2 fund, these survivors will get about \$350 a month for the rest of their lives, Kagan said. Of the 20,000 survivors, 55 percent live in Israel and 33 percent live in the United States.

The Claims Conference continues to receive applications for compensation, Kagan said, adding that the group expects an additional 10,000 people to be approved in the next year to receive payments. □

**BEHIND THE HEADLINES**
**Atlanta unveils memorial to slain Israeli athletes**

By Roni B. Robbins  
Atlanta Jewish Times

ATLANTA (JTA) — Israeli Olympic marksman Guy Starik sat in the gathering dusk, reflecting on the newly unveiled memorial to 11 of his countrymen murdered at another Olympics 24 years ago.

"I came to have a look at it alone," he said Sunday, teary-eyed.

Starik was 7 years old when Palestinian terrorists murdered Israeli athletes and coaches at the 1972 Games in Munich. Yet, the stone sculpture with its eternal flame burning below five Olympic rings touched something deep inside him. "In Israel, there are always those 11 athletes," he said between drags on a cigarette. Any mention of the Olympics there automatically includes reference to the massacre. "No one will ever forget it."

Minutes earlier, some 600 Atlanta Jews, members of the international media and Olympic and government officials gathered outside the entrance to the Atlanta Jewish Federation's Selig Center for the private dedication of the 3-foot sculpture.

As fate would have it, the ceremony was not only a tribute to the slain Israelis, but to the victims of more recent Olympic terrorism.

Two nights earlier, two bystanders died when a bomb exploded in Centennial Olympic Park. Two Israeli citizens were among the more than 100 injured.

The commemoration also provided a forum for the families of the Munich victims and other Jews to call for public recognition of the massacre at the Atlanta Games, which end Sunday. And it gave some Palestinians a chance to express their condolences to the Israelis in a poignant demonstration of goodwill.

Tragic similarities abounded. The Atlanta bombing occurred about the same time in the Olympics as the Munich massacre — the start of the second week of competition, Federation President Steve Selig told the crowd. "It is being said that Friday's act of violence and terror has destroyed the innocence of the Olympic Games — but the 14 children of the Munich 11 are here tonight to tell us that the innocence was lost long ago," he said as a strong breeze cooled the summer air.

**Specific target**

The difference between the Munich and Atlanta bombings was that Palestinian gunmen had a specific target in mind in 1972, said Rabbi Arnold Goodman of Ahavath Achim Synagogue. "By contrast, the victims in Centennial Park just happened to be at the wrong place," Goodman said, adding that both acts of terrorism blurred the spirit of dreams, brotherhood and peace of the Games.

Sharing his prayers of mourning was Atlanta Mayor Bill Campbell. "I'm here to say Kaddish with you," he said, asking those present to hold onto their memories and work toward peace. "The goals of terrorists may vary, but the actions always result in the loss of human lives," he said. "The world must learn from the past, while reaching for the future."

Among those who can never forget the past are the children of the Munich victims. Oshrat Romano, daughter of weightlifter Yoseph Romano, said she choked back tears at the opening ceremonies in Atlanta.

"Feelings of sadness, anger and a longing for my father mingled with the pride of seeing our athletes and the sight of the Israeli flag in the stadium," Romano said, her voice stunted again by tears. Then, speaking directly to the slain Israelis, she vowed to continue the campaign of

remembrance at future Olympics. The families have been appealing to the International Olympic Committee to observe a moment of silence at the Games.

"We promise you, that we will never let the world forget that you came to the Olympics full of hopes and dreams, but you returned in a coffin," she said.

The ceremony ended as Romano and the other relatives tried to light 11 memorial candles. The wind blew the flames out, so they were rekindled later inside the Selig Center, where the Federation sponsored a reception for the Israeli delegation.

It was the largest tribute organized by Jews during an Olympics since the 1976 Montreal Games, when 5,000 people attended a memorial for the slain Israelis, said Ankie Spitzer-Rechess, the remarried widow of fencing coach Andre Spitzer, who was killed in the 1972 attack.

But what Spitzer-Rechess said she would remember most about the Atlanta memorial is that it was the first to bring Palestinians and Jews together.

"We never thought Palestinians would come to us" to shake hands, said Rachel Romano, the sister of Oshrat Romano. "They said they were here to remember our fathers. They were not here for terror. They were here for peace." □

**Palestinians participate in memorial to slain Israelis**

By Neil Rubin  
Atlanta Jewish Times

ATLANTA (JTA) — The two olive-skinned men looked comfortable in the crowd filled with dozens of other Middle Easterners.

But these visitors, wearing Palestine Olympic Committee lapel pins, were believed to be the first Palestinians at a memorial ceremony for the Israelis murdered by terrorists at the 1972 Munich Olympics.

"All human beings all around the world are against what happened in Munich," Rabi H. Al Turk, deputy director of the Palestine Olympic Committee, said in an interview after the ceremony. "All the Palestinians, especially sports people, are against this."

During the emotional ceremony, held at the Atlanta Jewish Federation Selig Center, the Palestinians joined standing ovations after two children of the murdered athletes spoke.

Later, Al Turk approached Rachel Romano, daughter of a Munich terror victim. He looked into her eyes, paused, kissed her on the forehead and walked away.

"I was thinking of it brotherly and with humanity," Al Turk later said.

"Let's bring instead of this [terrorism], love and to build together our area in the world. How? Through the peace channel. This is the only way."

As he spoke, Palestine Olympic Committee delegation head Muamna Bississo stood at his side. The two had been invited by the Federation, as had representatives of the other 196 national Olympic committees.

Most Jews interviewed for this article had mixed feelings about seeing the visitors.

Not everyone agreed. "I don't have anything to say to them," said Rahamim Kaduri, an Israeli referee in weightlifting.

Yuval Higger, a sports scientist in Israel, had been coached by some of the Israelis killed in Munich.

"We should not forget, but we should look forward to the future, even if we miss one heartbeat for a moment because they are here," he said.

"It's emotional, but [Yitzhak] Rabin shook hands with [Yasser] Arafat and I'm sure that Arafat has more blood on his hands than these two persons." □