



## NEWS AT A GLANCE

■ Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu warned against an escalation of hostilities in Lebanon, saying that a strong Israeli response to attacks by the Islamic fundamentalist Hezbollah group would be painful for Lebanese citizens. Speaking during his first tour of southern Lebanon since being elected prime minister, Netanyahu reiterated that there was no confirmation of reports that Hezbollah had acquired longer-range Katyusha rockets. [Page 3]

■ Leaders of Israel's fervently Orthodox community issued a directive that bars yeshiva students from participating in demonstrations in Jerusalem and from carrying out violent actions. The declaration followed the decision of the Jerusalem District Court to release an Orthodox youth arrested for throwing stones during a recent Sabbath demonstration on Bar Ilan Street.

■ Jewish settlement leaders criticized Israeli leader Benjamin Netanyahu for failing to fulfill election promises. The leaders called on the government to strengthen the Jewish community in the West Bank town of Hebron, where some 450 Jewish settlers live in fortified enclaves among a population of 100,000 Palestinians. [Page 3]

■ President Clinton, speaking at his 50th birthday celebration at Radio City Music Hall in New York City, paid tribute to Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin. "I started out my presidency with one of the greatest men I ever met in my life," Clinton said of the assassinated leader, adding, "I miss him so much."

■ The chief of the international observer force in Hebron said that in the two months since the Netanyahu government took office, the number of confrontations between Jewish and Palestinian residents in the West Bank town had increased.

■ An Israeli Arab was shot and seriously wounded by Palestinian police at a roadblock in the West Bank town of Tulkarm. An initial inquiry found that the police had fired on the car even after it drifted onto the shoulder of the road.

## NEWS ANALYSIS

### Netanyahu, Levy heal rift, but truce may be temporary

By David Landau

JERUSALEM (JTA) — No sooner had Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and Foreign Minister David Levy resolved their latest high-profile rift than a dispute surfaced about what they in fact had just agreed upon.

"It's just a matter of time before the next crisis erupts," a source close to Levy said.

Sunday's reconciliation came after two weeks of public exasperation and threats of resignation by the foreign minister, who said he and his ministry were being excluded from peace process diplomacy.

Levy's particular target was Netanyahu's American-born foreign policy adviser, Dore Gold, who has been serving as the premier's point man in contacts with the Arab world and with the Clinton administration.

The breaking point came when Levy belatedly discovered that Gold had held a meeting in Washington with U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher at Netanyahu's behest.

Neither the Foreign Ministry in Jerusalem nor the Israeli Embassy in Washington had been informed about Gold's discreet diplomacy.

Gold had also been dispatched by Netanyahu during the past two months to Jordan, to Palestinian Authority leader Yasser Arafat in the Gaza Strip and to Persian Gulf states as part of the new premier's efforts to keep avenues of communication open with the Arab world despite the slowdown in the peace process.

His ire growing, Levy publicly accused Gold of having set up a "Jordan desk" within the Prime Minister's Office and of blatantly allocating to himself functions constitutionally and traditionally discharged by the Foreign Ministry.

Levy also took public issue with the prime minister's plan to appoint another of his close aides, Cabinet Secretary Danny Naveh, to head up the Israeli negotiating team when formal negotiations with the Palestinians resume.

Naveh, a pivotal figure within the Prime Minister's Office, would obviously report straight back to Netanyahu, leaving the Foreign Ministry hard put to stay in the loop.

Staffers at the Foreign Ministry gave their fervent support to Levy's complaints.

### Feeling increasingly left out

They, like their minister, have felt increasingly left out as the Prime Minister's Office signals to governments around the world that it is the best address in Jerusalem for getting things done.

In recent years, the Foreign Ministry was hardly far from the action of the unfolding peace process.

Under the previous government, Foreign Ministry Director General Uri Savir headed the negotiations with the Palestinians while retaining his role as a close aide and adviser to Prime Minister Shimon Peres.

And also under Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin, when Peres served as foreign minister, senior Foreign Ministry staffers — among them Deputy Minister Yossi Beilin and legal adviser Yoel Singer — played key roles in the peace process.

Levy brought matters to a head earlier this month by pointedly boycotting Cabinet meetings and then by flying off to the United States last week for an open-ended private visit with friends in New Jersey.

While the recriminations flew, aides to Levy and Netanyahu continued to seek a formula that could patch up the ruptured relationship.

On Sunday, after Levy returned home from the United States, he and Netanyahu held a two-hour *tete-a-tete*, after which peace was officially restored.

The Prime Minister's Office issued a formal statement in which Netanyahu was quoted as greatly valuing Levy's contribution to the peace process.

The two had agreed upon methods to ensure smooth cooperation between the Prime Minister's Office and the Foreign Ministry, the statement

said. Specifically, it announced that negotiations with the Palestinians would be headed up by former Israel Defense Force Chief of Staff Dan Shomron, not Naveh.

The statement also said that a "ministerial steering group" would be established to oversee the peace process. The group would be made up of Netanyahu, Levy and Defense Minister Yitzhak Mordechai.

The return to interministerial harmony purportedly achieved by the Netanyahu-Levy meeting lasted only from Sunday afternoon until that evening.

It was Levy who first upset the delicate balance by appearing on Sunday's prime-time television news programs to announce that Gold's Jordan desk would be disbanded and Gold himself reduced to his proper role as the prime minister's foreign policy adviser.

Practical diplomacy, the foreign minister said, would be in the exclusive hands of his ministry.

Sources in the Prime Minister's Office retorted in Monday's newspapers that the so-called Jordan desk is made up of just a couple of experts — one of them, in fact, a Foreign Ministry staffer. So there was nothing really to disband, the sources said.

Moreover, they added, Gold would continue to carry out discreet missions abroad on behalf of the prime minister.

Sunday's reconciliation, they said, had basically been a matter of saving face for Levy, "helping him to climb down the ladder he has climbed up."

Above all, the sources said, the conduct of the peace process would remain firmly in the hands of the prime minister.

The opposition, watching these developments from the sidelines, sought to score points during the politically sultry August haze.

"Spare us these sticky and pathetic 'reconciliations,'" said Meretz leader Yossi Sarid, adding that the repeated feuds and pacifications were "not about policy, but only about ego."

Sarid's observation did not reflect a unique political or psychological insight.

Levy, visibly, finds it hard to adjust to his subordinate role in a Cabinet led by a man many years his junior — a man, moreover, with whom he has had a stormy and mutually contemptuous relationship in the past.

Further, as foreign minister, he finds himself not even No. 2, but rather No. 3, behind Defense Minister Mordechai — or even lower in the order of perceived power and prestige, behind Finance Minister Dan Meridor and Infrastructure Minister Ariel Sharon.

#### **An often awkward relationship**

The relationship between prime minister and foreign minister has often been awkward in Israel, right back to the days of David Ben-Gurion and Moshe Sharett.

In a country wrestling constantly with issues of war and peace, it is natural that the prime minister himself, with his intimate staff, be involved in hands-on diplomacy on a daily basis.

This situation has proved a fertile source of friction. Foreign Ministers Golda Meir (under Ben-Gurion), Abba Eban (under Meir) and Yigal Allon (under Rabin) all found themselves fighting to protect their turf and to ensure for themselves that vital ingredient of power in any government: the right to know.

And this built-in tension may prove to have been intensified by the new system of government ushered in this year with the direct election of Netanyahu as prime minister.

Under this system, it is far more difficult for individual ministers or groups of ministers to threaten the very existence of the government.

For the government to fall, the Knesset must resolve to dissolve itself — and that is an altogether remote scenario.

Ministers rocking the boat can now find themselves fired summarily.

And new people can be appointed without the need for the prime minister even to inform the Knesset, let alone win its approval. □

#### **Argentina to review cause of Israeli Embassy bombing**

*By Sergio Kiernan*

BUENOS AIRES (JTA) — The Argentine government has decided to order a new study of the March 1992 explosion at the Israeli Embassy here.

President Carlos Menem ordered the new study, to be conducted by international experts, after Israel harshly criticized the findings of an earlier study that had been commissioned six months ago by the Argentine Supreme Court.

Announcing some of those findings last week, the court said a three-member panel of experts had concluded that the explosion was caused by explosives placed inside the embassy.

The findings contradicted earlier conclusions by Argentine, American, Israeli and European experts who said a car bomb was used in the attack.

The Israeli Foreign Ministry and Israel's ambassador to Argentina countered the report's conclusion, saying that they did not believe that the bomb had been placed inside the building.

"We categorically reject the evaluations published by the Supreme Court in Argentina," the Foreign Ministry said last week in a statement.

The Israeli ambassador to Buenos Aires, Itzhak Aviran, was especially critical of last week's report.

"Argentine experts, police experts, Israeli experts, French experts and American experts all agree a car bomb was used," said Aviran.

"I cannot imagine how the Supreme Court can arrive at a different conclusion over four years after the explosion."

After asking Aviran "to tone down" his criticism, the Argentine government called the study "unofficial" and "just one more legal procedure in a complex case."

After a stormy Cabinet meeting Aug. 15, Menem ordered a new study of the explosion in order "to settle the issue."

Cabinet members discussed taking what they called "a more active role" in the case.

The embassy bombing killed 29 people and left more than 100 injured.

The Argentine government has come under constant attack from Jewish officials here and abroad for its inability to find those responsible for the embassy attack.

The July 18, 1994, bombing of the Jewish community's headquarters here, which left 86 dead and more than 300 wounded, also remains unsolved. □

#### **Underwater eatery to open in Eilat**

*By Naomi Segal*

JERUSALEM (JTA) — Visitors to Eilat will soon be able to see their fish and eat them, too.

Israel's first underwater restaurant is under construction in the southern resort city, where diners will be able to watch the tropical sea life shimmer by through the restaurant's windows.

Also planned for the facility: a movie theater and scuba diving club. □

## During visit to security zone, prime minister warns of conflict

By Naomi Segal

JERUSALEM (JTA) — Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu warned this week of a possible escalation of hostilities on the Israeli-Lebanese border.

"We have proposed to Syria, Lebanon and Hezbollah to resolve this conflict," Netanyahu told reporters Monday during his first visit to the southern Lebanon security zone since his election in May.

"If we don't, it will no doubt lead to an escalation which will be painful for the other side."

Netanyahu's statement echoed similar warnings issued by Israeli officials during the past week of the harsh Israeli retaliation that would come if Hezbollah launched attacks on northern Israel.

The warnings came after the Israel Defense Force chief of staff, Lt. Gen. Amnon Shahak, told the Knesset Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee last week that Hezbollah might have obtained longer-range Katyushas. Shahak said the reports had not yet been confirmed, but added that the militant group had dispersed its supply of Katyushas throughout southern Lebanon and would be able to quickly organize an attack against northern Israel.

A day after Shahak discussed the reports, Defense Minister Yitzhak Mordechai issued a warning against attacks on civilians in northern Israel and on armed forces serving in southern Lebanon.

"We will hold Lebanon and anyone on its territory responsible if civilians or soldiers are hurt," he said during a tour of the security zone. "We have the necessary means."

### 'Laughable' proposal

The reports prompted a meeting last week of local leaders in the north to discuss possible security measures for their communities.

During Monday's visit to southern Lebanon, Netanyahu met with Antoine Lahad, the commander of the Israel-allied South Lebanon Army.

He also met with Israeli soldiers serving in the area and was briefed by senior IDF officers. And the prime minister visited northern Israeli communities and said government aid promised in the wake of Hezbollah rocket attacks earlier this year would soon be delivered.

In April, Israel launched a 16-day artillery and air blitz against Hezbollah in southern Lebanon in a move aimed at stopping the rocket assaults on northern Israel.

The cross-border fighting ended April 27 with a U.S.-brokered cease-fire that barred either side from firing on or from civilian areas.

Earlier this month, Syria and Lebanon flatly rejected Netanyahu's "Lebanon First" proposal, which called for the withdrawal of Israeli troops from Lebanon in exchange for the disbanding of Hezbollah militias there.

Netanyahu issued the proposal as a confidence-building measure aimed at building momentum for restarting negotiations with Syria.

But Syrian President Hafez Assad viewed the proposal as an attempt by Netanyahu to avoid the central issue: an Israeli withdrawal from the Golan Heights in exchange for a full peace with Syria and Lebanon.

On Monday, Labor Party leader and former Prime Minister Shimon Peres described Netanyahu's proposal as "laughable." He said Netanyahu was telling Syria, "You help us evacuate Lebanon, we promise you we'll stay on the Golan."

"Tell me, is there any chance from the point of view of political sense that will be accepted?" Peres said in an interview on Israel Radio. □

## Anti-Semitic article draws ire of president of Georgia

By Lev Krichevsky

MOSCOW (JTA) — An anti-Semitic article in a newspaper in the former Soviet republic of Georgia has triggered a sharp response from the country's leader.

Noah, an independent newspaper published in the Georgian capital of Tbilisi, published an article earlier this month blaming Jews for the high level of unemployment and other economic ills besetting the country in recent years. The article, written by the paper's publisher, called Jews "vampires," who have been "pumping money, gold, nerves, thoughts" out of Georgia.

Despite the newspaper's small circulation, the article elicited a swift condemnation from Georgian President Eduard Shevardnadze, who described it as full of "fascism and bigotry."

"If the free press continues to publish such articles, we would have to reconsider our attitude" toward these publications, he said.

Georgia, which is located in the Caucasus Mountains, is known as a country with a relatively low level of anti-Semitism.

During the Soviet era, Jews in Georgia enjoyed religious freedom to a greater extent than in any other republic of the Soviet Union.

In 1989, about 100,000 Jews lived in Georgia. The republic has a general population of some 5.7 million. But many of the country's Jews left during a civil war that broke out after Georgia declared its independence in 1991.

"There had been no displays of anti-Semitism in Georgia in recent decades," Jemal Adjashvili, leader of Georgia's 13,000 Jews, said in a telephone interview.

"Anti-Semitism is an extremely unusual thing in our country. Neither Jews nor Georgians are used to it. That is why our president reacted the way he did to the anti-Semitic piece in a newspaper," said Adjashvili, the only Jewish member of the 226-seat Georgian Parliament.

Adjashvili said the Union of Georgian Writers and other groups of intellectuals had already come out against the anti-Semitic article.

According to Georgian law, a newspaper cannot be closed even if it is spreading racism and bigotry.

"The Jewish community and Georgian intellectuals think that after we've faced such a case, this law should be revised," Adjashvili said.

Shevardnadze, who served as foreign minister for former Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev, said strict sanctions would be applied against the newspaper. □

## Court's ruling on autopsy pleases Jews in Australia

By Jeremy Jones

SYDNEY, Australia (JTA) — Members of the Jewish community in Australia's most populous state have welcomed a recent decision stopping a coroner from performing an autopsy on an Orthodox Jewish man.

The deceased's widow recently argued before the Supreme Court in New South Wales that an autopsy was, in her view, an act of desecration.

Many Orthodox Jews frown on autopsies, saying that Judaism forbids the mutilation of a corpse, even if scientific benefits would result from the examination.

During the court hearing, the coroner failed to present evidence that the circumstances surrounding the man's death were suspicious.

The right of a family to object to an autopsy has gained prominence here with revelations of theft and other criminal behavior at the Sydney morgue. □

**Jewish genealogists: Funding needed to save family records***By Bill Gladstone*

BOSTON (JTA) — Jewish genealogists are appealing to federations and philanthropists across North America to devote more financial resources to genealogical causes to preserve old and disintegrating records.

The appeal was made during a panel discussion at the 15th annual Summer Seminar on Jewish Genealogy that was recently held here.

The three panel members — a genealogist, an archivist and a communal official — estimated that between 5 percent and 50 percent of North American Jews are engaged in family tree research.

But they differed on the significance of genealogy to Jewish continuity and therefore the need for federations to fund genealogical research projects.

Gary Mokotoff, former president of the Association of Jewish Genealogical Societies and publisher of the genealogical journal *Avotaynu*, said genealogy is essential to Jewish continuity because it enables researchers, who number in the hundreds of thousands, to recognize their connection to the Jewish people. Genealogy "is capable of stemming the tide of Jewish assimilation and should be of great interest to philanthropists," he said. "Isn't Jewish continuity a goal of Jewish philanthropy?"

Mokotoff said Jewish genealogists want funds not for themselves but to rescue irreplaceable Jewish records that are disintegrating in archives around the world.

"We must spend more money to preserve Jewish history," he said. At the same time, he called upon genealogists to give more money and time as volunteers to important genealogical causes.

The other two panelists, however, said there was little need for communal resources to be allocated for genealogy.

For genealogists to ask Jewish federations to fund their various projects would be "like turning to big government for a bailout," said Michael Feldberg, executive director of the American Jewish Historical Society in Waltham, Mass.

Jewish continuity "is a room with many doors, the greatest of which is probably synagogue membership," and not historical family research, he said.

Michael Bohnen, a Boston-area lawyer and past chairman of Combined Jewish Philanthropies of Greater Boston, said, "Passing on our family history to our children doesn't take communal funding. It's more important that we send our children to Hebrew day schools."

**'It's triage'**

Several audience members participated in the discussion.

Robert Weiss, president of the Association of Jewish Genealogical Societies, noted that schoolchildren in Israel, "where Jewish continuity should not be a problem," are obliged to study Jewish genealogy in the seventh and 10th grades in order for them to understand their connections to 17th-century shtetls in Europe.

Yale Reisner, director of the Lauder Foundation Genealogy Project of the Jewish Historical Institute in Warsaw and a former federation official, acknowledged that communal officials face tough decisions when allocating limited resources to increasing and competing needs.

"The fact is there is only a limited amount of money, and the poor and the sick are part of that. It's a hard decision to make. It's triage," Reisner said.

Archivists also face tough choices, Reisner said, citing the Jewish Historical Institute's need for an elevator to give handicapped people access to archival records.

"Do we want to preserve Schindler's List or do we want to buy a Schindler Lift?" he said. "That's a question that must be answered."

Urging Jewish genealogists to become more active in rescuing records, Reisner cited what he called Reisner's Law of the Conservation of Matter: "If it matters to you, conserve it." He added, "The Nazis tried so hard to wipe us out but they didn't do it. What a tragedy it would be if we allowed the memory to be wiped out." □

**Israel's rehabilitation centers key to success in Paralympics***By Melanie A. Lasoff  
Atlanta Jewish Times*

ATLANTA (JTA) — Since the Paralympic Games were first held in 1960 in Rome, Israelis have brought home more than 350 medals, including 135 gold.

The disabled Israeli athletes are hoping to perform just as well at this week's Games, which follow the 1996 Olympic Games held here last month.

What's the secret of the Paralympians' success?

Some of the 60 members of this year's Israeli Paralympic delegation attribute their successes to Israel's world-renowned rehabilitation centers for athletes and disabled war veterans. Others say the Paralympians reflect the Jewish state's determination and spirit.

Whatever their unique experiences, the 41 athletes and their coaches share the mentality of many Paralympic athletes — a sheer love of sports and a pride in their country.

"We're true sportsmen," said Fritz Friedman, one of three Israeli lawn bowling coaches. "We play because we love the sport, not because we are professional. If someone does something because they love doing it, there is more gain."

Some Israelis learn to love athletics at Beit Halochem Sports, Rehabilitation and Social Centers, located in Tel Aviv, Haifa and Jerusalem. Among the centers' amenities are heated, Olympic-sized pools, spacious gymnasiums and assorted sports equipment.

Unfortunately, there is much need for innovative rehabilitation in a country that sees many victims of terrorism and war, said Yosef Lutenberg, head of the Israeli Paralympic Delegation and chairman of the Jewish state's disabled veterans association.

"We have many youngsters who go through our program [because] we have many casualties daily," Lutenberg said. "Sports is a part of their rehabilitation, but they also like it."

Some Paralympians not disabled from war or terrorism also train at Beit Halochem. Their determined and passionate attitudes also lead to medals, Lutenberg said. "We don't need to teach them; they are motivated by themselves," he said. "They are serious about fighting for the pride of the new State of Israel."

More than half of this year's Israeli Paralympians are disabled war veterans, said Joel Breslauer, executive vice president of the New York-based Friends of Israeli Disabled War Veterans. Their participation in Beit Halochem prepares the veterans for Paralympic competition and strengthens their mindset, he said.

"They are serious-minded about rehabilitating themselves," Breslauer said. "They are not just training for the Paralympics. They are training for a new life."

Tami Carmelli, a lawn bowler who was blinded several years ago by diabetes, has won gold and silver medals in several international competitions. "I just love the sport," she said. "I like the people around the game, who are very social, and I enjoy my relationships with the coaches and players." □