



## NEWS AT A GLANCE

■ Avraham Burg, chairman of the Jewish Agency for Israel, concluded a six-week North America tour to help raise funds for the annual campaign run by the United Jewish Appeal and federations. In the fund-raising events in which he participated, \$50 million was raised, a 13.6 percent increase over last year's campaign among the same donors. In addition, he raised more than \$5 million in personal solicitations.

■ Israeli and Palestinian negotiators recessed for the weekend without any apparent progress in their talks on an Israeli redeployment in Hebron. Palestinian Authority leader Yasser Arafat said he could not stop a new uprising from breaking out. [Page 2]

■ A federal judge in Manhattan refused to stop the extradition to Israel of Musa Abu Marzook, the head of Hamas' political bureau. Marzook, who is expected to appeal the judge's decision, faces charges in Israel that he financed and helped organize terrorist attacks.

■ A mosque was inaugurated in the Knesset after an Arab Israeli parliamentarian requested that a place of worship be available for Muslim members of the Knesset who pray there several times a day.

■ Secretary of State Warren Christopher announced he would attend the Middle Eastern economic summit in Cairo in November. Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak had threatened to cancel the summit in the wake of the stalled peace process.

■ The leader of an anti-Semitic and supremacist group will be tried in a Moscow court on a charge of inciting racial hatred. Ilya Lazarenko, 23, is the founder and editor of Narodniy Stroy, a militant anti-Semitic newspaper.

■ A Nottingham fertility clinic became the first in Britain to appeal publicly to Jewish women to donate their eggs. The move has been welcomed by infertile Jewish women, but it has highlighted the dispute among leading Orthodox rabbis as to whether egg donation contravenes Jewish law.

## ON THE CAMPAIGN TRAIL

### What does 'pro-Israel' mean? Just ask your local candidate

By Matthew Dorf

WASHINGTON (JTA) — At an elaborate Capitol Hill reception last year, Speaker of the House Newt Gingrich (R-Ga.) heaped praise on then-Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin for making peace with the Palestinians.

Nine days before Rabin's assassination, Gingrich told hundreds gathered in the Capitol Rotunda for a Jerusalem 3000 celebration that Rabin is a "bold visionary" for agreeing to the Israeli-Palestinian accords that "set the path of peace in motion."

How fast things change.

As Israelis and Palestinians gathered here last week for an emergency summit to revive a threatened peace process, Gingrich practically condemned Rabin's peace policies.

More Israelis have died at the hands of Palestinian terrorists in the 30 months since the agreements were worked out in Oslo than in the 30 months before the peace accords, Gingrich said in a conference call with Jewish journalists.

"The dying continues on the part of Israelis," he said.

Throughout his 17-year career in the House, Gingrich has consistently been placed in the pro-Israel camp by Jewish activists.

But how can the Republican leader in the House of Representatives go from peace process advocate to critic in less than 12 months and remain a supporter of the Jewish state?

The answer lies in the dramatic shifts of pro-Israel politics in the last few years.

With Election Day less than a month away, seasoned lawmakers and newcomers to national politics are once again grappling with profound changes in the Middle East and what it takes to be pro-Israel — a badge many seek and wear with pride on the campaign trail.

"Candidates are dealing with a completely different Middle East today," said Michael Bloomfield, political affairs director at the American Israel Public Affairs Committee, the pro-Israel lobby.

Within a few years' time, he said, "Scuds have fallen on Tel Aviv and Rabin shook Arafat's hand."

Congressional candidates often emphasize their pro-Israel policies as they seek pro-Israel PAC money and support from local Jewish voters.

While much of the attention to pro-Israel policies falls to the congressional races, presidential contenders, in courting Jewish voters, also face the challenge of how to promote themselves as supporters of Israel.

Candidates and activists once measured pro-Israel policies in black and white.

But since the birth of the peace process after the 1991 Gulf War, support for the Jewish state is increasingly monitored in shades of gray.

Complicating the issue for many candidates are the splits in the American Jewish community on many issues facing Israel today.

At the same time, the core definition of pro-Israel activism remains constant: an unwavering commitment to Israel's security.

## Heightened devotion to the core issues

When congressional candidates asked the Jewish community in 1990 what it takes to run on a platform supporting Israel, they were told to start by condemning the "international terrorist campaign" sponsored by Yasser Arafat's Palestine Liberation Organization.

They were also told to oppose arms sales to Arab states because such arms sales were seen as a "disincentive to enter the peace process."

These suggestions, contained in AIPAC's 1990 candidate briefing book, have since been replaced by a call from the pre-eminent pro-Israel lobby to support arms sales to Jordan and U.S. foreign aid to the Palestinians.

While the peace process has led to increasing confusion and a wider array of issues to grasp, the changes have heightened devotion to the core issues of the U.S.-Israel relationship.

"Israel is a fellow democracy and the United States' only reliable ally in the region," AIPAC's Bloomfield said. "Most other issues follow from

this," he said, citing U.S. foreign aid to Israel, maintaining Israel's qualitative military edge, the quest for peace with security through direct negotiations and no imposed solutions in the peace process.

"The other issues on the agenda are commentary," he said, referring to the ebb and flow of particulars in the peace process, counterterrorism efforts and U.S. relations with Arab states.

With a few exceptions, candidates in the field generally steer away from controversial issues on the pro-Israel agenda such as the redeployment from Hebron and the possibility of deploying U.S. troops on the Golan Heights if Syria and Israel reach a peace accord.

Instead, most focus on their support for the government of Israel and for foreign aid.

"For seven days there were non-stop front-page stories in newspapers everywhere" about the recent outbreak of violence in the Middle East and the summit at the White House, Bloomfield said. But at the height of election season, "almost every candidate shied away from talking about it. Why? It's too difficult to understand."

One House candidate from a rural district issued a position paper that confused the Bosnia peace accords with the Oslo accords between Israel and the Palestinians, according to a Washington insider who saw the paper but declined to reveal the candidate's identity.

The would-be congressman called on Israel and the United States to work toward implementation of the "Dayton peace accords."

So just what are the candidates talking about when it comes to Israel?

The vast majority of candidates issue position papers that include general statements about Israel.

The Democratic candidate for Congress from a suburban Philadelphia district with a large Jewish population issued a one-page paper headlined, "Joe Hoeffel and the Jewish Community."

In addition to statements denouncing anti-Semitism and maintaining church-state separation, the paper includes a boilerplate endorsement of U.S. foreign aid to Israel, commitment to Israel's security and support for Jerusalem as the Jewish state's capital.

These are all key points of AIPAC's current briefing book, which the organization distributes to virtually all candidates running for national office.

Hoeffel is challenging Rep. Jon Fox (R-Pa.), who is the only Jewish member of the 104th Congress' freshman class.

#### **'America should act as a guarantor'**

Other candidates share Hoeffel's standard pro-Israel line. But this support means different things to different lawmakers, especially those most involved with foreign policy issues.

"American foreign policy should not attempt to persuade Israel to give specifics in the peace process," said Robert Wexler, who won the Democratic primary in a Florida district widely rated as a safe Democratic House seat.

"Our goal should be to make Israel feel comfortable," he said, citing his concern over previous pressure on Israel to return the Golan Heights.

According to Rudy Boschwitz, a veteran pro-Israel Republican lawmaker running for the Minnesota Senate seat he lost in 1992 to another Jew, Democrat Paul Wellstone, "America should act as a guarantor of Israel's security."

"That has not changed and, if anything, it is heightened," he said, referring to what he called the sea change in Israel's policies since he last served in Congress.

Activists point to Rep. Benjamin Gilman (R-N.Y.)

as a prime example of the complexity of what it means to be pro-Israel.

As chairman of the House International Relations Committee, Gilman last year placed a hold on \$10 million in U.S. aid to the Palestinian Authority to protest Arafat's government stonewalling an investigation into PLO assets.

In the face of White House protests and calls from former Israeli Prime Minister Shimon Peres to release the money, Gilman refused.

"The irony is certainly there," said Chuck Brooks, executive director of National PAC, the pro-Israel political action committee. "As Clinton met with Arafat with Israel's blessing, Gilman withheld U.S. money."

Nonetheless, "it would be a joke to call him anti-Israel for holding this money," Brooks said. "Gilman's doing what he thinks is in the interests of the United States and Israel." □

#### **Arafat threatens new violence if Hebron talks do not succeed**

*By Naomi Segal*

JERUSALEM (JTA) — Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat adopted an ominous tone after this week's negotiations on an Israeli redeployment in the West Bank town of Hebron remained deadlocked.

Addressing the Palestinian legislative council in Ramallah on Thursday, Arafat said he could not stop a new uprising from breaking out and that an explosion of violence was likely at any time in the West Bank and Gaza.

Arafat said he did not think that the talks at the Erez crossing had achieved any result and he called on the Palestinians to be prepared to confront all possibilities.

Meanwhile, the chief Palestinian negotiator at the talks, Saeb Erekat, said Israel had put forward 11 security-related demands to protect Jewish settlers in Hebron after the redeployment.

He added that the Palestinians were not willing to change one clause in the already-signed agreements.

Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu denied Thursday that Israel was trying to reopen the agreements.

"All of the security arrangements with regard to Hebron fall within the framework of the Oslo accords," he told the Tel Aviv Chamber of Commerce.

President Ezer Weizman, who hosted Arafat at his Caesarea home Tuesday, sharply criticized the Palestinian leader's latest remarks, saying that they contradicted his more diplomatic comments earlier in the week.

As a confidence-building measure, Israel said it would ease its closure of the West Bank and Gaza Strip and allow 35,000 Palestinian laborers to enter Israel starting Sunday, according to news reports.

In Washington, the State Department said Middle East envoy Dennis Ross, still in the region to mediate at the talks, had issued a statement Thursday that the two sides would reconvene next week, holding alternate sessions in Eilat and at the Egyptian resort of Taba.

In a separate development, Arafat's second in command, Mahmoud Abbas, met Thursday with Labor Knesset member Haim Ramon and with Aryeh Deri, the parliamentary leader of the Shas Party, which is part of Netanyahu's governing coalition.

"The meeting centered on the political situation," Ramon told Israel Radio. "It is important that these meetings take place."

Palestinian sources said the meeting lasted four hours. Mohammed Dahlan, head of the Palestinian security service in Gaza, and Yossi Ginossar, a former senior Israeli intelligence official, also attended the meeting, the sources said. □

## Nation of Islam battles ADL, this time on its own doorstep

By Daniel Kurtzman

WASHINGTON (JTA) — A rally marking the one-year anniversary of the Million Man March will unfold next week on the Anti-Defamation League's doorstep.

United Nations Plaza will actually serve as the backdrop, but the ADL headquarters happens to be located across the street.

It may be pure coincidence, but after an editorial this week in *The Final Call*, the Nation of Islam's newspaper, stepped up its vitriol against the ADL to a new level, officials with the Jewish defense organization say they will keep a wary eye on next week's event.

"We would be irresponsible if we weren't concerned," said Abraham Foxman, the ADL's national director.

Nation of Islam leader Louis Farrakhan has designated Oct. 16 a World Day of Atonement, calling on nations to "put aside violence, murder and war" in order to "atone, repent and reconcile." Publicity for the event has not even begun to approach the hype that accompanied last year's controversial march on Washington.

Moreover, the gathering comes shortly after turnout fell far short of expectations at a political summit late last month in St. Louis, which was billed as a follow-up to the Million Man March. Still, no one is guessing how many people the Manhattan rally will draw.

Phil Baum, executive director of the American Jewish Congress, believes that this year's event is receiving less mainstream attention because public perception has turned against Farrakhan. "His positions have been so compromised and undermined by his blatant association with dictators around the world that it's hard to believe that any balanced or reasonable observer could believe that this is a message intended to promote peace and better understanding," Baum said.

### 'Don't see a stampede'

Last year, as many mainstream black leaders scrambled to secure a spot on the podium alongside Farrakhan, Jewish leaders urged those opposed to bigotry to stay away from the Million Man March.

That kind of call does not appear to be necessary this time around, Foxman said. "I don't see a stampede of people wanting to participate. Even Jack Kemp hasn't said that he wants an invitation," Foxman said, referring to a recent interview in which Kemp, the Republican vice presidential candidate, praised Farrakhan's self-help philosophy and said he wished he had been invited to speak at the Million Man March.

As for the day's theme of atonement and reconciliation, Jewish leaders continue to see Farrakhan's use of such language as cynical. "He certainly hasn't atoned," Foxman said, noting the courtesy calls Farrakhan placed this year to various dictators who sponsor terrorism, including Libya's Muammar Gadhafi.

Similarly, atonement and reconciliation are not exactly the themes that jump out of the Nation of Islam's most recent editorial railing against the ADL.

Running under the headline: "ADL: Enemy to the people," the editorial said the ADL, by pressuring the federal government to cancel contracts with security firms affiliated with the Nation of Islam, was responsible for "the loss of Black lives in cities throughout America."

The editorial also accused the ADL and the CIA of conspiring to bring crack cocaine into black communities.

While hardly charting new editorial ground for a publication that has devoted considerable ink over the years to anti-Semitic conspiracy theories, Foxman said the

editorial nonetheless constitutes a "high level of incitement which we find very disturbing." He added that the timing of the attack piece, appearing one week before the U.N. rally, was puzzling. "Rather than calling on the faithful to atone and reconcile, this is the lead editorial."

The Nation of Islam and *The Final Call* did not return phone calls.

Meanwhile, the scene outside the United Nations on Oct. 16 might have had an entirely different complexion had New York City officials granted Jewish groups the permit they were seeking for their own rally at the same site. Oct. 16 marks the 10-year anniversary of the capture of Ron Arad, an Israeli air force pilot shot down over Lebanon and rumored to be alive.

Jewish groups wanted to hold their rally to call for the release of Israeli MIAs on the 16th, but rescheduled it for Oct. 14 after city officials denied their permit request. The Nation of Islam had beat them to it. □

## Jordan raises a harsh voice against the Israeli government

By Naomi Segal

JERUSALEM (JTA) — Jordan has added its voice to the harsh criticism of the Israeli government's peace policies.

The unprecedented attack on Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's policies prompted a flurry of diplomatic contacts aimed at clarifying and easing friction between the two countries.

King Hussein said in an interview this week that the Arab countries were "bordering on despair" with Israel's lack of progress in the peace process with the Palestinians, and the result could lead to renewed warfare.

This, along with a formal complaint over the recent opening of a second entrance to an archaeological tunnel in Jerusalem, was another indication that the usually warm relations with Jordan had taken a frosty turn.

Netanyahu played down the tensions, saying that friends could have differences of opinion. "I have no doubt regarding our commitments to peace with Jordan, developing economic and political relations. I am committed to discussions with King Hussein and I see him as a very important partner," he told reporters Tuesday.

Nevertheless, the prime minister's political adviser was expected to be dispatched to Amman this week for talks with Jordanian officials. And the state of relations was to be discussed by senior Cabinet ministers and at the Foreign Ministry.

In an interview with the newspaper *A-Shaqr Al-Awsat*, King Hussein warned of dire consequences if Netanyahu failed to uphold Israel's signed agreements.

"These agreements are sacred," he said. Violating them "will lead us right back to all the doubts, suspicions and fears we thought we had left behind."

Hussein alluded to the 1991 Gulf War, when Netanyahu, as deputy foreign minister, was interviewed on television wearing a gas mask, as protective gear against a possible Iraqi chemical weapons attack. "If we don't proceed vigorously forward in attaining a comprehensive peace in the region, the danger is there for all sorts of things to happen," he said, including "reliving the experiences" when Netanyahu "had to don his gas mask."

Jordan also complained to Israel over the opening of a second entrance to a Hasmonean tunnel in Jerusalem, which prompted the violent clashes in the territories earlier this month. Citing the Israeli-Jordanian peace treaty, which acknowledges the Hashemite kingdom's special role with regard to the Muslim holy sites in Jerusalem, the complaint said Israel should have consulted Jordan before taking any steps. □

# BEHIND THE HEADLINES

## Ransacked Nablus yeshiva off-limits for Simchat Torah

By Gil Sedan

NABLUS, West Bank (JTA) — For the first time in 15 years, there were no Simchat Torah celebrations here.

The celebrations were but one of the casualties of the three days of violence that erupted late last month in the West Bank and Gaza Strip after Israel opened a new entrance to a tunnel located near the Temple Mount.

On Sept. 26, the second day of the clashes, armed Palestinian police and stone-throwing civilians stormed Joseph's Tomb and the adjacent Od Yosef Chai Yeshiva, a Jewish island in the heart of Arab Nablus, which has 130,000 Arab residents and is the largest Palestinian population center in the West Bank.

The Palestinians laid siege to the Jewish site, trapping a group of Israel Defense Force soldiers stationed there.

As Israeli army reinforcements arrived, they were shot at from rooftops near the yeshiva: Six Israeli soldiers were killed during the ensuing clash as they attempted to rescue the other troops trapped within the buildings at Joseph's Tomb.

After a fierce gun battle, a tank evacuated the remaining Israeli soldiers.

The Palestinians then stormed Joseph's Tomb, ransacked the yeshiva there, burned hundreds of religious books and set one of the buildings on fire.

Palestinians took to the streets that week to vent their anger after Palestinian leaders warned that the tunnel entrance Israel opened near the Temple Mount posed a threat to Islamic holy sites there.

But when it came to Jewish holy sites in Nablus, according to some observers, Palestinians were apparently far less concerned about acts of desecration.

After regaining control of Joseph's Tomb, the IDF carted away from the yeshiva two truckloads of damaged religious books.

### 'Intense courage'

The IDF Central Command last week completed its inquiry into the Palestinian assault on the tomb and found flaws in the behavior of the Israeli commanders who called in the reinforcements.

It also said the ability of Palestinian police and rioters to enter the compound reflected a serious security lapse. The inquiry added that the soldiers sent to rescue the trapped troops had shown intense courage when battling with the Palestinians. It also praised the IDF's evacuation of the wounded.

The inquiry, which focused solely on IDF activities, did not include a condemnation of the Palestinian desecration of a Jewish holy site.

In the aftermath of the September clashes, 15 Israelis and 60 Palestinians were killed, and hundreds were wounded.

The 60 students at the Od Yosef Chai Yeshiva, who were not at the site during the Sept. 26 battle, have not been allowed to return there by the army, which has turned Joseph's Tomb into a closed military compound.

As a result, Simchat Torah was not celebrated there this year. The festivities were diverted to a military camp near the Arab village of Hawara, located about three miles south of Nablus.

Earlier this week, a visitor came for the conclusion of the celebrations and to assess the mood of the teachers and students at the yeshiva. After passing Hawara, which was immersed in darkness after the IDF had placed the village under a curfew, the visitor suddenly came upon an

array of lights, loud music, and hundreds of Jews singing and dancing around the Torah scrolls.

"I feel in exile," Rabbi Yitzhak Ginsburg, head of the yeshiva, said of the IDF decision to close off Joseph's Tomb. Nearby were circles of youths, hugging Torahs as they sang and danced. Ginsburg evidently did not share their joy.

Some of the books that were burned last month were on display. A yeshiva student, carrying two huge empty jars, urged people to donate generously to help rebuild the yeshiva.

The Jewish presence in Nablus has long been the subject of controversy, with some saying that it should never have been established there in the first place.

Some of the Jews who were forced 15 years ago to leave Yamit — a settlement in the Sinai, which was to be turned over to Egypt as part of the peace treaty signed at the time with Cairo — relocated here to establish a yeshiva at Joseph's Tomb.

The move annoyed not only the yeshiva's Arab neighbors, said Ginsburg, but also the IDF.

"It's not that they don't want us there," Ginsburg said of the IDF. "But they have to make an effort. The army does not want headaches." He is confident that the bloodshed of Sept. 26 could have been prevented had the IDF security branches allowed the yeshiva students to live permanently at Joseph's Tomb.

The army, reflecting a government policy not to allow the development of a Jewish settlement in Nablus, has insisted that the yeshiva students leave the site every evening and spend the night at the neighboring settlements of Yitzhar and Elon Moreh.

After the IDF turned Nablus over to Palestinian self-rule in December 1995, teachers and students were no longer allowed to travel to the yeshiva in their own vehicles.

Instead, they came to the yeshiva each morning under a heavily protected army escort.

Had there been a permanent Jewish settlement in Nablus, said Ginsburg, the army would have maintained a stronger military presence there. This, he added, would have prevented the tragic events of Sept. 26.

To Palestinians living near the yeshiva, a permanent Jewish presence there would only mean the creation of another Hebron, the volatile West Bank town in which 450 Jewish settlers live among some 100,000 Arabs.

### 'Cannot have a happy end'

Less than one mile down the road from Joseph's Tomb, at the edge of the Balata refugee camp, lives Dalal Salameh. At 30, she is the youngest member of the Palestinian legislative council elected in January.

She prays that the IDF will not allow the tomb and yeshiva to reopen, she said during an interview.

"A Jewish yeshiva virtually inside a Palestinian refugee camp — this cannot have a happy end," she said.

Not surprisingly, the people at Od Yosef Chai are doing their utmost to prevent Salameh's prayers from being answered. "We believe it is realistic that we can return to Nablus as soon as possible," said Zvi Bernstock, director of the yeshiva, who added that the Defense Ministry was being pressured to give the green light for their return.

Ginsburg has meanwhile issued an urgent appeal to Jews everywhere to help rebuild the yeshiva, replace the library and refurnish the study hall.

British philanthropists Cyril Stein and Conrad Morris, who have created a fund for that purpose, have donated \$100,000 and are seeking another \$400,000 from other donors. □

(JTA correspondent Naomi Segal in Jerusalem contributed to this report.)