



NEWS AT A GLANCE

■ Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu denied that he plans to offer the Palestinians control of 40 percent of the West Bank as part of a permanent settlement. [Page 2]

■ Swiss officials claim their government did nothing wrong by selling arms to the Nazis during the Holocaust. Swiss Ambassador Thomas Borer said his country had "to enter into a lot of compromises," because they were surrounded by the Axis powers.

■ Canadian Jewish groups are demanding an apology from *La Presse*, a Montreal French daily newspaper, for a story they claim is anti-Semitic. The article focused on the arrests of Jewish members of a criminal organization, even though most of the group is not Jewish. [Page 4]

■ With about a quarter of the votes in, sentiment from federations across the United States is running overwhelmingly in favor of a joint operating partnership between the United Jewish Appeal and the Council of Jewish Federations.

■ The American Jewish Congress weighed in on a Wisconsin legal dispute over a school voucher program implemented in Milwaukee. In a friend-of-the-court brief, the group urged the Wisconsin Court of Appeals to uphold a lower court decision prohibiting the use of government-funded tuition vouchers at private religious schools.

■ A German insurance carrier said it has not been able to find a single valid claim relating to policies it sold to Holocaust victims. Allianz AG Holding has set up a 24-hour hot line for people to report claims of missing assets.

■ Israel's High Court of Justice rejected a petition from the mother of Yitzhak Rabin's assassin, demanding the prosecution of a man she said incited her son to murder. Geula Amir claimed that Avishai Raviv, a member of an extremist Jewish group, influenced her son Yigal to carry out the November 1995 assassination.

SIX-DAY WAR ANNIVERSARY

Israelis re-examine decisions that led to momentous victory

By David Landau

JERUSALEM (JTA) — Israelis who experienced the Six-Day War find it difficult, 30 years later, to convey to others the emotions of the time.

The country's soldiers, poised and straining after three weeks of nervous waiting, leapt into battle on June 5, 1967.

Even non-fighting units were filled with a rare sense of do or die, of history in the making, that can, on occasion, ignite an entire army and drive it to victory.

The citizens of Israel, especially those of Jerusalem and the Upper Galilee, were so close to the battlefronts that they could share much of the euphoric sense of triumph and salvation that swept through the fighting forces as the enemy retreated before them.

The war also became a watershed event for competing views of Israel's history — and of the circumstances surrounding those six fateful days.

Israel's nationalist camp and religious right never wavered in attributing to the war a historic, heroic and, in many cases, neo-Messianic significance.

On the other side, at the height of the Palestinian uprising in the late 1980s, it was commonplace in the Israeli peace camp to speak and write of the war not as a victory and a salvation — but as a curse.

The perspective of 30 years, replete with bold advances and painful setbacks on the uphill road to Israeli-Arab peace, is affording thoughtful Israelis the opportunity to look back.

For most observers, it was a war of salvation that delivered Israel from a defeat that could have obliterated it.

And it was a huge victory because it taught the Arab world that Israel was there to stay.

Even the 1973 Yom Kippur War was not designed by Egypt and Syria to "drive the Jews into the sea" — Egyptian President Gamal Nasser's rhetoric of the 1960s — but to defeat Israel on several fronts and bring overwhelming international pressure to bear on the Jewish state.

All the advances toward peace that have followed the Six-Day War can be seen as the fruits of that war.

They would have been unattainable, indeed unthinkable, without that victory and its historic impact on the region and on the wider world.

Israeli propaganda over the years has naturally focused on the extent of the grave danger facing the country on the eve of the war.

Posthumous pronouncements by Dayan

For 30 years, Israeli leaders have insisted that the Jewish state was at the time in mortal peril.

They have uniformly swept aside "revisionist" assertions that the military situation was not really all that grave, and that the Israel Defense Force would have won comfortably even without its massive strike at Egyptian, Syrian and Jordanian airfields in the first hours of the war, when those air forces were virtually destroyed on the ground.

The perspective of 30 years is long enough for the Israeli public to have assimilated even these discrepancies — between the exaggerations of the politicians and the reservations of the revisionist historians — and to emerge with its basic judgment of the Six-Day War as a milestone and positive event in the nation's history.

But this judgment has just recently been delivered a new blow.

Indeed, the 30th anniversary of the war is largely being marked in Israel in the shadow of jarring posthumous pronouncements by the architect and popular hero of that war: then-Defense Minister Moshe Dayan.

In a series of interviews that Dayan gave journalist Rami Tal in the mid-1970s and which were recently published in the Israeli daily *Yediot Achronot*, Dayan states that the years of cross-border violence between Israel and Syria that preceded the war were largely a result of Israeli provocations.

According to Dayan, some 80 percent of the pre-war border incidents were the result of Israeli initiatives. Moreover, Dayan told Tal, he strongly

opposed Israel's broadening the war to encompass the Syrian front.

But kibbutz leaders from the border area sought to annex the lush farmlands of the Golan Heights, Dayan said, and for that reason they prevailed on then-Prime Minister Levi Eshkol to launch the IDF ground attack against the Golan on the fifth day of the war.

Until then, the Israelis and the Syrians had confined themselves to trading shell-fire across the border.

In the interviews with Tal, Dayan described his grudging agreement to fight Syria as one of the most serious errors of his life.

This version of events before and during the war flies in the face of some of the most cherished Israeli myths.

Every Israeli schoolchild was taught that the brave kibbutzim faced constant harassment from the Syrian forces that were perched on the Golan.

Dayan's version also has direct implications for the Israeli-Syrian peace process, particularly the present Israeli government's refusal to agree to a withdrawal from all of the Golan, even in the context of a full peace and satisfactory security arrangements.

Dayan insisted that Tal shelve the tapes and not publish the interviews, and the reporter respected his wishes for more than 20 years.

But Tal obtained permission from the late leader's daughter, Yael, to go public with Dayan's startling and thought-provoking revelations.

Some Dayan apologists, on both sides of the political divide, maintain he was speaking "out of context."

Mordechai Bar-On, the general's aide-de-camp in the 1950s and more recently a Knesset member from the Meretz Party, wrote in the Israeli daily Ha'aretz that had Dayan lived, he would have maintained his ban on publication — because the conversations, as recorded by Tal, gave a less-than-full picture.

Bar-On wrote that he spoke as someone who supports full withdrawal from the Golan.

Nevertheless, he insisted, the evolution of events leading to the Israeli attack on the Golan was much more complex than Dayan depicted it in those interviews with Tal.

Perhaps it will take years, or even decades, for this latest dose of revisionism to make its way through the Israeli body politic.

Only in the years ahead will the Israeli nation, with the benefit of still more hindsight and perspective, be able to come to terms with Dayan's posthumous charges and subsume them into the overall saga of that brief but monumental victory. □

Israel denies reported plan to retain most of West Bank

By Naomi Segal

JERUSALEM (JTA) — Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu reportedly plans to offer the Palestinians control of 40 percent of the West Bank in permanent settlement talks.

The Israeli daily Ha'aretz published a map Thursday which it said represented how the West Bank would look under Netanyahu's plan.

The prime minister denied the report.

"There is no basis to that report because I did not show to anyone [a map] nor did I draw a map," Netanyahu told Israel Radio.

The extent of the West Bank he would turn over under the reported plan falls far short of the expectations of the Palestinian Authority. □

According to the map, Israel would maintain a 9-mile-wide corridor along the Jordan Valley.

Almost all Jewish settlements would remain under Israeli control by widening the greater Jerusalem area in all directions toward Ma'aleh Adumim, Kfar Adumim and the Etzion settlement bloc.

The corridor between Jerusalem and the coastal plain would also be widened, to the north and south.

The few settlements that would remain near the Palestinian towns of Nablus and Jenin would be in Palestinian territory or evacuated, the report said.

Safe passage routes would connect the West Bank and Gaza Strip self-rule areas. Additional corridors would link Palestinian towns. Four corridors for Israeli use would cross the West Bank to the Jordan Valley.

The Inner Security Cabinet this week began discussing the principles that would govern Israeli positions in the final-status negotiations, which are slated to address the highly charged issues of borders, Jerusalem, settlements, refugees and the Palestinian political entity.

Commenting on the published map, National Infrastructure Minister Ariel Sharon said it was not so different from a proposal he put forward more than 20 years ago.

Sharon said that any final agreement would have to break up territorial continuity to prevent the establishment of a Palestinian state.

Ha'aretz reported that in a February meeting in Washington with President Clinton, Netanyahu presented a map prepared by the Israel Defense Force planning branch for the final-status talks.

Clinton did not express his views, and Netanyahu did not offer details on his conception of final borders.

The report said that Netanyahu's plan is not finalized, and that he has instructed government bodies, including the Foreign Ministry and IDF, to draw up position papers on the negotiations.

Palestinian officials reacted angrily to the report.

"Netanyahu can continue dreaming," the head of the Palestinian preventive security service, Jibril Rajoub, told reporters in Ramallah. "This is Palestinian land, and it must be returned to its people."

Warning of violence

Rajoub blamed the ongoing deadlock in peace negotiations on Israel's failure to live up to its commitments in the signed accords.

He warned that if Israel did not change its policies, especially with regard to settlements, violence could break out. "If the Israeli government is not respecting the agreements, all options are open, including violence and confrontation," he said.

Egyptian presidential adviser Osama Al-Baz was due to hold talks with Netanyahu on Thursday night, in a follow-up to the Israeli leader's summit meet with Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak earlier this week.

Baz met with Palestinian Authority Chairman Yasser Arafat in Gaza on Wednesday to brief him on the summit, which Egypt initiated in an effort to break the deadlock in the Israeli-Palestinian negotiations.

Ha'aretz reported that during the summit, Netanyahu offered to initiate large-scale building for Palestinians near the new Jewish neighborhood of Har Homa in southeastern Jerusalem, and to suspend the demolition of illegally built Arab houses in areas of the West Bank that are under Israeli control.

However, the Palestinians have stuck to their demand for a halt to all settlement construction.

In an interview earlier this week, Arafat said that building for Arabs in Jerusalem was no substitute to an end to Israeli settlement activity. □

AROUND THE JEWISH WORLD
Leadership of Poland's Jews
passes to younger generation

By Ruth E. Gruber

ROME (JTA) — The Holocaust survivor generation has ceded the helm of Poland's Jewish community to a new, younger generation of leaders.

It is a move that could prove a landmark in the revival of Jewish life in Poland.

Meeting in Warsaw Monday, the newly elected board of the Union of Jewish Congregations in Poland chose as its president 49-year-old Jerzy Kichler, from the western city of Wroclaw.

Kichler, the first person to hold the post who was born after the Shoah, replaces Holocaust survivor Pawel Wildsztajn, who has been named honorary president.

Three of the four other newly elected officers were also born after World War II.

Half the members of the board that was elected earlier this month were born after the Holocaust, too, and some are just in their 30s.

"It marks a pivotal change in the community," said Rabbi Michael Schudrich, the Warsaw director of the Ronald S. Lauder Foundation.

The foundation sponsors Jewish youth and education programs in various Polish cities.

"This is not a revolution but a passing on to a younger generation which will now take its place in the community," he said in a telephone interview.

"Not only does it show that there are young Jews in Poland, but it shows that there are young Jews who want to be Jewish and want to work for their Jewish community."

Changing the community's image

Stanislaw Krajewski is a board member who was born in 1950.

"Our main objective is to change the image of the Polish Jewish community from that of a remnant to that of a living reality looking toward the future," Krajewski said.

The move is more important because it came on the heels of legislation passed earlier this month that regularized the relationship between the Polish state and the Jewish community.

This new law — which is similar to legislation regulating the state's relationship to other religions in Poland, including the Roman Catholic Church — recognizes the Union of Jewish Congregations in Poland as the official representative Jewish body.

The law also calls for the recognition of the rights of Jews to take off from work on Jewish holidays.

In addition, it sets guidelines for the restitution of Jewish communal property.

"We must see how to put this law into practice," Kichler said in a telephone interview.

The passing of the torch of leadership to the post-Holocaust generation testifies to a remarkable process of Jewish revival that has occurred in Poland for nearly two decades.

That process has mushroomed since the fall of communism in 1989.

A decade ago, few would have predicted such a seemingly natural generational transition in a country that before World War II was home to 3.5 million Jews.

Three million Polish Jews were killed in the Holocaust.

Tens of thousands of survivors left Poland after the war, many fleeing lingering anti-Semitism.

Most of the Jews who remained in Poland under the Communist regime chose to assimilate, and many hid

their Jewish identity. An anti-Semitic campaign by that regime in 1968 forced at least 20,000 Polish Jews to emigrate, leaving behind a Jewish community whose few thousand openly identifying members were mostly elderly Holocaust survivors.

Starting around 1980, younger Jews born after the war began the process of rediscovering their Jewish roots and identity.

"I always knew I was Jewish," said Kichler. "But after 1968 I hid it.

"Then, at the beginning of the 1980s, I got involved. I came back to Judaism."

A key catalyst in this Jewish revival was the Lauder Foundation.

The foundation set up youth clubs and educational centers, including a Jewish kindergarten and day school in Warsaw, as well as summer and winter camps for whole families.

The American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee, which supports the Jewish religious community, also began focusing on Jewish education and revival as well as social welfare.

These newly affiliated Jews number in the thousands, but until recently friction existed between many of them and the older, survivor generation.

Some older people, who dominated the Jewish religious community, refused to accept the newcomers as Jewish.

"The new, younger leadership may make it easier for unaffiliated Jews to come forward and join the community," said Manlio Dell'Araccia, the JDC country director for Poland. "We hope that a new era will open."

Krajewski said that with the election of the new, post-war generation leadership, "We understand that a new chapter of the Jewish community, the Jewish religious community, has to be made."

This chapter "will not be a repetition of pre-war patterns, but will be the creation of Jewish life that fits the nature of present-day Polish Jews — who are as Polish as French Jews are French," said Krajewski.

He also serves as the Warsaw consultant for the American Jewish Committee.

"This means, for example, that neither Yiddish nor very Orthodox forms of ritual will predominate," he said.

"We are much more similar to our peers in the West."

'Now we have to make it real'

Kichler, who is married to a doctor and has two children, was trained as an electrical engineer and recently taught Judaism at the University of Wroclaw.

He is the representative of the Lauder Foundation in Wroclaw and also served as vice president of the local Jewish religious community there.

"The Lauder Foundation taught us to be young Jews in Poland at this time and how to build a future," he said.

"We spent night after night sitting and talking about this. Now we have to make it real.

"We are prepared to take the situation into our hands, but there are many challenges," he said.

"We have to make plans and confront the future," Kichler added.

A priority, he said, would be to create a Jewish center for each of the 12 congregations around the country, "with a synagogue, an education center, and care for seniors."

"Charity and social welfare problems are important challenges, as is education," he said.

"We have to establish an effective fund-raising system." □

Canadian newspaper accused of printing anti-Semitic story*By Bram Eisenthal*

MONTREAL (JTA) — Canadian Jewish groups are demanding an apology from a Montreal French daily for a story they claim is anti-Semitic.

The article focused on Royal Canadian Mounted Police arrests of Jewish members of a criminal organization, even though most of the group is not Jewish.

Wednesday's story in the newspaper *La Presse* ran under the headline "RCMP Strike a Deadly Blow to a Jewish Criminal Organization."

It described a criminal group led by Montrealers with Jewish-sounding last names.

These men, Morris Mayers and Shimon Ben-David, were charged along with Mahmood Hassan and Thomas McKinnon, but *La Presse* focused on the Jewish identity of the organization.

Only seven members of the group of 31 individuals, also suspected of smuggling drugs, are said to be Jewish.

Both Canadian Jewish Congress and B'nai Brith Canada expressed their outrage at the *La Presse* coverage, which also alleged links between Jews and the Mafia.

The newspaper also ran a separate article about infamous American Jewish organized crime leaders Meyer Lansky and "Bugsy" Siegel.

"The religious background of a number of the individuals apprehended has no relevance nor relationship to the criminal acts and the identification of the group as such casts a very negative shadow over Quebec's Jewish community," said Steve Slimovitch, legal committee chairman of the BBC League for Human Rights.

"It unjustly nourishes intolerant stereotypes."

The league sent a letter to Claude Masson, *La Presse*'s assistant publisher, demanding a published apology. Mike Cohen, CJC's national communications director, said Wednesday that his organization's leadership would meet with Masson to explain its position on the issue.

CJC also issued a written statement expressing its outrage.

On Wednesday Masson defended his paper's coverage. "I think we're playing with words a bit," he was quoted as saying. "I think we should be careful about being so politically correct that we can no longer say what is happening in our society."

'Perhaps we went too far there'

Masson did say he would reserve judgement until meeting with representatives of Jewish groups.

But he pointed out that the leaders of the criminal group have been identified as Jewish by the RCMP, which stated that the main leaders have Jewish or Israeli connections.

Fo Niemi, executive director of the Center for Research Action on Race Relations, said the story "shows a tremendous lack of sensitivity. It essentially turns a crime issue into an issue of ethnicity."

According to some of the newspaper's critics, the story about Lansky and Siegel appeared to add insult to injury. Said Jeffrey Boro, a lawyer for one of those arrested who was later released, "They had to go back 40 years to find a notorious Jewish criminal, which gives you an idea of how criminalized our population is."

Masson admitted, regarding the second article, "Perhaps we went too far there."

The CJC's community relations chairman, Arielle Meloul, pointed out that other newspapers covering this story locally refused to focus on the religion of those arrested.

"This is particularly disturbing to the Jewish community, given the very good relations we have fostered with *La Presse* over the last number of years. That is why we are seeking this meeting with *La Presse* before deciding whether or not to take further action."

One option open to Jewish groups would be to file a grievance with the Quebec Press Council. □

Wiesenthal Center pursues plans for Jerusalem museum of tolerance*By Tom Tugend*

LOS ANGELES (JTA) — The Simon Wiesenthal Center is committed to building a \$50 million museum in Jerusalem, despite skepticism expressed by some Holocaust scholars.

"We are close to acquiring a property and are putting together an advisory board in Israel, whose members will range from the far left to fervently Orthodox haredim," said Rabbi Abraham Cooper, the center's associate dean.

He said the new project will draw on the practical experience derived from running the center's popular Museum of Tolerance in Los Angeles, which deals with the Holocaust and other outgrowths of racism and ethnic hatred.

However, the Jerusalem museum will not duplicate these themes, Cooper said.

"It would be ludicrous to try and build a second Yad Vashem in Jerusalem," said Cooper, referring to the famed Holocaust memorial in Israel's capital.

No permanent name has been selected for the museum, but Rabbi Marvin Hier, founder of the Wiesenthal Center, used the Talmudic phrase *Kavod HaBriot, or Respect for Mankind*, to indicate the thrust of its mission.

The museum will address two main themes.

One will deal with the last 100 years of Jewish history in Israel and the Diaspora, expressed mainly through the encapsulated experiences of Jews in different times and places. The second, and more controversial, part of the project will focus on contemporary issues that represent "flash points" of tension and strife among different segments of the Jewish world.

Likely examples are confrontations between Orthodox and secular Israelis, or between American Jewry and Israeli lawmakers on the legitimacy of non-Orthodox conversions.

The museum project has been met with skepticism, and even derision, by some Holocaust experts.

Holocaust historian Raul Hilberg has suggested that the new museum might copy the interactive, high-tech atmosphere of the Museum of Tolerance.

"It will probably be a little bit of Disneyland with voices and disappearing bodies," Hilberg said. "This is not my cup of tea."

Avner Shalev, chairman of the Yad Vashem directorate, also had reservations. "I knew they had some kinds of confused ideas in the past, but we have the feeling that we don't need [the proposed museum]" he said.

Qualified support came from Abraham Foxman, national director of the Anti-Defamation League. "I think it's important to help Israel deal with its intolerance problem. I'm not sure a museum is a way to do it," Foxman told the *Forward*.

Cooper declined to respond to Hilberg, but he expressed surprise at Shalev's comments. "We have had two long meetings with Mr. Shalev, at which we explained our plans in detail," said Cooper.

After the site for the Jerusalem museum is purchased, it will take about five years until the opening day, Cooper estimated. □