

**NEWS AT A GLANCE**

■ Israel is considering a proposal to "significantly slow the pace of building on Har Homa, to a virtual halt," according to the Israeli daily Ha'aretz. The report, denied by Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, came as Egypt, Israel and the Palestinians prepared to hold further discussions.

■ Israel rejected a U.N. demand that it pay compensation for damage resulting from the shelling of a U.N. base in southern Lebanon. About 100 Lebanese refugees were killed in April 1996 when Israel fired at Hezbollah fighters who had launched an attack from a nearby area.

■ Five Israelis testified at the trial of a Jordanian soldier charged with killing seven Israeli schoolgirls. [Page 4]

■ American Jewish Congress leaders who visited Turkey last week said the Islamic-led government is committed to democracy and that Turkish-Israeli relations remain positive. The delegation met with Prime Minister Necmettin Erbakan and members of the Jewish community.

■ The Jewish Renaissance Foundation bought a building near Warsaw's last functioning synagogue in an attempt to rebuild part of the Polish capital's prewar Jewish area. The Ronald Lauder-backed foundation plans to repair the building and turn it into a Jewish bookstore, kosher bakery and cafe, and crafts shop.

■ Anne Frank's diary is now available in Lithuanian. B'nai B'rith paid for the translation and distribution of the diary as part of its program to introduce Holocaust education into Lithuanian schools.

■ An audit of Ukrainian newspapers from 1996 found that every fifth reference to Jews was made within an anti-Jewish context. [Page 4]

■ Swiss voters overwhelmingly rejected a proposal that would ban all weapons exports. Despite arguments that such a move would counter international criticism of Switzerland's World War II dealings with the Nazis, the proposal was defeated by a margin of 77 percent to 23 percent.

**FOCUS ON ISSUES****Donors demanding more say in how federations use gifts**

By Cynthia Mann

NEW YORK (JTA) — A six-figure donor to the Jewish federation in Louisville, Ky., decided he did not want any of his money going to Israel because he was angry about conversion legislation pending in the Knesset.

Like many other American Jews, he believed the controversial measure would delegitimize Reform and Conservative Judaism by reinforcing exclusive Orthodox control over conversions in Israel.

The Jewish Community Federation of Louisville routinely sends 40 percent of all annual campaign contributions to the United Jewish Appeal for distribution to Israel and elsewhere overseas.

But, to accommodate one of its top givers, it did something it had never done before: It allowed him to earmark his entire contribution for programs at home.

It was a decision accompanied by misgivings, however.

Withholding the money from UJA "has a significant effect on Israel at a time when immigrants are still coming and it's needed," said Alan Klugman, the federation's associate director.

And its significance is made even greater by the fact "that someone of this prestige in the community" could become the model for others, he said.

In fact, the Louisville donor's decision reflects a nationwide trend of contributors seeking more control over where their philanthropic dollars go and assurances that they are being spent in ways that reflect their values.

This is a particular challenge to the Jewish community, whose hallmark has been a collective process of identifying need and of raising and allocating money worldwide through the UJA-federation system.

Nowhere is this trend toward a direct philanthropic relationship more pronounced than among donors to Israel, creating tension within the central fund-raising system and its annual campaign.

Its guardians fear that fragmenting Jewish giving, whether or not it happens to be in protest over a political development, marks the breakdown of a historic Jewish mandate and tradition.

At the same time, they are devising ways to keep donors within the fold and meet their changing needs, because the trend is expected to intensify.

Already, Jewish federations, in communities from Cleveland to San Francisco, are responding to donor demands and reducing their UJA allocations in favor of funneling money directly to projects in Israel.

Indeed, a new study of Jewish baby boomers commissioned by the UJA identifies the changes and calls on the system to adapt.

Conducted by Gary Tobin and Joel Streicker of Brandeis University, the study shows a decreased identification with the Jewish state and recommends new ways of "nurturing support of Israel."

These include creating a new orientation toward Israel marked by "people-building" and environmental and social issues.

It recommends "projects that promote Jewish culture and identity in Israel" and that "help American Jews build their own identity through connections to Israel."

**'Danger to the bedrock concept'**

For its part, UJA, which funnels its Israel allocation to the Jewish Agency for Israel and the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee, is trying to achieve a balance.

"We're not fools," said Richard Wexler, national chairman of UJA. "We recognize the donor-driven concept," and "we need to be responsive or we will be irrelevant."

But inherent in the trend "is a danger to the bedrock concept" of federated giving, he said. There is a risk that the community's "central planning and priority-setting role will get overridden by the individual."

That UJA has felt pressure from mounting grass-roots anger over the religious pluralism conflict in Israel was evident in an advertisement it ran last month in the national edition of The New York Times.

The ad showed a child's face, accompanied by the caption: "He's not

Reform, Conservative or Orthodox. He's poor and hungry."

The copy below read: "Wherever you stand on the debate about religion in Israel, he's not the enemy.

"Don't make your Federation and UJA the battlefield. Your annual campaign gift is still the better way to rescue the imperiled, care for the vulnerable and strengthen the entire Jewish community."

UJA also has tried to contain potential damage through talks with leaders of the Reform and Conservative movements, who have implied that their constituents are prepared to bypass the campaign to give directly to their institutions in Israel.

UJA has offered to help the Reform, Conservative and modern Orthodox movements raise up to \$10 million each in joint supplemental fund-raising projects, apart from the annual campaign.

If the plan wins the endorsement of UJA's owners, the United Israel Appeal and the JDC, the money would be funded through the Jewish Agency.

But here, too, UJA faces constraints.

Dr. Mandell Ganchrow, president of the Union of Orthodox Jewish Congregations of America, believes "no UJA money should be given to any project with the word 'pluralism' attached to it."

He said Orthodox Jewish contributors "will have a problem" if the funds go beyond the realm of "religion and Jewish unity" to support "political or partisan causes."

In a separate initiative, the Council of Jewish Federations has recommended doubling the \$2.5 million in annual funding to projects of the various religious streams that comes from the Jewish Agency's program allocations budget.

The UJA approved the recommendation and will propose it as a resolution to be voted upon later this month at the Jewish Agency's annual assembly in Israel.

"We plan on doing everything we can to prevent polarization and to bridge the gap" created by the conversion issue, said Martin Kraar, executive vice president of CJF.

But "we don't believe the federation system should be the battleground for this terrible problem," he said. "We don't believe that people with serious human needs should be sacrificed in the name of Jewish unity."

#### **Pledges up 9.1 percent**

Fallout from the pluralism furor slowed the pace of the UJA campaign after Passover, said Bernie Moscovitz, UJA vice president and chief operating officer.

Nonetheless, he said, the campaign has ridden it out. Pledges are up 9.1 percent over this time last year and could finish with a 4 to 5 percent increase, a total of between \$735 million and \$750 million.

That would reflect the largest single increase in a campaign year in non-emergency times, said Moscovitz.

He said the anticipated increase reflects the efforts of UJA and federation solicitors, who have done five to six times the number of face-to-face solicitations than in the past of donors of gifts between \$15,000 and \$100,000.

The increase would come in spite of the stepped-up pressures on federations to bypass the national system and give directly to Israeli projects and programs.

In Cleveland, considered a bellwether community, the Jewish Community Federation is about to formalize a decision to decrease its UJA allocation from \$11 million to \$8 million.

The change is being made because "we have questions about how national decisions are made for international needs and because of greater concern about whether the system can provide an opportunity for the

people-to-people connections essential to the Israel-Diaspora relationship," said Stephen Hoffman, the federation's executive vice president.

"It is very important when there is a crisis to have the ability to act collectively," said Hoffman. But by allocating some money directly to programs in Israel, it expands the number of local people who are involved in decision-making from "the current cadre of half a dozen to hundreds."

Cleveland is not alone.

In San Francisco, the Jewish Community Federation decided to decrease its UJA donation by \$1 million, with half of that to be spent directly for progressive projects in Israel and half to remain at home.

And the Greater Federation of San Jose changed its policy this year by allowing donors for the first time to designate their gifts for groups that support religious pluralism and Jewish-Arab co-existence.

"It was not an easy decision," said Jyl Tanowitz, campaign director. While it reflected an effort to "respect the priorities" of the donors, there was no way of knowing how it would affect other "critically important programs we've supported in the past," she said.

Said Hoffman of Cleveland, "We believe the time has come for the national system to recognize it should do things differently if [donors] are going to have the same connection that the previous generations did."

That is a call the system has heard.

One of its most popular programs is the Jewish Agency's Partnership 2000, which allows federations to team up with residents of an Israeli development region and build "people-to-people projects" to strengthen Israel-Diaspora understanding.

They range from e-mail pen pal projects between schools to exchange programs for doctors.

UJA also recently has expanded its program of supplemental giving, which allows donors to designate their gifts to a wide variety of projects through the Jewish Agency and JDC.

But these options are limited to federations and to top donors who must maintain their gift to the annual campaign in order to participate.

#### **Smaller philanthropies see opportunity**

Meanwhile, smaller, more targeted philanthropies, like the New Israel Fund, are seizing on the hunger of Jewish donors to give directly to causes in Israel that mirror their immediate concerns.

From its earliest days, the underpinning of the New Israel Fund was that "donors should have a more direct relationship with the institutions on the ground that they support than was traditionally the case," said Norman Rosenberg, the charity's executive director.

The fund last year raised \$13 million, or 20 percent more than the previous year, for projects fostering religious pluralism, Arab-Jewish co-existence, women's rights, social justice and civil rights.

Now it is running 21 percent ahead of where it was at this time last year.

The growth is fueled in part by American Jewish anger over the controversial conversion legislation, said Rosenberg.

The fund's "lead theme" since June has been religious freedom. It recently mounted a petition drive calling on Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu to thwart the legislation and denounce religious extremism.

"There is no issue I've seen that has provoked more anger and outrage among American Jews, including the peace process," said Rosenberg.

"And people know we've been fighting for religious pluralism for 18 years." □

**NEWS ANALYSIS**

**Netanyahu endures as premier while facing series of crises**

By David Landau

JERUSALEM (JTA) — One year after taking office as Israel's youngest and most politically inexperienced prime minister, Benjamin Netanyahu has two things going for him: He is still in power and the worst of his troubles may be over.

The year has not gone well for Netanyahu or for the country.

Indeed, in the view of his critics and political foes, his first year in office has been a disaster for the Jewish state on a number of fronts.

Even his supporters — and in fact Netanyahu himself — do not try to contend that the year has been a resounding success.

First of all, the peace process is now in crisis. That process was first weakened by a series of Hamas terrorist attacks in February and March 1996 that former Prime Minister Shimon Peres still blames for his own downfall and Netanyahu's victory in the May 1996 election.

Netanyahu says it is still taking time for the Palestinians, the wider Arab world and the international community as a whole to come to terms with the fact that Israel has a new government.

His coalition, while committed to pursuing the peace process, is opposed to a Palestinian state and to ceding large swaths of the West Bank to the Palestinian Authority.

It is also committed to holding the Palestinians accountable to the commitments they made in their accords with Israel, a sharp change from what Netanyahu has described as the all-too-forgiving attitude of the previous Labor government.

These stances could have a stiff price. In off-the-record conversations, senior civilian and military officials are discussing the chances of a new war in the region.

On the economic front, the waning of peace prospects has contributed to a slowdown in Israel's economic boom because potential investors have shied away, fearful of new regional violence.

**Social tensions running high**

The Netanyahu government has made minor cuts in its budget. But economic experts predict a recession, albeit a mild one, for the coming year or two.

Internally, social tensions, especially secular-Orthodox frictions, are running high.

A prolonged confrontation over Bar Ilan Street, a major thoroughfare in Jerusalem that fervently Orthodox Jews want closed on the Sabbath, may be nearing resolution with the implementation of a government scheme to shut the road during prayer times.

But the episode is seen by both Orthodox and secular groups as a reflection of growing Orthodox assertiveness.

Another source of friction stems from the demand of Netanyahu's Orthodox coalition partners that he support legislation to delegitimize non-Orthodox conversions performed in Israel.

Passage of the conversion legislation, which was a condition of the religious parties when they joined the government coalition a year ago, threatens to drive a wedge between the Jewish state and Diaspora Jews.

Netanyahu's supporters blame the bad times on external factors, including a begrudging and prejudiced political opposition.

They concede that the premier's lack of previous Cabinet experience, and his relative inexperience in party

leadership, led him to make decisions that more mature reflection might have avoided.

The decision to open a new entrance to an archaeological tunnel near Jerusalem's Temple Mount is cited as one salient example of hasty decision-making.

They maintain that Netanyahu, whose gifts of intelligence are not disputed even by his detractors, is learning all the time.

But behind his back, key political figures within his own Cabinet and party are saying, albeit not for the record, that they would prefer to replace him.

That would not be easy.

Israel's new electoral system has been without doubt Netanyahu's staunchest ally during this year.

The new system was devised to strengthen the premier and weaken the bargaining power of the small parties. It has patently failed in its second goal: The power of the fervently Orthodox Shas Party, for example, a key component of Netanyahu's coalition, is still pivotal.

But the system has succeeded in ensconcing the directly elected prime minister in office. To remove Netanyahu, a majority of the 120-member Knesset would need to support a motion of no confidence, but this would automatically trigger the parliamentarians' own resignations and the holding of new elections both for prime minister and for the Knesset.

Moves are afoot in the Knesset to reform the election law, with support from members across the political spectrum.

**Sweeping away entrenched 'elites'**

Increasingly, as his first year in office wore on, it became clear that for all his fumbling, Netanyahu has an overarching strategy that embraces not only the peace process — where he will fight for every inch of land — but also domestic issues.

He sees himself as a "new broom," determined to sweep away the entrenched "elites," as he calls them, which have long held the top positions in public life.

This is how Netanyahu's supporters depict his January appointment of Likud activist Roni Bar-On as attorney-general. The short-lived appointment triggered an inquiry of influence-peddling that ended with a police recommendation that Netanyahu be prosecuted, a stance later reversed by the attorney general.

But the Bar-On affair is not yet over. The question of indicting the premier is now under review by the High Court of Justice.

Despite the allegations of corruption that the Bar-On appointment triggered, Netanyahu's supporters say he remains determined to bring new, "non-establishment" blood into the judiciary, the army and universities.

Netanyahu's efforts on this front have met with many rebuffs and few successes. Not all Likud voters are happy with them, and not all Likud ministers subscribe to them.

But they have won Netanyahu powerful and vociferous support from one increasingly important segment of political life: the Sephardi supporters of Shas.

There, resentment over longstanding social grievances has welled up into an unprecedented surge of hostility against all the Ashkenazi "bastions of privilege," as many Shas supporters see the institutions of government and culture.

The anti-establishment stance of Shas and of Netanyahu is still in its infancy. Some Israeli scholars believe this trend contains the dangerous seeds of anarchy. Others are more benign, regarding it as a latter-day passing populist fad.

The year ahead will determine whether this trend will continue. □

## Jordanian attack survivors testify at trial near Amman

By Naomi Segal

JERUSALEM (JTA) — Five Israelis testified this week at the trial of the Jordanian soldier charged with the murder of seven Israeli schoolgirls.

The students were gunned down in March at the Naharayim enclave, which is located on the Israeli-Jordanian border.

Among those appearing Monday in a military court near the Jordanian capital of Amman were three teachers who accompanied the school trip and a student who was seriously wounded when the soldier, Ahmed Dakamshah, opened fire on the group.

"It wasn't easy. It was quite scary," Maya Shmuel, who was wounded in the attack, told reporters after testifying.

Her mother, Claudine, added, "I was watching the soldier glare at my daughter.

"It was very unsettling for her to have to face this murderer again.

"She was shaking all over."

The Israelis were asked to testify in order to challenge the defense claim that the girls had provoked the soldier while he was praying.

The Israeli liaison officer in the West Bank who received evidence in the case said it was clear that it was not a time of Muslim worship when the soldier opened fire, and that the rest of the evidence disproved his contention that he had been provoked.

The five Israelis later were invited to have lunch with King Hussein at his palace.

Along with the seven Israeli schoolchildren he killed, Dakamshah wounded six others while the students were on a field trip to the border site known as "The Island of Peace."

The island was transferred to Jordan under the 1994 peace treaty with Israel, but the area, a popular tourist destination, is farmed by Israelis. □

## Palestinian Authority protests rescinding of official's VIP card

By Naomi Segal

JERUSALEM (JTA) — Israel has rescinded the VIP card of a senior Palestinian security official it suspects of involvement in the recent murders of Arab land dealers.

Palestinian Authority officials denounced the decision to withdraw the VIP credentials of Tawfik Tirawi, the head of security in Ramallah.

The head of the Palestinian Authority's information department, Yasser Abed Rabbo, called the Israeli decision a grave violation of the Israeli-Palestinian peace agreements.

He said Israel did not have the right to make a unilateral decision regarding the credentials.

Israeli police have disclosed that they suspect Tirawi of involvement in the recent murders of three Arab land dealers.

The killings occurred after Palestinian Justice Minister Freih Abu Medein said that selling land to Jews is a crime punishable by death.

Israeli police recently detained six Palestinians who were allegedly involved in an attempt to kidnap a fourth land dealer.

According to police, information culled from questioning the six has substantiated their suspicions that the Palestinian security apparatus, acting on instruction from the Palestinian Authority, was involved in the murders.

A U.S. official quoted Sunday by the Israeli daily Ha'aretz said that the United States had sent a warning to the Palestinian Authority regarding the murders.

The official was quoted as saying that as a result of the warning, the Palestinian Authority had decided to suspend the policy. □

## Survey of Ukrainian newspapers shows high level of anti-Semitism

By Lev Krichevsky

MOSCOW (JTA) — One-fifth of all mentions of Jews in the Ukrainian press during 1996 were made within an anti-Semitic context, according to an annual audit of Ukrainian newspapers by the Kiev Center for Political Research.

The center recorded 280 articles that contained anti-Semitic slurs or propagated anti-Jewish prejudices last year.

The articles were found in a dozen newspapers published mainly in the western part of Ukraine and in the capital of Kiev.

According to Alexander Naiman, an expert on the Kiev Jewish community, this number represented an approximate 10 percent increase over 1995.

The audit revealed that the largest number of anti-Semitic articles was printed by Za Vilnu Ukrainu, or For a Free Ukraine.

The ultranationalist newspaper is published in the western Ukrainian city of Lvov.

The paper, which has a reported circulation 135,000, published a total of 124 anti-Semitic articles during 1996.

But the center also found that anti-Semitic articles also occasionally appeared in the mainstream press.

Kiev's leading evening newspaper, Vecherny Kyiv, published 47 articles that contained anti-Semitic slurs in 1996.

The publication of hate propaganda is a violation of Ukraine's press laws.

Some of the Ukrainian newspapers responsible for publishing anti-Semitic articles received official warnings during 1996 from the country's Information Ministry. □

## Ben-Gurion University surveys giving

By Naomi Segal

JERUSALEM (JTA) — A survey of charity and volunteerism in Israel has found that religious Jews donated more than seven times as much as their secular counterparts.

The survey on giving and volunteerism, the first of its kind in Israel, was carried out by Professor Binyamin Gidron of Ben-Gurion University of the Negev.

Among the survey's findings:

- three out of every four Israelis give to charity;
- individual Israelis donated in 1996 some \$135 million;
- the average amount donated annually per Israeli is about \$78;
- 77 percent of the adult Jewish population in Israel gave to charity last year;
- among the fervently Orthodox, or haredi, community, individuals pledge about \$294 annually, compared to about \$39 pledged by secular Jews;
- most of the haredi community donated to organizations serving only the religious community;
- one out of every five Israelis is involved in some sort of volunteer activity.

The survey was based on a sample of 500 Israeli Jews. □