



NEWS AT A GLANCE

■ **The Israeli government postponed a controversial vote over a proposal to withdraw from more of the West Bank.** Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu convened a lengthy Cabinet session to discuss the issue as hard-liners threatened to bring down the government. [Page 2]

■ **U.S. officials filed a request to Israel for the formal extradition of a Jewish American teen-ager wanted for allegedly committing a brutal murder in Maryland earlier this year.** After pressure from the United States, Israel's attorney general previously said Samuel Sheinbein was not an Israeli citizen and could be extradited.

■ **The parents of a Delaware teen-ager charged with murdering her newborn son last year did not appear for an interview with a prosecutor.** Amy Grossberg's parents say testifying would violate a Jewish precept that parents are not allowed to testify against their children in legal proceedings.

■ **German government officials and representatives of the Conference on Jewish Material Claims Against Germany failed to reach an agreement on pensions for Holocaust survivors living in Eastern Europe.**

■ **An alleged Nazi war criminal went on trial in Germany.** Ernst Hering, 75, is charged with being involved in the 1942 murder of 20 children in a Ukrainian village.

■ **Russian police clashed with members of the anti-Semitic group Pamyat as the group attempted to stage a protest outside a Moscow bank.** The group shouted anti-Semitic slogans against the bank, which is headed by two Jews.

■ **Israel and Jordan held joint naval exercises in the Gulf of Eilat.** The exercise took place amid an apparent warming of relations after the crisis that followed Israel's botched assassination attempt of a Hamas leader in Amman.

REMINDER: The JTA DAILY NEWS BULLETIN will not be published Friday, Nov. 28.

ISRAEL TURNS 50

Anniversary of U.N. resolution creating Israel passes unnoticed

By David Landau

JERUSALEM (JTA) — As Israeli politicians are grappling with how to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the founding of the Jewish state, another jubilee event is passing by almost unnoticed.

On Nov. 29, 1947, there was dancing on the streets here when, crackling over the radio, the news came from the United Nations that the then-fledgling international organization had approved the creation of a Jewish state.

By a vote of 33 in favor, 13 against, 10 abstentions and one absent, the U.N. General Assembly adopted the partition plan, dividing British Mandatory Palestine into a Jewish state, an Arab state and an international sector that included Jerusalem and its environs.

The partition vote set the stage for Israel's independence — and for the Israeli-Arab conflict.

David Ben-Gurion, the leader of the yishuv, the pre-state Jewish community in Palestine, knew what lay in store that November night.

"They are dancing now," he remarked, looking down sadly on the rejoicing crowds from the balcony of the Jewish Agency building in Jerusalem. "But this means war."

He knew that the Palestinians and the surrounding Arab states would reject the partition plan, as indeed they did.

When the 1948 War of Independence was over, Israel occupied considerably more land than it had been allocated by the United Nations. Both Jordan and Egypt occupied much of what was supposed to be the Arab state.

Almost 20 years later, as a result of another war launched by the Arabs against Israel, the 1948 borders became recognized by the international community — and gradually by most of the Arab states, too — as the Jewish state's rightful boundaries.

But by then, Israel was unwilling to relinquish new lands gained in the 1967 Six-Day War.

Now, 30 years after that war, the question of land-for-peace remains disputed within the country and in the diplomatic arena.

Because of this history, and because of the small allocation of territory the United Nations made to the Jewish state, the 1947 partition resolution has inspired mixed reactions over the years.

There are streets in Israel named "29th of November," implying that this date was focal — and favorable — in the saga of national renaissance.

Yet the partition plan is often referred to with anger and contempt, as though it sought to choke off the Jewish aspiration to viable sovereignty.

Moreover, the basic rationale of partition — dividing this small territory between the Jewish and the Palestinian national liberation movements — has never been popular with any but the extreme left of Israeli opinion.

Doves and those in the political middle regarded it, then and now, as an unavoidable necessity — the only pragmatic way to reach peace.

Rightists and religious hard-liners saw it then as a temporary setback imposed by a cynical world and wrongly acquiesced to by what they regard as a cowardly Jewish leadership — a wrong to be corrected when the time came.

For many in this camp, that time came in June 1967, when Israel captured the West Bank, the Gaza Strip and the Sinai Peninsula.

Their struggle through the subsequent decades was to avoid a repetition — albeit along different geographical lines — of what they regarded as the historic error of 1947, the relinquishing of land they claim as integral to Eretz Israel.

It is against this backdrop that the effect of the present Likud-led government's espousal of the basic logic of partition is so significant.

Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, when he signed on to the Hebron Agreement in January, accepted that Israel would hand over to the Palestinians parts, although minuscule, of the West Bank.

With that move, he broke with the Likud orthodoxy regarding the integrity and sanctity of Eretz Israel. To this extent, therefore, the 1947

partition plan can now be said to articulate a principle that is accepted, however reluctantly, by both of the mainstream forces in Israeli political life.

This perhaps accounts for a discernible moderation in the pejorative comments that the very words "partition" or "1947 resolution" used to elicit from people on the right of the Israeli political divide.

But the resolution is not out of the woods yet in terms of Israeli public acceptance. This is perhaps why the jubilee anniversary of the partition plan is passing with little fanfare.

Partition has always meant more than just the loss of part of the historical homeland.

It meant acquiescence to the creation of a separate Palestinian state.

There is still strong opposition to this in Israeli politics, not only from government circles, but also from the left-of-center opposition.

This opposition is voiced even though, as the polls clearly demonstrate, most Israelis — including those most opposed to Palestinian statehood — concede that such a state is likely or even inevitable.

Just the same, the prospect of a Palestinian state is largely contemplated without enthusiasm — and hence the lack of excitement with which people here recall the tense debate and U.N. vote that was the first formal act in the drama of Israel's birth.

The United Nations, moreover, has had a patchy and largely negative image in Israeli minds for much of the five decades that followed the partition vote.

During the long decades of the Cold War, bloc voting in the General Assembly and Soviet bully tactics in the Security Council resulted in Israel's perpetual isolation in the United Nations.

As a result, generations of Israeli youth were brought up to sneer at and despise the international organization.

A lot of this changed with the 1993 Israeli-Palestinian accords, which, coming after the collapse of the Soviet empire, ushered in something of a honeymoon period for the Jewish state at the United Nations.

But, with the Netanyahu government's adoption of a tougher stance in the peace process, Israel is unpopular again in the international arena.

Once again, anti-U.N. feeling is running high in Israel, especially in right-wing circles.

And this naturally colors the sentiments that surface when people think back to that historic vote in the General Assembly 50 years ago. □

Netanyahu faces looming crisis over proposal for redeployment

By Naomi Segal

JERUSALEM (JTA) — Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu is facing a looming threat to his government over further Israeli withdrawals in the West Bank.

Netanyahu, under pressure from the Clinton administration, is reportedly proposing that Israeli troops withdraw from 6 to 8 percent of rural areas of the West Bank currently under sole Israeli control.

The plan is conditioned on a Palestinian commitment to fight terrorism and an agreement to move to final-status talks.

Hard-line members of Netanyahu's coalition this week threatened to bring down the government if such a handover is implemented.

Palestinian officials have already rejected the leaked proposal as insufficient.

In an effort to avert a crisis, Netanyahu convened

his Cabinet ministers Wednesday to discuss the principles of further redeployment and final-status talks.

No vote was taken at Wednesday's meeting, a decision Cabinet Secretary Danny Naveh attributed in part to the fact that not all of the ministers had a chance to speak during the six-hour session.

A vote is not expected until next week at the earliest.

One of the ministers who did comment at the meeting, Transportation Minister Yitzhak Levy of the National Religious Party, said he opposed carrying out the redeployment.

Netanyahu faced pressure from his more dovish coalition partners as well.

Foreign Minister David Levy told Israel Radio on Wednesday that he would consider it a "waste of time" to remain in the government if the coalition were to bring the peace process to a halt.

Speaking for the opposition, Labor Party leader Ehud Barak warned about the diplomatic standstill.

Barak also called on government officials to prepare for "armed guerrilla warfare" with the Palestinians.

Meanwhile, in the Knesset, Likud coalition chair Meir Sheerit tried to convince his Likud colleagues Wednesday that a Palestinian state could be established, and if so, it should be done when a Likud government was in power.

Earlier in the day, Sheerit had the embarrassing task of canceling a coalition meeting with Netanyahu to discuss political developments, when only a handful of legislators showed up.

In addition to the pressure from his coalition, Netanyahu has been facing pressure from the U.S. administration to take "serious" steps to restart the long-stalled negotiations.

Aides to Netanyahu said this week that the prime minister was no longer seeking a meeting with President Clinton next month.

Naveh told reporters that such a meeting was not on Israel's agenda, but reports circulated in Israel that Netanyahu was angry at the pressure emanating from Washington and at Clinton's apparent unwillingness to meet with him. □

Israeli ministry agrees to fund DNA tests for 'missing' Yemenites

By Naomi Segal

JERUSALEM (JTA) — The Israeli Health Ministry has agreed to fund genetic testing for families of Yemenite children who allegedly disappeared during the early years of Israeli statehood.

The testing may provide some answers, and some closure, to one of the most painful episodes in the Yemenite immigrant experience.

Some members of the Yemenite community have repeatedly alleged that hundreds of their children were kidnapped and sold to Ashkenazi families.

Previous inquiries found no wrongdoing, concluding that many of the children died of disease and that the confusion surrounding their fate was due to governmental bureaucracy.

With the ministry's decision, some \$11,000 will be allocated for tests to compare DNA from families with remnants exhumed from graves in which their children were said to be buried.

The samples will be sent to a laboratory in Britain for analysis.

The genetic testing, which was begun last year, was suspended due to budgetary shortages. □

BEHIND THE HEADLINES**Pro-Israel political giving bucks national support for GOP**

By Daniel Kurtzman

WASHINGTON (JTA) — Despite an overall shift in political giving toward Republicans in the 1996 election cycle, pro-Israel donors favored Democrats by a 2-1 margin, according to a new study.

Pro-Israel political action committees and individuals contributed a total of \$4.2 million to candidates for federal office in 1995-1996, according to the Center for Responsive Politics, a Washington-based, non-partisan organization that analyzes the role of money in politics.

In its study released this week, the center found that the 1996 election campaigns were the most expensive in U.S. history, with \$2.2 billion spent by the two major parties, political action committees and other political organizations.

Political action committees and individuals contributed a total of roughly \$630 million of this amount, the bulk of it coming from corporate America.

The study comes as Americans continue to debate the merits of campaign finance reform. The issue has created a rift in the Jewish community, with some believing that such reform poses a threat to American Jewish influence on the political process. Others see a need to reduce the influence of money in politics.

PAC contributions represent only a small part of Jewish political giving. Millions more flow from individuals and other channels directly to candidates and political parties.

The study found that among ideological or single-issue political action committees — which raised \$29 million — pro-Israel PACs ranked second, behind “leadership PACs,” which are run by members of Congress and other political figures to distribute funds.

Of the \$4.2 million spent by pro-Israel PACs, about \$2.7 million went to Democrats — the traditional recipients of most Jewish dollars — compared to \$1.5 million to Republicans.

The \$4.2 million in total outlays marked a 17 percent decline from 1994, when pro-Israel interests gave \$5 million to candidates, the study found.

The totals reflect contributions from the 38 pro-Israel PACs around the country that were active in 1995-1996, and from individuals connected with pro-Israel PACs who gave \$200 or more.

Drop-off in contributions

The PACs, some of which also consider domestic issues when distributing their funds, contributed \$2.3 million to candidates, while individuals gave \$1.9 million.

Chuck Brooks, executive director and treasurer of the pro-Israel National PAC, said the drop-off in contributions is consistent with the overall decline in Jewish giving to established fund-raising organizations.

That decline is attributed to several factors, he said, including a generational shift, a prevailing sense of complacency and, to a lesser extent, alienation from Israel stemming from the religious pluralism debate.

He also said the controversies surrounding campaign finance in general may have “soured” some to the idea of participating in the political process.

While political givers as a whole backed Republicans by a solid majority, pro-Israel donors favored Democratic candidates over Republicans 65 percent to 35 percent, the study found.

Still, contributions from pro-Israel donors to the GOP were up 21 percent from the 1994 election cycle.

Democrats, meanwhile, showed a decline of 29

percent in such donations, but still maintained a solid edge over Republicans.

The Jewish tilt toward Democrats may have as much to do with the candidates that are up for election “as with the general ideological alliance of Jewish Americans,” said Sheila Krumholz, project director of the Center for Responsive Politics.

National PAC, the largest pro-Israel PAC, bucked the trend in pro-Israel giving, favoring Republicans over Democrats, 56 percent to 44 percent.

Like many who began shifting their money toward GOP candidates after the Republican takeover of Congress in 1994, Brooks said his committee’s contributions were “reflective of the balance of power” in Washington.

The study also found that:

- Among all political action committees, National PAC ranked 86th with its \$590,000 in campaign contributions. It ranked ninth among all ideological PACs, which includes the National Rifle Association, which ranked first with \$1.5 million in contributions.

- After National PAC, the most active pro-Israel PACs included Desert Caucus, Washington PAC, the National Jewish Democratic Council PAC and the Women’s Alliance for Israel.

- Among the top five recipients of pro-Israel PAC dollars in both the House and Senate, only two — House Speaker Newt Gingrich (R-Ga.) and Sen. Mitch McConnell (R-Ky.) — were Republicans.

- The top five Senate recipients were Sens. Carl Levin (D-Mich.), Ron Wyden (D-Ore.), Tom Harkin (D-Iowa), Richard Durbin (D-Ill.) and McConnell.

- Gingrich led House recipients, followed by Reps. Sander Levin (D-Mich.), Martin Frost (D-Texas), Jane Harman (D-Calif.) and Sam Gejdenson (D-Conn.). □

Survivors of bridge collapse intend to sue Israeli officials

By Jeremy Jones

SYDNEY (JTA) — More than 40 Australian survivors of July’s Maccabiah Games’ bridge collapse have announced that they will sue Israeli officials.

The survivors will also sue the Maccabi World Union, which organized the Games, and the company that built the bridge, according to lawyer Peter Redlich, who said Tuesday that he will represent most of the injured.

He described the bridge collapse as the result of the most “gross example of negligence” he has seen in 40 years of dealing with such cases.

Two Australian athletes were immediately killed July 14 and hundreds of other participants at the Games injured when a pedestrian bridge collapsed during the opening ceremony at the Ramat Gan stadium, plunging scores of people into the Yarkon River.

Two more Australians died weeks later as a result of complications that medical officials linked to contaminants in the river water.

Other suits may be filed by families of the athletes who died, and by the family of Sasha Elterman, 15, who has been hospitalized with a brain abscess that doctors say was caused by the polluted water.

Maccabi Australia president Tom Goldman responded to news of the proposed suit, saying, “Nobody has really stood up and been held accountable and responsible, and it has to be done.”

Goldman, who recently returned from Israel, said Israel and the Maccabi World Union signed an agreement to give a \$1 million loan to help the Australian team members. The loan will be repaid after the injured and families of those killed receive compensation payments, he said. □

Israeli government minister visits Pollard in American jail*By Naomi Segal*

JERUSALEM (JTA) — Israeli Absorption Minister Yuli Edelstein has become the first Israeli government minister to visit Jonathan Pollard in jail.

Edelstein met on Monday in a North Carolina jail with the former U.S. Navy intelligence analyst, who is serving a life sentence for spying for Israel.

Edelstein, whose meeting was cleared with Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and the attorney general, conveyed a letter written by Netanyahu's spokesman, David Bar-Illan, that contained a pledge from the premier to continue every effort to secure Pollard's release.

Edelstein recently initiated the meeting, saying the Israeli government was not doing enough to help Pollard.

Edelstein's spokesman said after the meeting that Pollard was cynical about the promises made by Israeli leaders to act on his behalf.

Pollard was arrested in 1985 outside the Israeli Embassy in Washington. He pleaded guilty in 1986 to stealing secrets for the Israeli government and, in 1987, was sentenced to life imprisonment.

Pollard has petitioned Israel's High Court of Justice to force the government to recognize that he acted as an agent for Israel.

Israeli officials have maintained that Pollard passed on intelligence documents without official sanction.

Pollard was granted Israeli citizenship last year, a move he had hoped would bolster his chances for release.

During his visit to the federal prison, Edelstein asked prison officials to improve Pollard's medical treatment and to make kosher food available to him.

Edelstein had no meetings scheduled with Washington officials to discuss Pollard's case.

When he returns to Israel, Edelstein is slated to brief Netanyahu and Attorney General Elyakim Rubinstein about his meeting with Pollard.

Earlier this month, Rubinstein asked U.S. Attorney General Janet Reno to help secure the prisoner's freedom. □

Possible indictment adds to woes of former top Netanyahu official*By Naomi Segal*

JERUSALEM (JTA) — Immediately after resigning as Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's right-hand man, Avigdor Lieberman is facing a new set of problems.

Israeli police are recommending that Lieberman be charged with embezzlement and fraud because he failed to repay about one-quarter of a \$31,000 loan he received several years ago from an immigrant support group.

Sources familiar with the investigation were quoted by the Israeli daily Ha'aretz as saying that the evidence against Lieberman was "borderline" and that State Prosecutor Edna Arbel would have to weigh whether there were sufficient grounds for an indictment.

Earlier this year, police recommended that Lieberman — along with Netanyahu and other top officials — be indicted in connection with improprieties surrounding the short-lived January appointment of Jerusalem lawyer Roni Bar-On as attorney general.

But Attorney General Elyakim Rubinstein and Arbel decided not to prosecute either Lieberman or his boss, citing a lack of sufficient evidence.

Lieberman said Monday that he did not know of the latest police recommendation when he resigned a day earlier as director-general of the Prime Minister's Office.

Lieberman, who emigrated from the former Soviet Union in 1979, angered many Likud Party stalwarts with what they considered his strong-arm tactics in support of the premier.

That anger boiled over earlier this month, when critics accused Lieberman of using Bolshevik techniques to control the recent Likud convention.

Lieberman is widely believed to have been behind a convention decision to cancel the party's primaries, returning selection of Likud legislative candidates to the party's central committee — which is stacked with Netanyahu supporters.

The controversial decision to cancel the primaries sparked moves by party rebels to take control of the party and, perhaps, support a no-confidence vote in the Netanyahu government.

The Israeli daily Ma'ariv compared Lieberman's departure to the 1973 resignations of President Nixon's aides H.R. Haldeman and John Ehrlichman.

Netanyahu was "sacrificing his right-hand man" to "save his seat," the paper said in an editorial. □

Priest condemns anti-Semitism espoused by censured colleague*By Ruth E. Gruber*

BERLIN (JTA) — A Polish Jesuit priest has condemned the anti-Semitic statements of a fellow Polish priest — and what he sees as the inadequate official reaction to them.

In a sermon on Oct. 26, Gdansk priest Henryk Jankowski said that "one shouldn't tolerate the Jewish minority in the Polish government" and that Jews should not be allowed in Poland's recently elected government.

Stanislaw Musial wrote that statements made by Jankowski were "an anti-Semitic utterance in the worst, Nazi form. If one shouldn't tolerate someone in the government why should one tolerate him as a teacher, a doctor or even a shoe cleaner?" he wrote. "That Nazi anti-Semitism led to the murder of 6 million Jews."

Musial's article was published in a leading Polish Catholic intellectual monthly and reprinted last week in *Gazeta Wyborcza*, Poland's largest daily newspaper.

The comments by Jankowski were only the latest in a series of questionable remarks he has made.

In a 1995 sermon, he said, "We can no longer tolerate being governed by people who have not declared whether they come from Moscow or Israel" and that the Star of David is "implicated in the swastika as well as the hammer and sickle."

Jankowski was suspended from some of his priestly duties after the latest incident.

Musial also criticized the reactions of Polish officials and others to Jankowski's statement.

"If in a Western country a Catholic priest of similar stature as Jankowski expressed comparable anti-Semitic opinions then, I guess, many people of good will would protest in the streets. This is not possible here at the moment," he wrote.

"It is not surprising that anti-Semitism is not seen as a threatening evil," he added when "opinion-shaping bodies and moral authorities" have failed to denounce Jankowski's anti-Semitism.

Musial urged the Polish church to write a document teaching about "the sin of anti-Semitism."

Stanislaw Krajewski, the American Jewish Committee's Polish consultant, lauded Musial's article.

"Musial expressed everything that Jews hoped be expressed," he said. "It is great that a Catholic priest has said all that. He represents the face of Poland in which we recognize ourselves." □