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TOP NEWS IN BRIEF

Summit begins in Maryland

President Clinton urged Israel and the Palestinian Authority to "break the logjam and finally take the next essential steps for peace in the Middle East."

Clinton made his remarks before Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and Palestinian Authority Chairman Yasser Arafat traveled to a retreat on Maryland's Eastern Shore for talks aimed at reaching a deal on a proposed 13 percent Israeli redeployment from the West Bank tied to specific Palestinian steps to combat terrorism, thereby ending the 19-month stalemate in the peace process.

If successful, the open-ended summit would culminate in a signing ceremony at the White House on Monday or Tuesday. Clinton will intervene in the talks as necessary. U.S. Secretary of State Madeleine Albright will directly oversee the talks. [Page 3]

Settlers protest Netanyahu

Thousands of Jewish settlers protested outside Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's residence, saying they would bring down his government if he agrees to a further 13 percent withdrawal from the West Bank.

Some hawkish lawmakers called on Netanyahu not to attend the summit in Washington as a protest against attacks upon Israelis.

Men beat Russian rabbi

Two young men beat a Lubavitch rabbi in the city of Nizhny Novgorod.

Rabbi Zalman Yoffe, 31, was attacked near his home in the city, which is located 250 miles east of Moscow.

In May, two skinheads attacked another rabbi in a subway station in Moscow.

Books nominated for award

A novel about Orthodox Jews in contemporary New York and a 900-year history of a Lithuanian shtetl made the list of finalists for the 1998 National Book Award.

The winners for both the fiction competition, which includes Allegra Goodman's "Kaaterskill Falls," and the non-fiction contest, in which Yaffa Eliach's "There Once Was a World: A 900-Year Chronicle of the Shtetl of Eishyshok" is a nominee, will be announced in mid-November.

Controversy shrouds ceremony making Jewish-born woman a saint

By Douglas Davis

LONDON (JTA) — Pope John Paul II irritated Jewish sensibilities when he declared Edith Stein a saint, making her the first Jewish-born woman to achieve sainthood in the Roman Catholic Church.

Stein, who died at the age of 51 in Auschwitz on August 9, 1942, converted to Catholicism and became a nun just as Hitler was starting his rise to power.

That coincidence of events raised a large, doubtless unasked, question at Sunday's ceremony in Rome: Does the martyrdom of Stein truly merit sainthood — or is her canonization an attempt to assuage the guilt of the Vatican's silence during the Holocaust?

In canonizing Stein, Pope John Paul II called her both "an eminent daughter of Israel and a faithful daughter of the Church."

The pope also used the canonization to launch a powerful appeal for tolerance, dialogue and reconciliation.

"For the love of God and man, I once again raise my voice in a heartfelt cry: never again may such a criminal act be repeated against any ethnic group, any people, any race, in any corner of the earth!" he said.

And he said Stein's saints day each year, Aug. 9, would be celebrated as a Holocaust memorial to remind the world "of that bestial plan to eliminate a people, which cost millions of Jewish brothers and sisters their lives."

But many Jews said that by singling out a Jewish convert to Catholicism for sainthood, the Pope offended the memory of the Holocaust's Jewish victims.

Efraim Zuroff, director of the Simon Wiesenthal Center's Jerusalem office, went even further. He called the move "outrageous" and a "very public slap in the face to the Jewish community."

He said, "The pope is sending an extremely negative message to the Jewish community that in the eyes of the Catholic Church the best Jews are those that convert to Catholicism."

The leader of France's Reform movement also criticized the move.

Rabbi Daniel Farhi said the canonization of Stein, was the "ultimate injury to Holocaust survivors and the descendants of victims.

"How can one not understand that it is a Jew converted to Catholicism that is being shown as an example to the Christian people?" he said.

Like other critics of the ceremony, Farhi maintains that Stein — whose beatification as a martyr in 1987 was also widely criticized — was killed because she was a Jew, not a Catholic.

Indeed, Baltimore Cardinal William Keeler, the Episcopal moderator for Catholic-Jewish Relations of the National Conference of Catholic Bishops, issued a statement Oct. 5 in which he said that by honoring Stein, the church was symbolically memorializing Jewish victims of the Holocaust.

"In Edith Stein's mind, we know, she never for a moment felt that she had ceased to be a Jew," he said. "As a Church, we cannot pretend that she died as anything other than one of the millions of Jews murdered in the Shoah."

Farhi, who has been active in forging closer ties between Catholics and Jews in France, warned that the move would be "a new stumbling block in Judeo-Christian dialogue."

But Rabbi A. James Rudin, the director of interreligious affairs for the American

MIDEAST FOCUS

Israelis take over building

Israelis and Palestinians clashed in eastern Jerusalem after the settlers moved into a building that they claim used to be a synagogue. The scuffle began after members of Israel's far-right Moledet Party moved into the building.

More Israelis go to temple

A record 32,000 Israelis attended Reform synagogues during the recent holiday period, according to the Israel Movement for Progressive Judaism. The number represents an 18 percent increase over last year's estimated attendance figures.

Rabbi Mordechai Rotem, the movement's chairman, said many who attended the services felt "disgusted" by Orthodox religious coercion in Israel, but were interested in exploring their Jewish heritage.

The movement also said unprecedented coverage of the Reform and Conservative movements in the Israeli media this year boosted awareness among residents of the Jewish state of liberal Jewish alternatives to Orthodoxy.

Shells fall in northern Israel

Shells fell near an Israeli village not far from the Israel-Lebanon border. Hezbollah claimed responsibility for the attack, in which no one was injured.

Financial crisis hurting Israel

The director general of Israel's Defense Ministry recently called on local arms manufacturers to merge into one company in order to remain competitive.

Ilan Biran issued the call after acknowledging that the world financial crisis is hurting Israel's defense industry.

Industry revenues will plunge from \$2.5 billion in 1997 to an estimated \$1.5 billion in 1998, he said, adding that Israeli firms should merge in order to avoid costly duplication in research and development projects.

Jewish Committee, who said Stein's canonization is filled "with ambiguity, ambivalence and confusion," told JTA that he did not believe the move would derail the generally positive relations between Catholics and Jews.

Stein was born into an Orthodox Jewish family in Breslau, now the Polish town of Wroclaw, on Oct. 12, 1891 — Yom Kippur of that year.

In her unfinished autobiography, "Life in a Jewish Family," Stein wrote that as a child she was convinced she was "destined for something great and that I did not belong in all the narrow, bourgeois circumstances into which I had been born."

The brilliant, passionate Stein offers little insight into her decision to convert — "It is my secret," she wrote — but she does describe a visit to the widow of a friend who had been killed during World War I.

The widow attributed her composure and serenity, despite the loss she had suffered, to her recent embrace of Christianity. It was to be the most influential encounter of Stein's life. She soon set about devouring Catholic literature.

On Jan. 1, 1922, at the age of 31, Stein was baptized a Catholic.

Her mother was both heartbroken and confused by her daughter's decision.

On Oct. 14, 1933, at the age of 42, Edith Stein irrevocably shed her Jewish past and, adopting the name Teresa Benedicta a Cruce — Teresa, Blessed of the Cross — entered the Carmelite Convent of Cologne in Germany.

But even as a converted Catholic nun, she was not safe from the Holocaust. After she first entered the convent, Stein wrote about the Nazi measures being taken against the Jews. "The fate of this people will also be mine," she wrote prophetically.

In 1933, she appealed to Pope Pius XI to speak out against the Nazis. The pope rejected her plea.

After fleeing in 1938 from Germany to a Dutch convent in Holland, Stein was arrested at the convent on Aug. 2, 1942. She died in Auschwitz exactly one week later.

On May 1, 1987, in a prelude to canonization and full sainthood, she was beatified by Pope John Paul II at a huge ceremony in a football stadium in Cologne.

At that ceremony, the pope told the assembled crowd: "Today, we greet in profound honor and holy joy a daughter of the Jewish people, rich in wisdom and courage, who gave her life for genuine peace."

He insisted that her baptism "was by no means a break with her Jewish heritage. But the life of this heroic follower of Christ was illuminated by the cross."

Eleanor Michael, a writer who has spent five years tracing the life of Stein, said categorically that Stein was "murdered by the Nazis because she was Jewish. What had she done to provoke the Nazis who murdered her, other than being born Jewish?"

"Stein is one of 6 million Jews who perished," said Michael. "Her ascension to sainthood may well symbolize all that Edith Stein would cry out against in life. Honoring her Christian martyrdom negates her Jewish spirit." □

(JTA correspondents Ruth E. Gruber in Rome and Lee Yanowitch in Paris contributed to this report.)

Gore takes a shot of vodka at shul

WASHINGTON (JTA) — Vice President Al Gore stood in front of a Conservative congregation with a shot glass filled with vodka in his left hand, and a pickle and piece of pumpernickel bread in his right.

"Rabbi, teach me how to do this," Rabbi Leonid Feldman said Gore asked him Tuesday morning.

Gore joined 150 congregants of Temple Emanuel in Palm Beach, Fla., in their Simchat Torah service before attending a Democratic Party fund-raising event that raised some \$500,000. Congregant Daniel Abraham, the founder of the Slim Fast diet-aid company and chairman of the Center for Middle East Peace and Economic Cooperation, held the luncheon fund raiser, which President Clinton had originally planned to attend.

The Soviet-born Feldman introduced the vodka tradition into the shul's Simchat Torah and Purim celebrations 10 years ago.

Gore and Abraham left after services and surprised congregants by walking the two blocks to Abraham's home. □



Daily News Bulletin

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JEWISH WORLD

Holocaust day created in Canada

The Canadian Jewish Congress applauded a recent move by the Ontario Legislature that made Ontario the first province in Canada to proclaim an annual Holocaust Memorial Day. Congress officials are hoping that educators will use the annual memorial day to introduce Holocaust education into the province's school system.

USC establishes Jewish institute

The University of Southern California established a Jewish studies institute that will focus on the experience of Jews in the western United States. The founding of the Institute for the Study of Jews in American Life comes after the university, once considered unfriendly to minorities, has made steps in recent years to recruit both Jewish faculty and students.

Search launched for missing boy

Chasidic Jews and New York police launched a door-to-door search for a 6-year-old Jewish boy who disappeared from his Brooklyn, N.Y. home. Police suspect Chaim Weill's babysitter, Theresa Giannola Goldberg, in the kidnaping. Investigators suspect that Goldberg, a Jehovah's Witness, may have taken Weill, who has cerebral palsy, out of state to find a medical or spiritual cure for him.

Historians compile list of victims

Two Jewish genealogists are compiling a comprehensive list of the roughly 200,000 to 240,000 Jews from Lithuania who died in the Holocaust. With the help of several Jewish institutions, the two, one of whom lives in England and the other in Israel, have collected about 80,000 names so far.

Jewish leader slams novelist

The head of Germany's Jewish community, Ignatz Bubis, accused a leading novelist of "mental arson" for his recent comments that Germany is overdoing its confrontation with its past. In his acceptance speech on Sunday for the prestigious Peace Prize of the German Book Trade, Martin Walser accused German intellectuals of institutionalizing the memory of Auschwitz to ease their conscience. Walser has spoken out frequently on the need for more nationalism in German society.

Group honors Sugihara

A Jewish group in Germany honored a Japanese diplomat who helped thousands of Jews escape from the Nazis. Chiune Sugihara, who served in the Japanese mission in Lithuania during World War II, was given a prize named after Raoul Wallenberg, the famous Swedish diplomat who helped Jews flee Hungary during the war.

Clinton urges Netanyahu, Arafat to finalize deal as summit begins

By Matthew Dorf

WASHINGTON (JTA) — The last time that President Clinton stood in the Rose Garden to discuss Middle East peace, he mourned the death of slain Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin.

On Thursday, Clinton again used the historic setting to kick off high-stakes summit diplomacy in an effort to fulfill Rabin's legacy.

Flanked by Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and Palestinian Authority Chairman Yasser Arafat, Clinton urged the two leaders to "break the logjam and finally take the next essential steps for peace in the Middle East."

Netanyahu and Arafat then retired to the Wye Plantation in rural Maryland for a weekend of talks aimed at reaching an agreement on a proposed 13 percent Israeli redeployment from the West Bank tied to specific Palestinian steps to combat terrorist attacks.

If successful, the open-ended summit would culminate in a signing ceremony at the White House on Monday or Tuesday.

Highlighting the difficult talks ahead, Clinton called for compromise.

"As in any difficult problem, neither side can expect to win 100 percent of every point," he said.

"Concessions that seem hard now will seem far less important in the light of an accord that moves Israelis and Palestinians closer to lasting peace, closer to a day when the people of Israel can have the safety and security they have been denied for too long, closer to the day when Palestinian people can realize their aspirations to be free and secure and able to shape their own political and economic destiny," said Clinton, who will intervene in the talks as necessary.

U.S. Secretary of State Madeleine Albright will directly oversee the talks.

While both sides expressed optimism that an accord would be reached by the likely end of talks Monday, much remains to be negotiated.

Against this backdrop, both Arafat and Netanyahu jockeyed in an effort to score rhetorical points until moments before they left for the secluded site of the talks.

For Israel the key is that Palestinians "fight terrorism in word and deed," Netanyahu told reporters in the White House driveway.

"We come with the best intentions and we hope that there will be an accord.

"We're asked to give additional territory; we want to ensure that this territory doesn't become a base and a haven for terrorists to attack us as happened before," he said.

Arafat, who spoke after Netanyahu had departed from the White House, said, "Peace is the most important platform for security."

Clinton was to present Arafat with "very specific steps to combat terrorists in the areas of the West Bank under Palestinian control, Israel's ambassador to the United States, Zalman Shoval, told reporters.

"We cannot sign an agreement" without security guarantees in place, Shoval said.

Albright appeared to side with the Israeli team on this point.

"There has to be a verifiable way of knowing there is security in the region," Albright said in an interview with the Associated Press.

But in a sign that negotiators were getting closer to an agreement, U.S. officials said the summit will be a success even if the Israelis and Palestinians do not wrap up all the issues left over from the 1995 Interim Agreement. Such issues include the opening of a Palestinian airport and seaport, and a safe-passage route that would link the West Bank and Gaza Strip.

For the Clinton administration, the key to the summit's success is reaching an accord that would move the sides into final-status talks to avert a possible unilateral declaration of Palestinian statehood next May.

"If you don't get on to the permanent-status issues, if you don't begin to formulate approaches and certain understandings, you are really dealing with a looming disaster," a senior U.S. official said. □

NEWS ANALYSIS**Global economic crisis hits Israel, driving shekel, markets downward***By Avi Machlis*

JERUSALEM (JTA) — Israel's economy is on the verge of getting sucked into the global economic crisis, even though the country's leaders have reacted with relative calm to international market turmoil during the past months.

Finance Minister Ya'acov Ne'eman and Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu have repeatedly insisted that Israel's economy is an "island of stability" in the global economic storm due to what they described as the government's "responsible" economic policies during the past two years.

Indeed, many economists believe that Israel would have been in far worse danger today had the government not moved in the past to reduce the budget deficit.

But the global storm that started to hit Israel's shores hard last week sent the stock market and the shekel plunging. The shekel has fallen more than 11 percent against the dollar since the beginning of October and 21 percent since the beginning of the year.

On Oct. 8, it slid an unprecedented 5.25 percent in one day — to 4.31 shekels to the dollar — and the decline was even more dramatic considering that the dollar itself was weakening on world markets.

"Whoever thinks Israel can remain an island of stability in a stormy world is living in a fantasy. We will also get hit — and we will get hit hard," Arie Mientkavich, chairman of Israel Discount Bank, the country's third largest, said last week.

By Thursday, the shekel had strengthened somewhat to about 4.20 to shekels to the dollar, but trading remained volatile. And inflation showed signs of rising, with the September consumer price index jumping 1.4 per cent, pushed up by an earlier devaluation.

The latest slide of the shekel is expected to push inflation even higher this month, rendering inflationary expectations of about 4 to 5 per cent for the year obsolete.

The sharp devaluation is already leaving its mark. Importers of goods such as appliances and cars have started to raise prices. Israelis who rent apartments — with monthly payments quoted in dollars but paid in shekels — will pay more this month. And prices of basic commodities such as food are also expected to rise soon.

Ne'eman and Bank of Israel Governor Jacob Frenkel tried to stay calm as they attended the International Monetary Fund's annual conference last week in Washington. "The Israeli public is not panicking and is not buying large amounts of foreign currency," Ne'eman told Israeli television.

However, the causes and effects of the devaluation have given Ne'eman and Frenkel plenty to worry about.

The shekel began to slide when foreign investors recently started liquidating their investments in Israeli stocks, as they have been doing in emerging markets across the globe. First, they sold shares on the Tel Aviv Stock Exchange. Then they bought dollars with the shekels received from the shares, pushing down the price of the shekel.

Israeli companies nervously watched the shekel's movements. Many, lulled into a false sense of security during the past two years when the shekel was relatively stable, took out foreign cur-

rency-linked loans to finance their activities.

As the shekel depreciates, these loans quickly become more expensive to repay, and high financing costs could take a bite out of corporate earnings. This is why many companies have been buying foreign currency — to protect themselves should the shekel sink lower. However, this also contributed to the shekel's further decline.

So far, financial analysts say, the general public has yet to join the rush for the dollar. If this happens, the shekel could further devalue with disastrous effects.

With inflation on the horizon, analysts predict the central bank will have no choice but to raise interest rates again, both to keep inflation down and to get Israelis to hold onto their shekels at better interest rates.

But higher interest rates — with the higher costs they entail for business loans — will deal a blow to overall economic growth. Israel's economy is already suffering from a severe slowdown. It was expected to grow only 1.5 percent this year after growing an annual average of 6 percent during the mid-1990s. □

Refugee from Nazi persecution winner of Nobel Prize in chemistry*By Tom Tugend*

LOS ANGELES (JTA) — A refugee from Nazi persecution is one of the recipients of the 1998 Nobel Prize in chemistry.

Walter Kohn, a 75-year-old emeritus professor at the University of California at Santa Barbara, will share the \$970,000 prize with British scientist John Pople of Northwestern University in Evanston, Ill.

Their research, which makes it possible to model new chemicals in a computer as an alternative to chemical experiments, has applications ranging from the development of new drugs to protecting the environment.

Kohn, who was born in Vienna, fled Austria with his sister and managed to reach England one month before World War II began. Their parents stayed behind and perished in Auschwitz.

The 17-year-old Kohn was interned as an "enemy alien" on England's Isle of Man and later Canada, but was released in 1942. Two years later, he joined the Canadian army as a volunteer.

After studying at the University of Toronto and Harvard, and a distinguished career as a scientist, working at the intersection of physics and chemistry, Kohn was named the first director in 1979 of the Institute for Theoretical Physics, located at the university in Santa Barbara.

Kohn is strongly involved in Jewish life.

While teaching at the University of California at San Diego, he was instrumental in founding the Jewish studies department. In Santa Barbara, he is on the school's Hillel advisory board and regularly participates in faculty Torah study sessions.

Kohn maintains close ties with Israeli colleagues and has been a visiting scholar at the Hebrew University, Weizmann Institute of Science and Tel Aviv University. He has received honorary degrees from Hebrew University and the Weizmann Institute, as well as from Brandeis University.

His wife, Mara, is the daughter of famed photographer Roman Vishniac, who documented Jewish life in Eastern Europe before the Holocaust. □