



Daily News Bulletin

Vol. 77, No. 194

Tuesday, October 19, 1999

82nd Year

TOP NEWS IN BRIEF

Clinton vetoes foreign aid bill

President Clinton vetoed the foreign aid bill Monday, saying it did not contain any money for Israel and the Palestinians to implement the Wye agreement.

The president described the bill, which contains \$2 billion less than he requested, as one example of "the new American isolationism" being pursued by the Republican-controlled Congress.

However, Republican leaders said they were not going to dip into the Social Security surplus or raise taxes to increase foreign aid spending.

Israel to begin razing outposts

Israel is expected to dismantle the first of 12 West Bank outposts on Tuesday — a move that some settlers have vowed to resist.

They will be dismantled as part of a compromise reached between Prime Minister Ehud Barak and settler leaders last week.

Mandela visits Israel

Nelson Mandela arrived in Israel for his first visit to the Jewish state. Mandela canceled previously scheduled visits to the Jewish state because of his criticism of Israeli policy. [Page 3]

Ethiopian campaign launched

Ethiopian activists in Israel launched a campaign to raise public awareness of the plight of what they say are 18,000 Ethiopians hoping to immigrate to Israel.

Hundreds of activists asked Prime Minister Ehud Barak on Sunday in Tel Aviv to bring to Israel the remaining Falash Mura, who consider themselves to be Jewish but are not recognized as such by the Israeli government.

Palestinians gain in Jerusalem

Residents of eastern Jerusalem who do not live in Israel for more than seven years will no longer lose their right to live there.

Israeli Interior Minister Natan Sharansky made the decision in the wake of several Supreme Court petitions filed on the matter.

"As someone who believes that Jerusalem must remain under Israeli sovereignty, we must look after the rights of all citizens," said the former Soviet dissident.

Diversity among German Jews shows how far community has come

By Toby Axelrod

BERLIN (JTA) — The opening of a new school for Jewish teachers in eastern Berlin last week is being hailed as a sign of the variety and maturity of post-Holocaust Jewish life in Germany.

The Lauder Judisches Lehrhaus, which aims to train a new generation of Jewish educators for a community sorely in need of them, is one of a few new developments meant to meet the needs of a growing and increasingly diverse Jewish population.

Ten Years After the Wall Part of a Series

"This is a symbol of the profound resilience of the Jewish people," said American businessman and philanthropist Ronald Lauder to a gathering of several hundred Jewish leaders and local politicians in Berlin's ornate Rykerstrasse Synagogue, which survived the Holocaust. "The flickering flame is once again being fanned into life," he said.

The school is one of several Jewish institutions that have opened recently. These institutions reflect not only the phenomenal growth of Jewish life here, but also the fact that Germany's Jews feel freer to express their religious differences after decades of presenting a self-protective facade of unity.

As council member Michel Friedman has often said, children of Holocaust survivors, like himself, are no longer sitting on packed suitcases, ready to leave at the slightest sign of danger.

Options are growing for liberal or Reform Jews, and in the 20-something generation, a tiny but growing number are seeking religious roots, trying to keep kosher and even wearing their tallit fringes in public. Such sights haven't been seen much around here since before the war. "I had to go to New York to see what my grandparents probably experienced in Germany," said Joachim Gauck, a Protestant theologian and former East German dissident, at the dedication.

Other recent Jewish developments in Germany include the opening this summer of two new Jewish courts, one Orthodox and one non-Orthodox; recently, a new Reform-style congregation started meeting in Berlin; and a liberal rabbinical school is scheduled to be dedicated later this month in nearby Potsdam. The Lauder school, which has been operating in temporary headquarters for about a year, is of a more traditional bent.

As in every pluralistic society, the institutions' ideological differences create problems. Germany's two Jewish courts disagree on essential questions of conversion, divorce and burial. But both are supported by the official community.

Such challenges may chafe, but when is any good-sized Jewish community monolithic?

"At least I am happy there is diversity in Germany," noted Israel's outgoing ambassador to Germany, Avi Primor, at the 1997 conference of the World Union of Progressive Judaism, held for the first time in Germany. "In Israel, those who don't wish to remain loyal to Orthodoxy leave religion altogether," he said, in a typically fearless challenge to his own government.

The new Lauder school is intended to address one of the most serious practical problems of the growing community — a lack of teachers and rabbis.

Lauder pointed to a related problem — Germany's new Jewish communities are too spread out. Because of Germany's settlement policy, tens of thousands of ex-Soviet

MIDEAST FOCUS

Money pledged for pluralism

Israel's education minister promised to budget \$1.25 million for educational organizations that offer a pluralistic approach to Judaism, according to the Israeli daily *Ha'aretz*.

In a meeting with representatives of some of the 70 non-Orthodox organizations involved in Jewish education in Israel's state school system, Yossi Sarid said the money would come in addition to the \$15 million budgeted for pluralistic educational programs to implement the recommendations of a commission that investigated the issue in the early 1990s.

Lawmaker resigns from Knesset

An Israeli legislator said he would resign from the Knesset to devote his energies to opposing the dismantling of settlements in the West Bank.

Hanan Porat's comments came one day after several thousand settlers and their supporters demonstrated across from the prime minister's residence in Jerusalem on Sunday night to protest the planned dismantling of settler outposts.

Israeli spied for the KGB

An immigrant from the former Soviet Union was convicted Monday of spying for the KGB.

Valery Kaminsky pleaded guilty in a plea bargain to providing the KGB with classified information he culled from his son, an Israeli soldier, and his work as an airplane maintenance technician on an Air Force base, between 1976 and 1993.

Charges were not brought against his son.

Israel can sell arms to Jordan

Israel's military industry was given permission to sell light arms to Jordan for the first time.

But no deal is presently in the works, according to the newspaper *Ha'aretz*.

Israeli arms have previously reached Arab states through a third party.

Jews have been placed in some 80 communities nationwide, where they must stay until they become German citizens if they want to receive state financial support. "I have to thank the German government for giving them the chance to come here," said Lauder. But the policy of separating them is not helpful. "We must have fewer communities and better schools and synagogues," he said.

On Sunday, Lauder affixed a mezuzah to the entrance of the school building, with help from the school's dean, Rabbi Chaim Rozwaski, and Andreas Nachama, the leader of Berlin's Jewish community.

Guests then filed into the newly renovated school, with its sparkling white hallways, brand new meeting rooms, offices and kitchens, and gleaming mezuzahs over the doorways.

Only a few months ago, these halls were dusty and moldy and filled with the discarded furniture from the years the building was used as an East German social welfare office.

Lauder's 12-year-old eponymous foundation, which has created or supported dozens of Jewish institutions across Central and Eastern Europe, from schools and kindergartens for some 7,500 children to community centers and summer camps, also dedicated Jewish schools in Vienna and in Warsaw this week.

Germany's official Jewish population has nearly tripled to more than 75,000 in the past decade, thanks to the arrival of the former Soviet Jews.

"Who could have believed in 1945 that the Jewish community in Germany would become the fastest growing in the entire world? For me, it is a miracle," said Paul Spiegel, a member of the Central Council of Jews in Germany.

Spiegel hailed the new Lauder school as "a gift to future generations" during Sunday's dedication ceremonies, which included speeches by Nachama, Gauck and Berlin Mayor Eberhard Diepgen, who was re-elected by a wide margin later that day.

The school has been operating for about a year in temporary quarters, under the leadership of Rozwaski, who came to Berlin last year from New York. Already, several students have been commuting to the school from across the country. The school will eventually include a teacher resource center, an adult education institute and an intensive study program.

Since this spring, workers have been renovating the school building, which was returned to the Berlin Jewish community in 1998.

The Jewish community made the property available rent-free to the *Lehrhaus* for 20 years and has contributed to the cost of repairing the building, though the bulk of the cost has been assumed by the Lauder foundation.

The new school in Berlin seems destined to become a magnet for younger Jews, born in the former Soviet Union, who are rediscovering their Jewish roots.

Two young men from Leipzig on Monday confessed their dreams of attending the school in a year or two. Igor Radbil, 15, and Genady Shandalov, 19, met through the Lauder Am Echad youth program in their city.

Now both young men wear yarmulkas in the street and try to keep kosher at home. They came to the opening day ceremony along with dozens of Jewish youth from around Germany.

Their experiences may symbolize the challenges and rewards ahead. "My parents don't like it that I don't put on the lights on the Sabbath," said Radbil, who wears his tzitzit visibly despite the fact that Leipzig has a serious problem with far-right extremists.

Levy, the Lauder foundation's Germany chairman, cares like a parent for all the young people who pass through the foundation doors.

He's inspired by such convictions but agrees with Josh Spinner, one of two young rabbis recently hired as educators. "Josh advised Igor to wear a baseball cap and not a kippah on the streets of Leipzig," Levy said.

"It's very good to wear the kippah, but God forbid that something should happen to you."

Recently, it has been Jewish tombstones that have been victimized.

More than 100 graves were desecrated at Jewish cemeteries in Berlin and southern Germany earlier this month.

"It is not that Germany is paradise on earth for Jews," said Spiegel. "All in all, I believe that Jews have confidence in Germany. But we must watch out." □



Daily News Bulletin

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JTA DAILY NEWS BULLETIN is published five days a week, except holidays, by the Jewish Telegraphic Agency Inc., 330 Seventh Ave., New York, N.Y. 10001-5010. For information about how to subscribe by e-mail, fax or regular mail, call (212) 643-1890, or visit our Web site at www.jta.org.
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JEWISH WORLD

Poland pressed on restitution

Fifty-eight U.S. lawmakers called on Poland's Parliament to pass legislation allowing for the restitution of property seized by the Nazi and Communist regimes.

In a letter, the members of the U.S. House of Representatives commended Poland for making progress in repatriating communal property, but also expressed concern that the government has postponed a conference on the issue that it had pledged to host next month.

Japanese article anti-Semitic

The Simon Wiesenthal Center is calling on the advertisers for Japan's second largest weekly magazine to pressure the publication to retract an anti-Semitic article. The Oct. 15 article in the *Shukan Post* stated that "Wall Street Jews" were behind an American company's Sept. 28 takeover of a Japanese credit bank, adding that the "Jewish financial clique" will "eat up" Japanese taxpayer money.

Haider: Jews stuck in Holocaust

The leader of an Austrian far-right party that finished second in general elections earlier this month said the world's Jews are stuck in a Holocaust-era mindset.

"Israel, the Jewish communities, are tied to the history of 50 years ago. Often they forget that the world has changed, that men and history have changed," said Jorg Haider.

West Virginia eyes creationism

A school board in West Virginia is considering lifting a ban on the teaching of creationism.

A proposal by a board member was submitted last week to principals and teachers in Kanwaha County, the state's largest county.

The board is expected to vote on the matter in December.

Neo-Nazi's appeal rejected

A court in South Africa rejected an appeal by a neo-Nazi against his six-year sentence for attempting to kill a black man. Terre Blanche, the leader of the Afrikaner Resistance Movement, has two weeks to appeal his case to the country's highest court, the Supreme Court of Appeals.

Exhibit on London Jews opens

An exhibit of paintings of a turn-of-the-century London Jewish art dealer and his family opened Sunday at the Jewish Museum in New York. After the paintings by John Singer Sargeant of the Wertheimer family are displayed at the Jewish Museum, they will travel to New Orleans, Richmond and Seattle.

France to raise arrests of Jews as Europe takes lead with Iran

By Julia Goldman

NEW YORK (JTA) — Efforts to mobilize international support for the 13 Iranian Jews arrested in March for spying for Israel continue, advocates in the United States say.

European officials have been at the forefront recently of advancing the issue with the Iranian government, which has said it will try the Jews in a revolutionary court in the southern city of Shiraz.

Israel denies any connection to the prisoners.

On Oct. 14, Iran's Foreign Ministry reportedly said it was "surprised" that France would raise the issue of the 13 Jews — whose number is believed to include Jewish religious and communal leaders — during a visit by President Mohammed Khatami scheduled for late October.

Iran says that several Muslims are being held along with the Jews, as an indication that the arrests were not motivated by religion or ethnicity.

Iran is considered by observers to be locked in a struggle between moderates, under Khatami, and religious hard-liners even as it attempting to strengthen its ties to the West.

"The case of the Jews is an internal Iranian matter and is the proper business of Iran's courts," a Foreign Ministry spokesman was quoted as saying in the Tehran press.

The day before, French Foreign Minister Hubert Vedrine declared that he and Prime Minister Lionel Jospin would broach the subject with Khatami, who would be the first Iranian president to visit France since the 1979 Islamic Revolution in Iran.

Last month, Austrian President Thomas Klestil raised the case with Iran's spiritual leader, Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, during what was the first visit to Iran by a European head of state since 1979.

Khamenei reportedly told Klestil that the issue was an internal matter and that "if their crime is proved by the court, they will probably be punished."

Espionage is punishable by death in Iran, and 17 Jews have been executed for spying in the past 20 years.

Last month, however, U.S. Secretary of State Madeleine Albright in a meeting with Jewish leaders in New York, reiterated reports that Tehran had given assurances that "in time of peace, Iran does not apply capital punishment."

As diplomatic advocacy continues to free the 13 Jews — or at least to provide for an expeditious, fair and open trial — Malcolm Hoenlein, the executive vice chairman of the Conference of Presidents of Major American Jewish Organizations, is stressing that there is no need for funds on behalf of the Jews being held or the Jewish community in Iran.

The Presidents Conference, a New York-based umbrella group, has been active on the issue since word of the Jews' imprisonment in the city of Shiraz emerged in April.

Reports of fund-raising activity for the Iranian Jews prompted Hoenlein to warn that any such solicitation "should be considered a sham." Hoenlein also said such fund raising could endanger the Jewish community in Iran because it "sets up a situation where all Iranian Jews would become potential hostages." □

Mandela visits Israel for first time

JERUSALEM (JTA) — Nelson Mandela has arrived in Israel for his first visit to the Jewish state.

The former South African president and Nobel Peace Prize winner, whose visit is seen as an indication that he is pleased with progress in Israeli-Palestinian peace talks, told reporters before meeting with Israeli President Ezer Weizman on Monday that he believes Iran and Syria are interested in peace.

Mandela was also scheduled to hold talks with Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Barak, and visit the Yad Vashem Holocaust Memorial and the grave of Yitzhak Rabin.

Mandela was slated to meet with Palestinian Authority Chairman Yasser Arafat on Tuesday. Mandela canceled previously scheduled visits to the Jewish state because of his criticism of Israeli policy. □

NEWS ANALYSIS

Domestic issues take back seat to peace in Barak's first 100 days

By Gil Sedan

JERUSALEM (JTA) — On Day 100 of Ehud Barak's term in office, the prime minister earned a big victory: He and settler leaders agreed to dismantle some West Bank outposts.

Only 24 hours earlier, some of these leaders had threatened to resist "down to the last brick" a committee decision to dismantle 15 of the outposts.

For the price of three outposts, Barak temporarily, at least, earned the cooperation of the settlers.

This compromise represents Barak's main achievement in his first 100 days in office — and is indicative of how observers are viewing his performance.

While he has received high marks on the peace front, and for warming relations with the United States, he is generally considered to have accomplished little regarding the economy and other domestic matters.

Although there has been some grass-roots opposition to the move, the compromise on the outposts was no small achievement.

However, the settler issue will not go away for Barak. The deal has opened a generational rift between older settlement movement founders and younger, more militant groups.

For now, however, as Barak attempts to reach an agreement with the Palestinians on a framework for a permanent status agreement within the next 100 days, he has avoided a direct confrontation with the Israeli right.

Indeed, at his meeting with the settlers, Barak went out of his way to compliment them for their "fantastic achievements" and express his "deep empathy" for the settlements.

While Likud leader Ariel Sharon accused Barak of conspiring with Yasser Arafat against the settlers, other ministers on the right praised the agreement.

And while some members of the Israeli left might have wanted more outposts dismantled, the memory of right-wing former Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu is too fresh in their minds not to forgive Barak's mistakes.

Some 170,000 Jews live in settlements scattered among more than three million Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza Strip.

Elsewhere, Barak has achieved less success.

When he took office, Barak pledged to withdraw from Lebanon within a year.

But after initial signs of a warming of relations between Israel and Syria, the main power broker in Lebanon — Barak and Syrian President Hafez Assad praised each other — there has apparently been no real progress in bringing the two countries back to the negotiating table for the first time since 1996.

"I have no doubt that when during the election campaign he promised to get the army out of Lebanon within a year, it was not more than a figure of speech.

"But then he was caught by his own words, and he is now bound by a commitment which he did not have in the first place," settler leader Elyakim Haetzni of Kiryat Arba told JTA this week.

Progress on the economy appears to be just as slow.

When Barak took office, he made the peace process a priority, and critics say he has ignored the domestic front.

One of his campaign promises was to make sure that "the old woman from Sderot" — representing poorer segments of Israeli society — would no longer lie neglected in a hospital corridor.

"The way Barak copes with the challenges, the old woman must have died a few weeks ago," quipped writer Nir Bar'am.

Unemployment is still high, the health care system is still in deep financial crisis, budgets for cultural projects have been cut and salaries for social workers and Arab teachers have been put on hold.

Barak believes that progress in the peace process will inject life into the economy.

But analysts say that while there are hints of a cyclical recovery, Barak was unable to push through significant changes in the budget framework that would jump-start the economy out of its four-year slowdown.

In internal politics, Barak has generally done as he pleased. True, he had to reverse his initial draft for a new state budget following across-the-board criticism that the budget did not contain enough social spending.

But he did include Shas in the coalition, despite the opposition of many of his own supporters, and on his own terms: convicted criminal and Shas leader Aryeh Deri was not allowed to head the party.

In addition, religious leaders relented and allowed power plant parts to be moved on Shabbat despite threats to quit the coalition over the issue.

And state funding of Shas' educational system decreased from a generous current of money to a carefully controlled trickle.

Suspicious by nature, Barak has succeeded in creating a large number of political foes in his own party.

Critics say he doesn't consult his ministers enough and gives them too little credit.

When Transportation Minister Yitzhak Mordechai asked him recently whether the ministers could view certain defense documents, Barak responded offhandedly: "Some you will see, some you won't."

Barak has alienated influential politicians such as Internal Security Minister Shlomo Ben-Ami and Environment Minister Dalia Itzik by pushing them to lesser ministries.

Ben-Ami wanted the Foreign or Finance ministries; Itzik wanted the Education Ministry.

Barak has also managed to aggravate even his ally David Levy, the foreign minister, by not inviting him to a surprise overnight meeting with Palestinian Authority Chairman Yasser Arafat.

Nor does Barak show any signs that he intends to make any use of the experience of former Prime Minister Shimon Peres, who is now the regional cooperation minister.

So while Barak's handling of the peace process appears to have won some time with the Israeli public, his honeymoon is over.

"Barak should know that what he hears from his own people and from the media is totally different than what the public thinks of him.

"People stop me in the street and ask me when are we finally going to get rid of him," Likud Knesset Member Silvan Shalom told JTA.

But if the comment from a member of Likud is to be expected, another is not: Recent opinion polls have shown that Barak's popularity among Russian immigrants, whose support helped elect him, has dropped considerably in the past three months. □