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82nd Year

TOP NEWS IN BRIEF

Troops evict West Bank settlers

Israeli troops dragged hundreds of Jewish settlers from an illegal West Bank outpost. The eviction of the settlers took place hours before Israel's Cabinet approved a withdrawal from another 5 percent of the West Bank.

Under the terms of an accord signed in September, Israel agreed to withdraw from an additional 18.1 percent of the West Bank. [Page 4]

Israel's U.N. exclusion 'unlawful'

Israel's exclusion from the United Nations' regional groups is "unlawful," according to a report by a former president of the U.N.'s International Court of Justice.

In the Nov. 4 report obtained by JTA, Sir Robert Jennings says Israel's "hobbled and undignified" position is "manifestly unlawful and constitutes a breach of both the letter and the spirit" of the U.N. Charter. The report, made at Israel's request, calls for the matter's resolution as "an issue of primary importance."

Israel is the only U.N. member-state denied membership in any of the five groups, which effectively bars it from full participation in the 188-member forum.

First lady arrives in Israel

First lady Hillary Rodham Clinton began a two-day visit to Israel. The visit will likely draw the attention of Jews in New York, where she is expected to run for a Senate seat next year. [Page 4]

Voucher amendment passed

The U.S. Senate passed by a vote of 50-49 an amendment to a bankruptcy bill allowing students who are victims of violent or drug-related crimes to be eligible for vouchers to attend private or parochial schools. The language was included in a larger amendment offered by Sen. Orrin Hatch (R-Utah) containing a number of anti-drug provisions.

Candidates to address group

All six Republican presidential candidates are expected to appear at a Dec. 1 forum sponsored by the Republican Jewish Coalition. The group is billing the Washington event as the only time all of the contenders will collectively address a Jewish audience.

Atlanta gathering to unveil game plan for the new UJC

By Julia Goldman

NEW YORK (JTA) — Mandy Patinkin ends his Yiddish version of "Take Me Out to the Ball Game" with an exhortation: "Play Ball!"

By the time the popular performer takes the stage on the last night of the United Jewish Communities' General Assembly next week, the 3,200 delegates and 2,000 volunteers expected to gather in Atlanta for the event should know the game plan for the new organization that aims to represent the domestic and international agendas of some 200 Jewish communities in North America.

This year's G.A., as the General Assembly is commonly known, will be the first official event for the United Jewish Communities, which is being formed by the merger of the United Jewish Appeal, the Council of Jewish Federations and the United Israel Appeal. The four-day event will also be the first test of the motivating principle behind the merger: making local Jewish federations responsible for North America's most broad-based Jewish fund-raising and social service organization.

Last year the UJC raised more than \$760 million in its annual campaign, funds that were allocated to local, national and overseas needs.

The G.A., which will officially begin Nov. 17, marks the first meetings of the committees and boards that will govern the UJC, which was founded at a meeting of federation lay and professional leaders this spring after six years of discussions and development.

"We will begin the decision-making process at the G.A.," said UJC President Stephen Solender, "But of equal importance, we're going to begin the education process at the G.A."

During the next three to nine months, he said, the UJC will have to adopt its first budget, approve recommendations regarding overseas disbursements and take up initial recommendations from the four "pillar" committees charged with formulating the programmatic mission of the organization.

"Our objective is to prepare the federations so that over the next period of months they can make some very important decisions that are going to define the immediate future of the UJC," said Solender, who took office in October after six months as acting president.

Part of that preparation will come out of high-level briefings by Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Barak; Rabbi Michael Melchior, Israel's minister for Diaspora affairs; Dennis Ross, the U.S. government's special Middle East coordinator; George Schultz, the former U.S. secretary of state; Alice Shalvi, one of the foremost Israeli feminists; and a host of Jewish thinkers, teachers and writers.

Vice President Al Gore, who had been invited to address the opening plenum, will not attend the convention, according to UJC officials.

But G.A. participants, including approximately 300 Israelis, are also expected to learn from each other in roundtable discussions and in open forums focused on the four areas designated as pillars: Jewish Renaissance and Renewal, Israel and Overseas Concerns, Human Services and Social Policy, and Financial Resource Development.

"Everyone in the room will be able to discuss the topic, to put their ideas on the table," said Ivan Schaeffer, a Washington businessman who is co-chairing this year's G.A. with Jodi Schwartz, a New York attorney.

Staff facilitators will communicate feedback from the discussions to the governing bodies that are charged with running the new entity: the Executive Committee, the Board of Trustees, the Delegate Assembly and the four pillar committees. This is the UJC's

MIDEAST FOCUS

Israel helping Chinese air force

Israel is outfitting a Chinese air force jet with an advanced radar system that will allow the aircraft to conduct long-range surveillance, according to an Israeli official.

Reports that Israel is selling the radar system to China have been circulating for two years. Israel has also reportedly sold the system to South Africa.

Joint naval exercises planned

Turkey, Israel and the United States are planning to hold joint naval exercises before the end of the year.

Similar exercises held last year stirred the anger of Arab countries, who are threatened by the growing military ties between Israel and Turkey.

U.S., Israel discuss bioterrorism

The United States is seeking closer cooperation with Israel to develop antidotes against biological weapons.

Ha'aretz reported Tuesday that the matter was raised in talks during recent strategic cooperation discussions in Washington.

Soldiers said to be smuggling

Dozens of Israeli soldiers serving in southern Lebanon are reportedly smuggling drugs into the Jewish state.

As much as three tons of heroin are smuggled into Israel across the Lebanese border each year, with soldiers making up to \$10,000 for each 2 pounds they smuggle, the Israeli daily Ha'aretz reported.

Natural gas found near Israel

A natural gas field was recently discovered off the coast of southern Israel by the Israeli firm Isramco and the British firm British Gas.

An Isramco official said the field indicates that resources may exist only a few miles off the coast to meet Israel's natural gas needs.

"first face to the public," Schwartz said. "We want to show who we are" and also to "get input on what they," the UJC constituents, "want from us."

Since April, Solender said, the UJC, acting under an interim governance structure, has been soliciting recommendations from federations for seats on the 550-plus-member Delegate Assembly and the pillar committees.

The thousands of federation responses were reviewed by the UJC's top lay leaders — Charles Bronfman, chairman of the board, and Joel Tauber, chairman of the executive committee — and a nominating committee, which made the appointments.

The final appointments are meant to reflect the federations' actual constituencies, with an eye to creating a balance in terms of gender, age, geography and federation size.

"We've been conscious all along that these people are the owners of this entity," Solender said.

Federations' ownership role should also be clear in the work of the governing bodies, officials said, where federations have a majority voice. The bodies are constituted as follows:

- **Delegate Assembly** — 550 federation representatives, plus 15 seats for independent communities; one seat each for agencies that work with the UJC nationally and overseas, including the Jewish Agency for Israel, the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee, Hillel and the Jewish Community Centers of America, and one seat each for representatives of the four synagogue movements.

The Delegate Assembly is mainly responsible for adopting annual budgets and voting on major public policy statements of a system-wide nature.

"The overarching authority" of the UJC "lies in the Delegate Assembly," where "all the federations come together," said Stephen Hoffman, the executive vice president of the Jewish Community Federation of Cleveland, who heads the committee that drafted plans for the UJC's governance structure.

- **Board of Trustees** — 120 seats, with 68 percent apportioned by federation city-size groupings and 32 percent representing the four pillar committees and the UJC's five regions, with 10 seats at large.

Additional seats are held for past officials of the organizations that are participating in the merger.

The Board of Trustees is charged with setting policy for the organization, recommending a budget to the Delegate Assembly and acting on the recommendations of a separate committee that determines global Jewish needs. That committee operates as the Overseas Needs Assessment and Distribution Committee, or ONAD. The Board of Trustees is slated to meet at least four times a year.

"This is where the ownership is lodged on a representative basis," Hoffman said of the Board of Trustees, "where the policy decisions may get implemented, and issues are shaped."

- **Executive Committee** — 25 members, all of whom are members of the Board of Trustees, including the chairman of the board, the chairman of the executive committee, the chairs of the pillar committees, the regional services chair, the UJC treasurer, the UIA board chair, and local federation officers.

"It is anticipated that the Executive Committee will actively manage the UJC on a month-to-month basis," Hoffman said. "In terms of lay leadership input — that's new."

The Board of Trustees will meet for the first time in Atlanta, and at least nine resolutions — on issues ranging from Middle East peace to U.S. health policy and Social Security — will go before the full Delegate Assembly.

Solender said that the legal incorporation that will finalize the merger is expected to be approved by the morning of Nov. 17, when the Board of Trustees meets.

Appointments to the pillar committees are expected to be announced at the G.A., but UJC officials do not plan for the members to hold a formal meetings during the G.A.

In fact, the entire organization is still under development. Along with Solender, two other professional executives, Louise Stoll and David Altshuler, were appointed last month, but they will not take office until after the G.A.

Since the UJA and CJF first formed a working partnership in the spring of 1998, officials have said repeatedly that the future of the organization could not be determined until the governing bodies and officers were in place.

Now, as Solender indicated, the UJC will have to start in on its work of setting a fund-raising and programmatic agenda for North American Jewish communities. □



Daily News Bulletin

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JEWISH WORLD

California to pressure insurers

California plans to issue subpoenas to some 15 European insurers doing business in the state in a bid to extract complete lists of Holocaust-era policyholders.

California Insurance Commissioner Chuck Quackenbush said Tuesday he will start issuing the subpoenas next week to force the companies to attend two public hearings next month. The hearings will attempt to determine whether the companies are ready to turn over the lists, in compliance with California's newly enacted Holocaust Registry Law.

"If we get defiance of the subpoenas, our course will be clear and we can prepare for their eventual exit from the California marketplace," Quackenbush said.

U.S. moves against alleged Nazi

The U.S. Justice Department moved to revoke the citizenship of an alleged Nazi war criminal for lying about his World War II record.

The department's Office of Special Investigations alleges that Wasyl Krysa served as a guard at the Poniatowa labor camp from July to November 1943 and that he later was a guard at a sub-camp of Mauthausen.

Krysa, who lives in Brooklyn, Ohio, entered the United States in 1951.

Firm chairman called anti-Semitic

The chairman of the board of a multinational telecommunications giant was fired amid allegations that he is a member of an anti-Semitic group.

The charges against Swiss citizen Hans Rudolf Barth, of Nokia International, came in a Swiss newspaper.

California inks deal in Israel

The state of California and Israel signed an agreement to cooperate in the field of biotechnology. The agreement, which was signed last week at Ben-Gurion University in Beersheva, came during Gov. Gray Davis' visit to the Jewish state.

The agreement calls for academic and commercial exchanges and research projects. On his four-day trip, Davis also met with Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Barak, President Hosni Mubarak of Egypt and Palestinian Authority Chairman Yasser Arafat. According to figures released by Davis' office, California's exports to Israel rose to a high of \$726 million in 1998.

Film planned for fake memoir

A producer for Paramount paid for the right to produce a film based on a magazine article about a man whose Holocaust memoir appears to be fabricated. The article focuses on Benjamin Wilkomirski, whose acclaimed book, "Fragments," was recently withdrawn from publication.

Non-Jewish immigrants subject of fiery debate in Knesset panel

By Avi Machlis

JERUSALEM (JTA) — The flow of non-Jewish immigrants from the former Soviet Union has become a flash point of controversy in Israel, with one legislator going so far as to call it a "national security problem."

Nobody knows exactly how many non-Jews have arrived in Israel among the more than 800,000 immigrants who came during the past decade from Russia and the other former Soviet republics.

Some officials estimate that about 25 percent of the immigrants who arrived during that period, and more than 50 percent of those arriving today, are not Jewish.

The debate has prompted the same legislator, Shmuel Halpert, a Knesset member from the fervently Orthodox United Torah Judaism Party, to propose a change tightening the Law of Return, which grants anyone who had a Jewish grandparent the right to immediate Israeli citizenship.

Batya Carmon, director of the Visa Department at Israel's Interior Ministry, told a Knesset panel that many non-Jews from the former Soviet Union have forged documents to resettle in Israel.

"Whoever immigrates to Israel on the basis of the Law of Return has the right to come," said Carmon on Tuesday at the Knesset's Immigration and Absorption Committee, which held a heated debate on the issue. "The problem is with all those people who are exploiting the law of return while acquiring a false identity."

The debate heated up when Halpert unleashed sweeping condemnations of the non-Jewish immigrants, accusing them of being responsible for the organized crime and prostitution that many Israelis believe is prevalent among emigres from the former Soviet Union.

Knesset members from across the board condemned his remarks and urged Halpert to apologize, but he refused.

Last week Halpert — who initiated Tuesday's debate — submitted a bill to change the Law of Return to prevent more non-Jews from entering the country.

Under his proposal, only those who are Jews according to Orthodox law, meaning those who have a Jewish mother, would be eligible for Israeli citizenship.

Part of the problem is that the founders of Israel, who wrote the Law of Return, never imagined that the struggling Jewish state would one day boast a thriving economy that would attract non-Jews from poorer countries such as Russia.

But several Knesset members rejected Halpert's initiative.

Much of the pressure to reach a solution to the ongoing debate over Orthodox control of conversions in Israel is linked to the Russian immigrant issue.

Rabbi Yitzhak Grossman, a fervently Orthodox member of the Chief Rabbinate's council, insisted that the rabbinate is making it easier for immigrants to convert. "But there are many immigrants that do not want to convert," he said.

Others argue that many immigrants want to be Jewish, but not Orthodox.

"The central problem on the agenda today is the conversion problem," said Naomi Blumenthal, the committee chair and a Likud Knesset member. "If different types of conversions were available, they would convert."

At the committee meeting, a photocopy of a Russian newspaper advertisement was distributed. In the ad, the Jewish Agency for Israel appealed to non-Jewish Russians of Jewish ancestry to immigrate.

"If at least one of your grandparents from your father's or mother's side is registered as Jewish, you have the right to immigrate to Israel," declared the ad.

Chaim Chesler, the Jewish Agency's treasurer, denied the agency had distributed the ad and rejected responsibility for the influx of non-Jews.

"We at the Jewish Agency implement the policy of the State of Israel," said Chesler. "So what do you want to do, kill the messenger?"

On Wednesday, Chesler called on Halpert to apologize.

"We cannot stand idly by when someone in a position of public standing makes such incitements to intolerance," he said. □

NEWS ANALYSIS

Images of Jew vs. Jew emerge from settlers' eviction

By Mitchell Danow

NEW YORK (JTA) — Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Barak has won what was his first open confrontation with Jewish settlers since taking office.

But, eager to protect the strong governing coalition he has formed, he is hardly looking forward to any repetition of what occurred Wednesday.

In a scene reminiscent of the settler demonstrations that took place in 1995, when then-Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin was withdrawing from portions of the West Bank under the terms of the Interim Agreement signed that year, some 300 settlers were forcibly removed Wednesday by Israeli troops from an illegal hilltop outpost. There had originally been only four families at Havat Maon, or Maon Farm, but the numbers grew in recent weeks as settlers arrived at the barren hilltop and prepared for a confrontation with the troops.

Their numbers were nowhere as strong as the thousands who turned out in 1995 to block roads across Israel, but just the same, the images of the Maon standoff may create sympathy for their cause — sympathy that may translate into wider demonstrations as Barak attempts to advance the Oslo peace process with the Palestinian Authority.

Just hours after the standoff, Barak secured his Cabinet's approval of the next step in that process when his ministers, by a vote of 17-1, gave the go-ahead to an Israeli withdrawal from another 5 percent of the West Bank.

Wednesday's standoff provided its share of disturbing images: settlers clinging to rooftops before being taken away; the cries of "Shame," "Arafat Is Proud of You" and "Refuse Orders" directed at the troops; eggs and paint being thrown at the approximately 1,000 security forces; a settler removing a Torah scroll from a makeshift wooden synagogue under a police escort.

Hours later, during the Cabinet meeting, Barak applauded the restraint shown by the troops, who he said combined "sense and determination in order to impose the government's will on its citizens."

"What happened at the Maon Farm is a difficult test for democracy and a red light on the road to anarchy," he added.

But if he felt any sense of triumph, there were warnings that further confrontations were still to come.

"If this is the kind of struggle that is put up over an outpost, imagine what it will be like over a settlement," said settler leader Benny Katzover.

The incident at Maon also drew condemnation from others.

"This is ethnic cleansing of Jews by Jews and we are ashamed of our government," said Nadia Matar of the Women in Green movement, which opposes any Israeli handovers of the West Bank to the Palestinians. And another handover is exactly what is planned as a result of Wednesday's Cabinet vote.

Under the terms of the land-for-security accord signed September in Egypt, Israel agreed to withdraw from an additional 18.1 percent of West Bank lands in three stages.

In September, Israel transferred 7 percent of the West Bank to joint Israeli-Palestinian control. In the second stage, to be carried

out Monday, Israel will transfer 2 percent of the land to sole Palestinian control and an additional 3 percent to joint control.

On Jan. 20, Israel will hand over an additional 6.1 percent of the region. A third phase of withdrawals, called for under the Oslo accords, still has to be negotiated as part of the final-status negotiations. Its extent will determine both the size and borders of the Palestinian entity that emerges from those talks.

But if settler demonstrations gather momentum in the coming weeks, the pro-settler National Religious Party could wind up bolting the coalition.

Barak — who currently has the support of 73 of the Knesset's 120 members and wants to keep his coalition intact through the final-status talks — can ill afford any defections as he attempts to work out a final peace agreement with the Palestinian Authority.

In an effort to create facts on the ground in advance of the final-status talks, settlers created 42 outposts on barren hills across the West Bank during the past year.

The settler leadership persuaded the residents of 11 outposts to leave, but Maon became a magnet for younger settlers who defied the leaders. While most of them used passive resistance, dozens of them were arrested Wednesday for threatening or hindering the security forces.

The confrontation took its toll on the Israeli security forces who carried out the predawn evacuation. According to Maj. Gen. Moshe Ya'alon, chief of the Israel Defense Force's command in charge of the West Bank, soldiers had received psychological counseling before launching Wednesday's operation.

"We are trained to fight in battle against enemies, not against Jews — either settlers or other Jews," he was quoted as saying.

Emotions swelled among all the participants Wednesday. When the evacuation ended, an Israeli policewoman was seen hugging a colleague and breaking into tears. □

First lady tours the Middle East

JERUSALEM (JTA) — First lady Hillary Rodham Clinton began a Middle East tour by lending her support to an Israeli campaign against youth violence, saying it is also a problem in the United States.

Clinton, who is considering a run for a New York seat in the U.S. Senate, stressed that she's traveling in her official capacity as first lady. However, her activities and remarks while here are likely to be closely watched for impact on the large Jewish voting bloc in New York.

At Clinton's first stop, a teen counseling center in Kfar Saba, she and Prime Minister Ehud Barak's wife, Nava, signed a "Don't Give Up — Fight Violence" pledge.

The pledge is part of an anti-violence campaign launched by Elem, the Association for Youth at Risk and Distress. Clinton said she hoped to initiate a similar campaign in the United States.

"It's a good idea that I will take back to the United States because we are similarly engaged in a national campaign against violence," Clinton said after signing the pledge. "I particularly hope that the covenant which I just read will be heard by adults, because it is not the young people we need to reach."

The counseling center in Kfar Saba — sponsored by Elem, the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee, Israeli government ministries and other organizations — is one of eight around the country providing teens with information and guidance. □