

## IN THE NEWS

### Holocaust-era archive to be opened

A commission of 11 nations agreed to open a major Holocaust-era archive.

Representatives of the countries that oversee the former Nazi files in Bad Arolsen, Germany, agreed Tuesday to allow access to historians and researchers.

The archive contains 50 million files and is administered by the Red Cross.

### Palestinian rocket kills chickens in Israel

A Palestinian rocket killed dozens of chickens in an Israeli farming community.

There were no human casualties from Tuesday morning's salvo from the Gaza Strip against Kibbutz Nativ Ha'asara, but locals said at least 30 chickens died when a Katyusha rocket hit their coop.

The Palestinian terrorist group Islamic Jihad claimed responsibility for the firing, saying it had used a new version of the Soviet-era Katyusha.

The overall frequency of such firings has dropped significantly in recent weeks as Israel has sent artillery barrages against rocket launch areas in northern Gaza.

### Azeris to open Israel Embassy 'shortly'

Azerbaijan will open an embassy in Israel, a Jewish Azeri legislator said.

Yevda Abramov told Baku Today that the issue was raised last month when Azeri President Ilham Aliyev visited Washington and met with Jewish leaders.

Aliyev pledged to open an embassy "shortly," Baku Today said.

Israel has had an embassy in the largely Muslim former Soviet republic since 1993.

Azerbaijan has resisted opening an embassy with Israel because of Azerbaijan's good relations with neighboring Iran.

# WORLD REPORT

PUBLISHED WEEKDAYS BY JTA—THE GLOBAL NEWS SERVICE OF THE JEWISH PEOPLE • WWW.JTA.ORG

## Olmert seeks pullback support in U.S., though Israel is balking

By LESLIE SUSSER

**J**ERUSALEM (JTA) — Ehud Olmert is hoping his upcoming visit to Washington, his first as Israeli prime minister, will bring U.S. backing for a major Israeli withdrawal from the West Bank — yet Olmert doesn't even have unqualified support from his own government for a unilateral move.

Olmert's main coalition partner, defense minister and Labor Party leader, Amir Peretz, insists that Olmert first fully explore the possibility of a negotiated settlement with the Palestinians.

The situation is further complicated by differences on the Palestinian side. While the radical Hamas government rules out peace talks with Israel, Palestinian Authority President Mahmoud Abbas, leader of the more moderate Fatah movement, has been imploring Olmert to open negotiations with him and warning that unilateral moves by Israel could lead to a violent conflagration.

The upshot is likely to be a coordinated, two-pronged American-Israeli policy: exploring peace talks with Abbas while simultaneously drawing up detailed plans for a unilateral withdrawal that will go into high gear if talks fail.

Olmert begins his diplomatic dealings with the Bush administration convinced that there's no genuine peace partner on the Palestinian side. In his view, Hamas has ruled itself out and Abbas is too weak to deliver.

Olmert likely will tell the Americans that while he is willing to explore the Abbas channel, it's almost certain to fail. Since Is-

rael can't continue to be sucked into an occupation it doesn't want, he'll argue, Israel and the United States should start tackling the enormously complex unilateral option without delay.

Olmert leaves for the United States on Sunday. On Monday he meets Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice and Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld, then meets with President Bush on Tuesday, possibly for several hours. On Wednesday, Olmert is due to address a joint sitting of both houses of Congress.

Aides say Olmert will seek agreement on the following general principles in his Washington talks:

- The time to be allotted to peace talks with Abbas before they can be declared ineffective;
- American readiness in principle to back a policy shift to unilateral withdrawal if it becomes apparent that peace talks are irredeemably deadlocked;
- An American commitment to mobilize international support for any unilateral Israeli moves;
- American readiness to negotiate with Israel over where its permanent borders should run, and to recognize them if agreement is reached.

The basis for future Israeli-American border negotiations will be Bush's April 2004 letter to then-Prime Minister Ariel Sharon.

Bush wrote that it would be "unrealistic" to expect Israel to return to the pre-1967 boundaries, and implied American support for the retention of "already existing major

*Continued on page 2*

NEWS  
ANALYSIS

## ■ *Ehud Olmert will seek American backing for withdrawal, but lacks Israeli support*

*Continued from page 1*

Israeli population centers," a reference to large West Bank settlement blocs.

In the months ahead, the two sides will need to translate these general ideas into specifics on the ground.

Olmert hopes that if the United States agrees on a line, it will recognize it as a permanent border and get the international community to do the same.

That would make it much easier for Olmert to galvanize domestic support for withdrawal.

But there's a catch: When Bush wrote his letter, Yasser Arafat was still leading the Palestinian Authority, and was seen as blocking all avenues to peace. Abbas, Arafat's successor, seems genuinely committed to peacemaking — and, if at all possible, the United States would much prefer to see borders agreed upon in negotiations between Israel and the Palestinians.

Complicating matters for the prime minister, Peretz also favors a negotiated settlement.

Like Olmert, he believes Israel may ultimately have to make unilateral moves but, unlike the prime minister, he thinks a channel to Abbas could be productive.

In closed sessions with top Defense Ministry officials, Peretz called for an early resumption of contacts with the Palestinian Authority and said talks with Abbas should be given every chance.

In the event of a breakthrough, he argued that Abbas would be able to bypass

Hamas by putting any agreement with Israel to a Palestinian referendum.

Olmert was not impressed. How would he make the case for unilateralism in the United States when his defense minister was prioritizing talks with the Palestinians, he asked in a tense meeting with Peretz last week.

"Only I have the authority to make policy," Olmert reportedly said.

There also has been movement on the Palestinian side toward re-engagement with Israel.

A document negotiated between two jailed but influential leaders, Marwan Barghouti of Fatah and Sheik Abdel Halek Natshe of Hamas, has been hailed by both Hamas and Fatah officials as a basis for "national dialogue" that could lead to a compromise on policy toward Israel.

In contrast to the official Hamas position, the document appears to accept the principle of a Palestinian state alongside Israel and endorses all previous Palestinian-Israeli agreements — though recognition of Israel is only implied, not explicit.

It also calls for the formation of a national unity government and for the inclusion of Hamas in the PLO umbrella organization.

Such moves could give more credibility to a negotiation between Israel and

Abbas, who is not only the P.A. president but also PLO chairman.

In a speech Monday marking the anniversary of the Palestinian "Nakba" — the "catastrophe" that accompanied the creation of the State of Israel — Abbas underlined his determination to revive peace talks. He urged Palestinians to stop their "futile rocket attacks" on Israel, and called on Israel to drop its claim that there's no Palestinian partner.

"The partner exists, and we extend our hand to you in peace," he declared.

The Palestinian quandary is clear. If they don't get into significant negotiations with Israel soon, they could find themselves having to accept borders and other realities over which they have no say.

Jordan's King Abdullah put it succinctly: The Palestinians, he said in early May, have just two years to reach an agreement with Israel.

"I fear if this short time elapses and we don't reach a settlement, that there will be nothing left for the Palestinians to negotiate over," he told Al-Arabiya, the Dubai-based Arabic TV news channel.

The countdown begins with Olmert's Washington visit: One way or another, it will start laying the groundwork for new borders between Israel and the Palestinians.

**How will Olmert make a case in the United States for unilateralism when his defense minister is prioritizing talks with the Palestinians?**

### **JTA** WORLD REPORT

**Daniel J. Krifcher**  
President  
**Mark J. Joffe**  
Executive Editor and Publisher  
**Lisa Hostein**  
Editor  
**Michael S. Arnold**  
Managing Editor  
**Lenore A. Silverstein**  
Finance and Administration Director  
**Noa Artzi-Weill**  
Marketing Director

JTA WORLD REPORT is published five days a week, except holidays, by the Jewish Telegraphic Agency Inc., 330 Seventh Ave., New York, N.Y. 10001-5010. For more 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](http://www.jta.org).  
© JTA. Reproduction only with permission.

## Court allows Coca-Cola suit

A U.S. appeals court upheld the right of an Egyptian Jewish family to sue Coca-Cola for the use of the family's former property in Egypt.

Egyptian authorities confiscated properties belonging to the Bigio family in the early 1960s because the family was Jewish.

The Egyptian government later ordered the property returned, but the state-owned company that controlled the property refused and instead transferred the property to a company held in part by Coca-Cola.

A U.S. district court in New York dismissed a lawsuit against Coca-Cola, saying the case was properly Egypt's jurisdiction.

The Bigios appealed and the second circuit federal appeals court ruled in their favor on May 9, returning the case to the district court.

An amicus brief to the appeals court from the Zionist Organization of America argued that anti-Semitism was too deeply embedded in the Egyptian system to allow the Bigios a fair hearing there.

# Groups mobilize against boycott call

By CHANAN TIGAY

NEW YORK (JTA) — Jewish groups are mobilizing to defeat another potential boycott of Israeli academics, this time by Britain's largest union for college teachers.

The 65,000-member National Association of Teachers in Further and Higher Education meets May 27-29. Barring procedural stumbling blocks, NATFHE will vote on an "emergency motion" to blacklist Israeli lecturers and academic institutions that don't publicly declare their opposition to Israel's presence in the West Bank.

The motion accuses Israel of "apartheid policies" and asks NATFHE members to boycott Israeli educational institutions and individuals who don't publicly distance themselves from Israeli policy.

The move comes a year after another British union, the Association of University Teachers, passed a similar Israeli boycott. The AUT later rescinded the decision in the face of international criticism.

"Once again, a group of British academics is targeting Israel, only this time their goals are even more insidious," said Abraham Foxman, national director of the Anti-Defamation League. "Members of this union are being told that it's acceptable to boycott Israeli scholars on the basis of their nationality and to question them about their political views. By singling out Israel, these activists are once again demonstrating the anti-Semitic agenda which lies at the heart of the boycott movement."

NATFHE Resolution 198C, a copy of which was obtained by JTA, cites "continuing Israeli apartheid policies, including construction of the exclusion wall, and discriminatory educational practices. It recalls its motion of solidarity last year for the AUT resolution to exercise moral and professional responsibility."

The resolution further "invites members to consider their own responsibility for ensuring equity and non-discrimination in contacts with Israeli educational institutions or individuals and to consider the appropriateness of a boycott of those that do not publicly dissociate themselves from such policies."

It is one of two resolutions relating to Israel. The other asks British academics to support Palestinian colleagues in the face of "the continual attacks by Israel's

government" and to reaffirm that support by contacting the Palestinian Authority government. The United States and European Union have cut off contact with the Palestinian Authority now that it is run by the terrorist group Hamas.

The American Jewish Committee has re-upped on its anti-boycott fund, launched last year to help combat the AUT resolution. The group last week pledged an additional \$10,000 to the fund.

"The track record from the experience with the AUT showed that a variety of tools need to be used to combat this type of boycott, and one of them is that people have the ability to sue or at least assert their legal rights," said Kenneth Stern, a specialist on anti-Semitism and extremism at the AJCommittee. "We're raising funds to help whoever is impacted by this to fight it in any way possible. They shouldn't have to bear the cost."

The teachers association, which is planning a summer merger with the AUT, won't comment on the motion "unless and until it is certain that it will be discussed at the conference."

"It's an emergency motion," NATFHE spokesman Trevor Phillips told JTA. "Not all emergency motions are discussed. This one is in some doubt because of procedural issues."

The American Jewish Congress has made it possible for those who oppose the boycott to automatically generate e-mail letters to NATFHE and AUT leaders. So far, 1,500 e-mails have been sent.

"NATFHE's proposed resolutions are indefensible," said AJCongress' executive director, Neil Goldstein. "One resolution advocates support of the Palestinian government run by Hamas, an internationally recognized terrorist organization that proudly takes credit for the murder of innocent Israeli civilians. This support of terrorism reveals the one-sided political nature of the NATFHE resolutions and the moral blindness of its statements on the tragic Middle East conflict."

In Britain, efforts are under way among some anti-boycott members of NATFHE to lobby against the motion, a model based on the effort that over-

turned last year's AUT measure.

"The important grass-roots work has to be done by people who are members of the union," said Jon Benjamin, chief executive of the Board of Deputies of British Jews. "We are certainly keeping a close eye on what's going on and providing whatever assistance we can in terms of logistical help."

He added, "It's like bush fires: You think you've put it out and then it pops up somewhere else. It's going to be a constant thing."

The World Jewish Congress said it was "deeply upset" by the NATFHE motion. So did other institutions.

"Any boycott call that is based on whether Israeli academics support their government's policy is like the AUT call last year — discriminatory, and effectively

an anti-Semitic act," Ronnie Fraser of Academic Friends of Israel said in a letter posted on the Bar-Ilan University Web site. Bar-Ilan was one of two Israeli universities

specifically targeted by last year's AUT resolution, while this year's NATFHE motion would affect all Israeli academic institutions.

Meanwhile, Scholars for Peace in the Middle East launched an online petition to oppose the resolution.

"Academic boycott actions are antithetical not only to the principles of academic freedom, but also to the quest for peaceful resolution of the Arab-Israeli conflict," the petition said. "Those who perpetuate and participate in such boycotts are separating themselves from the academic community as opposed to bringing it together to work for peace and support academic freedom."

Letters to NATFHE and AUT can be sent through <http://www.ajcongress.org/Action-Alert.asp>.

To contribute to the AJCommittee fund, checks should be made payable to the AJC Anti-Boycott Fund and sent to AJC Anti-Boycott Fund, 165 East 56th Street, 8th Floor, New York, NY 10022. Donations can be made online at [www.ajc.org](http://www.ajc.org).

The Scholars for Peace in the Middle East petition is available at [http://www.spme.net/cgi-bin/display\\_petitions.cgi?ID=2](http://www.spme.net/cgi-bin/display_petitions.cgi?ID=2)

FOCUS  
ON  
ISSUES

Britain's AUT passed  
a similar academic  
boycott last year.

## NEWS IN BRIEF

### NORTH AMERICA

#### Politician against U.S. money for withdrawal

A New York politician is working to make sure U.S. funds won't go toward an Israeli withdrawal from the West Bank.

Dov Hikind made the comments this week while visiting Israel, according to an article on the Ynet Web site.

"It is absurd that the American taxpayers should fund a plan that will ethnically cleanse an area of Jews by expelling tens of thousands of Jews from their homes," Hikind said.

#### Chomsky meets with Hezbollah

Noam Chomsky met with Hezbollah's leader, the Al-Manar TV network reported.

The terrorist group's station broadcast that the American linguist and MIT professor met with Sheik Hassan Nasrallah in Beirut this week, according to the Middle East Media Research Institute.

"Hezbollah's insistence on keeping arms is justified," Al-Manar quoted Chomsky, a critic of U.S. and Israeli foreign policy, as saying.

"Nasrallah has a reasoned argument" that the group should be armed "as a deterrent to potential aggression."

He also called the United States the leading terrorist state, Al-Manar reported.

Chomsky also spoke at the Center for American Studies and Research at the American University of Beirut.

#### Funding for senior communities backed

Representatives of Jewish federations testified before a U.S. Senate subcommittee in favor of a type of senior community.

"Developing solutions to enable seniors to remain living at home in dignity for as long as is safely possible is a priority of the Jewish community," William Daroff, the United Jewish Communities' vice president for public policy and director of the UJC Washington office, said Tuesday at a meeting of the Health, Education, Labor and Pensions Committee's Subcommittee on Retirement, Security and Aging.

The subcommittee is considering reauthorizing the Older Americans Act.

NORCs are residential housing developments where people moved decades ago, raised families and aged, and where they want to continue living independently as seniors.

#### Poet Stanley Kunitz dies at 100

Stanley Kunitz, a former U.S. poet laureate who made metaphoric use of the Talmud and other Jewish images in his poetry, died Sunday at age 100.

Kunitz, who was known for writing on themes ranging from life and death to gardens, received the Pulitzer Prize in 1959.

The son of Jewish immigrants from Eastern Europe, he gave up his dream of earning a doctorate at Harvard after being told that non-Jewish students wouldn't enjoy being taught English literature by a Jew.

A pacifist, Kunitz was a strong opponent of the Vietnam War and, later, U.S. military involvement in Central America and Iraq.

### MIDDLE EAST

#### Israeli reservists get recognition

Israel honored its military reservists.

Israel Defense Force Reserves Appreciation Day was marked Tuesday with political ceremonies in Jerusalem and a slew of benefits, such as shopping discounts, for reserve soldiers.

But what was once an almost universal institution for Israeli men

is on the wane, with no more than an estimated 15 percent of former military conscripts going on to serve in the reserves.

"Society no longer supports people serving in the reserves, and the reservists themselves are made to feel like they are being used," Brig. Gen. Danny Van-Buren, the chief reserves officer, told the Jerusalem Post.

"This is why we need to have an IDF Reserves Appreciation Day," he said.

#### Israeli spies foresaw Hamas win

Israel's military intelligence anticipated Hamas would win the last Palestinian elections, a senior officer revealed.

During a speech at a Tel Aviv University conference Monday, Brig. Gen. Yossi Kuperwasser, head of military intelligence analysis, displayed a memorandum that he said had been prepared by his department before the Jan. 25 vote in the West Bank and Gaza Strip.

While most observers had been predicting that the long-dominant Fatah faction would win the elections, the document instead anticipated a victory for Hamas.

It also predicted that the Islamic terrorist group's rise to power would bring political polarization and even chaos to the Palestinian Authority.

Kuperwasser declined to comment on how the analysis was received by the Israeli government.

#### Kibbutz members plead guilty to drug smuggling

Two members of a kibbutz drug-smuggling ring pleaded guilty and received jail time.

Kibbutz Gesher Haziv's Ron Dotan will receive eight and a half years in jail while his wife, Talia, will serve four and a half years in prison after they pleaded guilty to smuggling cocaine into Israel in wine bottles.

The kibbutz in northern Israel was settled after Israel's War of Independence, in part by immigrants from North America.

### WORLD

#### Pilgrims flock to Tunisian synagogue

Thousands of people attended the annual Lag B'Omer pilgrimage to the Tunisian island of Djerba.

The two-day celebration at the Ghriba Synagogue marks the end of a legendary plague 2,000 years ago.

The synagogue was the site of a 2002 Al-Qaida terrorist attack that killed 21 people, mostly German tourists.

The synagogue is the oldest Jewish house of worship in Africa and serves one of the world's oldest Jewish communities.

#### Goering's relative becoming Jewish?

A distant relative of Hermann Goering is on his way to becoming Jewish, according to reports in Germany's Spiegel Online magazine.

Matthias Goering, 49, lives in Zurich and has begun observing some of the practices of Orthodox Judaism, including wearing a kippah and keeping kosher.

He told the magazine that he had lost his job and his family when two events moved him to consider conversion: First, his prayer for a new job was answered, and second, he dreamed God told him he was needed "to guard the gates of Jerusalem."

Goering told the news magazine that he had been subjected to taunting as a child because of his family name, but that his sense of responsibility for remembering the Holocaust was the same as that of any German.