

Israeli news

Russian immigrants on West Bank have little patience for peace talks

By LEV GORODETSKY
JERUSALEM (JTA) - "Yitzhak Rabin came to heaven and is knocking



A Russian demonstrator holds up a poster depicting Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Barak handing Palestinian Authority President Yasser Arafat the keys to Jerusalem at a demonstration July 5 in the city in which thousands of Russian-born Israelis participated. Credit: Brian Hentler/JTA.

make aliyah, have to know that we are on the verge of a total war. Think and decide for yourself." Lugovskoy recently told a group of potential emigres studying Hebrew in a Moscow classroom sponsored by the Jewish Agency for Israel. Lugovskoy, a veteran Jewish underground activist who lives in Kiryat Arba, was visiting Moscow.

In Memoriam



In loving memory of our very dear son, **JONATHON BASS**

who died tragically July 30, 1992
Timeless to death he went, his song of life was cut too soon,
how sad - for he had more songs.
—Lovingly remembered and sadly missed by his mom, dad, grandparents, sister and brother.

In Memoriam 4th Dahrzeit

In loving memory of our dear and beloved husband, father and grandfather **SIMON DEUTSCHER**
who passed away July 13, 1996
26 Days in Tammuz
—Ever remembered and sadly missed by his loving wife Sara, children and grand-daughter Ilana.

In Memoriam



In loving memory of **TAMARA CHISICK**
who passed away July 23, 1998
29 Days in Tammuz
—Ever remembered and sadly missed by her husband, children and grandchildren.

on the doors of Paradise. "The angel tells him: 'You are too late, my dear. There is no place, everything has already been handed over to the Palestinians.'" This joke, popular among Russian Israeli settlers on the West Bank, reflects the growing fears among many in Israel's largest immigrant community about the peace process. Thousands of Russian-born Israelis, fearing Prime Minister Ehud Barak is prepared to make dangerous concessions to the Palestinians, demonstrated in Jerusalem last week.

These concerns among the roughly 1 million-strong community are being fanned by leading Russian politicians, including cabinet member Natan Sharansky. Avigdor Lieberman, a leader of the Israeli, Our Home Party, which drew the bulk of the Russian settlers' vote in the 1999 election, recently warned, "War is inevitable within a year."

And the appearance in downtown Jerusalem of thousands of immigrants, who carried such signs as "This Peace Is Killing Us" and "Yes to Peace, No to Capitulation," testifies that the movement has a strong base among the Russian grass roots. "Our people in general can't understand why Israel should surrender the land. When they hear of any territorial concession, the immediate question is, 'What for? Why should we do that?'" said Benny Briskin, who came to Israel from Moscow in the mid-1980s and is now the head of the Russian

desk of the Yeha Council, a leading organization of Jewish settlers. The hawkish views of Russian Israelis, within Israel proper as well as in the West Bank, can be traced to several factors - among them, a nationalistic Zionism borne out of reaction to the anti-Israel rhetoric they were bombarded with in the former Soviet Union. "I think there is going to be a very serious deterioration of the situation as a result of the peace process, including clashes around the settlements with numerous victims. The Arabs are not going to stop," said Alexander Averbuch, a Moscow-born mathematician who now edits a Russian-language newspaper in Russia.

Observers here agree that this drive to the right is spearheaded by Russian West Bank settlers who are spreading doomsday scenarios. "Something should be done. Disaster is coming. Our doctor tried to stop it, he did not succeed," said a 35-year-old bearded Russian settler who asked not to be identified. The settler was referring to Baruch Goldstein, who opened fire inside the Tomb of the Patriarchs in February 1994, killing 29 Palestinian worshippers. Sergey Lugovskoy, a Russian-born immigrant who lives on the West Bank, is spreading the word to future Israelis. "National disaster is taking place in Israel. I personally think that Jews have to be together even during the war, but you, people, when preparing to

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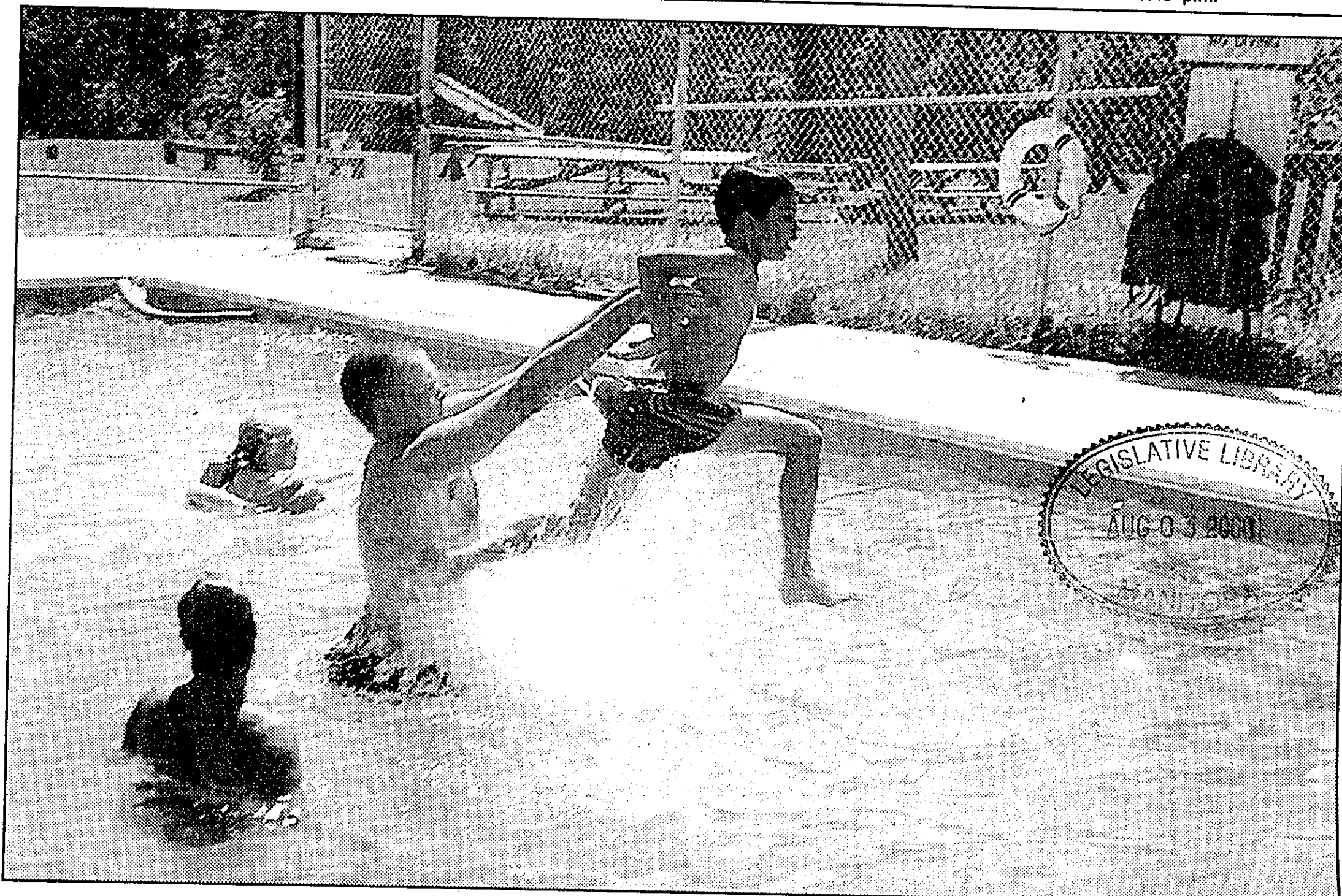
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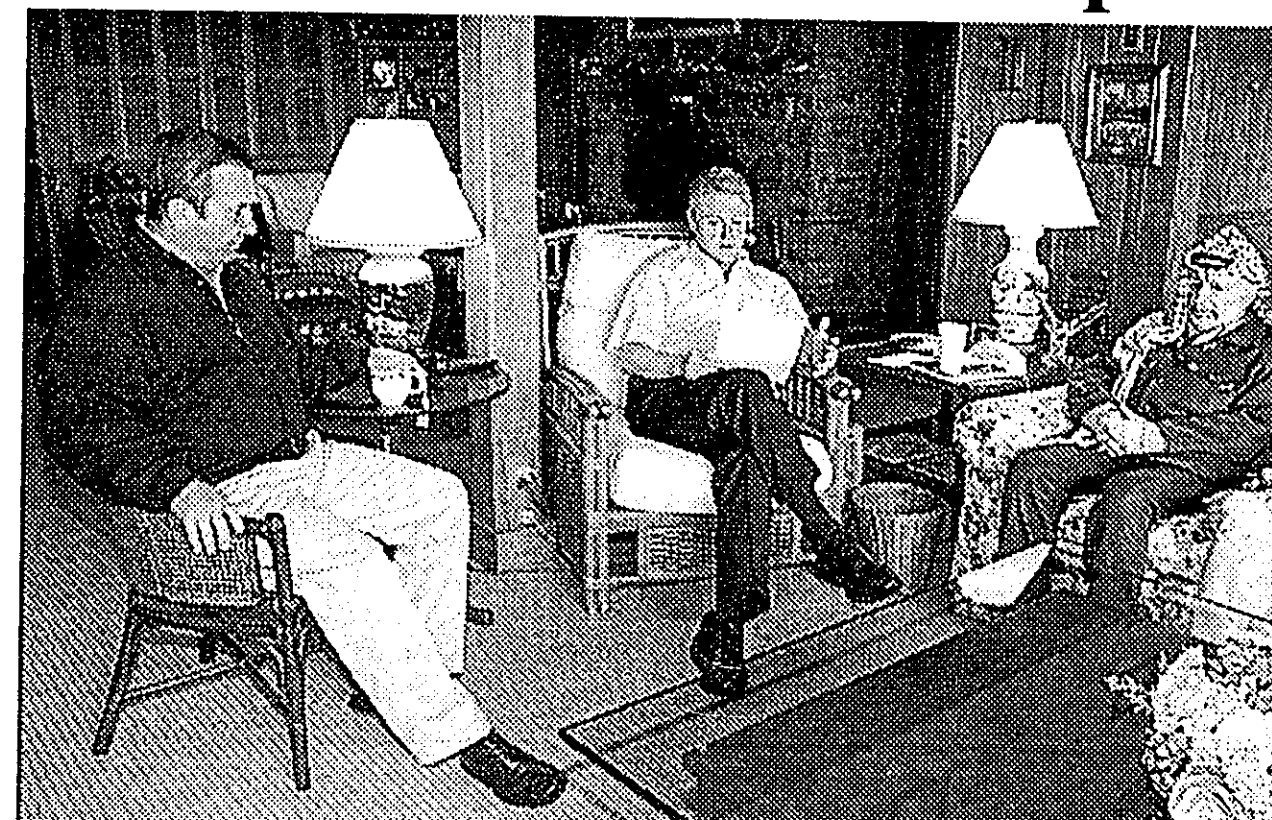
Willie Huggard lifts fellow Keshet Day Camper Avichai Stoller into the air, letting him fall into the water in the swimming pool at Camp Manitou just west of Winnipeg July 27. The Rady Jewish Community Centre has been leasing the Camp Manitou site since January, for its day camps and other interested users of the property. See story and more photos on page 3. Photo by Fern Swedlove.

Up...and down

News analysis

Israel braces for turmoil after Camp David failure

By DAVID LANDAU and NAOMI SEGAL
JERUSALEM (JTA) - With the failure of the Camp David summit, Israelis are bracing for a political shift and increased tensions with the Palestinians. But the future of the peace process remains uncertain. The coming days and weeks will witness a complex interplay between events in Israel and the Palestinian self-rule areas. How these events will come together is difficult to predict. Speculation is now rampant over what Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Barak's next steps will be - whether he will seek a national unity government with the Likud Party opposition, try to rebuild his coalition or seek early elections.



President Clinton holds a meeting with Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Barak, left, and Palestinian Authority President Yasser Arafat, right, on July 25 at Camp David. The summit collapsed later that day. Credit: White House Photo by Ralph Alswang.

At a news conference immediately after the summit's collapse, Barak said, his voice heavy with fatalistic resolve, that the people of Israel "will know how to unite in the face of danger." The tenor of his remarks seemed to indicate he expects more strife ahead, rather than more diplomatic efforts to bridge gaps that proved unbridgeable during the summit. In Jerusalem, seasoned political observers said he was referring to political strife, not military conflict. They said Barak's talk of danger and unity was a hint about forming a national unity government with Likud. Other Israelis, as well as some American and Palestinian pundits, preferred to focus on a

comment that President Clinton made July 25. In his own post-summit news conference, Clinton said the issues discussed at Camp David needed "to percolate" for some time before their full effect could be gauged and the way forward clearly seen. In particular, Clinton said, a debate had already begun within Israel over the issue of Jerusalem, which he described as the "most difficult problem" blocking Israel and the Palestinians from reaching an agreement at Camp David. Barak, too, welcomed the "significant and legitimate debate" regarding

Jerusalem that the summit has triggered within Israel. The prime minister mentioned at his news conference, almost in passing, that a senior U.S. official would soon be dispatched to the Middle East in an effort to salvage the peace process from what he described as the "heavy blow" it had suffered from the failure of the two-week summit. Not all Israelis, however, were pessimistic about efforts to renew the negotiations. Legislator Uri Savir, a longtime peace negotiator and a member of the Center Party, predicted that the July 25 collapse would only result in a brief hiatus and that the peace process would go on through other channels.

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