

# WORLD BEAT

edited by Marta Garelik

## Europeans May Force Israel to Raise Cigarette Tax

JERUSALEM (JTA) — Israel's low tax on cigarettes may prevent it from becoming a full-fledged trading partner with the European Community.

The 12 nations of the community are trying to reduce smoking for health reasons by, among other things, heavily taxing tobacco products.

But the Israeli Finance Ministry sharply reduced the tobacco tax last year. A pack of cigarettes that costs \$2.50 in Britain averages about 60 cents in Israel.

These facts were raised at the First European Conference on Smoking Prevention held in Madrid. It was pointed out that cigarettes sell in Israel more cheaply than in most other countries.

The conference recommended a series of measures to restrict smoking in public places and to raise the price of cigarettes. If the E.C. countries adopt these measures and Israel does not, Israel may not be accepted as a full trading partner.

Amos Hausner, legal adviser to the Israel Society for the Prevention of Smoking, said that the lowered tobacco tax increased the portion of the Israeli population that smokes from 29 to 36 percent this year.

The Health Ministry also welcomed the recommenda-

tions of the Madrid conference. It promised to work with the Ministry of Commerce and Industry for a substantial increase in the tobacco tax, despite opposition by the Finance Ministry.

## First Jew Conquers Everest

SEATTLE (JTA) — Dr. Geoff Tabin, 32, of Chicago, became the first Jew to climb Mount Everest, the world's highest peak at 29,108 feet. Tabin reached the summit Oct. 2. He has been rock climbing and mountain climbing for the past 15 years around the world.

This was his third attempt to scale Everest. "I always focused on my goal and that was to get to the top of Mount Everest," he said.

A graduate of Yale University and Harvard Medical School, Tabin is now in his fourth year of residency at Michael Reese Hospital in Chicago.

## Israel Plays Ball In Moscow

TEL AVIV (JTA) — The champion Hapoel volleyball team from Kiryat Ata is the first sports team to break the ice that has frozen Israeli-Soviet sports competition for more than 20 years.

They went to Moscow to play the Muscovite "Dynamos" in the European Cup contest. A week after that,

the Russian players came to Israel for a return match.

The good news was a disappointment for Maccabee Tel Aviv, Israel's championship basketball team. They had expected to be the first Israelis to play in the USSR.

## Acid Hurlled by Holocaust Survivor

JERUSALEM (JTA) — A 70-year-old Holocaust survivor hurled acid into the face of Yoram Sheftel, chief defense counsel for convicted war criminal John Demjanjuk, during the funeral for Dov Eitan, a member of the Demjanjuk defense team.

Sheftel was rushed to a hospital, where doctors treated damage to one eye. A woman with him was also treated for slight injuries. Israel Radio identified her as author Edna Shabtai.

Eitan, 53, a retired Jerusalem district court judge and former military court president, committed suicide by jumping from the 15th floor of a downtown Jerusalem office building.

## Ultra-Orthodox Harass Feminists

JERUSALEM (JTA) — About 100 Diaspora Jewish women, many of them Americans, were called "pigs" and otherwise harassed by religious extremists when they held a prayer service at the Western Wall in Jerusalem's Old City.

The worshipers, who were among 500 women from 25 countries attending the first International Conference on the Empowerment of Jewish Women, were the targets of insults and curses by ultra-Orthodox men and women who pray regularly at the holy site.

A Reform rabbi from Toronto, Debra Brin, conducted the service, which

marked the final day of the conference.

As the feminists, many wearing skullcaps and prayer shawls, prayed and read from the Torah, black-garbed men shouted and pounded on the wooden barricades that separate male and female worshipers at the Wall.

Said one pious Jew, "The spectacle of a woman carrying the Torah is as scandalous as bringing pigs to the Kotel," as the Western Wall is known in Hebrew.

"In the name of God, I protest," shouted another. "This is a holy place for all of Israel and they are defiling it."

An elderly Orthodox woman pushed and shoved the foreign women, screaming that they were desecrating the Torah.

"Disgraceful," snorted Rabbi Yehuda Getz, the functionary in charge of the Western Wall. He was referring to the foreign women, not the behavior of his ultra-Orthodox colleagues.

## Quebec Rabbis Make Mandatory Prenuptial Get Agreement

MONTREAL (JTA) — Jewish couples planning to wed here must promise to obtain a religious divorce in the event that their marriage ends in divorce, the Quebec Region of the Rabbinical Council of Canada ruled.

The Orthodox group has instructed its member rabbis to require couples to sign a prenuptial agreement to obtain a Jewish bill of divorcement, known as a get, if they should ever seek a civil divorce.

The problem occurs when a spouse refuses to grant a religious divorce. It is usually the woman who suffers because religious law stipulates that the husband issues the get.

In extreme cases, the partner seeking a religious divorce from a recalcitrant spouse could apply to the civil courts to enforce the religious agreements.

The Quebec Region of the Rabbinical Council has a membership of more than 20 Orthodox rabbis, who represent 80 percent of all rabbis in Montreal.

## Rally Held to Protest Army Exemptions for Yeshivaites

TEL AVIV (JTA) — High-ranking reserve officers in the Israel Defense Force and

disabled war veterans addressed a mass rally here protesting the exemption of yeshiva students from compulsory military service.

The theme of their speeches was that anyone claiming benefits from a democratic society must fulfill its obligations. The rally drew between 25,000 and 30,000 Israelis.

Speakers at the rally warned that rabbis who avoided military service because of their yeshiva studies should not be made ministers in a government that might be required to decide questions of war and peace.

## Jewish Women Prone To Ovarian Cancer

NEW YORK (JTA) — Jewish women are at nearly twice the normal risk of non-Jewish women to developing ovarian cancer, according to an article published recently in Contemporary Issues in Obstetrics and Gynecology. Black women, however, have one-third fewer incidences of ovarian cancer than white women, according to the article.

These racial and ethnic differences may only reflect sociological, economic and childbirth variables. Specifically, women with diets high in saturated fats, with homes or jobs in a city, and with few or no children are at higher risk.

"The prototype that has emerged is a well-educated, affluent white woman living in an urban area, who has no children or only a single child," said Dr. Carolyn Runowicz, author of the article.

Single women are 14 times more susceptible than married women, but married women who have never been pregnant are at even greater risk, suggesting infertility or subfertility may be a factor.

If a malignant tumor is detected in the early stages, the rate of cure runs between 80 and 90 percent. Runowicz suggests that all women have pelvic exams twice a year, especially women with high risk factors. For women over 40, she recommends checkups as frequently as every three months, along with a sonogram twice a year.

## Tid-Bits

TEL AVIV (JTA) — Police and government agents

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