

News Digest

WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 18, 1998

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Israel approves withdrawing troops

Arafat stresses peace in news conference; Knesset votes 75-19 to remove West Bank forces

JERUSALEM (AP) — Israel's parliament overwhelmingly approved the latest Mideast land-for-peace accord with the Palestinians late Tuesday, paving the way for an Israeli troop withdrawal from the West Bank.

The Knesset endorsed the agreement by a 75-19 vote with nine abstentions. It was also a vote of confidence in Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, who signed the agreement with Yasser Arafat at the White House on Oct. 23.

The vote and a retraction of inflammatory statements earlier Tuesday by Arafat pushed the Wye River accord over two major hurdles toward implementation.

The crisis over Arafat's recent remarks was the latest in a series of flare-ups to plague the U.S.-brokered accord that calls for Israel to withdraw troops from 13 percent of West Bank territory.

Lawmakers got their first look at withdrawal maps before Tuesday's vote. Coming out of a map room in the Knesset, right-wing lawmakers said they were shocked to see how isolated some Jewish settlements would become after the first pullout from 2 percent of the area.

Others complained that the government was hid-

ing the truth from them by posting only a map for the first phase of withdrawal.

"This is a fraud," charged Michael Kleiner, a right-wing legislator in Netanyahu's coalition. The public and the media were not allowed to view the maps.

Addressing the Knesset earlier, Netanyahu said maps would be shown to the parliament before each pullback and called on ministers to support the peace accord.

"I hope that what comes out today is a wide agreement on the Wye accord and the desire to see it carried out. I think this is the only way to achieve peace," Netanyahu said.

On Monday, Netanyahu suspended plans for the redeployment and demanded a retraction from Arafat after the Palestinian leader repeatedly said he would announce statehood in May and alluded to armed conflict as a means to gain independence.

Arafat opened a news conference Tuesday by reading a softened statement directed at the Israelis.

"I stress ... that we are protective of the peace process in the Middle East and all the peace agreements we signed with the Israelis. Peace is a strategic choice of the Palestinians," Arafat said. "We

stress that concerning any differences in final status negotiations, we want to solve these issues by peaceful means, through negotiations, and not in any other way."

Although Arafat did not entirely drop the possibility of declaring independence in May, when the current peace accords expire, his call to solve final status issues including permanent borders, was viewed as a back-down.

Israel termed the remarks "positive," and Netanyahu adviser David Bar-Illan said the prime minister "considers this a retraction."

Netanyahu's Cabinet still would have to review whether the Palestinians have lived up to their obligations before going ahead with the pullback from an initial 2 percent. The Cabinet was to meet today, but the prime minister's office announced the meeting had been pushed back to Thursday to give more time to the Palestinians.

A statement said that by Thursday, Israel expects the Palestinians to have jailed 10 of 30 named fugitives, publish a statement against incitement and a plan to confiscate illegal weapons. Sections of the Palestinian charter that call for Israel's destruction are to be amended by the PLO central committee.

Stenberg OKs record tobacco settlement

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to be a sort of refund for past Medicaid costs covering diseases linked to tobacco use.

A 1997 tentative deal reached between tobacco companies would have paid \$368 billion to the states in turn for protection from lawsuits by smokers and families.

To toughen that deal, lawmakers tried to increase the amount of the settlement and incorporate advertising bans and price raises on tobacco products.

In April, the tobacco industry walked away from the negotiating table, and all deals were off. That's when state attorneys general stepped up to try to reach a settlement of their own.

Four states — Minnesota, Texas, Florida and Massachusetts — reached individual settlements totaling \$36.28 billion this summer, propelling the recent settlement forward.

In preparation, the Legislature set up a trust fund in its 1998 session that would use the money from the settlement for public health initiatives such as health insurance for children and converting nursing homes to assisted living shelters.

Wesely said he felt comfortable using the money for multiple health care improvement projects, and the Legislature echoed that sentiment in public hearings.

Nebraska ranks 49th in the nation on the amount of money it spends on health care.

If an unspecified number of states approve the plan, Nebraska would receive its first payment of \$14 million in 1999, and future payments would increase or decline from that amount depending on inflation and sales of tobacco in the state.

Under state law, only the interest from the money in the trust fund will be used, which could be \$4 million to \$5 million in the first year, Wesely said.

"It's not a lot, but it's a good

Judiciary Committee releases Tripp tapes

WASHINGTON (AP) — Finally, the voice. Monica Lewinsky's girlish excitement and pouty petulance reverberate through the Linda Tripp tapes as she dissects her improbable relationship with the president.

No valley girl-speak, here. No grim "Fatal Attraction" tones. Rather, the gush of emotion from an earnest young woman infatuated with an older man. Naive but not quite innocent.

With precise diction, Lewinsky playfully tests come-ons to Clinton like "Dear Boo-Boo" and "You can't refuse me because I'm too cute and adorable." She chokes out her words over sobs and snuffles when things turn sour, declaring: "It is too much for any one person."

The 22 hours of tapes released Tuesday by the House Judiciary Committee gave America its first chance to hear Lewinsky's voice, one of the few remaining mysteries from a presidential morality tale that has unfolded in excruciating detail.

A transcript of the words came out earlier; what was new Tuesday was the emotion and inflection. The only thing missing now is the steady stream of expletives that were deleted.

Radio and TV stations had a field day: Lewinsky's voice instantly echoed across the airwaves coast to coast.

California psychologist Robert

Butterworth offered this assessment: "It almost is like sitting down listening to 'Days of our Lives.' ... She's coming across more sympathetically and a little bit more vulnerable than I would have thought."

The White House professed disinterest.

"My guess is that most people around the country won't be paying much attention, but the people who are obsessed with this story, this will be a day in heaven for them," said spokesman Joe Lockhart.

The tapes were secretly recorded by Lewinsky's onetime friend and co-worker, who turned them over to Independent Counsel Kenneth Starr, triggering the 10-month investigation that spawned an impeachment inquiry. A Maryland grand jury is considering whether she broke state wiretapping law by taping Lewinsky without her knowledge.

At times, Tripp comes across as a co-conspirator to Lewinsky, chortling at her schemes to rendezvous with Clinton. At other points, she is the school marm, correcting Lewinsky's grammar and voicing exasperation at her naiveté.

"Oh, Monica, Monica, Monica," she sighs.

The irony of some lines rings through on the tapes. Even as Tripp is secretly taping her young friend, she advises Lewinsky: "I'd be careful what I said on the phone."

Inspectors back in Iraq, ready to resume work

■ The workers say there have been no problems since they arrived back; an aide to Saddam Hussein anticipates no conflict.

BAGHDAD, Iraq (AP) — U.N. weapons inspectors flew back to Baghdad on Tuesday, saying they want to get to work as soon as possible to test Iraq's pledge to cooperate in the search for its weapons of mass destruction.

"We are back, we are ready to work immediately," Jaakko Ylitalo, a senior weapons inspector, told reporters shortly after his C-130 transport plane landed at the Iraqi military air base at Habaniya outside Baghdad.

Ylitalo, among the 86 inspectors from the U.N. Special Commission,

declined to give details on Tuesday's work.

Asked by reporters if Iraqi officials were helpful, Ylitalo said, "We have no problems."

The arms inspectors have been working for more than seven years to unearth Iraq's chemical and biological weapons and long-range missiles. Their work frequently has been blocked by Iraq, but the latest threat of attack by U.S. and British forces produced a renewed promise to cooperate.

While President Clinton has expressed skepticism that Iraq would keep to its promise, a top aide to Iraqi leader Saddam Hussein insisted Tuesday he anticipated no problems with the renewed inspections.

Gen. Amer al-Saadi, scientific adviser to Saddam, said in a CNN interview that all would go smoothly if February's accord between Iraq and the United Nations is followed.

Seminar explores Internet 2's research virtues

INTERNET 2 from page 1

Ted Hanss, a speaker from the University Corporation for Advanced Internet Development, the organization that created Internet 2, said many universities across the United States have put time and money into the future of the project.

"Universities are working together not just for higher education, but to raise the bar over all Internet services," Hanss said. "If we do not benefit all Internet users, then we will fail."

Internet 2 eventually will have an effect on how classes are taught on campus once more people are aware of its capabilities.

Among the capabilities of Internet 2 are quick downloading of audio data and the ability to show video of speakers and presentations almost immediately to students across campus.

"It has changed the nature of research and education," he said.

Although most of the research done on Internet 2 focuses on science, the tool can be used for other things,

such as the fine arts or humanities.

Hanss said by the year 2001, virtual art exhibits with interactive tours, speakers and video information about the works will be available over Internet 2, as well as virtual reality that brings researchers of any subject together to study the same data.

"It really has the ability to bring people together around common resources," he said. "The collaboration will really make the difference. We want to make that interaction possible."

Sen. Abboud resigns, governor appoints Redfield to take over

From staff reports

Gov. Ben Nelson appointed Omaha Sen.-elect Pam Redfield to take over for Sen. Chris Abboud until her elected term begins in January.

Abboud submitted his resignation as District 12 representative to Gov. Nelson on Friday, and the seat was effectively empty Monday morning.

The southwest Omaha senator said it was the right time to leave the Legislature after serving 16 years as the District 12 representative.

He said he wanted to spend more time with his family and return to working as a full-time lawyer.

Redfield was elected in November to represent the Papillion district.

Her appointment filled the empty spot immediately.

Nelson said the early appointment would allow Redfield to start work right away.

"This appointment will give her the opportunity to get started early, and it will ensure that the 12th district does not go without representation."

Daily Nebraskan

Questions? Comments?

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The Daily Nebraskan (USPS 144-080) is published by the UNL Publications Board, Nebraska Union 34, 1400 R St., Lincoln, NE 68588-0448, Monday through Friday during the academic year; weekly during the summer sessions. The public has access to the Publications Board.

Readers are encouraged to submit story ideas and comments to the Daily Nebraskan by calling (402) 472-2588.

Subscriptions are \$55 for one year. Postmaster: Send address changes to the Daily Nebraskan, Nebraska Union 34, 1400 R St., Lincoln NE 68588-0448. Periodical postage paid at Lincoln, NE.

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