

STATE AND NATIONAL NEWS

# President Clinton says Mideast peace possible

BY BARRY SCHWEID  
ASSOCIATED PRESS

WASHINGTON (AP) — On the eve of a Mideast summit, President Clinton said Monday that Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Barak can make peace with Yasser Arafat despite Barak's political woes at home.

A solid majority of Israelis "want him to come and want him to pursue peace," Clinton said.

Acknowledging that formidable obstacles lie ahead, Clinton said the Mideast poses "perhaps the most difficult of all peace problems in the world."

He added, "Both Prime Minister Barak and Chairman Arafat have the vision, the knowledge, the experience and the ability and sheer guts to do what it takes ... to reach an agreement and then to take it back to their people and see if they can sell it."

In the Israeli Knesset, Barak survived a no-confidence vote prompted by his negotiations policy.

The opposition Likud party failed to muster the 61 votes that would have ousted him.

Fifty-four members voted for the motion of no confidence; 52 opposed it, and seven members abstained.

Barak and Arafat are to join Clinton at Camp David, Md., for a summit opening yesterday.

The president plans to leave the United States eight days later for the annual summit of industrialized nations, being held in Okinawa, Japan.

"I don't want to set an artificial deadline for these talks," Clinton said, "but I think that they need to listen to each other and I need to listen to them and we need to get right after it, because it's not as if we don't know what's out there to be done. And this has been simmering on the stove for some years now."

Before leaving Washington to address the National Governors' Association meeting in Pennsylvania, Clinton talked with Russian President Vladimir Putin by phone about the Mideast summit and the Okinawa meeting.

Secretary of State Madeleine Albright told The Associated Press that Barak's

election was a mandate to make peace and that the Israeli people have shown in a new poll that they still back him while aware of some of the concessions he is ready to offer the Palestinian leader.

"He is not going to make an agreement that jeopardizes his people," Albright said.

At home, though, three political parties, including Barak's biggest coalition partner, Shas, have announced they would leave the government.

They are concerned about his plan to relinquish most of the West Bank and to give the Palestinian Authority a foothold in Jerusalem.

And Foreign Minister David Levy, a moderate who has served in both Likud and Labor governments as a kind of swing man, will not accompany Barak to the summit.

Likud Chairman Ariel Sharon said in Jerusalem that Barak did not have the nation's support and urged him not to go to Camp David.

In a poll published Sunday by the Yediot Ahronot newspaper, 52 percent

of Israelis who responded said they backed Barak in going to the summit despite political developments, while 45 percent thought he should stay home.

Objections in Israel are based partly on security concerns and also on the Jewish religious view that the land belongs to the Jewish people.

Albright said she is confident Barak has the support he needs to come to terms at the summit.

His election was "a mandate to make peace," Albright told a reporter.

With Jerusalem and other core issues in hot dispute, both in Israel and in pre-summit negotiations with the Palestinians, some observers have suggested the two sides will agree where they can and then set a second summit meeting, perhaps in August.

Albright said "that is not our plan." The gap between Israel and the Palestinians is a wide one.

Clinton described the two sides as deadlocked when he announced the summit last week.

## STATE BRIEFS

### ■ Four-year-old boy drowns in pool

LAKE WYLIE (AP) — A 4-year-old boy has drowned in a swimming pool after apparently wandering off from a house.

Ryan Michael Kirby, of Tega Cay, was pronounced dead at Piedmont Medical Center on Saturday night.

Ryan's mother, Jenny Kirby, had taken him swimming at a Lake Wylie home, according to the York County Sheriff's Office. They two had gone next door to eat. After dinner, Kirby realized Ryan was not with the other children who were playing in the house.

Investigators still are trying to determine how Ryan got into the pool, which is surrounded by a fence and latched gate. An autopsy is scheduled for Monday.

### ■ Police shoot and kill suspect, ex-con

SENECA (AP) — The man shot and killed by a Seneca police officer Saturday was hiding at a friend's house because he did not want to return to prison, family members say.

Christopher Michael Jordan, 29, died Saturday from multiple gunshot wounds, Oconee County Coroner Karl Addis said. An autopsy was planned to determine how many times Jordan was shot.

Seneca police Sgt. Malcolm Purdessy has been placed on administrative leave while the State Law Enforcement Division investigates the shooting.

Jordan had spent five years in prison and was being sought on drug and parole violation charges, Jordan's aunt Pam Patterson said.

"He said he was afraid of going back to prison," said his sister, Chasity Branyon of Anderson.

### ■ Investments yield state \$73.6 million

COLUMBIA (AP) — South Carolina earned \$73.6 million on its investments in the just-completed fiscal year, which was more than expected, says state Treasurer Grady L. Patterson Jr.

The earnings for the fiscal year that ended June 30 were 5 percent above expectations, Patterson said Monday.

The state took advantage of an improving market for short-term, fixed-income securities, generally those with maturities of less than a year, Treasury Spokesman David A. Adams said.

## TALLEY

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help ensure that senior citizens get the medical care that they need, but often can't afford.

He hopes to look into setting up a trust fund for senior citizens with mon-

ey that is being paid to the state by the tobacco industry over a 20-year period.

The money would, in turn, be used to help seniors with the cost of medicine. It would be a gradual plan, but Talley believes it could be successful, and it would allow seniors to get more of the medical care they need without sacrificing other basic needs, such as food.

Talley also hopes to work towards a

consumption-based tax system in South Carolina, meaning that South Carolina would charge no income tax, but instead increase sales tax.

Talley believes this is a much more fair system because people are taxed only on what they choose to buy, not on what they make.

It might take awhile, but he would like to see the state investigate the pos-

sibility of this type of tax system.

He said he has always had an interest in politics, and if he enjoys his term in office as much as he thinks he will, he would like to run for re-election in two years.

If he continues to be successful, he might eventually consider running for the office of governor or senator.

## POKER

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Nearly 50 former video gambling business employees went to the Lancaster National Guard armory Saturday to file unemployment claims with the state Employment Security Commission.

Commission officials said people had positive attitudes Saturday, despite losing their jobs.

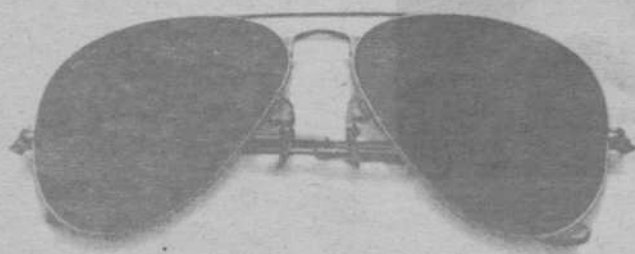
"Their attitudes are excellent, but they are worried if they are going to find other jobs," said commission employee Beverly Horton.

There are no precise figures on the number of people who were employed by the video gambling industry statewide.

Operators have said their industry employs as many as 30,000, but the state Employment Security Commission puts the number closer to 3,500.

Employment Security Commission spokesman Clark Newsom said about 850 unemployment claims had been filed by Friday for former gambling machine workers in South Carolina. An additional 200 claims were filed for out-of-state workers.

Newsom said 500 more appointments were scheduled for next week and more special sessions will be held at the Fort Mill National Guard Armory.



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