



A parabolic solar reflector at Luz Industries' plant in Jerusalem.

(Shuki Kook)

Work begins on biggest solar energy plant

By CHARLES HOFFMAN
Jerusalem Post Reporter

Work on the world's largest solar energy generating plants began last week in southern California. The plant is based on a parabolic reflector system developed by Luz Industries of Jerusalem.

The ground-breaking at the site in Daggett, California, was marked in Jerusalem by a press tour of the Luz plant in the Har Hahotzvim industrial zone.

The 13.8 megawatt facility, costing \$61 million, was built for Southern California Edison, and will generate enough electricity to heat and light some 7,000 homes. Luz is supplying \$39m. of equipment for the plant. The "reflector farm" will be completed next year, and will extend over 320 dunams.

Luz, founded in 1979 by American-born Arnold Goldman, has already installed several smaller

solar energy systems in Israel and the U.S., including one for the Tapud potato-processing plant at Sderot, in the Negev.

Science and Development Minister Yuval Ne'eman, who was a guest on the tour, said that the Luz reflector system together with the solar ponds at the Dead Sea give Israel a leading position in the international solar energy field. Ne'eman, reacting to recent American criticism of Israeli settlements in the administered territories, noted that the southern California plant is being built on "occupied Mexican territory."

Goldman said that the second phase of the project with Southern California Edison will consist of a 30 megawatt system, to be installed by the end of 1985.

The Luz system uses parabolic reflectors to focus sunlight at high intensity on a heat absorption pipe

containing a special fluid. Heated to 300 degrees centigrade, the fluid flows through a heat exchanger, which produces steam. The steam is then superheated to 400 degrees C. and fed into a turbine that generates electricity.

The parabolic collectors are mounted on supporting structures which include a computerized sun-tracking system to enable the system to operate efficiently at all times of day. The southern California plant will operate for six to seven hours a day to generate power for peak demand.

Luz maintains that its system is competitive with oil and gas, since the capital cost of the system, when written off over a 30-year period, is equivalent to a cost of five cents per kilowatt-hour. Electricity in Israel, produced by burning coal and fuel oil, costs 6.7 cents per kilowatt-hour to produce.

TEL AVIV. Elron Electronic Industries has announced that net after-tax profits for the six-month period ending September 30 came to \$4.6 million, or \$0.45 a share. This compares with \$2.8m., or \$0.30 per share, in the same period a year ago.

In January 1983, Elron distributed 50 per cent bonus shares to its shareholders.

Elron's balance sheet, on a consolidated basis, showed total sales of \$117.7m., compared with \$88.5m. in the same period last year. Total income, on a consolidated basis, came to \$56.9m., compared with \$41.4m.

In advance of the announcement the price of the American registry

share was ahead by more than \$1. to \$11.50.

Since Elron is essentially an investment company, it is possible to establish its valuation on a net asset value basis. This can best be done by taking Elron's percentage holding in its main subsidiary and multiplying it by their current market price.

Based on the latest market valuations the Elron shares had a net asset value of some \$18.50, while its market price was \$11.50.

Elron owns 78.4 per cent of Elbit, 15.7 per cent of Elscint, 11.6 per cent of Fibromes and 2.3 per cent of Biotechnology General. In addition the company has \$2 cash per share, being the value of the cash on hand on a per share basis.

Mutual funds change direction

Jerusalem Post Reporter

TEL AVIV. — The investing public has definitely moved out of shares and into index-linked bonds and foreign currency, according to Meitav, a financial consultancy firm, which last week published its findings on the ten largest mutual funds.

While at the end of 1982 seven of the ten biggest funds concentrated on shares, with the remaining three specializing in index-linked bonds, by the end of this July only one among the top ten still specialized in shares. By the end of last month not one of the top ten was still specializing in shares.

Of the top ten funds today the largest, Shavit, is run by Bank Hapoalim. Six others are run by PIA (Bank Leumi) and another one is run by a Leumi affiliate. Of the remaining two funds, one is run by Bank Hapoalim, and one, Egoz, is run privately (by Ilanot).

Although there are 108 mutual funds active on the market, the big ten handle 44.8 per cent of all mutual investments. This is a slight drop from the 45.3 per cent at the end of 1982, when there were only 96 funds.

These ten funds hold investments of IS46.5 billion.

\$1.5m. to drill for oil near Ashkelon

By YITZHAK OKED

TEL AVIV. — The King David Oil and Gas Corporation has started drilling its Karmon III well at Moshav Hodayah north of Ashkelon. The company is owned by a group of American Jewish investors headed by Jerry Oren, a former Israeli who is now a succes-

ful businessman in Los Angeles.

Oren told *The Jerusalem Post* that about \$1.5 million will be invested in Karmon III. A group of Jewish investors from Australia is also investing in the deal. Other partners are the Delek fuel company, Clal and North American Oil and Gas Company.