

**SEVEN REPORTED LIGHTLY WOUNDED
IN IRAQI MISSILE ATTACK ON ISRAEL**

By Gil Sedan

JERUSALEM, Friday, Jan. 18 (JTA) -- Warnings throughout the day Thursday that the massive bombardment of Iraqi military installations by U.S.-led forces had not yet eliminated the threat of an Iraqi attack proved all-too-accurate early Friday morning, when seven to 10 SCUD missiles hit sites within Israel.

No one was killed in the attack by the missiles, which contained conventional warheads, not nerve gas as originally feared.

But seven people were lightly injured in the assault, the first missile attack on Israel in the history of the state. The wounded were treated at Ichilov Hospital in Tel Aviv, a city believed to have sustained at least two missile strikes.

The missiles also struck the Haifa area and at least one unpopulated rural locale.

Initial reports were sketchy because of the inability of witnesses to see out sealed windows or leave their airtight, poison gas-proof quarters.

As of dawn Friday, some three hours after the initial strike, Israelis were still being instructed to remain in their sealed-off rooms for fear of further attacks.

The assault confirmed fears that had been voiced that Iraqi mobile missile launchers remained intact, undamaged by the successful barrage of U.S.-led air attacks early Thursday, which appeared to have wiped out fixed missiles positioned in western Iraq that had been deemed most threatening to the Jewish state.

Shamir Convenes The Cabinet

The big question that remained here by early Friday morning was whether Israel would retaliate and how. Shortly after the attack, senior Israeli officials and diplomats abroad were quoted as stating that Israel reserves the right to protect itself in whatever way it deems fit.

Israel Radio reported that Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir had summoned the Cabinet Friday morning to decide whether Israel would retaliate.

The missile attacks occurred between 2 and 2:30 a.m. local time. Residents of Haifa and Tel Aviv reported hearing several huge explosions shortly after air raid sirens were heard. The booms "sounded very frightening," according to one person who spoke on Israel Radio.

The predawn ordeal shattered the euphoria that many Israelis had felt Thursday at the resounding success of the initial phase of the American and allied assault on Iraqi military installations.

Israeli politicians and military commanders, past and present, had been effusive with their praise Thursday for the execution of "Operation Desert Storm." One former IDF chief of staff called it a major turning point in military history.

Prime Minister Shamir sent a message to President Bush, expressing his gratification and congratulations.

"Our hearts are with you and with your pilots," the prime minister wrote.

In Tel Aviv, many ordinary Israelis were so elated by reports of the near-total destruction of the Iraqi air force that they ignored the advice

of civil defense authorities to stay indoors and strolled out into the afternoon sunshine.

Many people waited patiently at bus stops, clutching gas masks in one hand and shopping bags in the other.

Hours later, the streets were empty.

(Contributing to this report were JTA correspondents Cathrine Gerson and Hugh Orgel in Tel Aviv, and David Landau in Jerusalem.)

**BUSH 'OUTRAGED' BY IRAQI ATTACK,
SAYS MISSILE SITES BEING DESTROYED**

By David Friedman

WASHINGTON, Jan. 17 (JTA) -- President Bush said Thursday night that he was outraged by the Iraqi missile strike on Israel and that the coalition of international forces in the Persian Gulf was attacking all Iraqi missile sites that could be located.

"The president is outraged at and condemns this further aggression by Iraq," said White House press secretary Marlin Fitzwater.

Israeli Ambassador Zalman Shoval confirmed the "unprovoked attack" on "purely civilian targets" at a news conference at the Israeli Embassy here late Thursday night.

The government of Israel, supported fully by the opposition, "reserves the right to respond in any way it deems fit," Shoval said. But he refused to say whether Israel would retaliate.

The ambassador said he had received calls from Secretary of State James Baker, Deputy Secretary of State Lawrence Eagleburger and White House officials, who told him they were "devastated" by the attack. He said this feeling was expressed in their voices.

The White House later said Baker had telephoned Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir to discuss the situation. "The secretary assured the prime minister that the United States is continuing its efforts to eliminate this threat," the White House said in a statement.

Gen. Colin Powell, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, said earlier Thursday that most of the fixed missile sites in western Iraq, the area nearest Israel, had been knocked out by U.S. and other warplanes in the first hours of "Operation Desert Storm."

He said a "high priority" of the U.S.-led operation was to destroy Iraq's 76 mobile SCUD missile launchers. The chief problem, he said, was locating them.

Shoval said the attack on Israel "jeopardized the lives of both Jews and Arabs, Israelis and Palestinians, who live next to each other."

He pointed out that Israel had maintained a low profile at the request of the United States and kept out of the conflict since Iraq invaded Kuwait last Aug. 2.

"The Israeli government, supporting America's political aims and complying with the United States government requests, decided to refrain from a pre-emptive attack" on the Iraqi missile launchers that threatened it, the ambassador said.

He said that as a result, "the State of Israel and the people of Israel" had paid "the dearest price of any of the countries in the world which have faced Iraq's aggression, except Kuwait itself."

IN A FORTIFIED, AIRTIGHT SHELTER, A REPORTER SITS AND FILES A STORY

By Gil Sedan

JERUSALEM, Friday, Jan. 18 (JTA) -- This is probably the strangest war reporting I have ever done.

It is 3 a.m., and the alarm sirens have just gone off. I am sitting at my computer in my (hopefully) airtight room. But the difficulty is that I can hardly see the computer screen. Instead of my glasses, I am wearing my gas mask.

We awoke in Jerusalem, just as in the rest of the country, at 2:30 a.m. to the unpleasant sounds of the air raid siren, knowing immediately that war must be here. But so far, half an hour after my dreams have been interrupted, this is the only sign of war.

Until a few minutes ago, planes -- friendly planes, I guess -- roared over the Jerusalem skies, assuring us that the guardian angels are up there, taking care of us.

There is no panic. At most, disappointment. I went to sleep last night with the intention of having a good night's sleep after a long day of work, quite confident that as far as Israel was concerned, war was over.

I brushed off my son's speculation that an attack was imminent, that the Iraqis would not sit idle and let us get out of it unscathed.

And here it is: my conviction has proven wrong, and I find myself in the fortified airtight room, happy that it has not been too much trouble to put on the personal gas mask, which has been lying here for the past few weeks.

Indeed, it has proven easier than expected, and the next few minutes are devoted to retaping the window, double-checking everything is sealed.

If there has been an air raid, we in Jerusalem do not feel it. The radio plays music, and relaxed announcers assure us that some explanation is on the way.

An explanation soon comes: "Due to a missile attack on Israel, residents are expected to stay in closed rooms and put on their gas masks," the announcer says.

Children Taking It More Seriously

Outside, the quiet continues. Here and there, a car can be heard passing. An ambulance has just passed by, sounding its horns, while all the while the assuring sounds of our planes are heard from above.

The children are taking it more seriously than we grown-ups. My daughter has thrown up in her gas mask, certainly a strong way of protesting the war. My 11-year-old son suddenly is suffering an unpleasant combination of head and stomach pain.

A half-hour later, it seems half over. The army announces on radio that gas masks can be taken off, so that as I reach this part of the report, my glasses are back in place. However, the instructions of the Air Defense are to remain in the sealed rooms.

A few minutes later, residents of the Tel Aviv and Haifa areas have been ordered to put on their masks once again.

So here it is. The war must be here, but so far, we here in Jerusalem don't feel it. We just hear of it.

Now it is a matter of waiting. Nothing to do here beyond wait, and yearn to know what is happening there, a thousand kilometers to the east of us, where the real war is raging.

JEWISH LEADERS GATHER TOGETHER AS WORD OF THE ATTACK COMES IN

By Aliza Marcus

NEW YORK, Friday, Jan. 18 (JTA) -- It is Thursday night, hours after Israel has been attacked by Iraqi missiles. In the office of the Conference of Presidents of Major American Jewish Organizations, it is eerily quiet, with only the drone of televisions and the ringing of telephones disturbing the somber mood.

The few people who were still working in the office shortly after 7 p.m., when the first news was heard of the air raid sirens going off in Israel, spent the next few hours anxiously monitoring the news while at the same time juggling phone calls from community leaders, parents worried about their children and answering questions from journalists looking for a quote.

"Will the coalition hold? Does this threaten the coalition?" asked Shoshana Cardin, chairman of the Conference of Presidents, as she finished talking with another reporter.

"Everyone is asking me that, and the answer is no, the attack doesn't threaten the coalition. Yes, the coalition will hold."

The Conference of Presidents, the umbrella organization of 46 major religious and secular Jewish organizations, was the center of Jewish fears and hopes late Thursday night as leaders followed the news that always seemed practically unimaginable: an Iraqi attack on Israel.

Cardin observed that this is the price Israel had paid for no pre-emptive strike. "The hope was that because of the distance, the missiles would either fall short or be inaccurate. But we knew it was a risk, and it was quite a price."

A special phone number installed last week to give Jewish leaders up-to-the-minute news on the Gulf crisis rang non-stop, while Cardin and Malcolm Hoenlein, executive director of the group, hastily arranged a late-night meeting.

In the midst of the turmoil, and the uncertainty of missiles exploding in Israel, Jewish leaders just wanted to be together, to discuss what their next step would be and to show their support for Israel and the U.S. attacks on Iraq.

A Statement At 2 A.M.

While waiting for some 35 Jewish leaders to arrive for the 10:30 p.m. meeting, Cardin and Hoenlein sat in front of the television set, mapping out their next moves.

To keep up with the constant questions they were facing, they spoke with U.S. administration officials and Israeli officials here.

Finally, shortly after 2 a.m. Friday, the Conference of Presidents issued a statement saying it was "deeply pained" by the Iraqi missile attack against Israel, and that the "launching of the missiles was an act of war."

It further says that "every country has the right and responsibility to respond to attack, to defend its citizens and protect its borders."

The statement lauds "the wisdom and courage of the president's decision to use force against Saddam Hussein," and salutes the courage of the Israeli government and people "in confronting the great challenges they face."

Hoenlein said afterward that the Conference of Presidents is calling for an event to be held Sunday at noon local time across the country, to demonstrate solidarity with Israel; support for President Bush's decision in the Gulf; and to offer prayers for troops fighting in the war.

OLIM CONTINUED TO ARRIVE IN ISRAEL DESPITE PROSPECT OF AN IRAQI ATTACK

By Charles Hoffman and Hugh Orgel

JERUSALEM, Jan. 17 (JTA) -- The prospect of an imminent attack from Iraq did not deter hundreds of new immigrants from coming to Israel on Thursday, as U.S. and British bombers strafed targets in the nearby Persian Gulf.

Throughout the first day of general alert in Israel, some 900 olim arrived at Ben-Gurion Airport aboard four El Al jets.

The new Israelis, most of them from the Soviet Union but also some from Ethiopia, stepped off planes and were issued gas masks along with their teudot oleh, or immigration certificates.

Quickly tutored in the quickest method of putting on the strange facial protective devices, the immigrants were then bused to hotels in the area, which had become almost totally vacant as most tourists and even some major Diaspora Jewish leaders stayed away from Israel, fearing an outbreak of war.

Most of the arriving immigrants said they had already learned that war had begun in the Gulf while they were still in Europe.

Still they came.

Whatever risks they might encounter in their new homeland were apparently outweighed by their desire to leave their countries of origin as quickly as possible.

'Did Not Let Up Even One Day'

In New York, Zalman Shoval, Israel's ambassador to the United States, told a hastily convened meeting of the Conference of Presidents of Major American Jewish Organizations on Thursday morning:

"The good news is that Soviet emigration did not let up even one hour or one day, despite what was going in the last few days in the Middle East."

El Al continued to fly. But arrangements were being made to keep immigrants in Eastern European transit centers should air traffic become impossible.

On Thursday afternoon, some 200 Ethiopian immigrants landed at the airport, having changed planes in Rome.

About the same number of Soviet newcomers came in via Warsaw.

Transport Minister Moshe Katsav was on hand to greet the arrivals.

Officials of the Jewish Agency for Israel, which held a meeting of its Executive in Jerusalem on Wednesday and Thursday, were confidently predicting that the aliyah would be maintained, albeit on a lower level, for the duration of the crisis.

Security Precautions Taken

Agency officials say the numbers would pick up and return to the record December monthly level of more than 35,000 once tension in the area abates.

The Jewish Agency, alert to the threat of an Iraqi attack, undertook elaborate security preparations in absorption centers, as well as youth aliyah villages, schools, and other centers and buildings.

In the absorption centers, bomb shelters were prepared for occupancy, and one room in each apartment was sealed against chemical and biological warfare attacks, as was the case in most Israeli dwellings.

PUNISHING BOMBARDMENT OF IRAQ COMES AS BLOW TO PALESTINIANS

By Gil Sedan

JERUSALEM, Jan. 17 (JTA) -- The Palestinian population in East Jerusalem, the West Bank and Gaza Strip was in a state of profound shock and deep dejection Thursday after suffering two major blows this week.

First the Palestinians were reeling over the slayings Monday of two top-ranking Palestine Liberation Organization leaders and an aide. The men -- Salah Khalaf, known as Abu Iyad; and Hail Abdul Hamid, called Abu Hol -- were buried Thursday in Tunis.

Also slain was Fakhri al-Omari, an aide to Khalaf.

The burials of the men, originally intended to have been held in Amman, were changed to Tunis because of "Operation Desert Storm" and the state of alert in Jordan.

PLO officials have tried to link the gunman to Israel.

The Palestinians, stalwart supporters of Iraqi President Saddam Hussein, were reeling, too, over what seemed the imminent decimation of Iraqi military power by the U.S.-led air attacks Thursday in the initial phase of the Middle East war.

The Israeli authorities kept most of the territories under tight curfew to prevent trouble, issuing very strong admonitions not to break the curfew. It is expected to last at least until Sunday or as long as the situation in the region remains unclear.

A curfew was clamped on the Silwan neighborhood of East Jerusalem after disturbances erupted over news of the U.S. air raids on Iraq.

The Jerusalem police said initially they would allow Moslem worshippers to attend Friday prayer services in the mosques on the Temple Mount. The decision was in line with efforts to restore a degree of normalcy to the Palestinian population.

But by the end of the day, that appeared unlikely.

'Their Only Ray Of Light'

Also trying was the struggle by the Palestinians to be issued gas masks, just as the Jewish settlers in the territories had. The local media published elaborate instructions on how to behave in case of a poison gas attack, bringing home the immediacy of the expected attack by Iraq.

The Palestinians, many of whom had originally not wanted to be issued the protective gear, now lamented Israel's failure to issue them.

It was only at the last minute that the Israel Defense Force issued the protective masks to Palestinians, acting on orders from the High Court of Justice, which called it a "scandal" that Jewish settlers in the territories, but not Arabs, had been issued masks.

Some Palestinian leaders, such as Dr. Sari Nusseibeh, maintained Thursday that the initial setback suffered by Iraq could not change the fact that Palestinians had to support Saddam Hussein "as their only ray of light."

He said the Palestinians did not delude themselves that Iraq could withstand a coalition offensive. However, they had no choice but to side with Iraq, Nusseibeh said.

He predicted that after the crisis, the United States would try to exert pressure on Israel to reach a settlement with the Palestinians. "But such a settlement would not satisfy the Palestinian minimum," he said.

AMERICAN JEWISH GROUPS DISCUSS SECURITY CONCERNS WITH EXPERTS

By Elli Wohlgelester and Aliza Marcus

NEW YORK, Jan. 17 (JTA) -- The outbreak of the Middle East war early Thursday morning has focused attention on the possibility of retaliatory attacks by Iraqi terrorists or their supporters in the United States.

It is a concern that the Jewish community shares with most Americans and one that addresses practical questions of safety while avoiding any cause for panic.

That was made clear here Thursday at a meeting with security experts and law-enforcement officials, convened jointly by the Conference of Presidents of Major American Jewish Organizations and the Jewish Community Relations Council of New York.

The meeting was called after many organizations expressed anxiety over the issue of security, particularly in light of the recent media exposure given to the dangers of terrorism worldwide.

The one-hour session was conducted by two representatives from private Israeli security firms, a representative from official Israeli security and representatives from the New York Police Department, including Robert Johnson, the chief of department.

Menachem Rosensaft, president of Labor Zionist Alliance, said the speakers "didn't say anything that wasn't common sense, practical and realistic. It was sober, not alarming, but there was no attempt to sugar-coat the situation."

During a satellite hookup program Thursday afternoon for North American Jewish federations, participants agreed on the need to follow up on security measures "without creating undue fear and anxiety," said Martin Kraar, executive vice president of the Council of Jewish Federations.

Take Reasonable Measures

At the end of the satellite program, organized by CJF and the National Jewish Community Relations Advisory Council, Kraar also said Jewish organizations needed to look at security "seriously, without driving everybody crazy with it, but to take reasonable measures."

In New York, area rabbis were also alerted about security precautions.

Suggestions and procedures based on consultations with the New York Police Department were offered in a memorandum circulated by the JCRC, the New York Board of Rabbis and the UJA-Federation of Jewish Philanthropies Department on Religious Affairs.

Rabbis were advised to contact the commander or community affairs officer of their local police precinct to familiarize them with synagogue routine, such as the times religious services and classes begin and end.

In Los Angeles, a sense of cautious optimism pervaded the Jewish community Thursday morning while security precautions were stepped up at synagogues and Jewish institutions there.

A meeting attended by 200 Jewish leaders and law-enforcement officials was held at the office of the Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rith to plan security precautions.

Although Jewish agencies reported few hostile calls, officials noted an increase in anti-Semitic calls to radio and television talk shows over the last two weeks.

(JTA correspondent Tom Tugend in Los Angeles contributed to this report.)

RELIGIOUS ORGANIZATIONS INVITE SPECIAL PRAYERS FOR WAR EFFORT

By Debra Nussbaum Cohen

NEW YORK, Jan. 17 (JTA) -- Through prayer and repentance, outreach and social action, Jews across North America are doing what they can to bring a peaceful conclusion to the war in the Middle East.

The Synagogue Council of America, an organization representing Orthodox, Conservative and Reform groups, has called upon the congregants of each of these branches of Judaism to continue special prayers for the safety of American military services during Shabbat services.

Some places of worship could not wait until Saturday. After missiles hit Israel, one congregation here, Lincoln Square Synagogue, held a midnight prayer session Thursday night.

In Brooklyn, Orthodox congregations reportedly were packed for evening services, with some said to have held consecutive services because of the large crowds that kept coming into the buildings.

On Wednesday night, the Bobover Hasidim held a special midnight session at their headquarters in Borough Park to recite tehillim, or psalms. Special psalms being read were Nos. 79 and 83.

The SCA's statement affirmed support for President Bush's action against Saddam Hussein, and purposely left out mention of Israel in order not to appear to link the Middle East crisis with the Jewish state, according to Gunther Lawrence, spokesman for the organization.

Most Orthodox groups, including the Union of Orthodox Jewish Congregations of America, the Rabbinical Council of America, Agudath Israel of America, the National Council of Young Israel and the Lubavitch Hasidic movement, strictly observed the eve of the U.N. deadline for Iraqi withdrawal from Kuwait as a Yom Kippur Katan, with fasting, extra prayer and teshuvah, or repentance.

Marked With Half-Day Fast

Yom Kippur Katan, which falls monthly on the eve of the new moon, in this case, the new month of Shevat, is traditionally marked with a half-day fast, but is not universally observed.

It is more likely to be observed during times of crisis, and this time, "an entire community was galvanized, and everyone joined in, from right to left," according to Rabbi Yitzhak Brandris, director of public affairs for Agudath Israel.

Rabbi Marc Angel, president of the Rabbinical Council, called on his colleagues at 1,000 congregations to add more psalms to services, as well as individual private prayers, Torah study, charity and teshuvah.

The Agudath Israel Council of Torah Sages has urged Jews to increase the recitation of psalms, as has the O.U., which is asking its affiliated synagogues to organize a special late-evening service nightly and to include Torah study.

"We're looking for something that will add a real spirituality. We're asking the community to add a special, additional dimension which requires effort: praying with the community," said Rabbi Pinchas Stolper, the O.U. executive vice president.

The Conservative movement, through its congregational arm, United Synagogue of America, has developed "Operation Chizuk," encouraging members to invite both Jews and non-Jews who have family members in the Persian Gulf into their homes for Shabbat services and hospitality.