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**IRAQI MISSILE SHOT DOWN OVER ISRAEL
AS NATION RECOVERS FROM TUESDAY RAID**
By Hugh Orgel and Gil Sedan

TEL AVIV, Jan. 23 (JTA) -- Israelis, still reeling from a devastating missile attack in the Tel Aviv area Tuesday night, were sent back to their poison gas-proof "safe rooms" Wednesday, as Iraq fired another SCUD in Israel's direction.

But this time when the all-clear sounded, Israelis had cause to rejoice: The SCUD had been shot down over northern Israel by a Patriot missile, operated by a joint U.S.-Israeli team.

The successful interception reversed the bitter disappointment some Israelis felt after the American-supplied Patriots, deployed in the Tel Aviv area since Saturday, failed to destroy the incoming missile Tuesday night.

That attack, which occurred in the township of Ramat Gan, just east of Tel Aviv, left 96 people injured and three dead, according to revised figures provided Wednesday by the Israel Defense Force.

One fatality was attributed to a direct hit next to a three-story residential building. The other two died of heart failure during the attack.

Only 11 of the injured remained in hospitals Wednesday afternoon. Others, treated mainly for broken limbs, cuts and bruises, were sent home.

One building was destroyed on impact. Twenty sustained varying degrees of damage. Some are repairable, but others will have to be torn down.

Hundreds of rescue workers, including personnel specially trained to find people buried under debris, toiled through the night Tuesday removing rubble, aided by "sniffer dogs," in their search for trapped persons.

Civil Defense Orders Questioned

Wednesday's missile strike occurred shortly after 10 p.m., when air raid sirens sounded throughout Israel. Sirens also sounded in Saudi Arabia, where a SCUD missile was shot down by a Patriot battery.

Residents in northern Israel saw two speeding lights in the sky approaching each other at great speed and then meeting with an explosion, as the Patriot struck the SCUD.

There were no casualties and only a few windows broken. Police and defense officials were seen searching the area, which was not immediately identified, for fragments of the missiles as they fell to the ground.

Both that SCUD and the one fired toward Saudi Arabia on Wednesday were fitted with conventional, high-explosive warheads, like all the other Iraqi missiles that have been fired since the U.S.-led bombardment of Iraq began last week.

None of the missiles has been armed with chemical warheads, and Israelis are beginning to express doubt now that Saddam Hussein has that capability.

Complaints are mounting from the public that the civil defense authorities are making a mistake by ordering civilians to stay at home in rooms protected against poison gas instead of in fortified underground bomb shelters.

Although the civilian casualties might have been reduced or avoided if people had taken to

bomb shelters as soon as the air raid alert was sounded Tuesday night, the IDF has not revised its instructions.

Brig. Gen. Nachman Shai, the IDF spokesman, said the possibility of a poison gas attack had not been ruled out. A gas attack would have more devastating consequences in terms of civilian casualties than conventional warheads, he said.

As long as there is no clear confirmation that Saddam Hussein's missiles cannot carry chemical warheads, the present instructions will not be changed, Shai said.

Americans Overwhelmed By Hospitality

But the mass-circulation Yediot Achronot reported Wednesday that even military sources are questioning the validity of those instructions. The newspaper quoted "a very senior officer" as saying the public should be sent to bomb shelters in an air raid alert.

"It is time that someone in the defense establishment admits a mistake and stops endangering the population," the officer was quoted as saying.

The IDF is conducting an investigation into why the Patriot missiles failed to destroy the incoming missile Tuesday night. Unlike in Wednesday's operation, the Patriots reportedly were operated solely by Israeli personnel.

Defense Minister Moshe Arens told a Cable News Network interviewer that the Patriot missile fired at the incoming SCUD on Tuesday night may not have registered a "miss" but a "near miss."

According to Arens, the SCUD's propulsion mechanism was knocked out, sending the warhead plunging to the ground.

The success of the Patriot strike Wednesday was reassuring to Israelis, many of whom had viewed the arrival of the anti-missile batteries as their only salvation against the Iraqi SCUDs.

The American soldiers, men and women, operating the Patriot batteries are being overwhelmed with Israeli hospitality. They have been showered with cakes and other homemade treats, and have received countless invitations from Israeli families wanting to entertain them at home.

**ISRAEL CONSIDERS RETALIATION,
BUT SHAMIR LEANING AGAINST IT**
By David Landau

JERUSALEM, Jan. 23 (JTA) -- There was no clear word after Wednesday's emergency Cabinet meeting about whether Israel had decided to retaliate for the Iraqi missiles hurled at the Tel Aviv area over the last week.

While some officials said there was no question Israel would retaliate eventually, observers here suggested Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir had decided to hold back for the moment.

Basking in unprecedented support in Israel for his handling of the crisis and enjoying high praise from the West, especially Washington, for Israel's forbearance, the prime minister seemed inclined to give the policy of restraint -- and the defensive capabilities of the U.S. Patriot missiles -- another chance.

But should Shamir unleash the Israel Defense Force against Iraq, the move could have far-

reaching consequences for the Persian Gulf war and the newly cozy relationship between Jerusalem and Washington.

As evidence that Israel would defer military action for the moment, observers cited the announcement from Bonn on Wednesday afternoon that German Foreign Minister Hans-Dietrich Genscher would lead a special solidarity delegation to Israel on Thursday. (See story on Page 3.)

They surmised he would not have planned to come had he expected to find himself visiting a nation actively at war.

Shamir met with his top political and military advisers Wednesday after an early morning phone call from President Bush, who again expressed his "outrage" at Tuesday evening's missile attack and extended his sympathies for the casualties.

The prime minister had another meeting with U.S. Deputy Secretary of State Lawrence Eagleburger on Wednesday morning, followed by the Cabinet meeting.

Israel Radio said Eagleburger gave Shamir a message from Bush, but no details were released.

Want To Deliver A 'Painful Response'

Political sources here gave no indication what the prime minister may have decided with respect to Israel's military options in the wake of Tuesday night's SCUD attack on Ramat Gan.

Shamir ordered Wednesday that no minister may speak out on the policy-making process save for himself, Defense Minister Moshe Arens and Foreign Minister David Levy. Officials said the decision was intended to ensure Israel speaks with one voice to its own public and to the world.

Earlier, Health Minister Ehud Olmert said in a radio interview that the Cabinet, like "every Israeli citizen who is healthy and normal, would like to deliver a painful response to Iraq, so that they cry out in pain."

In more measured language, Deputy Foreign Minister Benjamin Netanyahu told the Knesset that neither Israel's right to respond, nor the "certainty" that it would do so, was in question. The question was when, where and how, he said.

That position seemed broadly supported in the Knesset and by the public.

Shamir received warm accolades from such staunch political opponents as Dedi Zucker and Shulamit Aloni of the Citizens Rights Movement. Zucker said the past five months had seen flawless crisis-management on the prime minister's part.

U.S. REASSURES ISRAEL IT IS TRYING TO ELIMINATE IRAQI MISSILE THREAT By David Friedman

WASHINGTON, Jan. 23 (JTA) -- The Bush administration sought to ensure Israel on Wednesday that the United States was doing everything it could to provide for Israel's security, despite the continuing threat from Iraqi SCUD missiles.

"We want the government and the people of Israel to know that the United States will continue to stand by Israel in the days ahead," said State Department spokeswoman Margaret Tutwiler.

These assurances were seen as part of the U.S. effort to encourage Israel to continue refraining from retaliating for the SCUD attacks, the most serious of which occurred Tuesday night in Ramat Gan. Three people died and 96 were injured in that attack.

The SCUD hit the suburban Tel Aviv neigh-

borhood despite the Patriot anti-missile batteries the United States rushed to Israel last weekend.

In a speech Wednesday night to the Reserve Officers Association, President Bush said Saddam Hussein "has sickened the world with his use of SCUD missiles, those inaccurate bombs that indiscriminately strike at cities and innocent civilians in both Israel and Saudi Arabia."

Calling the SCUD missiles "tools of terror," Bush declared "they do nothing but strengthen our resolve to act against a dictator unmoved by human decency."

Finding and destroying Iraq's mobile SCUD launchers is still a major priority, Defense Secretary Dick Cheney said at a news briefing Wednesday.

Gen. Colin Powell, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, added that finding the SCUDs has been "more of an effort on our part than we had anticipated."

Both White House spokesman Marlin Fitzwater and Tutwiler at the State Department maintained Wednesday that the United States has not directly asked Israel to refrain from a retaliation.

And Bush reportedly did not do so when he called Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir at midnight Tuesday to express his "outrage" at Iraq's "unprovoked aggression."

\$13 Billion Request Under Consideration

But Bush and other top administration officials have made their preference clear by repeatedly expressing appreciation for Israel's restraint so far, which the president called "remarkable."

"We recognize and respect the right of every sovereign state to defend itself and thus have never questioned Israel's right to respond to attacks," Tutwiler said.

"We also recognize and respect Israel's desire not to be drawn into this conflict and greatly admire Israel's restraint in the face of Iraqi deliberate and murderous efforts to widen the conflict caused by the aggression against Kuwait," Tutwiler said.

The White House said Bush and Shamir agreed to stay in close consultation. One means of doing this is the indefinite stay in Israel by Deputy Secretary of State Lawrence Eagleburger.

Eagleburger spoke to Secretary of State James Baker by telephone eight times between the time the SCUD missile hit Ramat Gan on Tuesday and noon Wednesday, according to Tutwiler.

Both Fitzwater and Tutwiler denied that Israel has been promised any specific rewards for its restraint, such as the \$13 billion in additional aid over five years that Israeli Finance Minister Yitzhak Moda'i requested during a meeting Tuesday with Eagleburger.

The deputy secretary made no commitment on the aid, but the request will be "given our full consideration," Fitzwater said.

Meanwhile, the House of Representatives voted 416-0 Wednesday afternoon to adopt a resolution condemning the Iraqi attacks on Israel, praising Israel's restraint and declaring solidarity with the Jewish state.

The resolution was introduced by Rep. Edward Feighan (D-Ohio), who declared that the longstanding ties between the United States and Israel have now been forged into steel.

A similar resolution was introduced in the Senate by the majority and minority leaders, Sens. George Mitchell (D-Maine) and Robert Dole (R-Kan.) respectively.

GERMANY SAYS IT'S GIVING ISRAEL \$165 MILLION IN EMERGENCY AID

BONN, Jan. 23 (JTA) -- Chancellor Helmut Kohl announced Wednesday that Germany would grant Israel \$165 million to help overcome its economic problems, which have been worsened by the Persian Gulf war.

Kohl made the commitment after being accused by opposition Social Democrats and even members of his own Christian Democratic Union of insensitivity toward Israel, especially after the Jewish state became a target of Iraqi missile attacks.

Kohl's announcement was welcomed by Kent Schiner, president of B'nai B'rith International, who met with the chancellor Wednesday.

In his announcement, Kohl also promised to take swift, decisive action to halt German exports of "sensitive equipment" to Iraq or to any country from where it could find its way to Baghdad.

German firms are known to have supplied the Iraqis with materiel, equipment and technology for the manufacture of chemical weapons.

Those revelations and what some Jews have perceived as a low-key response by Germany to the Iraqi missile attacks on Tel Aviv sent Jewish protesters into the streets of Frankfurt and other German cities last weekend with placards reading "German Gas 1944, German Gas 1991."

The Iraqi attacks so far have been by conventional, not chemical weapons. But some Israelis are concerned that Germany is not being sufficiently outspoken against the Iraqi attacks.

In response to such charges, Foreign Minister Hans-Dietrich Genscher is due to leave for Tel Aviv on Thursday heading a delegation of German dignitaries in a demonstration of solidarity with Israel.

Meanwhile, strong anti-American demonstrations continued in Germany protesting the U.S.-led "Operation Desert Storm."

POPE SYMPATHIZES WITH ISRAEL FOR 'CONTEMPIBLE BOMBARDMENTS'
By Ruth E. Gruber

ROME, Jan. 23 (JTA) -- Pope John Paul II expressed sympathy with Israel on Wednesday after the third and deadliest Iraqi missile attack on the Tel Aviv area in less than a week.

During his weekly public audience, the pontiff said he felt "solidarity with how much they are suffering in the State of Israel for the contemptible bombardments of recent days and yesterday."

His remarks were the first specific papal condemnation of the Iraqi SCUD missile attacks on Israel that have injured over 100 people since they began on Jan. 18 and caused seven fatalities.

The pope also expressed solidarity with the people of Iraq and of the other countries involved in the conflict.

His remarks, however, were the first time he has referred specifically and by name to Israel, although he has made several ardent appeals for peace since the Gulf war broke out.

The latest papal comment followed the release Tuesday of a strongly worded public statement by Rome's 2,000-year-old Jewish community -- the oldest in the Diaspora -- taking John Paul severely to task for his failure until then to voice sympathy for Israel under attack.

The statement also urged the pope to use the present occasion to announce Vatican recog-

nition of the Jewish state, which it has withheld for the 43 years of Israel's existence.

The Jewish community's statement was strongly backed by some leading Italian political figures.

A group of Liberal Party and Radical members of Parliament introduced a motion asking Prime Minister Giulio Andreotti, a Christian Democrat, to publicly propose that the Vatican recognize Israel.

The motion in Parliament expressed hope "that Vatican City wants to add itself to the states that recognize Israel and not to number itself any longer among those, like the Arab dictatorships, who deny even in a diplomatic way its right to existence."

The Jewish community said that "more than 40 years after the foundation of Israel, the Holy See and John Paul II avoid even pronouncing the name of the State of Israel.

"For this reason, many Jews feel that the Holy See does not recognize the State of Israel because of theological prejudice."

The Jewish community's statement said, "We Jews of Rome have waited with hope the great commitment of John Paul II in recent weeks in search of a peaceful solution for the Gulf region after the invasion of Kuwait by Iraq.

"Still we have remained waiting for John Paul II to condemn in clear terms Iraq's repeated threat that it wants to destroy the State of Israel, and still more, we would have wanted to hear clear words on the successive bombardments against Tel Aviv and Haifa," the statement said.

AMERICAN LEADERS VISITING ISRAEL STEP RIGHT INTO A MISSILE ATTACK
By Charles Hoffman

JERUSALEM, Jan. 23 (JTA) -- While many visitors and volunteers have been arriving here the last two weeks to help lend spiritual, physical and moral support to Israel, none quite expects to touch down right in the middle of a missile attack.

But so it was for three leaders of the American Jewish Committee, who arrived here Tuesday night for a two-day solidarity and fact-finding visit. One hour after their arrival, air raid sirens sounded warning of an imminent Iraqi missile attack.

"When the siren sounded," said David Harris, executive vice president of AJCommittee, "we had just arrived at our hotel in Jerusalem. We took our gas masks and walked up nine flights of stairs to one of the sealed rooms.

"I was struck by the calm and sense of discipline among the people here," he said.

"In the room with us was a man and his daughter, both from Florida," he recounted. "She is here on a year study program and didn't want to leave. Rather than pressure her to come home, her father came to be with here to face the situation. I asked what their motivation was, and he said, 'We're believers in Israel.' I was very moved by their feelings, and will long remember this."

Harris, along with Sholom Comay, AJCommittee president, and Alfred Moses, chairman of its board, said Israeli leaders want to see more visits by Diaspora Jews at this difficult time.

"On the political level," Harris said, "there has seldom been a more important time, and a more significant opportunity, for Jewish leaders to enhance understanding in the U.S. of Israel's security predicaments."

BRITAIN HIT BY ANTI-SEMITISM SINCE FIGHTING IN GULF BEGAN

London Jewish Chronicle

LONDON, Jan. 23 (JTA) -- A string of anti-Semitic attacks since the fighting in the Persian Gulf began has prompted the Board of Deputies of British Jews to launch its most extensive operation ever to protect Jewish lives and property in the United Kingdom.

The board's Communal Security Organization, its defense arm, has been operating around the clock following a series of attacks including arson in Birmingham and London and the desecration of the Jewish cemetery in Portsmouth.

The security organization issued a warning of possible attacks by pro-Iraqi terrorists and far right-wing groups using the Gulf war to exploit racial tensions.

Police intelligence has said the Jewish community would not be the primary target of terrorist outrages. "But we are taking a slightly different view," the security organization said, while cautioning Jews not to panic.

In London, after the first Iraqi missile attacks on Israel last week, the Holocaust memorial in Hyde Park was defaced with red paint.

On Wednesday, fire gutted two staff offices and other parts of the Hasmonean Boys' School in Hendon, in northwestern London.

Police said the fire was arson but did not attribute it to "racial motivation."

A Board of Deputies spokesman said it accepted the police evaluation but advised the community nevertheless "to pay particular attention to security needs."

Arsonists struck at the Central Synagogue in the Midlands city of Birmingham. A car owned by a local kosher caterer, Janet Levy, was doused with gasoline and set on fire in the synagogue's parking lot. Police are investigating.

Swastikas On Gravestones

Despite an advance tip, police did not prevent anti-Semitic vandals from breaking into the Jewish cemetery on Fawcett Road in the southern coastal city of Portsmouth on Saturday night.

Fifteen gravestones were daubed with swastikas, SS insignias and obscene words. Some of the stones marked the graves of Jewish servicemen in both world wars. A house of prayer at the cemetery was also desecrated.

A spokesman for the board's security group reported a significant number of minor incidents. He also said the recent arson at mosques in Batley, Yorkshire, in the country's north, and Woking in Surrey, southwest of London, could be connected with the attacks on Jewish property.

Strong sympathy for Israel echoed in the House of Commons after Tuesday night's SCUD missile attack on the Tel Aviv area.

Prime Minister John Major said, "Like all civilized people, I am appalled by this savage attack by Iraq on civilians sitting peacefully in their homes in Tel Aviv. I am sure that everyone in this country would want to express their deepest sympathy to those who have been hurt and to their families."

The minister of state at the Foreign Office, Douglas Hogg, told Parliament on Wednesday that the government has "nothing but admiration and respect" for Israel.

Chief Rabbi Lord Immanuel Jakobovits sent a message to Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir applauding his "prudent and steadfast leadership."

FRENCH OPINION SHIFTS TOWARD ISRAEL IN THE WAKE OF IRAQI MISSILE STRIKES

By Edwin Eytan

PARIS, Jan. 23 (JTA) -- French public opinion, leaning toward Israel since the Persian Gulf war started a week ago, veered sharply in Israel's favor after it became the target of Iraqi missile attacks.

According to the latest, as yet unpublished polls, 85 percent of French people express sympathy and support for Israel. Much of that sympathy stems from Israel's restraint so far from reprisal attacks on Iraq.

The empathy marks a sharp change of climate between the two nations. Israel's image has until just recently suffered badly here since the intifada began three years ago and French television was filled with pictures of Israeli soldiers firing on Palestinian rock-throwers.

The change of national sentiment was reflected Tuesday night when all radio and television channels interrupted their programs to broadcast long, sympathetic reports of the havoc wrought by the latest Iraqi missile attack in the Tel Aviv area.

"It was not just news, it was reported with the warmth and sympathy generally reserved for a national catastrophe," a senior French editor told the Jewish Telegraphic Agency.

The change is reflected in the slant in newspaper headlines and stories and the fact that Jewish leaders and pro-Israel personalities are getting more invitations than ever to appear on television talk shows.

Dozens of leading political figures asked to join a "solidarity trip" to Israel organized by CRIF, the umbrella organization of French Jewry.

About 20 members of the Chamber of Deputies, wearing the traditional tricolor scarves, called on the Israeli Embassy on Tuesday.

President Francois Mitterrand received French Chief Rabbi Joseph Sitruk at the Elysee Palace on Tuesday, following a request from CRIF leader Jean Kahn.

Nevertheless, the swing in popular opinion toward Israel has not retarded the influence of the growing "peace camp," an ad hoc grouping of left-wing intellectuals, trade union leaders and French people of Arab descent.

Hundreds and sometimes thousands gather daily in Paris and other large cities demanding the government return to its earlier peace plan, which linked a solution of the Iraqi-Kuwait dispute with the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

3 HELD FOR BOMBING STORE IN ROME

By Ruth E. Gruber

ROME, Jan. 23 (JTA) -- The police are holding three men suspected of bombing a Jewish-owned clothing store in an outlying district of Rome on Sunday night.

But they say it was not a political or racially motivated act, but a bad practical joke by not-too-bright perpetrators.

A simple, homemade bomb placed in front of the store shattered its windows and caused some interior damage.

One of the accused, a man with a record of theft and drug-trafficking convictions, told police he and his companions thought it would be funny to bomb a Jewish shop "because of all the news and tension about the war in the Gulf," a Rome newspaper reported.