

**ISRAELIS GRATEFUL AS ALLIED FORCES  
PRESS AHEAD WITH WAR AGAINST IRAQ**  
By David Landau

JERUSALEM, Feb. 26 (JTA) -- "Iraq's given the order to withdraw," said the 12-year-old Israeli girl, rubbing sleep from her eyes Tuesday morning. "That's terrible, isn't it?"

The plaintive query was a clue to the mood in Israel, where everyone, including children, has become either an armchair general or a kibitzing diplomat, watching the military and political drama unfold in Kuwait and Iraq.

The schoolgirl was reacting to Baghdad radio's announcement that Iraq had ordered its occupation army to withdraw from Kuwait.

Her unspoken fear was that this move might prompt the U.S.-led allies to halt their ground offensive before it destroys the Iraqi army and topples Saddam Hussein.

Just about everyone in Israel has been concerned that Washington might succumb to Soviet and Third World pressures to end the war short of the destruction of Hussein, one of Israel's most implacable foes.

Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir spoke for many Tuesday when he said it was in Israel's interest that Hussein "disappear from the international arena."

"I don't want to talk about the ways to achieve this," he said. "The main thing is that he no longer control developments in the Middle East."

Like countless other Israelis, the 12-year-old was relieved to hear later in school that President Bush had dismissed the Baghdad broadcast and said the battle against Iraqi forces would not end until all surrender or retreat unarmed from Kuwait.

**'Trying To Save The Remnants Of Power'**

In a speech from the White House Rose Garden, Bush called Hussein's announcement that Iraqi troops should leave Kuwait "an outrage."

Hussein "is not voluntarily giving up Kuwait. He is trying to save the remnants of power and control in the Middle East by every means possible," the U.S. president said.

The coalition forces are now ahead of schedule, said Bush, and "the liberation of Kuwait is close at hand."

He urged "all Iraqi forces in the theater of operation, those occupying Kuwait, those supporting the occupation of Kuwait, to lay down their arms, and that will stop the bloodshed."

Israelis were also heartened after Washington brushed aside Moscow's 11th-hour peace offensive late last week, aimed at averting a ground war.

But by midweek, the picture had become more complex. The clash of arms was in full fury, and Israelis sympathized with the U.S. president's need to weigh American casualties against the pursuit of his war aims.

Those sympathies were heightened when Israelis learned of Monday night's deadly Scud missile attack on an American army barracks near Dhahran, Saudi Arabia, in which 27 soldiers were killed and 98 injured.

Israel has suffered only four fatalities in some 39 Iraqi missile attacks since the war began

six weeks ago, though several hundred people have been injured by debris, and property damage, particularly in the Greater Tel Aviv area, has been extensive.

The Orthodox -- and a considerable number of less-observant Israelis -- consider that a miracle and sufficient proof that the Jewish state enjoys divine protection.

**Concern About A Chemical Attack**

There had been an abiding fear in recent days that once the ground war began, Saddam Hussein would launch a chemical weapons attack on Israel in desperation.

So far, that has not materialized. Former Defense Minister Yitzhak Rabin said Tuesday morning that the threat of poison gas attack has now greatly diminished.

Among Israeli politicians and in government circles generally, there are somber predictions of diplomatic clashes to come with Washington and other allied capitals once the Palestinian issue resurfaces with renewed urgency after the war.

Still, at this juncture, when the drama of war grips the world, there is a deep sense of gratitude in Israel that the country, spared the need to wage war and shed blood, is aligned with the forces of good in a historic confrontation.

*(Contributing to this report were JTA correspondents David Friedman in Washington and Hugh Orgel in Tel Aviv.)*

**PALESTINIANS, REACTING TO NEWS,  
REJOICE OVER HUSSEIN'S 'VICTORY'**  
By Gil Sedan

HEBRON, West Bank, Feb. 26 (JTA) -- The writing on the wall for Saddam Hussein says "Defeat," but Palestinians are refusing to read it.

Jubilant residents of Nablus, the largest city in the West Bank, took to the streets Tuesday, rejoicing in what they called Saddam Hussein's "victory."

When the Iraqi president announced his troops would withdraw from Kuwait in keeping with U.N. resolutions, many residents of Nablus climbed to the rooftops to praise God.

"Allah Akhbar" (God is great), they chanted, the same slogan they used when Iraqi missiles hit Tel Aviv.

As some of them expressed it, the fact that Hussein withstood 38 days of pounding by a multinational allied coalition led by a superpower spelled victory, not defeat.

Theirs was an expression of total support for Hussein, regardless of the consequences. If there was criticism of the man who led his people to disaster, it was not heard.

In Hebron, residents showed more restraint than in Nablus. The streets hummed with activity, even as authorities continued to prevent most Arab workers from returning to work in Israel.

People here did not cling to their radios, as they did in Nablus and Jordan, listening to the speech of the Iraqi leader. They were too busy in their daily routines to bring life to a halt, but when asked, they responded unanimously that Saddam Hussein had been justified.

"Kuwait is part of Iraq," said a shop owner, who refused to be identified. "We sided with him

because he was the first Arab leader who came to our support."

"He gave us hope," said Akil Kafishe, a restaurant owner. "He gave us belief in the future."

Some insisted Iraq's defeat was not final. "There are those who have not lost hope. I am convinced that in the end the Iraqis will come out stronger, both politically and physically," journalist Daoud Kuttub said at an East Jerusalem symposium Tuesday.

Palestinians refuse to discuss the future, even in terms of an international peace conference, possibly because they realize they would be attending such a meeting in a weakened position.

"We will not accept any political solution short of an Islamic state," said Sheik Hisman Kafishe, a young bearded imam, or Islamic religious leader.

"You, the Jews, have waited for 2,000 years to realize your dreams," said Atiya Zahde. "We have patience, too."

#### E.C. SUPPORTS BUSH WAR DECISIONS, BUT COULD PART ON POSTWAR FOCUS

By Edwin Eytan

PARIS, Feb. 26 (JTA) -- While the European Community is backing President Bush's decision to continue the war against Iraq until Saddam Hussein's total surrender, some of the 12 member states show signs of divergence from U.S. policy in the postwar peace negotiations.

Those countries, led by France, want to put the Israeli-Palestinian dispute at the top of the Middle East agenda.

The other Mediterranean states -- Greece, Italy, Spain and Portugal -- have taken their cue from France. They will support America now, diverge later.

Most of these governments are anxious to mend relations with the Arab world. Moreover, they believe their desire to raise the Palestinian question as soon as possible does not run contrary to Israel's interests and would better serve it in the long run.

French officials say that while Germany does not give the Palestinian issue the same priority and feels a special responsibility for Israel's security, Bonn agrees nevertheless that the subject should be addressed as soon as possible.

France was the first E.C. country to announce its support for the American position Tuesday.

Foreign Minister Roland Dumas is going to Washington on Thursday for talks with Secretary of State James Baker and other administration officials on continuation of the war and the postwar situation.

#### ISRAELI UNITY ON WAR POLICY MAY FIZZLE IN POSTWAR PERIOD

By David Landau

JERUSALEM, Feb. 26 (JTA) -- While Israeli politicians have stood united behind the government's policy of restraint in the face of Iraqi missile attacks, the non-partisan spirit may collapse in the postwar period, when peace is the issue.

Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir and Shimon Peres, leader of the opposition Labor Party, clashed sharply on the subject Tuesday during a Knesset debate.

There seem to be more subtle differences

between Shamir and Foreign Minister David Levy and their respective camps within the Likud bloc.

Both Shamir and Levy spoke Tuesday of their readiness to negotiate with the Arab states "without preconditions."

But Levy stressed Israel must launch a peace offensive without delay after the war.

Shamir, for his part, repeated his opposition to the "land-for-peace" formula, though it is one of the principles of the 1978 Camp David accords, which he often cites. Analysts say he sees no immediate need for a new peace initiative when Israel already has one on the table.

The prime minister's altercation with Peres took place at a meeting of the Knesset Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee. The Labor leader took offense at Shamir's remark the day before that he "quaked" at the thought of "someone else" handling Israel's postwar diplomacy.

"Someone else" meant Peres, the Labor leader charged. He accused the prime minister of hating him personally and of squandering chances for peace in the past.

Shamir denied both charges but insisted on his right to express profound gratitude that Labor would not be shaping Israel's policies.

Peres said Monday that recent visitors to Damascus reported the Syrians ready to talk peace with Israel, on condition that the Palestinian issue topped the agenda.

Shamir reiterated his readiness to negotiate with Syria "without preconditions." He told reporters following the committee session that he neither feared nor expected pressure on Israel after the Gulf war.

#### ISRAELIS LOSE SLEEP OVER SCUDS, ESPECIALLY WHEN THEY DON'T HIT

By Hugh Orgel

TEL AVIV, Feb. 26 (JTA) -- In terms of sleeplessness, Israelis have a "bad" night when Scud missiles strike after midnight.

A "good" night is one in which a missile strikes early in the evening and there are no casualties or damage.

Worst of all are the nights when no missiles are launched. The anticipation of an attack makes it difficult to fall asleep.

Those were the findings of a study conducted at the Sleep Clinic of the Technion-Israel Institute of Technology in Haifa, where Professor Peretz Lavie and his colleagues took advantage of public tension under attack to conduct experiments into sleep and alertness patterns.

Volunteer subjects had a sophisticated microcomputer strapped to their wrists. The tiny electrodes recorded how long they slept, how well and how many times they awoke.

In continuing experiments, people in the Greater Tel Aviv and Haifa areas, the main targets of the missile attacks, were disconnected from the electrodes during the alert and reconnected after the all-clear.

Most fell asleep within minutes.

Lavie, who heads the Technion's sleep laboratory, said that was a sign of adjustment to the situation.

He also analyzed the subject's dreams. He said the most frequent anxiety dream was of running to catch a bus and suddenly remembering having left one's gas mask at home.

"The siren is sounded and the person wakes up in alarm, putting an end to the dream," Lavie said.

## JAPAN-ISRAEL TRADE SHARPLY OFF AS A RESULT OF PERSIAN GULF WAR

By Aliza Marcus

NEW YORK, Feb. 26 (JTA) -- Japanese banks and companies have sharply curtailed their transactions with Israel as a result of the Persian Gulf war, even though Israel is not a combatant, Israeli and American Jewish officials charge.

The issue was expected to be taken up this week during a visit to Israel by the Japanese deputy foreign minister, who also brought an official condolence message for the victims of the Iraqi Scud missile attacks on Israel, said Israeli officials here.

Information about the disruption in financial and trade relations between the two countries was released by the World Jewish Congress this month.

Officials had public a letter sent to the Japanese ambassador to Israel, in which Japanese banks are accused of withholding funds to be transferred to Israeli companies.

The letter, sent by Elchanan Harel, chairman of the Israel-Japan Friendship Society and Chamber of Commerce, charges that the non-governmental Japanese Bankers Association recommended its member banks suspend dealings with Israeli banks. Harel wrote that banks then advised their client companies to cease trade with Israel.

"It is difficult to understand that Israel will receive the same 'treatment' as the countries involved in the war, as Israel is not involved, has not declared war and is not in a state of war," Harel wrote in the letter.

He pointed out that Israeli companies had always been financially responsible in their dealings with Japanese firms, and he demanded Japan adhere to the "business as usual" policy Israel was maintaining with its other trade partners.

The Israeli deputy consul in New York, Mordechai Yedid, said Japanese businesses decided this so as not to "favor trade with Israel" in the midst of cutbacks to Gulf countries directly involved in the fighting, such as Saudi Arabia.

Referring to the meetings in Israel this week between Japanese deputy foreign minister Hisahi Owada and Israeli officials, Yedid said the issue of Japanese-Israeli trade was No. 1 on the agenda.

"We hope this would bring trade activities back to normal," he said.

### Expansion Of Arab Boycott?

The diminished trade and financial ties between the two countries is of particular concern because of the tendency of Japanese companies to closely follow the Arab-led economic boycott of Israel.

Organizations monitoring compliance have documented at least two dozen Japanese companies -- including Matsushita, Casio, Toshiba and Toyota -- that adhere to the economic boycott.

Japan, which must import all of its oil, is considered to be particularly dependent on Arab oil producers, and observers attribute the boycott by Japanese companies to this dependence.

American Jewish and Israeli officials would like to see the Japanese government institute an anti-boycott law, similar to one in effect here that is enforced by the U.S. government.

Israeli officials have also complained about a two-week cessation in postal service with Japan, which affected most Middle Eastern countries. Service to Israel resumed Feb. 1 after the Israeli ambassador to Japan lodged complaints with authorities in Tokyo.

In a memo privately circulated to members of his organization, Harel added that since the Aug. 2 Iraqi invasion of Kuwait, Japanese companies have been more hesitant in their dealings with Israel.

He wrote that companies sometimes demand that Israeli letters of credit be backed by foreign banks or that payment be made in advance. Harel charged that many businesses were refusing to ship merchandise to Israel and had stopped ordering merchandise from Israel.

### 'Trade Is Virtually Nil'

"With very rare exceptions, Japanese banks are not undertaking transactions with their Israeli counterparts and to this day, trade is virtually nil," said Elan Steinberg, executive director of the World Jewish Congress.

Reports of such an economic slowdown were denied by Yoichi Mikami, the Japanese vice consul here, who said the Japanese government was in fact urging companies and banks to show greater flexibility in their dealings with Israel.

He said that while the Japanese government did not have control over the private sector, financial and trade services between the two countries had not been disrupted.

Trade between the two countries is not considered very large, although it has been steadily growing over the past few years, officials from both countries said. In 1990, Japan imported \$682.7 million worth of Israeli goods, while Japan exported to Israel \$395 million worth of goods, according to the Japanese Consulate.

## SYNAGOGUE FIRE IN SYDNEY IS THIRD ARSON THIS MONTH

By Jeremy Jones

SYDNEY, Australia, Feb. 26 (JTA) -- The third synagogue fire in less than a month damaged Sydney's Sephardi Synagogue on Tuesday morning.

The New South Wales police arson squad promptly linked it to the allied ground offensive against Iraq in Kuwait.

But a past president of the congregation, Alfred Gubbay, called that "pure speculation." The fire was just "a wanton act of arson" he said.

Police said an unknown person or persons smashed a window and set fire to the synagogue's kitchen. The fire brigade's prompt response confined the damage to a small section of the building complex.

The chairman of the New South Wales Ethnic Affairs Committee, Stepan Kerkasharian, denounced the arson. "Whether it is ultimately proved to be directly connected with the Gulf war or not, this sort of criminal behavior has no place in our society," he said.

"Naturally, the Gulf war has produced tensions in our society, but we shouldn't allow bigots or hoodlums to use that tension to create fear and hatred in our harmonious, multicultural society," Kerkasharian added.

In the past month, arsonists caused \$80,000 damage to the North Shore Temple Emanuel kindergarten in the Sydney suburb of Chatswood.

Less than 24 hours earlier, someone torched the North Eastern Jewish War Memorial Center in the Melbourne suburb of Doncaster.

Damage was estimated at \$6,000 by Joe Gersh, president of the Jewish Community Council of Victoria, who blamed "hooligans" for the fire.

## SOVIET IMMIGRATION REBOUNDS AS HUNGARIAN FLIGHTS RESUME

By Gil Sedan

JERUSALEM, Feb. 26 (JTA) -- Immigration from the Soviet Union is increasing again, after slackening when the Persian Gulf war began five weeks ago.

About 700 olim arrived Tuesday, on the heels of 601 who arrived at Ben-Gurion Airport on three flights Monday.

Jewish Agency Chairman Simcha Dinitz disclosed that 12,571 immigrants had arrived in Israel since the outbreak of war.

"One of Saddam Hussein's goals was to create conditions that would hurt aliyah," but he failed, Dinitz told a Golda Meir Scholarship awards ceremony at the Hebrew University.

Malev, the Hungarian national airline, resumed flights to Tel Aviv on Monday. Malev carries large numbers of Soviet Jews in the absence of direct flights from Moscow.

Dinitz expressed hope that other foreign airlines that suspended flights when war was imminent in the region would also restore service.

He praised the quality of Soviet aliyah, stressing the large proportion of professionals and academicians among them.

"This wave of aliyah, together with Israeli university graduates, will change the face of Israel in a few years," Dinitz predicted.

"The country will become a world center of science, technology and culture," he said.

But Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir sounded a cautionary note. "There are voices in the Soviet Union calling for the cessation of aliyah," he told the Knesset's Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee on Tuesday.

Meanwhile, immigrants arriving at the airport received colorful Purim masks for their children in addition to gas masks for all.

## EX-REFUSENIK OPPOSES UCSJ PLAN TO EXPEDITE IMMIGRATION TO U.S.

By Aliza Marcus

NEW YORK, Feb. 26 (JTA) -- A proposal to increase the number of Soviet Jews allowed to enter the United States is dangerous and counterproductive, according to a former longtime Soviet Jewish refusenik now living in Israel.

Yuli Kosharovsky, who was often jailed and harassed during the 18 years he waited to emigrate, warned the plan would leave Soviet Jews "sitting on their suitcases and waiting," instead of boarding planes to go to Israel.

"I think it's counterproductive and short-sighted, and I don't understand how it can help Soviet Jews," he said in an interview Monday, during a three-day visit to the United States.

The Union of Councils for Soviet Jews proposed last week that the U.S. government should, in effect, waive its Soviet refugee quota and allow all Soviet Jews who have already applied to immigrate here to do so this year.

Some 40,000 Soviet Jews will be allowed to enter the United States as refugees this year. But more than 100,000 others have applied to immigrate here.

The Union of Councils says the proposal is necessary because of the shifting conditions in the Soviet Union, the threat of violence against Jews living there and the danger that emigration might be halted at any moment.

Kosharovsky, who arrived in Israel in March

1989, said the plan was unlikely to be accepted by U.S. officials, but that in the meantime, Soviet Jews would postpone their departures to Israel in the hope of getting a place in the United States.

## Doing What Hussein Could Not Do

"At this very time when Soviet propaganda is portraying Israel as hell on earth, at this very time when Jews are again being brainwashed, they suggest a proposal" that feeds into this propaganda, said Kosharovsky, who arrived here after an extended visit to the Soviet Union.

He was extremely dismissive of the plan and charged it would accomplish what the Iraqi Scud missile attacks were unable to do: halt Soviet immigration to Israel.

"They somehow are acting in the same direction as Saddam Hussein," said Kosharovsky. "They don't understand what they are doing."

But an official from the Union of Councils said Kosharovsky misunderstood the proposal and was incorrect to think it would harm Soviet Jewish emigration.

Micah Naftalin, the group's national director, said the proposal would apply only to those people who had already applied to enter the United States under the restrictive refugee resettlement and family reunification program.

"When things are getting so dangerous in the Soviet Union, can we afford to let them sit there and wait to be reunited with their families?" asked Naftalin.

"This would open no new avenue for Soviet Jews planning to go to Israel," he said.

Nevertheless, the plan has already been rejected by most other U.S. groups working on behalf of Soviet Jews. Some Jewish officials expressed worry that the plan would take much-coveted refugee slots away from other people in danger of persecution throughout the world.

## THATCHER COMES OUT TO HONOR RETIRING BRITISH CHIEF RABBI

London Jewish Chronicle

LONDON, Feb. 26 (JTA) -- Britain's chief rabbi, Lord Immanuel Jakobovits, was extolled by one of his most ardent fans, former Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher, at a dinner this week honoring him on the occasion of his retirement.

It was Thatcher's first formal speaking engagement since she resigned in December.

No chief rabbi has had "so profound an effect on the life of this nation as Lord Jakobovits," Thatcher said. She revealed "one of this nation's worst-kept secrets -- that he has had, through his thinking and writing, a deep effect on me as well."

The Conservative former prime minister and the Orthodox chief rabbi share deeply traditional viewpoints and longevity in office.

Thatcher became prime minister in 1979 and had the longest uninterrupted incumbency of any British prime minister in this century.

Jakobovits will have completed 24 years as chief rabbi when he leaves office next September.

Both he and Thatcher have been controversial figures at times.

The former prime minister observed that Jakobovits was "one of the few who, in every generation, speak out for enduring truths and traditional beliefs, who, first, may be criticized, mocked and even slandered, but who as the years go by, are ever more intently heard, admired and ultimately followed."