



# Daily News Bulletin

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## TOP NEWS IN BRIEF

### **Arafat travel ban partially lifted**

Israel partially lifted a travel ban on Yasser Arafat.

Israel Radio reported that Israel's Security Cabinet decided Sunday that the Palestinian Authority president would be permitted to travel within the West Bank town of Ramallah.

Arafat had been under virtual house arrest in his Ramallah office since December, when Israeli officials said he would be confined there until he arrested those responsible for last October's assassination of Tourism Minister Rehavam Ze'evi. Prime Minister Ariel Sharon convened the Security Cabinet on Sunday to discuss whether to lift the travel ban after the Palestinian Authority announced last week that it had arrested three suspects in the assassination.

### **Arafat failed, Clinton says**

Sen. Hillary Clinton, on a solidarity visit to Israel, blamed Yasser Arafat for failing to stop violence. Speaking in Jerusalem on Saturday, the Democratic senator from New York declared that Arafat "has failed as a leader, and his inability or unwillingness to rein in forces of violence and terrorism demonstrates he is not ready or willing to be a leader." Clinton was addressing the Conference of Presidents of Major American Jewish Organizations at the start of a 36-hour solidarity visit to Israel.

As part of her schedule Sunday, Clinton visited the Jerusalem pizzeria that was the site of a suicide bombing last August that killed 15 people and wounded more than 130 others.

### **Israel to halt reprisals**

Israel agreed to stop attacking Palestinian targets in order to give the Palestinian Authority a chance to halt violence.

The decision came after Israeli and Palestinian security officials met Feb. 21, their first such meeting in several weeks.

### **Groups denounce Pearl's murder**

Jewish groups said Daniel Pearl was a victim of Islamic fundamentalism.

The Simon Wiesenthal Center said the Wall Street Journal reporter "fell victim to the insanity of Islamic fundamentalism" that targeted Pearl because he was an American and a Jew. [Page 4]

## BEHIND THE HEADLINES

### **On eve of Cheney's Mideast trip, U.S. less beholden to Arab allies**

By Matthew E. Berger

WASHINGTON (JTA) — As Vice President Dick Cheney heads to the Middle East to drum up support for a possible U.S. attack on Iraq, the Bush administration does not appear willing to make major policy concessions in order to win Arab support.

In a series of speeches in recent weeks, senior Bush administration officials have reiterated that the United States is willing to take action in Iraq — even without the support of U.S. allies if necessary.

"A regime change is something the United States might have to do alone," Secretary of State Colin Powell told the House International Relations Committee earlier this month.

Cheney will visit nine countries, including Israel, on a 10-day tour of the Middle East in March. He will focus not just on the Iraqi situation, but on what Arab states can do to thwart terrorism, including finding terror groups' financial and diplomatic links within the region.

While the Bush administration is hoping to gain at least acquiescence from Arab states for any moves, it has made it clear that the United States will not bargain for that support, as it has in past regional conflicts.

That assertion leads some to conclude that Israel will not be harmed if U.S. forces move into the Middle East this time around.

"The president has demonstrated he's not going to do these things at the price of Israel," said Malcolm Hoenlein, executive vice chairman of the Conference of Presidents of Major American Jewish Organizations. "We know the Arabs have made some demands, but so far the administration has been very straightforward."

Advocates for Israel grow wary each time the United States considers military action in the Middle East. Memories of U.S. support for Israel apparently waning as the first Bush administration sought Arab help in the 1991 Persian Gulf War has made American Jewish leaders nervous that a new foray into Iraq could damage U.S.-Israeli relations.

When the coalition against terrorism began to take shape after Sept. 11, American Jewish leaders wondered what would happen to U.S. support for Israel.

Bush administration officials openly wooed Iran and Syria, among other nations, to join their campaign against Afghanistan, while leaving Israel out of the coalition in response to Arab demands.

Any pressure that the Bush administration put on Israel — whether to end targeted killings of Palestinian terrorists or to minimize retaliatory incursions into Palestinian-run territory — was seen as a direct result of the need to maintain Arab support for the anti-terror campaign.

In recent months, however, the administration has seemed less beholden to the Arab states. At the same time, U.S. policy has become increasingly pro-Israel.

As Palestinian Authority President Yasser Arafat's failure to break with terror has become increasingly evident, administration rebukes about Israeli actions have become rarer.

American Jewish leaders therefore are far less hesitant as the United States sets its sights on Iraq.

"The idea that somehow the multilevel relationship between the United States and Israel had changed since Sept. 11 was mostly the concern of paranoid Jewish groups, and never touched policy-makers or the American public at large," one Jewish leader

## MIDEAST FOCUS

### 13 Americans killed in intifada

At least 13 American Jews have been killed in the 17-month-old Palestinian intifada, a new report says.

The report, released by the Zionist Organization of America, says an additional 38 Americans have been wounded in Palestinian terrorist attacks.

The ZOA says 25 Americans have been killed by Palestinians and 63 wounded since the Oslo peace accords were signed in 1993.

### Settlers told to adopt self-defense

An Israeli military official suggested that settlers take steps to protect themselves from Palestinian attacks.

The proposal calls for settlers to defend their communities until army forces arrive, according to the Jerusalem Post. Maj. Gen. Yitzhak Eitan suggested the plan during a meeting with members of the Yeshiva Council, which represents settlers in the West Bank and Gaza Strip.

### Pollard seeks Knesset's help

Jonathan Pollard is urging members of the Knesset to lobby the U.S. Congress for his release. Serving a life sentence in a North Carolina prison for spying for Israel, Pollard has asked members of the Israeli government to forward a petition seeking his release to Congress, as well as to President Bush.

At least 110 of the Knesset's 120 members have signed the petition.

### Rocket found near Ashkelon

Remains of a Kassam rocket fired by Palestinians were found near the Israeli city of Ashkelon. The rocket was believed to have been fired from the Gaza Strip into Israel on Feb. 19.

Meanwhile, the army was investigating whether another Kassam rocket was fired Saturday after a large explosion was heard in the Ashkelon area.



## Daily News Bulletin

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said. It remains unclear what effect an American attack on Iraq would have on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. U.S. action against terrorism might give Israel a freer hand in its own efforts against terror — but a longer, protracted conflict with Iraq might up grass-roots pressure on Arab states, leading them to increase their support for the Palestinian cause and their pressure on the United States almost as a safety valve.

And while it speaks of taking on Iraq alone if need be, the Bush administration would prefer to have international support. Support from the European Union is seen as key, Arab support less so.

"If the United States is unprepared to make changes in its strategy to get European support, it's not going to make changes for countries with which it has more difficult relations," said Patrick Clawson, director of research at the Washington Institute for Near East Policy.

Clawson said he believes that when Cheney puts his cards on the table with Arab leaders, many of them will come back with their own demands — specifically, more U.S. pressure on Israel to ease up on the Palestinians. But analysts say they do not think the administration will shift its attitude on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

"I don't think you're going to find positions change on the terror Israel faces solely because we are engaged in an effort in the Persian Gulf or elsewhere," said Edward Walker, a former U.S. assistant secretary of state for Near Eastern affairs.

"Israel's enemies are now our enemies," said Daniel Pipes, director of the Middle East Forum.

One factor insulating the United States from Arab pressure is the fact that the Bush administration wants some support, but not the type of grand coalition which was deemed necessary in the Persian Gulf War.

Coming off its quick, decisive victory in Afghanistan, the Bush administration has political capital to spare.

Many Arab countries are concerned about the threat from Iraq. They may hope that the United States will take similar speedy action in the Middle East that will result in a regime change in Iraq, analysts say.

Some Arab countries also seem less likely to take up the Palestinian cause than they were a few months ago. Egypt has been more critical of Palestinian actions since Israel last month seized a ship filled with 50 tons of weapons, en route to the Palestinian Authority from Iran.

Indeed, one State Department official said the collusion between Iran and the Palestinian Authority has changed several Arab states' attitude on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. And Bush administration officials have been heartened by several recent Arab gestures, including a tentative Saudi Arabian statement of support for an diplomatic resolution of the Arab-Israeli conflict.

Therefore, while they may raise public objections, Arab states privately are expected to go along with U.S. plans against Iraq.

"Cheney will encounter classic Middle Eastern schizophrenia in saying one thing in public and another in private," Pipes said. "Privately they will be urging us to finish Saddam Hussein, while publicly urging us to stay away."

Israel's main concern is not about U.S. or Arab rhetoric, but real action. During the Persian Gulf War, Israel was dissuaded from retaliating when Iraq hit Israel with Scud missiles.

This time, Israeli officials have made it clear that they will not demonstrate similar restraint.

"We cannot not retaliate twice and keep the same deterrence" in the Middle East, David Ivry, Israel's ambassador to the United States, said this week.

But Israel also does not believe it is as vulnerable as it was a decade ago.

Ivry said he believes Saddam Hussein does not have the same missile stockpile as he had during the Gulf War, and Israel's anti-missile systems are vastly improved.

One danger is the possibility of nuclear weapons, which some Israeli officials believe Hussein already had access to — but did not use — a decade ago.

"If he believes this operation is designed to remove him from power, he could go for broke," one Israeli official said.

For that reason, Israel sought assurances that the United States will give it early warning of an impending attack. While not describing details of the agreement, Israeli officials seem satisfied with the results. □

## JEWISH WORLD

### Iran tests missile system

Iran successfully tested an air-to-surface missile fired from a helicopter, an Iranian newspaper reported Sunday. Iran insists its weapons development programs are strictly conventional and meant for deterrence, not offense.

The United States has accused Russia, China and North Korea of helping Iran develop missile systems.

### Rome gets new chief rabbi

An inauguration ceremony was held for Rome's new chief rabbi. Thousands of the city's Jews crowded into Rome's ornate main synagogue Sunday for the installation of Dr. Riccardo Di Segni.

Di Segni, 52, replaces Elio Toaff, who retired in October after 50 years in the post. Leone Paserman, the president of the 15,000 member community, told the congregation that he hoped Di Segni would "illuminate the community with the light of the Torah."

### Proposal would ban racist posts

Authors of racist e-mails and Internet postings could face criminal charges under a new European proposal. Drafted by the Council of Europe, a legal forum that works to harmonize laws across Europe, the proposal would outlaw the publishing of "hate speech" on the Internet. Welcomed by law enforcement agencies, it has been criticized by Internet firms as impossible to enforce.

### TV evangelist slams Islam

A religious broadcaster drew criticism after describing Islam as a violent religion. Speaking Feb. 21 on his "700 Club" TV show, Rev. Pat Robertson said Islam "is not a peaceful religion that wants to coexist. They want to coexist until they can control, dominate and then, if need be, destroy."

Hussein Ibish, spokesman for the Washington-based American-Arab Anti-Discrimination Committee, lashed out at the comments a day later: "The rhetoric is exactly the same as traditional anti-Semitism. All you can do is change the word 'Jew' to 'Arab' or 'Muslim.'"

### Appeal of former SS man rejected

A former Nazi SS guard lost an appeal of his life sentence in prison for murdering a Jew during the Holocaust.

Germany's highest criminal court rejected the appeal of Anton Malloth, a former Nazi guard at the Theresienstadt Ghetto who was sentenced last year to life imprisonment for murder and attempted murder, according to The New York Times. Malloth, 90, was found guilty of murdering a Jewish prisoner and of trying to shoot another prisoner.

## AROUND THE JEWISH WORLD

### Book on Lithuanian rescuers prompts debate with nationalists

By Adam B. Ellick

VILNIUS, Lithuania (JTA) — A recently published book listing the names of Lithuanians who rescued Jews from the Holocaust has sparked a debate between the State Jewish Museum and Lithuanian nationalists.

After 13 years of extensive research, the State Jewish Museum last week released "Saving the Jews in Lithuania from 1941-1944." The book by Viktorija Sakaite lists the names of 2,570 non-Jewish Lithuanians who risked their lives to protect Jews during the Nazi occupation of the Baltic nation.

When the State Jewish Museum was re-established in 1989, it immediately appointed a special committee to research the number of Lithuanian rescuers and gather their daring stories.

But Lithuanian nationalists insist the actual number of Lithuanian rescuers is closer to 14,000.

The issue is especially sensitive in Lithuania, which is widely believed to have had the highest rate of collaboration with the Nazis among overrun states. During World War II, the Nazis and their Lithuanian collaborators murdered 94 percent of the country's 250,000 Jews.

But don't cite such statistics to Ruta Gajauskaite, a former member of Parliament and founder of the small Green Party in Lithuania.

She points to "The List of Gurevicius," a 1999 book written by Lithuanian-Canadian journalist Antanas Gurevicius. Researched over several decades, the book cites more than 10,000 Lithuanian rescuers, also known as "righteous Lithuanians."

Gajauskaite says most Jewish survivors emigrated to Israel, South Africa and North America after the Holocaust, and this has made it difficult to locate rescued Jews.

Gajauskaite, whose mother saved 12 Jewish children, treating them "like her own daughters," calls the research by the State Jewish Museum truthful, yet incomplete.

She aspires to publish a substantially longer list under the Club of Signatures, a Lithuanian nongovernmental organization that includes more than 100 former Parliament members.

Her request to cite the work of the State Jewish Museum in her project was rejected by the museum's director, Emanuelis Zingeris.

"Lithuanian radical and national groups are trying to make a better face of Lithuania, to make surrealist numbers of righteous people. Our small team here will never be used to create this sugar and propaganda," he says.

"Lithuanians can make these lists ourselves," Gajauskaite counters. "All those accusations are mostly speculative and aim to make some violence between Lithuanians and Jewish people."

Jonas Morkos, a non-Jewish Lithuanian journalist who has produced documentaries on the Holocaust in Lithuania, says the debate is just one of many since 1991, when Lithuanian independence from Soviet domination opened the doors for historical research.

"At first, I thought the controversy was good because it brought attention to the subject," Morkos says.

"But now I wonder if it's just serving modern politics and has nothing to do with the experience of victims. It doesn't make a difference if it's 4,000 or 10,000. The important thing is that such people existed, and they are completely unknown by the public in the West."

He calls author Sakaite "a great professional in looking for rescuers."

He adds that Gajauskaite and Gurevicius "are not a serious force."

The argument over the actual number of righteous Lithuanians appears rooted in what each side considers suitable proof.

For example, the Jewish Museum got a lead about hundreds of Lithuanians in the small town of Utena who saved numerous Jews. The incident is tallied in Gurevicius' list, but it was omitted by the Jewish Museum.

"We made the research, and it's horribly incorrect," Zingeris says. □

BEHIND THE HEADLINES**Murder of Pearl raises concern for safety of Jewish journalists***By Matthew E. Berger*

WASHINGTON (JTA) — The kidnapping and murder of Wall Street Journal reporter Daniel Pearl raises concerns about the safety of Jewish journalists in violent regions.

Several veteran foreign correspondents say all American journalists, regardless of religion, face the same danger in overseas trouble spots — although they agree that religion is an issue, both for their editors and their subjects.

An American who also had Israeli citizenship through his parents, Pearl was abducted in Karachi, Pakistan, on Jan. 23 by Pakistani militants. They accused him first of working for the CIA and then of being a Mossad agent.

Videotapes of Pearl's execution, obtained by government officials Feb. 21, reportedly show him declaring in his last words that both he and his father are Jews. It is unclear whether he was forced to say those words or was responding to his captors' questions.

The video then shows Pearl's throat being slit.

One of Pearl's alleged captors said through his lawyer Feb. 21 that Pearl was abducted and killed for being "anti-Islam and a Jew."

Leaders from around the world expressed their revulsion and condolences.

"His murder is an act of barbarism that makes a mockery of everything Danny's kidnappers claimed to believe in," said Paul Steiger, the managing editor of The Wall Street Journal. "They claimed to be Pakistani nationalists, but their actions must surely bring shame to all true Pakistani patriots."

Pearl was the paper's South Asian bureau chief, based in Bombay, India. Pearl's mother and father, a professor at the University of California at Los Angeles, came to the United States from Israel in the 1960s.

They both have dual U.S.-Israeli citizenship.

Daniel Pearl had only American citizenship.

In addition to his parents, Pearl is survived by a wife who is pregnant with their first child.

Pearl's death raises questions about the safety of all journalists in violent parts of the world, but the fact that he may have been targeted because of his religion is of particular note.

Tim Weiner, a New York Times reporter based in Mexico City, has made many trips to Pakistan and Afghanistan as a journalist. He said he believes Pearl's Jewishness was secondary for his captors.

"I think this is primarily an act of hatred against the United States and the West, rather than Muslim against Jew," said Weiner, who knew Pearl personally.

Weiner told JTA that when the subject of religion came up during his interviews in the region, the reaction generally was positive. He cited an incident in 1994, when he was interviewing a provincial governor and Islamic militant, Abdullah Jan, who asked if Weiner was Muslim.

"He was the typical old-fashioned warlord type, with a 2-foot long turban and a beard down to his short ribs," Weiner recalled.

When he responded that he was not Muslim, Jan asked whether Weiner was Christian. Again, Weiner said no.

"You must be Jewish," Jan then said.

"He raised up his right hand with his palm toward me, as if he was taking an oath in court," Weiner said. "And he said, 'All men are brothers, all children of Ibrahim. As long as you are a brother of the book, you're OK with me.'"

Weiner says he does not believe that Pearl was targeted because he was Jewish.

"I think that this little group of demonstrative and crazy people found it useful for their own twisted propaganda purposes to make an issue or try and make headlines out of his religion," he said.

Glen Frankel, editor of The Washington Post Magazine, said assigning a Jewish journalist to an area like Pakistan is a Catch-22. Before sending someone to the region, editors would discuss the factor of religion — yet they also would be wary of preventing a reporter from working in a certain region just because of his faith.

"I would think about it, but I would also feel a responsibility to cover events," said Frankel, who has been stationed in the Middle East, southern Africa and Europe. "I would go to Pakistan, but I would also be as careful as possible" — as, he added, Pearl probably was.

American Jewish groups reacted harshly to Pearl's murder, calling it an example of extreme Muslim fundamentalism.

"He was a reporter merely doing his job who fell victim to the insanity of Islamic fundamentalism that targeted him merely because he was an American and a Jew," said Rabbi Marvin Hier, dean and founder of the Simon Wiesenthal Center. "It was the same hate and fanaticism that brought down the World Trade Center."

Ironically, friends and colleagues describe Pearl as someone curious about Islam and eager to tell the stories of extremists.

Abraham Foxman, national director of the Anti-Defamation League, said he did not believe that Jewish journalists are more at risk than other American journalists.

"I don't see any patterns that Jewish journalists are being targeted," Foxman said. Pearl "was targeted first and foremost because he was an American."

But, Foxman added, the level of hate is increasing in that region, and anti-Semitic dimensions are being seen in conflicts in the Middle East and South Asia.

President Bush, who was traveling in China when he learned of Pearl's death, said: "Those who would threaten Americans, those who would engage in criminal, barbaric acts, need to know that these crimes only hurt their cause and only deepen the resolve of the United States of America to rid the world of these agents of terror."

"May God bless Daniel Pearl," he added. □

**Israeli wounded by army fire**

JERUSALEM (JTA) — Israeli troops shot and wounded an Israeli civilian they mistook for a Palestinian terrorist.

Noam Chen, 36, was driving with his family last Friday in the Hebron area when he spotted two Palestinians he thought were armed and about to attack him.

Chen opened fire at the Palestinians, in turn drawing fire from Israeli troops at a nearby roadblock who thought he was a terrorist.

They stopped when Chen identified himself, and then they began pursuing the Palestinians. One of the Palestinians was shot and wounded and the other escaped. Israeli troops searching the site found a plastic toy rifle. □