



# Daily News Bulletin

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86th Year

## TOP NEWS IN BRIEF

### London conference opens

A conference on reforming the Palestinian Authority opened in London.

The meeting began Tuesday, despite Israel's decision to bar a Palestinian delegation from attending, a move taken after a deadly terror attack earlier this month in Tel Aviv.

Instead, Palestinian delegates took part in the opening session via video hookup.

At the start of the conference, Britain's foreign secretary, Jack Straw, said Palestinian Authority President Yasser Arafat must step up democratic reforms to get the Mideast peace process back on track.

Arafat agreed before the meeting to an Egyptian proposal calling on all Palestinian groups to halt terror attacks against Israeli civilians, Israel Radio reported, citing the P.A. publication Al-Ayyam.

### Orthodox leader Dworken dies

Rabbi Steven Dworken, executive vice president of the Rabbinical Council of America, died of a heart attack Monday in New York at 58.

Dworken, who led the group that represents 1,100 Orthodox rabbis and serves as the rabbinic authority for the Orthodox Union's commission on kashrut, was eulogized at a Yeshiva University service Tuesday.

### UJC disbands Trust, hires CFO

The United Jewish Communities will cut off funding for its Trust for Jewish Philanthropy.

Founded in 2000, the Trust was intended to build relationships between the Jewish federation system and Jewish philanthropists by catalyzing new ventures and providing consulting services.

UJC, which said it took the move for budgetary reasons, will try to absorb the Trust's staff into other operations.

At the same time, the UJC announced that it had hired a new chief financial officer, Samuel Astrof, senior vice president and CFO of the United Way of New York City and a former partner at Ernst & Young.

Because of the Martin Luther King holiday in the U.S., the JTA DAILY NEWS BULLETIN will not be published Monday, Jan. 20.

## ISRAEL VOTES 2003

### For U.S. Jews, fewer chances to get involved in Israel's elections

By Rachel Pomerance

NEW YORK (JTA) — Political consultant James Carville once remarked that campaigning in Israel wasn't unlike campaigning in America: It's still about Jewish money, he joked.

But the American consultants who have advised candidates in Israel's recent elections largely are absent this time around. So, too, are American Jewish activists.

American Jews have gotten involved in Israeli elections for the last 20 years, particularly in the last decade — helping candidates Yitzhak Rabin, Benjamin Netanyahu, Shimon Peres and Ehud Barak, according to Steve Rabinowitz, an unpaid adviser to the Labor Party for nearly 10 years.

American involvement peaked in the Barak-Netanyahu contest of May 1999, Rabinowitz said. Clinton spin doctors Carville, Stanley Greenberg and Robert Shrum advised Barak's campaign, while Republican strategist Arthur Finkelstein devised Netanyahu's game plan.

But as scandals related to overseas donations have rocked this and the last election, Israeli candidates have become wary of soliciting foreign contributions — which are illegal under Israeli law once the election date has been determined.

Only Finkelstein, who has worked for Netanyahu in two campaigns and for Sharon in 2001, is involved in the campaign for the Jan. 28 elections, again helping Sharon.

Finkelstein did not return JTA's phone calls. But according to Rabinowitz, Finkelstein's "involvement is considerably less than it was in the" Netanyahu years, but "more than people thought it would be this cycle."

Carville's international consulting group, GCS, was hired by former Labor Party Chairman Benjamin Ben-Eliezer, who lost to Haifa Mayor Amram Mitzna in the party's November primary.

Greenberg and Frank Luntz, a Republican pollster who has worked for Netanyahu and Natan Sharansky, have been diverted to another Israel project.

The two are backing a media campaign in America to promote Israel's democratic values and peacemaking efforts. Sources say that both men fear that partisan involvement in Israel's election would jeopardize the public relations effort.

For his part, Rabinowitz decided against helping Mitzna, citing the short election cycle and meager payment — and the fact that Labor wasn't strenuously soliciting his aid anyway. Meanwhile, would-be contributors or activists from the United States have been discouraged by a combination of factors:

- skittishness over scandals relating to foreign financial contributions, which Israeli authorities have investigated more aggressively in recent years;
- the struggling U.S. economy, and the fact that U.S. Jews already are donating heavily to the United Jewish Communities' Israel Emergency Campaign to help Israel weather the Palestinian intifada;
- focus on a possible U.S.-led war on Iraq;
- shattered hopes for the Israeli-Palestinian peace process;
- Israel's return to a one-vote system from the more "Americanized" direct election of the prime minister, obscuring the process for many; and
- a race that, until recently, seemed like a foregone conclusion.

However, Mitzna has roused at least a few American peaceniks.

In Boston, where the Jewish federation has a "sister-city" relationship with Haifa,

## MIDEAST FOCUS

### Sharon: No radicals in coalition

Prime Minister Ariel Sharon said he would exclude extremist parties if he forms a unity government after the Jan. 28 elections.

In an interview published Tuesday in *The New York Times*, Sharon said he would not put himself in the hands of any radical parties, either of the left or the right.

### Mitzna: Labor won't join Likud

The leader of Israel's Labor Party announced that his party will not join a unity government led by Ariel Sharon. "It's us or him. Anyone who doesn't vote Labor is voting for Sharon," Amram Mitzna said at Tuesday's news conference. Research by Labor has shown that such a move would garner three or four more seats for the party, which would be taken from Meretz, Shinui and the Arab parties, according to the Israeli daily *Ha'aretz*.

### Loan to Sharon laundered?

A South African unit is assisting Israeli officials in probing whether money laundering was involved in a controversial loan by South African-based businessman Cyril Kern to Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon. According to the *Cape Times* newspaper, the money reached Israel via accounts in Australia and New York.

A spokesman for South Africa's Justice Ministry said the probe would focus on why the money did not go directly to Israel. South African officials also are interested in whether South Africa's law on foreign exchange was broken, he said.

### Joint U.S.-Israel exercises

Hundreds of American soldiers arrived in Israel for joint maneuvers. The exercises are being conducted in southern Israel using anti-missile systems, the U.S.-made Patriot and the Arrow, which was developed by Israel and the United States, officials said.

a group hosted a fund-raiser before the Labor primary, raising "in the ballpark of five figures," one source said.

Others have expressed interest in helping Mitzna's candidacy, but said there have been few opportunities.

Ken Brociner, a longtime political activist, asked several left-leaning organizations in America how he could help build support for Mitzna, but got few concrete suggestions.

"In my view, the liberal, progressive community in the United States has failed to mount a coordinated coherent effort, however indirect, in support of a campaign that is completely consistent with its values," he said.

The left-wing group Brit Tzedek, which formed last year, is considering asking its supporters, about 4,000 activists, to donate to two nonpartisan voter mobilization projects in Israel — one coordinated by and targeting Israeli Arabs, and another run by the Coalition of Women for Peace to reach women on issues of social justice.

Donna Spiegelman, a biostatistics professor at the Harvard School of Public Health, sent e-mails to about 5,000 people asking them to contribute to the New Israel Fund and other groups in support of the women's project. The project has produced 10,000 posters for Israeli cities.

Still, many liberal Jewish organizations that were involved in previous Israeli elections are less active now.

During the 1999 Barak-Netanyahu race, Americans for Peace Now ran a special fund-raising drive that raised some \$500,000 for its Israeli counterpart. Peace Now used the money for billboards, bumper stickers and pamphlets.

This election, Peace Now — to which APN contributes about 30 percent of its fund-raising — decided not to mount a special campaign because of the shortened election cycle after Prime Minister Ariel Sharon called early elections. The group is continuing its regular activities, such as publicizing government budget allocations to settlements.

"There have been a few people who have called in looking to see how they can help different political parties, but it has not been a flood," said Lewis Roth, assistant executive director for Americans for Peace Now.

In the February 2001 election for prime minister, the Shefa Fund, which supports liberal causes, subsidized flights so Israelis living in America could return home to vote. But the group plans no such trips this time around.

"Because the prospects for peace seem so distant, many funders are simply staying away," said Sue Hoffman, who directs the Shefa Fund's grant-making program.

When Netanyahu was elected prime minister in 1996 by less than a percentage point over Peres, some observers believed that Israelis living abroad who were flown in by groups supporting Netanyahu made the crucial difference.

But this time, American aid to the Likud Party appears similarly limited.

As far as fund-raising goes, "We do none, we have none, we will do none," said Philip Rosen, chairman of American Friends of Likud.

While Rosen said he has heard of voter mobilization projects sponsored by others in the past, that has changed this time around.

"I've heard of none on the right side of the political spectrum," he said.

Morton Klein, president of the Zionist Organization of America, also said he's not aware of efforts by the Likud or Israel's more hawkish parties to fly voters back to Israel or raise funds for the election.

A primary reason for American disengagement is fear of becoming embroiled in financial scandals, along with the fact that Israeli parties are not soliciting American donors.

In the past, Israeli authorities investigated allegations of overseas donations for "soft-money" purposes — donations to Israeli nonprofit organizations that used the money for political purposes, or payments to American consultants working for Israeli candidates.

While the foreigners' contributions generally didn't break any laws at home, they might have breached Israeli laws. And while Israel can't punish foreigners, the donors may jeopardize the careers of the candidates they're supporting — and tarnish their own reputations. □



## Daily News Bulletin

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## JEWISH WORLD

### Lieberman calls for Mideast envoy

Sen. Joseph Lieberman (D-Conn.) is calling for the Bush administration to appoint "some high emissary" devoted to addressing the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

Speaking on CBS' "Early Show" on Tuesday, a day after announcing he is running for president, Lieberman reiterated Bush administration policy that "a peace which involves two states, a free and secure Israel next to a free and secure Palestine," would be in both sides' best interests.

The Connecticut senator also said peace would only be possible if Palestinians stop terrorist attacks against Israel.

### Arabs threaten Olympic Games

Islamic extremist groups reportedly threatened to bomb the 2004 Olympic Games in Athens if security for the Games is assigned to a consortium that includes Israeli companies.

In addition, Arab nations are threatening to boycott the Athens Olympics if the SAIC Team gets the security contract for the Games, according to the Greek newspaper *Avriani*.

Greece also is reportedly concerned that one of the Israeli security companies on the team has signed a cooperation agreement with Turkey, Greece's longtime rival.

### Florida rabbi may be evicted

A Florida county is trying to foreclose on a rabbi's house because prayer services were held there in violation of local zoning laws.

A hearing will be held Wednesday in Orange County, Fla., to evict Chabad Rabbi Joseph Konikov and his family from their house.

The Konikovs have filed a federal lawsuit alleging that the county is violating their constitutional right to assemble peacefully and pray in their house. "This case is looking more and more like the selective enforcement of an already unconstitutional law," said John Stemberger, Konikov's attorney.

### 'Blast off' in Hebrew

A Hebrew translation of the NASA countdown will be offered when the Shuttle Columbia lifts off this week with an Israeli astronaut, Col. Ilan Ramon, aboard.

Chabad Jewish Community Center of the Space Coast plans to offer simultaneous translation in Hebrew of the live countdown coverage.

The Hebrew coverage will be available via the Internet on [www.jewishbrevard.com](http://www.jewishbrevard.com).

The coverage will begin on Thursday at 9 a.m. Eastern time and continue for 45 minutes after the launch.

### A JEWISH PRESIDENT?

## Lieberman's mom kvells, predicting her son will be 'best president' ever

By Matthew E. Berger

STAMFORD, Conn. (JTA) — Sitting on the stage as her son announces his candidacy for president, Marcia Lieberman grasps her grandson's hand and begins to tear.

"It's beyond what any mom would ever dream," she says later in the day.

The mother of Sen. Joseph Lieberman (D-Conn.) opened her home Monday to her son, family, friends, a slew of campaign operatives and the national media.

As the senator tackles tough questions in the living room of the small, two-story house here where he grew up, Marcia Lieberman sets out plates of cookies and bowls of fruit for her guests.

And like a good Jewish grandmother, there are sucking candies on the table as well.

She can hardly be heard in the cramped kitchen, as she whispers as to not interrupt her son's interviews. Suddenly, she asks around the room, "Can I talk louder?"

"You can talk as loud as you want," one of her granddaughters replies. "It's your house."

It is a busy day for the 88-year-old Lieberman, but she is in a reflective mood, spouting small words of wisdom on being a good Jewish mother: "In raising a child, spoil them but love them," she says. "That's the secret."

And when a reporter needs a little help with her Yiddish, Marcia Lieberman tries to explain the word "nachas," helping the reporter pronounce it, translate it to English — she says it means "happiness from relatives and friends" — and even spell it.

Her kitchen seems like something out of a Neil Simon play, complete with flowered drapery, a key chain rack with the word "Shalom" on it and a small menorah on the windowsill.

On her back door, there is a wooden sign with the family's last name etched in it, and in Hebrew, *bruchim haba'im*, which means welcome.

The candidate's mother, a widow, walks with a cane and speaks slowly, but has a great deal of spunk. When her son was the vice presidential nominee in 2000, running with then-Vice President Al Gore, she campaigned across the country for the ticket.

And when Gore announced last December that he would not seek the Democratic nomination in 2004, the senator's mom was the only member of the family who was doing media interviews.

She expects to be on the campaign trail this time around, too.

"I certainly will, as much as I can," she said. "I enjoyed it last time, and I'm certain I will enjoy it this time."

In the home where she raised three children, Marcia Lieberman says she didn't talk about political aspirations with her son when he was young, but instead instilled basic values. "I taught him that everyone is born equal. You can make friends with anyone you meet."

But as he grew, she says she knew that he would go far in politics because he understands people.

She likens her son to John F. Kennedy, who as a presidential candidate in 1960 was trying to be the first Catholic in the White House. She is proud of her observant Jewish son, but quickly says she does not think Jewish families are any different from others.

And like any good mother, she has a bold prediction for 2004 and beyond: "He'll be the best president there ever was. I'll tell you that." □

## Jewish educators meet in Israel

JERUSALEM (JTA) — Some 300 American Jewish educators joined their Israeli counterparts for a conference this week on Jewish and Zionist education.

The meeting, being held at a Dead Sea resort, marks the first time the North American Alliance for Jewish Youth is holding its annual conference in Israel, according to the Jewish Agency for Israel. □

A JEWISH PRESIDENT?**A little pride and a little fear:  
Jews react to Lieberman news**

By Peter Ephross

NEW YORK (JTA) — The American public appears to be ready for a Jewish president — but some American Jews may be a little more anxious about the idea.

Even though it's the second time around for Sen. Joseph Lieberman (D-Conn.) in the national spotlight, it's different now that he's gunning for the top slot on the ticket.

Lieberman, who ran as Al Gore's vice presidential nominee in 2000, announced this week that he would seek the 2004 Democratic presidential nomination.

For most Jews, there's an immediate swelling of pride that an M.O.T. — a member of the tribe — is seriously being considered as a presidential candidate. However, "after the pride is past, and I think that will pass pretty quickly," there will be "ambivalence from both ends — the liberals and the traditionalists," said Samuel Heilman, a professor of sociology and Jewish studies at the City University of New York.

For those who are more liberal than Jewish, there's ambivalence that the face of Judaism presented to the American public is one of observance. Lieberman prays at a modern Orthodox synagogue in Washington and observes kashrut and Shabbat.

"There are always Jews who will look over their shoulder and feel uncomfortable when a co-religionist rises to a highly visible position of society. This is a reflection of their own personal discomfort with who they are," said Rabbi Joshua Plaut, the executive director of the Center for Jewish History in New York.

During the 2000 campaign, Lieberman consistently invoked God, in turn invoking the wrath of the Anti-Defamation League for often referring to faith and God in his speeches and for advocating a greater role for faith in American life.

When he announced his bid Monday at Stamford High School in Connecticut, he pledged to do so again.

"My faith is at the center of who I am. I am not going to conceal that" during the campaign, he said, adding that he would not "hesitate to talk about faith when it's relevant."

On the flip side, among some Orthodox Jews, there's a fear that Lieberman will be seen as a negative model of adaptation to the modern world, Heilman says.

"What do you do with an Orthodox Jew who will have a Christmas tree in his house, which he will have in the White House if he is president," said Heilman, the author of "Defenders of the Faith: Inside Ultra-Orthodox Jewry."

And will Lieberman, Heilman wondered, allow pictures of himself praying in his tefillin and tallit?

"He won't want to have these strange things on his head" that could alienate Americans, Heilman said.

For his part, Lieberman says that if elected he would not allow his Shabbat observance to interfere with his duty to serve the country. While most U.S. Jews fall in between these two poles, many may experience at last a muted aspect of these feelings.

And for some Jews across the religious spectrum whose Judaism derives primarily from a fear of anti-Semitism, that ambivalence morphs into fear.

These Jews fear that "if Jews are going to be in the public

arena, then it will increase anti-Semitism," said Eva Fogelman, a New York-based psychologist. If anything goes wrong," Fogelman said, these Jews worry that "the Jews as a group will be blamed."

This worry is likely more pronounced among the older generation of Jews, who may have firsthand experiences of anti-Semitism — whether abroad or in the United States in the 1950s and early 1960s.

These worries fly in the face of facts: Polls indicate that Americans don't really care about a candidate's religion anymore. In 1937, the Gallup organization found that 46 percent of Americans would vote for a Jewish person for president. By 1999, that number had climbed to 92 percent.

Of course worries about Jews in high office are nothing new.

Before Henry Kissinger became secretary of state in 1973, "there were those who felt it shouldn't be a Jew, never mind a Jew with an accent," said Menachem Rosensaft, a member of the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Council.

But while white supremacists had their day with Kissinger's Jewishness, it had little play elsewhere.

Indeed, outside the Jewish community, the white supremacists are likely to make the most of Lieberman's religion.

Lieberman ran alongside Gore in 2000 with almost no problems related to his religion — and no evidence that his Jewishness hurt the Democratic ticket. But the events of the past few years — the echoes of Sept. 11 and the ongoing Israeli-Palestinian violence — have created a heightened anxiety.

"The American Jewish community is also in a somewhat different place than it was two years ago," said Jonathan Sarna, Braun professor of Jewish history at Brandeis University.

"The community is much more nervous, about anti-Semitism domestically, about Israel, about the fate of Jews around the world and historically, Jews know that sometimes it's been dangerous to have Jews in high positions of power in such moments," he said.

"Some feel, and this is whispered a lot, that it is 'untimely' to have a Jewish president."

Whatever their reactions, many American Jews respond strongly to Lieberman's nomination. Whether this will translate into votes is another matter.

"This an era of the maturing of the Jewish politician and the Jewish political world," Sarna said. "We're seeing a diversity of Jews in American politics and different Jews staking out different positions."

As Rosensaft put it, "Let's see whether we vote for him." □  
(JTA Staff Writer Joe Berkofsky in New York contributed to this report.)

**Israel limits 'conflict diamonds'**

JERUSALEM (JTA) — Israel took steps to limit its involvement with "conflict diamonds."

Israel says it recently became the first country to adopt the Kimberley process, which attempts to halt the sale of conflict diamonds, gems sold to raise funds for armed rebel groups in countries such as the Democratic Republic of Congo and Angola.

Israeli companies purchase approximately 50 percent of the world's rough diamonds, two-thirds of which are eventually exported to the United States.

Fewer than 4 percent of the world's diamonds are considered conflict diamonds. □