



# Daily News Bulletin

Vol. 81, No. 14

Wednesday, January 22, 2003

86th Year

## TOP NEWS IN BRIEF

### Sharon, astronaut chat

Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon talked Tuesday via satellite phone with Israeli astronaut Ilan Ramon.

Sharon wished Ramon good luck on his space mission and sent him "blessings from Jerusalem, the capital of the Jewish people for 3,000 years and forever."

Ramon is aboard a NASA space shuttle that was launched from Cape Canaveral, Fla., on Dec. 16.

The mission is scheduled to run through Feb. 1.

### UJC to vote on ousters

The United Jewish Communities is expected to approve a resolution to oust members that do not pay their dues to the umbrella organization.

UJC member federations are scheduled to vote on the measure during a conference call Wednesday.

The measure also would bar federations and local leaders from national positions if they do not pay their dues.

The measure comes after some federations protested a rise in dues that came after a new "fair share" formula was approved in June.

### Israel razes Palestinian market

Israel tore down 62 shops and market stalls in a West Bank village Tuesday as soldiers clashed with Palestinian protesters.

Israeli officials said the shops were built illegally. The mayor of the village accused Israel of waging war on the Palestinian economy.

The market in Nazlat Issa drew many Israeli customers before the Palestinian intifada began in September 2000.

### Flooding in central Israel

Israel's navy was called in Tuesday to help rescue trapped residents in the Tel Aviv area after torrential rains caused widespread flooding.

Thousands of motorists were trapped when water levels rose as much as one yard, swamping their vehicles and causing roads to be shut down.

Witnesses said people climbed out of trapped buses and swam for safety, according to witnesses. In Holon, firefighters rescued dozens of small children trapped in nursery schools, according to the Jerusalem Post.

## ISRAEL VOTES 2003

### With Sharon still in control, focus shifts to 'day after' Israel's election

By Leslie Susser

JERUSALEM (JTA) — The election campaign winding to a close this week should have been about which party has the best plan to extricate Israel from the current cycle of Palestinian terror and economic decline.

Instead, it focused almost exclusively on sleaze in the political system and corruption allegations against the leading players, especially Prime Minister Ariel Sharon.

But the core issues aren't about to go away, and the way the next government handles the Palestinian dilemma will determine the reality Israelis will live with for years to come.

Polls show that most of the public seems to prefer Labor Party Chairman Amram Mitzna's ideas for separation from the Palestinians as the key to security and economic regeneration — but they don't really trust Mitzna to do it.

With substance largely shunted aside, the campaign has boiled down to a choice between youth and experience. Mitzna, the political neophyte, is facing Sharon, the seasoned campaigner, who may be tainted by scandal but who has proven himself capable of steering the state.

Given Israel's recent experience with novices who swept into office with big ideas but who accomplished little, voters are leaning toward the Likud Party and Sharon, the father figure who projects a more reassuring and protective image.

The irony, pundits have noted, is that the public seems to want a right-of-center prime minister — to carry out left-wing policies.

With the Jan. 28 vote only days away, Sharon, 74, seems virtually assured of a second term, and pundits already are asking what he intends to do differently this time around.

The word from his inner circle is that this time Sharon is determined to make peace with the Palestinians. He wants to go down in history, they say, as an "Israeli de Gaulle" — a general who, in the twilight of his career, made peace with the people he had spent most of his life fighting.

Aides say that's why Sharon so wants Labor in his coalition. And, they say, that's why he has set up a team under Dan Meridor that has begun secret talks with Palestinian leaders — aside from Palestinian Authority President Yasser Arafat, whom Sharon continues to shun.

Such whispers have right wingers so worried that settler leaders like Elyakim Haetzni are calling on the Likud to dump Sharon, "the new leftist," and replace him with Benjamin Netanyahu, who is seen as more hawkish.

But there is a rival theory on the left. Despite the fact that the campaign has been short on substance, left-wing pundits see the new peace talk from the Sharon camp as a late pitch to voters. The aim, these skeptics say, is to win over floating centrist voters and, after the election, entice Labor to join his coalition.

Yet these skeptics argue that Sharon is congenitally incapable of making peace: He is too attached to the settlements he helped found, and his truncated vision of Palestinian statehood will find few takers on the other side, they say.

"Sharon," one pundit wrote, "is incapable, psychologically and politically, of even starting negotiations."

Whether Sharon has adopted peacemaking as a strategy, or whether he merely talks

## MIDEAST FOCUS

### Palestinian teams honor 'martyrs'

The Palestinian Authority has named teams in a soccer tournament after suicide bombers and other "heroes" of the intifada.

The tournament, and a team, have been named for Abdel Baset Odeh, the bomber who carried out last year's "Passover Massacre" in Netanya that killed 30 people, according to the Jerusalem Post. Another team is named for Raed Karmi, a commander of the Al-Aksa Brigade in Tulkarm whom Israel killed last year, accusing him of involvement in numerous terrorist attacks.

The other five teams also have been named for terrorists from the West Bank city of Tulkarm, where the tournament is taking place under the auspices of P.A. officials. Odeh's brother is to hand out the trophy to the victorious team.

### Police stop explosives-laden van

Israeli border police stopped a van filled with explosives, preventing a major terrorist attack. Four Palestinians fled the van when police stopped the vehicle Tuesday near the Israeli Arab city of Umm el-Fahm.

Two of the Palestinians fled to Palestinian-controlled areas, while the other two fled toward Umm el-Fahm, police said.

### Egypt calls off talks

Egypt called off talks at which Palestinian groups were to discuss a temporary halt to terror attacks on Israelis. A Palestinian official who declined to be identified told Reuters that the meeting was called off after Syria refused to allow Palestinian factions based in Damascus to go to Egypt.

Last week, Hamas and Islamic Jihad rejected an Egyptian proposal to halt terror attacks at least until Israel's Jan. 28 elections, in order to help the Labor Party.

of it to buy time and make political gains, could prove to be the most important question in the election aftermath. And Sharon could be put to the test very soon, depending on events in the Persian Gulf.

Much will depend on what happens after the anticipated American-led war on Iraq. Top U.S. officials are intimating that one of the first orders of business in the post-Saddam era will be a serious U.S.-led attempt to resolve the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

Deputy Defense Secretary Paul Wolfowitz suggested that after Iraq, the United States quickly will turn its attention to curbing Israeli settlement activity. Secretary of State Colin Powell said the United States intends to push ahead vigorously with a peace "road map" — which calls for full Palestinian statehood within three years — being developed by the diplomatic "Quartet" of the United States, United Nations, European Union and Russia.

In Israel, opinion is divided on how much effort the Bush administration will be prepared to invest on the Israeli-Palestinian track. On the left, Danny Yatom, a former Mossad chief and key policy adviser to former Prime Minister Ehud Barak, is convinced that the United States will achieve its goals in Iraq and then exploit the favorable regional conditions to force through an Israeli-Palestinian agreement.

"I think the Americans will be far firmer with the parties and won't allow them to drag their feet," he says. The United States might even try to impose a solution on the two sides, Yatom says.

On the right, Uzi Arad, a former deputy Mossad chief and top policy adviser to Netanyahu, argues that the situation is far more complex. The Americans will have so many other things on their plate in the post-Saddam era that they will only turn to the Israeli-Palestinian issue if and when they think the parties are ready, Arad says.

In this view, the Bush administration will put its resources and prestige on the line only "if they identify tangible chances of success" — and that, Arad believes, could be a long way off.

How Sharon responds to a new American initiative, and whether the Americans view the situation optimistically, will depend to a great extent on the coalition Sharon is able to put together.

A narrow coalition with right-wing and religious parties would effectively prohibit peace moves.

And unless Labor relents and joins a unity government — or Shinui relents and agrees to sit with the fervently Orthodox — a narrow, right wing-religious coalition is all Sharon would have.

Partly to pave the way for a national unity government, a handful of Mitzna's opponents within Labor have been pressing to replace him with Shimon Peres as the party's prime ministerial candidate. That comes after a poll in Monday's Ma'ariv newspaper predicted that Labor would win another 10 seats — and possibly take the election — if the more experienced Peres were party leader.

A switch at this late hour is unlikely, especially since Peres says he backs Mitzna. But pundits see the affair as the first attempt by other Laborites to erode Mitzna's standing after the election and chip away at his refusal to enter a national unity government.

If Labor does go in, Sharon may come through as the peacemaker his aides say he wants to be. If not, he and Israel may have to wait until the election after this one — when someone other than Sharon might become prime minister. □

(Leslie Susser is the diplomatic correspondent for the Jerusalem Report.)

## Russian ultranationalist in Israel

JERUSALEM (JTA) — Russian ultranationalist Vladimir Zhirinovskiy arrived in Israel at the invitation of a small Russian immigrants party.

Speaking to reporters on his arrival at Ben-Gurion Airport on Monday, Zhirinovskiy dismissed Palestinian demands that Jerusalem be the capital of a future state, The Associated Press reported.

As part of his ongoing efforts to dispel his anti-Semitic image, Zhirinovskiy also made comments praising Jews. Israel's Foreign Ministry stressed that Zhirinovskiy's visit is unofficial. □



### Daily News Bulletin

Norman H. Lipoff, *President*

Mark J. Joffe, *Executive Editor and Publisher*

Lisa Hostein, *Editor*

Michael S. Arnold, *Managing Editor*

Lenore A. Silverstein, *Finance and Administration Director*

Paula Simmonds, *Marketing and Development Director*

JTA DAILY NEWS BULLETIN is published five days a week, except holidays, by the Jewish Telegraphic Agency Inc., 330 Seventh Ave., New York, N.Y. 10001-5010. For information about how to subscribe by e-mail, fax or regular mail, call (212) 643-1890, or visit our Web site at [www.jta.org](http://www.jta.org).  
© JTA Reproduction only by previous arrangement.

## JEWISH WORLD

### Sharpton enters 2004 race

Civil rights leader Rev. Al Sharpton entered the 2004 Democratic presidential primary race. Sharpton is a controversial figure in the Jewish community, stemming in large part from his involvement in the 1991 Crown Heights riots.

During those riots, Sharpton made incendiary comments at the funeral of a black child who was killed in an auto accident by a Chasidic driver. "The Al Sharpton of 2003 is different than the Al Sharpton of 1991," said Rabbi Marc Schneier, president of the Foundation for Ethnic Understanding. "I think he will be very careful and avoid a black-Jewish rift."

### Jewish P.M. in Holland?

Amsterdam's mayor is trying to become Holland's first Jewish prime minister. Job Cohen could assume the nation's highest post if his Labor Party wins Wednesday's elections.

Labor is running neck and neck in opinion polls with the ruling Christian Democrats. Cohen was nominated as Labor's candidate for the premiership on Sunday.

### Belarus to open Nazi-era archives

Belarus signed an accord that will open a large trove of Nazi-era records to war crimes prosecutors in the United States.

The agreement signed Monday in Washington is expected to yield several ongoing cases, say officials with the Justice Department's Nazi-hunting Office of Special Investigations.

### Roommates get racist e-mails

Internet users began receiving Holocaust-denial e-mails after they signed up for a roommate-matching service in Manhattan. Michael Santomauro, who started the Roommate Finders service in 1979, also runs a Web site called RePortersNoteBook.com, which has Holocaust revisionist articles and pieces critical of Jews and Israel.

Santomauro denied that he had knowingly added the e-mail addresses of people using the roommate service to his RePortersNoteBook.com mailing list, The New York Times reported.

### Al Hirschfeld dies at 99

Al Hirschfeld, who drew caricatures of Broadway personalities, died Monday in New York at 99. He was known for his drawings of personalities ranging from the Marx Brothers to Carol Channing, many of which appeared in The New York Times.

Among Hirschfeld's drawings is one of the late Chabad-Lubavitch rebbe, Menachem Mendel Schneerson, which can be seen on the Internet at [www.margofeiden.com/cgi-bin/popup?ID=REBBE](http://www.margofeiden.com/cgi-bin/popup?ID=REBBE).

## Libya to chair human rights group; will Israel even feel the difference?

By Rachel Pomerance

NEW YORK (JTA) — Israel and Jewish groups are outraged that Libya has been chosen to chair the U.N. Human Rights Commission — though they say the group's treatment of the Jewish state can't get much worse than it already is.

The commission "can't do anything but run a smear campaign against Israel, which is what they already do," said Ariel Milo, spokesman of the Israeli Mission to the United Nations.

"And the fact that Libya of all countries becomes the chairman of the committee is proof of the irrelevance of that committee."

The U.N. Human Rights Commission is a subsidiary body of the U.N. General Assembly that addresses human rights issues, including matters of political, social, economic and humanitarian concern.

Unlike the U.N. Security Council, its resolutions are not legally binding.

U.N. Secretary General Kofi Annan's recent appointment of Sergio Vieira de Mello as high commissioner, replacing Mary Robinson, may offset the effects of Libya's chairmanship.

Many Jewish groups considered Robinson to be overtly pro-Palestinian during her tenure.

De Mello, who took office in September 2002, "seems to be more in sync with the West in terms of the war on terrorism, and that is a net plus for Israel," one American Jewish official said.

As commissioner, de Mello is the top U.N. official dealing with human rights, with an office to investigate and monitor human rights around the world. He works with the UNHRC, but is not in charge of it.

That will be the job of the Libyan delegate, who as chairman will organize the agenda of the UNHRC's six-week session, which deals with specific human rights questions and issues resolutions on them. This year's session will run from March 17 through April 25.

Messages seeking comment from Libya's U.N. mission in New York were not returned.

The ascendancy of Libya — under U.N. sanctions for its role in the hijacking and explosion of Pan Am flight 103, and blasted by human rights groups for torturing prisoners and reportedly engaging in slave trading — is a major concern to many Jewish groups that monitor the United Nations.

"The election of a repressive, terrorist-supporting dictatorship to lead the world's foremost human rights body brings the moral decay of the United Nations into sharp relief and makes an utter mockery of the values it is supposed to uphold," said Avi Beker, secretary-general of the World Jewish Congress.

The WJC and other Jewish groups praised the United States for calling for a vote to reject the nomination.

Still, the Libyan ambassador to the United Nations in Geneva, Najat al-Hajjaji, won 33 votes Monday in a secret ballot of the 53-country commission. Seventeen countries abstained, and three, including the United States and Canada, voted against the nomination.

Each year, chair of the commission rotates among the five regional groupings, which nominate a representative country. The African group recommended Libya for the post.

For the next year, Libya will be able "to influence the agenda of the commission," said Andrew Srulovitch, director of U.N. Watch. For example, the length of time devoted to an agenda item lambasting Israel largely will depend on Libya, he said.

Srulovitch said the appointment could go in either of two ways: The Arab countries might "restrain themselves on the Arab issue" for public relations gain, or they could "pillory" Israel and the West to further their foreign policies.

"I don't think anyone knows, because it really is going to depend on what side of the bed Gadhafi wakes up on," Srulovitch said, referring to Libyan leader Muammar Gadhafi. □

## Demise of philanthropy trust is attributed to several factors

By Rachel Pomerance

NEW YORK (JTA) — The demise of the United Jewish Communities' experiment in "venture philanthropy" is being attributed to both budgetary pressures and changes in the fundraising environment.

The Trust for Jewish Philanthropy was created shortly after the formation of the UJC three years ago.

The UJC is a merger of the Council of Jewish Federations, the United Jewish Appeal and the United Israel Appeal.

Touted as a "wellspring for developing brand new innovations," the trust was meant to target new donors and foundations to support national and international projects that individual federations would be hard-pressed to mount on their own.

And in offering specific donor projects, it was intended to respond to a donor trend for more control over how their dollars were spent.

But last week's move, which the UJC called a cost-cutting measure, comes at a time of increased pressure from local federations to cut the UJC's \$42.5 million budget. UJC spent between \$1.5 million and \$1.7 million a year on the trust.

It also comes at a time of increased competition for dollars when many donors are focused on crises in Israel and Argentina.

Among the trust's projects were a Jewish communal service program targeting youth, a program to advance women professionals in the Jewish community and an initiative to establish Jewish sleep-away camps that focused on the arts or children with disabilities.

But in a news release issued last week, UJC CEO Stephen Hoffman stated that "in consideration of our financial priorities for the coming year, our professional and lay leadership has determined that this is not an area in which we should maintain a presence."

The director of the trust, David Altshuler, who was founding director of New York's Museum of Jewish Heritage-A Living Memorial to the Holocaust, did not return calls to JTA.

But the UJC stated that some "some trust activities will be absorbed into UJC departments," and it will also try to absorb the trust's staff — about a half a dozen people.

Several familiar with the trust say the root of the problem was the perceived competition for donor funds between the trust and the local federations.

Altshuler's "hands were tied," said Barbara Dobkin, who donated \$1 million to the trust to help fund her program, Advancing Women Professionals and the Jewish Community, to groom women into Jewish communal leaders. Potential donors had to be cleared by local federations, she said, and "most federations did not want any of their donors to be solicited.

"I wouldn't want anyone deciding for me whether or not I could be solicited for that," she said. "I don't belong to anybody."

Dobkin expressed dismay with the way the plan turned out, saying the trust was supposed to deliver \$4 million for her program, but she said it came up with about \$175,000.

She said she would pursue the initiative, which she said was going like "gangbusters," outside the purview of UJC, unless it agreed to help them fund raise.

But others that benefitted from the trust praised its work.

Ruth Messinger, executive director of the American Jewish

World Service, one of 15 groups comprising the Jewish Coalition for Service, which got seed money from the trust, said it "did extraordinary work for us."

The trust helped the coalition, which is naming its first executive director this week, raise funds for its first two years, she said.

It was "directly responsible for a significant amount of the publicity that we've gotten and they were advisers and consultants. They played exactly the role we wanted them to play and they made a huge difference," she said.

UJC insiders cite budget concerns as the main reason for terminating the project.

"We weren't producing enough to say it was worth a million and a half dollars out of the budget," said Karen Shapira, a UJC vice chair.

UJC's budget is under intense scrutiny by member federations, many of whom claim it's too bloated. The budget is slated for review in June. "There is a lot of pressure to examine everything we're doing" to see if it substantially services federations and the UJC, Shapira said.

In explaining the trust's dissolution, many say it emerged at a time when too many other needs demanded federations' attention, and it simply wasn't returning the investment. Marvin Lender, the bagel magnate who was a member of the trust's board, said the timing was not right for the trust, emerging as it did just before a period of crisis for the Jewish community.

"It takes time, seeds have to be planted, contacts have to be made and that requires patience and perseverance on the part of its owners, which are the federations/UJC," Lender said.

"I think we're living at a time of crisis in the Jewish communal world, and I just don't think people can get to this right now. That doesn't mean that we shouldn't revisit it somewhere down the road."

According to another UJC vice chair, Robert Schroyer, the UJC was conducting too many fund-raising initiatives at once. He cited the Israel Emergency Campaign and the annual campaigns of local federations, on which local leaders were more focused.

"We were asking for a lot of things, and I don't think anybody was concentrating on the trust," he said.

"We should have terminated it a while back," he said, saying the trust only solicited "one or two" foundations anyway.

But for those who held out hope that the trust could foster new donors, and innovative projects, the loss is a serious blow.

"It was an opportunity for them to be a more inclusive organization and to offer a broader vision of what UJC could be," Dobkin said. Now, "it's back to business as usual."

That may be typical for organizational life, according to Jeffrey Solomon, president of the Andrea and Charles Bronfman Philanthropies.

"In any organization, there is a huge tension between experimenting with the new and staying with the old," and the old usually wins, he said.

But it's a decision that comes at a cost.

"I understand that the community is under significant pressures with the Israel Emergency Campaign and the crisis in Argentina, but personally I believe that a time of crisis is also a time when a vibrant community like ours should be trying to figure out what's next," said Messinger of the American Jewish World Service. "Jewish service is one of those things and it will proceed. I'm just sorry we won't have the trust to help." □