



# Daily News Bulletin

Vol. 81, No. 74

Monday, April 21, 2003

86th Year

## TOP NEWS IN BRIEF

### Five Palestinians, Israeli killed

Five Palestinians and an Israeli soldier were killed during an Israeli army operation in the southern Gaza Strip. Three other Israeli soldiers and some 40 Palestinians were wounded Sunday in clashes that erupted during the operation, which targeted a neighborhood considered to be a militant stronghold in the city of Rafah.

The Israeli soldier killed in the raid, Sgt. Lior Ziv, 19, was a photographer in the Israeli army spokesman's unit who was documenting the operation.

### Arafat, Abbas at odds

Palestinian Prime Minister-designate Mahmoud Abbas reportedly threatened to quit over a dispute with Yasser Arafat.

Abbas stormed out of a meeting of the Fatah Central Council in Ramallah on Saturday, when Palestinian Authority President Arafat continued efforts to block Abbas' plans to name the former Gaza Strip security chief Mohammad Dahlan to a key Cabinet position.

### Ghetto uprising marked

The Warsaw Ghetto Uprising was commemorated. Members of Warsaw's Jewish community gathered Saturday to mark the 60th anniversary of the uprising, which began April 19, 1943.

During the following weeks, a small number of Jews heroically fought off the Nazis with homemade explosives and smuggled weapons. A more formal ceremony is slated for April 30.

### Palestinian journalist killed

Israeli soldiers killed a Palestinian journalist working for the Associated Press.

Nazeh Darawzeh, who worked for Associated Press Television News, was killed Saturday while filming a dash between the Israeli army and Palestinians in Nablus. Israel said its soldiers reacted after being surrounded by a group of armed Palestinians throwing stones and firing weapons.

Because of the Passover holiday, the JTA DAILY NEWS BULLETIN will not be published Thursday, April 24 and Friday, April 25.

## WAR IN IRAQ

### As rebuilding of Iraq begins, Jews see opportunity to build tie for Israel

By Matthew E. Berger

WASHINGTON (JTA) — As the United States begins rebuilding Iraq, pro-Israel activists are watching closely, seeing an opportunity for the Jewish state to improve ties with another Arab neighbor.

Much of that hope has been placed in the hands of Ahmed Chalabi, a leader of the Iraqi National Congress opposition group who has forged strong ties with the White House and Pentagon in recent years — and has built a strong following in the American Jewish community.

"There's no track record of anyone else in Iraqi leadership having a relationship with the Jewish community," said Tom Neumann, executive director of the Jewish Institute for National Security Affairs.

Chalabi's group has been assigned to help U.S. troops impose order in Baghdad — a sign, some argue, that the congress is favored to play a large role in any interim government the United States forms in Iraq.

The Iraqi National Congress is not universally liked within the Bush administration. Reports stress that the State Department and the CIA are concerned about the congress' lack of popular support in Iraq.

JINSA and other Jewish organizations met with Chalabi and other congress leaders in the run up to the war last fall, part of the Jewish community's effort to strengthen Israel's relations with the Arab world.

With the Bush administration preparing at the time to overthrow the regime in Baghdad, both the congress and Jewish groups said they had something to gain from a strong bond.

The congress saw a way to tap Jewish influence in Washington and Jerusalem and to drum up increased support for its cause.

For their part, the Jewish groups saw an opportunity to pave the way for better relations between Israel and Iraq if and when the congress is involved in replacing dictator Saddam Hussein's regime.

"Because Saddam was so anti-Israel, the hope is that all of Saddam's policies will be revisited, including his relationship with Israel and the United States," Neumann said. "There's no reason for the Iraqi people to have a problem with Israel."

The congress' relationship with JINSA also is significant because Lt. Gen. Jay Garner, who has been assigned to lead the U.S. reconstruction of Iraq, has traveled with JINSA and supported the organization's agenda.

While JINSA has had a relationship with Chalabi for 10 years, according to Neumann, other Jewish groups are supporting him publicly for the first time.

Yet some observers worry that a public relationship could work against the interests of Jewish groups and the Iraqi opposition.

Michael Amitay, executive director of the Washington Kurdish Institute, said Jewish groups might run into problems by working only with Chalabi and Entifadh Qanbar, director of the congress' Washington office, because the congress does not have strong support in Iraq, where there are numerous groups.

Perceived Jewish support for Chalabi could "drive a wedge between Chalabi and other forces in the Iraqi opposition," said Amitay, whose father, Morris, is vice chairman of JINSA's board of directors.

Calling the Jewish approach "short-sighted," he said it would be "much more

## MIDEAST FOCUS

### Thousands pray at wall

Thousands of people held Passover prayers at the Western Wall in Jerusalem on Sunday.

Security has been tightened around the capital amid warnings of possible terrorist attacks during the Passover holiday, which ends Thursday. Israel's High Court was due to hear a petition Sunday from a Temple Mount group requesting permission to pray on the holy site in Jerusalem. Israeli security officials believe that Jewish prayer at the site could lead to public disturbances.

### Objections to prisoner release

Israeli defense officials are arguing over a proposal to release hundreds of Palestinian prisoners. Defense Minister Shaul Mofaz recently instructed security officials to draw up a list of Palestinians whose detention periods are due to end soon, as a precursor to releasing them.

But some defense officials oppose the move, saying it would harm the fight against terror, the report said.

### Police suspected in death

Four Israeli border police have been arrested for suspected involvement in the killing of a Palestinian youth in Hebron four months ago.

Friends of the youth claimed in December that he was taken from his home in a border police jeep, and his body was found nearby soon afterward. An autopsy of the body revealed evidence linking the four officers to the incident, Israel Radio reported.

### Lufthansa curtails flights to Israel

Lufthansa suspended its Munich-Tel Aviv flights. In making the move, effective May 1, the German airline cited a severe drop in passengers flying the route. Lufthansa will still offer 14 weekly flights between Frankfurt and Tel Aviv.



## Daily News Bulletin

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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).  
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helpful if Jewish groups reached out to other groups, such as the Kurds," as well.

Qanbar disputes that claim.

He says Jewish groups have been among the first to form an alliance with the congress because they realize support for the organization is growing within the Bush administration.

"Jewish groups have a strong understanding of American politics," he said. "It's an indication that there is a new phase of policy."

Some also worry that Chalabi's good words won't translate into a pro-Israel foreign policy.

Pressure to garner support from inside Iraq and the rest of the Arab world could force the Iraqi National Congress to abandon its pro-Israel position.

In addition, the Bush administration's appointment of a military leader and encouragement of a dissident group with ties to Israel have played into conspiracy theories in the Arab world that the United States went to war in Iraq for Israel's benefit — perhaps constraining the next Iraqi government's latitude to approach Israel.

"It's far too early to even speculate where any of them will be and what their positions will be," said Malcolm Hoenlein, executive vice chairman of the Conference of Presidents of Major American Jewish Organizations. "It never works out the way people think it is going to work out."

The congress was founded shortly after the end of the 1991 Persian Gulf War, combining several smaller opposition forces within Iraq.

It operates a newspaper, a television station, regional offices and a center for humanitarian relief.

The congress is based in Salahuddin in northern Iraq and has its external base in London.

The United States has given the congress more than \$26 million during the past three years. U.S. aid to the group was suspended in January because of the congress' alleged mismanagement of funds, but resumed a month later.

The United States also has given a smaller amount, \$315,000, to another opposition group, the Iraqi National Movement, and \$1.5 million to the Future of Iraq Project, which brings together numerous opposition groups, including the congress.

Qanbar says the congress reached out to the Jewish community because it is the best avenue to get to the Israeli government. Israel, he believes, should reciprocate by reaching out to the congress and getting more involved in creating political change in Iraq.

"The Jewish groups in Washington have some influence in Israel," he told JTA in an interview last fall.

Qanbar said he believes good relations with Israel are possible under a new regime because Saddam is the one who had a problem with Israel, not the Iraqi people.

His analysis is contradicted by history, however: Iraqi antagonism toward Israel predates Saddam by several decades, as Iraqi army units invaded Israel during its 1948 War of Independence.

In addition, popular attitudes toward the Jewish state surely have been influenced by decades of fiercely anti-Israel propaganda.

Qanbar also said the congress urges the resolution of all regional conflicts without violence.

Chalabi told the JINSA audience in October that Saddam is the source of all terrorism in the Middle East and that governmental change in Iraq would affect the regional dynamics to the benefit of the United States and Israel. □

## Bombing victims attend hotel seder

JERUSALEM (JTA) — Some 120 people attended a Passover seder April 16 at the Netanya hotel that suffered a deadly suicide attack a year ago.

Among the attendees were several families who were at the hotel during last year's bombing, which killed 29 people and wounded 130 at the Park Hotel.

The attack, which culminated a month of increasingly deadly terrorist acts, prompted Israel to launch a massive invasion of the West Bank to uproot the Palestinian terrorist infrastructure. □

## JEWISH WORLD

### France said to owe \$84 million

The French government and banks owe \$84 million to Holocaust survivors and their heirs for items stolen during the Nazi era, a French commission said.

The commission said the debt stems from money, property and possessions taken by France's pro-Nazi Vichy regime during World War II. The commission's recommendations are not binding, but the French government has said it would follow them.

### JCC CFO pleads guilty

A Florida woman pleaded guilty to stealing more than \$20,000 from a JCC where she was chief financial officer.

Wendi Korb, 37, was placed on probation and must pay \$25,000 to the Jewish Community Center of the Greater Palm Beaches immediately, and \$45,000 more during the next 10 years.

Korb took the money by transferring credit from the JCC to personal credit card accounts. Korb worked for the JCC from August 1998 until November 2001.

The previous CFO of the JCC previously pleaded guilty to stealing almost \$65,000 from the institution.

### Nazi hunter: 'My work is done'

Simon Wiesenthal said his work tracking down Nazis and their collaborators is finished.

"I found the mass murderers I was looking for, and I have outlived all of them," Wiesenthal, 94, told the Austrian magazine *Format*. "If there's a few I didn't look for, they are now too old and fragile to stand trial." Wiesenthal tracked down hundreds of Nazi war criminals, and played a role in capturing Adolf Eichmann.

Born in what is now Ukraine, he spent World War II in labor and concentration camps.

### War criminal ordered deported

The United States ordered a man living in Pennsylvania deported because he collaborated with the Nazis.

The Justice Department's decision last Friday regarding Theodor Szebinskyj came after his citizenship was revoked in July 2000 for serving as a concentration camp guard during World War II.

Szebinskyj was found to have worked at the Gross-Rosen, Sachsenhausen and Warsaw concentration camps between January 1943 and February 1945.

### Church builds Wall replica

A church in Texas has built a replica of the Western Wall as part of its tribute to Israel and the Jewish people.

The New Life Christian Center in San Antonio built the wall with Jerusalem stone imported from Israel.

## WAR IN IRAQ

### Death of Jewish Marine in Iraq leads to outpouring of sympathy

By Joe Berkofsky

NEW YORK (JTA) — The mother of one Marine from Arizona promised she would plant a tree in Israel every year.

Other women whose sons served in the Israel Defense Force sent words of support. And old friends of his mother's, who kept a kosher home with her one summer in the Hamptons on Long Island, called, too.

In death, it seems, Mark Evinin reached Jews everywhere.

The first known Jewish casualty of Operation Iraqi Freedom, Evinin opened an emotional outpouring from Jews around the world.

From Israel to New Jersey, "people have been calling, writing. It has been incredible," said Evinin's mother, Mindy Evinin, of South Burlington, Vt.

"I don't know why it is. Maybe it's because the war might help Israel," she said. "Maybe because my father was a rabbi. I don't know, but it gives me pleasure."

Mark Asher Evinin, 21, a corporal with the 3rd Battalion, 4th Regiment of the 1st Marine Division, was shot April 3 in the city of Kut, south of Baghdad, when his unit of 800 soldiers came under Iraqi machine gun fire.

Evinin returned fire but was hit in the stomach and fatally wounded, among the first two dozen U.S. fatalities in the war.

Reaction to his story was so strong that some even contacted JTA to ask where they could write or to whom they could make a donation.

"It means a lot to me," Mindy Evinin said.

Not only Jews have responded: One woman whose 19-year-old brother was killed in 1983 when Hezbollah terrorists blew up the U.S. Marine barracks in Beirut reached out to tell Mindy Evinin of the day the Marines delivered the news to her home.

Kuni Takahashi, a Boston Herald photographer whose picture of the fallen Marine shortly before he died ran in *The New York Times*, also called.

Though Takahashi only knew Evinin for a few hours, the call meant a lot to Mindy Evinin — as did the final photo of her son, who was seen preparing to join a convoy toward Baghdad. "He looks like a little boy packing up, like he was playing war — except he was grown and had a real gun," she said.

Two days before he was killed, Evinin called his mother via a reporter's satellite phone. U.S. Marine Chaplain Irvin Elson reportedly met with Evinin shortly before the fateful battle, Mindy Evinin said.

On April 11, Evinin came home for good. The Marines were due to fly his body from Dover Air Force Base in Delaware, but when the Evinin family realized that it meant he would arrive on Shabbat, the Marines drove Evinin's body to Vermont earlier.

Relatives and friends helped with such details as tahara, the ritual washing of the corpse; posting shomrim, or guards, to protect the body; and having people say prayers.

Evinin was given a Jewish memorial service at the Conservative Ohavi Zedek Synagogue in Burlington, where his grandfather, Max Wall, is rabbi emeritus, followed by a Jewish funeral with full military honors at the city's Hebrew Holy Society Cemetery. More than 1,000 people attended, including Vermont Gov. Jim Douglas and Bishop Kenneth Angell of the Burlington diocese.

Angell's brother David, producer of the TV show "Frasier," was aboard American Airlines Flight 11 that Al-Qaida hijackers crashed into the north tower of the World Trade Center on Sept. 11, 2001.

Local police and firefighters formed an honor guard outside the synagogue, Mindy Evinin said, and townspeople lined the funeral route, saluting and holding their hands on their hearts.

"He is buried with my father's tallis," or prayer shawl, which Wall wore at his wedding and hoped would be buried with him, Mindy Evinin said.

Other contributions are being accepted in Evinin's name at the South Burlington High School, where a fund is being established to help the school's computer imaging lab, where Mark Evinin spent much time, and at the Marine Corps Scholarship Foundation in Princeton, N.J. □

## BEHIND THE HEADLINES

**Capture of Abu Abbas leads to fight over legal jurisdiction***By Joe Berkofsky*

NEW YORK, (JTA) — The capture of Mohammed “Abu” Abbas may advance the U.S. war on terror, but it also could set off a political time bomb.

Soon after U.S. Special Operations Forces in Baghdad nabbed the mastermind of the infamous 1985 Achille Lauro cruise ship hijacking last week, parties ranging from the Anti-Defamation League to Italian authorities to PLO officials fought to influence his fate.

On April 16, the ADL called on Attorney General John Ashcroft to bring Abbas to the United States to stand trial for the murder of Leon Klinghoffer, a disabled American Jewish passenger who was shot after the ship was hijacked. Klinghoffer was then dumped in his wheelchair into the Mediterranean.

The United States should be the country to bring Abbas to justice because “it’s an American citizen who was murdered,” argued Abraham Foxman, the ADL’s national director. “We urge the Department of Justice to seize this moment to strike another blow in this nation’s war on terrorism.”

Meanwhile, the Palestinian Authority demanded that Abbas be freed, saying his arrest violated the Oslo peace accords and subsequent interim deals. “We demand the United States release Abu Abbas,” Palestinian Authority Cabinet minister Saeb Erekat told Reuters. “It has no right to imprison him.”

According to Erekat, the Israeli-Palestinian peace pact, brokered by the United States, said PLO members should not be detained or charged for any terrorist attacks they committed before Sept. 13, 1993.

With apparent American and Israeli approval, Abbas was allowed to return to Palestinian areas several times starting in 1996, and even lived openly in the Gaza Strip for a time.

Israeli officials in the United States could not be reached for comment last week because of Passover.

A U.S. State Department official, meanwhile, was quoted in the Israeli daily Ha’aretz as saying that the 1995 deal did not apply to “the legal status of persons detained in a third country.”

Meanwhile, Italy — which let Abbas leave the country immediately after the attack rather than fall into U.S. hands and then, in 1986, tried him in absentia and sentenced him to life in prison — pledged to seek his extradition.

“We will have to clarify some legal questions as to whom to request the extradition, which we’ll do as soon as possible,” Italian Justice Minister Roberto Castelli told The Associated Press.

But with U.S. Special Operations and 3rd Infantry Division forces holding Abbas in Iraq, it seems the United States will have the final word, some say. “By all legal rationales at this point, with his life sentence in absentia, the Italians have first dibs,” terrorism expert Steven Emerson said. “But possession is nine-tenths of the law, so of course the United States can decide what to do.”

Emerson said he believes there was some tacit agreement among the United States, Israel and the Palestinian Authority to allow Abbas and other Palestinians into Palestinian-run areas after Oslo, provided they renounced terrorism.

“What they did with Abbas was no different than with Arafat: They wiped the slate clean,” he said.

Abbas, 54, head of the Palestinian Liberation Front, a PLO faction, planned the 1985 hijacking of the Italian luxury liner. Four terrorists seized the ship with 410 people aboard off the Egyptian coast.

Abbas later called the killing of Klinghoffer a “mistake,” though he also claimed that Klinghoffer was “provoking” other passengers.

Though Abbas was said to have renounced terror, he told the Jerusalem newspaper Al Quds in 1998 that the “struggle between us and Israel does not stop at any limits.”

The hijackers shot the wheelchair-bound Klinghoffer, 69, in the head and chest as his wife, Marilyn, watched.

The hijacking sparked an international crisis that in some respects foreshadowed today’s legal maneuvering.

Abbas initially won a deal calling for him and his men to be flown from Egypt to safe haven in Tunisia.

But Col. Oliver North, an aide to then-President Reagan, ordered U.S. Navy fighter jets to scramble the EgyptAir flight, and Abbas was forced to land at an airport in Sicily.

A standoff between Italian and U.S. soldiers ensued, with both sides demanding custody of the terrorists. Reagan and then-Italian Prime Minister Bettino Craxi negotiated a deal in which Italy would try the PLF members.

Two days later, however, Italy said it lacked sufficient evidence to hold Abbas and — arguing that he also held an Iraqi diplomatic passport — let him go. He quickly fled the country.

Abbas reportedly spent much of the 1980s and early 1990s living in Algeria, Libya and Tunisia. He moved to Iraq in 1994, one of several terrorist leaders — including the infamous Abu Nidal — for whom Saddam Hussein provided asylum.

Shortly after Abbas resurfaced in Gaza in 1996, the ADL and its Leon and Marilyn Klinghoffer Memorial Foundation welcomed U.S. calls for Italy to extradite Abbas and put him on trial in Italy.

But now, with Abbas having been captured during the war in Iraq, “the situation has changed,” Foxman said.

“Look where he was captured,” Foxman said. “Look where he was hiding out. He was captured during wartime, and it’s a new status for him, and for us.”

After Baghdad fell, Abbas traveled to the northern city of Mosul and on to the Syrian border, but Syrian authorities turned him away, the AP reported.

Someone tipped off U.S. officials to Abbas’ whereabouts, and U.S. forces were led to a safe house on the Tigris River south of Baghdad.

Special Forces raided the house. Abbas had fled, but they found Lebanese and Yemeni passports, thousands of dollars, rocket-propelled grenade launchers and some documents.

Abbas later returned to the city and was captured along with several others.

Emerson, author of “American Jihad: The Terrorists Living Among Us,” said the papers could prove a valuable weapon in the war on terror and will likely reveal Abbas’ terrorist ties to Syria and to the Palestinians.

“Why would the Palestinian Authority be so protective of him if he weren’t so close to them?” he said.

The White House said it would review the situation, while U.S. military officials signaled they were likely to interrogate Abbas about terrorism.

“Justice will be served,” Marine Maj. Brad Bartelt, a Central Command spokesman, told the AP. □